

Thomas Cromwell and Calais

G.W. Bernard

August 2007

ABSTRACT In this paper, drawing on research in The National Archives, I discuss the claim that Thomas Cromwell protected religious radicals in Calais in the late 1530s. It has become a seemingly impregnable orthodoxy that Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's leading minister, was a religious reformer, though exactly what kind is less often considered. Whatever the finer points of his theological standpoint, Cromwell is then confidently presented as pressing Henry VIII into ever more protestant directions, and consequently leaving himself vulnerable to the charges of religious radicalism that ultimately brought him down in 1540. And on this view Cromwell supposedly used Calais as a sort of laboratory or model for the religious reforms that he supposedly sought, reforms that - it is asserted - went beyond what Henry VIII was willing to accept in England. Such an account is, I aim to show, seriously misleading. Cromwell emerges as the king's servant, not as the leader of some proto-protestant faction.

More positively, my study aims to offers intriguing insights into the character of the church as it developed after the break with Rome. If these events in Calais have too long been misunderstood, nonetheless they have a wider significance. Here, as early as the late 1530s, we can see features that would characterise church and state over a much longer period, not least in the reigns of Elizabeth, James and Charles I. Here we have fears of papists and papist plots, with suspicions that a leading

nobleman in a position of authority and strategic importance, Lord Lisle, Lord Deputy of Calais, owed greater loyalty to the pope than to the monarch. Here we have fears of religious radicalism and the associated undermining of social order as preachers were seen as ridiculing existing church services. Here we have charges of papist sympathies by one side and of religious radicalism by the other, dismissed in turn as exaggerated or prejudiced. Here we have damaging accusations against those in authority in church and state, of encouraging, or turning a blind eye to, what they were expected to repress. Here we have royal government somewhere in the middle, denouncing the pope and rejecting blatant superstition, but also denouncing religious extremism. None of this was trivial. Lives and liberties were at stake: those who fell foul of accusations, whether well-founded, whether malicious, found themselves subject to interrogation, trial, even death. Compared to the late 1530s, accusations of popery and of religious radicalism were no doubt sharper in the years following Queen Elizabeth's suspension of Archbishop Grindal in the late 1570s, and fears of popery and fears of religious radicalism were undoubtedly more heightened and more persuasive in 1640-42. Yet this study of events in Calais in the late 1530s reveals, already, the same potentially explosive mixture of divisions and suspicions. Not just in the long run but also very immediately, all this was the complex and often unhappy consequence of Henry VIII's break with Rome and the very distinctive reformation which he had embraced.

IT has become a seemingly impregnable orthodoxy that Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's leading minister, was a religious reformer.

Exactly what kind of religious reformer is not clearly addressed.

Sometimes Cromwell is presented as protestant, meaning Lutheran (believing that men were saved through faith in Christ alone), sometimes as at least proto-protestant, or 'evangelical', in his sympathies (though it is much harder to offer a thumb-nail definition of what those who describe him thus mean). Some even suggest that Cromwell had Zwinglian, or, in contemporary terms, sacramentarian, sympathies (seeing in the eucharist not a miraculous re-enactment of the Last Supper but a simply a commemoration). Whatever the finer points of his theological standpoint, Cromwell is then confidently presented as pressing a more or less reluctant Henry VIII into ever more protestant, or proto-protestant, or evangelical, or sacramentarian, measures, and often going much further than the king wanted - and consequently leaving himself vulnerable to the charges of religious radicalism that, it is alleged, ultimately brought him down in 1540. Now it is indeed true that Cromwell was accused of religious radicalism in the act of attainder that condemned him. But whether such accusations were in themselves true is moot. The surprisingly little direct evidence for Cromwell's religious beliefs that we have points another way: regrettably, its implications are

usually ignored. Typically, to choose a recent example, so meticulous a scholar as Susan Foister, historian of Tudor portraits, well known for her careful reading of inventories and accounts, amply sets out the evidence [\[1\]](#) that Cromwell owned wholly traditional religious pictures - but quite fails to see that this must sharply qualify any straightforward understanding of Cromwell as a protestant, or evangelical, however that is defined.

Astonishingly, what happened in Calais, England's enclave on the shores of northern France, has widely been taken as the most important evidence to illustrate Cromwell's supposed 'evangelicalism', with Cromwell, assisted by Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, presented as Cromwell's willing subordinate, supposedly using Calais as a sort of laboratory or model for the religious reforms that he supposedly sought, reforms that - it is asserted - went beyond what Henry VIII was willing to accept in England. And conservatives who disliked the religious reforms of the 1530s then made use - it is claimed - of

Cromwell's supposed protection of reformers in Calais to discredit him in the eyes of Henry VIII, and ultimately to bring him down. Despite the forcefulness of a paper by Philip Ward, which concluded that 'from the Calais evidence there is little to suggest that Cromwell himself intended, [\[2\]](#) or attempted, to exceed Henry's desire for religious change', the opposite view has become a staple in recent writing. Since it would be very significant if true but is highly misleading if wrong, it demands further detailed scrutiny. Such scrutiny might - though given how entrenched the orthodoxy is, one cannot be too hopeful - lead to a more sympathetic hearing to those who doubt Cromwell's supposed evangelical credentials. And in showing how important the king's interventions were, it casts renewed doubt on the notion of 'faction' as the key to understanding politics in the reign of Henry VIII. More positively, such a study offers intriguing insights into the character of the king's church as it developed after the break with Rome.

Any such inquiry is perforce also a study in historical epistemology. On what grounds may we reach conclusions? On what sorts of evidence are

historians' differing claims based? Much of our information is derived from contemporary letters. How they are read is crucial. Is it legitimate to cite them as revealing the opposite of what they actually say? If Cromwell writes vehemently denouncing religious radicals, is it reasonable for the historian to declare that Cromwell was in fact defending them and that his vituperative language was no more than a smokescreen? How readily may irony or sheer disingenuousness be inferred? Or should historians' default assumption be that unless there is obvious reason for scepticism, those who wrote letters meant what they said, not least since not just outright lies but even economy with the truth would quickly emerge and then cause far greater problems? What follows reflects the belief that the fairest way for the historian to proceed is to quote from the sources and to share with the reader the possible readings of a letter.

But we must first begin by first applying a basic Eltonian test of plausibility. Is it plausible, we must ask, that Cromwell, as the leading minister of Henry VIII, should have adopted or supported measures in

Calais, of all places, that would have been anathema at home? After all, Calais was not some obscure backwater far from anywhere and out of sight that did not matter. On the contrary, Calais was a frontier post, and a garrison city, in English hands since Edward III's conquest in 1347. Anything that happened there was highly visible and quickly left open the way for public scandal, royal reproof or worse. It was not somewhere remote where religious experiments could be carried out without anyone - and especially Henry VIII - noticing. Moreover it is not easy to see what religious reformers, accepting for the sake of argument that Cromwell was one, of whatever kind, should have had to gain by turning Calais into a godly commonwealth, supposing that had been possible. The way to spread protestant ideas in England would rather to have worked on parishes in London, or in towns within easy reach of London, making it possible for large numbers to hear sermons and acquire printed books bearing an unambiguously protestant message. The fashionable orthodoxy asks us to believe that Cromwell deliberately supported fiery preachers in Calais who provoked public quarrels - even though such divisions manifestly added nothing to its defensibility. As a frontier

town, Calais was always vulnerable to French pressure. In 1538-39, when Henry feared that Francis I, king of France, and Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, would unite against him, Calais was an obvious target. It strains belief that Cromwell would lightly have risked doing anything that would weaken Calais and leave it exposed to the French.

Yet however implausible on first principles their case appears, many historians have claimed that Cromwell and Cranmer foisted religious radicals on to Calais, and then defended them against the complaints and intrigues of supposed conservatives, notably Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, bastard son of Edward IV, entrusted by Henry VIII with the oversight of Calais as Lord Deputy, and Thomas Howard, third duke Norfolk. A.J. Slavin saw a running battle between Cromwell and Lisle in [\[3\]](#) the mid-1530s which threatened to destabilise the town. Muriel St Clare Byrne, the editor of Lisle's letters, wrote of 'Cromwell's policy of support for the reformers' and thought that Cromwell simply ignored Lisle's repeated warnings about religious radicalism in 1538 and early

1539: The position into which Cromwell's policy for religion in Calais forced the Calais Council and the difficulties which it created over the proper maintenance of authority in the town was ultimately ... one of the

[4]

causes which helped to bring about his own downfall'. Cromwell, for St Clare Byrne, ultimately paid the price for his 'determination to protect

[5]

the Calais reformers by all possible means'. Susan Brigden echoed Byrne in claiming that Calais 'had become an enclave for reformers in the 1530s All through 1538 Cromwell kept his knowledge of the

[6]

heresy in Calais secret'; 'all through 1538 Cromwell ignored Lisle's

[7]

pleas and protected the reformers'.

Brigden, Byrne, Glyn Redworth and Diarmaid MacCulloch then claim that the conservatives in turn used Cromwell's defence of religious radicals in Calais as a repeated, and ultimately successful, means of discrediting him in the eyes of the king and securing a more conservative religious policy in 1539 and 1540 and Cromwell's downfall in 1540. For

Redworth, 'if any one factor deserves to be singled out as finally responsible for turning the unsystematic, piecemeal, and haphazard, conservative doctrinal pronouncements of late 1538 into a comprehensive, statutory and penal definition of the six essential points of catholic doctrine' in the Six Articles of 1539 'then it is the revelation to Henry by a rump of traditionalist or anti-Cromwellian councillors of the spread of sacramentarian and other heresies or dissensions in his one remaining military foothold on the continent, Calais' 'A cohort of Cromwell's enemies struck political gold in the spring of 1539.

Information about the doctrinal dissension which threatened the internal security of the fortress-town, which Cromwell had tried to conceal from

[8]
the king, came into the hands of conservative councillors'. For St Clare Byrne, 'nowhere is there more evidence to justify the charges [brought against Cromwell in 1540] of supporting heretics and favouring heretical opinions than in the Calais story.' "'The matters of Calais" contributed materially to the arguments and allegations they [Norfolk

[9]
and Gardiner] used to play on the king's innately suspicious mind'. 'To

stiffen the king's reactionary resolve, conservative councillors warned

[10]

him of the progress of heresy in Calais', Christopher Haigh concurs.

David Grummett sums up a remarkable consensus: 'the basic assumption that Cromwell had close links with heretics in Calais and thus the charges levelled at him in the act of attainder were correct can probably be accepted. It was Cromwell's support for the reformers in Calais, or at least his failure to persecute them, that proved his opponents' single most

[11]

powerful weapon against him in the early months of 1540'.

Such claims wholly misunderstand, it will be contended here, both the particular details of what was happening in Calais and the larger religious situation. We need first to stand back from the events of 1538 to 1540, and remember that what Henry VIII, supported by Archbishop Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, most immediately wanted in the years from 1533 was the peaceful acceptance of the break with Rome and the royal supremacy. Securing acquiescence in that was demanding enough. And clearly there were difficulties. In October 1535 Cranmer thought the

inhabitants of Calais 'altogether wrapt' in 'hypocrisy, false faith and blindness of God and his word, to the prejudice of 'the good and laudable acts lately conceived by the king's grace and his high court of parliament', Not surprisingly he therefore urged that there was nowhere among the king's dominions that needed good instruction of the word of God more, 'considering not alonely the great ignorance and blindness as well of the heads now resident there, as of the common and vulgar people, in the doctrine and knowledge of scripture, but also having [\[12\]](#) respect unto the universal concourse of aliens and strangers'. Here Cranmer, we may note, was using the language of the European protestant reformation. But at the time he wrote these phrases, few religious changes had yet been introduced in England beyond the break with Rome itself. So we must be cautious in interpreting Cranmer's words. The target of his criticism was anyone who did not accept that break with Rome and the consequent declaration of Henry VIII's royal supremacy. Clearly any sympathisers with the pope were even more a potential fifth column in Calais than they were in England. It was

therefore highly important that the king's royal supremacy should be vigorously preached there.

Responsibility for its enforcement in Calais lay squarely with Viscount Lisle, who held the post of Lord Deputy of Calais. Unfortunately Lisle was not a man of the highest competence. Geoffrey Elton called him 'the most touchingly idiotic figure of the day'; 'at moments thoughts obtrude of Lord Emsworth'; C.S.L. Davies rightly observed that 'how Henry VIII came to entrust Lisle with such a strategically important command

[\[13\]](#)

remains a mystery'. Henry VIII, Cranmer and Cromwell were above all concerned that the royal supremacy should be enforced and that no one should voice any papal sympathies. In 1537 Archbishop Cranmer complained that Lisle did not enforce the oath against papal authority.

[\[14\]](#)

In July that year Cromwell sent Lisle and the council of Calais a stinging rebuke. Henry, on learning that two priests, William Richardson and William Minsterley, were in Calais, ordered Cromwell to tell Lisle that the king's pleasure was that they should be sent up as prisoners since

they were known to be papists. 'His grace cannot a litle mervayl to here of the papisticall facion that is mayntained in that towne and by you chiefly that be of his graces counsail'. The king would appoint others to fill the posts of any who showed so little respect to the king or his laws.

[15]

Lisle was here being accused of serious disloyalty, of supporting a 'papisticall faction' in Calais.

