1987

Influence, Image, and Intimacy: Gift-Giving in Tudor England

Cheryl B. Bacon

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https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-v5x5-1r79

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INFLUENCE, IMAGE, AND INTIMACY:
GIFT-GIVING IN TUDOR ENGLAND

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Cheryl B. Bacon
1987
APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Author

Approved, May 1987

Dale E. Hoak

James Axtell

Anthony Esler
DEDICATION

To my parents, whose support made this work possible and, above all, to Martin and Elizabeth Bacon, without whose patience, encouragement, and advice this project could never have been completed.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express her appreciation to Professor Dale E. Hoak, at whose suggestion this investigation was initiated, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the project. Thanks are also due to Professors James Axtell and Anthony Esler for their reading and criticism of the manuscript and to Professor Natalie Z. Davis for providing invaluable assistance in the location of secondary sources.
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ABSTRACT

The patterns of behavior observed in a particular society are important indicators of the values, beliefs, and perspectives of that society. The exchange of gifts, first described by sociologists in anthropological studies of tribal cultures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is a universal practice which can be applied equally well in a historical context. *The Lisle Letters*, edited by Muriel St. Clare Byrne, provides almost seven hundred examples of gift-giving among the aristocrats of Tudor England, thereby providing ample evidence for a study of aristocratic attitudes during the crucial years 1533-40.

A survey of the types of gifts given in *The Lisle Letters* reveals that the most frequent present was food, including wine and beer, wildfowl, venison, fish, various other types of meat and poultry, fruits and vegetables, jellies, and medicines. Animals were also popular presents, especially birds of prey such as hawks and falcons. Dogs, horses, monkeys, and singing birds were also exchanged. Clothes, too, served as gifts, as did various items of jewelry; rings make up the majority of these personal presents. Books, cups and containers, pictures, religious tokens, and furniture were exchanged between the members of the sixteenth-century upperclasses. This exchange was not characteristic of birthdays, or of any holiday except New Year's Day. Rather, gift-giving was a means of maintaining relationships. In an age when there was no telephone, when few people could write well, or even easily, the exchange of gifts provided a sense of community and intimacy that otherwise would have been difficult to sustain.

An examination of the people involved in gift exchange demonstrates more fully the attitudes and motivations of the Tudor upperclass represented in *The Lisle Letters*. Between government officials and men in positions of discretion at court gift-giving was a relatively formal process, with gifts of wine, wildfowl, and venison predominating. The consumable nature of those presents could serve to safeguard reputations, since there would be no trace of the gift remaining, even if its intent were less than honorable. The intimate aspect of gift exchange was primarily reserved for the women in sixteenth-century society, since they were less confined by considerations of public duty and personal honor and thus had more opportunity to express friendship and intimacy freely. The men of Henry VIII's court were equally capable of strong feelings for family and friends, but were restricted by the conventions of their society from expressing these emotions. Tudor England was not, as has been stated, a cool and unfriendly place, but rather one in which the roles assigned to men and women by society were very separate and require, as a result, more detailed and appreciative study.
INFLUENCE, IMAGE, AND INTIMACY:

GIFT-GIVING IN TUDOR ENGLAND
The reign of Henry VIII encompassed one of the most critical transitions in English history. The country for which he assumed responsibility in 1509 was very much a medieval kingdom, characterized by primitive agricultural methods, by an aristocracy founded solely on the possession of landed wealth and exercising territorial powers greater than (and often in opposition to) the Crown, and by a government organized around the royal household and the personal whim of the monarch. At Henry's death in 1547, however, England stood on the threshold of the modern world. The legacies of this second Tudor king included a church independent of Rome, a government bearing a fledgling resemblance to an effective bureaucracy, and sparks of industry and capitalism smoldering in London and the countryside. A profound understanding of the pivotal nature of this period must rest in part upon an examination of the perspectives of the English people: the way in which they viewed themselves, their world, and their relationships. Yet this remains one of the most elusive aspects of social history. Contemporary observations are valuable, but not comprehensive. Sir Thomas More's thinly veiled criticisms in *Utopia* represent only one aspect of Tudor attitudes, and not necessarily the most universal; few Englishmen in the 1520s and 1530s could
claim More's education or his connections with the humanist movement. Social commentators such as Thomas Elyot and Roger Ascham tended to grapple with the ideal instead of the reality, and even William Harrison and Thomas Smith, recording their observations of English life much later in the century, dealt more with facts and figures than with habits of mind and outlooks on life. If the Tudor perspective is not to be lost in the maze of time, other tools must be sought with which to expose its essence.

One such tool has been developed by twentieth-century sociologists studying tribal cultures around the world. In these societies with little or no written traditions, with unfamiliar oral histories, and with mores so different from those of Western Europe that familiar social landmarks are useless, social practice has proved an invaluable guide to social attitudes. "The study of the concrete, which is the study of the whole, is made more readily, is more interesting, and furnishes more explanations in the sphere of sociology than the study of the abstract." Observation of social action reveals patterns of behavior and symbolism that define the basic characteristics of the society itself. An application of this sociological method in a historical context can reveal new textures in the fabric of Tudor society.

Letters, diaries, public records, and other easily accessible sources that relate human activity can be effective foundations for a historical study of social behavior.
A particularly advantageous collection for this type of research is *The Lisle Letters*, edited by Muriel St. Clare Byrne. Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, served as lord deputy of Calais from 1533 until his arrest for treason in 1540, at which time all of his papers were seized as evidence and stored with the government. Byrne's voluminous edition contains English correspondence spanning this critical period and involves men and women at many levels of Tudor society; the facets of Tudor life revealed by these letters are as varied as the individuals who wrote them. The present study will concentrate on an aspect of social behavior that is well documented in *The Lisle Letters*, the exchange of gifts. Chapter 1 will summarize the theories of gift-giving developed by sociologist Marcel Mauss and others, the background and characteristics of *The Lisle Letters* as a historical source, and the organization of this research. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the gifts exchanged in the Lisle correspondence and discusses the occasions upon which gifts were given. Chapter 3 examines the people involved in gift exchange. Questions of status and power as well as affection and service will be considered there. The fourth and final chapter will assess Tudor society as it is illuminated by gift-giving, a phenomenon that, according to Marcel Mauss, "contains all the threads of which the social fabric is composed."
The observation of social practice as a guide to social attitudes is a fundamental aspect of twentieth-century sociology. One of the landmark works in this field is *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* by Marcel Mauss. Drawing together minute observations of several different tribal societies in widely scattered areas of the world, Mauss arrived at a universal theory of gift exchange that has provided a solid foundation for further sociological studies and can be applied equally in a historical context. His method involved the consideration of the daily activities and social interactions of individuals which, when compiled, reveal important aspects of the society itself.

It is only by considering [social groups] as wholes that we have been able to see their essence, their operation, and their living aspect, and to catch the fleeting moment when the society and its members take emotional stock of themselves and their situation as regards others. Only by making such concrete observation of social life is it possible to come upon facts such as those which this study is beginning to reveal.

To subject Tudor England to this type of analysis - that is, to examine in close detail the practical, commonplace mechanisms by which Tudor society functioned - will, without doubt, produce a more insightful conception of the society that propelled England into the modern world.
Among the many cultural systems that can be used to describe a society, the system of exchange is one of the most enlightening. Society cannot exist without some form of exchange between individuals and between groups. Mauss defined the relationship, in any society, between exchange and development.

Societies have progressed in the measure in which they, their subgroups, and their members, have been able to stabilize their contracts and to give, receive, and repay. In order to trade, man must first lay down his spear. When that is done he can succeed in exchanging goods and persons not only between clan and clan but between tribe and tribe and nation and nation, and above all between individuals. It is only then that people can create, can satisfy their interests mutually and define them without recourse to arms.3

"Exchange" has come to mean, in the modern world, the sphere of economic transactions in which material goods are exchanged for money or credit. Mauss concluded that these economic exchanges - purchase and sale, loan, and even barter - were derived from a more basic custom: the exchange of gifts. Gift-giving is not, however, a simple, unqualified act but rather an intricate process based on obligation and self-interest that binds the members of a society indissolubly to each other and to us, their successors.

The fundamental characteristic of gift exchange is the creation of a bond between giver and recipient. A man's tools, weapons, and ornaments have historically been considered "intimately and indelibly his 'own.'" To give away such an object is to give part of oneself, and to
accept part of another person is to be "held" by that person until the gift is repaid. An emotional tie is thus established between participants; this commitment of the self to someone else distinguishes gift exchange from economic transactions. By creating an environment in which friendly relations can develop, if they do not already exist, gift exchange acts as a cement in the construction of society.

The transfer of a material gift is a symbolic expression of intangible, immaterial elements in the relationship, an "objectification of desire and intent."

Between friends and family, gift-giving is representative of affection and concern. On a more public level, gift exchange in tribal cultures is motivated by the quest for power, status, and prestige. These "archaic" societies, as Mauss called them, are hierarchical in organization; the maintenance or acquisition of status often depends upon an individual's ability to give gifts.

Between vassals and chiefs, between vassals and their henchmen, the hierarchy is established by means of these gifts. To give is to show one's superiority, to show that one is something more and higher, that one is magister. To accept without returning or repaying more is to face subordination, to become a client and subservient, to become minister.

Both dignity and honor are at stake if a gift is either not given or not repaid adequately. Mauss found that the question of honor was an extremely important one in tribal
cultures. "Nowhere else is the prestige of an individual as closely bound up with expenditure, and with the duty of returning with interest gifts received in such a way that the creditor becomes the debtor." The result of this philosophy is the accumulation of wealth and goods for the purpose of giving them away. A prestigious man is given tribute in the form of gifts that he can use to acquire power and to make alliances that will increase his circle of profitable gift exchanges.

If exchange is a cohesive force in these tribal cultures, it is also a coercive one. All social situations involve considerations of power differences between the actors; the generally recognized spheres of politics and economics are only two of the many arenas in which the dynamics of power are contested. By establishing ties of personal dependence, an "assymetrical" relationship such as indebtedness is a powerful weapon of coercion. Gift exchange in these situations is thus an obligatory, circular process without peaceful termination. To refuse to repay or to give is, according to Mauss, "the equivalent of a declaration of war; it is a refusal of friendship and intercourse."

These are not, of course, overtly recognized mechanisms in the society. The coercive, self-interested nature of gift exchange is disguised by the style of presentation and by considerations of time and equivalency. The donor of a gift finds the options for giving fairly
rigorously circumscribed by social regulations; certain gifts are specific to certain situations. The advantages attached to giving and the maximum benefit to be derived from an alliance must be considered. Although the recipient of a gift is obliged to repay it, to do so immediately or to return an exactly identical gift would be considered an insult and a refusal of the original present. Moreover, to be too eager to repay would be an open acknowledgement of indebtedness (and thus a loss of face) as well as a denunciation of the donor's motive as selfish and ungenerous. Time must pass before a counter-gift can be made, whether it is a meal, a service, or an object of value, and the return must not be equal, but equivalent. The form of presentation for private gifts must be even more deceptive, since the relationship being symbolized is so much more important. Between intimates, gift exchange is a matter of small, less costly items sent at frequent intervals, each gift still creating its own, smaller debt that must be repaid, each gift bringing the participants closer together; this, indeed, is the desired result. It is important to recognize that at any stage of the gift exchange process the mechanism can misfire: gifts can be refused, alliances can be broken. The ultimate meaning of a gift is derived solely from the response it triggers.

This theoretical discussion of gift exchange has been based primarily on studies of tribal cultures of the
twentieth century. Neither the universality of these ideas nor their applicability to social practice in Tudor England is assured. The similarities between Mauss' archaic societies and England on the eve of modernity are, however, too striking to be ignored. Mauss described these societies as "segmentary," that is, based on small groups such as tribes or clans, which are internally homogenous while being externally quite separate. This description can apply almost equally to early modern European societies. Fernand Braudel found that success in Renaissance Europe "must always be credited to the assets amassed by vigilant, attentive families striving to increase their fortune and their influence bit by bit." Medieval England was dominated by a class of manorial lords, representatives of powerful families, who commanded military and economic forces often superior to those of the king. Although Henry VII did much to dispel these threats to his crown, there remained a significant legacy from that feudal system in the persistence of personal dependence as a basis for political power, personal dependence exercised through what can loosely be called the "system" of patronage.

Patronage was an important political fact in England under the Tudors and Stuarts.

Gifts and rewards flowed not only from the monarch, but also from major and minor nobility and gentry, royal favorites, government civilian and military officials, virtually anyone who was positioned to offer . . . benefits ambitious men sought.
Much study has been devoted to the network of patronage under Queen Elizabeth I and the early Stuart kings, but the early Tudor period has been relatively neglected. This is an unfortunate oversight, because the reigns of Henry VII and, especially, Henry VIII mark the beginning of England's governmental transition from feudal kingdom to modern centralized state. Under Henry VIII, the system of personal influence and power centered around the nobility and gentry had yet to disappear, and the sense of community based on national affiliation that is a characteristic of the modern state was only beginning to emerge. At the same time, the developing power of the monarch increased his personal influence, an influence often exercised with gifts of land, offices, and money. The elaborate system of gifts and fees to government officials so prevalent in the Elizabethan and Stuart periods began in the reign of Henry VIII with the expansion of the bureaucracy itself, and the practice of patronage that developed was based on an intricate, essentially feudal, network of influence and service. The system of tribal alliances described by Mauss, the obligatory gifts in return for honor, prestige, and power, is paralleled by the patronage and clientage practices of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.

The economic conditions of early modern England also bear a striking resemblance to the simple economies of tribal cultures. England's economy between 1450 and 1750 has been described as "preindustrial," "natural," and
"highly personal"; these terms apply equally to the societies studied by Mauss. While Tudor England was a money-based economy, with widespread markets for imports and exports, and an effective internal trade network, it is conceivable that the majority of Englishmen depended as much on gift exchange and barter for goods and services as on the market economy. An intense examination of this transition from a personal, natural economy to a market, capitalist system - an examination founded, in part, upon a consideration of exchange practices - could do much to elucidate the factors that contributed to England's eventual position of leadership in the Industrial Revolution.

The economic transition is but part of the general transformation of English society that began during the reign of Henry VIII. A study of gift exchange will not, of course, provide a comprehensive explanation of this transformation. That discussion must wait upon numerous studies of a similar nature, each focused on a different aspect of Tudor social behavior, which will, when assembled, present a satisfactory whole.

Letters are an obvious source of information about gifts given in any particular society; individuals write to thank benefactors, to warn of gifts in transit, or to make requests for gifts they desire. Fortunately, a collection
of letters exists for the reign of Henry VIII that makes a study of this kind particularly profitable. Between 1533 and 1540 Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, and his wife Honor resided in France while Lisle represented Henry VIII as lord deputy of Calais. When Lisle was recalled to England in 1540 and accused of treason (a delaying tactic by Thomas Cromwell in an effort to avoid his own downfall), the personal and business correspondence of that seven years' residence was confiscated by government agents. Lisle was eventually exonerated, but the letters, some three thousand of them, remained with the government.

Arthur Plantagenet was the illegitimate son of Edward IV and the last of that line by direct male descent. His royal blood was "as openly acknowledged as his illegitimacy" and he had been in the service of English kings since 1503, first as a squire of the body to Henry VII and then as a member of the King's Spears under Henry VIII. He served as a justice of the peace for Sussex, sheriff for Hampshire, and saw active military service at sea and in France. After 1518 he was much in demand at court for ceremonial and social occasions, including the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520. He became Viscount Lisle in 1523 and knight of the garter a year later. In 1525 Lisle was appointed vice admiral and it was he who exercised the real authority of the Admiralty until 1533 and the transfer to Calais (the lord admiral was a boy of six, the king's illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy). Lisle also belonged to the Privy Chamber.
and was a member of the King's Council. The Lisle title came to Arthur indirectly through his first wife, Elizabeth Grey. As the widow of Edmund Dudley (whose execution served as reward for loyal service to Henry VII), Elizabeth held the Dudley land and the Lisle title that Henry VIII eventually bestowed on Arthur. After Elizabeth died in 1525 or 1526, Lisle waited until 1528 to marry again and chose another widow, Honor Basset, who brought to the marriage the valuable Basset lands and the ambitions of her Grenville connections.

The children brought together by these marriages present an impressive family portrait. Lisle's stepson by his first marriage was John Dudley, who succeeded to the viscountcy in 1542 and went on to become earl of Warwick and duke of Northumberland. Lisle had three daughters by Elizabeth Grey: Frances, Elizabeth, and Bridget. In 1538 the elder Frances was married to Honor Basset's eldest son John, thus keeping valuable properties and dowry in the family. There were two other Basset sons, George and James; George became a solid country squire who perpetuated the Basset name, while James entered the service of Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and eventually found for himself a position of some influence at the court of Queen Mary. Of the four Basset daughters, Anne was the most successful, acquiring a position at court that she retained under four Queens. Katherine, Philippa, and Mary fared less
brilliantly but married quietly and well. Honor Lisle also held token responsibility for three daughters from her first husband's first marriage, although they were women as old as herself.

These, then, are the immediate family members involved in the Lisle correspondence. The bulk of the letters, however, deals not only with the family itself but with their contacts and transactions in England and on the Continent. Lisle's political affairs, the children's education, and the management of the vast properties acquired through judicious marriages are the subjects of the correspondence. Lisle and his wife preserved few copies of their own letters, thus most of this collection is written to them by their agents in England, especially one John Husee, gentleman servitor and devoted guardian of Lisle interests, and by lawyers, government officials, and other business associates. It is possible to distill from this collection a reasonably accurate picture of Tudor life, not only the political events during the Lisle stay in Calais, but the more intimate details of daily management and the personal perspectives of the people involved in those details.

Although the ideal source for a study of the letters would be the documents themselves, these reside in the Public Record Office in London, unavailable to those not fortunate enough to enjoy an extended stay in England. It is therefore a great gift in its own right that, after a labor of thirty years, Muriel St. Clare Byrne has produced
an impressive edition of this correspondence as The Lisle Letters. She has reproduced over 1,600 of the letters and has arranged them chronologically, with the exception of the letters about the children, which are grouped separately. Byrne's intent was not to create a scholarly reference text: "as I understand it, original research can be done only one way - by handling the original documents." Rather, she hoped to provide the scholar with a survey of the material available in the letters in order to facilitate an in-depth study of the documents themselves. More important, Byrne intended to provide the lay reader with a glimpse of the Tudor age, a close perspective of the people as they thought and felt at the time, without the veneer of centuries laid upon those feelings.

It is the moment-to-moment life, sensation, and thought that is recorded in them - all the intimate hopes and fears, the trivial preoccupations, the obstinacies, the generosities, the pettiness, the magnanimity, the foolishnesses, the money troubles, the wire pulling, the disappointments and triumphs, all the quirks and oddities, simplicities and complexities of character, the pace, the quality, the pressure, the almost unbelievable dailyness of life.

Since it is those same perspectives and interactions that a study of gift exchange should reveal, the Byrne edition seems an ideal source.

There are, of course, problems that should be addressed. Letters, especially the Lisle letters, are, by their nature, incomplete. It is impossible, except with a
meticulously kept diary, to have a daily record of human interaction. The Lisle correspondence, since it contains primarily letters written to and not by them, is more incomplete than could be desired. Thus, it is impossible to attempt a comprehensive study of all gifts given or received by the Lisles between 1533 and 1540; the sample available must be accepted as representative. Given the breadth of the correspondence, this seems a valid assumption.

Edited material is not an ideal source for research. Byrne has modernized much of the text, has arranged the letters in an order that she perceives to be correct, and omitted almost half of them. In using her edition, the present study is resting on a foundation that may be inherently shaky. To accept Byrne's genealogy of those correspondents who are not historical figures (and many of them are not) is to accept the possibility of editorial error, to place a perhaps excessive dependence on her reliability as a historian.

Yet the structure of the letters lends itself to a general survey of this kind. The giver of the gift mentioned in a letter is usually clear: either the writer mentions a gift being sent with the letter or thanks the recipient of the letter for a gift already received. Most of the gifts are obvious and not subject to misinterpretation; only the letters translated from French would present this problem. Byrne includes in the text numerous transcriptions of the original letters, especially when
there is doubt about form or content. Additions and deletions in the text are indicated, and original spelling of names has been retained in the letters themselves. Since Byrne was fundamentally a scholar of language and literature, it is sound to accept her texts as accurate enough for this study. Moreover, most of the relationships between authors and addressees are clarified in the letters themselves; to accept the letter is to accept those relationships, and the annotation and historical detail added by the editor become accessory rather than primary information.

