

EDMUND PECKHAM: BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CATHOLIC, TUDOR CIVIL SERVANT, ROYAL COFFERER, AND MASTER OF THE MINTS

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Sir Edmund Peckham (c1495-1564) of Denham, Buckinghamshire, spent almost the whole of his adult life in the service of the crown, working in the field of government finance. His career demonstrates how a servant of the state could hold senior office under the crown through four reigns, each of which saw political upheaval and major religious change. Peckham was always a Catholic, or at least a religious conservative. That did not outweigh his commitment to serving the crown, even in the reign of Edward VI, whose reformist policies influenced every aspect of life secular and religious. Peckham bent with the changing political and religious winds as far as was necessary. Nor did religious conservatism stop him entering the property market to purchase former monastic lands when opportunity offered. In that respect he was no different from many conservative peers, among them his friend Thomas Wriothesley.¹ He used his acquisitions in High Wycombe to set up what became the Royal Grammar School. Throughout all the religious and political upheavals of this restless age, Peckham continued to serve his country, and himself, ultimately reaching the highest level of financial management.² This article explores the values and ideas that shaped his career, and the factors that enabled him to hold on to high office for so long.

Edmund Peckham lived through one of the most turbulent periods of English history. Religion played a dominant part in the lives of the whole community, and the cataclysmic changes through the reigns of the four sovereigns impacted on the lives of all. The break with Rome, the evangelism of Edward, the search for heretics under Mary, and Elizabeth's new Protestant settlement brought a succession of religious upheavals.

Prior to the 1534 Act of Supremacy, the Pope was the acknowledged Head of the Catholic Church in England. The Act that made Henry VIII Head of the Church in England rejected papal authority and required everyone over the age of fourteen to take an oath accepting the validity of Anne Boleyn's marriage to Henry. Refusal became treason. Further Acts authorised the dissolution of the monasteries.³ Catholics now had to decide whether to recognise Henry or the Pope as the arbiter on all matters religious. Most did what was demanded, however reluctantly, unsure how far Henry's breach would go and whether it would prove permanent. When the opportunity came to purchase former monastic

lands, there was no shortage of buyers.

Edmund Peckham was born in Buckinghamshire around 1495, the son of Peter Peckham of London by his second wife, Elizabeth. Of his education we know nothing. In the course of his long career he acquired considerable property in Buckinghamshire, including Denham, where he died and was buried. His monument still survives in the church.⁴ Peckham (whose name is spelt very variously⁵) served four monarchs and enjoyed the trust of them all. His life and career remind us that even in the turbulent Tudor period, devotion to the crown, reliability, expertise, tireless attention to duty and the avoidance of faction created a foundation on which family and fortune could be built. Patronage was also crucial.⁶ Family connections were usually important in forging a career in royal service. Peckham's marriage by 1516 to Ann, one of the daughters of John Cheyne of Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire, linked him to the influential family of Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester from 1531 to 1555,⁷ and may have provided the patronage that launched him into the service of the Crown.⁸ His marriage probably also

connected him to Sir Thomas Cheyne, Treasurer of the Household under Edward VI, who held many offices under Henry VIII and sat in Commons on ten occasions between 1529 and 1558.⁹

Whatever the process, Peckham entered the service of Henry VIII as a clerk in the counting house.¹⁰ There he would have been introduced to the handling and management of the privy funds that became his principal concern in his first years of employment. No records show precisely when his service began, but we know that he accompanied the king to Gravelines in July 1520, when Henry met Charles V to plan joint action against France. In May 1523, Peckham was appointed interim treasurer of the privy chamber, serving until January 1524. He had time to assess the revenues available, and complained to Cardinal Wolsey that they were inadequate for the crown's needs.¹¹ He was appointed to the office of cofferer in January 1524, a post that he was to hold until his death.¹² His duties were to receive the moneys required to pay the costs of the household and other royal expenses. Later he was to become head of a sizeable management structure that also controlled the mints and their operations.¹³ The office of treasurer, his first of real importance, had put him in close daily contact with members of the royal household and others involved in the management of affairs of state. His appointment in 1526 as Clerk of the Green Cloth brought additional responsibility in the administration of the household expenses.¹⁴ Under the lord great master, the treasurer of the household and the clerks of the green-cloth would attend a daily meeting 'to sitt and have brought before them all the Bookes of briefments ... for the day before passed' to consider details of expenditure.¹⁵