Interestingly, however, Cromwell followed up a few days later with a personal letter to Lisle, referring to his writing earlier 'somwhat sharpely' by the king's command, warning 'some of the said conseill which leane moche to their supersticiouse olde obseruacions and rites'. But he assured Lisle that 'I remayne styll your parfite and syncer Freend, and that by such sharpnes ye ar non otherwise touched to therby than to take an occasion to be concurrent with me to altere such evill instructed and enclyned hertes to leave their olde ceremonyes and obseruacions and

[16]

exhorte them to knowe and folowe the truth declared vnto them'.

What is intriguing here is how Cromwell was attempting to soften the

force of the royal rebuke that he had just sent to Lisle. Cromwell does not appear as Lisle's rival: rather they come across as servants of a very demanding king, suspicious of disloyalty and of continuing attachments to old superstitions. And thus far Thomas Cromwell emerges as a scourge of the 'papisticall faction' and of members of the council of Calais who were still sympathetic to 'their superstitious olde obseruations and rites', but in no sense as a supporter or protector of radical reformers. In voicing criticisms, he was fully in line with royal policy. Here is worth emphasising that from 1536 royal policy had evolved to include the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, and from 1537-38 the dismantling of allegedly superstitious royal shrines. Everywhere those who held power were expected to enforce these policies . If Cromwell spoke bitingly against 'superstitious olde obseruations and rites', he was in no sense running ahead of the king.

Lisle manifestly faced an awkward combination of challenges. Divisions over religion in Calais – with some attached to traditional religion and others welcoming change - became increasingly visible and carried the

risk of provoking disorder in the garrison-fortress town. To be fair to Lisle, since he had to deal with problems on the spot, he was more acutely sensitive to disturbances, or the risk of disturbances, provoked by moving too fast, than were those who sometimes berated him from London for not moving past enough. He was quick to react and, perhaps, to unnecessarily to dramatise. And perhaps Henry and Cromwell in turn were too eager to hear that matters were going well, too prone to underestimate local difficulties, and too ready to dismiss Lisle's warnings.

A crucial weakness was that he did not get on well with John Butler, the Commissary, son of a Calais merchant and alderman. The ecclesiastical structure of Calais was anomalous: located in the diocese of Therouanne, not within the territories governed by the king of England, it was in practice appended to the diocese of Canterbury and administered by a Commissary appointed by the archbishop. In a time of religious turmoil, much turned on the qualities of that Commissary and on the day-to-day working relationship between Lord Deputy and Commissary. The

difference between Lisle and Butler was essentially that Lisle feared the disruptive impact of religious divisions, while Butler gave the greatest priority to the preaching the royal supremacy and defending the reforms of the later 1530s. Lisle regarded Butler as dangerously radical, playing with fire, Butler feared Lisle was a crypto-papist, paying lip-service to the royal supremacy but failing to enforce it. Between them they were more than likely to mishandle any problems that arose, not least because each would interpret events differently and consequently respond differently, leading to incoherence of policy.

No one has yet come forward with evidence that Cromwell had any sort of positive plan for the religious reformation of Calais. What happened rather was that, as here, Cromwell reacted to specific matters in Calais that came to his attention. His correspondence shows that far from being the controlling mastermind, he was struggling to keep on top of events. That appears very clearly over the Damplip affair, the first strand in the claims by modern historians that Cromwell was protecting religious radicals.

Much has been made by factional historians of the preaching of Adam Damplip in Calais in 1538. It was undoubtedly provocative and divisive. But it is unpersuasive to interpret it factionally and to link it to supposed rivalry between Cromwell and Lisle. A key point is that it appears that Damplip came to Calais and stayed there quite by chance, not at anyone's instigation. Neither Cromwell, nor Cranmer, nor any local sympathiser with the evangelical cause was responsible for his arrival. Who was Damplip? According to the martyrologist John Foxe, he was a sometime chaplain of Bishop John Fisher, originally called George Bowker or Bucher, who had been shaken and converted to the anti-papal cause by a visit to Italy, especially Rome, after Fisher's death. Trying later to prove the sincerity of his conversion, he claimed he might have had a good living in Rome since Cardinal Reginald Pole would have had him as a reader, and sent him money. By turning his back on Rome he had made a significant personal and financial sacrifice. But when on his journey returning to England, he passed through Calais, he was persuaded to stay there by two members of the garrison. One of them,

William Stephens, an unusually educated soldier, said that when he first met Damplip, he found him popish, but that he was quickly convinced that Damplip should be encouraged to stay in Calais and to read and expound the Bible to the people. The Lord Deputy, Lord Lisle, and his wife too were deeply impressed by Damplip at first, and offered him

[\[17\]](#)

accommodation and money.

Why was Damplip so welcome? Those in authority were well aware that, a small minority apart, there was no great enthusiasm for the religious changes they were having to enforce. Yet now that the king required not only acquiescence in his royal supremacy and the denunciation of the pope but also the dismantling of pilgrimage shrines and the dissolution of the monasteries, there was an even greater need for preachers to educate the laity. In autumn 1537 John Butler, the Commissary, had complained against a priest who declared that it was right to pray for the pope and who defended purgatory by showing the soldiers of the garrison a book that proved its existence. Little wonder that Butler urged

preachers to be sent to Calais to preach in Lent, or that he signed that he would not write what rebukes he had had from the papistical sort - they

[18]

were too sore and opprobrious.

And in May 1538 Butler found himself dealing with three 'papistes', as he called them, including Thomas Cockes, the curate of Marke, who 'rayse suche slaunders vpon then that do aply themselves to the worde of God' - that is, who defended the king's supremacy and the religious changes of the mid-1530s - by accusing them of saying unacceptably extreme things. Cockes had allegedly claimed that a woman had said that she was as good as Mary who had made her husband cuckold. Cockes would deny having said it, and appealed to John Benolt, the parish priest of Marke, and also secretary of Calais. Butler was suspicious of Benolt's testimony since, he said, Benolt 'nothinge fauoreth the worde of God'. Butler asked Cromwell to order the rulers of Calais to punish these 'false papists' and to compel Benolt, who held several benefices, to appoint good curates. The people, Butler insisted, would soon be brought to the

[19]

truth if there were good teachers. Lisle would deny that 'papechis

dreygys' remained in Calais: there was no manner of people that

[20]

favoured less 'the tradycions of popes'

But in such a climate - in which those who preached the word of God - that is to say, those who denounced the papacy - were defamed, it is not suprising that Butler should have welcomed Adam Damplip who must have struck him as a godsend, just the sort of fearless and effective preacher that was badly needed if people were to be persuaded to accept the changes.

Lord Lisle too had good reason in 1538 initially to welcome Damplip. Lisle's chief current concern was to enforce recent royal orders (similar to those sent to royal officers in many other places at this time) to dismantle pilgrimage shrines. In particular he was required to deal with the shrine known as the Resurrection, where, allegedly, three wafers buried in the ground had congealed into one, and turned into the flesh of the new-born baby Christ. The shrine was duly demolished, and found to

be feigned, containing only a box of stone, cement and iron, and two plates which immediately crumbled. But such apparently destructive actions by the authorities had to be explained and defended to the people, and that was where a good preacher could once again be invaluable. Damplip accordingly was asked to preach against the shrine, [\[21\]](#) crumbling its contents in his palm in front of the congregation. By doing that, Damplip provoked those who remained attached to such shrines, notably Prior John Dove of the Whitefriars, [\[22\]](#) but his actions were well in line with government policy.

What was not was to reject the real presence in the sacrament of the altar. But did Damplip go that far, so betraying Lisle's initial welcome? Did Lisle come to regret having welcomed him? If so, it would be a neat illustration of Lisle's lack of judgement. Sacramentarian heresy was already being voiced in Calais. In an undated draft letter, calendared midsummer 1538 but possibly earlier, Lisle began by referring to what had happened around the previous Easter (we can offer a more specific

[23]

date, namely 8 May). Lisle had then written to Cromwell about several soldiers and commoners who had spoken against the sacrament of the altar, 'saying yt was not in a knave prest to make God, and that the masse was not made by God but by the envensyon [invention] of man, and that a mouse wold as soone eyte the body of God as another cake'.

[24]

A little later, on 28 July, Sir Thomas Palmer, a member of the Calais garrison, would tell Cromwell that the mass was being much slandered by several people there, who were saying it was ordained to sing for dogs' souls, hogs' souls, and ducks' souls. Such extremity, he said, was taken very badly in France and in Flanders, where all this was being blown abroad. Butchers who usually brought in mutton for sale to

[25]

Calais were boycotting the town in consequence. Summarising Lisle's earlier letter, which does not survive, Cromwell noted how Lisle had reported 'the dissencion among you vppon certyn lewde woordes' - 'wordes pretended to be spoken in contempt of the sacrament'. Lisle was now asked to join others with him in counsel and take pains to examine

the very truth: on his report, such direction for the reformation of such as were found to be offenders would be taken as would be convenient to

[\[26\]](#)

justice.

It was in response to Cromwell's letter that Lisle (in a letter written by Thomas Palmer) reported how a young priest who came out of Germany - and Damplip seems almost certainly to be the priest in question - spoke in his sermon about the sacrament of the altar in a way 'much varing' from the king's book (Lisle must have meant what we know as the Bishops' Book of 1537). Frustratingly for us, Lisle did not spell out exactly what Damplip had said. He simply said that it had caused great offence, though, significantly, it had also made many people no longer care for the mass but wish instead that they had never heard mass all their lives. That was 'a great disturbance and an unsurety to this the kynges town to have any such opinions one against another and that yt ys clerly against the words of the Kyngs boke'. Lisle insited to Cromwell that 'bothe in France and Flanders they do repute vs but as heretics',

though he added, cautiously, that I will not say that these be honest men

[27]

that thus report vs'. A year later (in June 1539) Lisle would warn that

such 'abominable fashions' and consequent controversies had

endangered Englishmen going abroad. In Picardy a priest would not

continue mass when he found that an Englishman was present, in

Marguison the people refused to allow a dead child to be buried but sent

it back to Calais as if it had been a dead calf. Damplip had been the first

[28]

setter forth of such 'evil opinions' against the sacrament. If Damplip

upset some, and especially the inhabitants of neighbouring towns, he

clearly found some willing hearers in Calais. Foxe notes a certain poor

labouring man of Calais who after Damplip's preaching said that he

would never believe that a priest could make the lord's body at his

[29]

pleasure. That, incidentally, shows how important the attitude of the

authorities in allowing, inadvertently or not, such preaching was, and

how upsetting preaching could be.

Lisle went on to ask Cromwell whether the opinions voiced by Damplip

should be maintained or corrected. 'Bycause yor lordship can dyscuss the shyptur [scripture] better than I can, I do send yow hys opynyons plainly openyd yn the pulpyt before all men, to the yntent yow shall know all, weyther they be good or bad, worthy to be maintayned or to be correctyd'. 'For I have wryten yor lordship iii letters concernyng this [\[30\]](#) same self matter and cold never her word of answer'.

At first sight it is puzzling that Lisle should have been so uncertain about the heterodoxy of Damlip's views. In his later account the martyrologist John Foxe presents Damplip confuting transubstantiation and declaring how the world was deceived by Roman bishops who 'had set forth the damnable doctrine of transubstantiation and the real presence in the

[\[31\]](#) sacrament'. Had Damplip criticised transubstantiation without rejecting the real presence and without mocking the sacrament, in other words adopting a Lutheran position rather than the first-principle realist ridiculing - everyone can see that the bread and wine are still bread and wine - characteristic of late medieval heresy? However that may be, this

letter would suggest that Lisle had done nothing about Damplip yet, except to write to Cromwell on several occasions, though without response.

On 19 June Lisle took further action. An order made by Lisle and the council of Calais (Richard Granfield, Thomas Palmer, Robert Fowler, William Simpson, John Rockwood) warned the commissary, John Butler, who had licensed Damplip, of the dangers if Damplip, who had spoken controversially about the sacrament of the altar, preached

[\[32\]](#)

otherwise than might stand with the king's pleasure. We do not know whether Lisle had in the end decided to act on his own initiative; or whether he had by then have received instructions from Cromwell.

On 16 July Cromwell wrote noting 'some infection of certain persones denyeng the Holy Sacrament of Christes blessed body and blud, of suche opinion as commonly they call sacramentaries': the king's pleasure was thorough examination and exemplary punishment. Noting the argument

between Damplip and Friar Dove, prior of the Whitefriars, who had been provoked by Damplip's sermons, Cromwell ordered that both should be examined, and Cromwell advised, so that he might inform the king and

[\[33\]](#)

know his further pleasure.

This has been seen by Block as Cromwell's 'gesture toward orthodoxy', and 'rather empty' at that, 'because Cromwell gave no authorisation regarding Damplip', simply noting the divisions between Damplip and Dove and asking for information to be sent to him so that Cromwell could inform the king and know his further pleasure. But that is inadequate. Cromwell - and the king - wanted unity: their first instinct was to blame all those involved in a controversy for causing disorders. And Cromwell did not pull his punches when denouncing sacramentarian heresy. Lisle and the council were to weigh well what those accused said in case it appeared that they would maintain any errors against 'the true doctrine'. And in that case they should not only punish them 'to the example of all others', but also provide that 'no such errors pernicious be spread abroad there but utterly suppressed banished

[34]

and extincted'. Lisle responded by protesting his ignorance of theology and saying he had asked both men to make written statements

[35]

which he sent on. The Council of Calais asked Cromwell to inform them in confidence as to just how the king desired the sacrament of the altar to be honoured and whether they should take it otherwise than the

[36]

king's book set it forward or not. This has been seen as an attempt to trap Cromwell. Slavin thinks Lisle was preparing a trap, promising to license Damplip and encouraging Butler to do so, but in fact never delivering the licence and waiting for Damplip to incriminate himself by preaching heresy, and so giving Lisle the opportunity of blaming Butler for licensing him. That is extravagant: Lisle could not yet have known exactly what Damplip believed, or that Damplip would indeed go so far

[37]

as to preach heresy. But it is more plausible to see it as revealing innocent incompetence, and the ambiguities of Damplip's theology. And far from protecting Damplip, Cromwell had him - and his critic, Prior Dove of the Whitefriars - sent up to London.

