

CHAPTER 4

England, 1632–1640

One impression to be drawn so far is that Hamilton and Charles regularly disagreed. Enough evidence has been assembled to illustrate a deep commitment to the Palatine cause and the reverberations it caused through Hamilton's career. We saw that Hamilton advanced his own foreign policy against the grain of Charles and his court, but in true courtier-politician style, never so far as to create a breach with the king. He cut his cloth to suit the times. Even so, the Borthwick embassy shows that he was willing to push a course that may have led to a more active foreign policy on behalf of princess Elizabeth and her family. What evidence there is suggests that the king did not know the full details of the approach. This is a recognisable element in Hamilton's political craft and it resurfaces again, particularly during the break-up of the Caroline polity between 1638–43. Working for Charles required considerable dexterity, including working 'back-channels' to try and build greater influence or a change in policy.

Through part of the present chapter we continue to answer the question which Gilbert Burnet left unanswered: what did Hamilton do in the period before the Scottish troubles?¹ One thing is certain: Hamilton thrived at court despite his differences with the king over foreign policy. Yet what else did he do, aside from his association with the Palatine family?

This chapter seeks to examine his domestic interests and his involvement in the government of England. The first section will delineate his court offices, and sketch some contemporary impressions. Section two examines some aspects of Hamilton's political clientage, his collaborators and family connection at court. Section three is a case study of Hamilton's protection of his brother-in-law Basil, Lord Feilding (ambassador extraordinary to Venice and the princes of Italy) as an illustration of the influence the marquis exerted at court. Section four presents a brief study of Hamilton's activities as an art collector. The final section is broader in scope. It is a close study

¹ Burnet, *Lives of James and William Dukes of Hamilton* (Oxford, 1673, repr. 1852), pp.31–33, esp.p.33.

How to cite this book chapter:

Scalli, J. 2024. *The Polar Star: James, First Duke of Hamilton (1606–1649)*. Pp. 67–96. London: Ubiquity Press.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/bcx.e>. License: CC BY-NC 4.0

of Hamilton's and the other Scots's attendance at the English Privy Council: it will be suggested that Hamilton and the other Scots followed a distinct pattern of attendance.

I

Even to the stoutest defender of the pre-eminence of the English peerage James, 3rd marquis of Hamilton, 2nd earl of Cambridge, sometime 4th duke of Chatelherault,² master of the horse and gentleman of the Bedchamber to Charles I, knight of the Garter, privy councillor in England and Scotland, steward of Hampton Court and keeper of Portsmouth would warrant a sage, if somewhat grudging, nod of approval. In recent years the impact of the Scots at the early Stuart court (not least the two who successively sat on the English throne) have received some much-needed attention.³ It is worth pointing out that the two highest peerage titles in the post-Buckingham court were held by Scots, both of whom were the king's cousins and both of whom ranked amongst the most intimate of his friends. The first, was James Stuart, duke of Lennox and earl of March, and the second was Hamilton, who was also next in line to the Scottish throne after the royal Stuarts. No English peer had such a link with his king.

It is appropriate to begin by taking a closer look at a few of the titles listed above that have not already been discussed and relate directly to the concerns of this chapter. The two most important in the list were master of the horse and gentleman of the Bedchamber. The master of the horse was the third highest court office and enjoyed precedence over every household officer bar the lord steward and lord chamberlain.⁴ There was no lord steward appointed between April 1630 to April 1640 and so Hamilton was the second most senior court officer throughout the Personal Rule.⁵ As master of the horse, Hamilton occupied around twenty rooms in Whitehall.⁶ Recent holders of the office included the Elizabethan earls of Leicester and Essex, and George, duke of Buckingham, and this alone attests to the importance of the place. As the title of the medieval office literally suggests, Hamilton was in charge of the king's horse. This meant that on all occasions, whether at the hunt or in public, Hamilton rode close to the king and led or bridled the royal horse. We see this most clearly in Van Dyck's 1635 painting of Charles I standing in a rustic setting with Hamilton nearby bridling the king's horse.⁷ Furthermore, only the master of the horse and the groom of the

² For the debate over whether the Chatelherault title was hereditary, G. E. C[okayne], *The Complete Peerage*, ii, Appendix B, 445–8.

³ The most influential work on the nobles in recent years is by Professor John Adamson and Professor Keith Brown. John Adamson, *The noble revolt: the overthrow of Charles I* (London, 2007); Adamson, 'The Baronial Context of the English Civil War', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Ser., 40 (1990), pp.93–120 and other references; K.M. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland: wealth, family and culture from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh, 2000); Brown, *Noble Power in Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh, 2011); Keith Brown, 'Aristocratic Finances and the Origins of the Scottish Revolution' *English Historical Review*, vol. civ, number 410 (January 1989), pp.46–87 and other references. See also, Jenny Wormald, 'James VI and I: Two Kings or One?', *History*, vol. 68 number 23 (June 1983), pp.187–209; Neil Cuddy, 'The King's Chambers: the Bedchamber of James I in Administration and Politics, 1603–1625' (Oxford DPhil, 1987); Neil Cuddy, 'Anglo-Scottish Union and the Court of James I, 1603–25', *TRHS*, (January 1990); Peter Donald, *An Uncounselled King*; Reeve, *Road to Personal Rule*; Richard Cust, *Charles I and the Aristocracy* (Cambridge, 2013); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990) and Russell *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637–42* (Oxford, 1991); Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992).

⁴ G. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: the Civil Service of Charles I* (London 1961) p.30.

⁵ The 3rd earl of Pembroke was the previous lord steward and he died in April 1630.

⁶ These figures are for Charles II's reign, Sharpe, 'The image of virtue: the court and household of Charles I, 1625–1642' in Starkey, *The English Court* (London, 1987), p.229. Hamilton's rooms may have been situated off the Long Gallery towards the Orchard, Millar, ed., *Van der Doorts Catalogue of Charles I's Pictures*, p.44.

⁷ In the Louvre, 'Charles I a la crosse', printed in Roy Strong, *Charles I on Horseback* (London 1972), p. 55. The picture was used on the front cover of C. V. Wedgwood's paperback edition of *The King's Peace, 1637–41* (London 1968). This is my reasoned assumption that it is Hamilton.

stool were permitted to ride with the king in his carriage.⁸ The same rule probably applied to the royal barge.⁹

Most of the medieval martial elements of the office had disappeared before the seventeenth century, though strong elements persisted around behaviour, honour, hierarchy and nobility. The proposed trial by combat solution to the Ochiltree Affair, discussed earlier, is a tangible example of medieval culture persisting into the 17th Century. Similarly, in a meeting of the Council of War on 19 March 1639, Hamilton put a claim to the lord general of the army that it belonged to his place, as master of the horse, to carry the king's standard on the day of battle.¹⁰ As an outward sign of the king's favour then, the office was difficult to match. It meant that on nearly every occasion outside the royal residences Hamilton was at the king's side. Such was its prestige, that a rumour circulating in 1633 reported that Hamilton had sold the place to the earl of Newcastle for £20,000.¹¹

The master of the horse ran his own department, the Stables, employing nearly 200 staff, which consisted mainly of grooms, equerries and yeomen.¹² Each of the royal houses had its own stables and, in conjunction with the steward of the royal house, it was the responsibility of the master to staff, stock and maintain them.¹³ More interestingly, evidence suggests that the master of the horse was responsible for licensing the import and export of all horses.¹⁴ Similarly, as master of the horse, Hamilton secured a patent in 1635 to licence, regulate and set prices for hackney carriages in London.¹⁵ Finally, it was Hamilton who authorised and controlled the use of the king and queen's coaches, whether for the convenience of foreign diplomats or indeed to serve the royal family.¹⁶

The Stables were financed out of the Great Wardrobe, but the accounts do not appear to have survived.¹⁷ On top of the money from the Wardrobe, the master received extraordinary payments to purchase horses for the king and queen, usually for their own use though sometimes as gifts to heads of state. Some of these accounts have survived and they show that Hamilton received a total of £19,320 between November 1628 and February 1639, just under £2,000 per annum.¹⁸ Breaking the figure down, we find £3,000 spent on gifts and the rest on stock for the royal family. Each of the 29 transactions was normally procured by Hamilton via the king's signet and sign manual and sent to the Exchequer by privy seal warrant.¹⁹ The usual format was that Hamilton had a float of

⁸ N. Cuddy, 'The Bedchamber of James I in Administration and Politics, 1603–25' (University of Oxford DPhil 1987), p.52. Princes of the blood were also entitled to ride in the king's carriage.

⁹ I have no evidence for this but see Cuddy, 'Bedchamber of James I,' pp. 167–8.

¹⁰ TNA, SP 16/414/134 (Notes of Council of War, 19 March 1638/9).

¹¹ *CSPV*, 1632–6, p.87.

¹² TNA SP 16/154/77 (The King and Queen's servants in the stables, 1629). See also Aylmer, *King's Servants*, p.474.

¹³ See for example, Nonsuch Palace's stable buildings had eight rooms below stairs and 10 above for grooms and inferior officers of the court. The great stable and little stable could house 40 horses with six rooms for lodgings, TNA, E. 317/Surrey/41. For an example of repairs, *CSPD* 1629–31, 64 (Warrant to Hamilton for £200 for repair of stables at the mews, 25 September 1629).

¹⁴ NRS, GD 406/1/296 (Wentworth to Hamilton, 2 September 1634) requesting a license to export 20 horses to Ireland; *CSP Ire.*, 1633–47, 38 (Charles I to Wentworth, 16 January 1633/4); *Ibid.*, Charles I to Hamilton, 16 January 1633/4; TNA, SO3/10 unfol., January 1634 (Warrant to Hamilton and letter to lord deputy); Sheffield City Library, Wentworth Woodhouse mss, vol. 4/ fol.56; GD 406/1/1420 (St. Albans and Clanricard to Hamilton, 13 August 1641) requesting a license to export 34 horses to Ireland. For examples of Hamilton licensing horses for export to France. TNA, SP 16/199/54, 55; GD 406/1/1431 (countess of Carlisle to Hamilton, 21 September 1641).

¹⁵ See below and chapter 6.

¹⁶ A.J. Loomie, ed., *Ceremonies of Charles I: The Note Books of Sir John Finet, 1628–41* (New York, 1987), pp.137–8, 153–4, 173.

¹⁷ TNA, SP 16/229/63; TNA, *Guide*, i, p.71. I am grateful to Simon Adams for this reference and information on this subject.

¹⁸ The docquets and warrants are recorded in the Signet Office (TNA, SO3/9–11) with 18 and the other 11 dispersed through the State Papers.

¹⁹ See for example, TNA, SO3/10 unfol., April 1632; SO3/11 unfol., July 1635; *CSPD* 1635–6, p.151; SP 16/356/1.

£400 to cover the main purchase, submitted his account to the king and was paid the excess – often about £100, but sometimes as high as £500 – plus a new float of £400.

Hamilton appears to have been dissatisfied that his department had to rely on the Wardrobe for payment of its normal running costs. Significantly, the Wardrobe was in financial disarray as Hamilton would have been well aware, for his father-in-law, the 1st earl of Denbigh was master of the Great Wardrobe.²⁰ This may have prompted Hamilton's offer in 1631 to take over the stable duties of the Wardrobe for an annual payment of £7,000.²¹ About the same time, an investigation into the household departments found that the Stables spent around £27–30 per day (i.e. £9,855–£10,950 p.a.).²² Despite the saving, Hamilton's offer was not taken up and no evidence has survived to tell us if it was either rejected or quietly dropped. However, he won a minor point in 1637, being thenceforth responsible for procuring payment for the liveries of the king and queen's coachmen, postillions and footmen.²³ Clearly, he remained unhappy that his Stables were tethered to the Wardrobe.

Unlike the mastership of the horse, the place of gentleman of the Bedchamber carried neither administrative responsibility nor fees.²⁴ Again, as the name suggests, the place involved attending the king when he was in his bedchamber. As well as being a companion to the king, certain duties were carried out by the gentlemen. Often in collaboration with the groom of the stool, they dressed the king after the grooms had performed the more menial tasks.²⁵ The gentlemen worked in rotas, perhaps in quarterly shifts as in Scotland, and slept in the king's chamber when it was their turn.²⁶ There could be no better complement to Hamilton's public position of master of the horse than gentleman of the Bedchamber.²⁷ Quite simply, wherever the king went Hamilton was in attendance. The rules of entree did not pose a problem.²⁸

Hamilton was made steward of Hampton Court in June 1630 in the middle of his preparations for the German expedition.²⁹ Like his investiture as a knight of the Garter in October of the same year, the stewardship illustrated the king's support for the German venture.³⁰ For Hamilton it gave him the fees and patronage of one of the king's largest houses and, moreover, alternative

²⁰ See below.

²¹ TNA SP 16/229/63. Hamilton also offered to take on some of the charges of the prince and Lady Mary, 'so long as the charges of their stables is not augmented'. This was over and above the Wardrobe's current remit. The £7,000 was to be paid in equal portions, twice termly.

²² TNA, SP 16/229/65 ('Concerning provisions for the Household'). These figures were compared with a list of what officers spent under Edward VI. Dr. Aylmer's figure of £1,671 p.a. (annual totals for 1631–5) is too low. The extraordinary payments which Hamilton received did not come from the Wardrobe and do seem to have been calculated into the per day calculation.

²³ TNA, SO3/11, [N.D.] 1637; *CSPD* 1637, p.537. The sum was £710 p.a. for 9 coachmen and their postillions, and 20 footmen. In May 1631 Hamilton procured (as a one-off) a winter livery for the same servants, over and above their usual issue, TNA, SO3/10, unfol., May 1631. This may have been partly done to press his deal to have the Stables removed from the Wardrobe.

²⁴ For fees see, Aylmer, *King's Servants*, p.473.

²⁵ The grooms made the king's bed and helped him on with his underwear, N. Cuddy, 'The Revival of the Entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603–1635' in Starkey, *The English Court* (London, 1987), p.191.

²⁶ Cuddy, 'Revival' pp.178, 191.

²⁷ Patent for Master of Horse dated 12 November, 1628, NRS, GD 406/L1/128, also, *CSPD* 1627–8, 371 where the grant for the same office is November 7. I have argued in chapter 1 that Hamilton was sworn a gent. of the Bedchamber sometime in 1625, shortly after Charles ascended the throne, but the evidence is inconclusive, see chapter 1, pp.16–17. It has normally been assumed that Hamilton became a gentleman of the Bedchamber at the same time he was sworn master of the horse, G. E. C., *Complete Peerage*, ii, 259.

²⁸ The gentlemen of the Bedchamber could share or preside over the groom of the stool's duties 'either as a matter of course or by acting as deputy in his absence.' Cuddy, 'Revival', p.186.

²⁹ TNA, SO3/9, unfol., June 1630. The signature was procured by Dorchester. The earl of Anglesey was the previous steward.

³⁰ Bodleian Library, Oxford, ms Ashmole 1132 fol.124. See also chapter 2, p.35.

accommodation to his rooms at Whitehall.³¹ Hamilton may have been staying at Hampton Court from 1634.³² Certainly he housed part of his picture collection there,³³ and executed various building projects (including a garden) and repairs.³⁴ Hamilton was also keeper of Portsmouth which, amongst other things, gave him the right to nominate one of the town's members of parliament.³⁵ His first opportunity to exercise that privilege came in 1640 and he nominated his brother, Sir William Hamilton, as the first burgess to be returned by the town to the Short Parliament.³⁶ A close examination of Hamilton in the Privy Council will be done in section V, but one more title deserves notice before moving on; duke of Chatelherault.