The state papers record dozens of warrants each year authorising payments large and small remitted by the Privy Council to Peckham, throughout his time in office. Countless other duties required him to audit accounts,¹⁶ collect money due under the clerical subsidy of 1524,¹⁷ make payments for services rendered to persons named by the Privy Council,¹⁸ attend state occasions,¹⁹ provide money for the outfitting of sailors,²⁰ and for the payment of garrisons in France, troops in the north of England and on the south coast, and provide the means to prosecute the French war.²¹ Peckham handled and was responsible for huge sums of money raised and disbursed for this war.²² Between 1522 and

1524 the war required the payment of expenses amounting to £130,792, all of which came from Peckham's treasury. Extraordinary income for the period 1522–1527 totalled £549,368, of which £211,596 comprised loans from the laity, most of it paid over to Peckham. Total expenditure on war between 1539 and 1552 amounted to the huge sum of £3,501,453. Peckham was at the heart of the machinery collecting and disbursing these funds, and built up significant expertise, experience, and trust.²³

In 1525, Peckham was made a justice of the peace for Buckinghamshire, his home county, an appointment that was renewed annually until 1543. He also served as a justice of the peace for Middlesex in 1537–43, and between 1528 and 1537 he was constable of Scarborough Castle. Rewards also followed; in 1536 he was granted the leases of manors of Alford, Eccles, Alderley and the stewardship of Londondale, all in Cheshire and forfeited that year by William Brereton.²⁴ Buckinghamshire remained his main sphere of interest and influence. In November 1540, Thomas Wriothesley sold the former Cistercian Biddlesden Abbey (dissolved in 1538) to Peckham, and in the same year Henry VIII granted him Denham Manor, further evidence of his standing in the royal service.²⁵ Peckham's religious conservatism proved no obstacle to his acquisition of former monastic lands.

In May 1530 Thomas Wriothesley, ten years younger than Peckham, had married Jane, another daughter of John Cheyne. This strengthened the ties between the two men.²⁶ In the early days of his royal service, Wriothesley was identified as Peckham's 'servant', a relationship that changed radically as his status at court rose with his appointment as Cromwell's secretary.²⁷ Wriothesley was a staunch Catholic throughout his life, and this may have further strengthened his bond with Peckham. In February 1534 he wrote to Cromwell, 'I beseeche your lordship to returne your goodnesse to maister coffere and to thank hym for me...how moche I have been bound in tymes past and by his letters enclosed you may see his kindnesse'.²⁸ The relationship became still more significant when Wriothesley was appointed secretary by Henry VIII, after Cromwell's fall and execution, and he was made Lord Chancellor four years later.²⁹ Wriothesley was no longer 'the servant'. But though he had overtaken Peckham both in wealth and status, they frequently continued to act in concert.

Throughout his years in royal service, Peckham would have been very aware of the tensions in the royal household arising out of the breach with Rome and Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. The Oath of Succession 'was put to everyone in authority', which would have included Peckham. He had to weigh religious unease against his duty to his king, his office, and his large family, and concern for his neck.³⁰ Bishop John Fisher and Thomas More, who refused to take the oath, were both executed after 'show trials'.³¹ On 16 April 1534 'the citizens of London were summoned to take the Succession Oath and none openly demurred'.³² Most of the population acquiesced in the removal of papal authority,³³ and within a decade 'even the most militant of religious traditionalists would appear to have accepted the royal supremacy'.³⁴ Given his office near the centre of the government's financial operations Peckham could not have avoided taking the oath. Under both Henry and Edward, he let himself be carried along by the tide, like most religious conservatives.

In 1536, rebellion broke out in the eastern and northern counties, provoked by hatred of Cromwell and his policies, the Act of Succession and the oath of Supremacy. The Pilgrimage of Grace defended the monasteries, demanded the dismissal of councillors of 'low birth and small reputation', such as Cromwell, and asserted the pope's spiritual headship.³⁵ There were many who 'grudged very sore that the King's grace should be their supreme head and the bishop of Rome put down'.³⁶ But if Peckham felt any sympathy for the pilgrims' complaints, he kept it to himself. Loyalty to the crown came first.