The framework for this study of the gifts in the Lisle correspondence was designed to approximate as closely as possible the action of gift-giving. Each letter in the Byrne edition was examined for mention of gifts. Any sum of money paid as a fee was discounted. Articles requested and then paid for, such as wine supplied by Lisle to friends in England for which he was then reimbursed, were not considered gifts. Articles of clothing for the various children that Husee (and others) wrote to request and that Lady Lisle then sent have been considered as maintenance and not as gifts. The possibility of missing letters implies that some items counted as gifts actually were not, but the trends and patterns in the correspondence are definite enough to assume that the errors, if any, are slight. Gifts that were suggested, by Husee or other advisers, but that cannot be further documented have been ignored. A few gifts
that were lost before they reached the recipient have been included and noted. References to the letters will be made in the text, with the volume number in Roman numerals followed by the number of the letter as assigned by Byrne, enclosed in parentheses.

Once an item's status as a gift was determined, the giver, receiver, date, type of gift, reason for the gift, reference, and any notes pertaining to that item were entered into a computer. A cost comparison was also an original aspect of this study. Most of the data proved to be too difficult to appraise without research so extensive as to constitute another topic entirely, and the idea was abandoned; the cost of giving would, however, be a worthwhile investigation. Although comparative costs have not been considered here, certain conclusions regarding quality and quantity have been included.

When all of the data had been entered, a computer program was used to sort the information according to "Giver," "Receiver," and "Reason for Gift." The giver and receiver listings have been used to reach the conclusions that follow. The category of "Reasons" had originally been intended as the organizational framework of the essay, a preliminary study of the letters concerning the children (two hundred out of the total collection) having indicated this to be the simplest approach. Further work, however, demonstrated that this simplicity could not, in fact, adequately convey the nature of gift exchange as documented
in the letters. The emphasis of the Lisle correspondence is indubitably on the people involved, and it is with this perspective that the gifts must be examined.

The statistical analysis of the gifts is very simple, a matter of sums and percentages. So many of the gifts are inaccurately described that precise numbers are impossible: "some pears" versus "two hundred oranges"; a kilderkin of ale, which would be unequal in volume to a kilderkin of eels, which would be different from a kilderkin of herring. In counting gifts, each type of item was counted once; a dozen quails would be a single gift, as would a seal or a brace of bandogs. In a list of several items, such as "capon, woodcocks, snipes, and heronsewes," capons count as a single gift and woodcocks, snipes, and heronsewes would be another single gift. This is a matter of classification: capon, a domestic fowl, was a different type of bird from the other wildfowl. An exception to this method will be found in the initial tabulation of gifts, where each type of bird was counted separately. The problem arises only with wildfowl and fish; the only error introduced would be an underestimation of the presence of wildfowl in the gift list, and the trend is so definite that the deficit is unimportant. It must be remembered that all of the numbers presented are approximate and that the patterns of giving are the significant information, not precise statistical figures.
The Lisle Letters provides a representative sample of gifts given by or to a gentleman's household in the years between 1533 and 1540. The general characteristics of exchange, discussed above, should be easily discerned within this sample. Using the guidelines set down by Mauss, this examination of gift exchange in Tudor England will demonstrate some of the basic social mechanisms of that intricate, fascinating society.
CHAPTER II

Sixteenth-century England was just beginning to emerge from the insecurities of the Middle Ages and the sporadic violence of the Wars of the Roses. Conspicuous consumption had not yet been concentrated on the country estates so prominent in the eighteenth century, although building trends were moving away from defensible bulwarks toward a more decorative form of private architecture. Where once the church had been the primary object of artistic expenditure, the changes in attitude characteristic of the Renaissance had begun to draw money away from religious art and toward more personal adornments and furnishings. Jewelry, artwork, books, and clothes had their place in Tudor households and in Lisle gift exchange, but by far the most frequently received gift, and therefore probably one of the most welcome, was food.

English aristocrats considered it a matter of greatest importance that their table be lavishly supplied. "In number of dishes and change of meat, the nobility of England (whose cooks are for the most part musical headed Frenchmen and strangers) do most exceed," wrote William Harrison in 1587. Forty-four percent of the gifts given in the Lisle correspondence were "consumable": food, medicine, wine, and beer (Table 2:1a). These gifts range from the
### TABLE 2:1a
**SUMMARY OF GIFTS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>consumables</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animals</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothes</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jewelry</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miscellaneous</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>695</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2:1b
**SELECTED GIFT ITEMS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL GIFT LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wine &amp; beer</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildfowl</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venison</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hawks</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dogs</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cramp rings</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rings</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>365</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
mundane capon to French quails, from domestic quinces to expensive Spanish oranges, from a gammon of bacon to that most royal of meats, venison. Food was always useful, easily accessible, and universally acceptable. A survey of these edible and potable gifts brings to light some interesting patterns within this egalitarian medium of giving.

Wine and beer were the most frequent of the consumable presents in the Lisle exchanges, comprising almost 11 percent of the total gift list (Tables 2:1b and 2.2). Lisle in France had excellent access to supplies of wine and, indeed, the preponderance of it went to Lisle's English correspondents (Table 2:3). Wine was more easily transported than, for instance, a dozen live quails in a cage, and spoiled less quickly than fresh or cooked meats, although the wine of that day did not keep long by modern standards. A gift without restrictions as to degree or sex, wine was sent to Lady Lisle, to Thomas Cromwell, and to lawyers, clerics, and relatives. It crossed the Channel in tuns (252 gallons), pieces (126 gallons), puncheons (84 gallons), pipes (126 gallons), hogsheads (63 gallons), bariques (200 liters), and flagons. Gascon wines both white and red, "French wine", wine from Orleans and Beawne, as well as less identifiable white, red, and claret wines sat on English tables courtesy of the Lisles. Harrison referred to the latter as "small" or weak wines and put little value upon them. The recipients in the Lisle letters seemed
TABLE 2:2
COMSUMABLE GIFTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wildfowl</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venison</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruits &amp; vegetables</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jellies</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capon</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swine</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>codiniac</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spices</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coneys</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oxen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hares</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cullis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verjuice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wheat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pies &amp; pasties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>310</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 2:3
DISTRIBUTION OF CONSUMABLE GIFTS BETWEEN ENGLAND, CALAIS, AND THE CONTINENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>In England</th>
<th>On the Continent</th>
<th>Lord Lisle</th>
<th>Lady Lisle</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wine</td>
<td>68 99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>69 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venison</td>
<td>13 42</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td>13 42</td>
<td>31 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildfowl</td>
<td>47 63</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td>13 18</td>
<td>65 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>17 52</td>
<td>9 27</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>2 6</td>
<td>29 88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
generally appreciative, although Anne Basset reported to her mother that the earl of Sussex preferred "great and mighty wines" (V:1266). More than one request was sent to the Lisle for wine from France to be paid for when received; Lisle supplied wine to Archbishop Cranmer and Lord Chancellor Audley in this manner.

Beer, although not exclusively a poor man's drink, probably did not carry the prestige of French wine. It was, moreover, an English product. The March beer sent to Lord Lisle from Anthony Hegges, surveyor of the Ordinance of the Tower, was a year or more old, according to Harrison, and was common at noblemen's tables (V:1161). A kilderkin of ale (eighteen gallons) was a gift to Lord and Lady Lisle from Husee's "hostess" (presumably his landlady) and, no doubt, was highly appreciated in aleless France (III:798). Lady Lisle presented some beer to the wife of the seneschal of Boulogne and to the captain of Tourneham Castle, both Flemish officials, but the infrequency of these presentations would seem to indicate either a lack of supply or a lack of interest on the part of the recipients (IV:1023, 1023a). Perhaps English beer was not to Continental tastes.

Wildfowl accounted for 24 percent of the consumables mentioned, and over 10 percent of all gifts. Eighteen identified types of wildfowl, plus some unspecified "birds" and "wildfowl" traveled over the Channel, most often from Calais to England (Table 2:4). France was the principle source for the most popular of these delicacies, the quail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quails</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partridges</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dotterels</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brews</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gulls</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puffins</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cranes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peewits</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heronsewes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>storks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woodcocks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildfowl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other: kerseys, geese, snipes, egrets, bustards, pheasants, plovers
The volume of Lisle's trade in the little birds, as recorded in a letter from one of his suppliers, indicates the popularity of quail on English tables.

My lord, I beseech you . . . to send me by this bearer the money for the forty three dozens of quails that I have sent you, which doth amount to the sum of forty-three livres tournois and i j fish baskets; which should be xx sous the dozen. You write me that it seemeth to you that they are too dear at xx sous the dozen . . . I ensure you that they cost me as much, without those which were dead (V:1252).

Quails were shipped live to their recipients but did not always arrive in good condition; some birds sent to Husee for the king and queen were so thin on arrival that he could not deliver all of them and requested that fatter ones be sent in the future (IV:883,887,888). Birds were also sent baked and in pasties or pies, but most often they arrived in large numbers, such as the "little firkin with a dozen puffins" sent by Thomas St. Aubyn to Lady Lisle; a firkin was a container ranging from 8 to 10 1/2 gallons, depending upon the contents (III:630). Judging by their popularity, wildfowl were a major staple of the aristocratic English diet, bearing out Harrison's contention that "the kind of meat which is obtained with most difficulty and cost is commonly taken for the most delicate and thereupon each guest will soonest desire to feed."

Fish was another mainstay of English cooking, as a result of geography, if nothing else. Baked, cooked in the inevitable pasty, or sent by the barrel, 11 percent of food
gifts were marine products. Herring was the most popular of the fishes, but sprats, salmon, sardines, sturgeon, porpoises, mullet, tunny, and conger eels were also sent (Table 2:5). Byrne indicates that sturgeon was, like venison, under the king's protection, but the Lisles also sent sturgeon to Cromwell, to a friend in Sussex, and were advised to send a firkin of sturgeon to the chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas in furtherance of their suit (II:229,239;III:729). If not reserved exclusively to the king, it was a least a gift of some prestige. Walruses, seals, porpoises, dolphins, and whales were also considered fish in the Middle Ages. Lisle sent a seal to Lord Admiral Sir William Fitzwilliam and a porpoise to Cromwell (IV:1001;V:1438). A gift of fish, less exotic than one of wine or wildfowl from France, was perhaps more useful, since the church required fasts on holy days and a six-week abstinence from meat at Lent.

England was famous for its deer parks, those enclosed forest preserves dedicated to the hunting pleasures of the aristocracy and the king. Widespread poaching and deer stealing during the fifteenth century had almost exterminated the stock in some parks and forests; the desirability of venison had increased so that it was, according to Byrne, a "royal gift, of prestige as well as practical value." The frequency of venison as a gift in the Lisle correspondence rather disputes the "royal" aspect but certainly attests to the practical: almost 13 percent of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fish</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>herring</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sprats</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salmon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sturgeon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sardines</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carps</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mullets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>porpoises</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conger eels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tunny</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
food gifts mentioned were some form of venison. Unlike cattle or domestic fowl, which had to be cared for at all times, or wild game, which tended to disappear in the cold, deer were usually easy to obtain, being able to forage for themselves even in the snow. Thus venison was an important meat source, especially in winter. Most of the venison mentioned was sent to the Lisles in Calais, and there was little exchange of venison between the Lisles and their Continental neighbors; perhaps these gifts were not recorded, perhaps the Lisle household jealously guarded all the venison it received, or perhaps English venison did not appeal to Continental palates. Although sometimes baked or made into pasties, venison was most frequently sent fresh or cured, presumably for grilling and roasting. A whole red deer was probably the most prestigious gift of venison, since Harrison accounted the red deer the "most noble game"; Henry VIII sent the only whole red deer mentioned in these letters to Lord Lisle, packed in a salt canvas, but it was two halves of different animals (IV:1004). A side of red deer, a side of venison, whole bucks and does, and various haunches and "pieces" were other forms of venison sent as gifts. Many of those who received venison as a present from Lord and Lady Lisle were supplied from the parks of their estates in England, such as the "teg which John Davy and Pitts sent . . . from your park at Umberleigh against St. Crewenna's Day," for which St. Aubyn was most grateful (I:xxxvi). It is an appropriate summary of these
major food gift groups to note that Lady Lisle, visiting London without her husband in 1538, sent back to Calais two does; her husband's gifts to her included crane, hare, and kersey, all baked, some live partridges, and a pasty of wild boar (V:1274,1279,1286,1290). This contrast between English and French products is confirmed by gifts sent from Calais to Lisle in London a year later: a baked crane, a pasty of partridge as well as some whole birds, and two pieces of wine (V:1544). Almost 72 percent of food gifts mentioned in the Lisle correspondence are subsumed under the categories just discussed, providing an accurate guide to the culinary preferences of the Tudor aristocracy.

Other meats mentioned, with less frequency, included capons, oxen, bacon, coneys and hares (which Harrison claimed to be of small account because the hunting of them was so easy), swine, and boar, as well as unspecified pasties and pies. Boar was a relatively prestigious gift; an observer late in the century reported a total absence of these animals in English forests. Lisle was presented gifts of boars' heads and sides by his friends and acquaintances on the Continent and could conceivably have sent these tokens of esteem on to Henry VIII and Cromwell in England, though there is no direct evidence for this recycling in the letters. The general practice of using gifts received as gifts to donate was fairly common during this period and included New Year's gifts to the monarch as
well as the belongings of private individuals.

Fruits, vegetables, cheeses, and spices were infrequent but not inconsiderable contributions to the Lisle gift exchange. Lady Lisle sent peascods (garden peas), grapes, and cherries to London for the king; she herself received artichokes, olives and capers, melons, and other produce from the gardens of her neighbors, quinces from her silkwoman in England, and two hundred oranges from her devoted agent, John Husee. Oranges were a rare luxury and thus a particularly complementary gift; Husee wishes "every orange were jC " (V:1121). The significant percentage of fruits and vegetables sent as gifts in the Lisle correspondence indicates that at least among the aristocracy there was some aspect to the diet that was not bread and meat. Bread, in fact, is not mentioned as a gift in these letters. The only cheese specified, of the several given, is Parmesan, one of the "three great cheeses ... served at the finest tables." As for spices, although cinnamon and nutmeg are mentioned in the letters, only salt and saffron were sent as gifts. Salt was important, of course, in the preservation of meat and was produced in England, as was saffron. In addition to being used as an aid in cooking, saffron was considered to have medicinal properties and was used to treat diseases of the breast, lung, liver, bladder, stomach, and eyes, to cure drunkenness and infertility, to heal inflammations and boils, to dissolve kidney stones, and to kill moths.
Medicines sent as gifts were intended as expressions of concern and affection between friends. They included cullis (colys), a simple, nourishing broth, and an "electuary of life," a paste of honey and fruit preserves with special properties to induce longevity. When Lady Lisle thought herself pregnant, Sir John Wallop, resident ambassador to France, sent Lord Lisle two bottles of waters which I brought from Avignon, meet for that purpose, and specially when she draweth nigh the churcheing time. For she shall be so much the more readier by v or vj days, if she will use the virtue of the same, which is restreyneyve and draweth together like a purse (III:809).

An even more graphic, grateful account of Tudor medicinal gifts is a letter from Lord Edmund Howard, son of Sir Thomas and friend of the Lisles, whose account needs no editorial addendum:

Madame, so it is I have this night after midnight taken your medicine, for the which I heartily thank you, for it hath done me much good, and hath caused the stone to break, so that now I void much gravel. But for all that, your said medicine hath done me little honesty, for it made me piss my bed this night, for the which my wife hath sore beaten me, and saying it is children's parts to bepiss their bed. Ye have made me such a pisser that I dare not this day go abroad, wherefore for that I shall not be with you this day at dinner (II:399).

One final, interesting group of food gifts is that of the jellies and preserves exchanged between Tudor households. Quince marmalade (also called codiniac or goudinal) was considered to have medicinal properties; Henry VIII had
a particular fondness for Lady Lisle's recipe. Conserves of
damson plums and cherries were also exchanged. These
jellies were used as cool contrasts to hot foods served at
the same meal and as special features of outdoor meals in
spring and summer. Harrison described the tables of
merchants as "comparable to the nobility of the Land," where
geliffs [jellies] of all colours . . .
marchpane wrought with no small curiosity,
tarts of diverse hues, and sundry
denominations, conserves of old fruits,
foreign and homebred, suckets, codiniacs,
marmelades, marchpane . . . wild fowl,
venison of all sorts, and sundry outlandish
[foreign] confections, altogether seasoned
with sugar . . . do generally bear the
sway.20

The precious sugar used to make these jellies would lend
them distinction as gifts to noblemen; the labor invested by
the lady who made them would contribute to their intimate,
personal nature. The one remaining gift of food does not
fall into any of these categories: a little barrel of
verjuice, which was a semifermented fruit liquor used in
cooking. It was a useful, homely gift, sent to Lady Lisle
by the wife of a servant in England (I:53).

Gifts of food served a practical value in getting
people fed. Harrison pointed out that the plenitude at
English tables served to feed not only guests but "the rest
is reserved and afterward sent down to their servingmen and
waiters . . . their reversion also being bestowed upon the
poor which lie ready at their gates in great numbers to
receive the same." The Tudor ideas of generosity and
hospitality were legacies from the medieval conception of lordship, which no man who was careful of his honor and his reputation could afford to ignore. As Sir Thomas Palmer wrote the Lord Deputy, "he that keeps that house that you do can be no sparer." Lisle was known for his hospitable nature and would no doubt have welcomed any food gifts as relief to an overburdened pocketbook and an insufficient allowance. Relating the conversation with Cromwell in which he defended Lisle's hospitality, Sir Thomas continued:

[I] showed him that we hanged all upon you, and all strangers that came you did feast them for the King's honour. And I showed him that I was sure that if the best duke in England were in your place he could do no more honour to the King than you, which affirmed all to be true by my faith (V:1011a).

In Calais Lisle was a representative of the English monarch; it was of the utmost importance to display a royal degree of wealth and generosity.

The men and women to whom Lord and Lady Lisle sent consumable gifts were in similar positions of responsibility and held similar ideas about keeping up appearances. Gifts of food fulfilled an illusory, but nevertheless factual, purpose in helping to meet the societal standards for consumption at table. "Grand feasts created an impression of plenitude. Splendor of selection, opulence of presentation - proof therefore of noble wealth or Divine plenty - made the medieval feast an esthetic and, doubtlessly, political spectacle." The variety of dishes on a man's table and
the intricacy of their preparation were demonstrations of status and prestige, which were a sort of "symbolic capital," as Bourdieu has called it, a means of acquiring more influence and power simply through the demonstration of influence and power. A gift in assistance of this type of demonstrative consumption would be a recognition by the donor that the recipient was a man worthy of respect, a man (or woman) at the head of household for which he was responsible, and a man of hospitality and generosity who fulfilled his Christian duty to succor the poor. Moreover, the donor of lesser means need not fear the unworthiness of his capons or his coneys; the significant aspect of medieval - and Tudor - menus was "profusion of choice . . . . Liberality meant abundant offering." The gift that contributed to the demonstration of status and political power could never be unwelcome, no matter how prosaic.

Until the automotive era, human life was closely bound to that of animals. To plow, to travel, to hunt, indeed, to eat required some type of animal cooperation. Horses and oxen, hawks and dogs are all familiar denizens of the paintings and tapestries of the preindustrial age. The Lisle letters are filled with references to domesticated animals (Table 2:6), and a strong current of affection for these pets runs through the correspondence. Almost 14 percent of the gifts exchanged were animals or birds. From
### TABLE 2:6
**ANIMAL GIFTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hawks</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dogs</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(greyhounds)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birds</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mules</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marmosets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monkeys</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beasts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2:7
**DISTRIBUTION OF ANIMAL GIFTS BETWEEN ENGLAND, CALAIS, AND THE CONTINENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipients</th>
<th>In England</th>
<th>On the Continent</th>
<th>Lord Lisle</th>
<th>Lady Lisle</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gift</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dogs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hawks</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
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*Miscellaneous animals: mules, monkeys, marmosets, "beast"
marmosets and long-tailed monkeys to leashes of mastiffs and casts of lanners (falconets), Tudor men and women presented each other with the companionship and entertainment provided by the avian and animal worlds.

The whimsical nature of the Tudor affection for animals is demonstrated by the wide range of these gifts in the Lisle correspondence. In addition to hunting fowl, the birds mentioned include parakeets, parrots, linnets, a cock and hen of Guinea, and three pairs of herons, presumably for mating to provide flocks of future table fare. One of the linnets had a particularly difficult history. It was sent in 1538 to Edward Seymour by Lady Lisle and was saved from drowning in a shipwreck by one of her servants, only to fall into the clutches of a cat at Billingsgate before it could reach its intended recipient (V:1382). Tudor gift-giving was obviously not without hazards. Although there are no cats mentioned as gifts in the correspondence, among the miscellaneous animals sent as presents were several of the marmosets referred to above, a long-tailed monkey, and a most intriguing gift from Dan Nicholas Clement, prior of Christchurch, to Lady Lisle: "a beast, the creature of God, sometime wild, but now tame, to comfort your heart at such time as you be weary of praying" (III:688).

