Journal of British Studies 62 (January 2023): 161–185. doi:10.1017/jbr.2022.176
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Reading in Crisis: Francis Russell's Reading Records and the Beginnings of the Thirty Years' War

Sebastiaan Verweij

Abstract This essay discusses the reading records of Francis Russell, 1587–1641, later 4th Earl of Bedford. Drawing from a previously unstudied manuscript notebook from 1620 to 1622, the author demonstrates the importance of Russell's private archive at Woburn Abbey as an important repository for political, literary, and cultural history in the early Stuart age. The notebook evidences how a nobleman of Russell's wealth, stature, and influence prepared for political office, and more broadly, how he educated himself. The notebook contains a wide variety of texts, among them histories, sermons, poetry, political pamphlets, treatises, news, and gossip, much of which Russell brought to bear on the acute political Bohemian crisis then emerging, and on its consequences for domestic politics (for example, the 1621 Parliament). The notebook's contents also reveal more about early modern reading practice and the organization of knowledge and suggest the many networks of circulation through which Russell acquired his books, manuscript tracts, and oral information.

The author of the essay "Of Reading History" (1620) wrote that he preferred history over other formative discourses such as moral philosophy since "by an exquisite expression it doth shew vnto vs the Acts & Councels of precedent times."[1] Reading history fashioned the moral virtues and could "make a perfect man, namely, of an *vnderstanding* well informed of what is *true*, and of a *Will* well & constantly disposed to that which is good."[2] The essay was printed with eleven others and four tracts in a volume about whose publisher, Edward Blount, coyly remarked, the "Author of this Booke I know not."[3]

Yet the authorship was no secret to one reader, Francis Russell (1587–1641), later 4th Earl of Bedford, who, as soon as *Horæ Subseciuæ: Observations and Discovrses* appeared, took extensive notes "Out of my Lo[rd]: Candishes essayse that b[e]arres

Sebastiaan Verweij is senior lecturer in late medieval and early modern English literature at the University of Bristol. All manuscripts from Woburn Abbey are quoted by kind permission of the Woburn Abbey Collection. He further thanks Nicola Allen (archivist at Woburn), Paul Hunneyball (History of Parliament Trust), and Noah Millstone for their assistance and suggestions for improvement. Research for this essay was made possible through an Early Career Research Grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council; see further Noah Millstone, Sebastiaan Verweij, and Richard Bell, Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England, https://mpese.ac.uk/. Please address any correspondence to s.verweij@bristol.ac.uk.

[1] William Cavendish, "Of Reading History," in *Horæ Subseciuæ: Observations and Discourses* (London, 1620), sig. O1r.

[2] Cavendish, "Of Reading History," sig. O2v.

[3] Cavendish, sig. A2v.

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noe name nor Author."[4] Russell's attribution—to Sir William Cavendish (1590–1628), later 2nd Earl of Devonshire—precedes by three decades and thus considerably strengthens the evidence of his authorship found by Noel Malcolm in a library catalogue at Chatsworth ca. 1657.[5] Authorship of the other tracts has also been the subject of debate and even of computational analysis in order to prove (or disprove) the hand of a young Thomas Hobbes; Russell, however, explicitly attributed the discourse on Tacitus to "Candish," and following that on "Lawse," wrote "finis Candish," leaving little doubt he thought everything in the *Horae* was Cavendish's work.[6]

In his notes from "Of Reading History," Russell distills Cavendish's essay to just four observations:

1 Not wisdum to know anothers wisdum
2 Histories concurring liek diuers witneses deposing in the point
   History makse things rather represented then related
3 History wanting truth warse kind of poetry
4 Heds of common plases all under thes 3 Thoughts words deeds except that of natuer, and of philo: uide fol. 218.[7]

The first point, typically rephrased by Russell into a neat aphorism, refers to the difference between ancient thinkers who put their philosophy into action and modern readers who confuse true wisdom with the merely theoretical and therefore engage in useless syllogizing of philosophical tenets. Russell also notes that reading different historical texts on the same topic can get one closer to the truth, as would "diuers witneses" at a court case, and that "truth" is crucial to arrive at sound judgment; history without truth, in Cavendish's words, is "but the worst kind of Poetry." The fourth point relates to the early modern practice of commonplacing. Cavendish wrote that "whosoeuer out of irksomenesse, or haste, or impatience, in expecting the issue of any Relation, shall runne ouer a History in post-haste, shall be sure to lose the best part of the profit, which with attentive consideration hee might otherwise reap."[8] The studious reader should therefore extract, copy, and categorize under "Heds," rendering knowledge both retrievable and redeployable, in service of the ultimate purpose of reading history: "to make in a mans minde application of things past to the present . . . a kind of imaginary practice, to confirme, and make a man the readier for reall action."[9]

[4] Francis Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, MS, HMC 26, fol. 29r, Woburn Abbey. (Hereafter this repository is abbreviated WA).

[5] Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), 7.

[6] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 32r, 36r. For further discussion of the authorship debate, see Paul A. Rahe, *Against Throne and Altar: Machiavelli and Political Theory under the English Republic* (Cambridge, 2008), 249–52.

[7] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 32r. The final reference, "uide fol. 218," is to page 218 in the *Horae*, confirming that Russell took notes from the printed book.

[8] Cavendish, *Horæ Subseciuæ*, sigs. P4r–v.

[9] Cavendish, *Horæ Subseciuæ*, sig. P6r. That the early moderns read with pen in hand and deliberately for "action" has become a truism of book-historical scholarship: "[R]eaders did not passively receive but rather actively reinterpreted their texts"; moreover, reading was intended "to give rise to something else" and "was always goal orientated." Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, "'Studied for Action': How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy," *Past and Present*, no. 129 (1990): 30–78.

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During a two-year period of increasing political crisis, Francis Russell read and compiled his reading notes, perhaps making ready for "reall action" (though as we shall see, comparatively little is known about his own actions in this period). In the same notebook where he entered his notes from Cavendish, Russell extracted two works of history: Francis Hubert's life of Edward II in verse, and Francis Bacon's prose life of Henry VII. He also consumed many more acutely topical texts and included extensive notes from reading and hearing, copying texts in whole or in part and drawing from manuscript and print, including sermons, parliamentary and other speeches, documents of diplomacy, propaganda, news, gossip, verse, political manuscript pamphlets, a treatise on arms, and religious controversy. Many of these texts relate to the intensification of the Bohemian crisis, which severely affected English foreign policy, parliamentary proceedings in 1621, and broader questions around a continental war that had at its center the Elector Palatine Frederick V and his wife, Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of King James VI/I.[10]

Francis Russell's manuscripts have had little impact on literary and book-historical studies to date or on scholarship on the culture, production, and circulation of news in the early Stuart period of the kind that is now often seen in relation to the activation of political agency among readers. This oversight may be explained by the challenges of access to the private archive at Woburn Abbey, the overwhelming range and amount of the material, and some methodological issues, not least what one early commentator called Russell's "rapid hand unfortunately little legible."[11] Another hurdle was stated by the earl's direct descendant Conrad Russell: "[T]he deduction of [Russell's] opinions from the innumerable volumes of his commonplace books is a laborious process."[12] It can be difficult indeed to obtain a critical angle, all the more so for Conrad Russell, who favored the four-volume formal commonplace book in the easier hand of a secretary over Russell's messy, eclectic, idiosyncratic notebooks.[13] What is certainly true is that Russell was an inveterate commonplacer with a keen eye for rhetorical flourish, and such practice can seem at odds with more (explicit) analytical engagement. Yet when Russell read and took notes from historical works, such as those of Hubert or Bacon, he did so analogically (at least in places). He also often applied thematic keywords ("heds") under which an extract should be filed away in the commonplace books, suggesting associative thinking. From such evidence, alongside the bibliographical and prosopographical networks that also emerge from this notebook, which he compiled from early in 1620 until late in 1622, Russell's political and cultural thinking during these important years of the early Stuart age can slowly be pieced together.

The manuscript also shows something about the ways in which this wealthy, privileged, and well-connected nobleman and active member of the House of Lords

[10] On the political impact in England, see Robert Zaller, "'Interest of State': James I and the Palatinate," *Albion* 6, no. 2 (1974): 144–75; Conrad Russell, "The Foreign Policy Debate in the House of Commons in 1621," *Historical Journal* 20, no. 2 (1977): 289–309; Thomas Cogswell, "Phaeton's Chariot: The Parliament-Men and the Continental Crisis in 1621," in *The Political World of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, 1621–1641*, ed. J. F. Merritt (Cambridge, 1996), 24–46.

[11] J. H. Wiffen, *Historical Memoirs of the House of Russell; From the Times of the Norman Conquest*, 2 vols. (London, 1833), 2:126.

[12] Conrad Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637–1642* (Oxford, 1991), 239.

[13] Francis Russell, Commonplace book, WA, MS HMC 11.

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responded to political crisis. The notebook reveals how deeply embedded Russell was in the world of manuscript exchange and how well connected he was to informers and networks that afforded access to printed books, manuscripts, and oral material. Because some texts from which he copied, especially manuscripts, had limited readerships, Russell can now be situated among, or near to, sociopolitical circles that were close to the heart of Jacobean policy making. Above all, the notebooks show how a man of his stature educated himself. Russell seems always to have taken seriously the responsibilities of statesmanship, and so closer study of these formative years can underpin reevaluation of the earl's significance in political and cultural history, especially in the 1630s and early 1640s.