Damplip was then interrogated by Cranmer, who had been informed by Butler, his commissary, that Damplip did not deny that Christ was in the sacrament of the altar. Butler sent Damplip as bearer of his letter to Cranmer. Those who nothing favoured the truth, Butler assured Cranmer, would gladly hinder Damplip if they could so that he neither taught nor preached the word of God. They made false suggestion that there were in Calais men who openly and manifestly denied that Christ was present in the sacrament of the altar. Butler urged that Damplip should be sent back and made curate of Our Lady's Church and that he should receive the assistance of the council in Calais 'in reading and preaching the true word of god'. The 'poore commonalte' was 'very desirous to here him'. By contrast Prior Dove 'doth moche harme here'.

[38]

Later Butler would claim that whatever his chaplains had done in setting forth the word of God, 'no man hath hindered the matier somoche

[39]

as this priour, nor no superstition more mayntened than by this frier'.

On being pressed by Cranmer, Damplip indeed 'vtterly denieth' that he had ever taught or said that the very body and blood of Christ was not present in the sacrament of the altar: moreover Damplip 'confeseth the same to be there really'. The controversy between him and Prior Dove was, as Cranmer put it, 'by cause he confuted thopinion of the transsubstanuciation', in which matter Cranmer agreed with him: therin I thinke he taught but the truth'. But two friars had come against him to testify that, despite what he claimed, he had in fact denied the presence of the body and blood in the sacrament. When he found out, Damplip 'withdrew hymself'. No one knew where he was. Cranmer was very sorry. He thought he had fled 'suspectyng the rigour of the lawe than the

[40]

defence of his owne cause'; earlier Cranmer had been sufficiently impressed by Damplip to send him to Cromwell, describing him as of 'right good knowlege and judgement as farr as I can perceyve by hym', and entrusting him with a letter calling on Cromwell to instruct Butler to take away the images in the Calais Blackfriars 'to which any pilgrymage

[41]

apperteynein and all other ymages of like esumauon. FOXE tells a

more colourful tale, of Cranmer, still then a lutheran, marvelling at

[42]

Damplip's defence, but nonetheless warning him to run away. What

[43]

exactly happened to Damplip is uncertain.

The Damplip affair has been presented as an instance of the protection of religious radicals by Cromwell and Cranmer but it makes far more sense to see them as keen to defend someone they regarded as an effective preacher against what they came to regard as malicious and unfounded charges of religious extremism made by those whom they saw as papists. Cromwell and (in these years) Cranmer certainly did not hold sacramentarian views themselves, but they were suspicious that the accusation against Damplip that he was a sacramentary might be popish slander. In so far as they defended or protected Damplip, they were not defending a religious radical: for the very straightforward reason they did not believe that he was one. Given his effective denunciation of the Resurrection shrine, wholly in line with official royal policy, they were

at the least willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, and to seek out clear evidence of his alleged sacramentarian heresy, particularly when he (supported by Butler, the commissary), denied that he had done any more than attack transubstantiation. That it was the conservative Prior Dove, of the Calais Whitefriars, who came to testify against Damplip in summer 1538 could not have strengthened the case against Damplip in their eyes. Dove was suspected of intriguing with the bishops of Durham, London and Chichester, presumably lamenting the dismantling of shrines that was under way that spring, though the precise nature of

[\[44\]](#)

their contacts is not specified.

It was in that context that on 14 August 1538 Cromwell sent Lisle 'a sharpe letter' taxing him 'for persecuting those who favor and set forth

[\[45\]](#)

God's word and for favouring those who impugn it'. Confronted by similar problems the following year, as we shall see, Cromwell remarked in February 1539 to Lisle's London factotum John Hussee that it was time for Lisle to wax grave and not give credit to every light tale, and

'not to be earnest ne hasty in wryting without the thinges be fyrste very

[46]

cyrcumspectly foreseyne and weyed', that 'it is sore to note any man for a sacrementary, unles he that shalbe thauctor of thenfamy knowe well what a sacrementary is'. It was even sorer to accuse someone in authority of such a crime unless it might be 'duely and evidently proved against him'. And Cromwell added that the depositions against Butler 'be not most weightie and substancial'. Those against 'the other fewe accused' were 'sumwhat deper'. Yet given the small numbers accused, they might have been punished without 'a general infamy to the hole towne'. And while the preacher - most likely he had Damplip in mind - and others might have done 'more circumspectly in sundrie thinges', yet

[47]

none of that justified 'suche a general diuision amonge you'.

The Damplip affair recurs in correspondence the following year. In June 1539, a year after Damplip had been summoned to London on suspicion of heresy, Cromwell declared himself astonished that Lisle had only then sent him a schedule containing certain articles preached by Damplip and

that this had not been made available and when he had been accused

[48]

over transubstantiation the previous summer. Byrne sees Cromwell as wholly disingenuous here. Cromwell, she thinks, must have been fully informed of Damlip's activities and sermons in 1538 and consequently he must have been lying through his teeth in denying all knowledge of it till the following year. Oddly Byrne undermines such claims when she speculates that the council of Calais had compiled the list of articles in

[49]

1538 but, fearing that they were dynamite, had not sent them: in that case Cromwell's profession of ignorance and his manifest irritation would have been fully justified.

In June 1539 Cromwell made no bones about what beliefs were and were not acceptable. He had perused a schedule of certain articles preached by Adam Damplip and found them 'very pestilent': if it was true that Damplip taught them, 'thenne taught he most detestable and cancred heresye'. And if Butler, the commissary, had agreed to that doctrine, 'I must needs bothe thinke hym vnmete for suche an office and iudge him

[50]

also woorthye greate punishment'. If Cromwell believed those words, and there is no evidence to make us doubt it, then he was plainly in no sense a sacramentary himself, and he was expressly aligning himself with Henry VIII's robust anti-sacramentarianism.

That Cromwell and Cranmer saw themselves not as leaders of a faction but as royal servants implementing royal policy and concerned above all to maintain order and to minimise division is seen by their treatment of the conservative Prior Dove. In summer 1538 Cranmer severely criticised Dove for hindering the word of God, and maintaining

[51]

superstition, and kept him in safe custody till Cromwell returned, not

[52]

doubting that enough would be found to justify Dove's deprivation.

The questions put to him show that he was suspected of intriguing with the bishops of London, Chichester and Durham, presumably, as has already been suggested, against that spring's policy of dismantling

[53]

shrines. But, interestingly, Cromwell and Cranmer did not destroy

Dove, which on a factional view they might, as Butler urged them, have sought to do. Instead by a mixture of threats and promises they won him over. By October he was reported as returning to Calais in order publicly 'to rekant thinges by him mysspoken': for so doing Cranmer and

[\[54\]](#)

Cromwell promised him favour. In November he was on the point of

[\[55\]](#)

surrendering the priory to the Lord Lisle. All this reinforces the point that what Cromwell and Cranmer were pursuing was the furtherance and enforcement of the king's aim, securing the outward acquiescence of those seemingly opposed, and the maintenance of order, not the private encouragement of some evangelical agenda independent of royal policies. Cromwell wanted offenders punished but 'without to grete a tumult': 'as if the faultes of a fewe in respect of the multitude there were

[\[56\]](#)

bruted thorough an hole worlde'

Concern for the enforcement of policy and the maintenance of order was

also reflected in Cromwell's reaction to Lisle's report, on 8 May 1538 of the pulling down of the image of Our Lady in the Wall. What mattered were the circumstances in which the image of our Lady in the wall at Calais had been taken down. If the image of Our Lady in the Wall was taken down 'after any suche sorte as implied a contempte of common auctoritie or might haue made any tumult in the people', expedient order

[\[57\]](#)

would be taken. In response Lisle sent depositions; as for the taking down of the image of Our Lady in the Wall in a manner to imply contempt of authority, he and the council referred it to the king and Cromwell to determine the matter, since while there had been no command by the king to take it down, nor had there been any contrary

[\[58\]](#)

inhibition: there had been no tumult. The crucial aspect for Cromwell was not so much the dismantling of the image but the maintenance of order.

Cranmer and Cromwell continued to trust John Butler, the Commissary. As they saw things, Butler was furthering the break with Rome, reliably

anti-papal, carrying on the reform of abuses, encouraging the dispersal of ignorance through the reading of the Bible. That is why Cranmer sent over William Smith to reinforce his work, encouraging the laity to read

[59]

the Bible in St Mary's and St Nicholas' churches. It is not obvious that they were early on aware of Butler's increasing radicalism. For Lisle, facing religious divisions day-to-day, Butler was an irritant, trespassing on his own authority, and increasingly willing to allow provocatively radical preaching, and worse. Religious divisions did not disappear. The Bible readings promoted by William Smith, parish priest provoked quarrels. Henry Tourney argued with Gregory Botolf, Lisle's

[60]

chaplain. Thomas Brook, alderman and customer, provoked quarrels

[61]

at Easter 1539 by his Bible-readings. But, by and large, after Damplip's departure in summer 1538, matters calmed down, and for several months little occurred in Calais that would have caused Henry VIII any great or immediate concern. And so far nothing has been revealed to show that Cromwell was anywhere doing anything in breach

of Henry's policies and wishes.

Some angry letters exchanged in spring and summer 1539 have, however, been interpreted conspiratorially. They deserve more careful reading than they have usually been given. Viscount Lisle would claim that his earlier reports of troubles had been ignored and would emphasise his current difficulties; Cromwell would respond by accusing Lisle of failing to send him timely information. Historians have seized on Lisle's accusations and dismissed Cromwell's responses as hypocritical: Lisle, allegedly, was entirely right and Cromwell was subverting his authority by ignoring Lisle's requests for help. But close reading of the sequence of letters will suggest rather that we should be wary of taking these letters as proof that Cromwell was in any way protecting religious radicals in Calais. The fairest way of proceeding here is to consider the relevant letters in turn, scrutinising the details, and assessing the conspiratorial way in which they have so often been read.

This episode began when in March 1539, as part of a general

[62]

reinforcement of coastal defences, Edward Seymour, earl of

[63]

Hertford, was sent to Calais to inspect the fortresses there. This was

not, however, some special factional singling out of Calais for

investigation; at the same time, the duke of Norfolk was surveying the

[64]

garrisons at Berwick and Carlisle, and general musters were being

[65]

held throughout the country. There was a real fear of foreign

invasion in spring 1539. Commissions of this kind were a familiar

feature of early Tudor government; as recently as 1535 a commission

headed by Sir William Fitzwilliam had investigated in Calais and 'founde

this towne and marches farre oute of order, and so farre that it wold

greve and petie the hart of any good and true Englisshemen to here or

[66]

see the same'. Nor was the commission that was despatched to Calais

in 1539 factionally skewed in its composition. Hertford was no

conservative. Sir Thomas Cheyney, warden of the cinque ports, newly

appointed treasurer of the household, who had tangled with Cranmer

over doctrine, and Sir Anthony Browne, master of the horse, were more obviously conservative in religion, but they were also obvious members of such a commission. There is nothing to suggest that they were appointed because of their religious affiliation or for religious purposes.

What impact did the commission have? The first source that factional historians cite here is Cromwell's letter to Lisle of 6 May 1539 (miscalendared 1538 in *LP* and in Merriman). Cromwell noted that Hertford, Cheyney, and Browne had been 'signified' - he does not say by whom - that 'the towne of Calys shuld be in misorder by certayn sacramentaries alleaged to be in the same'. He voiced his surprise that Lisle, knowing Cromwell's desire for the repression of errors and the establishment of unity in the king's subjects, had given him no information touching such lewd persons. Lisle would know how much Cromwell esteemed the importance of Calais and how well he had considered the dangers that might come to Calais 'by diuersitie of opinion', especially in matters so high and weighty, and how he had done all he could 'with an honest charitie' to quiet all things that had 'insurged'

among them. The king had consequently ordered Cromwell to write to Lisle and the council to meet and to make 'due and circumspect inquisition' of all such matters that interrupted the quiet and unity that

[\[67\]](#)

ought to be there, and report back.

There have been varying readings of this letter. Lisle, some have suggested, had seized the opportunity of the the commissioners' visit to voice a warning, and had declared to Hertford, Cheyney and Browne that which he did not dare say to Cromwell. Did Lisle complain to them that Cromwell was protecting religious radicals in Calais? It is hard to see how that would have been to his advantage, since it would have revealed his incompetence in healing divisions and maintaining uniformity, vital in a garrison city, and consequently have exposed him to criticism. Cromwell would obviously come to hear of it and would clearly be offended: and the revelations themselves would not be to Lisle's credit.