Horses were an English specialty and thus an important gift to Lisle in Calais. Harrison felt that English horses, with their "easy, ambling pace," were the best for riding long distances. As the only convenient
means of transportation, horses held a unique position in
the animal kingdom, often becoming

the object of a peculiarly strong blend of
mastery, attachment and possessiveness. Two
things a man should never lend to anyone
else, according to an old Boer saying, are
his horse and his wife. 26

Most saddle horses were geldings, according to Harrison, and
gifts to Lisle included geldings black, bay, gray, and
white, as well as an Irish hobby (a short, Irish-bred
horse), and several young, unspecified horses and nags.
Mules were also sent as gifts. Thomas Cromwell received
several mules from the Lisles and Lord Lisle received a mule
"fully caparisoned" (outfitted) from a Flemish official
(V:1615). Although Henry VIII gave Anne Basset a nag and a
saddle as a single present, gifts such as horseshoes, spurs,
and saddles were usually mentioned separately. Saddles
could be extremely elaborate; a description of the possi-
bilities for a saddle ordered by Lady Lisle included

Lucca velvet, fringed with silk and gold,
with buttons of the pear fashion and tassels
quarter deep of silk and gold . . . stirrup
parcel - gilt, with a leather covered with
velvet or else . . . [a] saddle head of
copper and gilt (II:253).

As a fundamental aspect of travel, of war, and of sport, the
horse required and received a great deal of attention; the
gift of a horse was at once an honorific and an immensely
practical presentation.

It would be easy, after a perusal of the Lisle corre-
spondence, to decide that Tudor men and women seldom went
anywhere without at least one dog in attendance. The hunting field was populated with greyhounds (42 percent of the dogs mentioned in the letters) some of which were special enough to be given such evocative names as "Minikin" and "Spring" (V:1592,1116). The uniquely English mastiff, also called a bandog "because many of them are tied up in chains and strong bonds in the daytime," were quite popular with the Lisles and their Continental neighbors and were used as guard dogs as well as for such sports as bear-baiting. Spaniels, hounds (including one named "Hurlle"), and lap dogs like little "Purquoy" (possibly Lady Lisle's corruption of pourquoi) were all a part of the Tudor domestic scene; the Tudor reputation for coldness and disaffection vanishes when their fondness for birds and dogs, not to mention marmosets and monkeys, is considered.

Above all, the aristocrats in these letters preferred to give and receive birds of prey. Hawks and falcons of various kinds "flew" across the Channel. Although hawks were bred in England, English birds were despised and, according to Harrison, were often "brought to markets . . . and there bought up to be eaten." The most prized of the hunting fowl were from Germany and the Eastern Baltic, or at least from France, where Lisle had excellent access to supplies of such birds. Falconry was an immensely popular sport in England, and Lisle's position in France benefitted more than a few Englishmen, Thomas Cromwell among them.

The pattern that again emerges in this examination of animal
gifts is a sort of "balance of trade" in the exchange process (Table 2:7): a transfer of English dogs and horses almost in equilibrium with a transfer of Continental hawks and falcons. The Tudor aristocracy could have employed agents on both sides of the Channel to purchase these creatures and transport them home, but it was a tenet of the society and its unwritten code of behavior that gifts could easily supply what economics made difficult and costly.

The portraits of Hans Holbein the Younger are one of the primary sources of information on the details of Tudor dress; it is fortunate indeed that his artistic style (and that of his students and imitators) was distinguished by an unusual clarity and a rich appreciation of color. The Lisle gifts of clothing elaborate on Holbein's work, providing verification of fabrics and decorations that seem, in the portraits, too sumptuous to be believed. Almost 15 percent of the total gift list represents some type of clothing, primarily because of gifts to the Lisle children, which were mostly clothes or money. Clothes were also sent to friends, however, and were exchanged between employers and employees. A survey of the elements of dress given in the Lisle correspondence demonstrates the most popular gifts in this nearly universal medium, and, incidentally, reveals some little-known aspects of Tudor fashion.
Caps and hats comprise over 13 percent of the clothing items mentioned (Table 2:8). Lady Lisle corresponded with a French nun, Sister Anthoinette de Saveuses, whose convent made nightcaps for men and women. These squares of plain linen, closely fitted to the skull and tied under the chin, were sent by Lady Lisle as gifts to friends and relatives and by Sister Anthoinette to the lord deputy and his wife as well. Other hats mentioned include bonnets, for both Lady Lisle and her husband. The man's bonnet or bonet of the period was usually of black velvet and was brimless, rather like a beret. There is no indication of the style of the bonnet mentioned as a gift to Lady Lisle from her husband (V:1562), but it may have resembled a bonnet ordered for Frances Basset and described by Byrne as "a neat little fur hood with three corners . . . worn for domestic rather than formal occasions." The French hood sent by Lady Lisle to Katherine Basset was a popular headdress in France during the 1520s and was brought to the English court by Anne Boleyn (V:1372a). Of a less severe style than the more traditional gable headdress, it rested further back on the head so that the forehead and some hair could be seen. Parts of headdresses could also serve as gifts, including the frontlet, a band of cloth, perhaps silk or velvet, worn across the forehead on the gable headdress; the partlet, a cloth worn across the top of the head on the French hood; and the crepyn, a white linen cap worn underneath the French hood; all were sent as gifts in these
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letters. Caps of ermine and of velvet were customary and useful gifts, since Tudor men and women wore them inside as well as outside and to bed, thus their inclusion in Holbein portraits and their popularity in Lisle gift exchange.

The gown was a standard piece of Tudor dress, though the style for men and women differed greatly. A man's gown was a loose-fitting garment similar to a modern coat; it could reach to the knee or to the floor. Materials included velvet and taffeta, with fur often used as a trim. All of these fabrics were sent as gifts in the letters, as were ready-made gowns. Beneath the gown would be worn a doublet, made of equally rich fabric; Lord Lisle was presented with a "poor doublet cloth of satin" as a gift (III:639). The shirt worn under the doublet would be made of silk, or possibly of the crepe mentioned frequently in this correspondence, or of lawn such as the "2 yards of black and 1 1/2 yards of white" that Lisle sent to a French acquaintance (V:1215). Breeches were also worn under the gown, but there are none mentioned as gifts in these letters.

Women's gowns were of a richness nearly equal to that of men's, although in the sixteenth century it was usually the male whose plumage was the most elaborate. Lady Lisle sent velvet and damask fabrics to her daughters to be made into gowns and they received the same from the mistresses in whose households they resided. These gowns were similar in design to what is commonly termed a dress, constructed either in one piece or composed of a skirt and a kirtle, an
article similar to a man's doublet. Lady Lisle received a kirtle of cloth of gold from Anne Boleyn, and Anne Basset received one of crimson damask with matching sleeves from Lady Sussex, her sponsor at court (III:658,895). Women also wore the lighter shirts of silk, crepe, or lawn under their dresses, which provided an edge of white above the bodice and at the wrist.

One of the more interesting, albeit less familiar, items of clothing exchanged in the Lisle correspondence was the sleeve. Sleeves were often separate from the gown, kirtle, and doublet and were attached with a series of laces called "points" or "aigulets." Lady Lisle sent Mary Basset a gift of "laces," possibly some of these points (III:623a). The outer sleeve, attached to the gown, was quite elaborate and often matched the bodice or the kirtle; it could also be embroidered and jeweled. An undersleeve or false sleeve, made of a fabric lighter than that of the outer sleeve, might also be worn (outside of the sleeve of the shirt), attached to the outer sleeve by points. This false sleeve was padded and slashed and the undershirt was pulled through the slashes, which were jeweled and fastened with points. Sleeves of silk and linen, sleeves of yellow velvet, and sleeves of linen with ruffs of gold are mentioned as gifts in the Lisle letters, and fabric designated for sleeves was also exchanged. The design of the sleeve was a significant aspect of Tudor fashion and received, it
is apparent from these letters, the appropriate consideration and concern.

Ten percent of the gifts of clothing were, interestingly, shoes and hose. Some of these were gifts from Lady Lisle to various employees, but she also presented shoes and hose to the daughter and son-in-law of a French friend around the time of their marriage (III:576). Those hose that are described were made of wool or garnsey, a knitted fabric; hose cloths were also sent to children and employees as gifts. Since most of a man's hose was visible beneath his long doublet and short breeches, it was not an insignificant present. No details are given in the letters concerning shoes, but most Tudor shoes were made of fabric, such as velvet, again with decorative slashes, and were intended for indoor wear.

The most frequent gift of clothing was, in fact, fabric. Since clothes were made to order, this was obviously most practical. Cloth for gowns, sleeves, shirts, coats, and doublets as well as hose, collars, and girdles was exchanged. Some of these fabrics have been mentioned, such as cloth of gold, velvet, and damask; others included English knitted kersey and worsted wool, and even buckram for the padding of kirtles and sleeves. In addition to woven fabrics, furs and skins were sent as gifts, for use as linings, as trim on gowns, or in making doublets, gloves, and coats. One remarkable gift of fabric was an ell of violet satin sent by Lady Lisle to Sister Anthoinette for
use as an altar cloth (III:599).

Accessories were an important aspect of Tudor dress and included—in addition to jewelry—gloves, purses, and handkerchiefs, all of which are represented in this collection. The purses mentioned were made of crimson, russet, and green velvet, of crimson satin, and of wood. Gloves, that popular symbol of chivalry, were confined almost exclusively to women in the Lisle letters, although Husee discussed the propriety of distributing gloves as gifts to the guests at John Basset’s wedding (IV:858). “A pair of gloves lined, of wool,” gloves embroidered with gold or emblazoned with saints’ names—all served as personal, intimate gifts between friends or as special tokens of appreciation (II:290). The only handkerchief in the correspondence was sent to Lord Lisle by the wife of a kinsman as a token of affection (II:401). A lady’s waist was defined by her girdle, such as the girdle of white satin sent to Mary Basset by her mother, or perhaps by a wider stomacher, items of special elegance as gifts. Ribbons and borders with which to decorate gowns also served as presents, including what must have been an especially impressive "edge" of goldsmith work (V:1125). To effect these fashions and to occupy their time, Tudor women were, at least to some degree, seamstresses, and thus sewing equipment forms an interesting addition to this gift list. Pins were sent from Paris, two or three thousand at a time. Gold thread and
needle cases were dainty, considerate gifts. The most personal aspect of gift exchange is demonstrated by these gifts of clothes and is further augmented by an examination of an equally fascinating, luxurious segment of the Lisle gift list: jewelry.

The aristocrats of Tudor England were passionately fond of jewelry. "Jewels were worn on the clothes, over the clothes and under the clothes. They were sewn to sleeves, they were used to clip together folds of fabric, they were embroidered like confetti on doublets and stitched to a velvet shoe to emphasize its lines." Men and women alike wore a profusion of rings and hung chains around their necks and at their waists. Beads of gold, garnet, or coral, sometimes with a pendant heart or other ornament, chains of gold, brooches, bracelets, and individual stones: pearls, diamonds, and turquoises - all were gifts designed to complement and enhance. These gifts of personal adornment are sprinkled liberally throughout the Lisle letters and provide a glimpse of Tudor giving at its most intimate.

The most frequent gift of jewelry, accounting for 66 percent of those mentioned, was the ring (Table 2.9). Rings were worn on every finger of each hand and both thumbs as well; the wearers then "sighed that they had 'finger fatigue.'" Two types of rings were exchanged between the Lisles and their friends, made distinctive by their origin and use. Personal rings were sent frequently as "tokens," material signs of affection that might, at a
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future time, be returned to the donor. The origin of these tokens, according to Byrne, was as "a guarantee of the authenticity of a letter or verbal message . . . also used by those who could neither read nor write to convince the recipients of their letters that what they had sealed they had said." Rings with diamonds, rings with turquoise stones, and similar intimate gifts were obvious signs of friendship between Tudor women. When Lady Lisle received "a ring which is a wreath of gold" that had belonged to the queen of Hungary, Husee was charged with getting it back, since the donor, Lady Sussex, "would not lose [it] for a king's ransom, but maketh much ado for it" (IV:895). Ladies in the Lisle letters also exchanged other pieces of jewelry to convey affection and friendly concern and then returned them at a later date. A bracelet of coral beads with a heart of gold was one of Lady Lisle's favorite pieces; it was sent to Lady Ringely with affection and later returned (II:390). John Husee, a Lisle employee but also a gentleman and a friend, received a "token" from his mistress that may have been a ring or perhaps some other intimate remembrance, such as the "bracelets of my colors . . . the first that ever I sent to any man" given by Lady Lisle to Thomas Culpepper (V:1372a;IV:971b). Many such gifts mentioned in the letters are left tantalizingly unspecified.

Distinct from these personal tokens, however, were cramp rings, so-called because of their supposed efficacy against cramps, convulsions, and the "falling sickness,"
epilepsy. The semimystical quality of these jewels was derived from their origin as the king's Good Friday offering, which was melted down, shaped into rings (probably plain bands), and then blessed in a special ceremony while the monarch rubbed the rings between his hands. The rings were of gold and of silver, gold being most prized, and were sent singly and in groups of a dozen or more. How these highly valued and coveted rings were obtained does not appear in this correspondence, but they were sent both by men of exalted status and by those much further down the social scale. Lady Lisle received most of the cramp rings mentioned in the letters as gifts from friends in England; the jewels' healing qualities were being solicited on her behalf during what proved to be a false pregnancy. She in turn sent a few cramp rings to friends on the Continent, including Sister Anthoinette, who wrote back with thanks but wanted to be told "the virtues of the cramp rings as I know none other virtue save for the said cramp" (III:621). Lady Lisle's reply is not preserved.

Other types of jewelry mentioned as gifts included "ghaufrettes" for a collar and "habliments of rich and good sort," presumably types of decorations, and "certain gold," which could perhaps be fashioned according to the recipient's taste (V:11378, 1136a). An ivory comb sent to Lady Lisle seems a particularly elegant gift, although whether it was to be used for grooming or as a hair ornament is not
clear. Brooches, used to pin folds of cloth or to hold capes, were a popular item of Tudor adornment, but only one brooch is mentioned in this correspondence, sent to John Basset by his mother, and it is not described (IV:831). As for the heavy gold chains so prominent in Holbein portraits, several appear in the Lisle letters as gifts, the most impressive probably being the chain of gold Anne Boleyn took from her waist to bestow on Leonard Lord Grey as he set off for service in Ireland (II:468).

The proximity of clothes and jewelry to the body imbued these gifts with a significance more personal than that of food or animals. Byrne's description of the token and its use in Tudor society recalls the "confusion of personalities and things" described by Mauss as a feature of exchange contracts in tribal cultures. Gifts of food or of animals were used, of course, to convey greetings and affection, but the closest relationships - mother and child, special friendship, loyal service - were expressed with intimate presents to be worn close in remembrance and love.

The mystical nature of Tudor - especially Roman Catholic - beliefs shows up again in the exchange of religious tokens between Lady Lisle and her French friends. While Cranmer and Cromwell were ridding English churches of relics and images, the lord deputy's wife was exchanging unicorn's horn with Sister Anthoinette and receiving from others "an Image of the Holy Virgin Mother," "a head of St. John to put in your cabinet," and "tokens" from Vendôme, a
religious shrine (III:588,591,598,594). Other popular
sixteenth-century notions were enseignes, badges purchased
at shrines to which pilgrimages were made and attached to
the hat or cap like a brooch. These enseignes often incorpo­
rated the emblem of the saint involved, as did, no doubt,
the "enseigne which touched the head of John Baptist at
Amiens" sent to Lady Lisle by Sister Anthoinette (III:604).
These personal remembrances were almost exclusively French
and feminine; no gentleman in a position of responsibility
in the government of Henry VIII could afford to have such
potentially dangerous gifts traced to himself.

Lady Lisle has borne much criticism for the eventual
downfall of her husband; certainly her Roman ways provoked
both comments from Cromwell and warnings from Husee. Her
religion was not mere superstition, however: Lady Lisle
received most of the books mentioned in the collection,
including a Bible, a gospel, and a "religious" book as well
as a matin's book bound in black velvet and a book of
parchment or vellum (V:1441;III:590,743;V:1133;IV:857).
Lord Lisle received two books but seems to have enjoyed
artwork as well; he received "a present of late imprinting"
from an English friend and made gifts of pictures himself
(V:1494). These books may have been read to rather than by
the Lisles, but together with the artwork they are indica­
tive of the status of the recipients; only a man or woman
with adequate leisure time could appreciate gifts of art
and literature fully. That kind of leisure, in sixteenth-century England, belonged almost exclusively — and indeed served to define — the status of gentleman.

Gifts of money were not rare in these letters, but most were relatively small amounts sent to the children in England — John, George, Anne, and Katherine Basset — or to James Basset as he studied in Paris. Over four thousand pounds total was exchanged one way or another; Leonard Lord Grey received a single lump sum of five hundred marks sterling for service in Ireland (II:468). A multitude of currencies reflects the international setting of this correspondence, including French and Venetian coins as well as English: angels, crowns, sovereigns, demi-angelots, demi-ecu de la rose, demi-ducats, and rosimboz (which seem to have been variable in exchange value). Since money payments have been deliberately excluded from consideration, few of these sums represent gifts intended as bribes. It is interesting to note, however, that one Lisle servitor, in Husee's opinion, "had leyther have money than any such thing [as wine]; yea, and doth look for the same" (V:1473). Alternately, another steward judged an outstanding annuity of five pounds yearly, allowed by Lisle to accumulate for ten years, to be equaled by "two barrels of herring and one hogshead of wine" (V:1315). Gifts sent in supplication of or repayment for services clearly had to be carefully judged, with an eye to the recipient's tastes as well as the donor's needs.
Some gifts in the collection do not fall into any of the above categories, but their unique nature does not necessarily form a pattern in itself (Table 2:10). Cups and containers were popular gifts between Tudor intimates, and coffers, pots, baskets, a casket of steel, and a salt cellar all found their way onto the Lisle gift list. One particularly noteworthy gift was three dozen glass boxes for confitures (sweetmeats or jellies); considering the scarcity of glass, this was surely an expensive and impressive present.

Other unique gifts included two sets of knives, a candlemold, a pomander, and a silver toothpick. Furniture, too, was sent. Edward Seymour received a somewhat waterlogged stool along with his ill-fated linnet, and a piece of crewelwork slightly faded by saltwater. Lady Lisle sent virginals to a French acquaintance; the plural here may refer to a pair or to only one of these legless, stringed keyboard instruments (III:572). A "pentar [rack] on which to hang your keys" was sent to Lady Lisle by a Continental friend (III:797a). Gifts of land were made to Lisle and, again, to Leonard Lord Grey for their service to the king (see below, p. 69). The Lisles held several church advowsons on Basset properties, which they distributed as gifts; such generosity was a relatively frequent form of patronage that aided both the recipient and the benefactor by filling a church vacancy and thus accruing, presumably, divine grace. It was also a convenient way to pension off
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spurs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horseshoes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candlemold</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
clients or servitors from a large, expensive household. Flowers, a child's blanket, and those gifts left forever obscure - "a fine thing bordered with red ribbon," "a poor remembrance," the undefined "mersivin" - complete this discussion. The nature of these presents was, no doubt, less important than the giving (V:1378,1118a;III:579a).

This overview has avoided most questions of status, relationships, and reasons; these and other topics will be discussed in the following chapter. A general survey of the gifts in The Lisle Letters will serve as a base from which to launch further considerations and to illuminate some of the vital characteristics of Tudor gift exchange. The Lisles and their peers gave what they had or what they could acquire. As will be seen, certain gifts were more appropriate for particular persons in specific circumstances, but there was no gift that was unacceptable, at whatever level of society, for whatever reason. There is an innocence in this attitude that seems more closely related to a medieval, feudal society characterized by ties of personal dependence than to a modern world characterized by independence and by relationships mediated by cash. It is a contrast that will become, with further evidence, more apparent.

The occasions on which gifts were given in the Lisle letters can be dealt with briefly. There are no birthday
gifts mentioned in this correspondence, and no Christmas gifts, although that holy day was celebrated; Lady Lisle, visiting London in November 1538, received a letter from her husband in Calais requesting that she secure some venison for their use at Christmas. New Year's gifts were more frequently mentioned. Henry VIII usually presented Lord Lisle with a silver cup, often elaborately engraved. Lisle's standard return to his nephew was twenty pounds in silver. Lady Lisle received beads from Queen Anne and Queen Jane for the New Year (II:307; IV:867). The only other recorded New Year's present was a demi-ducat to Mary Basset from Lord Lisle. Gifts of food against Lent and saints' days are mentioned, and Mary Basset provided Lisle with an Easter parakeet (III:609,588). The only wedding and marriage gifts have been mentioned (see above, pp. 47 and 48); it seems that it was a standard Tudor practice for the families of the newlyweds (in this case both bride and groom) to distribute gifts to wedding guests.