Russell is best remembered for the development of Covent Garden, fen drainage, and his short-lived but explosive political career during the parliamentary crisis of 1640–41.[14] For the years covered by the notebook, 1620–1622, he can be glimpsed only imperfectly. One example is his prompt contribution of £100, paid according to his rank, in the benevolence for military intervention in the Palatinate raised from the peerage by the Privy Council in October 1620. Others wrote to the council excusing themselves on the grounds of having already donated privately to Frederick's ambassador in London, Baron Achatius von Dohna; some stated "their disabilitie," or promised to contribute later.[15] Whether Russell's contribution was fueled by his ideological commitment to the cause or by political expediency is difficult to interpret in isolation—an issue I return to below.

The other aspect of Russell's life from 1620 to 1622 concerns his parliamentary record. From 1614 until 1626, he sat in the House of Lords as Lord Russell, Baron Thornhaugh (and, following his succession in 1627, as the 4th Earl of Bedford). Paul Hunneyball has examined Russell's increased political activity once the Parliament of 1621 was called. This activity included acts of electoral patronage, a high attendance record ("84 per cent of the sittings"), and appointment to no less than fifty-two committees that associated Russell with the major parliamentary affairs: for example, on peers' privileges, the impeachment of Edward Floyd, the inquiries into monopolies centered around Giles Mompesson and the Duke of Buckingham, and the fall of Lord Chancellor Francis Bacon. (After serving on three committees dealing with the allegations of bribery against Bacon, Russell helped "to compile the final set of charges.") Russell was also involved with legislation around arms and ordinance and bills preventing recusancy, both associated with the response to the Palatinate crisis.[16] When he took part in a conference between the Lords and Commons in April 1621 to discuss the Bill of Informers, he made what was probably his single speech (no

[14] For example, see Clayton Roberts, "The Earl of Bedford and the Coming of the English Revolution," *Journal of Modern History* 49, no. 4 (1977): 600–16; Conrad Russell, s.v. "Russell, Francis, Fourth Earl of Bedford (bap. 1587, d. 1641)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24307; Paul Hunneyball, s.v. "Russell, Francis (1587–1641)," in *The House of Lords, 1603–1629*, ed. Andrew Thrush, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 2021), 3:505–15.

[15] Hunneyball, "Russell, Francis," 506. See further, Circular Letter from the Council, The National Archives, London, SP 14/117, fol. 73 (hereafter this repository is abbreviated as TNA); Lists of the Nobility, Bishops, and Deans Who Paid in Their Moneys, TNA, SP 14/118, fol. 81. For examples of letters declining further support, see TNA, SP 14/117, fols. 136, 174, 176–77, 179.

[16] Hunneyball, "Russell, Francis," 507–8.

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text or relation of it survives).[17] There is also some evidence of manuscript circulation from parliamentary sources: the minute book of parliamentary clerk Henry Elsyng, which reveals that Russell requested copies of a letter by Francis Bacon (26 March 1621) and the king's speech (27 March 1621).[18] As Conrad Russell notes, "the growing frequency and importance of Lord Russell's committee nominations before he inherited the earldom suggests that he was trusted and respected in the house." He was "a rare speaker," but "this is less significant than it might have been in the Commons. The quiet word with interested parties, and the tidy adjustment in committee, were much more effective weapons in the Lords than skill in oratory."[19] Even without direct evidence of how Russell conducted himself in the Lords, there is little doubt of his political commitment, and the notebook can shed new light on these activities at least in terms of Russell's formative reading, much of which can be related back to his parliamentary activities.

Russell's notebook for 1620–1622 is one of about twenty-five similar notebooks surviving in the private archives of Woburn Abbey, along with a larger manuscript collection associated with Russell, including formal commonplace books under headings—the largest of these, the four-volume commonplace in his secretary's hand, mentioned above, spanning many years and running to thousands of pages[20]—and manuscripts made by others and owned and annotated by Russell. Throughout, this corpus shows overwhelming evidence of thorough, even obsessive engagement, analysis, and organization of texts and knowledge. There is little to suggest that Russell was often guilty of reading (in Cavendish's words) "in post-haste,"[21] though some of his reading and scribal work was undertaken by a secretary who produced summaries. Apart from his secretary's intercalated list of contents and a few notes that seem to refer to the copying of material across to the commonplace books, the notebook for 1620–1622 is almost exclusively in Russell's hand.

The manuscript, Woburn Abbey MS HMC 26, contains 139 folios and is written predominantly on the rectos only. Bound within the first thirty-nine leaves are narrow paper strips that run the length of the gutter and accommodate marginal annotations, largely thematic "heds." Folio 1r is headed "Polipragmon," a rare noun in English usage denoting a zealous person going about his duties officiously. What Russell likely had in mind was "the Jacobean busy-body. . . fascinated with the affairs of his nation and the world rather than those of his neighbors."[22] Such men were often satirized for their hunger for news, rumor, and gossip. They congregated at St. Paul's Cathedral, where they walked the central aisle as they gathered their news in conversation, exchanged scribal and printed newsletters, and frequented the many

[17] Wallace Notestein, Frances Helen Relf, and Hartley Simpson, eds., *Commons Debates, 1621*, 7 vols. (New Haven, 1935), 3:85; 5:350; 6:102.

[18] Minute book, HL/PO/JO/5/1/1, 10, 19, Parliamentary Archives, London. I am grateful to Noah Millstone for this reference.

[19] Russell, "Russell, Francis."

[20] Russell, Commonplace book, WA, MS HMC 11.

[21] Cavendish, *Horæ Subseciuæ*, sigs. P4r–v.

[22] Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621–1624* (Cambridge, 1989), 21.

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nearby bookstalls that were themselves centers for social interaction and the exchange of news.

The pages so headed in the notebook contain short extracts and commonplaces—often one-liners—gathered while Russell went about his life. They include items of gossip, short phrases overheard, witty or moral maxims, and scraps of reading, among them many of his own carefully turned coinages (marked "FR" or "FR own"). This material, consistently termed *meselania* (that is, miscellanea) by Russell's secretary, who indexed the volume, pads out the manuscript in sections rarely longer than a few pages, until a longer text presented itself and Russell set to work reading in earnest. Folio 1r contains, among other things, a note on laws in Devon from "Glan [ville]" and a description of the king of Spain at communion attributed to "Doctor Hall." The reverse folio includes notes on drunkenness, more observations about the Spanish king (his being impoverished, according to "Cecil"), recollections of Essex, Raleigh, Salisbury, and Walsingham attributed to "Lo[rd] Canter[bury]," words recalled from the bishops of London ("I haue red of a mersy seate in heuen but neuer of a stole of meritse") and of Lincoln (on witches), all of this peppered with Russell's own witticisms. What appears to be a citation from Pliny—"that Aristomenes had a hayry hart"—turns out to be quarried from Hubert's *Historie of Edward the Second*, a text that Russell would extract from a few pages later (see below).[23]

News from the Palatinate also crops up in these sections. The first is an analogy between Frederick, Elector Palatine, and Christ, in that both were "elected" to do God's work, cited as originating from "Walker"—perhaps the William Walker who was a minister at St. Nicholas Church at Chiswick.[24] Whereas many of these materials are hard to date, a remark on folio 1v provides the manuscript with its *terminus a quo*: "The londoners ar contributing toe pouelse and by the pole to the k[ing] of bohemia FR." Russell's homophonic witticism recalls King James's visit in March 1620 to St. Paul's Cathedral, which was in disrepair and in need of donors, while Achatius von Dohna collected donations to pay for the voluntary force to the Palatinate. Russell's quip asks the first of many questions about what he actually thought as he penned it: raising money "by the poll" may neutrally describe what Russell considered a kind of poll tax, but "to poll" also meant "to plunder or pillage by or as by excessive taxation."[25] Russell's wordplay reflects the diversity of opinion otherwise espoused in the news items he recorded. "Walker" clearly regarded Frederick as a Christlike figure, but other snippets of reported opinion in the manuscript take a more critical line. On folio 12r, for instance, Russell noted, "It is sayd thay that should contribut to this warr of Bohemia without the kings express decleration shuld fall intoe a premunire." These were the words of "Lin,"[26] probably the

[23] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 1r.

[24] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 1r. Since the earl's marriage to Katherine Brydges in 1609, the Russells had lived at Chiswick; see Dianne Duggan, "The Russells of Corney House," *Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal*, no. 9 (2000), https://brentfordandchiswicklhs.org.uk/publications/the-journal/journal-9-2000/the-russells-of-corney-house/.

[25] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 1v; *Oxford English Dictionary* online, s.v. "poll," III.5a. On the king's visit to St. Paul's, see David Coast, *News and Rumour in Jacobean England: Information, Court Politics, and Diplomacy, 1618–25* (Manchester, 2014), 63–64.

[26] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 12r.

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bishop of Lincoln, George Montaigne. If Russell was in agreement, this explains his prompt payment of £100 to the Privy Council (or at least the fact he had not already made a private contribution, as had some).