As we have already noted in chapter 1, Hamilton's great grandfather, James, 2nd earl of Arran and regent of Scotland (1543–54) received from Henry II of France on 8 February 1549 the grant of the duchy of Chatelherault in Poitou.³⁷ Along with the lordship came an annual revenue of 12,000 livres. From an early stage the benefits were only intermittently honoured, and Hamilton made strenuous efforts to have the duchy restored and the revenue paid regularly.³⁸ Apparently, he even intended going to Paris himself to force his claim.³⁹ He made this bold promise during a particularly long series of negotiations in Paris, between 1627–8, conducted by one of his closest servants, probably Sir John Hamilton of Broomhill.⁴⁰ What is clear is that Hamilton, in general terms, offered his service to the French king, either at home or abroad. On subsequent information Broomhill received from Richelieu's servants, it appeared that an offer would be made to restore the duchy if Hamilton agreed to work for France. In the event Richelieu does not seem to have made the offer and Hamilton, reacting to Broomhill's warning that such an offer might be made, rejected it anyway.⁴¹ Due to the ragged nature of the evidence, too much significance must not be put on these events. If nothing else, they illustrate Hamilton's determination to pursue the laurels, as well as the financial rights, of his ancestors and it was a determination that persisted into the 1640s.⁴² It also highlights a hereditary connection between the Hamiltons and France. Finally, given the date, the initiative must also be viewed simply in terms of canvassing around for money to ease chronic indebtedness.⁴³

In sum, Hamilton's offices point towards the court, and in particular, the king's bedchamber and royal person. The marquis was the king's friend as well as his minister. He was a court officer as well as a privy councillor. That he was a friend and court officer was more important than his being a minister and privy councillor. For example, Hamilton was the king's hunting companion. It was the marquis who brought reports of poaching in the royal parks to the king's attention

³¹ For an attempt by a Mr [J] Carleton to get the deputy stewardship of Hampton Court, TNA, SP 16/169/17 (Carleton to Dorchester, 19 June 1630).

³² *CSPD 1634–5*, 213.

³³ Lennoxlove, Hamilton mss, TD 90/93/F1/91/(Accounts for repairs to Chelsea House, 1638), bill number 12.

³⁴ *CSPD 1636–7*, 442; *CSPD 1638–9*, 605, payment for repairs and building a garden. See also, TNA, SO3/10 unfol., June 1630.

³⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/798 (Hamilton to mayor of Portsmouth, 5 March 1639/40).

³⁶ NRS, GD 406/1/798 ([Hamilton] to mayor of Portsmouth, 5 March 1639/40).

³⁷ It is doubtful whether the grant made Arran a French peer, but certainly he was made hereditary lord of the duchy. For a full discussion of the problem, G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, ii, Appendix B, pp.465–8.

³⁸ NRS, GD 406/1/9660 (Gerard du [Runehey ?] to Hamilton, 7 May 1635); GD 406/1/9327 (J. Setone to Hamilton, 3 November 1634).

³⁹ NLS, MS 1031, fol.7v.

⁴⁰ The four letters that survive are all signed by a Hamilton which I recognise as the signature of Broomhill. NLS, MS 1031 fos.1r–7v. Frustratingly, the letters do not carry the year, but another letter from Hamilton to the king asking permission to begin the negotiations points to 1627–8. That is also an undated letter, but internal evidence suggests that it was written during his exile in Scotland, 1627–8, NRS, GD 406/1/8333.

⁴¹ NLS, MS 1031 fos.1v–2r, 7r–v.

⁴² D. Laing, ed., *Correspondence of Sir Robert Kerr, First earl of Ancrum and his son William, 3rd earl of Lothian* (2 vols, Edinburgh 1875), i, 142–143 (Instructions from Charles I to earl of Lothian to go to the king of France, 10 January 1642/3).

⁴³ There is some evidence for the approach being made to ease Hamilton's financial situation, NLS, MS 1031 fol.7r–v.

and arranged for notice to be given in surrounding churches condemning the poachers.⁴⁴ On a hunting trip to Woodstock in late August 1633, word arrived that the queen had been taken ill. Predictably enough, Charles rushed to Somerset House, but significantly he was attended only by Lennox, Hamilton and Holland.⁴⁵ Hamilton was also a commissioner for the affairs of Charles's heir and the rest of the royal children.⁴⁶ That is not, however, to belittle the role of the privy councillor, but it entails a shift of emphasis. Hamilton was in the bedchamber looking out, Laud was in the council looking in.

With the advent of a king of multiple kingdoms the step towards a nobility of multiple kingdoms was not far behind. The evidence suggests that Hamilton viewed himself in that light. Certainly with his peerage titles and, as we shall see, his grim determination to be a power in Ireland, he fitted the bill.⁴⁷ An important component of that ambition was his determination to increase his power and influence to that of the top ranking peers in England. The way he built up a substantial art collection, spent massive sums on clothes and ran a large household all attest to his desire to compete with the grand peers of England such as Arundel, Salisbury, Essex and the long shadow cast by the duke of Buckingham.

How, then, does this square with observations by contemporaries? Hamilton has normally prompted a variety of opinions from those who came into contact with him, even before his prominent political role in the decade 1638 to 1648. Clarendon disliked him, before and after 1638, though a proportion of that reflected his own Anglocentric bias.⁴⁸ We shall see later that Hamilton had numerous critics after 1638, but what comments on him survive that are not coloured by later events? We have as a starting point the description by Philip Warwick of the brooding, introverted young marquis's audience with Charles I shortly after he came to the titles.⁴⁹ In that description, Hamilton had short hair and 'wore a little black callot-cap,' not fashionable, as Warwick observed. The context at that time is also important, since Hamilton had inherited significant debt and was troubled by Eglissham's claims that his father had been poisoned. Four years later, and Hamilton's portrait by Daniel Mytens tells a different story. In the painting he is dressed in a suit of elegant blue cloth almost identical to that worn by the king in a portrait around the same time.⁵⁰ His hair is cavalier-long with fashionable curls, and he leans confidently on his white staff of office.⁵¹ The change is further underlined by a return to the accurate pen of Philip Warwick who, looking back to the 1630s, recalled that Hamilton:

had a large proportion of his Majestie's favour and confidence, and knew very dextrously, how to manage both, and to accompany the King in his hard chases of the stagg, and in the toilsom pleasure of a racket: by which last he often filled his own, and emptied his Master's purse; and tho' he carried it very modestly and warily, yet he had a strong influence upon the greatest affairs at Court, especially when they related unto his own Country. So as tho' the Duke of Lenox was the greater man, and likewise a very well qualified Gentleman ... yet Hamilton was the polar or northern starr.⁵²

With slightly more bile, Sir Tobie Mathew reported in November 1632 that in his absence, 'the king makes much of my Lo: Hammilton & indeed of all yt nation; & he is noble in it; for he

⁴⁴ TNA, SP16/339/15 (Warrant delivered by Hamilton, [n.d]).

⁴⁵ TNA, SP16/245/36 (Richard Kilvert to Sir John Lambe, 29 August, 1633).

⁴⁶ *CSPD 1636–7*, p.154 (Warrant by Hamilton, Pembroke, Sir Thomas Edmondes and Sir Henry Vane, 4 October 1636).

⁴⁷ See chapter 5.

⁴⁸ Clarendon, Edward Hyde, first earl of, *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* ed. W. D. Macray (6 Vols., Oxford, 1888) i, *passim*; iv, 491; i, 201, 165, 200–1, 389–90, 296.

⁴⁹ Philip Warwick, *Memoires of the Reigne of King Charles I* (London 1701), pp.103–4.

⁵⁰ The painting of Charles is also by Mytens and hangs in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh.

⁵¹ The Mytens portrait also hangs in the National Gallery in Edinburgh.

⁵² Warwick, *Memoires*, pp.104–5.

dranke his first draught of yt ayre.⁵³ An adherent of the Wentworth circle, when reporting on the opposition to Hamilton's patent for marking iron in 1637, observed 'Marquis Hamilton is not easily taken off, especially when there is a Glimmering of good Profit to come in.'⁵⁴ With much less hostility, a fellow courtier Scot and gentleman of the king's Bedchamber, Robert, 1st earl of Ancram, on notifying James, Lord Johnstone, of Hamilton's trip to Edinburgh in October 1633, warned his correspondent not to make Hamilton 'your ilwiller', and ended his letter, 'the Marquis is very frendly and constant where he takes.'⁵⁵ In June 1637 William Middleton, Lord Feilding's ex-chaplain,⁵⁶ observed: 'My lord Marquess is a most diligent waiter upon the King, and so evenly carries himself that he offends none and gaines some.'⁵⁷ Admittedly viewing Hamilton as a patron, Middleton confidently asserted later in the same year, 'I know he is strong in the King's favour and so that none more.'⁵⁸ Putting this all together we have a picture of someone in a secure position with the king, of a friendly and loyal disposition, yet with a stubborn, avaricious streak. These personal qualities, such as they were, can perhaps be tested by an examination of Hamilton's activities at court in the remainder of the chapter.

II

In the previous chapter we examined Hamilton's patronage of those individuals associated with the German campaign and his continued sponsorship of the Palatine cause. Yet this was only a part of the network of clients, associates, friends and relations with whom he worked. That is not to detract from the significance of the themes discussed previously, however. On the contrary, Hamilton tended to work with people who held similar views on foreign affairs. For example, the earls of Pembroke and Holland shared Hamilton's views on the Palatine cause. The trio's friendly relations found practical expression in their combined procuring of a grant of the whole continent of Newfoundland in October 1637.⁵⁹ Hamilton and Holland worked together in many other areas: both were connected with the queen's circle and were united in their antipathy for the lord deputy of Ireland.⁶⁰ While Hamilton naturally gravitated to those of a similar mind, he also worked with those who held contrary views. Although Sir Francis Windebank was both Catholic and pro-Habsburg, Hamilton preferred engaging his services to those of the senior secretary of state Sir John Coke, a Protestant interventionist. Hamilton's partnership with the Catholic Randal Macdonnell, 2nd earl of Antrim, offers another example.⁶¹

Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that Hamilton was never close to Weston, Laud, Cottington, and above all Wentworth. In large part that could be explained through differences on policy. In changed circumstances, however, during his commissionership to Scotland in May–December 1638, Hamilton found it prudent to work closely with Archbishop Laud.⁶² Hamilton's regular reports to Lord Treasurer Weston while he was in Germany followed a similar pattern.⁶³ For Ham-

⁵³ TNA SP 16/225/22 (Mathew to Sir H. Vane, 15 November [1632]).

⁵⁴ W. Knowler, ed., *Strafford's Letters and Dispatches* (2 vols. Dublin, 1740), ii, 72 (Garrard to Wentworth, 28 April 1637).

⁵⁵ W. Fraser, *The Annandale Book* (2 vols., Edinburgh 1894) ii, 31–2. Ancram also included the earl of Roxburgh in his warning (who was apparently travelling with Hamilton), but was more insistent that Johnstone did not get on the wrong side of Hamilton.

⁵⁶ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C85/1–4.

⁵⁷ *HMC, Denbigh*, V, 49–50 (Middleton to Feilding, 23 June 1637).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 51 (Middleton to Feilding, 1 September, 1637).

⁵⁹ TNA, SO3/11 unfol., (October 1637). The fourth grantee was Sir David Kirke.

⁶⁰ For Hamilton and the queen's circle, see below. For Strafford, see chapter 5, section v.

⁶¹ See chapter 5, pp.121–122.

⁶² See chapter 6, *passim*.

⁶³ See chapter 2, p.31.

ilton then, political differences were subordinate to political expediency. The key point here is that Hamilton's activities cannot always be slotted into neat categories. For example, although Hamilton may not have favoured some aspects of the government of the thirties, yet still he was one of the principal monopolists of the decade.⁶⁴

Hamilton's pattern of alliance and patronage were not based on one key political or religious factor. Rather Hamilton, in building a support network throughout the court and government, often worked with those of a different ideological or religious caste. Self-interest, family relations, ambition and pragmatism acted against a clean pattern of clients and collaborators.

An interesting starting point was Hamilton's relationship with Sir Robert Heath (1575–1649), one of his principal clients of the 1630s. What follows is a hitherto unrecognised aspect of Heath's career, which will lead to the suggestion that Hamilton intended building a power base amongst the legal profession. Sir Robert Heath's career has attracted substantial attention, especially his term as attorney-general in the 1620s and his puzzling fall from favour on 12 October 1634 after serving three years as lord chief justice.⁶⁵ It will be suggested that Heath was broken in 1634, but survived because he worked within the Hamilton orbit.

Throughout the mid to late 1630s Heath was in no doubt who his patron was.⁶⁶ Heath was Calvinist in religion, a strong critic of Arminians, anti-Spanish and interventionist, while being a staunch upholder of royal authority.⁶⁷ On that broad sweep he had much in common with his patron.⁶⁸ Similarly, the antipathy in varying degrees of Laud, Cottington, and Weston may have drawn Heath to Hamilton.⁶⁹ The assassination of Buckingham in 1628, Heath's former patron, also suggests a natural move to the next master of the horse and royal favourite. The marquis provided Heath with protection, with government work and, on 12 October 1636, the place of king's serjeant and an official return to royal favour. The connection between the two went back prior to Hamilton's German campaign. In April 1631, for example, they were working on plans to curb abuses in the silk trade.⁷⁰ Similarly, in December 1634, six weeks after his fall, Hamilton put Heath to work on ways to regulate alehouses and the brewing trade, a project which continued at least until May 1638.⁷¹

The evidence suggests a deepening of the relationship after 1634. Thenceforward, Hamilton was increasingly the patron of Heath's commercial interests and utilised both his position with the king and as a privy councillor to safeguard the enterprises. Hamilton was the patron of Heath's

⁶⁴ Hamilton was involved in a plethora of monopolies including coal, wine, copper mining, iron, silk, gold and alehouses and the papers to these activities survive in NRS, GD 406/M1 and M9. Unfortunately, I have no room to discuss these in detail except those used in my discussion of the English Privy Council and in a few other instances. Leaving these interesting activities out is made easier by Ronald Asch's article on monopolies in which Hamilton figures prominently, R. G. Asch, 'The Revival of Monopolies: Court and Patronage during the Personal Rule of Charles I, 1629–40' in eds., R. G. Asch and A. M. Birke, *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: the Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c.1450–1650* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 357–392.

⁶⁵ P. E. Kopperman, *Sir Robert Heath, 1575–1649: window on an age* (Suffolk, 1989); T. G. Barnes, 'Cropping the Heath: the dismissal of Lord Chief Justice Heath in 1634', *Historical Research*, vol. 64, number 155 (October 1991), pp. 331–343. The best comments on Heath are in, R. Cust, 'Charles I and a draft Declaration for the 1628 Parliament', *Historical Research*, 63/151 (1990), pp. 143–161.