One particularly fascinating episode in the domestic affairs of the Lisle family highlights a unique occasion for gift exchange in sixteenth-century England. During 1536-37 Lady Lisle believed herself to be pregnant. The traditions of confinement and christening demanded a richly furnished room for the mother to occupy during the last month or so of her pregnancy and in which the child would be born. The furnishings of this room were often lent by
friends and relatives especially for the occasion, and expectant parents of noble status could even hope to borrow from the royal Wardrobe. Through the letters in which he reports on his suit for the preferment of Anne and Katherine Basset (IV:863-908), John Husee also describes his search in London for just the right linens, altar cloths and hangings for Lady Lisle's chamber. Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex both contributed; Lady Sussex promised to send "a rich pane for a bed, of ermine bordered with cloth of gold, and a sheet of lawn to cover the same; and more, i or i\frac{1}{2} pairs of fine paned sheets and a traverse" (IV:868a). Apparently she sent only a carpet and a crib because of another confinement at the same time (IV:872). Marcel Mauss discussed much the same sort of system among natives of Samoa, where gifts brought on the birth of a child were given away again by the parents. "Still, they had the satisfaction of seeing what they considered to be a great honour, namely, the heaps of property collected on the occasion of the birth of their child." Eventually even the queen's Wardrobe lent a red traverse, but all in vain: the long-awaited Plantagenet heir was an illusion, and all the preparation went for nought. Lady Lisle ultimately returned the borrowed finery, but the long delay before she did so probably reflected her unwillingness to recognize publicly so distressing an end to such promising expectations.

Two conclusions from this evidence - or lack of it -
are possible. The letters recording gifts for birthdays, christenings, and Christmas may simply be missing; this would be an unusually selective loss. It is very possible that families made an effort to be together for such occasions and thus letters would not mention gifts exchanged in person. There are, however, few discussions of impending Christmas visits in the letters. It seems most reasonable to assume that Tudor gifts flowed throughout the year so that giving was not, as it usually is today, reserved for special occasions. Because there were no telephones, because few people could read and write well, or even easily, a gift was a form of communication, a token of presence used to establish and maintain relationships. The Tudor world seems much smaller and more personal from this perspective, and more comfortable emotionally than previously perceived, perhaps even more comfortable than the world of the present.
CHAPTER III

A survey of the types of gifts exchanged in the Lisle correspondence may be interesting, but it does little to provide insight into Tudor attitudes and perspectives. That information must come from the people themselves, from a documentary, as well as an intuitive, examination of the donors, the recipients, and the reasons involved in gift exchange. It is necessary, in effect, to set the presents in a social context in order to appreciate their social significance.

The society of the Lisle correspondence was primarily that of "gentlemen," described by William Harrison as

the prince, dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, and barons, and these be called . . . lords and noblemen; and next unto them be knights, esquires, and last of all, they that are simply called gentlemen.¹

Lawyers, too, were members of this elite group, although their less respectable origins were deplored by the land-owning aristocracy. Added to these were the rich City merchants, whose loans to the Crown doubtless paved the way for social intercourse with "lords and noblemen." John Skut, tailor to the queen, exchanged gifts with Lady Lisle and was "an authority to whom even [she] might listen with respect."³ Representatives from below the line of gentility are scarce in these letters. A few of the "burgesses,
yeomen and artificers or laborers" who made up Harrison's other 4 three "sorts" of Englishmen do appear, but the collection does not provide enough data to make reasonable conclusions about social relations within those groups or across the great divide separating political England from the relatively silent majority. Thus, this study will be, for the most part, an examination of gift exchange among the gentlefolk of Lisle's acquaintance, organized according to the official, the professional, and the personal relationships of Lord and Lady Lisle.

Official Relationships

Lisle's official correspondents included men in the English government with whom he may or may not have been on friendly terms, the men on his staff in Calais, and those French and European officials with whom he communicated as a result of his position as lord deputy. Most of these men were gentlemen and many were knights or peers; the gifts they exchanged thus provide a very specific portrait of the type of present considered appropriate for men of status and responsibility. Foremost on this list of official relationships was a very personal, very important connection: Lisle's nephew, the English king.

There is little about the gifts to Henry VIII and his queens that suggests the unusual or extremely valuable.
Henry received boars' heads and sturgeon from Lisle; often reserved for royalty in England, these gifts were relatively common and easily acquired in France. Dotterels and quails were frequent gifts to many of the Lisles' acquaintance, the king among them. Lady Lisle's recipe for codiniac was a royal favorite, as has been mentioned; Anne Basset relayed a typical royal request in 1538:

Madam, the king doth so well like the conserves you sent him last, that his Grace commanded me to write unto you for more of the codiniac of the clearest making, and of the conserve of damsons; and this as soon as may be (V:1620).

Peascods (peas) were also popular with Henry Tudor and were evidently a French specialty; Lady Lisle sent several such gifts across the Channel. When a Frenchman in Southwark, England, presented peascods to the king, Husee wrote to relieve his mistress of the burden, if only temporarily, since "there are no great store of them" (V:1427). Grapes and cherries were also sent from Calais to the royal table. In addition to these gifts of food, Lisle sent a pair of spurs to his nephew, and Husee's 1536 account of this present demonstrates gift exchange at its most coercive.

Yesterday Mr. Russell and Mr. Hencage delivered the King the spurs and desired his Highness to have you in remembrance: whose Grace made answer that he so would do, and thanked you for the spurs and received the same in thankful part, so that it was then betwixt them concluded that the next time they might see Mr. Secretary [Cromwell] with the King in a good mood, they all, with one voice would be suitors for your lordship so
be known what he would do for your lordship (III:729).

The king's pleasure was being sought on the question of a parcel of monastic land for Lisle, a suit finally brought to a successful conclusion in 1538 with Henry's gift of the priory of Frithelstock. One of Lisle's greatest problems with his post in Calais was absence from court; in this era of direct personal rule, to be forgotten by the monarch was to be exiled from the source of power and preferment. The Lisles invested considerable effort recalling themselves to King Henry, although the outcome, in 1540, was rather dubious.

The Lisle gifts to Queen Anne were similar to those sent to the king: friendly, casual expressions of affection. Lady Lisle had been at the English court when Anne unofficially "reigned" (prior to 1533) and in 1531 sent Lady Anne a bow which, although much appreciated, proved to be too long when strung. George Taylor, a servant of Lady Anne, presented the gift and then

> brake to her concerning your little vessel to have license to carry over the sea beer and to make return arras and other commodities into this realm: to which she made answer, praying you not to require that, for certain causes that she knows (I:xxxii).

Clearly, not all gifts brought a favorable response. Later presents from the Lisles included venison and, after the official coronation, dotterels. Queen Anne was apparently fond of animals: her gifts included a linnet bird that had hung in Lady Lisle's chamber and a most beloved little dog,
"Purquoy" (II:193,114). When the dog died after a fall, "there durst nobody tell her Grace of it, till it pleased the King's Highness to tell her Grace of it" (II:299a).

Presents to Queen Jane were, on the whole, less personal but still demonstrated an interest in her preferences. Lady Lisle made the queen a gift of a piece of Devonshire kersey (a glossy wool fabric) in 1535 (IV:828). In 1536 she began working to place at least one Basset daughter at court, an enterprise in which gifts were of no small significance. Gifts of dotterels found royal favor, but the issue was decided by quails, for which the now pregnant queen had a passion. Sir John Russell wrote in the name of the king on May 20, 1537, requesting quails "with as much speed as may be possible" (IV:878). Husee followed up quickly on May 23, looking for "fat quails ..., which her Grace loveth very well and longeth not a little for them" (IV:879). On the twenty-fourth he wrote in relief:

For immediately as they came unto my hands I rid in post to the court, with ij dozen of them, killed; and so they were anon upon vij of the clock presented unto the King, and the Queen's Graces, whose Highnesses, I assure your ladyship, were right glad of them, and commanded the one half of them incontinent to be roasted and the rest to be kept till supper (IV:881).

More birds were sent in the following weeks, and in July Queen Jane, dining on Lisle quails, agreed to take one of the Basset daughters (Anne or Katherine) into her service, the choice to be made on visual inspection (IV:887). It had
been an arduous, anxious task, and quails were not inexpen-
sive, but to have assured the success of a daughter was
despite the effort. Gifts to royalty had great potential in
terms of possible repayment and thus merited the attention
to royal preferences that was expended by petitioners like
the Lisles.

Gifts given by the monarch were appropriately grand
and overtly generous. Leonard Lord Grey, setting off to
service in Ireland, received presents from a grateful
sovereign:

\[
\begin{align*}
  & v \text{ hundred marks sterling in money, and a } \\
  & \text{hundred pounds land to him and his heirs, } \\
  & \text{beside his former grant of } ii j \text{ marks land } \\
  & \text{that was given him before. And also the } \\
  & \text{King's Grace gave him a ship well trimmed;} \\
  & \text{and the Queen's Grace [Anne] gave him a chain } \\
  & \text{of gold from her middle worth a hundred } \\
  & \text{marks, and a purse with XX sovereigns (II:468).}
\end{align*}
\]

Henry demonstrated his pleasure with Lisle's service in
Calais by bestowing a grant of monastic land upon him equal
to one hundred marks; Lady Lisle chose Frithelstock Priory
as being near the Basset property of Umberleigh. Most
monastic properties were sold by the Crown; Lisle's outright
gift, although it took many months of haggling with Cromwell
and the Court of Augmentations to secure, was an unusual
mark of favor. Another such gift was made to Anne Basset,
who caught the king's fancy at court and received her main-
tenance or "finding" at his expense as well as a nag and a
saddle (V:1249,1513).

Even the king's more customary gifts were out of the
ordinary. The standard New Year's gift to Lord Lisle from the king was a silver cup, often elaborately wrought or engraved. Royal gifts were more formalized and less personal than those of their subjects but also more negotiable: silver cups and golden chains (or the various beads Lady Lisle received from Queen Anne and Queen Jane) could be turned into cash, if necessary. What has been said of "gentlemen" is equally true of royalty: "They will accept humble gifts and thus acknowledge a bond to the giver; and because they are mightie' persons, the signs of love which they return may materially benefit their social inferiors." 6

In return, courtiers were assessed a certain sum in silver, the amount of which differed according to rank; Lisle's yearly gift to the king was twenty pounds. Subsidiary gifts such as jewels could accompany the money, of course, and the presentation of the coins often required more expenditure. Lisle's gift in 1532 was short sixpence but arrived in a beautiful blue velvet purse. The exchange between king and subject was at once symbolic and concrete: an expression of affection and a reminder of dependence, a reward for service and a petition for favor. Lisle wrote to Cromwell: "I have no trust but God, the King, and you" (III:653). In a very real sense, given the nature of Henry's rule - and of Henry himself - this was the absolute truth.

Lisle, as has been noted, had been a well-known, useful member of the court for over thirty years. His was a successful career: "He stood as high in the royal favor as
almost anyone at Court, had direct access to the King, and could use his influence for his own benefit and that of others." It was also a career paralleled by many others. Men like Sir William Kingston, Sir William Fitzwilliam, Sir Francis Bryan, Sir Henry Norris, and Sir John Russell had followed the same path of service and, in 1533, had come to occupy the most influential positions at court as intimates of the king. Friends as well as fellow officials, Lisle counted on these men to use their influence on his behalf while he served in Calais. Others at court were not so easily depended upon - Thomas Cromwell, for one. Gift exchange between these and other important figures in the English government demonstrates some of the characteristics of official relationships in the Henrician period.

Lord and Lady Lisle exchanged gifts with seventeen members of the Privy Chamber and incipient Privy Council during their stay in Calais (Table 3:1). While less than 20 percent of the Lisles' official presents went to royalty, over 65 percent were sent to those men who were in a position to influence royalty (Table 3:2). Sir Henry Norris was a particularly valuable advocate for Lisle interests; his loss over the Anne Boleyn affair was a severe blow. There are only a few gifts to Norris mentioned in the correspondence: some wine, falcons, and a horse (III:684;II:483,505;II:178). No gifts at all are recorded to Lisle from Norris or from Sir John Russell, another very
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir Thomas Audley</td>
<td>Member of Henry VIII's Privy Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lord chancellor 1533-44; keeper of the seal 1532-44.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir John Baker</td>
<td>Member of Henry VIII's Privy Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attorney general 1536-40; attorney to the Duchy of Lancaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Antony Browne</td>
<td>+ Member of Henry VIII's Privy Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>master of the horse 1539; captain of spears 1540.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Francis Bryan</td>
<td>+ Member of Henry VIII's Privy Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ambassador to France 1533.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Edward Foxe</td>
<td>* Member of Henry VIII's Privy Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bishop of Hereford; king's almoner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Cranmer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>archbishop of Canterbury 1533-47.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Cromwell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chancellor of the Exchequer 1533; principal secretary 1534; vicar general 1535; lord privy seal 1536; lord great chamberlain 1540.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Wm. Fitzwilliam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>treasurer of the Household 1527-37; lord admiral 1536-40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Thomas Heneage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>groom of the stole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir William Kingston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>captain of the guard 1523-39; constable of the Tower 1524-40; vice chamberlain 1536-39; comptroller of the Household 1539-40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Henry Norris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>keeper of the privy purse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Richard Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>comptroller of Customs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Radcliffe, Earl of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Richard Riche</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>solicitor general 1533-36; chancellor of the Court of Augmentations 1536-44.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir John Russell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Lord Sandys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lord chamberlain of the Household 1526-40; treasurer of the Chamber 1528-45; lieutenant of Guisnes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Seymour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Brian Tuke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clerk of Parliament 1516-45; master of Posts 1516-45; treasurer of the Chamber 1528-45.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3:2
**LISLE GIFTS TO OFFICIAL CONTACTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>royalty</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English officials</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calais officials</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European officials</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>155</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3:3
**LISLE GIFTS TO ENGLISH OFFICIALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>given to: All English Officials</th>
<th>Thomas Cromwell</th>
<th>Lord Lisle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gift</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildfowl</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venison</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other food</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hawks</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*consumables</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*chivalric</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*personal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See Appendix for definitions of gift categories
useful friend. Before 1536, Russell's intercourse with Lisle was of a friendly, customary nature, expressed by gifts of hawks (I:44;II:149a). In 1536, however, Russell's intervention was crucial to the successful prosecution of one of Lisle's most vexing legal suits. During his strenuous service, Russell received several gifts of wine from Lisle as well as ten dozen quails and eleven brews (III:795;V:1179,1188). After the completion of the suit, John Basset made a visit to the Russell household, taking with him some of Lady Lisle's conserves, which Lady Russell "would gladly be your scholar in the making of," according to Husee (V:1219).

There is a pattern of giving in the Russell microcosm that demands further examination. He received hawks as tokens of friendship but wildfowl as rewards for service, and sweet, expensive jellies as expressions of gratitude. The notable emphasis on consumable gifts to persons in positions of responsibility is repeated in a survey of Lisle gifts to their official correspondents in England (Table 3:3). These were men of whom favors might be asked but whose reputations could be compromised by injudicious presents; 74 percent of the gifts to these officials were consumable. Wine and quails were, of course, French products to which Lisle had easy access, but these comprise only 65 percent of the total consumables. This evidence suggests that food was considered the most appropriate gift to persons in positions of responsibility: respectful,
honorific, and ultimately untraceable. A gift of food could exercise "symbolic violence" and yet leave no mark, could serve as payment for services rendered without being indiscreet. Gifts of food were so much a part of Tudor social intercourse that their exchange was less suspect than more personal items such as jewelry, even when put to the same use.

Lisle's gifts to Sir Brian Tuke clarify this point. As treasurer of the Chamber, Tuke was burdened with the task of recovering a debt owed by Lisle to the king. Sir Brian sent Lady Lisle two green geese upon one occasion (V:1290); the gifts sent by Lady Lisle in return (fifteen in all) were uniformly consumable, with wine and wildfowl predominating. Byrne characterizes Tuke as "steady, reliable, conscientious, hardworking, friendly . . . incorruptible and essential." If Tuke was, indeed, incorruptible, what do these food gifts represent? Probably a propitiation of sorts, a promise from Lisle that he keeps the debt in mind and a request that Sir Brian exercise leniency and latitude in the matter. It is obvious that a gift of cash would have constituted bribery in this situation, but gifts of food were simply overtures of friendship, engendering good feelings in the recipient and, it was hoped, a delay of the necessary repayment. As Lisle may have died in 1542 with the debt outstanding, the persuasiveness of quails, partridges, and good French wine would appear to have been strong.
Thomas Cromwell is a particularly striking example of these aspects of official gift exchange. There are only three gifts recorded from Mr. Treasurer: some venison pasties and a buck to Sir Thomas Palmer (Calais official and Lisle partisan in London) and another buck to Lord Lisle. Thirty-four gifts are recorded from the Lisles to Cromwell, more than a third of the total gifts given to English officials. Seventy-seven percent of these gifts were consumable (Table 3:3). Mr. Treasurer himself explained this phenomenon to the King's Council at Westminster, in words reported by Thomas Broke.

Perchance, my lords, you do think I speak thus for affection I bear my Lord Lisle, by reason of some great rewards or gifts. But I assure you, on my faith, it is not so; nor I never received of his lordship anything, unless it were a piece or ij of wine, or a dish of fish or wildfowl (II:267).

Lisle gifts to Cromwell also included hawks, dogs, mules, and "ij fawcons of brass with charger, rammer, and molde"; Cromwell had these light cannon and their accoutrements stored under his great chamber (V:1596). Moreover, Mr. Secretary was not above taking more negotiable gifts. "We know that Cromwell pocketed annual fees from practically everyone of importance, including his enemies." There is no mention in the Lisle correspondence of a "fee" delivered by Husee to Cromwell, and although this lack is not conclusive, Lisle clearly relied on gifts in kind to solicit favors that others were seeking with cash. It is possible that gifts of food may have been Lisle's
unique response to the need to exert influence at court, but
the duplication of these efforts by his wife and by those
seeking similar favors of the lord deputy himself (see
below, p. 84 ff.) indicates a more universal practice. The
disparity between Lisle's gifts of food and Cromwell's
willingness to accept cash reflects a change taking place in
Tudor attitudes. For Lisle and men of his generation (he
was in his seventies when he accepted the Calais post),
government was a burden resting on the unpaid shoulders of
gentlemen: justices of the peace, sheriffs and commissioners
in the counties, the King's Council at Westminster, the
members of Parliament. These responsibilities were funda-
mental to the participants' personal honor and prestige; a
man of "high stomach" like Lisle would see a compromise of
his duties as a compromise of himself. Gifts in kind
could maintain a gentleman's honor - and his reputation -
while soliciting influence and paying for services rendered.

Thomas Cromwell, in contrast, was instrumental in the
transformation of government from inherited responsibility
to professional career. The elimination of the clergy
from political concerns left the doors of administration
open to a new breed: men of gentle, though not necessarily
noble, birth, trained in the universities and willing to be
recompensed for their services in cash, even if unoffi-
cially. Thanks to Cromwell, English government was
becoming a profitable business in which gifts in kind were
an over-delicate anachronism. The Elizabethan and Jacobean practice of cash "gifts" to secretaries, clerks, and officials was the offspring of Lisle's more naive, although similarly intended, gifts of wine and wildfowl in the 1530s.

Lisle practiced this convention of consumable gifts with most of his official contacts. William Lord Sandys received fish, venison, and wine from the Lord Deputy. Lady Lisle sent some birds, but whether of the hunting, singing, or consumable variety is unclear (IV:958,997; V:1496,1516;I:49). Sandys was lord chamberlain of Henry VIII's household and lieutenant of Guisnes, Flanders, a man close to the king and courted by Cromwell. Lisle and Sandys had more than one falling out during the Calais years, partially over the latter's long absences from his Continental post, and Lisle's gifts may have been efforts of appeasement, intended to keep an influential gentleman on his side.

Gifts of wine were sent also to Sir Richard Page, comptroller of Customs and useful intermediary at court, and to Archbishop Cranmer, who purchased wines from Lisle as well (III:674;V:1602). Attorney General Sir John Baker received a hawk, as did Sir Francis Bryan. The gift exchange between Bryan and Lisle, which also included wine, seems sparse in view of their evident friendship and Bryan's undoubted influence with the king. Bryan felt free to write to the lord deputy with a lecture on money management:
"As I am informed, you are no good husband in keeping of your house" and "employed" George Basset in his household, as most young men of birth were employed as servitors in noble houses (II:263a). Bryan sent Lisle a gelding, but no other material evidence of their relationship is recorded in the letters (IV:943). Another close friend on the Privy Council was Edward Foxe, bishop of Hereford and almoner to the king. No gifts are recorded from Lord Lisle to Bishop Foxe, but Lady Lisle sent him brews and heronsewes (IV:979). She requested that he send her some cramp rings in preparation for childbirth; his letter apologizing for the delay was accompanied by a "dozen and a half of cramp rings which you should have had long ago" (IV:979). A later gift from the bishop was "a poor remembrance," another of those mysterious tokens forever hidden from sight (V:1118a).