[\[68\]](#)

A more sinister reading is that Lisle had already written to Cromwell what he now said to Hertford and the other members of the commission - but that Cromwell had wilfully ignored it. St Clare Byrne (followed by Brigden) thinks Cromwell had repeatedly suppressed what was for him unwelcome news, and kept Lisle's demands for decisive action against religious radicals from the king, leaving him ignorant till Hertford, sent to Calais to inspect the fortifications, came across the religious divisions

[69]

there and reported accordingly to the king in mid-March. Cromwell's letter is thus disingenuous in reproaching Lisle for not having kept him

[70]

informed, and 'feigning astonishment'. That Cromwell suppressed Lisle's letters is, however, improbable. After all, at any time Lisle might have written again, and to others, not least directly to Henry VIII; and, as the Lisle letters amply reveal, in John Hussee he had an extremely active and effective London agent. In general, given Henry's close interest in religious affairs, it is unlikely that such letters could have remained concealed. Indeed we know that Henry sometimes even opened letters

[\[71\]](#)

addressed to Cromwell.

As we have already seen, it would be a few months later, in June 1539, that Cromwell marvelled that the details of what Adam Damplip had preached the previous year which had just sent him by Lisle and the council of Calais had not been made available to him when Damplip

[\[72\]](#)

faced accusations in summer 1538. St Clare Byrne thinks that Cromwell had indeed received those details in summer 1538 but had kept them secret: again, that seems implausible.

In July 1539 Cromwell would again reproach Lisle for not keeping him informed, this time over Ralph Hare, a soldier in the Calais garrison suspected of heresy. Was Cromwell being disingenuous? Or had Lisle been negligent? Lisle, provoked, insisted that he had written to Cromwell about all this before. Yet Lisle's studied vagueness about exactly when - in one draft the words 'in Lent or therabout' replaced 'a yere past and more' – fails to carry conviction.

And it is by no means clear that Lisle had written previously along these lines to Cromwell, as he so often claimed. Indeed not so long before he had rather boasted how smoothly matters were going. He had earlier complacently assured his wife that all was well: 'I insure youe owr doctors were never in suchs sylence, for they dare not speke one rude

[73]

word touchyng the blessyd sacrament'. He was, as we have already

[74]

noted and will note again, by no means competent as Lord Deputy.

Much more likely an explanation than that Cromwell had ignored Lisle's reports is that Hertford and the other visiting commissioners had simply found out about the religious divisions in Calais, which were real enough, and reported back accordingly. Cromwell, not unreasonably irritated that he had not been informed earlier about what was an undeniable problem, passed on the king's order that Lisle and the Calais council should investigate and report back, together with some reproaches. Maybe Cromwell had been informed, though not in

convincing detail, but had remained sceptical about Lisle's assessment of the seriousness of religious disputes in Calais. He may have seen Lisle's concerns as more a reflection of Lisle's crypto-papal sympathies than as an accurate description. And if Cromwell was more inclined to believe what he learned from William Butler, the Commisary, who was robustly defending the royal supremacy, that might have led him to play down

[\[75\]](#)

Lisle's concerns. However all that may be, blaming Lisle for not detecting heretics earlier - which is what Cromwell's letters in spring and summer 1539 do - was not an obviously effective way of protecting religious radicals in Calais. And that reinforces the claim that that is not what Cromwell was doing. In many ways the reproachful orders sent on to Lisle sound much more like the reaction of Henry VIII, typically, and unfairly, blaming his servant on the spot for problems in the execution of near-impossible or contradictory policies. So Cromwell was essentially passing on Henry's anger on learning from Hertford's commission that religious unity was not being maintained in Calais.

Responding to Cromwell's letter, Lisle and the Calais council, in an effort to defend themselves against perceptions of incompetence, in turn insisted that they had reported the problems before, dramatised the divisions and exaggerated the extent of radicalism. On 18 May, in a

[76]

letter to which Cromwell referred in his reply, Lisle clearly made a fuss about religious divisions in Calais. That is why he commanded - as Sir George Carew informed Cromwell on 21 May: 'the greff ys not a

[77]

lytell to thoys that favor godes word' - that the Bible should not be read at mass and service time. But in writing and taking action, Lisle was responding, as Cromwell's letter of 27 May makes plain, to Cromwell's earlier letter of 6 May with the king's commandment to inquire into the

[78]

causes of disunity. He was responding to Cromwell's instructions: he was not acting out of hostility towards him, whether whimsically on his own initiative, or on behalf of some supposed faction. He had been ordered to investigate and to report, and had responded by preparing depositions.

Lisle probably went into still greater detail. It is possible that an undated letter dated by *LP* and Slavin to July 1538 and Byrne to Lent 1539 in fact dates from May 1539 and is a response to Cromwell's request. In this letter Lisle informed Cromwell that the Commisary [John Butler] and 8 or 9 of the retinue 'do kepe daily a congregacion secretly in a prestes house'; they 'take upon them, withoute myne assent, to pull down images'; the comissary had without Lisle's knowledge or authority had taken 'from the aulter in our lady church a cloth of tynsyn/musyn [?] and a cote of tynsym fr an image of our lady saing he will make a bedd therof'. 'The parish priest here [William Smith] doth disannul in his preachings sundry things which the kinges majestie, in his grace's injunctions, doth not'. 'Thus they do usurpe and take upon them like rulers and heddes'. He besought Cromwell to cause them of the retinue to

[\[79\]](#)

stop. This was an astonishing admission of his own weakness and

[\[80\]](#)

incompetence.

In late May John Husee, Lisle's agent, met Hertford in London. Hertford asked 'what besines there was a do' in Calais concerning the sacrament. Husee, covering up not Lisle's conspiring but his incompetence, pretended to know nothing. Hertford said that Cromwell had told him the day before that 'thinges shold be surmysed and skant beliyved; Hussee defended Lisle, saying he and the Council were sure that he would not report to the king what he could not justify. Hertford said that the council was 'of ii partes and not vnyform but devyded'. Hussee tried to play down the divisions in the council of Calais, saying he knew no such thing. But Hertford gave Hussee the strong impression that Lisle's reports were thought not to be true but rather 'surmysed and malycyously imagined'. Hussee added that Lisle could see why his letters were not answered.

Factional historians read this as evidence of Cromwell's manipulating: here Cromwell was scheming to dismiss the charges Lisle had made by discrediting the evidence. But such a reading seems to make Hertford part of Cromwell's conspiracy, which is puzzling. Much more likely is

that Cromwell and Hertford both feared that Lisle was getting matters out of proportion. Even Hussee, Lisle's faithful factotum, had doubts: 'I trust yor lordship and others of the coluncil ar so cyrcumspect in suche thinges as hathe byn by yor letter certified that you dare at all tymes

[\[81\]](#)

iustiefye the same'.

Factional historians then read Cromwell's subsequent letter of 27 May as strong evidence of his attempt to protect the radicals. Those who without substantial grounds spread rumours should be punished; Lisle should use charity and mild handling; officers such as the Commissary should not be accused of so heinous a crime - as heresy - unless it could clearly be proved. The depositions against the Comissary were 'not most wighty and substantial'; the accusations against the other few 'seem to weigh somewhat deeper', 'and yet the small number that be accused of that offence might have been punished without a general infamy to the whole town'. MacCulloch reads this as Cromwell taking 'a sceptical view of the

[\[82\]](#)

accusations'; Ward that Cromwell was trying to fob off the Calais

[83]

authorities.

But what Cromwell wanted was quiet and unity in Calais. He suspected that Lisle - perhaps in pursuit of a personal quarrel - was exaggerating the extent and depth of the problem. His aim was a resolution of the difficulties, not the protection of radicals, above all since he did not think

[84]

that the alleged radicals were in fact radicals. Byrne thinks

[85]

Cromwell was being disingenuous, presumably because she thinks that Cromwell was really protecting radicals. MacCulloch thinks Cromwell 'tried stonewalling by keeping the depositions sent over from

[86]

Calais away from the king', but all that Cromwell said in his letter was that the king had not had time to read or hear them, perhaps not surprising given the simultaneous passage of the Act of Six Articles: 'the kinges maiestie traveylyng most catholiquely and christenly and

[87]

charitably to sett a general quiet and vnyte in all those mattiers'.

Yet the very next day, 28 May, Cromwell ordered Lisle to send up Ralph Hare and Jacob, the barber of Mark. If Cromwell was protecting radicals, his efforts had proved very short-lived - and while that does not necessarily disprove his intentions, it does suggest that it makes more sense to see Cromwell - and Henry - as working rather to root out radicalism, by dealing with individuals, and to maintain unity, by urging charity and gentle handling on Lisle. True, Lisle seems to have been anxious that Cromwell might not be helpful. If he continued to be used as he had been, maliciously accused by some of the councillors of Calais of jeopardising the safety of the town, 'I had rather to lye in perpetuall prison during my lyff then to abyde the lieffe that I haue bidden', and so he would write to the king if he could get no remedy from Cromwell.

[\[88\]](#)

That is hardly evidence of someone factionally plotting against the minister. It is more like the petulant complaint of a spoilt child. That outburst provoked Cromwell into pained self-justification. 'Surely my lorde, as I knowe not wherein I haue hitherto failed you' ... 'if it shall

lyke you playney and specially to write vnto me your greves, I shall myself declare the same to the kinges majesty, and joyne with you for the healing of them'. Moreover Cromwell added that 'if you doo mistrust me you may without any offence to me seke suche other remedyes as

[\[89\]](#)

your lordshipp shal think most convenient'.

And indeed Lisle had already gone elsewhere. At the end of May Lisle informed Sir Anthony Brown, who had been one of the visiting commissioners in March, about the erroneous opinions against the sacrament current in Calais, with which he had been continually vexed for two years. While some councillors supported him, others were against them. Cromwell had just ordered him to send over Ralph Hare, a member of the garrison retinue, and Jacob, barber of Mark, who had spoken evil words against the sacrament. Thomas Boyes, now one of the burgesses of the parliament for Calais, could, he said, tell more. Lisle asked Browne to keep the letter close, since if it came to Cromwell's knowledge or ear, he would be half undone. He had written three letters plainly to Cromwell that he was not able to serve the king here without

[\[90\]](#)

obedience.

Why did Lisle ask Browne to keep the letter close? Lisle did not directly criticise Cromwell in it: indeed it contains little that Cromwell would have objected to. Lisle did say that he rejoiced in news he had received from Browne, presumably about the impending Act of Six Articles, which reasserted the orthodox understanding of the mass, explaining his joy because in Calais they had had troubles arising from erroneous opinions about the mass. But since Cromwell evidently accepted the Act of Six Articles it is hard to see why he should have minded Lisle's welcome. Perhaps Lisle was anxious to keep secret no more than the fact that he had written to Browne. Yet if Lisle and Browne were really plotting against Cromwell, there would have been no need for Lisle to have implored Browne to keep his letter secret, so obvious would the need for secrecy have been. Was not Lisle's real concern quite simply that in his letter he was dangerously revealing his own incompetence and powerlessness?

Byrne thinks that 'Cromwell, as usual, when complaints were initiated by Lisle and the council, played down the whole affair with counsels of moderation, and for a couple of months at a time nothing is heard of it in

[\[91\]](#)

the correspondence'. But that is misleading. That there were serious religious divisions in Calais was made dramatically visible by the protests in parliament against the Act of Six Articles by Thomas Brook, one of the two burgesses for Calais. On 12 June Brook spoke in parliament about the sacrament, arguing for communion in both kinds, and condemning transubstantiation; most of the house were weary of his oration, and he was resolutely answered by Edward Hall, threatened by Sir William Kingston, and taunted by others so much so that Hussee

[\[92\]](#)

thought he would have little mind to reason the matter again there.

Meanwhile, Thomas Boyes, the other burgess for Calais, presented information against religious radicals to the king. All in all in summer 1539 it would hardly have been possible to ignore the religious divisions in Calais. Cromwell himself summoned Hare and the barber of Mark to

[93]

London, as we have seen. And the charges of religious radicalism far from being swept out of sight, were, as we shall see, rather fully and seriously investigated during the summer of 1539.

Moreover Lisle had every opportunity to press matters further, as we have seen he did. In early June the Council of Calais wrote to Cranmer and to Hertford, and, from Cromwell's reply, also to Cromwell, accusing Butler of maliciously accusing and then excommunicating Richard Leonard for allegedly restoring a tryndell of wax hanging before the crucifix in the parish church that had been cut down. Butler had also accused one Forde of defamation, for informing the council that Butler had spoken irreverently of the sacrament and encouraged others to hold erroneous opinions. They appealed for a discreet and learned man as commissary. In response, as we shall shortly see in greater detail,

[94]

Cromwell sent for Butler and Smith.