⁶⁶ See for example, NRS, GD 406/1/314 (Heath to Hamilton, 3 August 1635); GD 406/1/388 (Heath to Hamilton, 9 October 1637).

⁶⁷ Cust, 'Declaration', pp. 145–9; Kopperman, *Heath*, pp. 190–3.

⁶⁸ Cust, 'Declaration', pp. 145–9; Kopperman, *Heath*, pp. 190–3.

⁶⁹ Cust, 'Declaration', p. 145. For Laud, Kopperman, *Heath*, pp. 238–44.

⁷⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/203 (Heath to Hamilton, 1 April 1631).

⁷¹ NRS, GD 406/1/513 (Papers by Edward Nicholas and Sir Robert Heath on Alehouses, 5 & 11 May 1638). For earlier material, NRS, GD 406/2/M1/340 (Proposal for licensing Alehouses, [? December 1634]). Kopperman, *Heath*, p. 280, suggests that Coventry was Heath's patron, but the evidence in the Hamilton papers clearly points to Hamilton. Kopperman's unnamed 'lord' quoted in the Bankes Papers is probably Hamilton, *Ibid.* n. 7. In the Oxford DNB article of 2004, Kopperman opts for the earl of Carlisle as Heath's main patron following the assassination of Buckingham, Sir Robert Heath (1575–1649), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12842>.

saltworks project in South Shields, Tyneside.⁷² He also organised support for Heath when a case challenging his lease of the Dovegang leadmine in Derbyshire was brought before the Privy Council in June 1635.⁷³ Hamilton's increasing activity in protecting Heath's position led to a greater commitment in the former lord chief justice's enterprises.

The Dovegang project offers a convenient example. In August 1635, shortly after the successful defence in the Privy Council, Heath thanked Hamilton for being 'pleased to run with us'.⁷⁴ The following year Hamilton agreed to take a lease of the mine⁷⁵ in his own name, partly to assist with the capital outlay⁷⁶ and partly because Heath's removal from the chief justices's place had reduced his ability to command respect in Derbyshire.⁷⁷ By the summer of 1637 Hamilton had obtained a 21 year lease to be farmer of lead ore in the low and high peaks of Derbyshire.⁷⁸

Correspondingly, the closer commercial ties provided an added incentive for Hamilton to have Heath reinstated as a legal servant to the crown. Significantly, it was the agent of Heath's fall, Archbishop Laud, with whom the marquis worked to secure the recall. As Heath related to Hamilton on 9 October 1637:

On friday last ... my lord Grace of Canter. was pleased to tell me that the king hath been graciously pleased at his Graces & your Lops intercession, to signifie his resolution to receive me into his service againe & make me one of his Serjants at Lawe ... his Grace advisit me to be an humble suitor unto yor Lop to move his Maty for his warrant in that behalf: which uppon this incouragement & the assurance I have of your lops favor, I was bold to psent unto you by my good frend Mr [Tho] Levingston And mo[r]e a[m] bold to renewe my humble suite to yor lop & humbly begg this of yor lop that as ther shall be occasion you will ingage yor self to his Maty on my behalf that I shall dedicate the rest of my short life to his service & therein shall be as faythfull & industrious as any.⁷⁹

Three days later, on 12 October, Heath's patent was enrolled.

Much less well documented is Hamilton's relationship with another prominent legal figure, Sir Edward Littleton (solicitor-general from October 1634 to January 1640). The two letters which have survived point towards a collaboration in 1638, a few months before Hamilton went to Scotland as royal commissioner. In the first, dated 10 March 1638, Littleton, in a frank and friendly style, sent his cousin to Hamilton 'who hath a business of moment to imparte which requires a present consideration'.⁸⁰ Two weeks later the solicitor-general wrote again celebrating the successful collaboration:

I must thanke you for others and truly I can not say lesse then that there never was an after-game better played, and surely the same power and abilitie can play a fore-game very well

⁷² See below, though as an example, NRS, GD 406/1/311.

⁷³ See below.

⁷⁴ NRS, GD 406/1/314.

⁷⁵ *CSPD* 1636–7, 65 (Heath to Hamilton, 17 July 1636); *Ibid.* 66.

⁷⁶ NRS, GD 406/1/339 (Heath to Hamilton, 18 June 1636).

⁷⁷ NRS, GD 406/1/321 (Thomas Levingstone to Hamilton, 4 August [1636]). In this letter it was reported that opinion in Derbyshire was that 'Sir Robert Heath is a man altogether in disgra[ce]'. Levingstone was the go-between Hamilton and Heath and operated out of the Inner Temple, see also below.

⁷⁸ TNA, SP 16/377/5 (Proposition of Hamilton to the king, [1637]); SP 16/377/6 (Acceptance by the king of the proposition). In this arrangement, Hamilton was not sole undertaker for lead ore in the area as others held grants, but he had the right to offer a price (20 shillings per fodder) for mined lead in the area regardless. Lord Goring, on behalf of Henry Percy, the earl of Northumberland's brother, wrote to Heath informing him that Percy had a related grant in the area, NRS, GD 406/1/386 (Heath to Hamilton, 30 August 1637). However, Goring's complaint does not seem to have gone any further.

⁷⁹ NRS, GD 406/1/388 (Heath to Hamilton, 9 October 1637).

⁸⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/365 (Littleton to Hamilton, 10 March [1637/8]).

when a fit opportunitie presents itself; the bearer hath intentions of doing especiall services to the king and doth much desire to make his applications to your Lordship with whose wisdome and noblenes he is infinitely taken.⁸¹

Such circumlocutions are tantalising. In May of the same year Sir Thomas Milwood was made chief justice of Wales by Hamilton's 'means'.⁸² Both Littleton and his father had been successively chief justice of north Wales.⁸³ Just as there may be a connection in Milwood's appointment, so there could be with Littleton's appointment as lord chief justice of Common Pleas on 27 January 1640 and a year later as lord keeper of the great seal.⁸⁴ That is not to imply, however, especially in the absence of further evidence, that Hamilton secured the appointments, only that he may have supported the candidature along with others. Littleton, who had been in the 1620s the defender of Selden and in the 1630s the counsel for the crown against Hampden, was a mix Hamilton, and indeed Heath, would not have found incongruous. That Hamilton most certainly helped secure the place of solicitor-general for Oliver St John (Hampden's defence in 1637) in early 1641 points in the same direction.⁸⁵

Hamilton's correspondence with Lionel Cranfield, 1st earl of Middlesex, from 1636–40 is another example of Hamilton's association with former ministers, as was his attempt to have him brought back into government in 1637. Hamilton was not the only minister who corresponded with Middlesex. Henrietta Maria's cautious lord chamberlain, Edward Sackville, 4th earl of Dorset, used Middlesex as a means to vent his frustration at the direction government was taking in the second half of the Personal Rule.⁸⁶ The origins of the relationship with Hamilton remain unclear. Certainly, it did not come from Hamilton's father, who was one of the group that engineered Middlesex's fall.⁸⁷ It is more likely that it came through Middlesex's nephew, Sir John Suckling, gentleman of the privy chamber, who in 1631–2 had flitted between Vane and Hamilton's retinue in Germany.⁸⁸ Middlesex's first few letters attempted to whet Hamilton's appetite and draw out the marquis's support. In a letter of 3 February 1637, for example, he claimed that he had solutions to some of the most pressing state matters:

The macking good his Mate undertackinges for the defence of his Right in the narrow Seas. The Releiving the Prynce Pallatyne. The Raysinge monyes to do both and for his Mate supportacon (not in that narrow waye dishonorablye propounded for his subsistence onlie) But in such a Royall maner as is fitt for so great a kinge.⁸⁹

The suggestion of a project to aid the prince Palatine was probably an attempt to draw the marquis in by appealing to one of his hobby-horses. If that was the plan then it worked. Around 20

⁸¹ NRS, GD 406/1/367 (Littleton to Hamilton, 24 March 1637/8).

⁸² Knowler, *Strafford's Letters*, ii, 164 (Garrard to Wentworth, 10 May 1638).

⁸³ *DNB*, xxxiii, 366–7.

⁸⁴ For the great seal (19 January 1641), TNA, PC. 2/53, p.5.

⁸⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/1657 (St. John to Hamilton, 20 June 1642).

⁸⁶ D.L. Smith, 'The Fourth Earl of Dorset and the Personal Rule of Charles I', *Journal of British Studies* 30 (July 1991), pp.271–277; 'The Political Career of Edward Sackville, Fourth Earl of Dorset' (University of Cambridge PhD 1990), chapter 3.

⁸⁷ M. Prestwich, *Cranfield: Politics and Profit under the Early Stuarts* (Oxford, 1966), pp.436–474.

⁸⁸ Thomas Clayton, ed. *The works of Sir John Suckling: The Non-Dramatic Works* (Oxford 1971), pp.xxxiii–xxxiv; W. Carew Hazlitt, *The Poems, Plays and other Remains of Sir John Suckling* (2 vols.London, 1892), i, pp.xx–xxii; Prestwich, *Cranfield*, p.548.

⁸⁹ NRS, GD 406/1/340 (Middlesex to Hamilton, 3 February 1636/7). Middlesex also said that he had ideas on the soap business, the impositions on wines and the Irish customs. More mysteriously, he also talked of a business 'greater then all these and wch more concerns his Matie. But that is not fytt for a letter.' *Ibid.* See also GD 406/1/1026 (Middlesex to Hamilton, 26 October, [1636]).

July 1637 Hamilton took Middlesex to the king at Theobalds to discuss the projects.⁹⁰ However, Charles listened but committed himself no further.

In November of the same year, a committee was formed to regulate the royal households and, by perusal of ordinances going back to Henry VIII, to suggest economies.⁹¹ The committee comprised Hamilton, along with the other principal household officers and from outside, Archbishop Laud.⁹² Traditionally, attempts to curb spending in the household met with stiff opposition, or apathy, and this was no exception. However, the committee initially looked with some enthusiasm at ways to cut cost and waste. Apparently, some members, probably Hamilton, Coventry and Dorset, unsuccessfully tried to have Middlesex drafted in as an adviser.⁹³

Hamilton's attempt to have Middlesex brought into the administration is an important index of his attitude to government policy. Taken with his patronage of Heath, Littleton and his views on foreign policy, it becomes more significant. To some extent Hamilton opposed the course of government policy and, unlike others of a more cautious disposition such as the earl of Dorset, he was willing to push against it. Yet crucially Hamilton, once again, never went far enough to alienate the king. After Charles's lukewarm reception of Middlesex, the marquis steadily severed the contact.⁹⁴

The emerging picture, then, is of Hamilton outside the government mainstream, that is, the proponents of 'Thorough', and edging forward with alternative strategies for government. This was not a dangerous balancing act, for Hamilton seemed aware of how far he could go. Before 1638 his position was relatively secure, even though he did not have the impact on affairs, especially concerning England and Ireland, that Laud, Weston and Wentworth had. Yet he remained at court and pushed when the opportunity arose.

Still, it was not without mishap. Hamilton's initial foray into the minefield of court entertainments proved as unsuccessful as his military campaign in Germany. William Crofts's account to Lord Feilding of a ball in honour of the young lord's departure for Italy noted, 'some of the other Cavaliers that daunced at your ball indeede did not take so well, especially my Lord Hambleton, whose dauncing was not liked at all.'⁹⁵ Mercifully, in the same letter, Crofts happily reported that at a later ball, this time a triple wedding of French dignitaries to kinswomen of Richelieu, Hamilton fared better:

the Queene hath continued her favour to our nation in giving expresse order for the letting in of my Lord of Devonshire, my lord Hambleton and my Lord Dobigny, where my Lord Hambleton was taken to daunce and everybody sayes he did acquit himselfe much better than before.⁹⁶

That Hamilton brushed up on his dancing is an important indicator of a desire not just to be accepted into court society, but also the circle around Henrietta Maria. The marquis was already

⁹⁰ Knowler, *Strafford's Letters*, ii, 87 (Garrard to Wentworth, 24 July 1637).

⁹¹ TNA, P.C. 2/48, p.403.

⁹² *Ibid.* The full committee was Laud, Lord Keeper Coventry, Lord Treasurer Juxon, Lord Privy Seal Manchester, Hamilton, Earl Marshall (Arundel), earl of Salisbury (captain of gent. pensioners), earl of Holland (groom of the stool), earl of Morton (captain of the Guard), Vane, Edmondes, Jermyn, Coke and Windebank.

⁹³ Prestwich, *Cranfield*, pp.547–559. In the longer term, a report was presented in mid-April 1638, but not implemented, G. Aylmer, 'Attempts at Administrative Reform, 1625–40', *English Historical Review*, no.283, April 1957, pp.254–8; Prestwich, *Cranfield*, pp.547–9. A list of suggestions was put forward in mid-April 1638 and eventually approved by a sub-committee and two auditors on 12 June, but then it all 'faded into oblivion', Aylmer, 'Administrative Reform', p.256. By 1638, Hamilton was increasingly distracted by events in Scotland.

⁹⁴ Middlesex continued to write to Hamilton up to 1640, but the chance was clearly gone by the end of 1637. After the unsuccessful audience with the king in November, the correspondence was all one way. For some more of the letters, NRS, GD 406/1/1024 (Middlesex to Hamilton, 19 July 1639), GD 406/1/1025 (Middlesex to Hamilton, 23 September, 1639).

⁹⁵ *HMC, Denbigh*, v, 10 (W. Crofts to Feilding, 1 December, [1634]).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

half way there, if those who corresponded with him while he was in Germany was anything to go by. Holland, Goring, Carlisle, and Dorset had all expressed support for Hamilton in 1631–2.⁹⁷ Moreover, it appeared that Hamilton intended building a broader power base outside the king's bedchamber by utilising not only his aforementioned friends, but the family network he had reluctantly inherited in 1620. To understand this further we must look deeper at Hamilton's family connection at court.

Hamilton's mother-in-law Susan, countess of Denbigh, Buckingham's only sister, was first lady of the queen's Bedchamber.⁹⁸ Hamilton's wife was a lady of the Bedchamber.⁹⁹ Housed on the top floor of the inner court of Nonsuch Palace were the queen's most private rooms, among them 'the Queen's bedchamber, the Queen's backstayres, the King's backstayres, the Queen's chappell and two roomes for the Ladie Marquess of hambleton'.¹⁰⁰ She was the only one of the queen's attendants mentioned. In addition, Hamilton's wife regularly occupied a prominent place at court functions. At the christening of Prince Charles in June 1630 the marchioness carried the baby throughout the ceremony.¹⁰¹ Her mother, the countess of Denbigh, was the prince's governess.¹⁰² Of the eight ladies of the queen's Bedchamber who received keys to the altered locks at Whitehall in January 1637, three were related to Hamilton and another three were the wives of his close friends, the earls of Carlisle, Holland and Roxburgh.¹⁰³

Although in his formative years at court Hamilton had a close relationship with his father-in-law, the 1st earl of Denbigh, it waned partially during the 1630s with Denbigh's loss of influence and protracted absence from court.¹⁰⁴ The former admiral of the fleet to La Rochelle and beleaguered master of the Wardrobe never fully recovered from his patron's assassination in 1628 and, more importantly, the rising debt in the Wardrobe.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the career of Basil, the earl's eldest son, stalled on the assassination of Buckingham. The earl's wife, however, continued to enjoy a strong influence in the queen's bedchamber and it was with her that Hamilton most often collaborated.