The new men taking advantage of Cromwell's innovative spirit were not quite what Lisle was used to. Sir Richard Riche, generally assumed to have perjured himself to convict Sir Thomas More, became chancellor of the Court of Augmentations in 1536 and was directly involved with Lisle's suit for Frithelstock Priory. John Husee was justifiably unimpressed with Riche's manners and motives: before the affair was finished, Riche had been promised a velvet gown on Lady Lisle's behalf and may have pocketed at least half a year's rent from the priory (III:753). Sir Thomas Audley, lord chancellor 1533-44, received several gifts of wine from
Lisle and requested other shipments for which the lord deputy was reimbursed. Lady Lisle sent conserves as well, and "a ring to her ladyship" (II:159,163,211;V:1601). An interesting episode, because so open, was a gift of forty pounds "offered" by Husee to the lord chancellor, who then said he would "do the best that lay in him for your Lordship" (III:818). The issue in question was legislation concerning strangers and denizens in Calais; it looks very much like a bribe from the lord deputy to push the matter his way. That Lisle recognized the "new ways" (or, at least, the increasing prevalence of money gifts) is demonstrated by this evidence; that he preferred the "old" gifts in kind seems, from the above discussion, equally clear.

The Lisle exchange with Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, was an interesting one. Seymour was, in the 1530s, still consolidating his position among the influential gentlemen at court. There was little that he could do for Lisle and, in fact, actually did some harm when in 1534-36 he stood behind Lord Henry Daubenay in an attempt to take over some property included in John Basset's inheritance. Only much legal haggling, gifts of wine and quails to Daubenay, and, finally, the intervention of the king settled the matter satisfactorily. By 1539, however, the Lisles and Seymour were on good terms. Lady Lisle ate with the earl and his wife in the king's presence, and extended Calais hospitality when he visited on official business. A linnet, a stool, and a piece of crewelwork
followed Sir Edward back to England, intended by Lady Lisle to aid in securing a place for Katherine Basset in the Seymour household. The fate of the linnet at Billingsgate has been mentioned, and Katherine preferred to remain in her place with Lady Rutland. Relations remained friendly, however, and Hertford sent Lord Lisle a "very fair" saddle and harness as a gift (V:1439). Byrne opines that Seymour, the fast-rising brother of a queen, had read the political and religious cards well enough to sense the eventual conflict between Cromwell and Lisle and cultivated the lord deputy to cover his bets, as it were. This perspicacity aside, it is safe to assume that this exchange of gifts represented something friendlier than the formal public exchanges between Lisle and his more established official correspondents.

The gifts given to Lisle by these official correspondents include six presents of venison and three horses, donated by only six of the seventeen men considered. This relative paucity demonstrates the peripheral nature of the post in Calais. Lisle was no longer in a position to influence the king; the most he could offer anyone in England was a vacancy in one of the "rooms" in Calais - a soldier's post in the Calais garrison. Sir William Fitzwilliam and William Lord Sandys both requested rooms for their own favored candidates (II:263,278;V:1145). The only recorded gift from Lord Sandys was one half of a buck
(IV:972a). Sir William Fitzwilliam was one of Lisle's closest friends and gifts exchanged with him reflect the more intimate nature of this relationship. While Fitzwilliam's gifts to Lisle were mostly venison, "red deer and fallow" or "a buck ready baked" to Lisle and his lady (II:251;V:1513), Lisle's gifts in return were some of the most unique in the correspondence. In addition to several gifts of wild swine, Lisle sent "Antique pictures" for which Fitzwilliam returned hearty thanks; he also assured the Lord Deputy that he had

declared unto the King's Highness not only the good advancement and substantial setting forth of his Grace's works and fortification of that his town of Calais, but also the order ye have taken for the casting down of the sandhills on the west end of the said town, wherewith I assure your lordship his Highness is right well contented, and for the same, and your pain taken therein, giveth you right hearty thanks (II:182).

Fitzwilliam could be counted upon to apprise the king of Lisle's accomplishments without the distortion that might be expected of Cromwell or Sandys. In 1537 Lisle sent a "platt [sketch] of Hesdin" and a live seal. Fitzwilliam, who had become lord admiral in 1536, was not overly enthusiastic about the seal. Husee kept it in the river at Wapping for more than five weeks until he finally got in touch with Fitzwilliam, who had nowhere to keep the animal and so charged Husee with the responsibility of having it killed, delivered to a servant for baking, and conveyed to Fitzwilliam's wife. Husee commented, "I perceive he will
keep nothing that shall put him to cost" (IV:965,1001).

Sir William Kingston had been on terms of good friendship with Lisle for twenty-five years. His letters were frequent, his gifts less so: a gelding to Lisle, and two purses to his lady (IV:969;II:131;III:644). Lady Lisle sent Kingston a gift of an obscure nature that he described, in a letter of thanks to Lisle, as a "Secyall token . . . which was a tall man with a halberd, notwithstanding he had no feet to stand on; yet for her sake I shall give him entertainment" (II:131). Byrne interprets "secyall" as "special" and postulates this gift to have been a candle-mold. Lord Lisle's gifts were more predictable: wine, peewits, and cheese (II:169;I:10,22). Although Kingston was one of the king's "most trusted men," he does not appear to have wielded the same power at court as Fitzwilliam and Norris. His services were enlisted by Lisle in regard to a capacity for James Basset with Archbishop Cranmer, and although James did not receive the position, Kingston received a piece of wine for his troubles (IV:942).

Interestingly, it was into Kingston's custody that Lisle was delivered upon his arrest in 1540, and it was to Kingston that Cromwell sold Lisle's estate of Painswicke, also in 1540, a property that Cromwell had acquired from Lisle in return for a desperately needed four hundred pounds. Friendship might be a help in many situations; it was clearly no hindrance when considerations of acquisition and advancement were involved.
Lisle corresponded with men of less exalted status in the English government, of course, and he claimed several friends in high positions in the English church, including John Kite, bishop of Carlyle, and John Longland, bishop of Lincoln. The gift exchange between Lord Lisle and these acquaintances is rather sparse; many of the gifts can be attributed to specific requests. Longland received wine and hawks from Lisle along with a request to bestow a prebend on Richard Scrivener, a chaplain of Lisle's acquaintance. Longland complied and asked Lisle to find "two or three pieces of Orleans" for which he would be reimbursed (III:641). Lisle sent a goshawk to Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers, in October 1536 and again in 1539; in both letters there is discussion of a gelding for the lord deputy that has not yet come (V:1254,1581). William Gowreley, yeoman purveyor of the king's mouth, wrote to Lisle with the request that

your honourable Lordship be so good to me as to speak unto Mr. Bartlett the Searcher without the Gates of Calais that my servant Agnes Woodruffe may pass through with such fowl as she hath for me without any interruption (III:711).

Agnes evidently provided Gowreley with poultry for the king's table. According to the Calais gatekeeper she was supplying other poulterers as well and thus defrauding the king. Gowreley denied the charge and, to prove the point, sent Lisle "xi egrets and ij doz. of quails" through Agnes, making the lord deputy welcome to any other "dish of such
fowl" as he liked. William Newman, one of the king's trumpets, requested a "warrant for a protection" (a travel permit) for his brother-in-law; he sent a dog named Wolf to Lisle by the town's farrier and thanked the lord deputy for "my dog you gave me" (II:324). A present from Dr. Edmund Bonner, bishop of London in 1539, typifies the varied nature of these less frequent, less conspicuous presents between Lisle and his English acquaintances. Bonner sent Lisle a gift which of late was here imprinting . . . . The anatomy of the man is judged here to be done exquisitely. The anatomy of the woman pleaseth me not so much. Howbeit, Mr. Bekinsall that is married and hath but one child telleth me that that is the figure of women in their travail, to whose judgement, because I am ignorant, I leave the matter, thinking that he took consultation with some midwife touching his sentence (V:1494).

Bonner also sent Lady Lisle a turquoise. It is significant that the one instance in which the king's business was threatened - the problem with Gowreley, Agnes, and the Calais gate - involved gifts to Lisle which were, predictably, consumable. Less compromising requests could be, and were, accompanied by dogs, horses, and hawks; these were gifts between men of status, gifts of friendship unconcerned with questions of honor and corruption.

An examination of gifts exchanged within the walls of Calais, as Table 3:2 attests, will be short. There are two reasons for this brevity: the daily intercourse between men working together, which naturally preempted letters between
them, and the fact that most of the gifts mentioned involving Calais officials were sent to or from Lady Lisle. If Honor Lisle has not played a significant role in the discussion up to this point, it is not because she was uninvolved with her husband's official correspondents. In fact, she was closely identified with her husband's interests and activities. A trip to London in 1538, unaccompanied by the lord deputy, demonstrated her shrewd grasp of political methods: she held her own in discussion with Cromwell about the four hundred pound loan and the Painswicke property and had a clear grasp of the legal intricacies in the dispute over John Basset's inheritance (the affair in which Sir John Russell was so useful). Some of the gifts referred to as Lisle's in the previous analysis were sent by his wife, but by their nature proclaim their intent, especially those sent to Cromwell and to Tuke: partridges, wine, venison, and cheese. The one exception may be the "goodly flowers" she sent to Tuke's daughters (V:1332), and even those could have been consumable, since some flowers were considered edible delicacies. By reputation, Lady Lisle, was, if anything, more aggressive on her husband's behalf than he was himself.

The letters from Calais officials that do exist are from those who have returned to England on business of their own. William Lord Sandys sat on the Calais Council; his frequent absences from his duties were a source of friction
with Lisle, as has been mentioned. Sir Thomas Palmer, knight porter of Calais, was also sewer of the Chamber and a gentleman usher at the English court. Palmer could be depended upon while in London to send back news to Lisle as well as to put in a good word with Cromwell and the king. Only one gift is recorded from the Lisles to Palmer: "iij angel nobles" from Lady Lisle, which "as money goeth with me now," said Palmer, "every one was worth x" (IV:986). Palmer sent Lord Lisle two books, a "young horse for his gelding," and one of the more unusual gifts, "xl of logwood and xl of billets," along with a request for some intricate room rearranging by Lisle to benefit Palmer himself (II:163; IV:986,1028;III:709). Only two other donors from Calais sent gifts to Lisle: William Grett of the Constablerie, who sent a box of marmelado each to the lord deputy and his wife (III:193), and Ralph Broke, Calais spear and water bailiff. Broke provided Lisle with horses and sent several cheeses to Lady Lisle (I:30;V:1450;II:330,331). Again, there was a problem with room appointments; Broke asked Lady Lisle to "move my lord your husband" to correct the problem (II:331). No doubt there were many such gifts, dropped off at the Lisle establishment in Calais, of which no records remain. Corruption is not the question here, as it was not with Tuke, Russell, or (with the reservations noted above) Cromwell. Lady Lisle hotly denied taking bribes: "I would not for C take one penny, nor never did of no man, whatsoever hath been reported," and Lisle was held to be an
honorable man (III:721). There is little doubt that the same system of gift exchange existed between Lisle and his subordinates as between the king and his court in London: friendly, personal gifts given with an eye toward the lord deputy's preferences and the hope of influencing his decisions.

Gifts to Lady Lisle from Calais officials present an interesting contrast to most of the gifts mentioned thus far, a contrast that will become more pronounced in the examination of the Lisles' personal relationships. Of the officials themselves, only Sergeant-at-Arms Rokewood and Sir Edward Rynggeley, high marshall, presented items of food: a porpoise and a venison pasty, respectively (V:1292; II:238). Sir John Wallop, lieutenant of Calais in 1530 and later resident ambassador to France, was a friend of the Lisles' whose influence with the king was significant; his touching gift was "two bottles of waters against her lying in," sent to Lady Lisle when she believed herself pregnant with a Plantagenet heir (III:809). Lady Wallop sent the consumables: capons, coneys, woodcocks, and a plover of Coventry (V:1292). William Pole, a Calais spear assigned to service in Ireland as provost marshal, sent Lady Lisle an Irish hobby horse (III:804). Lady Lisle's other Calais donors were the wives of officials, both past and present. Lady Ryngeley seems to have been a particularly close friend. She sent a "gold ring with a flat diamond," another
unspecified ring, a capon, and a cheese to Lady Lisle; to
the lord deputy she sent "a handkerchief for a token"
(II:390,401,416). The wife of the mayor of Calais, Sir
Robert Wingfield, sent rings, as did Mistress Boys, wife of
a Calais burgess (V:1276,1293). Lady Lisle had earlier sent
the Wingfields a piece of venison (IV:1009). Finally, Lady
Garneys, wife of a previous knight porter, sent "a ring with
a sapphire for a token" and a basket of barberries and sixty
quinces (V:1293,1579). This is gift exchange at its most
personal. Although 70 percent of these gifts are consum-
able, they are not in the usual pattern of venison and wine,
but rather are fruits and more domesticated meats such as
capons and coneys. Twenty-three percent of these gifts were
jewelry; not ceremonial, formal cramp rings, but intimate
items of personal adornment. The pattern of these exchanges
is one of friendship and concern, with little indication of
influence and self-interest.

Lisle's official contacts in Europe can roughly be
divided between the officials with whom he corresponded on
matters of government business and those with whom he came
into contact as a matter of ceremony and hospitality on
behalf of the king. Very early in his tenure the lord
deputy had put himself on good footing with his European
neighbors. Lisle was on particularly close terms with
Oudart du Bies, seneschal (captain) of Boulogne; they had
met in 1527 while Lisle was on a Garter embassy, and in 1533
du Bies proved a good source of information on events in
France and the Holy Roman Empire. The gift exchange between the two households was one of friendship as well as diplomacy. In addition to gifts of boar and swine, du Bies sent Lisle a mule "fully caparisoned" (a caparison was an ornamental cover placed over a saddle), and in 1539 the lord deputy requested - and received - the loan of the seneschal's cook to make pastries (I:12,48; V:1306,1597, 1615). Lady Lisle received some artichokes from du Bies (I:12). Lisle gifts to the du Bies household, sent by both Lord and Lady Lisle, included venison, oranges, and "very good beer," a horse and two greyhounds, cramp rings, and codiniac (I:12; IV:924,1023; V:1211). The combination of consumable, chivalric, and personal gifts that characterizes the Lisle-du Bies relationship as more than official owes its existence, at least in part, to the participation of the ladies in this exchange. It was to Lady Lisle that the somewhat unusual artichokes were sent, and from her that cramp rings, codiniac, and oranges originated. This is not, of course, an invariable occurrence; du Bies' wife sent Lady Lisle the head and side of a small boar (IV:1023).

The gifts exchanged between Lady Lisle and other Flemish officials show a similar pattern. Ysabeau du Bies, daughter of Oudart du Bies and wife of Jacques de Coucy, lieutenant of Boulogne, sent a little monkey as a gift to Lady Lisle in 1534. No doubt much of their correspondence has been lost, but the next recorded exchange is some beer
sent to the lieutenant by Lady Lisle and some venison of a young boar sent by him in 1536 (III:797; IV:1023a). Lady Lisle sent codiniac and a cramp ring to Isabeau de Morbecque, daughter of the captain of Tourneham Castle in Flanders, and received "a pentar [rack] on which to hang your keys" from that lady (III:797a). The exchange of intimate gifts between women who may never have met is typical of social relationships as evidenced in The Lisle Letters and indicative of the role assumed by women in sixteenth-century society.

Gifts given to Lisle by French and Flemish officials may provide a key to some of his sources for gifts to England. It is conceivable that when the Lisles received, for example, the head of a fine black boar from J. de Morbecque, captain of the castle of Tourneham, they sent it on to England as a gift to the king (IV:1041). Pasties of swine may have been eaten in Calais, but half a side of wild swine from Jacques de Coucy, lieutenant of Boulogne, would have made an excellent meal for Cromwell (IV:1023a). There is no way to prove these speculations, and all of the food gifts would, no doubt, have been equally useful in the Lisle kitchens. The Tudor habit of what might be called "recycling" was widespread, however, beginning with the redistribution of New Year's gifts to the monarch; Lady Lisle's loan of a toothpicker (see below, p. 91) was probably a common, if unhygienic, gesture.

The medieval tradition of hospitality and open-
handedness was enforced in Lisle's Calais establishment and won both lord and lady praise. Jehan de Moucheau, a member of the French embassy that met with the English in Calais during 1534-35 to treat for the marriage of an English princess (first Mary and then Elizabeth) to the duke of Angouleme, third son of the French king, was much impressed with Lisle hospitality. De Moucheau sent "this poor trifling present in gree, which is a pair of gloves lined, of wool"; he had promised Lady Lisle to get her a pair in London. The great admiral of France, also a member of that party, sent back two marmosets and a long-tailed monkey, "which is a pretty beast and gentle," along with instructions on their diet: "Only apples and little nuts, or almonds . . . only milk to drink, but it should be a little warmed" (II:290,290a). Other guests in Calais were not quite so original; Balthazar Van der Gracht stayed with the Lisles on his way to England as an escort for Anne of Cleveves and, on returning home, sent some pears from his own garden (VI:1648). In 1539 Frederic II, count Palatine and duke of Bavaria stayed in Calais and was accompanied by Lord Lisle to England. Lady Lisle wrote to her husband that since "I did see him wear a pen or call to pick his teeth with" she was sending the duke her own toothpicker for his use (V:1546). She also sent a pasty of partridges to Lisle and to their guest. The palgrave's return gift and letter express his gratitude with grace and gentleness.
My very good lord and father, since my departing I have sent you two pieces of wine, the one a white and the other a claret of the finest growth of this country, understood that the season hath not been a good one. Nevertheless, according to what I hear from France, I think ye will find it passable for the present time, and drink it with my lady my good mother in remembrance of your son, to whose good grace and also to all the good gentlemen, I beseech you I may be most humbly and in most hearty manner recommended.

Being arrived hither with my brother the Elector my people have sent to my house without my knowledge your rapier which I promised that I would not fail to send you incontinent upon my arrival.

Praying you, nevertheless, to write me your news and of the good health of the King. I beseech the Good God, my lord, to have you in his safe keeping (V:1613).

No modern text can explain more fully the nature of gift-giving among friends.

A review of Lisle's gift exchange with official correspondents, including government contacts, friends, and acquaintances indicates that consumable items were by far the most frequent gifts between gentlemen of the Tudor Court; over 50 percent of the gifts to Lisle and over 70 percent of the gifts from him were food. An effective gift was one that honored the recipient by recognizing his status as a gentleman; those expensive presents of wildfowl and wine from France, the wild swine and boar that were so scarce in England, and the jellies and conserves that required precious sugar and were time-consuming to make were intended to convey feelings of admiration and respect. The exchange of gifts between Lord Lisle and his official
correspondents in Calais and on the Continent also followed these fairly rigid, well-defined guidelines. Men in positions of significant power and influence received consumable gifts that were easily disposed of and relatively uncompromising. Friendly relationships were less restricted and showed more evidence of personal interest and individual preferences. Between men, however, presents from friends still tended to reflect "manly" tastes and were primarily chivalric gifts of horses, dogs, and hawks. Most truly personal gifts such as jewelry and clothes were made to or by a woman, especially Lady Lisle. This dichotomy between the public and personal spheres of behavior grows more significant with the examination of other data; the implications for Tudor society must await that examination.

Professional Relationships

Lisle's professional relationships are defined here as those men and women with whom the lord deputy and his wife had what could be called a "contractual" arrangement: services rendered on a regular basis for payment that was usually, but not always, money. Servants, merchants, and lawyers fall into this category, as do members of the household such as John Husee, gentleman servitor and agent for the Lisles in England. There is often an overlap between professional and official duties; Husee was both a member of
the Calais retinue and Lisle's personal employee. Sir Richard Pollard, a friend of Lisle's as well as his feed counsel, held a post at court and, in 1537, was made surveyor of the Court of Augmentations. Personal relationships also encroached on the professional sphere. Hugh Yeo, a connection of Lady Lisle by her first marriage, was steward of a Basset estate and an advising counsel for Basset legal affairs. The regularity of professional relationships distinguishes them from the personal and the official, however, and it is this distinction that provides insight into the business affairs of Tudor households.