Much of the case for Cromwell's protection of religious radicals turns on

perceptions of his good faith. Was he, as Byrne maintains, doing what he could to protect those accused of radicalism? Was he therefore being disingenuous when he declared that 'he that neither feared God nor esteemed the king's injunctions is no meet herb to grow in his majesty's most catholic and virtuous garden'? Cromwell's advice to Lisle to handle matters gently can be read as ironic or disingenuous. But that it need not be, but should rather be taken as meaning no more and no less than it says, is suggested by the tone and content of the letter that Thomas Boyes wrote to Lisle. Boyes, one of Calais's two burgesses in parliament, was clearly conservative in religion and no friend of Butler or Hare. He advised Lisle to send evidence against them to Sir Anthony Brown, the duke of Norfolk or the earl of Hertford (significantly perhaps not to Cromwell?); moreover Boyes had delivered to the king a book concerning the misbehaviour and disobedience of many persons in

[\[95\]](#)

Calais. But Boyes nonetheless wrote from London in June 1539 in similar vein to Cromwell, telling Lisle how Cromwell 'marvelled greatly' about Lisle and the Council of Calais. Earlier Lisle had urged Sir

Anthony Browne that Boyes be given the chance to see the king. Henry had then had ordered Boyes to inform him about the causes of unquietness in Calais. 'The Kinges Grace hath apoynted you there', Boyes wrote to Lisle, 'to see the towne well ordered, and hath gevyn you power to punnyshe them that are yll doers, and you take vpon you in punyshment of them nothyng, but troubles the Kynges Grace and his cownesall wyth suche matters as you showd redresse yourselvys'. Boyes here shows Henry as criticising and advising Lisle in much the same terms as Cromwell had done - which suggests that that in his earlier letters Cromwell had been sincerely articulating royal policy, not disingenuously covering his own supposed factional manipulations. Boyes went on 'My lorde, I wyll insuer yor lordshyp that the Kyng ys not a lyttyll dyspleased with suche eronyous openyons and acts as is vused in Calyce'. Lisle would shortly receive instructions to investigate those who had eaten flesh in Lent or had otherwise behaved contrary to the king's injunctions. 'My lorde', Boyes continued, 'I trust that Calyce shalbe set in a gret quietnes'. 'The Kynges Majestie wyll haue the servyce of God honorably mayntayned, contrary to the seynges of dyuerce malycius

[96]

persons in Calyce'. Henry was clearly annoyed by the problems in Calais: he told one William Feilding 'I have more a doo with yow Cales

[97]

men than with all my realme after'. Boyes' advice echoes Cromwell's letter of 27 May but its rebuking tone cannot be ascribed to any covert defence of religious radicalism. Where Boyes noted that 'your lordshyp hath had her many enemys, in so mutche that they sayd that you could not faver them that luyd the word of God', what was at issue was not primarily that Lisle was prosecuting, and Cromwell was defending, sacramentaries, but rather that Lisle's actions in dealing with seditious and erroneous persons lent credence to accusations that he was a 'Pharisee', in other words a hypocrite, pretending to serve the king, while in fact a papist. What was at issue, and in some doubt, though almost certainly unfairly, was Lisle's fundamental loyalty to the break with

[98]

Rome. Did Cromwell's awareness of Lisle's conservatism make him fear that Lisle was exaggerating the extent of heresy in Calais, and in particular accusing of being sacramentaries those who were simply

enforcing the king's policies? However that may be, the undoubted action that Cromwell called on Lisle to take was to send up the alleged offenders.

John Butler, the commissary, and William Smith, the parish priest of

[\[99\]](#)

Calais, were sent up at the king's pleasure. Together with Ralph Hare, a soldier in the garrison, and Jacob, a Fleming who was a barber in Marke, they were heard by the lords of the council, including the duke of Suffolk, the bishop of Durham and the earl of Oxford on 19 June: Butler and Smith were committed to the Fleet, Hare and Jacob to the Gatehouse.

[\[100\]](#)

At much the same time Thomas Brook, burgess for Calais, was

[\[101\]](#)

speaking defiantly, as we have seen, in parliament. One report

[\[102\]](#)

suggested that Butler and Smith had been discharged, another that

[\[103\]](#)

little was laid against Butler; another that they had not been

[104]

discharged, but rather denied on oath the charges against them. On

5 July Archbishop Cranmer, Richard Sampson, bishop of Chichester, and Dr Richard Gwent asked Lisle and the council of Calais for further information. Rauffe Hare had challenged the testimony of Edward Malpas, Richard Sandes and Thomas Boyes against him. Lisle and the council sent on his objections. They were urgently asked to examine named suspected heretics - John a Calays, John Nicholas, Piers Hedge and Richard Swift - for any further evidence against him, especially for anything he had said since the king's recent proclamation pardoning

[105]

anabaptists and sacramentaries (issued on 26 February 1539).

Cranmer had reportedly spoken 'veray earnestly' against Hare, willing him to declare the truth, desiring him to relinquish his opinions, and

[106]

threatening him with the loss of his post. A few days later it was reported that witnesses had been before Cranmer, Sampson, and Dr

[107]

Gwent. Shortly afterwards Cranmer promised Lisle a discreet parish priest and a learned commissary, implying imminent dismissal of

[\[108\]](#)

Smith and Butler. On 29 [or 20] July Hussee reported that Ralph Hare would bear a faggot at Calais, Jacob the barber one at Marke; William Smith was openly to preach a sermon of recantation of all his false doctrine in the market place at Calais; and Butler was not to return to Calais until after Easter without special royal licence. Thomas Brook

[\[109\]](#)

was commanded to the Fleet to be tried later. Foxe's more colourful account largely confirms these details: Hare is presented as an unlearned man tricked into submission; Brook able to refute charges against him; Smith ordered to recant, which he did by denying nothing; Butler was

[\[110\]](#)

dismissed.

Does all this support Byrne's claim that 'Cranmer and Cromwell ... were

[\[111\]](#)

doing their utmost to clear the Calais prisoners'? When Cranmer cast doubts on the witnesses against them, was he trying to delay matters - or was he simply acting properly to test the truth of their evidence?

[\[112\]](#)

If Cranmer was handling Butler and Smith 'very gentyllly', as

Hussee reported, might that reflect the fact that they swore that what they were accused of was untrue, thus greatly increasing the need for

[\[113\]](#)

compelling evidence against them.

When on 28 July Cranmer

asked Lisle not to imprison Hare and the others who had been required

to do penance, was he protecting them - or simply upholding the

[\[114\]](#)

authority by which they had been dealt with?

What all this detail

shows is rather just how thoroughly the accusations of religious

radicalism were dealt with. Not all those examined were to be punished,

and not all those punished were punished severely, but that again shows

that efforts were made to determine the truth of the charges, rather than

that Cromwell or Cranmer or anyone else was shielding radicals.

Damagingly for any notion of Cromwell and Cranmer as protectors of a

coherent religious faction, details of the charges reveal that those

accused differed significantly in the extent of their alleged religious

radicalism. This was no organised group controlled from above: these were rather individuals with their own perceptions and preoccupations, reflections of a decade of intense religious debate. Dampier, as we have already seen, certainly preached against images, but in that he was. Crucially, in line with government policy. He had refuted transubstantiation, which Cranmer deemed to be entirely reasonable, but insisted - maybe disingenuously, maybe sincerely - that he had not denied the real presence. On that point Butler, the commissary, had supported him. But now Butler himself was accused of serious charges. He had allegedly said on 31 May that 'a draught of aqua vitae bought at John Spicers of Calais grocer and drunken up shuld doo a man asmoche good as the bodye of Christ conteyned in the blessed sacrament of the [\[115\]](#) aulter'.' He was accused (by Lisle and other councillors, in a letter sent to the bishops of Bath, Chichester and Norwich) of supporting many naughty preachers. He had supposedly taken away the best altar cloth from the high altar at St Mary's, against the will of the parishioners, and pulled down five or six altars in his church of St Peter's, half a mile from

the town. Several had spoken against the mass and eaten flesh in Lent

but he had neither punished them nor spoken against them 'but hath

[\[116\]](#)

rather supported maintained and comforted them therto'. The

Council of Calais would ask for him to be replaced as commissary by 'a
dyscrete well lernyd man beyng of good pore and sincere judgement'.

[\[117\]](#)

[\[118\]](#)

But Butler swore that what he was accused of was not true,
and John Hussee reported how (to his regret) little was laid against him.

[\[119\]](#)

On this evidence, Butler was not a screaming radical. He may also
have been somewhat negligent: Lord Sandys informed Lisle on 2 July of
the recent discovery that Butler had failed to see to the reforming of

[\[120\]](#)

pages dealing with Becket in books in St Peter's.

William Smith, the parish priest, had 'extremely' and influentially
preached against ceremonies so much so that 'the moste parte of this
towne haue clerly withdrawn theyr hartes and devocion from herynge
masse mattyns or evensong'. Although there were about 1700 in the

[\[121\]](#)

parish, only 10-12 went to evensong on Trinity Sunday. He had taken it upon himself to preach against the mass, matins and evensong and all other laudable ceremonies of the church commanded by the

[\[122\]](#)

king's proclamation, calling them 'stinking and beggerly'. He had allegedly preached against the Virgin, against praying to saints; and he

[\[123\]](#)

was - seemingly falsely - accused of eating flesh in Lent. But Smith does not seem to have expressed any views on the nature of the sacrament of the altar.

Ralph Hare, a soldier in the garrison, had allegedly spoken against the

[\[124\]](#)

sacrament on Good Friday. According to Foxe, Hare had also spoken against auricular confession, holy bread, holy palms, holy ashes

[\[125\]](#)

and holy water. On 5 July Cranmer, Sampson and Gwent asked the council of Calais for further information against him, especially anything he had said since the king's proclamation pardoning anabaptists and

[\[126\]](#)

sacramentaries [on 26 Feb. 1539]: that implies that he was under suspicion of having voiced sacramentarian heresies. But Hare (probably)

[\[127\]](#)

countered with charges against Lisle and impugned the evidence of

[\[128\]](#)

witnesses against him. Cranmer was very earnest with Hare that he

[\[129\]](#)

should relinquish his opinions, again implying that he had gone beyond what Cranmer thought allowable. Was Cranmer protecting him - or was he simply, like many a late medieval bishop before him had done, trying to prevent the downfall of someone whose abilities he valued but who had strayed into heresy? Foxe suggests that Hare continued to

[\[130\]](#)

maintain his innocence and submitted only out of fear.

Thomas Brook, burgess for Calais, openly spoke in parliament in 1539 in favour of communion in both kinds, and criticised the gross and

[\[131\]](#)

foolish error of transubstantiation. When interrogated, he was able

to refute charges that he had maintained Damlip: he had been in Paris at

[\[132\]](#)

the time. In August 1539 Brook informed Cromwell that he intended to ask for the king's pardon granted to all offenders before 26 February 1539, obviously referring to the provisions made then in favour of anabaptists and sacramentaries who recanted, and also for four commissions to be sent to Calais for the trial of his honesty, he being appointed to prove certain exceptions against Peyton and Pole, 4 November. These men were his capital enemies and had maliciously accused him of certain heresies and slandered him as seditious. He begged Cromwell's favour, and had always owed to him his faith and service as one who had set forth the wealth of this realm and the glory of

[\[133\]](#)

God. But Brook's appeal to Cromwell in no way proves that

[\[134\]](#)

Cromwell was protecting him. In April 1540, Henry VIII, noting that he had been reported as using himself 'very arrogantly and presumptuously', and 'thinking as that this contempt and eating flesh of the said Broke will extend, if it be well perpended, to as grievous an

offence as a relapse into his former heresies', instructed the commissioners for Calais to investigate and if necessary to execute him.

[\[135\]](#)

Thomas Curthop, the parson of Marke, was accused of having taken

[\[136\]](#)

down altars in his church. Lisle was to examine him according to

[\[137\]](#)

the king's pleasure and commandment in August. Jacob, the barber

of Marke, a Fleming, had declared that he had never received the

[\[138\]](#)

sacrament with good will since coming to the Pale and allegedly

[\[139\]](#)

spoke certain evil words against it.

That influential people in Calais were, in somewhat different ways, seeking religious reform beyond what Henry VIII's reformation allowed is clear. It is much harder to show that Cromwell or Cranmer were instigating, co-ordinating, or even protecting these men. What

characterised Cromwell's approach best were his words of advice sent to Lisle and the Calais councillors on 23 July 1539 ordering him to sort out a quarrel that had arisen between Mr Potter and Mr Palmer, two members of the Calais garrison. 'My lorde,' Cromwell urged, 'I advise you be not overfree nor to credule in believing any raportes made vnto you afore ye shall heare patently and at length both parties'. They were to work towards 'a gentle and indifferent order': 'ye shal norrishe and bring a very vnion and concorde betwen all them there and conduce them to such a knott as there shall be perfite union amongst them withoute striffe which is one of the strongest fortresses that can be in any [\[140\]](#) suche town of warre as the same is'.

There is thus little here so far to suggest that the behaviour of Dampier in 1538 or the revelations of religious radicalism in Calais in 1539 harmed or embarrassed Cromwell's standing with the king or influenced the making of religious policy. Instead, these events demonstrate the challenges that royal policy faced. What happened in Calais in 1538-39

tailed as an explanation for the fall of Cromwell a year later: if all this had tarred Cromwell with the brush of religious radicalism, it is not easy to explain why he did not fall in summer 1539. It was then that matters were brought very fully into the open and underwent close scrutiny. In

[141]

September 1539 Lisle crossed to England and saw the king. A committee of bishops heard further charges against a number of Calais men in November, debating the extent and reliability of the evidence

[142]

brought forward against them. That suggests that the problems of religious division were real and enduring: but no historian has so far suggested that these particular matters had political significance.

Since there is, then, little from the years 1538 and 1539 to support any claim that Cromwell was protecting religious radicals in Calais, it is the more unconvincing to read what happened in early 1540 in that light.

There was another investigation into disorder in Calais in March and April; and in May Lord Lisle was arrested. What lay behind those events? Were they further instalments in a factional soap-opera? Or

should they be understood in other ways?!

The duke of Norfolk visited Calais in February 1540, a year after the inspection by Hertford, on his way to and from the court of Francis I.

[\[143\]](#)

Once again this has been interpreted factionally. On this occasion there is at least a near-contemporary source, the chronicle written by Ellis Griffith. Griffith, a native of Flintshire, who after serving Sir Robert Wingfield became a soldier in the king's retinue at Calais in the 1530s, would write - in Welsh - a history of the world to 1552, including

[\[144\]](#)

an account of the recent past. But Griffith's text, however

[\[145\]](#)

interesting, is in the end no more than the hearsay. Griffiths had no privileged access to government. A committed protestant by the time he compiled his history, he disliked Lisle. And his gossip postdates the fall of Cromwell. Then it would be natural to search for conspiratorial explanations. We, however, must test them against other evidence.