For example, in May 1633 Eleanor Villiers, a niece of the countess, believed herself pregnant by Henry Jermyn, one of the queen's circle.¹⁰⁶ Apparently Jermyn refused to marry the young girl and, after the countess had informed Hamilton, it was taken to the king and queen. On 5 May Hamilton told Charles and the countess of Denbigh told Henrietta Maria.¹⁰⁷ The incident also illustrates Hamilton's participation in enforcing the high moral requirement amongst household members,

⁹⁷ For the first three see chapter 2, pp.41–42. For Dorset, NRS, GD 406/1/192 (Dorset to Hamilton, 14 March, [1631/2]).

⁹⁸ *CSPD 1629–31*, 185. The countess was a very important woman at court. A glance at her procurements at the Signet Office during the thirties confirms this, TNA, S.O. 3/8–11, *passim*. As an example, see some of her procurements between November 1629 and March 1631, two of them from the king's Sign Manual, *CSPD 1629–31*, 101, 185, 324, 537. See also below.

⁹⁹ TNA, L.C. 5/134 (Lord Chamberlain's warrant book, 1633–40), p.145.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, E. 317/Surrey/41 (parliamentary survey).

¹⁰¹ Loomie, *Ceremonies of Charles I*, pp.88–90. At the same ceremony Hamilton stood proxy for the king of Bohemia, *Ibid.* For the marchioness's attendance at the queen's theatre productions at Somerset House, *Ibid.*, p.76.

¹⁰² Loomie, *Ceremonies*, p.89.

¹⁰³ TNA, L.C., 5/134, p.145. The three relations were his wife, his mother-in-law and Katherine, duchess of Buckingham. The earl of Carlisle died in March 1636.

¹⁰⁴ He was abroad for most of the period between 1631–5 travelling in 'the east Indian ships (as a volantere) to the king of Pertia, and the great Magull', W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham mss, CR 2017/C1/2 (earl of Denbigh to Lord Feilding, 28 September [1630]); *CSPD 1629–31*, 329.

¹⁰⁵ The financial problems in the Wardrobe appear to have begun from the cost of James I funeral and it remained in debt thereafter. In June 1635 the arrears were about £12,000, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C7/15 (Abstract of debts ... June 1635). See also, *Ibid.*, CR 2017/C2/187 and CR 2017/R12 (Petition of 2nd earl of Denbigh to Charles II, [1660]); *CSPD 1629–31*, 424. Attempts were made to reform the situation, for example, TNA, SP 16/315/96.

¹⁰⁶ SP 16/238/35 (Examination of E. Villiers).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* Jermyn was subsequently banned from court for a time, Clarendon, *Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford, 1727), p.13.

which was such a feature of the Caroline court.¹⁰⁸ A more standard collaboration can be seen in William Middleton's attempt to secure royal patronage in the summer of 1637. He was advised by Archbishop Laud and Bishop Wren of Norwich to pursue his suit for the place of examiner at Charterhouse school through Hamilton and the countess of Denbigh 'joyntly'.¹⁰⁹

As well as utilising his family interest, Hamilton tried to advance individual family members, most notably his brother-in-law, Lord Feilding and, with much more success, his brother, Sir William Hamilton.¹¹⁰ Clearly then, the marquis aimed for a broad base of support through the court. An appropriate example of this intention is provided by the next section.

III

As with his father's career, that of Basil, Lord Feilding, faltered as a result of the events of August 1628. Until then Feilding looked set for a glittering court career alongside his seemingly unstoppable uncle. He was made a knight of the Bath on 1 February 1626 and sat in the House of Lords as Baron Feilding in 1628.¹¹¹ Buckingham had secured him a promise of the place of master of the robes and, after six months in that place, he was to be sworn a gentleman of the king's Bedchamber.¹¹² On the duke's death, however, the mastership of the robes went to George Kirke, the Bedchamber place was shelved and the king recommended Feilding try his fortune in the Dutch wars.¹¹³ Things looked up, however, when, after returning from his travels abroad, he received a pension of 1,000 marks and subsequently married Anne Weston, daughter of Lord Treasurer Portland.¹¹⁴ Hamilton's relations with Feilding were the subject of considerable strains: the Weston marriage cannot have helped, especially when in the spring of 1634 Feilding and his brother-in-law Jerome, Lord Weston, got involved in a double duel with Hamilton's friends, the earl of Holland and George, Lord Goring.¹¹⁵ The affair was eventually resolved in the Privy Council where submissions were made and severe reprimands meted out.¹¹⁶ But the main differences between Hamilton and Feilding concerned foreign policy, that is, the restoration of the Palatinate. We know that if the circumstances were right Hamilton supported war with the Habsburgs.¹¹⁷ Feilding did not and, like his father-in-law favoured negotiation with Madrid, rather than alliance with her enemies.¹¹⁸ So, on one of the great ideological issues of the day Hamilton and Feilding differed. Yet significantly, this did not seem to affect their alliance during Feilding's time in Italy, nor perhaps at any other time.

¹⁰⁸ Sharpe, 'Image of Virtue', *passim*, esp. pp.227, 258–60; Smith, 'Dorset and the Personal Rule', pp.260–1.

¹⁰⁹ *HMC Denbigh*, V, 50–1 (Middleton to Feilding, 13 July 1637). Middleton, backed by the countess of Denbigh, had failed to secure the place of governor of Charterhouse earlier in the year. It had gone to the Rev. George Garrard whose candidature was apparently supported by a disparate group of court nonentities: Henrietta Maria, Laud, the lords treasurer, privy seal and chamberlain, as well as the earls of Northumberland, Holland and probably the lord deputy of Ireland, Knowler, *Strafford's Letters*, ii, 150 (Garrard to Wentworth, 7 February 1636/7), 152–3 (Garrard to Wentworth, March 1636/7). It is no wonder that Hamilton probably did not support Middleton first time round.

¹¹⁰ See chapter 5 pp.102–3.

¹¹¹ *DNB*, xviii, 287–9.

¹¹² W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/R12 (Petition of 2nd earl of Denbigh to Charles II, [1660]).

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* Marrying into the Weston network may have put a barrier between Feilding and Hamilton, given the marquis's cool relations with the treasurer. See chapters 2 and 3.

¹¹⁵ The whole affair can be followed through, *CSPD 1633–4*, 14–16 and in more detail, TNA, SP 16/236/46–60.

¹¹⁶ TNA, P.C. 2/42, pp.565–571. Despite this evidence, a cleavage is difficult to prove as the sources record no contact between the two until the report of Hamilton's poor show on the dancefloor at Feilding's ball in late 1634.

¹¹⁷ See chapter 3 *passim*.

¹¹⁸ NRS, GD 406/1/9555 (Feilding to Hamilton, 6 February/27 January 1636/7), who argues against against war. Compare Feilding's cautious reply to Hamilton with his pro-Spanish views to the like-minded Windebank, *HMC Denbigh* V, 60–1 ([19/29] September 1638).

In the wake of these events Feilding was appointed ambassador extraordinary to Venice and the princes of Italy in late 1634. Without doubt, Feilding's move to Italy resulted in a strong alliance between the marquis and his brother-in-law. For the next four years both men corresponded regularly, normally every fortnight. Hamilton wrote to keep his brother-in-law informed of events, to advise him on his standing at court, on future conduct, and finally to seek Feilding's help in his increasing obsession with acquiring works of art. On Feilding's side, the correspondence represented a solution to the perennial problem of having a patron at court. Fortunately, he was in the enviable position of enjoying dual protection: from Hamilton in both the king and queen's court and additionally from his mother, the countess of Denbigh, and his sister, the marchioness of Hamilton, in the queen's bedchamber.

Feilding's recent marriage to the lord treasurer's daughter guaranteed a further and more powerful patron.¹¹⁹ Unfortunately, the death of his wife and the lord treasurer in March 1635, a few months after he arrived in Venice, dissolved the alliance.¹²⁰ It was a smooth changeover from Portland to Hamilton, however, and by the end of the year the regular correspondence between the two was established. An examination of this correspondence highlights the influence Hamilton exerted at court, where and with whom. It was an influence Hamilton was obliged to utilise to protect his indiscreet and accident prone brother-in-law. One more point requires emphasis. Feilding viewed his appointment to Venice as a stepping stone to high office, principally an appointment back at court, or latterly, the place of ambassador in Paris.¹²¹ In many ways he was a man in a hurry to make an impression, move onto greater things and make up for the time lost through Buckingham's untimely demise.

It has been a feature of the debate on the Caroline court to emphasise the king's insistence on order; that each officer executed his business and did not seek to encroach on the sphere of others.¹²² In practice, however, this was not always the case. Within a short time Hamilton made the business of the Italian embassies, particularly those of Venice and Savoy, his own territory. He regularly circumvented the secretaries, especially Sir John Coke,¹²³ and took Feilding's letters and dispatches to the king. Normally Feilding would send Hamilton copies of his official despatches, enclosed with a personal letter.¹²⁴ The marquis then read important parts of the correspondence to the king, or the king would read them himself; when Charles gave an answer, Hamilton would himself communicate it to his brother-in-law. The secretaries were sometimes present at these sessions, probably when they were the official audiences for Italian business, and Hamilton normally left the more mundane tasks to them. Although Sir John Coke was the secretary allotted to service Feilding, Hamilton preferred working with the younger, and more able, Sir Francis Windebank.¹²⁵ On Hamilton's advice, Feilding began to send copies of his dispatches as well as the more sensitive information to Windebank.¹²⁶ The marquis also left Feilding in Windebank's care when he was

¹¹⁹ *HMC, Denbigh, V*, 10–11 (Feilding to Portland, [December 1634]; W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox ms, CR 2017/C2/175 (Portland to Feilding, 10 December 1634); NRS, GD 406/1/9456.

¹²⁰ Feilding's wife died on 20 March shortly after she arrived in Venice, and Portland on 13 March, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox ms, CR 2017/F1/21; Gardiner, *England*, vii, 378. For the letters of condolence, *HMC, Denbigh, V*, 13–15 esp. 14 (G. Feilding to B. Feilding, 12 April, 1635).

¹²¹ For Feilding, NRS, GD 406/1/9456, 9443, 9576, 9573, 9544. And Hamilton's posed advice, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/64, 67, 70. C72/2/1-3. And for Feilding's desire for an ambassadors place in Paris, NRS, GD 406/1/525 (Hamilton to Windebank, 15 June 1638).

¹²² Sharpe, 'Image of virtue', pp.226–229 and *passim*.

¹²³ For the poor relationship between Hamilton and Coke, see below.

¹²⁴ For example, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/72, 73, 74, 86, 90, 92, 97.

¹²⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/9465 (Feilding to Hamilton, 7 October/27 September [1637]). Coke was the senior secretary.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* See also, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/85 (Hamilton to Feilding, 3 August [1637]). Windebank appears to have moved in and started sending Feilding letters and instructions, *Ibid.*, CR 2017/C5, *passim*.

in Scotland in 1638.¹²⁷ In these actions we see the origins of the steady campaign by Hamilton to expose Coke's incompetence, culminating in his removal in 1639 and replacement by Hamilton's long-time friend and collaborator, Sir Henry Vane.¹²⁸ Indeed, it was on the occasion of Feilding's move to Savoy and subsequent return to Venice in late 1638, when Coke tried to have his diplomatic status reduced, that the marquis pounced, and did not miss the mark. As Windebank's secretary informed a presumably delighted Feilding:

my discovery of Mr. Secretary Cokes ill intentions towards you hath produced by my Lord Marquis his power and complaints to the King so notable a redresse and reparation, in obtaining you newe credential letters ... which your lordship will receive by this post from Mr. Secretary Windebanke, without the Knowledge of Mr. Secretary Coke; whom my Lord Marquis did so reproach before the King (as I am informed) as I know not how Mr. Secretary will digest itt.¹²⁹

Long before this incident, Hamilton also procured permission for Feilding to write direct to the king if he had particularly sensitive material to relay.¹³⁰ Later, when it became apparent that Feilding's position was under threat, Hamilton formed an alliance with Anzolo Correr, the Venetian ambassador, so as to act as a special go-between for Venetian ambassadors in London.¹³¹ Hamilton provided the same service for the resident of Savoy in London from 1636.¹³²

Such an approach had its benefits for Feilding. Unlike that of the secretaries, Hamilton's access to the king was unrestricted. Most importantly, he could present the material in a favourable light, gauge the time and place to do so and report the king's impression. For example, in one instance Hamilton reported that Charles read the dispatches and commented that Feilding was 'ane abill young man'.¹³³ On another occasion Hamilton withheld a problematic dispatch as the king was 'extremly trubled with a byle in his thye which make him unwilling of busines ... bot shuch as will rather give Content then bread dislyke'.¹³⁴ Hamilton apologised to Feilding another time for not delivering immediately an important dispatch as most of the day had been 'spent in hunting efter our accustomatt maner'.¹³⁵ It was an enormous benefit then that Hamilton was always around the king and could choose a fitting moment to present an item of business. Equally, it was important that he could block, delay or reverse approaches which threatened his brother-in-law's position. That Feilding was dependent on Hamilton for his survival in his office is difficult to refute. To illustrate these points further we shall look at some specific examples in greater depth.

Feilding became embroiled in two incidents at Venice which caused concern at court. The first was over his giving asylum to two wanted men; and the second was over the killing of a gondolier by one of his servants. To the Venetian ambassador, Correr, the asylum incident was simple enough; a man who was being pursued by the authorities on a charge of high treason was arrested

¹²⁷ NRS, GD 406/1/9514 (Feilding to Hamilton, 19/29 December 1638); GD 406/1/9564 (Feilding to Hamilton, 5 July/25 June 1638).

¹²⁸ Feilding often complained to Hamilton about Coke, NRS, GD 406/1/9462, 9524. It may also be significant that Lord Deputy Wentworth, Hamilton's enemy, used Coke for most of his business, S.C.L., W. W., *Strafford Papers*, vol. 3/322, 324; Knowler, *Strafford's Letters*, ii, 245. For Hamilton's part in Vane's promotion, Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, i, 165.

¹²⁹ *HMC Denbigh V*, 66 (John Reeve to Feilding, 18/28 January 1638/9).

¹³⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/9443 (Feilding to Hamilton, 3 January 1635/6).

¹³¹ *CSPV 1636–9*, 326 (Correr to Doge, 26 November 1637). Hamilton seems to have been a successful go-between as the ambassador admitted it was more difficult to get business done after Hamilton went to Scotland in May 1638, *Ibid.*, 417.

¹³² NRS, GD 406/1/9456 (Feilding to Hamilton, [30 May 1636]); W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/61 (Hamilton to Feilding, 30 June/10 July [1636]).

¹³³ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/73 (Hamilton to Feilding, 12/2 June 1637).

¹³⁴ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/78 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27/17 November [1637]).