Englishmen were, in the sixteenth century, becoming increasingly litigious, with the result that the legal profession was attaining new prominence and respectability. Lisle in Calais had to depend on legal advice and aid from a number of sources in England to prosecute his affairs successfully, not only the large issues in court and at court but also smaller estate matters. These legal advisers, most of whom had been or would be knighted, were usually salaried. Sir William Sulyard, Mr. John Danastre, Sir Edmund Marvin, and Mr. John Densell were paid yearly retaining fees so that Lisle could call upon them when necessary; they also received various gifts for their work. Sulyard and Danastre were members of Lincoln's Inn when John Basset resided there in 1535-36. Their efforts on his behalf brought gifts of wine, herring, and quails from Lady Lisle (III:684,690,798a;IV:836,844,863,886,888). Marvin and
Densell were two of the most important of Lisle's legal counselors and were also recipients of quails from Lady Lisle (II:298). Densell in particular was instrumental in pursuing the suit for John Basset's inheritance against the encroachments of Lord Daubenay and his patron, Seymour. Sir Richard Pollard also acted in the Daubenay affair, bringing it to the king's attention in 1538 and thus insuring a successful conclusion. Husee wrote Lady Lisle in June of that year, "My Lord Privy Seal [Cromwell] hath demerited thanks, and Mr. Pollard and Mr. Marvin, yea and Mr. Knightley, for they would take no money; but the other had their fee, saving Mr. Yeo and Mr. Rolles" (V:1176). "Thanks," according to Husee, was some sort of gift, and although his rejoicing at that moment proved to be premature, Pollard received some Parmesan cheese in September and a hawk in October (V:1218,1258). Husee recommended another gift for Sir Richard: "Mr. Pollard desireth to have your house at Umberleigh this summer for vj weeks or ij months. By mine advice your ladyship shall offer it him with thanks . . . for his goodness now shewed in this cause" (V:1176). Pollard and Rolles were also useful in Lisle's suit for Frithelstock Priory.

The gifts to legal counsel cannot, with the exceptions mentioned above, be tied directly to specific suits; Pollard received quails in 1539, Rolles the same in 1534. The nature of gifts to lawyers is, however, quite obvious
and closely resembles the gifts given to government officials. Only one of Lisle's counselors received what appears to have been a cash gift - twenty pounds - in addition to his fee (I:vi). Even in this legal situation, where partisanship would be expected, it is possible that all parties desired to avoid any hint of corruption. Gifts to lawyers were gifts to gentlemen, designed to enhance prestige and convey sentiments of honor and gratitude. Their purpose was, no doubt, to create both a feeling of goodwill, and, as Marcel Mauss would say, a debt that would lead to further service. Leonard Smyth, having delivered the quails to Marvin and Densell, expressed it thus: "They are and will be ready at all times, as well for that cause you wrote unto them as in all other causes" (II:19).

The Lisles' relationships with the business world were often delicate; the lord deputy was constantly in debt, and Husee, as a result, was constantly being dunned. That gifts to merchants, especially those who, like John Skut, were wealthy enough to be accepted as gentlemen, were in propitiation of these debts must be considered. Skut wrote to Lady Lisle in 1534 thanking her for a gift of quails and promising delivery, through Husee, of a "gown of black satin furred with sable," but he also requested that she "have my obligation [debt] in remembrance when your ladyship may" (II:241). Other gifts of quails were sent to Mr. Skut, and a servant of this royal tailor received a special gift of twelve pence for unrecorded services (IV:846;V:1207,1393).
These gentlemen merchants also sent gifts to Lady Lisle, perhaps when her accounts had been settled. William Lok, mercer, was kind enough to send a stomacher of cloth-of-gold to Lisle for his lady, hoping that "it may cover a young Lord Plantagenet" (III:799). The exchange of gifts between Lady Lisle and these London merchants clearly indicates a practice carried on outside the transaction of their normal business relationships.

Not so highly placed, but in their way influential, were Eleanor Whalley and her husband, John, cousin to Thomas Cromwell. Mrs. Whalley provided silks for Lady Lisle and sent gifts as well: several barrels of quinces, "certain gold," a dozen cramp rings, and "a little booke limned of parchment or vellum" (V: 1572, 1236; III: 771a; V: 1136, 1442; IV: 857). John Whalley, paymaster of the king's works at Dover, also sent a dozen cramp rings (IV: 252). Lady Lisle's return for this generosity, besides her business, was good French wine, a barrel of herring, and quails (IV: 922, 883). A kilderkin of ale from "Husee's hostess" (presumably his landlady) and a half a haunch of venison from "Handcock of the Goat" to Lord Lisle round out the English merchants who sent gifts to the Lisles (III: 798; IV: 915). It is obvious that gift exchange was not being used to repay debts to merchants but only to enhance advantageous relationships. Evidence from the Continent supports this conclusion. A jeweler in Paris, Guillaume Le Metais, sent two crepes and
two thousand pins to Lady Lisle and her daughters; Adrain Boustin's wife sent a gift of two barrels of olives and capers along with other produce for which payment was expected (V:1514,1633). And Agnes Woodruffe, she of the poultry dispute in Calais, sent Lady Lisle some colys (cullis), a nourishing broth used for medicinal purposes. No gifts are recorded from Lady Lisle to these merchants; their presents were an indication that her custom was appreciated without further largesse on her part.

The sparse nature of Lisle gift exchange with the merchant class, indeed, with their professional contacts altogether, makes any comprehensive discussion difficult. There is obviously a tendency for the more formal relationships to be characterized by formal gifts of food. Between Lady Lisle and her business acquaintances of lower status, gift exchange seems to reflect the relationship between the king and his subjects: formal gifts from superior to inferior, but more personal gifts from inferior to superior, with consideration given to the preferences of the recipient. Inferior donors appear to have sent the best they could afford, as demonstrated by the Whalleys' interesting combination of quinces and cramp rings. Lady Lisle's return of wine and quails seems a bit perfunctory but at least had the virtue of being "gentlemanly," so that Cromwell's cousin could not feel insulted by a gift which was appropriate to the lord privy seal himself.

Gift exchanges between the Lisles and members of
their household are almost totally lacking in the correspondence, probably because proximity made letters mentioning gifts unnecessary. It is difficult to accept that the same type of friendly exchanges between Lady Lisle and her ladies-in-waiting did not go on as can be seen between the Basset daughters and their mistresses in French and English households (see below, pp. 111, 116). There are several gifts recorded from the ladies of the household to their mistress. Mistress Baynam sent gloves to Lady Lisle and to Philippa and Mary Basset, the daughters still at home; Lady Lisle received a garnet ring as well (V:1115). Mistress Archer sent a book of wax, and Mistress Hussey, at the commencement of her service, sent a Bible (V:1115, 1441). The only other gift from a woman servitor was from Mrs. James Hawkesworth, whose husband supervised Porchester Castle for Lisle; she sent a barrel of verjuice (an acidic fruit juice mixture used in cooking) (I:53). No gifts are recorded from Lady Lisle to her women.

Gifts from Lady Lisle are recorded to some of the men in the household. To William Bremelcum, manservant to John Basset, she made gifts of cloth for shirt, coat, and hose, as well as gifts of skins and of money. John Davy, a sort of bailiff and general man of business at the Basset estate of Binkington, was sent "a colt to run in the park"; this was probably less a personal gift than an addition to the estate (V:1427). The purser on Lady Lisle's ship Sunday of
Porchester received a coffer as a present, but was not dissuaded by this kindness from expressing his distress over her belief "that I should be untrue and deceive you in my Reckonings." He sent her the reckoning book to prove his honesty (I:14). John Lamb, shipowner, found Lady Lisle generous when he conveyed her to London; his ship sustained some damage upon docking and she gave him two crowns to cover it. It was the least she could do, she wrote her husband, since Lamb would not let her pay him for her passage (V:1262).

Lady Lisle's exchange of presents with her gentlemen servitors is a bit more rewarding. To Husee she sent some of the nightcaps presented to many of her friends, and another gift of friendship: a pomander, that popular piece of Tudor jewelry. Husee's gifts were equally affectionate: two hundred sweet oranges to Lord and Lady Lisle and, for the lady alone, a matins book by John Teboro bound in black velvet (V:1121,1133). Various tokens and New Year's gifts passed back and forth between Husee and the Lisles, the natures of which are never specified. The other gentleman servitor to whom Lady Lisle sent gifts was Sir John Bonde, vicar of Yarnscomb, who seems to have had some fee for overseeing the Umberleigh property. Certainly he had some merry fights with one of Lady Lisle's stepdaughters, Jane Basset, over what would and would not be taken out of storage at Umberleigh for her use and how much of the game in the park and the cattle on the farm could be allotted to
her table. Lady Lisle sent Bonde a gown, but her most generous gift was the advowson of Ashreigny; Bonde thought she had promised him the advowson of the chantry at Umberleigh as well (III:514,516,518). Advowsons held in gift were often used as a means of repayment, especially for 26 servitors that a patron could no longer fully support. The only gift recorded from Bonde to his mistress was twenty gulls (III:516). Another Lisle gentleman was Thomas Warley, useful as an informant on his various trips to London. He sent several gifts to Lady Lisle, including a gold cramp ring and a pasty of venison, but no gifts are recorded as being sent to him by his employers (II:245;III:655). The contrast between Bonde's formal gift of wildfowl and the more intimate gifts of those gentlemen closely associated with the Lisles is reinforced by the gifts of two humbler servants: a hogshead of white salt to Lisle from James Hawkesworth, and a doe to Lady Lisle from Rauff Rigsby, keeper of the Forest of Bere (I:53;II:452).

The lack of evidence for gift-giving between the Lisles and their professional contacts may, in itself, be significant. Gifts between people involved in business relationships may have been less frequent because of the extent to which the Tudor economy had become a cash economy, with little reliance on trade in kind; a series of comparative studies over several centuries could examine this hypothesis. The exchange between the Lisles and those with
whom they did business certainly reflects the same dichotomy of formal and intimate behavior that has been noted previously; its sparsity indicates the relative unimportance of gift exchange with most professional contacts.

A particularly interesting point is the involvement of Lady Lisle in these exchanges almost to the exclusion of her husband. It is conceivable that Lisle's relationships with his servitors were on a more impersonal plane where salaries served as the standard expression of satisfaction. Or perhaps this one-sidedness is an indication of the extent to which Lady Lisle exercised authority in household affairs, and, if her gifts to lawyers are any indication, in the sphere of business as well. It was generally the responsibility of the wife, whatever her rank, to see to the smooth running of the household. In addition to supervising the "small factory" that constituted the usual domestic establishment, she oversaw and maintained the health of animals and tenants on the property; women married to gentlemen and aristocrats might find themselves doctoring the whole village. When her husband was absent, she would be responsible for defending the estate from violent attacks, both foreign and domestic, and, as Lady Lisle amply demonstrates, might also be charged with the leasing of farms, the conduct of legal matters, and the marketing of crops and produce. "Clearly, a wife too old to bear children or even one who was childless remained an important part of the family's industry." Byrne maintains that Lady
Lisle was "a woman with decided views of her own, a good business head, a great sense of the responsibilities implied by her position, and a readiness, matched by capacity, to play her part socially in her husband's career . . . she took the burden of both social and business correspondence off her husband's shoulders, whenever possible." The extent to which Lady Lisle directed her husband's business affairs is no doubt due to the immense energy and vitality with which she approached what were considered tasks appropriate to her position as the lord deputy's wife.

Personal Relationships

In a general sense, all of the Lisles' relationships were "personal," which simply implies two or more people involved with each other on some interactive level. It has been noted that many of Lisle's "official" contacts - Fitzwilliam, Kingston, and Foxe, for example - were also close friends. A degree of affection existed between John Husee and his employers that betokened more than mere professional loyalty. It has been necessary, however, to separate these mixed relationships so that underlying patterns of behavior could be revealed. Accordingly, personal relationships will be considered those people associated with Lord and Lady Lisle as family and friends, people for whom the affective aspects of the relationship
take precedence over the official and the professional.

The overwhelming impression generated by an examination of gift exchange between the immediate members of the Lisle family is one of concern and involvement. Honor Lisle in Calais had a firm grasp of the requirements of her sons' education, in England or in Paris, and managed to supply those requirements and more. In addition to the necessities of life as communicated to her by Bremelcum and Husee, Lady Lisle sent John Basset gifts to ease his way and, probably, to signify her continued interest in his affairs. The future head of the Basset estate was receiving the training considered appropriate to his status: private tutoring in Latin while residing in the household of a distinguished friend of the family, followed by legal training at the Inns of Court in London. In October 1533 the fifteen-year-old John was placed with the family of Richard Norton, a justice of the peace and Lisle's successor as sheriff of Hampshire. While with the Nortons, Master Basset received a purse of crimson velvet containing a crown (five shillings), a shirt collar, and three shirts, as well as coat cloth and a yard and a half of satin (III:529,530). When he moved to London, Lady Lisle sent gifts to ensure that he began this new phase of his career in a noble manner: a taffeta gown, a brooch, and a purse of crimson satin (IV:830,831). As is the case today, one of the most useful gifts Lady Lisle sent any of her sons was money, and money was doubtless most appreciated. Gifts to John
amounted to over twenty pounds, sent in sums varying from twenty shillings to six pounds at a time, and included a gold piece and a double ducat (IV:835,839;III:526). Lady Lisle’s gifts to James Basset, studying in Paris, were exclusively cash, and included eight crowns (forty shillings), a demi-angelot, and a demi-ecu de la rose; the records of other gifts may have been lost (IV:1045,1049). Only one gift is recorded to the middle son, George: a velvet cap handed down from his elder brother (III:528).

The Basset daughters received gifts similar to those of the Basset heir, gifts to aid their performance and to enhance their prestige. Mary Basset, the youngest, and her elder sister Anne were sent, during their parents’ stay in Calais, to reside in the households of French aristocrats. In 1533 Anne, a girl of twelve or thirteen, was placed with the wife of Thybault Riouaud (Roualt), a friend of Lisle’s since 1527. The correspondence with the de Riou household reveals few gifts from Lady Lisle to her daughter, only some hosecloths (II:592). Mary went to the family of Thybault Riouaud’s sister, Madame de Bours, in 1534. The letters from this relationship are more abundant than from the de Riou connection, and thus the number of recorded gifts is greater. Like her brothers, Mary received presents of cash, but her other gifts are more interesting, especially the seven score pearls sent by her mother in 1535 (III:587). A beautiful white girdle, velvets, laces, and gloves were a
few of Lady Lisle's gifts to Mary; one could be pardoned for assuming her youngest daughter to be her favorite (III:590, 596,623a). It is more likely a case of surviving records. Unlike Anne, Mary remained in France, living with her parents and visiting the de Bours family frequently. This particularly close friendship culminated in a secret betrothal that contributed significantly to Lisle's troubles in 1540.

When Anne Basset took her place at the English court in 1537 - it was she that Jane Seymour chose to enter service - her mother sent gifts that expanded her wardrobe and thus improved her chances of success. In addition to sums of money, Anne received a French partlet, a girdle, and some pearls (V:1126,1136a,1513;IV:895). The pearls promptly got the girl into trouble, since she lent them to someone else without her mother's permission or approval and then had to get them back (V:1155). Katherine, failing to secure the coveted position in royal service, nevertheless remained in England in the household of Lady Rutland and was sent gifts of cash, a crepine and petticoat, a French hood, and damask and velvet cloth for a dress to attend a wedding (IV:906; V:1574,1650,1372a,1393). Since the purpose of a young lady's presence at court was, at least until the reign of Elizabeth Tudor, to secure an advantageous marriage, it was important that dress and demeanor be attractive and effective. Lady Lisle's gifts to her daughters in London were no doubt sent with this purpose in mind.
Of the other daughters in the Lisle household there is little mention. Bridget Plantagenet, about six years old in 1533, was left in England at the convent of St. Mary's in Winchester. She received an ermine cap and a tawny velvet gown from her stepmother, but otherwise seems to have been rather ignored. In 1538 Sir Antony Windsor took Bridget home with him for a time, a wise move in consideration of the Crown's attitude toward monastic establishments. The poor girl was evidently in need of some attention. Windsor wrote to Lady Lisle:

She hath overgrown all that ever she hath, except such as she hath had of late. And I will keep her still . . . and she shall fare no worse than I do, for she is very spare and hath need of cherishing, and she shall lack nothing, in learning nor otherwise, that my wife can do for her (V:1224).

This neglect seems typical of the reputed Tudor attitude toward young children, especially daughters, but quite alien to the usual pattern of Lady Lisle's behavior, which was generally maternal and solicitous. Another step daughter, Jane Basset, was allowed to take up residence at the Basset estate of Umberleigh and received her stepmother's attention to complaints against Sir John Bonde as well as the gift of a gown and permission to take a doe from the estate's park (III:511,513). Frances Plantagenet receives no mention in the letters until her marriage to John Basset, and Philippa Basset appears solely as donor, not recipient; both of these girls lived at home and thus
were rarely the subject of correspondence. In spite of the apparent neglect of Bridget, the general indication of these gifts to the children is that of concern and attention. Lady Lisle took her responsibilities as mother - and stepmother - seriously enough to send clothes requested and clothes as gifts, to send cash for spending, to answer letters and to keep in touch, through Husee and others, with their health, activities, and progress during the separation.

An indication of the bond between the Lisle parents and their various children is found in the gifts sent by those children back to Calais. Mary Basset's gifts were most frequent; this may explain, in part, the proportionately greater number she received. She sent her mother a couple of purses, a pair of knives, a needlecase, and a gospel to carry with her paternoster (III:579,590,589). At Easter of 1536 Mary sent her stepfather a parakeet "because," she wrote, "he maketh much of a bird" (III:588). Mary's outgoing affection for her family was not unique. James Basset sent his mother, from Paris, three thousand pins and a pair of gloves over which he exhibited special concern.

I shall not tell you how they are made, for I fear lest they might be exchanged, for lack of care, because he [the carrier] has many thus. In order that I may be assured, I beseech you that it may please you to write unto me how they are made (IV:1070).

Katherine, in London, sent back to her mother cramp rings of
silver and of gold and an ivory comb (V:1115,1164a,1401), but Anne, upon whom much time and expense had been expended in order that she succeed at court, is not recorded as having sent gifts to Calais at all. She did, however, send a belated gift of thanks to Madame de Riou: a pair of garnsey sleeves (IV:1126). During Lady Lisle's trip to London in 1538, her new daughter-in-law Frances sent a diamond ring and enclosed a token from Philippa Basset with it, an enseigne of Our Lady of Boulogne (V:1293). There were gifts between the children, too, if Mary and James are evidence; James sent his sister a chain for the neck and she, while not recorded as sending anything to her brothers, gave a purse of green velvet to Philippa, a little pot to Frances, and a gospel to Katherine (III: 597a,588). To accept the exchange of gifts as a symbolic expression of underlying relationships is to recognize that the Lisle family was bound by ties of affection similar to those of modern families, where favoritism, neglect, and childish ingratitude coexist with concern, affection, and deep respect.

Outside the immediate circle of the Lisle family was a larger group of relatives - nobles, gentlemen, and humbler folk - with whom gifts were exchanged. Kinship ties were crucial to the acquisition of political, social, and economic power in Tudor England, hence the prevalence of marriages arranged by parents with dynastic considerations
Relatives in positions of influence were one of the keys to personal and familial achievement; relatives in positions of dependence provided a secure source of labor and services. Gift exchange in the Lisle correspondence demonstrates both these aspects of Tudor family ties.

A most informative exchange is that between Lord and Lady Lisle and the guardians of Anne and Katherine in England. Thomas Manners was the first earl of Rutland, a cousin of Lisle's and descendant of Richard, duke of York; Lady Rutland was Eleanor Paston, great-granddaughter of the Agnes Paston whose letters provide one of the few personal glimpses of fifteenth-century English life. It was Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex (Honor Lisle's niece, Mary Arundell) who dined with Queen Jane, on quails from the Lisles, when the decision was made to admit a Basset daughter into service. Lady Rutland had received quails, cherries and peascods, and a heart of gold in the process of pursuing this preferment (IV:855,882). When Anne Basset proved to be the queen's choice, Katherine remained with Lady Rutland; they grew so close that when given a chance to advance to the household of Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, Katherine preferred to remain where she was. Interestingly, she was allowed to have her way, since Lady Rutland was agreeable. As Byrne remarked, "everybody concerned showed the tact, the good sense, and the kindly consideration for the feelings as well as the career of the girl who was the subject of these negotiations, which provide a pleasing illustration of the
In the meantime, gifts from Lady Lisle continued to arrive: more quails, brews, conserves, and heronsewes (V:1427). Gifts were also sent to the Lisles: Lord Rutland sent geldings to his cousin and to Lord and Lady Lisle went "a greyhound . . . whose name is Minikin" and "a fair young hound which is called Hurlle, and a new lyame [leash] and collar; and also for the greyhound, because he sherythe, a chain and lyame" (V:1592). Lady Rutland sent Lady Lisle bedestones, a pair of sleeves, and some spices (IV:907;V:1115,1420). Katherine received gifts from her mistress, only some of which, certainly, were recorded in Husee's letters to her mother but which included damask gowns (V:1136a;VI:1650).