Other related news items reveal both the variety in viewpoints and the kinds of informers Russell drew from. Directly following a citation from 1 John 5:16 attributed to Richard Senhouse, chaplain to Prince Charles and later bishop of Carlisle, is the unambiguous assertion that "Ther should be continnuall and suddayn ayd to help the K of Bohemia." As one "Denis" (perhaps the courtier Edward, Lord Denny, later 1st Earl of Norwich) reported following Frederick's defeat, "Boquay that toke prage and defeted the K of Bohemias army wase taken prisner by Sir Nicolas Parker diuers tiemse."[27] An informant identified by the initials PI contributed something that became partially obscured by Russell's hasty transcription and garbled syntax: the "Lo[rd] of Donkester in his negotiation to ^the K[ing] of^ Bohemiha and emperor and dubbel instructions and cross toe booth prinses"—something Russell filed away under the theme of "imbasadors."[28]

From Sir Edward Sackville, lauded orator in the Commons, came the following assessment: "Cannot consewe [conceive] how or why the emperor should restor the palatinat because he hath pawned upper austria to Bauier for his charges which if he should restor the Palatinat he must lowse upper austria or Bauier be a mighty Louser . . . That Bauiers charge hath grown for his owne safty for his nayburs cuntries wase a fier [afire, ablaze] the emperors and his would haue bien next and so if Bauier haue pece it is a recompence for his charge In pollycy we ought mayntayn low cuntryes for if K of spayn taks it taks us next."[29]

Sackville's voice is that of political reasoning, arguing by analogy that, as Maximilian I, Duke of Bavaria ("Bavier"), cannot give up his newly acquired lands of the Upper Palatinate since it acted as safety barrier for the empire, so England must now assist the Low Countries in order to maintain a line of defense against Spain. Sackville was a powerful force in the 1621 parliamentary session: as a member of Parliament, he worked on several cases that also concerned Russell in the Lords (for example, the committee on privileges, and the punishment of Mompesson). Later in the manuscript, Russell took notes from one of Sackville's many speeches (discussed below).

The *meselania* situate Russell squarely within a news network featuring bishops, members of Parliament, courtiers, politicians, and preachers. Such notes allow for a more precise prosopography of Russell's circles, and the often informal, even gossipy nature of the items also add to the more formal discourses, such as sermons and speeches, that have survived more commonly in the historical record. Moreover, these news items supplemented Russell's more sustained reading on related subjects and no doubt informed his own political and ideological positioning.

The first substantial text interrupting Russell's polipragmon returns us to the reading of history: "Notse out of E2," or Sir Francis Hubert's *Historie of Edward the Second*, also known as *The Deplorable Life and Death of Edward the Second*.[30]

[27] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 18r, 36r. "Boquay" is Charles Bonaventure de Longueval, Count of Bucquoy, who commanded the imperial army at the Battle of White Mountain.

[28] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 36r.

[29] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 77v–78r.

[30] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 4r–12r.

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This long poem survives in three versions that were marketed successively to Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline readers, ultimately growing to 664 stanzas of rhyme royal. At its first completion in the latter 1590s, Elizabethan censors prohibited printing because of Hubert's critical portrayal of royal favorites Piers Gaveston and the Despenser family and his frank coverage of a weak king and his deposition. Manuscripts continued to circulate in the Jacobean period. Alastair Bellany and Thomas Cogswell report that before the poem was pirated in print (1628) and revised and reissued by Hubert a year later, "in the mid-1620s the poem leaked into the literary underground, becoming a high-end scribal separate traded by men like [Ralph] Starkey." There is no evidence that Russell was ever a client of professional manuscript suppliers like Starkey, but his reading of the poem anticipated an intense interest in a text marketed by Starkey to Sir John Scudamore as a "rare and possibly dangerous piece of writing."[31]

Conveyed in a piece of literary ventriloquism in the voice of a fallen and contrite Edward II before his death, Hubert's poem is a study in moral and political failure. Russell's notes are typical for his copying of verse more generally, in that they show virtually no interest in the formal aspects of poetic craft (such as it was, in Hubert's unsteady hands). Rather, Russell read, at least in part, for historical narrative and the finely worded phrase, gathering redeployable *sententiae* that he keyed to marginal headings (such as "fortun," "kings," "youth," "flattery," "desier," "fauorits"). His opening notes truncate the poem's first nine stanzas, or sixty-three lines:

> In hyest fortunn cast by fortun down:
> A prinses platforme
> He that is weake subiects the frame of his owne building and dooth idly
> blam fortun which wise men make to wayt one them
> building one that which former tims did squar
> faults which cannot be withstud
> Ks that se by other eyse mistakings dooth arise.
> this bans most the Thron that of his falts the least part is his owne.[32]

These notes render the poem virtually unrecognizable. This is Hubert's corresponding stanza 6:

> And thou (*great King*) that now dost weild our *State*,
> Building on that, which former times did square,
> Oh let it not be thought to derogate
> From thy perfections, (admirable rare)
> If some errors of these times declare:
> Sure neuer *State* was so precisely good,
> But faults haue scap'd, which could not be withstood.[33]

Even making allowances for Russell's memory, it is difficult to imagine how such notes would be of use without their stating more of what this stanza is actually

[31] Alastair Bellany and Thomas Cogswell, *The Murder of King James I* (New Haven, 2015), 304–5.

[32] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 4r.

[33] Francis Hubert, *The Deplorable Life and Death of Edward the Second, King of England, Together with the downefall of the two vnfortunate fauorits, Gauestone and Spencer; Storied in an excellent poëm* (London, 1628), sigs. A3r, A4r.

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about: that is, Hubert's apology to James, designed openly to forestall and surreptitiously to encourage contemporary application of the poem.

In fact, it is exactly because of analogical reading that this poem retained its currency. Russell made at least one such application. It arises toward the close of the poem, where Edward II curses the architects of his downfall (Queen Isabella, Mortimer, and Tarleton) and aphoristically observes that (as Russell phrases it) "when others stumbel kings fall headlong down ther is noe mean between a graue and crown."[34] Russell underlined the phrase and penned into the margin "K Bohe." The common sentiment that, where mere men stumble, kings take mighty falls, if noted early in 1620, applied to Frederick V with a degree of ambiguity. It was prophetic of the Winter King's loss of his kingdom later that year and so perhaps indicative of how Russell saw his future unfold. Alternatively, it may speak more favorably of what Russell deemed Frederick's determination, leaving no option other than a "graue" or a "crown"—death or kingship. As with the quip on "poll" noted above, Russell's application remains ambiguous, and perhaps that was the point: the sentiment could be used regardless of one's view regarding the Palatinate; and these views, moreover, might change as political circumstances developed.

This application is also remarkably against the grain, at least considering later usage of the poem's discussion of overbearing royal favorites. Much of this discussion revolved around Edward's fatal reliance on bad counselors: Piers Gaveston (a man who, as Russell noted, was "a centaure half a man half a best: a plesing ciren: This Angell deuill"), but also the two men who took Gaveston's place, Hugh Despenser the younger and the elder.[35] Russell took extensive notes from Edward's (retrospective) moral speech on when his "Spencers"[36] led him further astray from good government. Addressing future princes, Edward counseled, in Russell's words, "Tis not enough that prinses ar Just but those whom thay put in trust, and gouern by the law and not their lust."[37] Russell, as a descendant of two privy councilors and as a son of a father with a distinct track record of military and diplomatic service to the crown, was continually interested in the tropes of good counsel. Conrad Russell has already established that "one of the savagest, and most uniform, sections of the commonplace books is that on favourites."[38]

Other commentators recalled Gaveston and the Despensers as textbook examples of moral depravity—for instance, in an anonymous poem (ca. 1604–5) against Henry Brook, Baron Cobham, supporter of the Main Plot that aimed to unseat James VI/I in favor of Arabella Stuart.[39] Later instances may be found in texts by major establishment figures, including a speech by Francis Bacon in 1612, a revenue tract by Robert Cotton of the same year, and Sir Walter Raleigh's 1615 *Dialogue*.[40] Yet the most public and explosive use of the story came a little after Russell

[34] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 11r. For the corresponding passage, see Hubert, *Deplorable Life and Death of Edward the Second*, sig. I1r.

[35] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 5r.

[36] Hubert, *Deplorable Life and Death of Edward the Second*, sig. D8v.

[37] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 8r.

[38] Russell, "Russell, Francis."

[39] "Proud Gaviston and both the Spencers fell," British Library, London, Add. MS 38139, fol. 193r. (Hereafter this repository is abbreviated as BL.)

[40] See "The Charge of Whitelocke" (summary report of Privy Council proceedings, 1612), in *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon* [. . .], vol. 4, ed. James Spedding (London, 1868), 353–57, at 354. Full texts of

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read Hubert's poem, when, in April 1621, the former attorney general, Sir Henry Yelverton, was called to give testimony to the House of Lords. This testimony concerned the impeachment of Francis Bacon and investigation of the abuse of monopolies. In his speech, Yelverton, who had played his own part in a corrupt system as commissioner of patents, laid the blame at the feet of George Villiers, Marquess of Buckingham. Addressing the Lords, Yelverton attacked James's favorite in the starkest of terms: "I dare say if my Lord of Buckingham had but read the articles exhibited in this place against Hugh Spencer, and had known the danger of placing and displacing officers about a King, he would not have pursued me with such bitterness."[41] In recalling an earlier parliament's deposition of Edward II and the removal of his evil counsel, Yelverton offered a distressing parable figuring Buckingham as the corrupt counselor and James as feeble king. The speech shocked the Lords, and James promptly jailed Yelverton. The impact of the case and its literary afterlife led Curtis Perry to describe it as "a template for many of the period's political preoccupations: autarchic ambition, royal favouritism, patronage and its sodomitical inversions, the limits of authority and prerogative, the duty of subjects, tyranny, and the connection between government and self-government."[42] As an analogical reader, Russell thus had his finger firmly on the pulse. If there is no evidence that he played a proactive role in propagating the political applications of the tale, his close reading demonstrates at least a political awareness of the history's potential use. A final and intriguing side note is one of Russell's *meselania*; subscribed "Yeluertun leter" and glossed with the keyword "frends," it reads, "I ame glad to se that yor hand hath cast noe ^of the^ dust in my face."[43] As members of a small elite, Russell and Yelverton were of course acquainted, and perhaps Russell sided with the disgraced attorney or was at least sympathetic to Yelverton's attack on Buckingham.