¹³⁵ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss CR 2017/C1/87 (Hamilton to Feilding, 24 August [1637]).

at a house next to Feilding's residence. He delivered his account at an audience with the king on 14 March 1637, to which he was conducted by Hamilton.¹³⁶ Two hours later, Feilding's dispatches arrived with his servant, John Bashford, telling of the sbirri (Venetian police) violently entering a house rented by him, beating his servants and arresting two men. Furthermore, one of the men, 'Andrea dalla Nave', had been granted refuge by Feilding.¹³⁷ That same night, Hamilton, after consultations with the Feildings, went to the king and publicly denounced both the violation of an ambassador's residence and the misrepresentation of the facts by Correr.¹³⁸

Next day Hamilton's objections were reinforced by the earl and countess of Denbigh.¹³⁹ Later, Feilding managed to secure a copy of Correr's report to the Doge and senate, which conveys how the Hamilton/Feilding lobby operated:

Att the first communication of the news [the king] made not great account thereof but after by the more lively offices of the marquis ham[ilton] and the solicitation of the weomen of the court who had gained the quine, the king had bene raisd to a higher sense of the affront, and to such quick resolutions as are before sett downe.¹⁴⁰

As a result the king demanded a high reparation from the Venetians and, it was rumoured, even considered sending Correr home and recalling Feilding.¹⁴¹ In a few days the case was before the Committee for Foreign Affairs and the whole Privy Council,¹⁴² while Correr stood by and despaired at his inability to budge the king in the face of Hamilton and the Feildings.¹⁴³ In the end, one of the men, Boni, was released and the other, La Nave, received a light sentence,¹⁴⁴ while Correr apologised for his behaviour.¹⁴⁵ Although the court lobby succeeded, Hamilton wisely advised his brother-in-law to labour for a speedy reconciliation with the Venetians.¹⁴⁶

No sooner had the dust settled than reports reached court at the end of November of the discharge of a pistol in St Mark's square by one of Feilding's servants resulting in the death of a gondolier.¹⁴⁷ As usual, Hamilton took control, emphasised that the pistol was discharged accidentally, and stressed the insult of having Feilding's residence surrounded, once more, by the sbirri.¹⁴⁸ Again, Hamilton determined the time when the king was informed and appeared to have had the

¹³⁶ *CSPV 1636–9*, 161–3 (Correr to Doge, 14 March 1636/7).

¹³⁷ *CSPV 1636–9*, 164–6 (Correr to Doge, 18 March 1636/7). La Nave's crime was apparently trying to bribe a judge through a jew. The name is probably della Nave.

¹³⁸ Hamilton read Feilding's account to the earl and countess of Denbigh and his wife, Mary before going to the king, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/81 (Hamilton to Feilding, 16/26 June 1636/7); *CSPV 1636–9*, 165.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/9579 (Feilding to Hamilton, 31 March/10 April 1637).

¹⁴¹ Apparently it was Correr who reported that Feilding may be recalled and he sent home, NRS, GD 406/1/9579; *CSPV 1636–9*, 175. The demands varied and the progress of the negotiations can be followed through, *CSPV 1636–9*, 137–144, 168–175, 195–8, 225–6 and notes. See also, GD 406/1/9526, 9508. And Feilding's letter that Bashford carried, GD 406/1/9544 (Feilding to Hamilton, 13/23 February [1637]). And Feilding's nine page letter to Charles I about the negotiations, GD 406/1/9526 (12 May 1637).

¹⁴² W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/68 (Hamilton to Feilding, 10/20 March 1636/7). In this letter, Hamilton is uncharacteristically smug about his ability to turn the king around.

¹⁴³ *CSPV 1636–9*, 168–171, 175.

¹⁴⁴ *CSPV 1636–9*, 225–6.

¹⁴⁵ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/81. Hamilton also procured a personal letter from Charles to Feilding.

¹⁴⁶ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/69 ([n.d]); NRS, GD 406/1/8278. The longer the case dragged on, the more it could reflect adversely on Feilding. It was also tendered with a view to the alliance negotiations with France and plans to have Feilding brought home to another post. For Windebank's equally posed advice, *HMC 6th Report*, 281 (Windebank to Feilding, 1 April 1637).

¹⁴⁷ *CSPV 1636–9*, 323–5 (Correr to Doge, 20 November 1637). The incident can be conveniently reconstructed through, *Ibid.*, 276–293.

¹⁴⁸ *CSPV 1636–9*, 323–6.

co-operation of the secretaries.¹⁴⁹ This time Hamilton was even more keen to quieten the whole affair, as rumblings at court drew attention to Feilding's propensity for misadventure.¹⁵⁰

As well as protecting Feilding, Hamilton was able to influence diplomatic appointments in Italy. That is, the ones he wanted to control, mostly on the advice of Feilding. On the earl of Portland's recommendation Feilding had employed, against his will, the former resident in Venice, Mr Rowlandson, as his secretary.¹⁵¹ With his new patron's assistance the secretary was removed¹⁵² and replaced by Hamilton's nominee, Henry Downhall.¹⁵³ Downhall was sent over in August 1637 to replace William Middleton as Feilding's household chaplain but also doubled as Feilding's secretary.¹⁵⁴ Anthony Hales, the resident at Turin since 1626, was another victim. Feilding had him removed in late 1635, ostensibly for indulging in some sabre rattling during negotiations with the duke of Savoy,¹⁵⁵ but really because he wanted his dependent in the place.¹⁵⁶ The dependent was Mr Peter Morton whom Hamilton duly sponsored for the post at Turin. But Feilding, on information received, found that Morton was not as loyal as he had at first thought and asked Hamilton to withdraw his support.¹⁵⁷ Feilding's change of heart came too late, however, and Morton got the place, ironically after some opposition which Hamilton was able to overcome.¹⁵⁸ Seemingly unperturbed, Hamilton then pushed to have Morton's title reduced to secretary and kept subordinate to his brother-in-law.¹⁵⁹

Yet once in Turin, Morton fought a rearguard action to have the title resident, backed principally by Coke, Windebank and the secretaries of the duke of Lennox and earl of Northumberland.¹⁶⁰ Most probably because Hamilton had withdrawn his support, Morton later sought to persuade the resident of Savoy in London, Benoit Cisa, Conte di Pezze, to go through Windebank and Lennox's secretary as a route to the king¹⁶¹ rather than Hamilton, to whom Cisa had been originally referred by the duke of Savoy.¹⁶² Cisa, in turn, was dependent on Henrietta Maria.¹⁶³ Although Hamilton suffered little by Feilding's change of mind about Morton, it inconvenienced him in as much as Morton, an able servant with influential backers, tried to damage Hamilton's relationship with Cisa.¹⁶⁴ To calm the waters, Hamilton urged his brother-in-law to appoint Morton as his representative in Venice while he was in Savoy, especially since he had found out that Morton was

¹⁴⁹ CSPV 1636–9, 325–6.

¹⁵⁰ CSPV 1636–9, 326, 324; W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/75 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 October [1637]).

¹⁵¹ NRS, GD 406/1/9462 (Feilding to Hamilton, 8 September [?1635]).

¹⁵² NRS, GD 406/1/9462, 9465, 9483; W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C72/2/fos.1–3 (Hamilton to Feilding, [9/19 June 1637]). After his removal, Rowlandson returned to Venice, as Hamilton believed to be on hand if Feilding was recalled.

¹⁵³ NRS, GD 406/1/9472, 9483. There is an element of supposition here as Feilding asked Hamilton to choose a secretary for him and the secretary who took over was Feilding's new chaplain, Henry Downhall, *HMC, Denbigh V*, 62–3. However, Downhall may only have been filling in until a secretary arrived. Yet he may have carried out both jobs as a cost cutting exercise.

¹⁵⁴ Hamilton procured Downhall's pass for Venice. His was the first signature on the document, TNA, P.C. 2/48, p.171.

¹⁵⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/9462 (Feilding to Hamilton, 9 September [1636?]). The letter is after Hales removal, and after Hales started a smear campaign against Feilding in Turin.

¹⁵⁶ NRS, GD 406/1/9443 (Feilding to Hamilton, 3 January/24 December 1635/6). For Feilding's different motives compare this with GD 406/1/9462 above.

¹⁵⁷ NRS, GD 406/1/9443, 9456 (Feilding to Hamilton, [30 May 1636]), 9466.

¹⁵⁸ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/60 (Hamilton to Feilding, 25 April [1636]).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, CR 2017/C1/60.

¹⁶⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/9525 (Feilding to Hamilton, [n.d.]).

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* It had been previously arranged with the duke of Savoy that his representatives in London would go through Hamilton.

¹⁶² NRS, GD 406/1/9456.

¹⁶³ NRS, GD 406/1/9525.

¹⁶⁴ NRS, GD 406/1/9466. Morton also seems to have been supported by the earl of Northumberland's secretary, GD 406/1/9525. And Windebank, see below.

Windebank's 'creatur[e]'.¹⁶⁵ The implications of this will become clear when we examine Feilding's term as ambassador in Savoy, and remind ourselves that Henrietta Maria's sister was married to the duke of Savoy.

On 12 October 1637 news arrived at court of the death of the Francophile duke of Savoy.¹⁶⁶ Although Hamilton initially viewed the event as it affected Italian politics, it is more important in casting further light on his power at court.¹⁶⁷ It was the queen who initiated a move to have an extraordinary ambassador sent to her bereaved sister and, with the earl of Holland, supported Lord Conway for the place.¹⁶⁸ The deal was concluded at the Committee for Foreign Affairs and approved by the king before Hamilton was alerted by Windebank. The secretary told Hamilton that the king opted for the grander gesture of sending Conway because Feilding was 'all most upone the place'.¹⁶⁹ Presented with what appeared to be a *fait accompli* Hamilton pushed against the decision and, within a day, had Feilding appointed. Predictably enough, he went first to the king and suggested that it was Feilding's right as extraordinary ambassador to the princes of Italy to go to Savoy. Charles wavered but would not alter the resolution.¹⁷⁰ Next he went to the earl of Holland who immediately transferred his support from Conway to Feilding.¹⁷¹ The two secretaries did the same. At a meeting of the Committee for Foreign Affairs the place was given to Feilding, subject to the queen's agreement. Charles assured Hamilton that she would assent. To top it all, Hamilton also received assurance from the king that after Savoy Feilding could choose whether to return to Venice or come home.¹⁷²

As a career move, the Savoy appointment presented a golden opportunity for Feilding to impress the queen, and therefore the king, and erase the memory of the accidents at Venice.¹⁷³ Unfortunately, Feilding was a much less shrewd tactician than were his supporters at court. Despite Hamilton's earnest entreaty to shun all controversy at Savoy, Feilding had the court in an uproar shortly after his arrival in March 1638.¹⁷⁴ First, he complained about his entertainment, lodgings and the manner of his first audience.¹⁷⁵ And second, he refused to treat with the minister appointed to him 'becaus of his beeing tou much frynsh', as Hamilton put it.¹⁷⁶ It must have only increased the marquis's exasperation that it was the queen who told him herself. That she went to Hamilton before the king and that he was able to persuade her to suspend her judgement and not to tell her husband until Feilding's dispatch arrived is significant.¹⁷⁷ Hamilton's letter to Feilding balanced anger with an admonition on how such behaviour threatened his brother-in-law's 'ooune saiftie',

¹⁶⁵ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss CR 2017/C1/95 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 October [1637]). In Hamilton's words Windebank 'will take mortouns employen to veneis as a courtasi down to him self'. It seems Feilding was unable to comply, as he could not pay Morton's debts at Turin along with the expense of his travel, so he appointed Sir Gilbert Talbot, NRS, GD 406/1/9491 (Feilding to Hamilton, 19/29 January 1637/8); *CSPV 1636–9*, 398. For speculation on who would succeed Feilding, *Ibid.*, 363, 388–9.

¹⁶⁶ *HMC 6th Report*, 278 (Windebank to Feilding, 21 August 1635).

¹⁶⁷ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/75 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 October [1637]).

¹⁶⁸ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/1/58 (Hamilton to Feilding, 3/13 November [1637]). According to Hamilton, Holland put Conway's name forward at the 'joynto', that is, the Committee for Foreign Affairs, *Ibid.*, CR 2017/C1/75 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 October [1637]).

¹⁶⁹ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/58. Feilding's diplomatic remit was for all the 'princes of Italy'.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C2/197 (Holland to Feilding, 29 March [?1638]). In this letter Holland told Feilding he had been more active in his service 'then my propositions hade showed me to bee so ...'

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ With the help of his wife and mother-in-law, Hamilton had the queen eating out of his hand, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/97.

¹⁷⁴ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/95 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 December [1637]).

¹⁷⁵ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/99 (Hamilton to Feilding, 29/19 April 1638); NRS, GD 406/1/9587 (Feilding to Hamilton, 4 June/25 May 1638).

¹⁷⁶ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/99.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; *CSPV 1636–9*, 404. Cisa, the resident of Savoy, was also persuaded to keep it from the king.

for by itt you dou not only venture to loous the queine, bot eaiven the king lykuys, who may have sume grounds to herber thoghtes thatt you ar a man to much subjeckt to have mistakes with thoes you ar imployed to.¹⁷⁸

Feilding made a spirited – yet rather hollow – defence of his action, claiming he had not refused to talk to the duchess's ministers and blamed Cisa for embroidering the dispatch.¹⁷⁹ Once again, the mess was cleared up. However, a greater one was around the corner. The duchess of Savoy was contemplating an alliance with her brother, Louis XIII, and asked Feilding's advice. Feilding, proving beyond doubt his ability to shoot himself in the foot, advised neutrality. By doing so he exceeded his instructions and only Hamilton stood between him and Charles's decision at the Committee for Foreign Affairs to recall him in disgrace.¹⁸⁰ Even with most of his time taken up with preparations for the commissionership to Scotland, Hamilton managed to have the resolution withdrawn and Feilding posted back to Venice.¹⁸¹ Feilding's chance to use a simple embassy of condolence to the queen's sister as a springboard to replace Viscount Scudamore as ambassador in Paris was lost.¹⁸²

To an accomplished courtier such as Hamilton, Feilding's inability to soothe and parry was bewildering. Hamilton's advice 'not tou much to stand on puntillious ... and comply uith thoes thatt hes the managine of affaires and the duches favoore' was lost on his brother-in-law.¹⁸³ The tension in Feilding's world came from dependence on those working within the pro-French orbit at court while being himself anti-French. Hamilton was able to work with people of differing views: Laud, Windebank, Goring, Henrietta Maria, Charles – as well as those with whom he had more in common: Dorchester, Roe, Vane, Holland, Pembroke, Sir Robert Heath and later Essex, Saye, Argyll et al. Feilding lacked that flexibility, the ability to weave a path rather than cut a swath.

Feilding may have harboured a grudge against the court when he returned to England in 1639. Conrad Russell has suggested that Feilding 'failed to rally to Charles' in 1642 partly because of arrears in his fees.¹⁸⁴ Certainly that may be true as Feilding often complained of penury and appears to have been owed £1,580 in November 1637.¹⁸⁵ Three days after the opening of the Long Parliament, Feilding's deputy in Venice, Sir Gilbert Talbot, wrote that the ambassador's chain (which Feilding had pawned in Padua) would be sold if money was not sent to redeem it.¹⁸⁶ In 1660, Feilding claimed that the combined arrears of his pension of 1,000 marks and diplomatic fees amounted to £13,157-6s-8d, of which he had received £1,500.¹⁸⁷ Feilding was not a successful royal servant, and for that he had no-one else to blame but himself. His lack of political sagacity together with a failure to heed Hamilton's advice left him discontented and alienated in 1640.