Lady Sussex kept Anne Basset until her installation at court and then again five weeks later at the death of the queen; her gifts to her charge included a kirtle of crimson damask with matching sleeves (IV:895). Lady Lisle and her niece exchanged "tokens" frequently, including the ring fashioned as a wreath of gold referred to above (p. 51). Lord Lisle's gifts to Lord Sussex were considered in the discussion of official relationships, since Sussex was a privy councillor high in the king's favor, but those presents of wine and a hawk may also have been sent with Anne's preferment to the queen's service in mind (II:482; IV:887;V:1125). These gifts were well deserved; Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex were put to some trouble for these
Basset daughters, not only in using their undoubted influence but also in seeing that the girls had the proper apparel and met the proper people. "The trouble they took to launch their young charges into the world of the Court illustrates very forcibly the strength of ties of kinship and friendship, as well as the sense of responsibility felt by their elders for young people."

On a less exalted social level was Thomas St. Aubyn, gentleman, the second husband of Honor Lisle's sister Mary, who looked after the Basset estate of Tehidy during her absence. The gift exchange between St. Aubyn and his sister-in-law spans the entire correspondence and demonstrates Tudor kinship at its best. When her daughter married, Mary St. Aubyn received a gift of venison from the Umberleigh park; when the conies (rabbits) on the St. Aubyn property died out, more were sent from Tehidy as Lady Lisle's gift (I:xxviii;II:277). Some beads sent by Lady Lisle to her sister were "fair and goodly and none such in Cornwall that I know," according to Thomas (I:xxxvi). A heart of gold was sent later, but the messenger was robbed and the pretty piece lost (III:630). St. Aubyn responded to this generosity with gifts of puffins, birds found only in the northernmost seas (I:xxxvi;III:630;V:1095,1125). When Lady Lisle sent a bracelet ("embracelett") to wear, more coneys, gulls, and a ship of wheat (from which, it seems, the whole county took a share), St. Aubyn sent puffins (IV:971;II:271). This is clearly an exchange of intimacy,
motivated by concern and determined by need and preference. It is also a demonstration of the amount of evidence that is missing from even this voluminous correspondence. St. Aubyn's last letter sends thanks to Lady Lisle for "your great rewards and gift ye sent to your nieces my daughters" and goes on to reply to letters requesting that he and Mary visit Calais; none of these letters - or gifts - is preserved (V:1095).

Other relatives who exchanged gifts with the Lisles included Lady Lisle's Grenville connections, among them her elder sister Lady Jane Chaumond and her cousins Thomas Speke and Thomas Leygh, both influential men at court. Leygh was a merchant of the Staple and an agent for the ambassador to Flanders between 1527 and 1534. John Grenville, Honor Lisle's nephew and an employee under both Lord Chancellor Thomas More and his successor Thomas Audley, received no gifts from his aunt and her husband but sent many to the lord deputy, including nightcaps, money, cramp rings, a greyhound called "Spring," and a doublet cloth (V:1104; I:60;II:163,336;V:1116;III;638). Grenville, at least, appears to have been one who felt that Lisle had favors to bestow, and sent more than one request to Calais, as in 1538 when he asked "that ye will send me a warrant [to travel] for a friend of mine whose name is Richard Grove" (V:1130). Arthur Plantagenet's relatives mentioned in regard to gift exchange included Lord Abergavenny, Lord Essex, and Henry
Courtenay, marquess of Exeter, with whom he exchanged, predictably, wine, wildfowl, venison, and hawks (I:72;II:111, 211,279,308,494;IV:1001;V:1112). The Waytes of Wimmering, Lisle's relatives through his mother, received their gifts from Lady Lisle: "a little black brache [dog]," shirt cloths and hose cloths, and twenty shillings (I::xxxvii;II:134).

That Lord and Lady Lislé exchanged gifts with so many of their relatives on such a frequent basis is a good indication of the importance of family in their lives, not simply as a source of influence and service but as a symbol of continuity in troubled times. Although the individual might be transient, the family of which he was a member could be immortal; the importance of that immortality was not lost on English men and women of the 1530s.

A summary of gift exchange between the Lisles and their relatives, including those mentioned above, provides some significant contrasts with presents given to official and to professional contacts (Table 3:4). Relatives outside the immediate family circle received predominately wine and wildfowl from Lisle, as would be expected, but the frequency of personal gifts such as jewelry and clothes is much higher for relatives than for officials or professionals. Again, it is the participation of women that creates the personal, intimate aspect of these exchanges. Lady Lisle kept in touch with her relatives, male and female, not only for the services they could render but out of affection and concern. The exchange of gifts indicates that these feelings were,
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indeed, amply returned.

The gifts between the Lisles and the French families with whom Anne and Mary Basset were placed provide an excellent illustration of the way in which sixteenth-century society was secured with gifts. The same letter from Madame de Riou to Lisle that announced Anne's safe arrival thanked him for the dogs sent to her husband; the Lisles were repaying the favor of Anne's residence with gifts (III:570). The list of offerings from Lord and Lady Lisle to the de Riou household included virginals, fine birds, and numerous dogs (III:570,572,577,581,582). It is significant that all of these gifts were suitable to a gentleman's entertainment. The gold thread and needlecase sent to Madame de Riou by Lady Lisle seem almost ideal examples of the gifts given by one gentlewoman to another (III:591,593).

Mary Basset arrived in the de Bours household in late July or early August. On August 9, 1534, Madame de Bours wrote Lord and Lady Lisle to express her pleasure in Mary's company (although Mary's lack of French was a handicap - neither she nor Anne spoke the language at first) and to thank Lady Lisle for "the cypres and the pins and the sleeves" that had been sent (III:574a). By November Madame had received a lanner (a female falcon) and a greyhound; animals and birds were a popular form in this exchange (III:575,583). Food gifts, including quince marmalade, were frequent as well (III:626). Evidence for the increasing closeness of the de Bours-Lisle relationship appears in the
way in which the circle of givers and receivers expanded
during Mary's stay. Lady Lisle made gifts to Madame de
Bours' daughter, Lady d'Agincourt, and to her son,
Montmorency, whose presents included three greyhounds and a
fine horse (V:1245;III:613,625). Even after Mary left the
de Bours household, gifts were exchanged between the ladies,
including greyhounds, codiniac, and clothes from Lady Lisle
to Madame and a water spaniel to Monsieur (V:1450,1352,1567;
VI:1657). There is no evidence in these letters that Madame
de Bours and Lady Lisle ever met face-to-face; for most of
their friendship it seems that their gifts served to convey
a sense of personal presence.

These gifts given by the Lisles on behalf of their
daughters were returned, of course; a gift demands repay­
ment. Madame de Riou, particularly devout, sent Lady Lisle
"tokens from Vendôme," a religious shrine (III:591). Other
religious gifts came from Lady d'Agincourt, including "a
head of St. John to put in your cabinet" (III:588).
Monsieur de Riou sent hawks to Lord Lisle (III:577,582).
Madame de Bours seems to have had access to an especially
good supply of hunting birds since she sent them frequently.
She was also fond of fruits. On the initiation of Mary's
stay the Lisles received "a confiture of cherries and some
prunes" and later "a little pot of preserves of cherries"
(III:574,583). Another valuable gift from Madame de Bours
to Lady Lisle was "three dozen boxes of glass for keeping of
your confitures"; she promised to send others of a different size if they were needed (V:1173). Mary received a border from Madame de Bours and, most dangerously, sleeves of yellow velvet and another pair of linen with ruffs of gold from her son (III:614;V:1635;VI:p.142-43). These tokens of affection represented a secret engagement which served to fuel the fires of Cromwell's accusations against the lord deputy and, incidentally, provide a clear indication of the consequences of indiscreet giving.

Although consumable gifts are not lacking in these exchanges, personal, chivalric, and religious presents are much more obvious. These gifts between friends were thoughtful, unusual, and intimate, intended to honor and compliment. If they reflect a national bias - greyhounds from England, hawks from France - it is an indication of the donor's desire to send the best available in order to convey sentiments of friendship and goodwill.

One of the most fascinating personalities in the correspondence exemplifies this kind of personalized giving: Anthoinette de Saveuses, cousin to Madame de Riou and a sister in a convent in Normandy. Lady Lisle and Sister Anthoinette became acquainted over the business of nightcaps produced by the convent; Lady Lisle bought the caps and distributed them as presents. The relationship progressed with the giving of gifts and an increasing intimacy in letters. Lady Lisle's gifts to Sister Anthoinette were generally of a practical or helpful nature: frequent sums
of money and, on one occasion, an ell of violet satin for an altar cloth (III:599). Sister Anthoinette, however, was inclined to religious, even magical, gifts: "an image of the Holy Virgin Mother," an "enseigne which touched the head of John Baptist," and part of a unicorn's horn were gifts that seemed to her useful, perhaps even necessary (III:598, 604, 605). To Lord Lisle she sent "a canakin of glass filled with the electuary of life" which was to help him against the rheum (III:579a). Sister Anthoinette's letters are alive with personality and concern for others; these and her unique gift list serve to create the portrait of a memorable sixteenth-century mind.

The circle of Lisle acquaintances on the Continent was large, and a significant number of gifts were presented by people who are frequently unidentifiable but must have been neighbors and friends. The variety of gifts to Lord and Lady Lisle from these miscellaneous acquaintances is as interesting as some of the gifts themselves; a gift of horn and another of rosin "both red and white" are two of the presents for which both definitions and use are obscure (III:596; V:1187). Although not an extensive list, it is generally in the same pattern as gifts exchanged with the de Bours and de Riou households. A fuller record would no doubt increase the evidence without radically changing the general outline of presents given in intimacy and affection.

Similarly, there were men and women in England with
whom Lady Lisle corresponded but whose validity as a group is too tenuous to be considered; their interest as individuals, however, deserves at least some mention. A few have no apparent connections to events in the letters, such as Mr. Manchester, Sir John Russell's chaplain, who received wine from Lady Lisle (V:1392). Others are friends clearly associated with a cause. Augustine Skerne shared a room with John Basset at Lincoln's Inn and received quails in appreciation for his companionship. His wife received a pair of silk and linen sleeves from Lady Lisle (IV:888; II:502). Peter Mewtas and his wife Anne occupied significant posts at court, he in the Privy Chamber, she as a gentlewoman in Anne of Cleeves' service while Anne Basset was maid of honor. Anne spent several months at the Mewtas' home in 1539 while recovering from an illness, and Lady Lisle sent a token and some caps at the beginning of that stay (V:1327a). Gifts to other ladies-in-waiting, presumably sent to express thanks for their help to Anne Basset before and during her preferment, included a partridge pie and "an edge of goldsmith's work" (IV:900; V:1125).

Gifts to Lady Lisle from these chance friends were predominately cramp rings. Sir George Douglas, Sir Christopher Morris and wife, George Wolfet, clerk of the king's closet, and George Taylor, receiver general to Anne Boleyn - all sent cramp rings to Calais (V:1325, 1562; II:168; IV:9623; II:175). Mrs. Horsman, one of the queen's
gentlewomen, sent a cramp ring and another ring; she received a "casket of steel with a flower," one of the less easily visualized gifts in the correspondence (II:299; III:668). Mrs. Denny sent a gold cramp ring and a pair of gloves embroidered with gold in return for a gift of caps from Lady Lisle (V:1382,1372a). A religious book was sent by Mr. Hore, one of Archbishop Cranmer's personal chaplains, and from Dan Nicholas Clement, a monk of the Christchurch Priory at Canterbury came "a beast of God, sometime wild but now tame" (III:743,688). A kilderkin of Cornish congers from the vicar of a church near Umberleigh and a buck from the master of the King's Armoury at Greenwich are typical of these small presents to Lady Lisle of which only brief mention is made (II:116,382).

An examination of gift exchange according to gender demonstrates the attitude of the Tudor upperclass toward men and women in society. The percentage of consumable (and thus more formal) gifts given by men is considerably higher than that for women (Table 3:5a). Men tended to present gifts of venison and wildfowl while women sent less traditional, less conventional foods, including medicines, conserves, and jellies. While the men in this correspondence, in England and on the Continent, gave a significant number of chivalric gifts, the women sent primarily personal gifts to Lisle and to his wife. This contrast indicates the roles ascribed to men and women in the Tudor
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perspective: the public, official sphere to men, the private, personal sphere to women. Even in the intimate realm of jewelry, men tended to maintain a more formal tradition. Cramp rings to Lady Lisle accounted for 44 percent of the personal gifts (and 78 percent of the jewelry) presented by men. In contrast, 72 percent of the jewelry presented by women was composed of personal rings. Cramp rings were, no doubt, less open to misinterpretation than more personal items of jewelry and many of Lady Lisle's masculine friends deemed the less personal gift to be the most suitable.

Gifts given by Lord and Lady Lisle demonstrate the same patterns of formal and intimate giving noted above. If anything, the lord deputy's gift exchange was even more emphatically "official": 65 percent of his gifts were consumable and only 6 percent personal. Of those personal gifts, 25 percent were clothes or cloth given to relatives and 25 percent were pictures sent to very close friends. Lady Lisle's chivalric gifts were similarly meager, but her consumable gifts were proportionately quite frequent, an indication of the extent to which she participated in her husband's official affairs. Most significantly, it was by Lady Lisle that the personal aspects of Lisle gift exchange were initiated. Whatever may have been Lisle's sentiments — and there is ample indication in the letters that he was a man of warmth and affection — gifts of intimacy and concern originating from his household were almost exclusively his
wife's responsibility.

Lady Lisle's participation in giving is seen clearly in a summary of gifts received (Table 3:5b). Although the percentage of consumable gifts received by men in the correspondence is quite high (a reflection of the overwhelming extent to which Lisle gifts were designed to solicit influence at court), there is a not inconsiderable balance of personal and chivalric gifts as well. Comparison with the number of personal gifts sent by Lord Lisle indicates that these gifts were not exclusively from him. There is also a notable increase in chivalric gifts to women, accounted for primarily by gifts of dogs to Madame de Bours. In both instances the new trend can be ascribed to Lady Lisle, since it was she who corresponded with Madame de Bours and she who sent bracelets to English friends, tooth-pickers to Continental friends, and nightcaps to many of her acquaintance.

A list of gifts received by Lord Lisle is very similar in composition to those given by him: largely consumable, secondarily chivalric, and only incidentally personal. His position as an official of the king's government and his status as a gentleman obviously dictated to a great extent the nature of gifts sent to the lord deputy. Lady Lisle, alternately, received a very large proportion of personal presents, from men and from women, as has been discussed. Lord Lisle received personal gifts from some of the men in these letters: cramp rings, a doublet cloth, and
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a nightcap were sent by a relative, John Grenville (Honor Basset's nephew); cramp rings were also sent by John Bernarde, a servant; and Ralph Broke of Calais sent an undescribed bonnet (II:163;III:638;V:1104,1171;I:30). It was Lady Ryngeley, however, who sent a handkerchief, and Sister Anthoinette who sent the "electuary of life" that so uniquely expressed a concern for his personal welfare (II:401;III:579a). The most intimate gift exchanges were, clearly, those which involved women; among Tudor aristocrats only women were far enough removed (in theory, if not, as Lady Lisle demonstrated, in fact) from the taint of official business to express feelings of affection and friendship without ambiguity.

Gift exchange in the Lisle correspondence and, by extension, in Tudor England was a matter of consideration. On a public, primarily masculine, level, consideration was given to appearances and to effectiveness, to making an impression without jeopardizing status or standards. On a personal, largely feminine, level, thought was expended upon the desires and needs of the recipient and the intent of the gift: to convey sentiments of affection, concern, and friendship. The implications of these considerations, for Tudor society and Tudor history, will be discussed in the final chapter.
CHAPTER IV

No comprehensive social history of the medieval or early Tudor upper classes has yet appeared. W.G. Hoskins' *Age of Plunder* is an economic discussion with important social insights on the life of the lower classes; Peter Laslett's *The World We Have Lost* is a landmark essay focused on the late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century village. Lawrence Stone has concentrated on aristocrats in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641*, *Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, and *An Open Elite? England 1540-1880*, but since he tends to generalize all of these folk before 1540 into a single behavioral group, his work presents some problems, which will be addressed presently. R. A. Houlbrooke's overview, *The English Family, 1450-1750*, defines broad trends over a period of several centuries and while admirable and useful, lacks specificity for the early Tudor period. Political history and biography have often been assumed to take care of the history of the English upper classes; in his study of medieval philanthropy, *Purchase of Paradise*, Joel T. Rosenthal has pointed out that "politics was but one part of life and not necessarily the best key to other realms and values." The present examination of gift exchange among the Tudor aristocrats has been directed toward those other realms and values in an
effort to discover the foundation upon which Tudor political and social action was erected.

The present study suggests that the significance of gift exchange in the economy of Tudor England was minimal. Gifts were not used to repay tradesmen and merchants or to fulfill business contracts. Servants and tenants of large households received gifts but were also paid cash wages, the gifts often serving to augment otherwise meager incomes. William Seller, a tenant of the Soberton estate, wrote to Lady Lisle expressing this need: "Madame, we live hardly now, but in Lent, without your good help of herrings or some other fish we shall take more penance for our sins against our will" (I:71). Thomas St. Aubyn solicited this kind of help as well: "Be so good lady to James Tehidy [a tenant] as to give him a new coat, for his old coat is threadbare. He hath made a fair new hall at Hellowe. If ye had seen it ye would like it full well" (II:277). It was the responsibility of the lord and his lady to take care of tenants and relatives by providing the necessities, including "the most part of what he wears" to a young kinsman in their service (II:269). Gifts of clothes and food to these dependents and servants were requisite acts of good lordship, demonstrations of responsibility that were an integral aspect of life for the Tudor aristocracy.

Gifts given in return for services rendered were reserved primarily to those of equal social status and then served less as payment than as tokens of appreciation and
esteem. Gifts to lawyers and other men in positions of
discretion did not pay for services rendered but, rather,
were intended to enhance the recipient's prestige, thus
creating a favorable environment for further cooperative
efforts. Favors by kin and friends were repaid with other
favors; gifts in these cases kept the relationship close
enough that each member could feel free to call on the
other. Lady Ryngeley's letter to Lady Lisle is but one of
the hundreds of expressions of this sentiment:

Moreover, madam, I heartily pray you that if
I may do your ladyship any service on this
side of the sea, that you, my good lady will
and command me as your own servant, and I
trust you shall never find in me to the
contrary (II:436).

The significance of gift exchanges in service relationships
lay in the bond created between individuals, not in the
economic aspects of the transaction.

Although this study of gift exchange does not
directly contribute to a further understanding of English
economic development, there is indirect evidence available.
Lawrence Stone has dealt with some aspects of the economic
issue in An Open Elite? England 1540–1880, in which he
examines the penetration of merchants and businessmen into
the ranks of the landed elite. His conclusion that there
was, in fact, very little lasting infusion of business blood
into the aristocratic stream leads him to discard this model
as an explanation for England's domination of the Industrial
Revolution and British imperial superiority. Instead Stone
focuses on the unique characteristics of the English aristocracy, citing the absence of legal distinctions between aristocrats and commoners, the paternalistic attitude of the landed elite toward their dependants and social inferiors, and especially the frequent associations of men of rank with professionals and wealthy merchants as factors that, when coupled with a sense of political responsibility, resulted in a broader perspective on the part of the upper class and thus created an environment in which British hegemony could develop. An examination of gift exchange in the Lisle correspondence supports these persuasive arguments but also demonstrates the extent to which the trends Stone perceives in eighteenth-century England were in evidence before 1540. Presents from Lord and Lady Lisle to their dependents and inferiors exhibit the paternal attitude that was, for Tudor aristocrats, considered simply a matter of responsible lordship. Gifts to lawyers, merchants, and business acquaintances indicate the degree of intercourse between men of rank and those still up and coming that Stone considered particularly crucial in the development of British imperial power and mercantile supremacy. Most significantly, the universal acceptability of all types of gifts, regardless of the rank of donor and recipient, confirms Stone's assessment of English society as one characterized by a "homogeneity of cultural values and behaviour among the landed classes, the wealthier merchant and banking patriciates, and the
gentrified 'middling sort'." It is this cultural unity of English society, accompanied as it was by a remarkable absence of legal class distinctions, that Stone sees as the primary difference between England and her Continental contemporaries. Stone is speaking of eighteenth-century England; it is obvious from the Lisle gift exchange that the salient characteristics of the landed elite had developed long before 1540.

Another fruitful aspect of this study is the insight gained on the significant social and political changes that occurred during the early Tudor period. When contrasted on the one hand with medieval feudalism, where a lord was responsible for the maintenance of his knights, first in his household and later on a monetary basis, and on the other hand with the Jacobean practices of clientage that so insidiously pervaded court society and English political life, the Lisle household seems to have remained curiously independant. This ambiguous position was the result of deliberate attempts by Henry VII and Henry VIII to "rid the country of the overmighty subject whose military potential came not far short of that of the monarchy itself."