Russell soon turned from reading history to more topical material. The new text, a short piece of Bohemian propaganda, "A Calculation uppon the Paulsgraues name," continues on the same folio where the notes from Hubert conclude:

Freder J C V s ii Bohe M J a R e X
MDCXIX
Freder I C V s, Re X ro M an V s
MDCXXI
Freder I C Vs, I M perator a V g U st V s
MDCXXII.[44]

These are chronograms—short texts with accentuated majuscules that denote their value as a roman numeral and add up to significant dates. Chronograms regarding

Cotton and Raleigh and their extensive manuscript bibliographies are available at Noah Millstone, Sebastiaan Verweij, and Richard Thomas Bell, Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England, https://mpese.ac.uk/.

[41] *Journals of the House of Lords*, vol. 3, *1620–1628* (London, 1767), 121. For further details on the affair, see Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592–1628* (London, 1981), 100–5.

[42] Curtis Perry, "Yelverton, Buckingham, and the Story of Edward II in the 1620s," *Review of English Studies* 54, no. 215 (2003): 313–35, at 315.

[43] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 22r.

[44] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 12r.

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Frederick had circulated on the Continent as printed broadsides at least since 1619 and were put to panegyric and satirical purpose.[45]

The chronograms in Russell's notebook circulated more broadly in England, and one copy (in a manuscript owned by Sir Julius Caesar and acquired on 23 November 1619, just nineteen days after Frederick's coronation) provides a gloss. In the first chronogram, it explained, "all the numerall Letters of that in Latyne; (signifieng Frederick the second, King of Bohemia;) doe make up the yeare of our lorde, wherein hee is elected to that Crowne." For the second, "All the numerall letters . . . (importing Frederick King of the Romanes;) arise to the yere, 1621. And I hope as it happens to iustifie the nomber; soe it will then make good the title, yf not before." In the third, "[T]the same fortune is founde in this presupposed Imperiall dignitie wished vnto hym; (the wordes intending Frederick the Emperour;) where there appeares the onely fitt nomber of the yeare 1622. May the twoe last I praie God prove as true as the first."[46] The chronograms thus underwrite the hope that a Protestant ruler would rise to the imperial throne and so complete the reformation of central Europe. James never acknowledged Frederick's kingship, addressing him in letters as "le Prince Electeur Palatin du Rhin"; the chronograms therefore signal a more radical support than was royally sanctioned.[47]

An added interest to Russell's copy is its subscription, "Cecill." This is probably in reference to Sir Edward Cecil, to whom several texts elsewhere in the manuscript are attributed. Russell (mis)attributed to him "A short uew of Great Britanny and Spayn"; he also copied short notes from Cecil's forged speech to the Lower House; a witticism on how the Dutch split a dinner bill ("according to ther quallities and not equally or according to their eating"); a rhetorical flourish on the subject of "frends" ("I haue had thoughts aboue you and belowe you: and neuer any of you that wase hurtful to you"); and notes on making gunpowder.[48] Their informality suggests that Russell gathered these phrases in social settings (if indeed he did so, firsthand). Cecil campaigned hard to achieve an English commitment to the Palatinate, and as a professional soldier with years of service in the Low Countries, he only narrowly missed out on the command of the English force raised by von Dohna. Cecil was therefore a likely figure to circulate this propagandistic fortune-telling regarding the Elector Palatine to well-meaning friends, and was counted among several of Russell's acquaintances who proactively supported military intervention.

Russell also transcribed four documents that reveal his interest in the ideological and legalistic aspects of the deposition of Ferdinand II and Frederick's election, and of England's responsibilities arising from the defensive alliance between King James and the Protestantische Union, struck in 1612 and renewed in 1619.[49] Two sets of notes derived from the printed propaganda then flooding the English

[45] *Frederick V, King of Bohemia and Elector Palatine*, 1619, line engraving, 13 7/8 x 9 7/8" (353mm x 251mm) paper size, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG D26190.

[46] Julius Caesar, Various Papers of Chancery, Admiralty, and other business, BL, Lansdowne MS 162, fols. 189–90.

[47] Brennan C. Pursell, *The Winter King: Frederick V of the Palatinate and the Coming of the Thirty Years' War* (London, 2003), 132.

[48] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 12r, 20r, 22r, 28r, 43v.

[49] Samuel R. Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603–1642*, vol. 3, *1616–1621* (London, 1907), 285–86.

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bookstalls.[50] From the *Reasons which compelled the States of Bohemia to reiect Archiduke Ferdinand*, Russell copied that it was Ferdinand who "wase neuer lawfully elected" since primogeniture had failed in Bohemia, and as a result "the Kdume of Bohemia euer since the cuntry hath bien inhabited hath had a fre election of ther prince: which hath bien confirmed to them by the Emperors goulden Buls as that of the Emp: Frederik in 1212: et 1216: that the stats of that kingdum might choyse a K: of ther own: fre will and that the emperors were to giue ther regall rights to hime."[51] Such constitutional debate consumed the continental corantos that made their way to England and were broadly debated at court and in London.[52]

In the two above examples, Russell engaged with publicly available discourse, but other items suggest an access to documents with more restricted readerships: "Resons of Baron Done to the K: obiections which ar toe His Maie: refuseth to giue assistans," and "Resons Pro et Contra betewn the K and Bautig [Baltic ?] cause uppon the question whether his ma[jesty] be tied by confederation with the prinses of the union to send succer to the prinses of the union according to the poynts of the contract."[53] No printed witnesses or other scribal copies have (yet) been discovered for the two items Russell copied from here, raising the possibility they were manuscript texts for privileged readers.[54] Both document the negotiations undertaken in the first two months of 1620 between James and Frederick's envoy to London, Baron von Dohna. Since their outcome would shape the future of the Bohemian conflict, the meetings were closely observed. On 14 January 1620, Noel de Caron reported home to the Dutch Republic that he found the king "somewhat unresolved" after having twice met with von Dohna. The Venetian envoy Lando confirmed on 20 January how von Dohna was "engaged in incessant disputation with the King [and] has had two very long audiences." Matters dragged on, since on 4 February, Diego de la Fuenta reported to Philip II that James "has postponed giving his final answer to Baron Dohna"; on 11 February, Lando wrote that "the king is quite contented and satisfied . . . [that] the kingdom of Bohemia is elective or hereditary, yet he wishes to have explanation on the rightfulness of Ferdinand's deposition; so that Dohna has to return for this purpose to his Majesty in a week's time." On 18 February, de Caron reported that von Dohna was still "very busy getting together his second memorial upon the points which the agents of Spain and the Archdukes set forth to the king . . . and [de Caron] understand[s] from a person who has seen it that it is well and solidly penned."[55]

[50] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 16r, 17r; *The Reasons which compelled the States of Bohemia to reiect Archiduke Ferdinand* [. . .] (Dort, 1619); *The declaration and information of the high and puissant King of Bohemia* [. . .] (London, 1620).

[51] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 16r.

[52] On these continental newsbooks in England, see Jayne E. E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge, 2011).

[53] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 14r, 15r.

[54] See, however, two related documents: a record of Dohna's discourse with the king at Windsor, 16 September 1620, TNA, SP 81/18 fol. 92; Dohna's remonstrance of 1621, TNA, SP 81/20, fol. 354. Both are in French, the language in which the ambassador undertook most of his correspondence—for instance, with Secretary of State George Calvert, or with Francis Nethersole. Because Russell's copies of the "Reasons" are in English, they were likely translated for limited circulation.

[55] Samuel R. Gardiner, ed., *Letters and Other Documents Illustrating the Relations between England and Germany at the Commencement of the Thirty Years' War*, second series (London, 1868), 141, 148, 160, 165, 174.

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While in England, Von Dohna petitioned nearly every person of influence, and Russell too received his letter. He copied among the *meselania* a brief extract from "Barone Dona. letter to me: K Bohemia": "A Cause blessed by god with many successfull victories which marks it for his owne and to personns that ar issews of your Souerayn and so you shall doe it to yor owne."[56] Russell must have been cognizant, too, of the fact that some his own family members were fervent supporters, first and foremost Lucy Harington, 3rd Countess of Bedford, who from the 1620s onward became a campaigner for the relief of Princess Elizabeth, corresponding directly with her and with Dudley Carleton in The Hague. In fact, Julia Crawford noted that Bedford House in London "assumed a controversial political status in the 1620s," and "a contemporary satire . . . imagined Bedford House as a site of political machinations," even a "'puritan shrine,'" and the location, somewhat later, of an attempted sabotage of the Spanish match.[57] Bedford House was also frequented by people with intimate knowledge of the conference between James and von Dohna—for instance, Francis Nethersole, who had served as secretary to Doncaster and who upon his return to London in 1619 was appointed as secretary to Princess Elizabeth and made the English representative to the Union.[58] Around the time that Russell made his notes from the manuscripts, Nethersole wrote to Dudley Carlton from Bedford House (20 February 1620), with perhaps better intelligence and further access to the documents to which the various ambassadors had alluded. Nethersole reported that James "delivered unto the Baron Donah an Information presented to him by the Spanish Ministers in favor of the Emperor" and had invited a reply. Nethersole "had the happines to see all these writinges, but have spared the paynes as yet to take copyes of them, because we have here an opinion that they will be very shortly printed."[59]

Russell's relations with the Countess of Bedford are not well understood, but his proximity to these Bohemian sympathizers makes it likely that he accessed manuscript material via his family networks. The "Resons Pro et Contra" takes a legalistic line and answers James's reasoning that "the alliance is puerly defensiue and the prinses of the union siding with the palatien in the cause of Bohemia which the K tooke to be offensiue and so he not teid."[60] Von Dohna even charged James with "rashnes" for destabilizing the alliance between the king of England and the princes of the union. The other tract, "Resons of Baron Done," answers two points: "1. For that thay ar not yet assaulted," and "2. For that thay ar noe more uppon the defensiue." Von Dohna responded with vigor to both, arguing how the Catholic league took up arms first, and how they outnumbered the Union's forces, threatened several cities, solicited the pope, and "openly threaten[ed] the palatinat." If von Dohna's argument that, without English assistance, "thay shall be driuen to be

[56] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 19r.