Griffith presented Cromwell as attacked for protecting heretics. When in

February the duke of Norfolk came to Calais, Lisle (Griffith tells us) complained to Norfolk that Cromwell had not punished the heretics sent over the previous year. Some members of the Calais Council begged Norfolk to persuade Henry to send over commissioners to deal with their

[\[146\]](#)

religious troubles. Griffith went on to claim that Norfolk, Lisle and Sandys set out to ruin Cromwell by a royal commission, charging Cromwell with aiding and abetting the soldiers of Calais together with

[\[147\]](#)

their protestant friends. Byrne draws upon this to argue that Norfolk and Lisle conspired together when they met, Norfolk plotting to use what was going on in Calais in order to undermine Cromwell - 'Norfolk must have realised ... that the Calais situation presented material for the right kind of attack on Cromwell's heretical Lutheran affiliations and opinions and his support of heretics', and Lisle simply seeking greater support for his position in Calais without much thought to the political implications of securing Norfolk's help, 'a final desperate bid for

[\[148\]](#)

the official support necessary to maintain his own authority'. Byrne

develops the conspiracy further by also bringing in the king. 'It is possible ... that Henry also secretly commissioned Norfolk to investigate the Calais situation on his way home from France because he had

[\[149\]](#)

already begun to suspect Cromwell's double game'. 'Lisle made his decision to risk a show-down with Cromwell by using Norfolk as his intermediary with the king'; 'almost certainly not action against Cromwell but a final desperate bid for the official support necessary to

[\[150\]](#)

maintain his own authority'. But all this is highly speculative, based on Griffith's gossip (as Byrne recognises) and on surmise. There is nothing in any other sources that supports Griffith. And it is interesting to note the tensions in such factional accounts. For Griffith, both Norfolk and Lisle wished to destroy Cromwell; for Byrne, Lisle's motivation was simply the maintenance of his own authority, rather than enmity towards Cromwell. It is interesting here how Byrne uses a source to the extent to which it suits her preconceptions, but no further.

Can Norfolk's visit be interpreted in other ways? It is far more likely that

Norfolk, stopping in Calais on his journey to the French king, rather than visiting the area for its own sake, became concerned at Lisle's inability to re-establish order there and anxious about any possible treachery. It is far from sure that invoking continuing religious radicalism in Calais was a useful weapon that Lisle could have used against Cromwell. If, as I have argued, Cromwell had not been protecting radicals, then it would have been an implausible charge to throw against him, since it would readily be exposed as an invention. Admitting that religious divisions were continuing to pose a serious in Calais would damage Lisle, Lord Deputy, responsible for maintaining order there, more immediately than it would Cromwell. All that makes it much more likely that rather than joining with Lisle in some conspiracy directed against Cromwell, Norfolk was simply reacting to the actual situation that he found in Calais.

What Henry VIII was concerned by was *any* dissension. Here the advice Lisle was given by Sir John Wallop is telling: 'I trust yf my lord of Norfolk tarryed with you one daye he wold so comfort you and advise you to sequester all craftie folks - I mean those that be disobedyent unto

the kinges iniunctions, as Poole etc - trusting ye declared those sorte according to ther merits, not forgetting the fleshe-eters'. Wallop was encouraging Lisle to act against 'all crafty folks', both Reginald Pole and his friends, and the 'fleshe-eters', that is to say the religious radicals who

[\[151\]](#)

did not abstain from meat during Lent.

As a result of Norfolk's visit, a royal commission was appointed. That in itself would seem to undermine factional accounts, since on a factional reading it would have been sufficient and speedier for Norfolk and Lisle, if they were conspiring together, to have simply prepared an appropriately damning report themselves, rather than relying on an unpredictable commission, whose members were not obviously all conservatives. These commissioners, appointed on 9 March 1540, were the earl of Sussex, Lord St John, Sir John Gage, Dr Curwen (Coren), Dr Edward Leighton and John Baker, together with Lord Lisle. They were to inquire 'by whose meanes proucacion or abbettment suche contencions as haue of late dayes appered betwne them haue growen and

been continued ; now the king s officers be affected and disposed in
matyers of religion as touching thobseruacion of the lawes statutes and
ordinances made for the perseruacion surety and defence of the sayd
towne’, [\[152\]](#) They arrived on 16 March [\[153\]](#) and reported to the king
on 5 April. They had required Lisle, the Lord Deputy, the other
councillors there, the men of arms, the constables and brethren, to say
whether they knew of any discord and division among them. In response
they showed the commissioners that there had been and still was 'greate
dyvysion amongst theym by reason of varitie in opynyon in Christes
religion, sprong and growen amongst theym by the reading and
preaching of oone Adam Damplyp' who had been there between March
and July 1538, first teaching the scriptures well, but then ‘percevyng
hymself to bee in the fauor and credit of the people’ preaching
‘extremely and detestably’ against the sacrament of the altar, denying the
real presence of the blessed ‘body and blood of Christ. Then William
Smith, the parish priest of our Lady’s church, had worked with John
Butler, the commissary, and took it upon himself to preach against the
mass, matins and evensong and all other laudable ceremonies of the

church commanded by the king's proclamation, calling them 'stinking and beggerly'. Eventually Smith and Butler were abjured by Archbishop Cranmer. But Smith had then returned and denounced his abjuration. Openly in the market place he declared that he was condemned by two witnesses and that 'yf oon thousand persons wolde haue saide the contrary it wolde not haue helpyn hym although he hadde beene very innocent as he tooke hymselfe to bee'. Butler had given him much support. Sir George Carew, lieutenant of Rysbraeck, had spoken in their favour, trusting that these ceremonies would be abolished at the next parliament and not used again, though - contradicting the depositions of five councillors - he denied saying it. But he admitted that he had eaten flesh in Lent. He also admitted having spoken words of comfort to Ralph Hare when Hare was on the point of leaving for England to answer charges of being a sacramentary, which he abjured. William Kynnardaye [Kennedy?] of the retinue had long been a great sacramentary but changed his mind - as he said - after the passage of the Act of Six Articles. He said that there were twenty more of his opinion, whom he refused to name. William Stevens, Richard Pelland and Thomas Brook,

deputy customer, had favoured Damplip and Smith: Brook had eaten mutton and pork in Lent, and had spoken disparagingly against mattins and evensong in church, and laudable ceremonies. Brook had challenged the authority of half the priests and clerks in Our Lady and St Nicholas's

[\[154\]](#)

churches ward.

All this evidence of dissension was distinctly irritating and troubling for the government, but it is striking that there was nothing directed against Cromwell, as the commissioners' despatch to him of a briefer letter, saying that 'ther must nedes reformation be hadde by some ponishment'.

[\[155\]](#)

Byrne thought that nothing could have been more dangerous to Cromwell than this letter: it wholly endorsed the reports and complaints that Lisle had been making, she says; it was designed to damage him in the king's eyes; the interim report of the commissioners on 5 April 'reflected gravely upon Cromwell's supervision of Calais affairs,

[\[156\]](#)

especially his ambivalent handling of religion'. But that begs the

question; it assumes that Cromwell had been protecting the divisive religious radicals. If, as has been argued here, he had not been, then the claim falls.

Henry responded by marvelling that not more had been accused and convicted. Considering the presumptuousness of Thomas Brook, he wished, if they found further matter against him, to consider what might be done by the laws against him. And, Henry continued with characteristic ruthlessness, 'wayeng and considering howe muche more the iuste punishment and execution of oon or two shuld conferre to the redubbing of this matyers thenne the banishment of many'. If they found they could condemn Brook as a traitor or as an heretic, then they should immediately cause him to be executed. Others should suffer extremity too. Sir George Carew's fate - revealing if we are trying to determine the authorship of policy - was to be determined by the king himself: 'we haue thought mete to reserue the determynacion of his cause to our selves'. If the depositions against him were substantial, he

[\[157\]](#)

should be sent over under guard.

The commissioners' response on

13 April does not survive; Henry's reply dated 17 April does: Sussex was

[\[158\]](#)

to remain in Calais while Lisle came over to see the king.

It is not easy to see just why any of this should be seen as damaging to Cromwell. It was surely more harmful to Lisle, who was shown up as grossly incompetent, incapable of maintaining authority or imposing religious uniformity. The king's concerns are well illustrated by the letter he would send Sussex (and Gage) in Calais in July, noting they had been sent there 'for thappeasing and reformacion of such sedition as was like to growe within that our towne of Calays vpon the dyversitie of opynion in maters of religion', and expressing pleasure that the town was now 'in

[\[159\]](#)

quiet concord and vnitie'.

Moreover concentration on religious radicalism in Calais overlooks the much greater concern of Henry VIII with the threat of treason by popish sympathisers. These were real fears. In December Cromwell sent the

William Fitzwilliam, earl of Southampton, then briefly in Calais to meet Anne of Cleves, royal instructions to cause two priests 'to be executed, if the lawes and justice woll condempne them bothe; and if not, thenne to procede to the execution of Richardson [a priest long imprisoned as a papist], and to awarde suche punishment to thother, for the concelement, as yor wisdom shal thinke expedient for the exemple of others'. Henry would not neither wish to hold them there nor to spend two pennys on bringing them to England, unless more reasons were

[\[160\]](#)

discovered. William Peterson, parson of Bonningue, and sometime commissary to Archbishop Warham, was duly further examined on 7 January 1540. He admitted possessing papal pardons and a papal dispensation, all from many years back. He said that a Calais priest, William Richardson, had told him three weeks earlier that he could not accept in his heart that the king was supreme head of the church:

Peterson said that he had warned him to take heed what he said, but he had not reported it since he thought Richardson a person out of his wit.

[\[161\]](#)

Peterson and Richardson were to be arraigned on 18 February.

[\[162\]](#)

They were duly hanged and quartered at Calais for treason on 10

[\[163\]](#)

April.

What appeared a greater danger, however implausible it ultimately proved, was the threat of disloyalty by Lord Lisle, the king's deputy in Calais. He was arrested on 19 May 1540, following the interrogation of one of his chaplains Gregory Botolf (Gregory Sweetlips) and his servant Clement Philpott in April. Gregory Botolf had joined Lisle's service as

[\[164\]](#)

chaplain probably in April 1538. Philpott was a young Hampshire gentleman who arrived to join Lisle's household at much the same time

[\[165\]](#)

. Gregory, Philpot and John Woller had been given leave to go to

[\[166\]](#)

England in February; but in fact Gregory Botolf had been - or said he had been - to Rome to discuss surrendering Calais to the Pope and

[\[167\]](#)

Cardinal Pole, both of whom he claimed to have met. At some

point - but not immediately - Philpott seems to have turned king's evidence, going to Lisle or to the king's visiting commissioners, and been instructed by the king to try to lure Botolph to return 'purporting

[\[168\]](#)

some apparent hope of a benefice'. Philpott testified at length on what Botolf had said and done; notably that 'I shall get the towne of Calais into the hands of the Pope and Cardynal Pole; this was the matter that I went to Rome for; and I have consulted with the Holy Father the Pope and with the Reverent Father Cardynall Pole who is a good catholyke man as euer I resonde with '. Botolf wanted Philpott to help

[\[169\]](#)

him seize the Lantern Gate; or to become captain of Rysbank.

Edward Cobbett, Lisle's servant, and Cobbett's servant, John Brown, also

[\[170\]](#)

gave evidence. Edmund Bryndelholme, priest of Our Lady in

[\[171\]](#)

Calais, was also interrogated about his contacts with Botolf.

Why must all this, and the subsequent recall and - if they are linked - arrest of Lisle be read factionally? Must they necessarily be 'part of

Cromwell's efforts to settle scores with those who had allowed a factional situation favourable to Roman influence to develop at Calais'?

[\[172\]](#)

Why say that 'Cromwell had to find some means of incriminating Lisle' and that 'there is more than a suspicion that Cromwell arranged this so-called "plot" of Botolph's in order to incriminate Lord Lisle'?

[\[173\]](#)

A somewhat different factional line is taken by Byrne, who seeing Lisle as in the spring of 1539 conspiring with Norfolk against Cromwell, thinks that Cromwell countered by planning on neutralising Lisle at court and winning him away from Norfolk's plot; but then Cromwell got news of Botolf, and had the chance to put Lisle out of the way by playing on Henry's visceral hatred of Pole. 'By the end of the second week in May Cromwell could have got together enough material to enable him to "frame" Lisle over the Botolf conspiracy - not because he believed he was guilty but because he wanted him out of the way'. 'If he could discredit Lisle with the king over the Botolf plot, even if only temporarily, he might distract the king's attention from the heresy charges against the Calais men'. Lisle's arrest would discredit his

[\[174\]](#)

testimony against the Calais sacramentaries. This is ingenious but based on a chain of supposition. For MacCulloch, the arrest of Lisle was also part of a grand factional struggle. 'Cromwell, with the concentrated energy of a desperate gambler, now moved into the offensive': Botolf's defection was a 'perfect excuse' for Cromwell to turn the situation at

[\[175\]](#)

Calais from danger to advantage and end Lisle's career.