¹⁷⁸ CSPV 1636–9, 404.

¹⁷⁹ NRS, GD 406/1/9587.

¹⁸⁰ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C72/1 (Hamilton to Feilding, 17/27 May [1638]).

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* Feilding was to return to Venice after 'sume short tyme'. For Feilding's answer to Hamilton's of 17 May and his own desire to return to Venice, NRS, GD 406/1/419 (Feilding to Hamilton, 16/26 June 1638). He did not leave until the end of the year, leaving plenty of time to get into further scrapes, CSPV 1636–9, 447 (Gustinian to Doge, 10 September 1638). In September, Feilding entreated Windebank to get him out of Turin as he was being victimised and ill-treated, *HMC Denbigh V*, 60–1. For his attempts to get his own back on the French ambassador in Savoy, GD 406/1/9511 (Feilding to Hamilton, 6/16 [October] 1638).

¹⁸² NRS, GD 406/1/525 (Hamilton to Windebank, 15 June 1638); *HMC 6th Report*, 283 (Windebank to Feilding, 15 March 1637/8); CSPV 1636–9, 363, 398–9.

¹⁸³ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C72/1.

¹⁸⁴ Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, p. 165.

¹⁸⁵ TNA, E. 403/2415 (Moneys due to Lord Feilding, Abassador Extraordinary at Venice). This amount does not include his pension arrears.

¹⁸⁶ *HMC Denbigh V*, 72 (Talbot to Feilding, 10/16 November 1640).

¹⁸⁷ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C6/100-100A. The £1,500 was paid on 18 August 1642, Russell, *Causes*, p. 165. Professor Russell also rightly cites 'the Incident' in Scotland as contributing to Feilding's choice of sides, *Ibid.*

Hamilton's unmitigated support for Feilding could be wholly explained through family connection. Yet the marquis had another reason for ensuring that his brother-in-law stayed in Venice – paintings.

IV

Following in the tradition of the Elizabethan nobility, a key part of the late renaissance nobleman's self-fashioning was the accumulation of an art collection. This was a trend started in the early Stuart period by prince Henry and by the duke of Buckingham.¹⁸⁸ The tier of English noblemen with whom Hamilton competed for political power and patronage were, or had been, avid collectors: the duke of Buckingham, the earls of Salisbury, Essex, Northumberland, Portland and most notably, the earl of Arundel, lord marshal of England. The 2nd marquis of Hamilton was also a collector and in his collection we can discern both a similarity in taste – Carravagio, Tintoretto, Palma – and source, Venice,¹⁸⁹ with the 3rd marquis. In addition, Hamilton's father swapped pictures with Prince Charles.¹⁹⁰ Like his father, Hamilton also exchanged pictures with Charles, but more often either sold or gave them to him.¹⁹¹ Charles I was the greatest collector, of course, and so we must identify where Hamilton's aesthetic appreciation met his political opportunism.

Certainly, Hamilton's art collecting further endeared him to the king, bestowing on him membership of the exclusive group of collectors around Charles. It was an interest inherited from his father and probably through his time in Prince Charles's Bedchamber, so we cannot view his art collecting entirely in terms of the reflected political, or indeed financial, gains. During Hamilton's periods away from court preparing for the German campaign his friends kept him informed about new pictures being hung in the king's closet.¹⁹² Likewise, while in Germany, Hamilton conducted a dialogue with Charles concerning the purchase of paintings and sculptures in Munich.¹⁹³ On his return from Germany the marquis gave at least seven paintings and one sculpture to the king.¹⁹⁴ Later on, when speculating in the Venetian art market, the marquis's attitude to picture collecting displayed a certain ambivalence. Periodically, he would declare that he was 'much in loofe with pictures', but at other times he would claim to care little for them.¹⁹⁵ However, this may have been a pose to impress his brother-in-law and hide his anxiety when it looked likely that he would miss a collection on offer.¹⁹⁶ As we shall see, the marquis showed a grim determination when pursuing additions to his collection, especially when either the king or his great rival, Arundel were

¹⁸⁸ Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance* (Germany, 1986) pp.86–184; R. Davies, 'An Inventory of the Duke of Buckingham's pictures, etc. at York House in 1635' *Burlington Magazine* 10 (1907), pp.376–82; Francis Haskell, 'Charles I's Collection of Pictures' in Arthur MacGregor, ed., *The Late King's Goods: collections, possessions and patronage of Charles I in the light of the Commonwealth sale inventories* (Oxford, 1989), pp.204–6.

¹⁸⁹ NRS, Hamilton mss, GD 406/M4/3 ('Copy of the Note of the pictures and payntings belonging to the Right honnorable Lord marquis Hamelton deceased, delivered to my lord duke according to my lord Marquis his warrant of the 14 of March 1624'). The 2nd marquis visited Venice in 1610 and was friendly with Sir Henry Wotton, the ambassador, *CSPV 1610–13*, 409; Sheffield City Library, Wentworth Woodhouse, Strafford Papers, mss 2/fol.14 (Wentworth to Wotton, 8 November 1617).

¹⁹⁰ Millar, *Van der Doort's Catalogue of Charles I's Pictures*, pp.78, 81.

¹⁹¹ See for example, *Ibid.*, 53, 64–6, 70, 158. Also below.

¹⁹² NRS, GD 406/1/183 (H. Vane to Hamilton, 7 May 1631).

¹⁹³ NRS, GD 406/1/158 (Charles I to Hamilton, 30 April 1632).

¹⁹⁴ Millar, *Van der Doort's Catalogue of Charles I's Pictures*, pp.62, 65–6, 81, 90, 95. Included amongst them were paintings by Snelling, Francks, George Spence, Palma and Louis Cronick.

¹⁹⁵ For example, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/70, 80, 86, 91, 95, 98, 75, 78. See also, P. Shakeshaft, 'To much bewiched with thoes intysing things': the letters of James, 3rd marquis of Hamilton and Basil, Viscount Feilding, concerning collecting in Venice 1635–1639' *Burlington Magazine*, February 1986, pp.114–132. Appendix I in Shakeshaft contains largely accurate transcriptions of those parts of the more important letters relating to Hamilton's collecting activities.

¹⁹⁶ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/70, 75, 80, 86, 91.

involved. Hamilton was equally fascinated by the price of paintings; and the money he could make if he had ‘a mynd to turne marchand; especially in selling his prizes to the king.’¹⁹⁷

Between 1636 and 1639 Hamilton secured around 400 pieces in Venice. They mostly came from buying the entire collections of Bartholomeo della Nave, the procurator Priuli and Nicolo Renieri. An inventory of under a half of Hamilton’s collection in 1649 listed, among others, 36 paintings by Titian, 42 by Palma (young 24, old 18), 12 by Veronese, 9 by Tintoretto and others by Raphael, Corregio, Georgione (10) and Leonardo.¹⁹⁸ Thus, his collection of the Venetian school exceeded in both number and quality that of the late duke of Buckingham.¹⁹⁹ Hamilton’s total collection probably numbered upwards of 600.²⁰⁰ Such was the marquis’s increasing obsession with art collecting that he planned to visit Italy in 1637.²⁰¹

Almost every letter that Hamilton wrote to Lord Feilding in Venice contained a final section enquiring after paintings. In the interests of brevity, however, we shall take only a brief look at the negotiations behind Hamilton’s purchase of Bartolomeo della Nave’s collection and the simultaneous acquisition of the Priuli collection, containing the prized Saint Margaret by Raphael. How Feilding came to hear about della Nave’s collection is uncertain, though we cannot overlook the coincidence of surnames between Andrea della or ‘dalla’ Nave, the man to whom he gave asylum and Bartolomeo, the owner of the art collection.²⁰² It is tempting to see some kind of quid pro quo operating, though we have no other evidence to support it. Whatever the link, if any, Feilding was clear of the field in alerting his brother-in-law that the collection was on the market in the spring of 1636.²⁰³ Even before he had seen the detailed list he had

¹⁹⁷ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss CR 2017/C1/82 (Hamilton to Feilding, 7/17 July 1637).

¹⁹⁸ K. Garas, ‘Die Entstehung der Galerie des Erzherzogs, Leopold Wilhelm’ in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorisches Sammlungen in Wien*, N.F., XXVII, 1967, pp.75–80. The following are the surviving lists of Hamilton’s pictures, Hamilton mss, Lennoxlove, (Listed in *NRA (S)* 332), M4/5, [1637] A list of paintings sent by Feilding to Hamilton, with annotations in Feilding’s hand; M4/6, [1637] ‘A note of pictures for my lord Marquis from my lord Feilding’. [Italian]; M4/7, [1637] ‘A note of pictures for my lord Marquis from lord Feilding’. [Italian]; M4/8, [c. 1637] A price list of paintings. [In Italian, with a translation]; M4/9, [c. 1637] ‘A note of pictures for my lord Marques from my lord Feilding’. [Italian]; M4/10, [c. 1637] List of paintings and marbles, in the same hand as M4/9 (with marginal notes in the hand of the earl of Arran (later 4th duke) indicating the owners of the paintings in his day); M4/11, [c. 1637–8] List of pictures shipped from Venice; M4/12, 13, 14. [c. 1637–8] Lists of paintings; M4/15, [c. 1637 x 1643] A list of paintings in Hamilton’s hand; M4/17, [Before 1643] ‘A bill for the right honourable the lord marquis of Hamilton’, that is, a list of pictures.; M4/18, [c.1643] Inventory of the 1st duke’s pictures, with their values; M4/19, [c.1643] Inventory of the 1st duke’s pictures; M4/20, [c. 1643] Inventory of the 1st duke’s pictures, [with annotations in Hamilton’s hand ?]; M4/21, [c. 1643] ‘A catalogue of my Lord Marquis’s pictures’, 600 paintings packed into 44 cases; M4/22, [c. 1643] ‘A catalogue of my lords Pictures’, similar to M4/21; W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss CR 2017/C1/102 [1643] ‘Duke Hamilton’s pictures’ [numbering 234 and a list of 36 marbles, statues and curiosities ? In Italian]; M4/40, [1649] A list of the pictures acquired by Archduke Leopold Wilhelm. Seven of the most important of these lists – M4/6, 7, 9, 10, 20, 21, 40 – have been printed in the following two articles: E.K. Waterhouse, ‘Paintings from Venice for Seventeenth Century England’ in *Italian Studies*, vii, 1952, pp.1–23, lists pp.14–23; K. Garas, ‘Die Entstehung der Galerie des Erzherzogs, Leopold Wilhelm’ in *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorisches Sammlungen in Wien*, N.F., xxvii, 1967, pp.39–80, lists pp.64–80. Two other lists, M4/5, 13, have been printed in P. Shakeshaft, ‘To much bewiched with thoes intysing things’: the letters of James, third Marquis of Hamilton and Basil, Viscount Feilding, concerning collecting in Venice 1635–1639’. in *Burlington Magazine*, February 1986, pp.114–132, Appendix II and III.

¹⁹⁹ Not all of the painters, such as Leonardo and Raphael, were of the Venetian school which I have listed. Only those of the Venetian school have been counted when comparing Hamilton’s with Buckingham’s collection, Francis Haskell, ‘Charles I’s Collection of Pictures’ in Arthur MacGregor, ed., *The Late King’s Goods*, p.208. Haskell’s description of Hamilton as ‘a greedy, ambitious and elegant Scottish nobleman’ is partly accurate.

²⁰⁰ One inventory of 1643 has 600 pictures, K. Garas, ‘Die Entstethung ...’, pp.69–75. There is no time to examine at length Hamilton’s contribution to 17th Century picture collecting but, as with all aspects of the Scots at the early Stuart court, more attention (and revision (sic)) is necessary.

²⁰¹ NRS, GD 406/1/9466; *CSPV* 1636–9, 197.

²⁰² A brother, perhaps? I have no other evidence, but it is nevertheless suggestive assuming, that is, that della Nave is not the Venetian equivalent of Smith.

²⁰³ Feilding informed Hamilton about the collection sometime before late June 1630, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/61, also *Ibid*, C1/64; NRS, GD 406/1/9451 (Feilding to Hamilton, 6/16 May 1636).

requested, Hamilton told his brother-in-law to buy the lot.²⁰⁴ The La Nave collection comprised about 220 paintings²⁰⁵ and 36 ancient marbles.²⁰⁶ After receiving the list in the early summer of 1637, Hamilton, in his reply to Feilding, displayed a critical knowledge of art, as well as showing his own artistic tastes which were not entirely satisfied by the quality of the collection.²⁰⁷ As a result, he made a canny offer of £1,500.²⁰⁸

All that changed within a month, however, when Hamilton informed Feilding that the king had seen the list and was:

extremly takine ther with as he hes persauaded me to b[u]y them all, and for thatt end hes furnis[h]ed me with sume munnis, so brother I heve undertakin that they shall all come in to ingland, booth pictures and statues out of which he is to make choyes of whatt he llykes and to repay me whatt they coost if I heave a mynd to turne marchand.²⁰⁹

With the king involved, Hamilton overcame his previous caution and instructed Feilding to buy them 'whatt sumever they coost'. Feilding was also charged to conclude the deal immediately as the earl of Arundel intended making a bid 'which will spoyll our bargane if not prevented by your industrie'.²¹⁰ Over the next seven months Hamilton, agitated by the prospect of Arundel securing the collection and of losing face with the king, pleaded with Feilding to close the deal and ignore the rising price.²¹¹

In August 1637, Hamilton received news that procurator Priuli's collection containing the Saint Margaret by Raphael was also for sale, and promptly instructed Feilding to buy both Priuli as well as La Nave.²¹² By the end of the year Hamilton had discovered that Arundel was behind the rising cost of the collections. In a detailed letter to Feilding, dated 27 December, he explained that Arundel's agent in Venice, William Petty, made inflated bids for collections, thereby scaring off competitors. Thus:

the pictures remain with ther ounners he weill knoing that no inglis man stay long in Italy nor you long to reseid wher you ar. So consequentli the pictures must fall in to his oune hand and att his oune prysis, pettie being auyes upone the place and provydid with munnis for thatt end.²¹³

Aware that he was the dupe of a sophisticated ploy Hamilton, rather than back-off, insisted that Feilding buy the collections at the inflated prices. Because:

²⁰⁴ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/61.

²⁰⁵ Feilding described the collection in a letter of 8/18 September [1637] saying it contained works by Titian, Corregio, Andrea Schiavone, Palma, Veichia, Bordenone and Bassan, NRS, GD 406/1/9508. William Petty accompanied Feilding to the viewing and suggested offering 14,000 duckets (£2,333), which he did, *Ibid.* For more on Petty, see below.

²⁰⁶ Sir Ellis Waterhouse tentatively identified the La Nave list and printed it in, E. K. Waterhouse, 'Paintings From Venice for 17th Century England' in *Italian Studies*, vii, 1952, pp.14–21.

²⁰⁷ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C72/2/fol.3 (Hamilton to Feilding, [June 1637]). Hamilton was particularly concerned whether copies were being passed off as originals.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/82 (Hamilton to Feilding, 17/7 July 1637).

²¹⁰ *Ibid.* Hamilton suggested offering £2,000. The intensity of Hamilton's resolve that Arundel would not get the collections can be gauged, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/91, 95.