[57] Julia Crawford, *Mediatrix: Women, Politics, and Literary Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2014), 158–59. It is unclear when Bedford House became Russell's more regular residence; Hunneyball, "Russell, Francis," 505, suggests it might have been as early as 1619, but it seems that Lucy Bedford kept her own court there at the time.

[58] B. C. Pursell, s.v. "Nethersole, Sir Francis (bap. 1587, d. 1659)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19906.

[59] Gardiner, *Letters and Other Documents*, 176–80.

[60] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 15r.

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disunited and utterly ruined" might have held some sway, Russell's side note suggests he was not unsympathetic to the king's position. The ambassador made the point that "as concerning the cause of Bohemia thay haue protested by letter thay had noe hand in it as letter to our king aperse."[61] Frederick did in fact write to James, but accepted the crown of Bohemia before James had a chance to reply. As a result, "James was furious. Not only had his good faith been impugned, but his relations with Spain, the cornerstone of his entire foreign policy, was placed in jeopardy."[62] It seems that on this matter Russell was sympathetic to James, since an annotation acknowledged Frederick's misjudgment: "K sayd the leter his son writ to him about it was befor the taking of croun but befoer it came to hime he touk the croun of Bohemia."[63]

In the notebook, Russell next turns to more recent history, that of the late Elizabethan involvement in the war between Spain and the Low Countries. He took a quick set of notes from "Extremities pressing Sir Fra: ver to offer a Ante parle to the Arch Duk Albertus ostend"[64]—that is, a 1602 pamphlet explaining to English readers the most recent development at the Siege of Ostend under the leadership of Sir Francis Vere.[65] By the time Russell read the tract, Vere had been dead for more than ten years, but the pamphlet was again topical because the twelve-year Dutch-Spanish truce was coming to an end. Moreover, Vere's younger brother, Sir Horace, had recently left London in command of the English volunteer army raised by Von Dohna. Russell's own family background would have instilled an interest. His father, William Russell, Baron Thornhaugh, had played an active role in late-Elizabethan pro-Dutch and anti-Spanish affairs: he served as lieutenant general in the Low Countries in 1585, fought the Spanish at Zutphen in 1586, succeeded as governor of the cautionary town of Flushing, and commanded the West Counties when Spanish invasion once again threatened in the late 1590s.[66]

Within the space of two leaves, Russell then draws on a work titled "A short uew of Great Britanny and Spayn."[67] A weight of manuscript evidence and the editorial labors of James Spedding have attributed this tract to Francis Bacon, but Russell considered it "written by Sir Ed Cecill." [68] Just as Hubert's history was sold by Starkey, so the "Short View" circulated on the scribal marketplace: two extant manuscripts are in the hand of the professional scribe "Feathery."[69] It also features on a list of scribal

[61] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 14v.

[62] Zaller, "Interest of State," 146.

[63] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 14v.

[64] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 18r.

[65] *Extremeties Vrging the Lord General Sir Fra. Veare to Offer the Late Anti-Parle with the Arch-Duke Albertus* (London, 1602).

[66] J. J. N. McGurk, s.v. "Russell, William, First Baron Russell of Thornhaugh (c.1553–1613)," *Oxford Dictionary of National* Biography *Online*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24342.

[67] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 20r.

[68] Spedding, Letters and Life of Bacon, 7:22–28; Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 20r. The "Short View" is slated for inclusion in *The Oxford Francis Bacon*, vol. 7, *Political and Legal Writings, 1613–1626*, ed. Chris R. Kyle (forthcoming).

[69] On Feathery, see Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes: Manuscripts and Their Makers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998), 58–108.

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pamphlets, likely a sales catalogue of the type produced by professional manuscript purveyors.[70]

Russell's confusion over authorship can be understood in light of Bacon's apparently vacillating convictions around Spain and English foreign policy. Edwin Abbott professed surprise that, in 1617, Bacon wrote strongly in favor of a Spanish alliance but two years later reversed position and in the "Short View" "inveighs against Spain as an empire whose policy has been bloody, corrupting, treacherous, and unnatural."[71] The author of the tract bluntly proposes that a newly united Britain join with the Low Countries to wage open war with Spain, attacking the mainland and cutting off its supply routes from the Indies. Its author assesses Spain's weaknesses in terms of unmanageably large dominions, mutineering seamen, and increasing poverty. Russell also copied what was this text's rhetorical high—"Whoe hath bien so thirsty for our blud as spayn whoe hath spilt more then he whoe hath bien so long our enimy whoe hath corrupted so many of our nation as he and with the help of his gould which he Inioys in respect of the neglect of this design"—and the description of James as "the greatest Islander of Chrissendum" and a "defendor of the fayth" who must undertake the work of "planting of the trew church."[72] When Russell read this tract in the first half of 1620, it was little short of incendiary, since for the majority of the years 1619 to 1621, England and Spain conducted what Robert Zaller has termed "a curious diplomatic ballet" while the Anglo-Spanish match was still being pursued.[73] The "Short View" represents some of Russell's most militantly anti-Spanish reading, and this explains, too, his (mis)attribution of it to Cecil. Such a text would also curry favor with the hotter English Protestants who wished not for a Spanish princess but for English boots on continental ground.

Russell's notebook for 1620–1622 contains the records of at least six (quasi-) speeches and letters. Two were not contemporary at the time Russell took his notes: Sir Charles Cornwallis's "apollogie out of the Tower" (1614) and "The Erle of Salsburry Tresorer spech toe booth houses" (1610).[74] Notes taken from two others return to the heart of debate about the Palatinate. Sir Edward Sackville's speech to the Lower House in February 1621 arose from committee work on the financial burdens of sending troops to aid Frederick. Sackville recommended, as Russell noted, that "25000 foete and 5000 horse fitt to be sent to recouer the palatinate" and that "ther ought to be disbursed 300,000 l for the prouision of shuch ane army." Sackville's speech was widely circulated in manuscript, the form in which Russell likely also encountered it. A supralinear addition to the heading "A spech ^ to be spoken ^ in the Lower howse" suggests that Russell may have been in possession of an advance copy, and this, too, would make sense given his appointment to

[70] The catalogue listing the "Short View" appears in Composite Volume of State Tracts, Letters and Speeches, BL, Hargrave MS 311, fols. 206r–7v: "6. A short view taken of great Brittaine & Spaine in matter of power." At least ten copies survive: eight are listed in Peter Beal, Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts, 1450–1700, https://celm-ms.org.uk/; and other copies are listed in Millstone, Verweij, and Bell, Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England.

[71] Edwin A. Abbott, *Francis Bacon: An Account of His Life and Works* (London, 1885), 278.

[72] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 20r.

[73] Zaller, "Interest of State," 147.

[74] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 47v.

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the Lords' committee on the bills of arms. Yet the reading notes indicate that what really drew Russell's eye was not the details of military provisioning but Sackville's rhetoric and the gnomic wisdom that bolstered the speech: for example, that "k[ing]s ar souerayns unto us but subiects unto tieme," and that "with k[ing]s the way toe conquer is toe submitt" (that is, give James what he asks for now, so that in turn the king would enter into a more reciprocal relationship with Parliament later).[75]

Russell also took a very short set of notes from "Sr Ed Cecilse spech in the Lower House," but in this case, not all was as it seemed: the speech was never delivered and was possibly forged (perhaps with Cecil's knowledge). In respect of its anti-Spanish position, it takes a leaf from the "Short View" and relates the question of supporting the Palatinate to "the catholiek king whose ambition it hath euer bien through the help of religion to thrust at the hart of the stat[e]." Philip II desired nothing less than "uniuersall monarchy," and so "Cecil" urged members of Parliament to vote for subsidies to ensure adequate protection of England's interests.[76] Some manuscripts of this text, including Russell's copy, suggest Cecil's authorship, but when it was printed later in 1622, other readers (for instance, John Chamberlain) questioned Cecil's hand because of the style. Cecil's biographers have suggested he might have commissioned it from the dramatist Cyril Tourner.[77] There is nothing in Russell's notes to suggest he knew that this speech was forged or that it was never delivered.