Yet all these by no means consistent theories - some appearing to imply that Botolf's 'treachery' was just invention, other claiming that Cromwell merely exploited it - explain too much. There is little reason to doubt that Botolf was up to something, and it flies in the face of the evidence to suppose that Cromwell dreamt it up. As for the suggestion that Cromwell seized on the news, it is more plausible that Henry, above all, treated Botolf's behaviour, however harebrained it may seem to us, as both alarming and quite damning enough. And even if masters were not responsible for their servants, the treachery of a servant was bound to

raise questions about the loyalty of his master: Botolf's actions

incriminated Lisle. Why could Henry and Cromwell not simply have been deeply concerned that Lisle might prove a traitor? Lisle's arrest was not a question of someone having 'anything to gain', [\[176\]](#) but of the king fearing he had a great deal to lose.

When did Henry and Cromwell learn of Botolf's plot? Byrne implies that Cromwell knew first, and did so before Lisle was summoned to the king, since she speculates, when explaining why Cromwell summoned Lisle to court, that he was hoping to use the Botolf plot to discredit Lisle. [\[177\]](#)

Byrne, it may be noted, believed that it was Cromwell - not the king - who summoned Lisle, realising, Byrne suggests, that he would get access to Henry, but thinking him less threatening than if he remained in

[\[178\]](#) Calais, a curious reversion of factional historians' more usual belief that it was absence from court on military service in Calais - the supposed equivalent of 'Tudor India' - that was politically damaging. But it is much more probable that Lisle was summoned by the king, not

because any knowledge of what Botolf had been doing had yet reached the king, but rather to discuss with Lisle the report and recommendations of the commissioners. The instruction to Lisle to come to Henry is dated

[\[179\]](#)

17 April. He duly came and is recorded as attending the House of

[\[180\]](#)

Lords between 27 April and 11 May. On 19 May he was arrested

[\[181\]](#)

and taken to the Tower. Ellis Griffith says that Lisle was coolly received by Henry and put in prison, but that fits awkwardly with the

[\[182\]](#)

chronology of his return. That he was not immediately arrested suggests that nothing was yet known of Botolf.

Of course, it is possible to posit a grand factional scenario, with (for example) Cromwell hoping to bully or bribe Lisle away from Gardiner and Norfolk, and Lisle playing hard to get, so eventually provoking

[\[183\]](#)

Cromwell into using Botolf's plotting against him. The problem is there is no evidence whatsoever to support such speculations. It is much

more likely that Lisle's arrest took place because the king had learned about Botolf and that it happened when it did because it was then that the news came to light. The fact that Lisle was detained but not tried shows that the king was weighing his suspicions against the hard evidence against Lisle. Marillac would report gossip that the king had said that he could not believe that Lisle had erred through malice but only by

[\[184\]](#)

ignorance, saying again in July 1541 that some noblemen had told him that on several occasions they heard the king say that Lisle erred

[\[185\]](#)

more through simplicity and ignorance than by malice. It was always possible that Botolf had acted independently of Lisle, though that was not to say that his actions did not reveal Lisle's deepest preferences.

Botolph and Philpot [and Edmund Bryndeholme, priest of Calais] were

[\[186\]](#)

attainted in parliament for adhering to the pope and assisting Pole.

And an incidental detail is intriguing: Lisle's daughter was found to have secretly contracted marriage to a French papist, without royal approval.

What he had discovered was understandably troubling for Henry: but, once again, it does not have to be seen in terms of a factional struggle within the king's court in which Cromwell and Cranmer and their supposed radical friends are seen as battling against Norfolk and Lisle and their conservative allies. In as much as Cromwell was involved in the arrest of Lisle, it was because he was enforcing the king's policies, not because he was engaged in some personal factional feud. Lisle's downfall was the result of the king's suspicions that he might not be as sympathetic to the royal supremacy and the break with Rome as the king wished, and of the king's consequent fears that any disloyalty by Lisle might quickly place Calais at risk. Marillac, reporting the news, said that he was accused 'd'avoir eu secrettes intelligences avec le cardinal Pol ...

[\[187\]](#)

et d'aucuns pratiques de luy livrer la ville de Calais'. Lisle, then, was the victim of his own incompetence, of his chaplain's intrigues, and of the king's by no means irrational concern at potential threats. A more skilful deputy would have not suffered such a fate.

On the other side of the religious spectrum, there were undoubtedly men in Calais sympathetic to more radical reformation than Henry was allowing; but, as we have seen, there is little to support the fashionable claims that Cromwell was protecting them. A fanciful variant is offered by Retha Warnicke. She implausibly speculates that Lisle, on his arrest, may have lashed out at Cromwell as a sacramentarian and that the king believed him. Warnicke then goes on ludicrously to associate sacramentaries with sexual libertines: 'Henry was surely intent upon finding the witch or sorcerer who had caused his impotence; if such a creature were identified and if there were even some indirect association with Cromwell, it is plausible, given the charges emerging at Calais, that the crown could link him to the creature by labelling him a sacramentary, a heretic widely recognised as a wanton agent of Satan' (p. 225). More moderately Susan Brigden suggests that 'now Cromwell's enemies could the more easily traduce him to the king as a favourer of sacramentaries, even a sacramentary himself'. [\[188\]](#) It is worth pausing to reflect on those words. If Cromwell's enemies were traducing him to the king, that must mean that in accusing him of favouring sacramentarians

they were accusing him falsely; yet if he was no favourer of sacramentarians, than it is hard to sustain the case for him as more radical than the king. However that may be, nothing in the sources relating to Calais in the late 1530s shows Cromwell as a protector of religious radicals. If sometimes he defended some who were accused of being sacramentaries, it was because he believed that they been falsely accused by those who had not accepted the break with Rome and royal supremacy. Cromwell was defending them precisely because he believed that they were not religious radicals but were upholding the royal supremacy and the religious reforms sanctioned by Henry VIII. If he was mistaken, if the charges were true, then in his eyes they were indeed pestilent heretics. Thus in Calais Cromwell was doing no more and no less than enforcing Henry VIII's reformation. Consequently explanations [\[189\]](#) for his fall of Cromwell in June 1540 must be sought elsewhere.

If these events in Calais have too long been misunderstood, nonetheless they have a wider significance. Here, as early as the late 1530s, we can

see features that would characterise church and state over a much longer period, not least in the reigns of Elizabeth, James and Charles I. Here we have fears of papists and papist plots, with suspicions that a leading nobleman in a position of authority and strategic importance owed greater loyalty to the pope than to the monarch. Here we have fears of religious radicalism and the associated undermining of social order as preachers were seen as ridiculing existing church services. Here we have charges of papist sympathies by one side and of religious radicalism by the other, dismissed in turn as exaggerated or prejudiced. Here we have damaging accusations against those in authority in church and state, of encouraging, or turning a blind eye to, what they were expected to repress. Here we have royal government somewhere in the middle, denouncing the pope and rejecting blatant superstition, but also denouncing religious extremism. None of this was trivial. Lives and liberties were at stake: those who fell foul of accusations, whether well-founded, whether malicious, found themselves subject to interrogation, trial, even death. Compared to the late 1530s, accusations of popery and of religious radicalism were no doubt sharper in the years following Queen Elizabeth's suspension of Archbishop Grindal in the late 1570s,

and fears of popery and fears of religious radicalism were undoubtedly more heightened and more persuasive in 1640-42. Yet this study of events in Calais in the late 1530s reveals, already, the same potentially explosive mixture of divisions and suspicions. Not just in the long run but also very immediately, all this was the complex and often unhappy consequence of Henry VIII's break with Rome and the very distinctive reformation which he had embraced.

[190]

NOTES

[1]

S. Foister, *Holbein in England* (2005), p. 143.

[2]

P.J. Ward, 'The politics of religion', *Journal of Religious History*, xvii (1992), pp. 152-71.

[3]

A.J. Slavin, 'Cromwell, Cranmer and Lord Lisle: a study of the politics of reform', *Albion*, ix (1977), p. 318.

[4]

M.C. St. Clare Byrne, ed., *The Lisle Letters* (Chicago, 6 vols., 1981), v. 351, 675; cf. v. 154, 166, 491, 498, 506, 562.

[5]

Lisle Letters, v. 491.

[6]

· S. Brigden, 'Thomas Cromwell and the "Brethren"', in C. Cross, D. Loades, and J.J. Scarisbrick, eds., *Law and Government under the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 47.

[7]

· S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989), p. 303.

[8]

· G. Redworth, 'A study in the formulation of policy: the genesis and evolution of the Act of Six Articles', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xxxvii (1986), p. 51.

[9]

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 228-9.

[10]

· C. Haigh, *English Reformations* (Oxford, 1993), p. 152.

[11]

· D.I. Grummett, 'Calais 1485-1547: a study in early Tudor politics and government', University of London Ph.D. thesis, 1997, p. 70.

[12]

· Cranmer, *Writings and Letters*, p. 310.

[13]

· G.R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation* (1978), p. 206; G.R. Elton, *London Review of Books*, 16 July 81; C.S.L. Davies, *TLS* 9 Oct. 1981.

[14]

· B[ritish]Library], Cotton MS, Cleopatra E iv. fo. 44.

[15]

· BL, Cotton MS, Cleopatra E iv. fo. 55 (R.B. Merriman, ed. *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 64-5; *LP*, XII ii 267). Minsterley was hanged in Calais; Richardson was imprisoned and hanged in April 1540 (*LP*,. XIV ii 726, XV 37).

[16]

· *LP*, XII ii 328 (Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 65-6; cf. Slavin, 'Cromwell, Cranmer and Lisle', pp. 320-5).

[17]

· P.J. Morgan, 'The Government of Calais, 1485-1558', Univ. of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1966, p. 221; Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 498-9; BL, Harleian MS, 283 fo. 59 (*LP*, XV 547).

[18]

LP, XIII i 108.

[19]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/132 fos. 30-30v (*LP*, XIII i 934).

20. TNA, PRO, SP3/9 fo. 58v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 151-3; *LP*, XIII i 1291).

[21]

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 500; *Lisle Letters*, v. 159; Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 222 citing Ellis Griffith, fos. 523-4.

[22]

· cf. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 500.

[23]

· see TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 167 (*LP*, XIII i 996). Cromwell refers to Lisle's letter of 8 May.

[24]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/9 fo. 58 (*Lisle Papers*, v. 151-3; *LP*, XIII i 1291).

[25]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 230 (*LP*, XIII i 1444).

[26]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 167 (*LP*, XIII i 996).

[27]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/9 fo. 58 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 151-3; *LP*, XIII i 1291).

[28]

TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 89-89v (*LP*, XIV i 1166).

[29]

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 523.

[30]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/9 fo. 58v (*Lisle Letters*, v. p. 151-3; *LP*, XIII i 1291).

[31]

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 500-1.

[32]

· *LP*, XIII i 1219 from BL, Royal MS 7 C xvi fo. 257.

[33]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 173 (*Lisle Letters*, v. pp. 178-9; *LP*, XIII i 1386).

[34]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 173 (*Lisle Letters*, v. pp. 178-9; *LP*, XIII i 1386).

[35]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 176 (*Lisle Letters*, v. pp. 180-1; *LP*, XIII i 1387).

[36]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 176 (*LP*, XIII i 1388).

[37]

· J.S. Block, *Factional Politics and the English Reformation* (Woodbridge, 1993), p. 144.

[38]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 226 (*LP*, XIII i 1436).

[39]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/135 fo. 87 (Cranmer, *Writings and Letters*, pp. 375-6; *LP*, XIII ii 97).

[40]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/135 fo. 87 (Cranmer, *Writings and Letters*, pp. 375-6; *LP*, XIII ii 97).

[41]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/134 fo. 232 (Cranmer, *Writings and Letters*, pp. 372-3; *LP*, XIII i 1446).

[42]

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 500-1; cf. *Lisle Letters*, v. 159-60.

[43]

· Lord Lisle claimed that he joined the service of Bishop Shaxton of Salisbury (TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 52 [*LP*, XIV i 1099]). Yet in 1540 he was attainted - in his absence - for supporting the pope and assisting Cardinal Pole (TNA, PRO, SP1/136 fos. 26-33 [*LP*, XV 498 (58)]); cf. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, iii. 351, 367 (Damplic attainted for receiving a French crown from Cardinal Pole on departing from Rome); v. 400 (Damplic received but a silly crown from Pole at Rome in way of alms). He was detected and executed for heresy 1543: Block, *Factional Politics*, p. 145, citing *Lisle Letters*, v. 165.

[44]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/136 fos. 21-25. esp. 23, 24 (*LP*, XIII ii 248).

[45]

· Notes made by Lord Herbert of Cherbury's secretary Thomas Master from a manuscript once in the Cotton Library record 'a sharpe' letter of Cromwell (dated 14 August 1539 or 1540, but most probably, as Brigden has it, 1538) to Lord Lisle: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Jesus MS 74 fo. 198v: cf. Brigden, 'Cromwell and the "Brethren"', p. 47. The dating is clinched by Cranmer's thanking Cromwell for his frank admonition of Lisle: TNA, PRO, SP1/135 fo. 117 (*LP*, XIII ii 127); cf. MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, pp. 218-9.

[46]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/143 fo. 69 (*LP*, XIV i 251).

[47]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fo. 162 (*LP*, XIV i 1029).

[48]

· TNA, PRO SP1/152 fo. 44 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 523-5; *LP*, XIV i 1086).

[49]

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 525-6.

[50]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/ 152 fo. 44 (Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 226; *Lisle Letters*, v. 523-5; *LP*, XIV i 1086).

[51]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/135 fo. 87 (*LP*, XIII ii 97).