Although the Lisle establishment was characterized by an extended household with large numbers of personal attendants and demonstrated attitudes of personal loyalty and management that were typically medieval, Lord Lisle's constant pecuniary difficulties heralded the demise of such elaborate arrangements. At the same time, there is little
evidence to indicate the extensive network of clientage so evident in Elizabethan and Stuart politics. There is no indication that Lisle relied on anyone except the king (and the king's right hand, Thomas Cromwell) for favors, offices, and gifts. He sent gifts to those men he felt could be of service to him, and some of these relationships were long-standing, but nowhere is there a sense of an established group looking to Lisle for patronage. He could, and did, intervene on behalf of his servants, servitors, and friends, but the occasions were rare, especially in the 1530s.

Between the baronial warrior and the aristocratic bureaucrat lay a desert of insecurity and insolvency in which Lisle and many of his contemporaries found themselves.

The difficulties besetting sixteenth- and seventeenth-century aristocrats are elegantly documented and discussed by Lawrence Stone in *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1588-1640*. A decline in the traditional aristocratic military functions; the increasing emphasis on court and monarch as the center of the realm; the new religion and the new bureaucracy, shifting the emphasis of government from noble to gentleman; and, above all, societal pressure for a ruinous level of personal expenditure were factors that, according to Stone, served to destabilize entire families. The evidence of the Lisle correspondence suggests, however, that these forces were at work much earlier than 1588, that they were, in fact, present in 1530,
if not before. The change in attitudes represented by Lord Lisle and Thomas Cromwell, a contrast between gifts in kind intended to solicit influence without jeopardizing honor and gifts of cash intended simply to influence, presages the changes in practice presented by Stone. It is also indicative that the word "gift" meant, at least to Lisle in the 1530s, a present in kind; by the end of the century, in political context, a gift was considered money or, possibly, land. Other signals that Stone has used to demonstrate the radical changes affecting late sixteenth-century society, including the multiplication of lawyers and their services and a new level of what could be called Machiavellian political practices, were demonstrably present in the 1530s. A recognition of the critical nature of that decade is not new but is certainly reinforced, from a slightly different perspective, by an examination of gift exchange.

The most profitable aspect of this study is the portrait provided of Tudor emotional ties. The Lisle correspondence presents innumerable examples of affection between family members and between friends. It is on this topic that issue must be taken with Lawrence Stone's conclusions:

All that can be said with confidence on the matter of emotional relations within the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century family at all social levels is that there was a general psychological atmosphere of distance, manipulation, and deference; that high mortality rates made deep relationships very imprudent; that marriages were arranged by parents and kin for economic and social reasons with minimal consultation of the children; that evidence of close bonding
between parents and children is hard, but not impossible to document; and that evidence of close affection between husband and wife is both ambiguous and rare.7 Gift exchange among the children and parents of the Lisle family contradicts these assertions. Lady Lisle's gifts to her sons and daughters do not indicate an attitude of distance and manipulation, and gifts from the Lisle children to their parents are far more representative of affection than of deference. The marriage of Arthur Plantagenet and Honor Basset was most probably one of convenience and had been arranged, if not by their parents, at least with the proximity of their various properties in mind, but there is little doubt of the sincere affection between them, as evidenced by the few letters and presents they exchanged in 1538 and 1539. The Lisle family is representative of many - if not most - Tudor aristocratic households, and there is much evidence in these letters and their gifts to indicate a warmer, more affectionate portrait of parents and children in the sixteenth century than Stone is willing to allow.

Further review of the evidence supports this conclusion. The Lisle gift exchange with relatives outside the immediate family circle demonstrates the intimacy of even extended family ties. Lord and Lady Lisle received frequent letters and exchanged numerous gifts with a variety of relatives left behind in England. Those relatives were ready to oblige the lord deputy or his wife in favors large
and small. Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex looked after Katherine and Anne Basset as their own daughters; Thomas St. Aubyn looked after Tehidy as his own property. Gift exchange functioned in these relationships as a reinforcement of already existing bonds between cousins, aunts, uncles, brothers, and sisters. Rosenthal concluded from his study of medieval wills that "family feelings were strongly vertical, i.e. directly up and down the lineage from generation to generation. They were rarely focused in a horizontal fashion, i.e. on the relatives within the grantor's own generation." This conclusion is not borne out by an examination of Tudor gift-giving. Inheritance was a matter of property, not affection; a man's emotional ties while alive cannot be adequately represented by his bequests, especially in a patriarchal society concerned with the perpetuation of the name, the line, and the family. There is evidence in the Lisles' gifts both from and to their relatives that family associations could be as affectionate in Henrician England as in the twentieth century. That they could also be unpleasant cannot be denied, but should not be assumed to be the norm.

If Stone is distrustful of kinship relationships, he is totally unbelieving of friendships outside the family. Prefacing his discussion with the qualification that it is "most hazardous" and "highly impressionistic," he continues:

Such personal correspondence and diaries as survive suggest that social relations from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries
tended to be cool, even unfriendly . . . at all levels men and women were extremely short-tempered . . . . England between 1500 and 1661 was relatively cold, suspicious, and violence-prone.\textsuperscript{10}

There is no room in Stone's discussion for John Husee, attending day after day to the business of his employers, waiting on Cromwell and Riche again and again, foregoing his own pay "at least till I see better store of money" (V:1409). Sir Bryan Tuke forestalling the king's debt year after year, Sister Anthoinette and her elixirs, the great admiral of France and his gifts of monkeys, and, above all, Lady Lisle with her abundant presents of medicines, clothes, food, and, through them, attention; all of these and hundreds of other examples dispute Stone's assessment of Tudor society. The evidence of gift-giving between the Lisles and their friends and acquaintances on both sides of the Channel provides ample proof of affection and concern that are totally dissociated from economic interest and political expediency.

There was distrust and enmity in Tudor relationships, as in twentieth-century society; the king himself was one of the least reliable men at court, as both Lisle and Cromwell discovered. Even old friends like Fitzwilliam and Kingston were not above capitalizing on the misfortune of a colleague. The political arena was a dangerous place where safety depended upon being in the right place with access to the right ear, where those not able to defend themselves against the ambitions of powerful manipulators - as Lisle
was not - could be easily hurt. This is the Tudor England described by Stone, an England contrasting sharply and, apparently, irreconcilably with that of The Lisle Letters.

From this examination of gift exchange, the difference between the two perspectives appears to be primarily one of gender. Tudor England was a society in which men and women occupied very different spheres of action. In the public sphere men were, indeed, on their guard, against others and against appearing suspicious themselves. Their gifts to each other, with occasional exceptions, indicate an awareness of scrutiny and a desire to achieve their goals with discretion. This is not to say that Tudor men were incapable of affection and friendship; quite the reverse is demonstrated by this correspondence. The code of behavior for Tudor aristocratic society, however, dictated a degree of caution in personal relationships between men in the public eye that has made overt affection extremely difficult to document. In a world in which men were expected to live up to a certain code of honor, appearances were all-important. "One of the most characteristic features of the age," according to Stone, "was its hyper-sensitive insistence upon the overriding importance of reputation."

Friendship could too easily be mistaken for collusion; the possibility of collusion, as Sir Henry Norris discovered in 1536, could be deadly. It is not surprising, therefore, that direct evidence of affection between highly placed
gentlemen at the Tudor court is rare.

In the personal sphere of Tudor society, less confined by considerations of honor, women were able to convey sentiment and affection to other women and to men as well, and to receive affectionate gifts from men and women in return. Although Thomas More had experimented with education (with its implications of wider horizons) for his daughters, the sixteenth-century perception of a woman's responsibilities was solidly domestic. Even when involved in matters outside the home, dealing with attorneys, merchants, or with highly placed officials such as Cromwell, the focus of their business was on a personal, individual level far removed from what might be called the good of the commonwealth. The result of this greater emphasis on individual concerns was a freedom to express emotion more openly, to enjoy social relationships for their intrinsic worth and not their ultimate appearance. The value of a gift in this personal sphere was its meaning; the value of a public gift was its result.

The segregation of women into the purely personal sphere of life does not, of course, deny their effectiveness in the public arena; the theory of Tudor practice did not always correspond to the performance. Lady Lisle's reputation for assertiveness, even troublemaking, may have arisen from her tendency to participate in the domain of men: specifically, to interfere in the governing of Calais. A culture that placed such emphasis on order and
degree as did sixteenth-century society in general, and one that, moreover, found itself assailed by forces seeking to thwart the established institutions (as Martin Luther and John Calvin, among others, were doing on the Continent), expected each individual to maintain his assigned place. To step outside that place, as did Lady Lisle on more than one occasion, was to invite criticism, if nothing more dangerous.

This appreciation of Tudor social perspective can be applied to other women in the sixteenth century, with interesting results. The success of Elizabeth Tudor as monarch may be explained, in part, by the dichotomy in Tudor social perspective. Elizabeth effectively combined in a single person the public and the personal spheres of action. Her refusal to marry was perceived by contemporaries as a headstrong attempt to retain sole authority in the kingdom. At the same time, it may have been that refusal which allowed Elizabeth to participate in the male world of government while retaining an aura of, and a reputation for, femininity. Elizabeth wisely, if not intentionally, removed herself from the female, married sphere of life, thus acquiring a much greater latitude of action. It is notable that Mary Tudor and Mary Stewart, each succeeding to her throne with an auspicious reception from her subjects, failed to consolidate that support; both women tended to neglect the public, formal aspect of their position as
monarch for personal concerns, with disastrous results.

The sixteenth-century perception of gender as it affected public image and public duty is only one aspect of the correlation between Tudor perspective and Tudor practice that may be revealed through further study. The minute observation of social behavior on which this examination is based is not, by any means, innovative. Natalie Z. Davis has been particularly effective in similar studies of sixteenth-century French society; Rosenthal's work on medieval philanthropy, cited above, is a praiseworthy beginning for medieval England. Grant McCracken has employed the concept of exchange to great effect in his study "The Exchange of Children in Tudor England: An Anthropological Phenomenon in Historical Context." The investigation of gift exchange in The Lisle Letters is only another demonstration of how fruitful this technique can be, not only for English history but for society in general.

This examination of gift exchange among Tudor aristocrats has demonstrated the multi-faceted nature of that overtly simple practice. The wide variety of presents mentioned in the Lisle correspondence indicates an inventiveness in giving that does credit to Tudor imaginations but also reveals the homogeneous nature of a society in which even the humblest of gifts can be offered with enthusiasm. A basic mechanism of sixteenth-century social relationships is evidenced by the universality of an exchange that was not confined to special occasions but
continued throughout the year, drawing together those separated by social as well as geographical distances.

The practical aspects of life in an aristocratic Tudor household and the practical aspects of political success and failure at the Henrician court are cogently demonstrated, as Byrne intended, by The Lisle Letters, especially by the evidence of gift-giving therein. Lord Lisle, aided by his wife, pursued the same goals as most of his peers: financial security, an augmented estate to leave to his heir, and success for his numerous offspring. Gifts were of significant value in achieving these aspirations and were distributed by the Lisles - and their cohorts - accordingly. Political expediency and familial aggrandizement, the pursuit of power, prestige, and profit, were socially appropriate goals among aristocrats of the sixteenth century. Gift-giving was, in this context, a quite effective means to a very important end.

Above all, however, the Lisle correspondence provides evidence that political machinations and hereditary concerns were not the primary motivations in Tudor social relationships. Genuine affection and solicitous interest were the emotions most frequently demonstrated by gift exchange between the Lisles and their acquaintance. Both Lisle and his wife maintained close, non-manipulative associations through the giving of gifts, and if Lord Lisle was less frequently involved in this unrestricted giving, it
was because of societal pressure, not necessarily personal inclination. The assumption that Tudor England was an unfriendly, even callous, society cannot be supported by a brief examination of daily life as portrayed in the Lisle letters. Rather, the gifts exchanged by Lord and Lady Lisle reveal a humaneness - a sense of concern and involvement between the members of society - that provides an attractive portrait of the Tudor world and, indeed, creates a bond between the sixteenth century and the present.
APPENDIX

Consumable Gifts: any type of food; any medicines.

Chivalric Gifts: any type of dog; any type of horse; any type of hawk or falcon; any weapon; any piece of equipment designed for use with the above, such as saddles, spurs, or horseshoes.

Personal Gifts: any type of clothing or cloth; any type of jewelry; religious emblems; pictures; toothpicker; unspecified tokens.

The total of consumable, chivalric, and personal gifts does not usually comprise the total gifts given or received because it does not include the following items:

- money
- books
- cups and containers
- advowsons
- furniture
- land
- flowers
- wood
- knives
- a cook
- horn
- rosin
- mersivin
NOTES FOR INTRODUCTION


3. Ibid., p. 1.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER I


3. Ibid., p. 80.


7. Ibid., p. 35.


9. Mauss, p. 11.
10. Bourdieu, pp. 5-6 and p. 194. See also Firth, p. 376-79.

11. Mauss, p. 79.


17. Lawrence Stone has an interesting explanation of this phenomenon in An Open Elite? England 1540-1880 (abr. ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) in which he attributes England's domination of the Industrial Revolution and British imperial superiority to the nature of the English aristocracy itself. The centuries preceding 1540 deserve an equally intense examination, involving a similar study of aristocratic ideas and attitudes, and directed toward the actual development of a market economy; an investigation of gift exchange would be highly pertinent to such a project.

Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, Honor Grenville Basset Lisle and her relatives, and John Husee.

19. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 123.

20. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 3.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER II


4. Harrison, p. 130.


7. Ibid., p. 130.


15. Lawrence Stone, in *Crisis of the Aristocracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), maintains that the "normal household diet thus consisted basically of huge quantities
of meat and bread washed down in oceans of beer and wine. Vegetables were rare in the sixteenth century, and only in the years before the Civil War did imported Mediterranean fruits and the produce of English vegetable gardens begin to lighten this unwholesome fare" (p. 559). The evidence from the Lisle correspondence clearly disputes this conclusion.


18. Ibid., p. 354

19. Cosman, p. 41

20. Harrison, p. 129.

21. Ibid., p. 127.


23. Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 180-81: "The mere exhibition of the material and symbolic strength represented by prestigious affines is likely to be in itself a source of material profit . . . it is easy to see why great families never miss a chance . . . to organize exhibitions of symbolic capital (in which conspicuous consumption is only the most visible aspect) . . . the exhibition of symbolic capital (which is always very expensive in economic terms) is one of the mechanisms which (no doubt universally) make capital go to capital."


27. Harrison, p. 341.

28. Ibid., p. 331.


32. Yarwood, p. 115.


34. Ibid., p. 85.


38. John Husee wrote to Lord Lisle with a warning that "divers have told me that my lady is very superstitious" (II:260). See also Byrne, vol. 4, pp. 158, 375-76, and vol. 6, pp. 69-70.


41. Mauss, pp. 6-7.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER III


2. "This is one of the greatest inconveniences of the land that the number of lawyers is so great . . . there being no province, city, town, or scarce village free of them, unless the isle of Anglesey, which boast they never had lawyers nor foxes." Thomas Wilson, *The State of England Anno Dom. 1600*, Camden Miscellany, vol. XVI, Royal Historical Society Publications 52, no. 1 (1936), p. 25.


4. Harrison, p. 94.


8. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 192.

9. The biographical details and assessment of position and influence at court are Byrne's: "First in point of influence at Court, however, were not these royal and aristocratic relatives [of the Lisles] but the group composed of the King's intimates and his ministers. The most prominent, in 1533, were Sir Francis Bryan and Henry Norris, Sir William Fitzwilliam, Sir John Russell, and dominating them all, Thomas Cromwell. As useful auxiliaries among the more favored permanent officials were Sir Bryan Tuke and Sir William Kingston, and among those already pushing their way to the front were Lisle's stepson, John Dudley, afterwards duke of Northumberland, and Edward Seymour, afterwards the Protector Somerset" (vol. 1, p. 52). For Byrne's assessment of the Privy Chamber and Privy Council, see vol. 1, pp. 264-65. See also her background sketches on the individuals.
throughout the work.


11. Pierre Bourdieu, in Outline of a Theory of Practice (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), defines "symbolic violence" as "the gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognized as such, and is not so much undergone as chosen, the violence of credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, gratitude, piety - in short, all the virtues honoured by the code of honour" (p. 192).


13. According to Byrne, in 1523 Lisle's debt to the Crown was £466. 13s. 4d. "In 1539 debts ten and sixteen years old were still outstanding. One of them was finally cancelled in 1613, seventy years after his death" (vol. 1, p. 22). The last reference in November of 1539 (V:1590) indicates that Lisle was still temporizing.


17. This point is well established by W.T. MacCaffrey in "England: The Crown and the New Aristocracy, 1540-1600," Past and Present 30 (April 1965), pp. 52-64.


20. See Byrne, vol. I, pp. 312-13; vol. 2, p. 26; vol. 4, p. 10, and especially pp. 60-63. For a concise explanation of
the conflicts between Lisle, Seymour, and Daubenay, see Michael L. Bush, "The Lisle-Seymour Land Disputes: A Study of Power and Influence in the 1530s," Historical Journal 9, no. 3 (1966), pp. 255-75. Bush notes in his discussion Lisle's use of gifts to secure favorable influence at court (pp. 258-61).


22. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 494-95.

23. Ibid., vol. 5, no. 1272 and comments; the bill of sale for Painswicke can be found in vol. 6, pp. 188-89.

24. Judging from these letters, Lady Lisle was at least as adept in the political arena as her husband, if not more so. For a general description of her personality, see Byrne, vol. 1, pp. 26-37, and also vol. 5, p. 290.

25. See Gladys Thompson's Life in a Noble Household on the recycling of New Year's gifts from the monarch. Byrne, too, notes this trend; see Lisle Letters, vol. 2, p. 373.


27. The training and education of women in sixteenth-century England has been thoughtfully addressed by Retha M. Warnicke in Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983). For her assessment of the role of the wife in the organization of Tudor households see pp. 6-7.


29. Cromwell's charges against Lisle were of a religious nature; the secret engagement of Mary Basset and a Roman Catholic Frenchman only added fuel to the fire. See Byrne, vol. 1, pp. 433-34, and esp. vol. 6, pp. 138-161.

30. Warnicke mentions Honor Lisle and her daughters Anne and Katherine as illustrative of the preparation considered most useful to aristocratic women during the reign of Henry VIII (pp. 91-92) and although her contention that Lady Lisle had her girls taught to read and to write French and English must be questioned - of the two, only Anne spent time with a French family learning to speak the language and later confessed that she could not write English at all (V:1126) - the function of court as an opportunity for good marriages is indisputable. The change under Elizabeth I was due to her refusal to allow her maids of honor to marry, which may
have been as much to preserve the eligible men at her court as the young women.

31. According to Lawrence Stone in The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1550-1800, abr. ed. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979): "Younger sons, and particularly daughters, were often unwanted and might be regarded as no more than a tiresome drain on the economic resources of the family" (p.87). Stone's assessment of Tudor emotive ties in The Family, Sex, and Marriage and The Crisis of the Aristocracy will be discussed in chapter 4.

32. Both Warnicke and Stone attest to the prevalence of arranged marriages, although Warnicke finds that "the custom of arranged marriages did not preclude the development of strong personal attachments between spouses" (p. 12). Stone, on the other hand, maintains that "family relationships were characterized by interchangeability, so that substitution of another wife or another child was easy" (Family, Sex, and Marriage, p. 88). The Lisle evidence, as will be discussed in chapter 4, clearly resides with the former opinion.


35. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 114.

36. According to V.G. Kiernan: "An estate destined to belong perpetually to a man's descendants was a way of circumventing fate, or blunting consciousness of it," a way of avoiding the inevitability of death. "Private Property in History," in Family and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200-1800, ed. Jack Goody, Joan Thirsk, and E.P. Thompson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 377. Kiernan, however, discounts the importance of family members as individuals: "The family had to be reduced from a clan to an abstraction - a name, a title, a coat of arms." The Lisle letters dispute this conclusion.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV


4. For the patronage practices of Elizabethan and Jacobean England and a description of English humanism, see the works cited above in chapter 1 (notes 13, 14, and 15) and chapter 3 (note 18).


12. According to Byrne, "[Lady Lisle] could never have helped running things. Cromwell and others might hint at the danger of feminine interference in matters of state; but . . . [the] formal address of 'My Lady Deputy', which was most unusual for the Tudor period, was in her case no mere formula" (v. 1, p. 31). See also vol. 2, no. 260a, p. 276, and especially no. 268; vol. 3, p. 404, no. 721 (a letter in which Lady Lisle authorizes William Popley to send one of his men over to fill the first available vacancy in the Calais garrison), and p. 606; vol. 4, p. 375-76; vol. 5, no. 1551 (a direct example of Lady Lisle advising her husband on the bestowal of positions in the garrison).


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