In August 1621, it fell to newly appointed lord keeper, John Williams, to address at the Guildhall the civic authorities of London on the matter of a subsidy voted for earlier that year in Parliament (in part the outcome of the Sackville speech above), "as a supplie and a support to the manifold occasions of the kinges expences."[78] This polished speech dwells at length on the legality of subsidies, citing biblical precedent and ancient Roman and English history (in Russell's phrasing, "For the contynuall practize of this kingdom it is not vnknowne . . . that o[u]r king[es] of old, were not wont to receaue but to impose subsedies"),[79] culminating (in William's full text) in a six-point list of imperatives ("You must remember . . .") stressing the need to grant the king his funds. Williams finally gets down to business, addressing the "persons" liable to pay and the "summes" to be levied.[80] Yet the opening of Russell's notes demonstrates his overarching reading strategy:

> Our blesed sauior neuer handled for ought we rede any coyn but this tribut munny
> Thay which caer for all should be releued by all
> As euery uayn must be content to bled for the preseruation of the hoele, so euer perticuler person to empty himself for the head
> A family is the broud egg of the commonwelth[81]

[75] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 39r.

[76] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 43v.

[77] Paula Watson, s.v. "Cecil, Sir Edward (1572–1638)," in *The House of Commons, 1604–1629*, ed. Andrew Thrush and John P. Ferris, 5 vols. (Cambridge, 2010), 3:470–81.

[78] John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, Speech to the Commissioners at the Guild Hall, August 1621, BL, Add. MS 4149, fols. 323r–27v.

[79] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 63r.

[80] Williams, Speech to the Commissioners at the Guild Hall, BL, Add. MS 4149, fols. 324v, 326r, 326v.

[81] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 63r.

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As in the Sackville example above, these are the rhetorical tropes of Williams's speech that color his request for money. Russell ignored many of the details such as exact sums and dwelt instead on exempla and William's rhetorical marshaling of England's constitutional history as a way to persuade the citizens of London. The latter subject —England's ancient constitution and its political history—was of enduring interest to Russell, as is evident from related reading elsewhere in the manuscript—for instance, William Warner's mytho-historic *Albions England* in verse,[82] Hubert's above-mentioned life of Edward II, and from the final text for discussion in this essay, Francis Bacon's life of Henry VII.

The extensive notes from Bacon are significant in this manuscript for several reasons. First, the bibliographical history of Bacon's life of Henry VII suggests that Russell was an early reader, perhaps even in manuscript. Second, Bacon's method and aims for this text align Russell with cutting-edge historiographical thinking. Finally, Bacon commanded a considerable amount of Russell's attention: reading and note taking from this text spilled over into other notebooks. The notebook for 1620–1622 contains notes from only the second half of the history, and Russell comments that "the rest that preseds [is] analised in a little paper book."[83]

Following his fall and exile from court, Bacon spent the summer of 1621 writing, and on 8 October 1621, he presented James with a manuscript.[84] The king enjoined a second reader, Fulke Greville, 1st Baron Brooke, whose positive assessment supported the royal imprimatur that followed early in January 1622. The *Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seuenth* was entered into the Stationers' Register on 9 February 1622, and the first evidence of its appearance in the bookstalls is a letter by John Chamberlain of 30 March. From their placement in the notebook, it seems that Russell took his notes sometime between November 1621 (the last item copied before Bacon is a set of extracts from another speech by John Williams, delivered on 9 November 1621) and 6 March 1622 (the date of Lancelot Andrewes's Ash Wednesday sermon, notes from which open a large block of notes on sermons given during Lent that Russell took from hearing).[85] Textual evidence is inconclusive because Russell's paraphrasing obscures what are the few textual cruxes between Bacon's manuscript (British Library, Additional MS 7804) and the printed version, which are very close. Some limited evidence opens the possibility that Russell had early access to a manuscript: for example, Russell's phrase "moer

[82] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 27r.

[83] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 73v. The "little book" seems not to have survived: it probably does not refer to Francis Russell, Composite Volume of State and Antiquarian Tracts and Papers, WA, MS HMC 27, fols. 133–38, which consists of yet further notes from Bacon's work in folio. Peter Beal erroneously records further notes from Bacon's history of Henry VII (from manuscript or print) in Francis Russell, Notebook ca. 1629–1630, WA, MS HMC 23, p. 18. Beal, BcF 215.1, Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts, 1450–1700, https://celm-ms.org.uk/authors/baconfrancis.html. In fact, these notes derive from Bacon's aborted history of Henry VIII, edited and printed by William Rawley in 1629.

[84] Francis Bacon, *The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh*, BL, Add. MS 7804. For this text's bibliographical history, see Michael Kiernan, introduction to Francis Bacon, *The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh and Other Works of the 1620s*, ed. Michael Kiernan, vol. 8 of *The Oxford Francis Bacon* (Oxford, 2012), xxi–lvi, xci–cvii (see also bibliographical descriptions and technical notes at 617–19.

[85] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 68r, 86–103. See further Williams's widely copied speech at first taking his seat in Chancery, 9 November 1621, Millstone, Verweij, and Bell, Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England.

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magnanimus then prudent" in the print runs "more magnanimous then prouident,"[86] an error typically arising from scribal abbreviation. The nature of Russell's exemplar matters because the overwhelming majority of evidence of the reception of Bacon's important history is predicated on the printed book.[87] In the same way that he may have gained access to the von Dohna tracts via family connections, so it seems plausible that these connections afforded access to Bacon's history: Fulke Greville was well known to Russell and to his father before him. Russell also transcribed large amounts of Greville's poetic and dramatic works, and in 1631 Russell's eldest daughter, Katherine, married Greville's adopted son, Robert, 2nd Baron Brooke.

At least Russell wasted no time once an opportunity came to read Bacon's history. The work's significance is (at least) threefold, first as an exemplum of annalistic historiography with distinct attention to cause and effect (and for that reason, also the psychology of Henry VII).[88] Second, scholars have argued for many topical readings, superimposing Henry's reign onto the Jacobean moment of the early 1620s in a variety of ways.[89] Third, as Daniel Woolf argues, the *Historie* was "aiming to instruct the reader in statecraft."[90] That intent explains Russell's sustained keying of extracts to single thematic heads: for example, "policy," "kings," "reputation," or, with a focus on the outcomes of bad kingship, "tresoun," "rebellion," or "inserrection." Other aspects of statecraft emerge from Bacon's relation of "one of the strangest examples of a personation," the creation and rise of Perkin Warbeck. Bacon observed that Warbeck remained "a mistery to this day" because of "the Kings manner of shewing things by peices, and dark-lights."[91] This aspect of Henry struck a chord for Russell, and he glossed this passage by interpolating an additional note describing the king as one who "stud in the dark to others and others that stud in the light to him," culled from Bacon's concluding portrait of Henry.[92] It is no stretch to suppose that Henry's kingship in this regard was powerfully reminiscent of James's self-presentation. Russell was also not adverse to some wry commentary. Michael Kiernan observed that Bacon's agenda was "to portray [Henry] as an exemplary legislator," and in recalling Henry's attendance at a feast celebrating his sergeants at law, Bacon wrote that as the king "gouernd his Subiects by Lawes, so he gouerned his Lawes by his Lawiers."[93] Russell's additional comment

[86] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 74v.

[87] On its reception, see Kiernan, introduction to Bacon, *Historie of the Raigne of Henry the Seventh*, liii–lvi. Beal has recorded more than ten other manuscripts with extracts from Bacon's history, but most, if not all, postdate the printed text; see Beal, BcF 215, Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts, 1450–1700, https://celm-ms.org.uk/authors/baconfrancis.html.

[88] Bacon's historiographical practice is summarized by Brian Vickers, introduction to Francis Bacon, *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII and Selected Works*, ed. Brian Vickers (Cambridge, 1998), xv–xxiii.

[89] David M. Bergeron, "Francis Bacon's Henry VII: Commentary on King James I," *Albion* 24, no. 1 (1992): 17–26, at 17.

[90] Daniel R. Woolf, "John Seldon, John Borough, and Francis Bacon's 'History of Henry VII,' 1621," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (1984): 47–53, at 47.

[91] Bacon, *Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh*, 80.

[92] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 73v.

[93] Bacon, *Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh*, 100n89, 401.

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here, "And Iudges by himself" (marked "FR own"), undermines Bacon's view and reasserts the trope of kingly manipulation in the law.[94]

Kiernan discusses other Jacobean applications of the particularities of the Henrician reign, for instance, the ways by which both Henry VII and James VI/I empowered Parliament in order to introduce legislation.[95] That theme interested Russell, too, and the longest verbatim citations in the notebook for 1620–1622 relate to Henry's 1495 Parliament and its law of attainders. Conversely, Russell seemed not to have responded to Bacon's sustained critique of Henry regarding his avarice and unscrupulous filling of the royal coffers. Kiernan has commented that especially Henry's extorting tax collectors, Richard Empson and William Dudley, became exemplary in the Jacobean context:[96] their activities were explicitly cited in the 1621 parliamentary investigation into Giles Mompesson and the row over monopolies, with which Russell was also concerned in the Lords, and which soon spilled over into the world of popular libeling.[97] Whereas some of the notes deal with these men ("emsun et dudley liek tame hawkse for ther masterse and wielde [wild] Hawkse for them selues pray uppon subiects,"), Russell stopped short of explicit analogical application.[98]

Like Cavendish, with whom this essay begins and who was himself a Baconian acolyte, Bacon had in various works articulated the merits of reading history. When he advised the Earl of Rutland to "be conversant in the Histories," this advice included "noting the coherence of causes and effects, counsels and successes, and the proportion and likeness between nature and nature, force and force, action and action, state and state, time past and time present."[99] Reading history also stimulated "reason of state" (a mode of political thinking that underpinned Bacon's sense of "coherence") —as Noah Millstone has described it, "an interpretive framework, a way of ordering the world of experience and rendering it meaningful, of posing and answering the question: What is it that is going on here?"[100] For Russell, what was going on in Jacobean England in the years 1620–1622, in Bohemia and the Palatinate, at court, Parliament, and in the mind of James VI/I, were crucial questions that would shape his own conduct and that could in part be answered by his voracious reading and note taking. Even for a parliamentary lord like Russell, enjoying privileged access to all sorts of news, reporting, diplomatic papers, sermons, speeches, and other kinds of discourse, it held true that "one of the best ways to acquire civil wisdom was to read history."[101]

In his important monograph on early modern manuscripts, Angus Vine calls on scholars to focus less on the precept or theory of note taking and more on its practice and the notebook as artifact. Vine argues that the "miscellaneous order" of notebooks often reveals that, despite initial impressions of haphazard and unstructured

[94] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 74r.