²¹¹ See for example, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/83, 86, 87, 90, 74. As well as Arundel, the Spanish ambassador in Venice was preparing to make a bid, *Ibid.*, C1/86, which raised the price further, NRS, GD 406/1/9469.

²¹² W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/87 (Hamilton to Feilding, 24 August [1637]). Hamilton described the St Margaret as 'a peeise so famous as I shall not be in patiens if I mise itt'.

²¹³ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/95 (Hamilton to Feilding, 27 December [1637]).

I dou nou conseave my self to be ingaged in poynt of honoure and wher the flinging a way of a small sume of munnie may saif thatt and satisfie my self itt might justly be called averis in me if I should not dou itt.²¹⁴

In the end Hamilton paid 15,000 duckets (£2,500) for La Nave and 5,000 duckets (£835) for Priuli, totalling £3,335, of which about £500–£800 may have been due to Arundel and Petty's price manipulation.²¹⁵ Feilding completed the deals in February 1638, quickly notifying a delighted Hamilton who recklessly declared that he 'would not have missed of them for tripill whatt they coost'.²¹⁶ The marquis must have been equally delighted at Feilding's description of Petty's 'choller' and 'disorder' on being told of the conclusion of the deals.²¹⁷ Hamilton's triumph over the earl marshal was probably even sweeter than Feilding's over Petty. Although Hamilton protested too much that he was not 'ane exorbitant louffer' of pictures, his honour had also been engaged, in different ways, by both the king and Arundel. That he persisted displays, once again, a stubbornness when he had resolved on a course of action. The marquis was not easily put off.

Hamilton received the good news about his paintings in the same month as the National Covenant was signed in Scotland. The collections arrived in England about a month before the Glasgow Assembly. The earl of Morton informed Hamilton that the king would waive custom duties only if the marquis gave Charles a 'guud bargan' on the pictures he wanted.²¹⁸ In reply to his old friend, Hamilton provided a further insight into the deal he had struck with the king, together with a revealing picture of the deteriorating situation in Scotland. For both these reasons it is worth ending this section by quoting this piece of eloquent Scots irony in full:

If I uer not opressed uith grife and trubbill I uould have much joyed when I hard thatt my pictures uer cume, bot the treuth is I have quytt for goot them, and if his Matti uould have a chepe Bargan nou is the tyme to deall with me, for yuse ue have of munie heir bot nott of pictures, for the veri naming of a sperituall invention is a nufe to make thoes thatt heath not lossed ther uites goe as mad as the rest, bot the lose uill not be greatt for the number uould be bot feu, bot nou in good earnest the king uould gaine if I should be knoked in the head heire for then he uould find thatt he is my ayre for the santa margarita uher as if I returne he must pay deire for hire [her], in my absence my shoope is shut, and no uares to be seine exsept to him self till the return of your lo. faithfull freind and poure distressed marchand.²¹⁹

V

Up till now it has been emphasised that Hamilton's power was drawn from his joint offices of master of the horse and gentleman of the Bedchamber. master of the horse was normally associated with the royal favourite.²²⁰ The fountain of his strength was his close relationship with, and proximity to, the king. He competed with the highest tier of the English nobility, built up a distinguished art collection and ran a large household at Wallingford House, and later, in 1638 planned

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/9493 (Feilding to Hamilton, 5 February 1637/8). For the various financial transactions involving Hamilton's merchant, William Moorehead, and latterly anyone else who would lend, W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/82, 87, 90, 94, 75, 95.

²¹⁶ W.R.O., Feilding of Newnham Paddox mss, CR 2017/C1/98 (Hamilton to Feilding, 8/18 March 1637/8).

²¹⁷ NRS, GD 406/1/9493.

²¹⁸ NRS, GD 406/1/8369 (Morton to Hamilton, 18 October 1638).

²¹⁹ NLS., Morton Papers, 79/80 (Hamilton to Morton, [after 18 October 1638]).

²²⁰ J.S.A. Adamson, *The Noble revolt: the overthrow of Charles I* (London, 2007), p.154, plate opposite.

to relocate to Chelsea House where he intended to develop its gardens and house his art collection in the two galleries.²²¹ At greater length, it has been demonstrated that he looked to exploit his connections in the queen's circle to build a broader power base through the court. Hamilton's sphere of influence was situated firmly within the inner court. And in a Personal Monarchy that was the place to be. But there were two Cs in Caroline personal government: the court and the council. Hamilton was a privy councillor as well as a courtier.

The debate on where power lay, in the court or the council, is always a heated one.²²² The evidence that has already been piled up tilts unquestionably towards the court being the cockpit of power. And this is confirmed by a detailed analysis of Hamilton's attendance pattern at the English Privy Council between 1633 and 1642. The argument in this section will be that Hamilton continued to be a courtier when he attended the council. There was no transformation into a Cecilian bureaucrat. For normally when Hamilton attended the council he went in train with the king and the other eligible members of the court and household. In most cases then, when Hamilton was there, the Privy Council became the court. Apart from specific instances when Hamilton attended without the king, in most cases when business that concerned him was on the agenda, the evidence supports this hypothesis.

Looking at the evidence another way, we can also determine the role of the Scots in the English Privy Council. The English Privy Council had no remit to discuss Scottish affairs and so we must try to ascertain the role the Scots played. The main points in this context will be three: first, that they were a marginal group, often used when numbers were short or when a particularly strong show of conciliar unity was required, such as over the dispatch of the ship money writs; second, Scottish members would attend when something in which they had a personal interest was to be discussed; third, the Scots were more likely to be there, like Hamilton, when the king attended. Although it is difficult to prove, I would suggest that Charles did not expect the Scottish members to attend regularly. Perhaps he even discouraged them. Their presence was more of a theatrical device in the British court rather than a serious attempt to integrate Scots into English government.

Hamilton was sworn of the council on 8 March 1633. Between that date and 30 August 1642 he attended 245 out of a possible 1,058 meetings, roughly one in four.²²³ Of these 245, he attended 177 with the king. The attendance of Hamilton's parallel figure in the Bedchamber, James, 4th duke of Lennox followed a similar pattern. He was sworn onto the council a few months after Hamilton on 28 July 1633,²²⁴ and attended 233 meetings up till 30 August 1642, 191 of those with the king. For both men then, attendance at the council could be explained as the household coming to council

²²¹ Hamilton was granted Chelsea House on 23 June 1638, *CSPD*, 1637–8, 526–7. The man whom Hamilton appointed to conduct repairs and alterations (and much more besides) was Sir John Danvers, famous for his designs of Italian gardens, Strong, *Prince of Wales*, p.31. For a taste of Danvers correspondence with Hamilton, NRS, GD 406/1/1316, 1694, 1698.

²²² For an interesting critique by Dr Starkey, *The English Court, Introduction*, pp.1–24.

²²³ Hamilton's attendance is recorded 1633 March–December, TNA, Privy Council Registers, P.C. 2/42, pp.497, 526, 534, 546, 565. P.C. 2/43, pp.178, 249, 261. 1634, P.C. 2/43, pp.627, 635, 653. P.C. 2/44, pp.24, 138, 192, 221, 239, 269, 281. 1635, P.C.2/44, pp.317, 319, 335, 347, 385, 439, 513, 530, 561, 604. P.C. 2/45, pp.21, 121, 237, 294, 309. 1636, P.C. 2/45, pp.329, 340, 347, 349. P.C. 2/46, 10, 41, 77, 108, 133, 138, 140, 176, 187, 245, 258, 277, 303, 308, 312, 345, 364, 370, 371, 420, 426, 434, 435, 449, 454. P.C. 2/47, p.28. 1637, P.C. 2/47, pp.61, 76, 83, 104, 152, 177, 224, 237, 254, 273, 286, 298, 298, 309, 330, 345, 379, 404, 430. P.C. 2/48, pp.6, 26, 29, 39, 90, 122, 157, 177, 201, 207, 212, 221, 275, 295, 314, 326, 346, 359, 403, 428, 446, 454, 460, 481, 483. 1638, P.C. 2/48, pp.500, 507, 521, 523, 544, 583, 597. P.C. 2/49, pp.20, 25, 32, 35, 61, 72, 96, 119, 136, 155, 176, 330, 343, 350, 411, 417. 1639, P.C. 2/50, pp.12, 35, 49, 81, 100, 112, 130, 150, 151, 197, 203, 225, 231, 238, 242, 578, 578, 587, 608, 629, 636, 646, 663, 667, 674, 681, 695. P.C. 2/51, pp.20, 25, 27, 43, 44, 68, 70, 72, 74, 101, 107, 157, 164, 184, 192, 215. 1640, P.C. 2/51, pp.225, 238, 244, 248, 251, 261, 264, 294, 311, 313, 316, 320, 349, 373, 373. P.C. 2/52, pp.421, 437, 448, 457, 462, 464, 469, 472, 474, 478, 480, 484, 494, 496, 500, 506, 507, 514, 519, 537, 550, 568, 570, 571, 609, 620, 624, 627, 633, 643, 652, 654, 665, 681. P.C. 2/53, pp.51, 53, 68. 1641, P.C. 2/53, pp.78, 78, 80, 82, 85, 99, 100, 100, 126, 177, 200, 203, 204. 1642, P.C. 2/53, pp.207, 207, 209.

²²⁴ TNA, P.C. 2/43, p.178.

	1633	1634	1635	1636	1637	1638	1639	1640	1641	1642
Total meetings	88	93	96	108	161	164	173	133	37	5
Hamilton (total)	8	10	15	30	44	23	43	54	13	3
Attended with king	6	9	13	23	36	18	24	37	8	3
Total attended										
Lennox	6	8	23	35	35	38	25	43	16	4
Kellie	37	26	20	2	2	–	–	–	–	–
Morton	6	7	14	14	29	20	9	20	0	0
Carlisle	7	8	12	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
Stirling	4	7	3	10	5	4	4	–	–	–
Roxburgh	–	–	–	–	3	2	1	4	3	1
Traquair	–	–	–	3	2	0	2	4	3	0
Lanark	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8	16	1

Table A.

or, more accurately, the two key members of the king's Scottish retinue attending the English king to council. The role of the Scots at court will be analysed at greater length in the next chapter; for now the focus will be on their attendance at the English council.

From 1633–42 the number of Scots who attended the English council hovered between six and seven. Of the older Jacobean members based in Scotland, Sir George Hay of Kinfrauns, later 1st earl of Kinnoul (May 1633), lord chancellor of Scotland only attended three meetings from the date Hamilton became a councillor: on 22, 27 March and 3 April 1633. The earls of Haddington, Mar and Strathearn did not attend at all and, like Kinnoul who died in December 1634, are not included in Table A. James, 1st earl of Kellie, James, 1st earl of Carlisle and William, 6th earl of Morton were all based at court and had modest attendance records. The sparse attendance of William, Viscount Stirling, later earl of Stirling (June 1633), the secretary for Scotland at court, attests to the separation of English and Scottish affairs insisted upon by both James and Charles. Principally as a novelty, it is worth noting that on only one occasion was there a sederunt recorded where the Scots outnumbered the English. It was not a meeting of council, however, but an *ad hoc* sub-committee which sat on 31 March 1635 to discuss a dispute between the English Greenland fishing company and one Nathaniel Edwards of Scotland.²²⁵

More interesting for our purposes is the additions to the English council after March 1633. Only four Scots were added to the council after Hamilton and each one appears to have replaced an outgoing member. Lennox replaced the disgraced genealogist William, successively earl of Menteith, Airth and Strathearn, former president of the Scottish Privy Council and justice general of Scotland.²²⁶ John, 1st earl of Traquair was made lord treasurer of Scotland in the Summer of 1636, and during the same visit to court was sworn of the English council on 18 May,²²⁷ probably replacing the earl of Carlisle, groom of the stool, who died on 25 April.²²⁸ Hamilton's friend, Robert, 1st earl of Roxburgh succeeded Hamilton's kinsman, Thomas, 1st earl of Haddington (James's 'old Tam

²²⁵ TNA, P.C. 2/44, p.503–4. The Scots outnumbered the English six to five though three of them – the earls of Roxburgh and Linlithgow and Sir James Galloway – were not members of the English council. The other Scots were Lennox, Morton and Stirling.

²²⁶ For more on the fall of Menteith, see chapter 5, section II.

²²⁷ TNA, P.C. 2/46, p.176.

²²⁸ G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, iii, 32.

o' the Cowgate') as lord privy seal of Scotland and took his place on the English council on 22 October 1637.²²⁹ Lastly, Hamilton's brother William, 1st earl of Lanark replaced the earl of Stirling as secretary for Scotland at court, subsequently filling Stirling's vacant place on the council on 10 June 1640.²³⁰ In sum then, there was usually six Scottish members on the English Privy Council.²³¹

If we take the Scots on the council as a group we can see a three-fold pattern emerging over the period 1633–42. The first stage, from 1633–34, was characterised by the Scots attending along with the king and occasionally signing council letters.²³² The exception to the case was the earl of Kellie who attended regularly between 1633–35 without the king or any of the other Scots. James's former groom of the stool was increasingly marginalised under Charles and his attendance at thirty-seven meetings (only two with the king) between March and December 1633 reflects a Bedchamber man, after losing office in the household, turning privy councillor to retain a toehold in government. The second stage, 1635–38, saw a more active council overseeing the assessment and collection of Ship Money. The Scots participated in the massive bureaucratic exercise probably because a strong show of government unity was required and, more importantly, because the corpus of English councillors who executed most council business required assistance with the flood of paperwork.²³³ The first two years of the third stage, 1639–42, marked a period when for the first time Scottish affairs became a major concern of the Privy Council with a Council of War appointed and the council generally playing a key role in the organisation of the Bishops' Wars. From the outset Hamilton occupied a prominent position in firstly organising the war effort against the Covenanters and later acting as the broker for the bridge appointments that brought the English opposition into the council.²³⁴

A glance at the composition of the five main Privy Council standing committees – Foreign Affairs, Ireland, Trade, Plantations and Ordinance – confirms the general picture. Only two Scots were appointed to two of these committees in peacetime: the earl of Carlisle enjoyed a long stint on the Committee for Foreign Affairs between 1628–35, while the earl of Stirling was a member for some time after 1629, perhaps to 1636.²³⁵ Stirling was also on the Committee for Foreign Plantations between 1636 and 1640,²³⁶ which was more likely a reflection of his own interest in colonial matters rather than an attempt to have Scottish interests represented. For all his interest in European politics, Hamilton was never made a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs. The most obvious explanation for this would be Hamilton's disagreement with government foreign policy. Another, less prosaic reason would be that he was not quite an important enough figure to sit on the council's most influential committee. Although we have already noted Hamilton's activities on the committee to reform the household,²³⁷ it was ironically not until the troubles that

²²⁹ TNA, P.C. 2/48, p.316.

²³⁰ TNA, P.C. 2/52, p.544.

²³¹ The old earl of Mar was technically still a member of the Privy Council, but was effectively retired since the earl of Morton took over as treasurer on 8 July 1630. Mar, like his son the earl of Kellie, was eased out under Charles.

²³² For examples of the Scots attending with the king, TNA, P.C. 2/43, p.635; *Ibid*, 2/44, pp.138, 192.