[52]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/135 fo. 117 (*LP*, XIII ii 127), cited by Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 222.

[53]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/136 fos. 23-24 (*LP*, XIII ii 248) (cf. Slavin, ‘Cromwell, Cranmer and Lisle’, p. 332)).

[54]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/137 fo. 83 (*LP*, XIII ii 538); fo. 105 (*LP*, XIII ii 523).

[55]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/3 fo. 13 (*LP*, XIII ii 897).

[56]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 44 (Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 226; *Lisle Letters*, v. 523-5; *LP*, XIV i 1086).

[57]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 167 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 1160; *LP*, XIII i 996).

[58]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/132 fos. 143-4 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 1166; *LP*, XIII i 1031).

[59]

· Morgan, ‘Government of Calais’, p. 224 from Ellis Griffith, fo. 526 and Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 502, 511-2.

[60]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/9 fos. 71v-72 (*LP*, XIV i 1351); Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 500).

[61]

· Morgan, ‘Government of Calais’, p. 224 from Ellis Griffith, fo. 526; Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 503-4, 505-6, 507-10, 515-20.

[62]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/143 fos. 100ff (*LP*, XIV i 398).

[63]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/144 (*LP*, XIV i 533), SP1/150 fo.95 (*LP*, XIV i, 717).

[64]

· *LP*, XIV i 625; TNA, PRO, SP1/146 fos. 245-6 (*LP*, XIV i 674); TNA, PRO, SP1/150 fos. 106-106v (*LP*, XIV i, 731).

[65]

· *LP*, XIV i 652.

[66]

· cited by S.E. Lehmborg, *The Reformation Parliament 1529-1536* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 239 from BL, Cotton MS Caligula E ii. fos. 213-4 (*LP*, IX 192).

[67]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 177 (Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 139-40; *Lisle Letters*, v. 462-3; *LP*, XIII i 936). This has been misdated: it is from 1539, not 1538, as the reference to the commissioners of early 1539 proves.

[68]

· cf. Slavin, 'Cromwell, Cranmer and Lisle', p. 327; Ward, 'Cromwell and Calais', p. 164.

[69]

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 351, 675.

[70]

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 462-3; Block, *Factional Politics*, p. 142: though Block apparently puts it before Damplic's arrest; Brigden, 'Cromwell and the "Brethren"', p. 47; Brigden, *London and the Reformation*, p. 304.

[71]

· Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. no. 177, p. 44; *LP*, X 576; cf. D. Norris, 'The fall of Thomas Cromwell', Univ. of Southampton BA thesis, 1995, p. 33. I should also wish to thank another of my students here, William Fraser-Allen.

[72]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 44 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 523-6; *LP*, XIV i 1086).

[73]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/1 fo. 32 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 323; *LP*, XIII ii 991).

[74]

Cf. TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 160-161 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 501; *LP*, XIV I 1029).

[75]

· Ward, 'Cromwell and Calais', pp. 164-6, 172.

[76]

· cf. TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 160-161 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 501; *LP*, XIV i 1029).

[77]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 147-147v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 489-91; *LP*, XIV i 1009).

[78]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 147-147v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 489-91; *LP*, XIV i 1009); *Lisle Letters*, v. pp. 462-3.

[79]

· TNA, PRO SP1/141 fo. 244 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 1498, 1498a; *LP*, XIII ii app. 30 (3)).

[80]

· St Clare Byrne thinks it dates from Lent and that Cromwell sat on it: the dating rests on Lisle's vague phrase 'in Lent or thereabout' ['a yere past and more' corrected] in a letter of 26 July (TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 189 [*Lisle Letters*, v. 598; *LP*, XIV i 1319]), though the dating is crucial if it is to support her claim that Cromwell suppressed it.

[81]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/5 fo. 33 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 495-7; *LP*, XIV i 1030).

[82]

· MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 248.

[83]

· Ward, 'Cromwell and Calais', p. 166.

[84]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 160-160v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 501-2; *LP*, XIV i 1029).

[85]

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 504.

[86]

· MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 248.

[87]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fo. 160 (*LP*, XIV i 1029).

[88]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fo. 167 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 508-9; *LP*, XIV i 1039).

[89]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 172 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 519; *LP*, XIV i 1060).

[90]

· TNA, PRO SP1/151 fo. 253 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 510-1; *LP*, XIV i 1042).

[91]

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 512-3.

[92]

· TNA, PRO SP3/9 fo. 24 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 534; *LP*, XIV i 1108); PRO SP3/6 fo. 27 (*LP*, XIV i 1152).

[93]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fos. 169-169v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 510-1; *LP*, XIV i 1042).

[94]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 7-7v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 515-7; *LP*, XIV i 1059); TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 5-6 (*LP*, XIV i 1058); TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 44-45 (*LP*, XIV i 1086).

[95]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 70 (*LP*, XIV i 1139). TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 44-45 (*LP*, XIV i 1086).

[96]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fos. 61-61v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 528-9; *LP*, XIV i 1088).

[97]

· TNA, PRO, SP3/3 fo. 44 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 579; *LP*, XIV i 1234).

[98]

· TNA, PRO, SP 3/2 fo. 61 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 527-8; *LP*, XIV i 1088).

[99]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 5-6v (*LP*, XIV i 1086).

[\[100\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 75 (*LP*, XIV i 1144); *LP*, XIV i, 1139.

[\[101\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/6 fos. 35-35v (*LP*, XIV i 1152).

[\[102\]](#)

· TNA, SP1/152 fo. 79 (*LP*, XIV i 1153).

[\[103\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/5 fo. 69 (*LP*, XIV i 1172); cf. SP3/4 fo. 81 (*LP*, XIV i 1194).

[\[104\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/4 fo. 81 (*LP*, XIV i 1194).

[\[105\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 101 (*LP*, XIV i 1209).

[\[106\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/8 fo. 58 (*LP*, XIV i 1219).

[\[107\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/4 fo. 93 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 579-80; *LP*, XIV i 1238).

[\[108\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 88 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 585-6; *LP*, XIV i 1264).

[\[109\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/5 fo. 51 (*LP*, XIV i 1291); TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 103 (*LP*, XIV i 1322).

[\[110\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 506-13.

[\[111\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 562.

[\[112\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 88 (*LP*, XIV i 1164).

[\[113\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/4 fo. 82 (*LP*, XIV i 1194).

[\[114\]](#)

TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 102 (*LP*, XIV I 1322; Cranmer, *Letters and Writings*, p. 393).

[\[115\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 4 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 505; *LP*, XIV i 1057); cf. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 511-2.

[\[116\]](#)

· TNA, PRO. SP1/152 fos. 89-89v (*Lisle Letters*, v. 553-5; *LP*, XIV i 1166).

[\[117\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo.6 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 515-7; *LP*, XIV i 1058).

[\[118\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/6 fo. 35v (*LP*, XIV i 1152); SP3/4 fo. 81 (*LP*, XIV i 1194).

[\[119\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/4 fo. 81 (*LP*, XIV i 1194); cf. SP3/5 fo. 96 (*LP*, XIV i 1172).

[\[120\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fos. 64-65 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 564-5; *LP*, XIV i 1199).

[\[121\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 89 (*LP*, XIV i 1166); Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 506.

[\[122\]](#)

· cf. Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 227 from Ellis Griffith, fos. 533-37 on Smith's attacking the 'mere bran' of ceremonies, and the 'Iscariots' of Calais.

[\[123\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 512.

[\[124\]](#)

TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 89v (*LP*, XIV, i 1166).

[\[125\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 506, 508.

[\[126\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 101 (*LP*, XIV i 1209).

[\[127\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/5 fo. 94 (*LP*, XIV i 1144).

[\[128\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/2 fo. 101 (*LP*, XIV i 1209).

[\[129\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/8 fo. 58 (*LP*, XIV i 1219).

[\[130\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 508-9.

[\[131\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 503-4, 510-1.

[\[132\]](#)

· Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, v. 509.

[\[133\]](#)

· PRO SP1/153 fo. 11 (*LP*, XIV ii 14).

[\[134\]](#)

· Ibid.

[\[135\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 73 (*LP*, XV 473).

[\[136\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/152 fo. 89 (*LP*, XIV i 1166).

[\[137\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/153 fo. 14 (*LP*, XIV ii 30).

[\[138\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fo. 167 (*LP*, XIV i 1039).

[\[139\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/151 fo. 169v (*LP*, XIV i 1042).

[\[140\]](#)

· PRO SP1/152 fos. 177-177v, quoted by Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 209 (*LP*, XIV i 1298); *Lisle Letters*, v. 589-90 (*LP*, XIV i 1299).

[\[141\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/1 fo. 5 (*LP*, XIV ii 164); TNA, PRO, SP1/153 fo. 95 (*LP*, XIV ii 166).

[\[142\]](#)

· *LP*, XIV ii 496.

[\[143\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 40-1: the precise details are confused; Cf. Kaulek, *Correspondance politique*, no. 207, p. 172 (*LP*, XV 370); cf. *Lisle Letters*, vi. 42, citing Ellis Griffith.

[\[144\]](#)

· Mostyn MS 158, now Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS 5276; Thomas Jones, 'A Welsh Chronicler in Tudor England', *Welsh History Review*, i (1960), pp. 1-17.

[\[145\]](#)

· cf. remarks by Peter Roberts, *English Historical Review*, civ (1989), p. 1021.

[\[146\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 43.

[\[147\]](#)

· Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 228, from Ellis Griffith, fo. 541v.

[\[148\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 42-5.

[\[149\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 67.

[\[150\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 44, 45.

[\[151\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/8 fo. 47 (*Lisle Letters*, vi. 39 (*LP*, XV 270/VIII 34)).

[\[152\]](#)

· *LP*, XV 436 (30); TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fo. 13 (*LP*, XV 316 (2)).

[\[153\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fo. 78 (*LP*, XV 392; *Lisle Letters*, vi. 57).

[\[154\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 151-154 (*State Papers*, viii no. dlxxvi pp. 299-303; *Lisle Letters*, vi. 63-66; *LP*, XV 460).

[\[155\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fo. 155 (*LP*, XV 461).

[\[156\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, v. 62, 67, 216.

[\[157\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 171-75v (*Lisle Letters*, vi. 72-4; *LP*, XV 473). Morgan thinks this shows Cromwell's and Cranmer's efforts to protect reformers: 'Government of Calais', pp. 229-30.

[\[158\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 72-73 (*LP*, XV 537; *State Papers*, viii. no. dlxxx pp. 316-7).

[\[159\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/161 fo. 15 (*Lisle Letters*, v. 159; *LP*, XV 833).

[\[160\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/155 fo. 134v (*State Papers*, viii no. dli p. 218; *LP*, XIV ii 726).

[\[161\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/157 fos. 26-27v (*LP*, XV 37).

[\[162\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP3/8 fos. 60-60v (*LP*, XV 217).

[163]

· Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, p. 115; Merriman, *Letters of Cromwell*, ii. 243-4 (*LP*, XIV ii 726); ii. 64-65 (*LP*, XII ii 267); ii. 65-6 (*LP*, XII ii 328). TNA, PRO, SP1/153 203-6.

[164]

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 53.

[165]

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 54.

[166]

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 54.

[167]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 179-82 (*LP*, XV 478 (1-4)); TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 204-214 (*LP*, XV 495); TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fo. 1 (*LP*, XV 496); TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 48-55 (*LP*, XV 507); TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 77-82v (*LP*, XV 539); TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 95-96v, 97-97v, 99-99v (*LP*, XV 552).

[168]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fo. 72 (*Lisle Letters*, vi. 96-8, *LP*, XV 537); *Lisle Letters*, vi. 110-1, 105; TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 99-99v (*LP*, XV 552 (3)).

[169]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 179-82 (*LP*, XV 478 (4)).

[170]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 48-55 (*LP*, XV 507).

[171]

· TNA, PRO, SP1/158 fos. 204-214 (*LP*, XV 495).

[172]

· Slavin, 'Cromwell, Cranmer and Lisle', p. 335 n. 102.

[173]

· Morgan, 'Government of Calais', p. 230.

[174]

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 216-25, at 219-20.

[\[175\]](#)

· MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, p. 269.

[\[176\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 224.

[\[177\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 213, 215-7.

[\[178\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 216.

[\[179\]](#)

· TNA, PRO, SP1/159 fos. 70-74v (LP, XV 537; *Lisle Letters*, vi. 106-7); LP, XV 536.

[\[180\]](#)

· *Lords Journals*, i. 133-6, cf. *Lisle Letters*, vi. 116.

[\[181\]](#)

· J. Kaulek, ed., *Correspondance politique de MM de Castillon et Marillac, ambassadeurs de France en Angleterre, 1537-42* (Paris, 1885), no. 223 p. 184 (LP, XV 697).

[\[182\]](#)

· Morgan, 'Government of Calais', citing Ellis Griffith, fos. 548-9.

[\[183\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 217.

[\[184\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 154.

[\[185\]](#)

· *Lisle Letters*, vi. 176; Kaulek, *Correspondancew politique*, no. 351, p. 321.

[\[186\]](#)

· LP, XV 498 (58): not printed in *Statutes of the Realm*; State Papers, viii no. dlxxxv p. 338 (LP, XV 833).

[\[187\]](#)

· Kaulek, *Correspondence Politique*, no. 223 p. 185 (LP, XV 697).

[\[188\]](#)

· Brigden, 'Cromwell and the "Brethren"', p. 47.

[\[189\]](#)

· See my *The King's Reformation* (2005), for an attempt.