[95] Kiernan, introduction to Bacon, *Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh*, xliv.

[96] Kiernan, introduction to Bacon, *Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh*, xlvii.

[97] See "M. Monopolies and Corruption: The 1621 Parliament," in Early Stuart Libels, ed. Alastair Bellany and Andrew McRae, http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/monopolies_section/M0.html.

[98] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 75v.

[99] Cited in Vickers, introduction to Bacon, *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII*, xvii–xviii.

[100] Noah Millstone, "Seeing Like a Statesman in Early Stuart England," *Past and Present*, no. 223 (2014): 77–127, at 80.

[101] Millstone, "Seeing Like a Statesman," 105.

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collection, in fact, early modern readers stored knowledge, organized it, and used it in order to create new knowledge, in ways that were highly systematic.[102] In light of that call, below I assess the book-historical and historiographical significance of Russell's notebook in three ways. First, while I consider a selection of Russell's topical reading at a time of political crisis, other texts in the same notebook both deepen and diffuse this focus. Second, the function of the notebook for 1620–1622 can be better appreciated alongside other manuscripts in Russell's archives. Third, Russell takes his place alongside other early modern note takers, within a culture of news and text gathering that has itself been the subject of extensive research—and so I offer a brief comparison between Russell and other readers.

Further texts extracted in the notebook for 1620–1622 include Cavendish's essays and the other tracts from the same printed volume, "A discourse uppon the beginning of Tacitus," and three discourses "of Roume," "[a]gaynst Flattery," and "of Lawse."[103] Tacitus was a key figure in a history writing also spearheaded (in England) by Bacon, and the treatise against flattery is resonant, for instance, in light of the criticism of royal favorites like Buckingham. Yet not all items conform easily to the political moment on which this essay has focused: for instance, the poetry of John Donne, or some of Donne's juvenilia.[104] Where the libel in support of Bacon was evidently topical, notes from Bacon's "Historia Wentorum" (History of the winds) held no such immediacy.[105] The latter part of the notebook contains notes from printed texts that were practical or theological—for instance, *The new man, or, A supplication from an vnknown person a Roman Catholike vnto Iames* (1622), an antipapal tract translated from Latin by William Crashaw and presented to Buckingham as a New Year's gift early in 1622. Another is John Smith's *Certain discourses* [. . .] *concerning the formes and effects of diuers sorts of weapons* (1590), an unsurprising choice given Russell's parliamentary committee on the bills of arms and what may have seemed like England's inevitable entanglement in continental war.[106] Sometime after April 1622, Russell also read Thomas Adams's *Eirenopolis*, *The Citie of Peace*, which argues for *pax politica* or civil peace.[107]

The notebook also includes a section of hearing notes from sermons by various preachers, including Lancelot Andrewes, John Donne, Richard Senhouse, Isaac Bargrave, Richard Corbett, William Laud, and Thomas Winniffe, that were delivered at court (Whitehall) and from other pulpits, such as St. James's in London and the parish churches of Chiswick and Woburn.[108] Only one sermon from which Russell took notes early in the manuscript shows evidence of direct engagement with the Palatinate, a dangerous topic in the pulpit at the time: "The gret question in

[102] Angus Vine, *Miscellaneous Order: Manuscript Culture and the Early Modern Organization of Knowledge* (Oxford, 2019).

[103] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 29–35.

[104] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 44–47r, 50r–54v.

[105] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 59, 136r–38r. For an edition of the libel, see "Mii8 When you awake, dull Brittons, and behould," in Bellany and McRae, Early Stuart Libels.

[106] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 79v, 104r.

[107] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 108r.

[108] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fols. 86–103. The Andrewes sermon was ultimately printed in 1629, though Russell also owned a manuscript copy of it; see Russell, Composite Volume of State and Antiquarian Tracts and Papers, WA, MS HMC 27, pp. 28–33.

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Bohemia one side called the unas the other the utraq."[109] (Many Bohemians were utraquists. Utraquism described how during the Eucharist, the laity would partake of both bread and wine, the body and the blood of Christ, *sub utraque specie*, under both kinds.) This sermon, so concisely noted that its content can barely be appreciated, let alone reconstructed, is nevertheless of interest because it was delivered by the "Lo Chanslers Chaplien," and so returns once again into Francis Bacon's orbit. In fact, Bacon retained three chaplains: his secretary and literary executor, William Rawley, a Mr Oates, and William Lewis.[110] Oates has not been positively identified, but Russell attended another sermon by a "Mr Otse" at Whitehall in March 1622.[111] Lewis, on the other hand, was the alleged author of the above-mentioned verse defense of Bacon.[112] Either one or both men therefore left traces in the manuscript tying Russell yet further into Bacon's networks and texts. Given the centrality of court preaching for the articulation of early Stuart devotion, doctrine, and politics, it is undoubtedly the case that Russell's sermon attendance also informed his political thinking.[113]

The organizing principles of the notebook were largely governed by expediency: Russell copied *seriatim* what came into his hands, responding promptly to new texts, printed or in manuscript. It seems likely that he carried smaller pocketbooks or relied on a good memory in those situations where carrying around a folio manuscript was impractical. Organizational features came later: these include the marginal heads, and particularly the secretary's table of contents, but at times even during transcription Russell adhered to thematic or generic groupings (such as sermon notes). Other manuscripts—which here can only briefly be referred to—reveal how the notebook was situated in a sprawling system of information and knowledge management. This notebook was not Russell's primary repository for parliamentary business, and only a few stray references recall the 1621 session.[114] Yet Russell kept a variety of parliamentary papers. One survival includes the composite volume that includes a full scribal copy of the above-mentioned sermon by Andrewes at the opening of Parliament; a bifolium containing the summary "Iudgment of mumpasson in parliment"; and two documents relating to Bacon: his "Letter to the Lords in parliment" of 19 March 1621, and "The humble peticion & supplication of the Lord Chauncellor" of 22 April 1621, perhaps received from Henry Elsyng (see above, text between notes 17 and 18).[115] Bacon's letter is tellingly

[109] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA MS HMC 26, fol. 17r. On the dangers of preaching on this topic, see Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge, 1998), 139–41.

[110] Angus Vine, "'His Lordships First, and Last, CHAPLEINE': Wiliam Rawley and Francis Bacon," in *Chaplains in Early Modern England*, ed. Hugh Adlington, Tom Lockwood, and Gillian Wright (Manchester, 2013), 123–40.

[111] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HCM 26, fol. 96r.

[112] Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HCM 26, fol. 59r.

[113] On Russell's taking notes on sermons, see Sebastiaan Verweij, "Sermon Notes from John Donne in the Manuscripts of Francis Russell, Fourth Earl of Bedford," *English Literary Renaissance* 46, no. 2 (2016): 278–313.

[114] See Russell, Notebook, 1620–1622, WA, MS HMC 26, fol. 37r.

[115] Russell, Composite Volume of State and Antiquarian Tracts and Papers, WA, MS HMC 27, fols. 28–33, 60, 122, 124.

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annotated with the single word "foulish."[116] Russell also kept a copy of the king's letter of 3 December 1621 from Newmarket to the speaker of the Commons that announced that Parliament was dissolved.[117] All these documents were received as loose papers, some endorsed by Russell or his secretary, suggesting that they formed part of the parliamentary paper trail. Russell also owned John Pym's Commons diary for 1621; this copy (there are others in existence) was started by Russell himself, completed by an assortment of scribes, and once more annotated throughout. It is perhaps the most comprehensive source of information on Russell's engagement with the Parliament of 1621, but it may not be reflective of his thinking at the time Russell compiled the notebook, for, as Wallace Notestein has suggested, Pym's diary was compiled several years later.[118] Russell also instructed a secretary to compile the enormous formal four-volume commonplace book, described above, that was often the destination of many underlined materials from the notebooks (the heads keyed into the margins of the notebooks corresponded with the alphabetical heads of the commonplace book).[119] The notebook for 1620–1622 thus reflects an intermediary stage in Russell's reading, thinking, and information management. Finally, the manuscripts extant today are only a portion of what was once a substantially larger collection that also included printed books.