²³³ There are many examples of the Scots, especially Hamilton and Lennox, both attending meetings when Ship Money was top of the agenda and signing letters to mayors, sheriffs etc. concerning Ship Money. For Scots attendance at Privy Council meetings concerning Ship Money, see for example, TNA, P.C. 2/44, pp.317, 347, 385–6, 439, 513. P.C. 2/45, p.237. P.C. 2/46, pp.41, 77, 108 (all of which Hamilton attended). For examples of Scots signing Ship Money letters, P.C. 2/44, pp.332, 334, 350, 359, 366, 466. P.C. 2/45, pp.75, 106, 296. P.C. 2/46, pp.80–81. For examples of Hamilton signing ship money letters, P.C. 2/44, pp.297, 325, 326–8, 334, 339, 350, 359, 366, 393, 405, 466. P.C. 2/45, pp.75, 106, 114, 296. P.C. 2/46, pp.11, 41, 291, 474. P.C. 2/47, pp.37–42, 49, 74, 78–80, 425. P.C. 2/48, p.223.

²³⁴ See below and chapter 7.

²³⁵ For Carlisle, TNA, P.C. 2/39, p.11; *Ibid*, 2/44, p.3. Stirling's attendance period is less certain, P.C. 2/44, p.1, when it says he was 'since added' (1634/5) and his name disappears from the roll thereafter.

²³⁶ TNA, P.C. 2/47, p.1; *Ibid*, 2/49, p.1; *Ibid*, 2/51, p.1.

²³⁷ See above. Hamilton was also a member of the enormous committee to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction within England and Wales, appointed 17 December 1633, *CSPD 1633–34*, pp.326–7.

Signatures	1635	1637	1639
Category 1	8	13	0
Category 2	6	34	21
Category 3	39	31	19
Undated	2	10	11
Total	55	88	51

Table B.

he joined a main committee, the Council of War on 27 January 1640.²³⁸ In sum then, the Scottish contingent in the council did not play a key role in its day to day business, nor did they play an active role in any of the main standing committees. In other words, they represented the Scottish wing of the king's retinue when he came to council rather than a coherent bloc exerting an influence or being encouraged to assimilate into English affairs. Nevertheless, that did not hinder them from promoting their own interests in the council.

By way of a case study to test these general trends we shall take a closer look at Hamilton's career in the English Privy Council. It is evident that Hamilton did not view being an English privy councillor as his most important office, useful and prestigious certainly, but not one he used as a focus of his power. In his first ten months as a councillor he attended eight meetings and signed only two letters at the board,²³⁹ though that can be partly explained by his absence in Scotland for four of those ten months.²⁴⁰ Taking a rough sample from three years – 1635, 1637 and 1639 – Hamilton's signing of Privy Council letters, passes and warrants fall into three categories. The first and smallest number are those signed on the same day as a council meeting he had not attended. Second and more frequent are those documents he signed on the same day he attended a meeting. Third and marginally the largest category are those Hamilton signed on the day there was no council meeting.

The first category shows that Hamilton chose not to attend some council meetings when he was at court, but could be persuaded by a sedulous secretary to sign letters. Obviously he had other things to do and such behaviour was not uncommon amongst ministers. The second category illustrates that Hamilton actually participated when he attended council meetings, at least by signing letters at the board. The third category throws up a number of points. It is clear that council business was not contained within formal council meetings, but overflowed into the daily life of the court and household. To expedite business the secretaries and clerks would use whatever councillors were around to sign documents. Council meetings on the other hand were driven by a small group of committed English bureaucrats: Archbishop Laud, the lord keeper, the lord privy seal, the chancellor of the Exchequer and the two secretaries. Hamilton was neither a bureaucrat nor English. Crucially, however, he was frequently around court and, with others like him, could be utilised to clear the workload or just keep business ticking along.

As suggested above, Hamilton was not the most assiduous attender at the council board. His power base lay elsewhere. But when it was necessary, he used the Privy Council to further his own ends as well as those of his clients and collaborators. In May 1636, for example, we find

²³⁸ TNA, P.C. 2/51, p.2. Later in the same year, probably October, Hamilton was also a member of the committee 'for the Portugall busines', P.C. 2/53, p.4. In November 1639, Hamilton was a member of the Committee for Arms with Juxon, Northumberland, Wentworth, Cottington, Coke and Windebank, *Ibid*, P.C. 2/51, p.72.

²³⁹ See Table A above, the two letters that Hamilton signed were both in the first week of his sitting on the council, TNA, P.C. 2/42, pp.497, 507.

²⁴⁰ See chapter 5.

him signing passes for the queen of Bohemia's cupbearer and for army officers to return to their commands in the Low Countries.²⁴¹ Similarly, Hamilton probably sponsored the request of the Swedish agent, Michael Le Blom, to the council on 20 December 1640 for permission to export fifteen hydes.²⁴² Certainly, it was Hamilton who procured a pass in August 1637 for Lord Feilding's new chaplain to travel to Venice.²⁴³ The range of Hamilton's activities in this context were not only restricted to one-off favours, but ranged to larger projects in which he had an interest. Three typical examples can be reconstructed in the Privy Council's action concerning hackney coaches, the Dovegang leadmine in Derbyshire and the Newcastle coal trade.

One of the many government initiatives Hamilton was involved in during the Personal Rule concerned the licensing of hackney coachmen. Various complaints had been made about the excessive numbers of hackney coaches in London and Westminster.²⁴⁴ On 27 September 1635 Hamilton sat in council (without the king) when the transport problem was debated.²⁴⁵ As a result, a new proclamation was published in January 1636 restricting the use of hackney coaches.²⁴⁶ It was after the failure of these measures that Hamilton emerged as the architect of another plan.²⁴⁷ The proposal was to form a company of fifty, later a hundred, licensed coaches charging set rates whose owners would be vetted and supervised by Hamilton.²⁴⁸ In addition, the company was to be allotted specific working practices, wear a livery, pay a composition and work at preferential rates for the crown.²⁴⁹ Hamilton's patent passed under the great seal on 14 July 1637 and four months later he presented his patent and rules for the company to the Privy Council.²⁵⁰ Interestingly, some evidence suggests that Hamilton's collaborators in the scheme were Sir Henry Vane,²⁵¹ the marquis's associate from the German campaign, and Sir Edmund Verney, knight marshal of the household, who may have managed the company on Hamilton's behalf.²⁵² As we shall see, Verney and Hamilton were involved in another larger business enterprise.²⁵³

More interesting were Hamilton's proceedings respecting the Dovegang leadmine in collaboration with Sir Robert Heath. In 1629 Heath, then attorney-general, with his partner, the ubiquitous Sir Cornelius Vermuyden, obtained a 31 year lease from the crown (through the duchy court of Lancaster) of the enormous 'drowned and deserted' Dovegang leadmine in Derbyshire at an annual rent of £1,000.²⁵⁴ By the spring of 1635 the project was taking shape. At the same time the

²⁴¹ TNA, P.C. 2/46, pp.108, 158, 169.

²⁴² TNA, P.C. 2/53, p.68.

²⁴³ TNA, P.C. 2/49, p.171.

²⁴⁴ See for example, *CSPD* 1634–5, 8, 69–70.

²⁴⁵ TNA, P.C. 2/45, 121.

²⁴⁶ *CSPD* 1635–6, 168. Hackney coaches were to be used only if the passenger was travelling three miles outside London.

²⁴⁷ The origins of Hamilton's proposal can be found in a petition of the hackney coachmen to the king, TNA, SP 16/346/94 (11 February 1637).

²⁴⁸ NRS, GD 406/M9/35/8.

²⁴⁹ NRS, GD 406/M9/35/11(Orders for licensed hackney coachmen, [1637]); GD 406/2/M9/35/2, 10 (Petitions to Hamilton from 50 hackney coachmen, [1637]). For the Testimonials of prospective coachmen, petitions and lists, GD 406/M9/35/1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12. For the composition, Knowler, *Strafford's Letters*, ii, 181 (Garrard to Wentworth, 3 July, 1638).

²⁵⁰ TNA, P.C. 2/48, pp.359–60. The king had already passed Hamilton's plans on 12 October, and was not present at the meeting, *Ibid*.

²⁵¹ Vane was petitioned by the coachmen as a potential patron probably in the months before Hamilton's patent was passed. I am uncertain as to the extent of his involvement, but he certainly passed the petition on to Hamilton, NRS, GD 406/2/M9/35/4.

²⁵² The evidence for this is suggestive rather than conclusive, being a copy of an undated royal warrant in the Hamilton papers authorising Verney to modify the hackney coachmen's rules and rates, NRS, GD 406/2/M9/35/8.

²⁵³ See for example, NRS GD 406/1/7536 (Goring to Verney, 1 February 1637/8). For more see chapter 5, p.125.

²⁵⁴ TNA, P.C. 2/44, pp.614–17 (incorrect pagination should be, 624–7). The Dovegang lease was subsequently expanded to include a wider area to allow for the drainage system and supplies.

previous holders of the Dovegang lease, George Sayers, Sir Abraham Dawes and Henry Carey, 1st earl of Dover contested Heath's lease claiming a precedent right.²⁵⁵

The Dover group's move against the Dovegang lease illustrated how Hamilton served his clients. In the run up to the hearing of the case in council Heath wrote regularly to Hamilton outlining the Dover group's movements and attempts to have the hearing delayed.²⁵⁶ Hamilton, for his part, discussed the case with the king and made sure that Charles, suitably primed, attended the hearing.²⁵⁷ The Privy Council hearing was held on 3 June and, as promised, Hamilton brought the king.²⁵⁸ On the day the Privy Council not only upheld Heath's lease, but approved the duchy court's decision to allow surrounding land to be added to the lease and likewise ruled against any attempts by local landowners or miners to hinder Heath's operations.²⁵⁹ Two years later, in February 1637, the Dover group launched another attack and it was again defeated.²⁶⁰

In much the same way Hamilton promoted his interest in the Newcastle coal trade. In this instance it was in collaboration with Thomas Horth, a Yarmouth merchant, who sought to bring free trade to the supply and freight of Newcastle coal.²⁶¹ Horth presented his scheme to the king, Hamilton and the rest of the Privy Council on 4 April 1638.²⁶² The propositions were favourably received by Charles, though the current contractors were given until 2 May to answer. On the evening of 1 May 1638 the marquis informed secretary Windebank that:

his Mattie heath commanded me to lett you knoe thatt the morou beeing the day appoynted for heeiring of the Coole busines that he will have itt in his oune presans and therfor your honour is to advertis the Lords ther of thatt accordingly the Counsall may sitte att Uhyhall.²⁶³

Next day, Hamilton and the king attended. After a debate Horth's scheme was approved and plans were put in motion to form a new corporation to control the Newcastle coal trade.²⁶⁴

The evidence suggests then that Hamilton recognised the worth of the Privy Council in government, even though it was not central to his political activities. Its day to day business was for others to execute, though he readily signed papers to clear a backlog and participated in the Ship Money workload. For Hamilton the council had a place in English government. In the first few months

²⁵⁵ NRS, GD 406/1/311 (Heath to Hamilton, 15 May 1635); TNA, P.C. 2/44, p.614 (incorrect pagination should be, 624).

²⁵⁶ NRS, GD 406/1/310 (Heath to Hamilton, 27 May 1635). Windebank may have been working on the same side as Heath and Hamilton for it was he who alerted Heath that a move was afoot to have the date of the hearing changed, *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.* NRS, GD 406/1/311 (Heath to Hamilton, 15 May 1635); GD 406/1/313 (Heath to Hamilton, 29 May 1635).

²⁵⁸ TNA, P.C. 2/44, p.614 (incorrect pagination, should be 624). Those who attended were the archbishops of Canterbury and York, lord keeper, lord privy seal, duke of Lennox, Hamilton, earl marshal, lord chamberlain, earl of Bridgewater, earl of Holland, Viscount Wimbleton, Viscount Cottington, secretaries Coke and Windebank.

²⁵⁹ TNA, P.C. 2/44, pp.618–20 (should be 628–30). It was also ordered that any further grievances against Heath were to be heard in duchy court. That was the only business which the Privy Council carried out that day. The Dover group mounted other challenges, but they were equally unsuccessful, Kopperman, *Heath*, p.267.

²⁶⁰ NRS, GD 406/1/10656 (Heath to Hamilton, 17 February, 1636/7). See also NRS, GD 406/1/386.

²⁶¹ The mss in the Hamilton Papers relating to Hamilton's commercial interests are often difficult to analyse as most of the material is in the form of undated and unsigned petitions, information papers and working papers. Only occasionally is there also personal correspondence (for example from Sir Robert Heath) which allows us to make definite connections. Nevertheless, the surviving evidence suggests that Horth was involved with Hamilton in a number of commercial ventures: in the Newcastle coal trade; in the supply of oil to the Scottish soap manufacturers; and with Heath and Hamilton in the Newcastle salt trade. See for example, NRS, GD 406/1/616 (Thomas Horth, to Hamilton, 18 August 1638); GD 406/M9/32/1; GD 406/M9/32/5; GD 406/M1/271; GD 406/M1/28/11; GD 406/M1/28/12; GD 406/M1/28/13; GD 406/M1/28/9. Horth's activities in the salt trade may have upset the interests of some saltmasters in Scotland, GD 406/M9/28/23 (Patrick Wood to Traquair, [?1637–1638]).

²⁶² TNA, P.C. 2/49, pp.72–3.

²⁶³ TNA, SP 16/389/3 (Hamilton to Windebank, 1 May 1638).

²⁶⁴ TNA, P.C. 2/49, pp.155–8.

of 1641 the marquis sponsored the bridge appointments (Bedford, Saye, Essex, Mandeville et al) to the Privy Council.²⁶⁵ As part of a remedy to ease the crisis it was both prudent and conciliatory. Whether he would have supported their appointment to the king's Bedchamber is another matter, however.

In analysing Hamilton's domestic activities relating to England we see a symmetry with his activities in foreign policy discussed in the previous chapter. The marquis did not wholly support isolationism and the domestic application of 'Thorough' but nevertheless worked successfully within the government. It was not a precarious political balancing act, however. First, there was Hamilton's special relationship with the king. The political differences between the two were smoothed by Hamilton's assured ability as a courtier and politician, and, more importantly, by the key fact that "James" was the king's friend. The friendship between the two was fused by the blood-relation. Charles was a much better friend than he was a king. Second, Hamilton successfully extended his power base outside the king's bedchamber into the queen's circle and formed partnerships with people both in and out of government: Heath, Middlesex, Holland and Pembroke, for example. Third, it has been shown that there was a high degree of flexibility in court alliances where individuals of differing views could work together. Still, the survival at court of critics such as Hamilton, Vane, Holland and Pembroke, reminds us that a dissident group, mostly peers, held key posts within the government during the Personal Rule in England. Men unhappy with some, not all, aspects of policy. It would be going too far to see them as a cohesive political force but, along with the later additions of the earls of Arundel and Northumberland, they constituted an alternative voice in particular areas of policy. Fourth, despite differences with some of the principal members of government and the king, Hamilton's position was secure. The marquis was thirty-two in 1638 and had been at court for eighteen years apart from two interludes between 1627 and 1628, and between 1631 and 1632. Only under intense pressure could one imagine him being dislodged from the king's side.

²⁶⁵ For Hamilton's part see chapter 8. For the appointments to the council, TNA, P.C. 2/53, pp.100–1.