Russell was not the only earl to read extensively and maintain a manuscript library, but aristocratic reading practices have remained comparatively underexamined. In recent years, the habits of provincial readers have been more closely researched in an effort to demonstrate the breadth of the political nation and the ways that reading is thought to have stimulated political agency. Under this banner fall men such as the Suffolk rector John Rous, the Devon-based barrister and politician Walter Yonge, the Warwickshire magistrate John Newdigate, and the Buckinghamshire gentleman William Drake. Some of their reading and associated practices of news gathering and keeping notebooks have been linked, as in the case of another such reader, John Scudamore, 1st Viscount of Scudamore, as serving a "continuous search for preferment."[120] The hard-nosed, ambitious Drake hoped to gain entry to court. Furthering that goal, he read voraciously and purposefully and also observed many of his social betters including Russell; from the physician of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, Drake learned of Russell's "singular way of speaking in a metaphorical way."[121] Such roundabout ways of information-gathering underline that Russell's wealth, rank, and societal privilege set him apart, and that the upper echelons in which he moved remained closed off to men like Drake.

[116] Russell, Composite Volume of State and Antiquarian Tracts and Papers, WA, MS HMC 27, fol. 122r.

[117] Russell, Composite Volume of State and Antiquarian Tracts and Papers, WA, MS HMC 27, fol. 128.

[118] Francis Russell, copy of John Pym's Commons Diary 1621, BL, Add. MS 26637. The diary is printed in full, though from another manuscript: Wallace Notestein, Frances Helen Relf, and Hartley Simpson, eds., *Commons Debates 1621*, vol. 4, *All the remarkable passages of the things done in the lower house of Parliament, a diary by John Pym* (New Haven, 1935); on the date of compilation, see Notestein, Relf, and Simpson, *Commons Debates 1621*, vol. 1, *Introduction and Index* (New Haven, 1935), 26–61.

[119] Russell, Commonplace book, WA, MS HMC 11.

[120] Ian Atherton, *Ambition and Failure in Stuart England: The Career of John, First Viscount Scudamore* (Manchester, 1999), 153.

[121] Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 2000), 134.

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Other aristocratic readers, for instance, Robert Sidney, 2nd Earl of Leicester, and John Holles, the 2nd Earl of Clare, kept extensive commonplace books. That of Leicester, alongside his library, constitutes "a solid body of evidence about his own mental universe" and "an exceptional window through which to view the structure of knowledge as it was imagined by a man of Leicester's status and generation."[122] Both Russell and Leicester continued a family tradition of commonplacing: Russell inherited some manuscripts of his grandfather, the 2nd Earl of Bedford, and Leicester followed his father, Robert, 1st Earl of Leicester, in this practice.[123] Russell and the 2nd Earl of Leicester both also left explicit instructions in their wills: Russell left to his son William "all my Bookes written with mine owne hand, and all such as I haue caused to bee written for my vse; hopeing that hereafter hee may make some vse of my poore labours in that kind as I make noe question, butt that hee will make a godlie vse of that which I shall leaue him."[124] If Russell's notetaking has far so been considered as topical, urgent, and personal, the will underscores that he also hoped the manuscripts would have educational purpose after his death. The two men otherwise had both complementary and divergent tastes: both devoured history but Leicester more consistently in foreign languages, and whereas Russell read and noted a great deal of poetry, Leicester largely avoided it. Finally, if we take all this reading as formative for the shaping of political office, Russell and Leicester could not have ended up more differently. Whereas Russell would become a leader of the so-called parliamentary junto in 1640–41, Leicester retreated to his library: his reading and notetaking, in Warkentin's words, was "a full-scale humanist enterprise, but one much more inward-looking, speculative, and less oriented toward the immediate issues of politics."[125]

John Holles, the 2nd Earl of Clare, has been described as a man who "lacked political ambition" and was without relations at court.[126] This may be so, but his reading reflects at least a political curiosity, if not engagement. He took "sentences and noates" from what was arguably the first English history in Tacitean style, Hayward's *Life and Raigne of King Henrie IIII*, and from an English translation of Botero's *Relazioni Universale*. His notebooks also include papers relating to Yelverton's Star Chamber case (November 1620), and his own diary of the 1624 Parliament. Clare was also an avid reader of poetry; a verse miscellany that he compiled features some poems by his father (John Holles, 1st Earl of Clare), including an invective against Buckingham, an extraordinary instance of an aristocrat not only collecting but also turning out a verse libel.[127] A final salient example concerns Clare's notes

[122] Germaine Warkentin, "Humanism in Hard Times: The Second Earl of Leicester (1595–1677) and His Commonplace Books, 1630–60," in *Challenging Humanism: Essays in Honor of Dominic Baker-Smith*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars and Arthur F. Kinney (Newark, 2005), 229–53, at 232.

[123] Francis Russell (2nd Earl of Bedford) and Francis Russell, Commonplace book, WA, MS HMC 10; Robert Shephard, "The Political Commonplace Books of Sir Robert Sidney," *Sidney Journal* 21, no. 1 (2003): 1–30.

[124] Francis Russell, Will and testament, 26 February 1628, WA, MS 5.7.3. On Sidney's will, see Warkentin, "Humanism in Hard Times," 247.

[125] Warkentin, 239.

[126] P. R. Seddon, s.v. "Holles, John, Second Earl of Clare (1595–1666)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13555.

[127] Yelverton case, Botero notes, BL, MS Harley 6055; Hayward notes, verse miscellany, and 1624 parliamentary diary, BL, MS Harley 6383. On the 1st earl's poems, see Thomas Cogswell, "'The Symptomes

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from the 1629 Privy Council investigation into a number of high-ranking aristocrats involved in the circulation of an incendiary political tract, the "Propositions to Bridle the Impertinency of Parliament." Revolving around Robert Cotton, the case also implicated the 1st Earl of Clare as well as Russell, who were both briefly incarcerated for their roles in the circulation of this work: the very fact of user publication of such political texts constituted an assertion of their political agency.[128] As with Russell's manuscripts, there is virtually no scholarship on the 2nd Earl of Clare's notebooks, yet such collections present an important slice of early Stuart reading practice from particular socioeconomic vantage points.

Perhaps Russell read, to return finally to Cavendish's phrase where this article began, to make him "the readier for reall action."[129] It seems a truism now: Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker contended that "the reader alone in the study or closet with his—or her—books both imbibed politics and formed a political consciousness"; that "ways of reading, hermeneutic strategies, were, and of course remain, political performances," so that ultimately, "early modern . . . men and women, we might say, read themselves into citizens."[130] One closely observed instance comes from the above-mentioned Newdigate, whose reading "provided the basis for a shared language which cemented in place the values of the 'gentry republics' [and revealed] the 'quasi-republican' ideals which encouraged Elizabethans to think as 'citizens' rather than 'subjects.'"[131] Such an approach might hold true for a regional justice of the peace, but to an earl invested in Jacobean monarchy and aristocratic prerogative, reading oneself into a citizen was hardly a priority. Russell's reading practice takes us into a new direction, precisely because his mental world and political status and responsibilities were so different from Newdigate's. Compared with, for instance, Walter Yonge's obsessive note taking of affairs in Bohemia and the Palatinate during the years 1620–1622 (including details of military activity, English political response, and parliamentary reports, much of it culled from newsletters), Russell's factual recounting in the notebook seems positively lightweight.[132] Yet Russell was in a position to steer policy, whereas Yonge commented from the sidelines. Russell's comparative proximity to court and monarch explains such differences in approach: Conrad Russell has described Russell's constitutional thinking as "focused . . . on securing good counsel to the king."[133] Russell read for statesmanship (and perhaps in expectation of a Privy Council seat) in ways that betray something of

and Vapors of a Diseased Time': The Earl of Clare and Early Stuart Manuscript Culture," *Review of English Studies* 57, no. 230 (2006): 310–36.

[128] "The Lo Wentworths abstracte out of their severall answears in ye Starr-chamber, concerning ye paper, for wch ye Earles of Bedford, Summerset, & Clare &c were committed," Beinecke Library, New Haven, MS Osborn b32, fols. 259–62. For further on this case, see Noah Millstone, "Evil Counsel: The Propositions to Bridle the Impertinency of Parliament and the Critique of Caroline Government in the Late 1620s," *Journal of British Studies* 50, no. 4 (2011): 813–39.

[129] Cavendish, sig. P6r.

[130] Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, eds., introduction to *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), 1–38, at 18–19.

[131] Richard Cust, "Reading for Magistracy: The Mental World of Sir John Newdigate," in *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England*, ed. John F. McDiarmid (Aldershot, 2007), 181–99, at 199.

[132] Yonge's news diary from 1604 to 1628, BL, Add. MS 28,032. See George Roberts, ed., *Diary of Walter Yonge, Esq.* (London, 1848), 32, for example.

[133] Russell, "Russell, Francis."

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how he oriented himself in a world of confusing and fast-moving news, while anchored to the worldview of an aristocrat. Some of Russell's reading probed the extremes of potential responses to the Palatinate crisis, perhaps in an effort to reconcile such variant views. As political positions in the later 1620s and 1630s became more entrenched, Russell would continue to practice "the scholarly ecumenism of a good Jacobean," maintaining friendships with men as widely divergent as John Pym and Archbishop Laud.[134] It appears from the notebook for 1620–1622 that he had long been in that habit. Russell's reading accords with the tried and tested humanist method, practiced by countless early moderns, and as such it is wholly typical for the age. But what is remarkable about this and the other notebooks is just how much evidence there is—most of it still unexamined—of Russell's thinking and formative reading and, just as importantly, of the networks of people and the exchange of texts that underpinned this intellectual life. In-depth engagement with Russell's manuscripts is exacting work, but it is also exceptionally rewarding: a great deal remains to be learned about Russell's thinking and, consequently, about the neglected topic of aristocratic reading and note taking in the early Stuart age.

[134] Russell.

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