On Ascension Day in 1542, Peckham was knighted.³⁷ He was now 47 years old and had been in royal service for twenty-two years or more, heavily involved in managing the royal finances. From 1540, new sources of revenue were provided to Peckham as cofferer,³⁸ and about that time 'it was ordred that all gentilmen and other attendant vpon the kings maieste in his prevy-chambre sholde... receyve & take their wagis at the handis of master Edmund Pekham first master and cofferer of the kingis most honorable householde'.³⁹ His growing importance is apparent. As Master of the Household he no doubt worked closely with Anthony Denny, from 1542 keeper of the privy purse. Denny was a follower of the reformed faith, but there is no evidence of friction between them.⁴⁰

In May 1544 Peckham was made 'treasurer of the exchange, coinage and mint within the Tower of London and high treasurer of all the king's mints', responsible for the manufacture of coin and for the provision of funds for the state's financial needs. He held this post until his death.⁴¹ His enlarged staff included a surveyor of the coinage, surveyors of the exchange, tellers, and auditors.⁴² He now also supervised those in charge of the several mints, and soon found evidence of corruption; it emerged that: two senior officials, William Sharington and Martin Bowes, had both falsified records.⁴³

In Henry VIII's last years, the sale of church lands, compositions with the crown and the Benevolence of 1545 were producing less than had been anticipated, and the interest on loans negotiated in Antwerp proved prohibitively expensive. It was clear that a radical new solution had to be found to the king's financial problems.⁴⁴ Debasement of the coinage was adopted as the answer.⁴⁵ This was one of the key financial expedients of the last years of Henry VIII's reign and that of Edward, to increase the funds available to the crown. Debasement involved the adulteration of the coinage by minting coins 'in which the purity and weight of those coins were seriously reduced for fiscal ends'.⁴⁶ By arbitrarily raising the value of gold and silver, Henry was able to coin at great profit to himself the huge quantities of plate held in his jewel house, and by reducing the proportion of gold and silver in new coins he could increase the quantity of coin produced at no extra cost. The debasement of the coinage financed Henry's last war against the French, and from 1544 the mint produced more money than had the sale of monastic lands.⁴⁷ Between 1544 and 1546, new mints were opened in Durham, York and Bristol with another at the Tower, all to expand production of coin. This process led Wriothesley to describe the mint as the country's 'holy ancre [anchor] holding fast the ship of state when all else failed'.⁴⁸ It was Peckham who held overall responsibility for the personnel and running the mints during this period of frantic production.

Henry VIII's will, signed only a few days before his death on 28 January 1547, appointed Peckham treasurer to the executors, and an assistant executor. He was also given a legacy of £200, though like the other executors he had to wait a considerable time to receive it.⁴⁹ These appointments brought him into close contact with influential

members of Henry's court, who formed the core of the new privy council of the nine-year-old king, Edward VI.⁵⁰ Edward's accession in no way diminished Peckham's status or responsibilities. Edward's Council was quick to despatch to the Tower a number of prominent conservatives seen as a threat to Somerset's Protectorate, but Peckham was clearly viewed as an indispensable civil servant. In March, soon after Edward's accession, he was reappointed high treasurer of the mint, with overall responsibility for the several mints operating around the country.⁵¹ The treasury had been much denuded by the cost of the war with France in Henry's last years, and throughout Edward's reign Peckham faced similar problems.⁵² Alongside Sadler, Mildmay and Sharington,⁵³ Peckham was directed to carry out a complete audit of the records of John Browne, keeper of the coinage at the Tower, a task that had been overlooked for several years.⁵⁴

The new Protector, Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset, was strongly committed to the Protestant faith, and though Peckham's religious views differed from the rapidly developing evangelicalism of the majority of the council, this was evidently no obstacle to his continued employment.⁵⁵ Religious conservatives like Stephen Gardiner and Edmund Bonner were seen as potential threats, but Peckham's expertise and reliability made him indispensable to the new regime, and he was willing to serve it. He sought to avoid involvement in the growing friction between Somerset and John Dudley, who was soon to overthrow him. A letter to Sir Thomas Smith in June 1549, on the council's financial problems, indicated where Peckham's primary concerns lay. He was struggling to meet a host of demands, working into the night while too ill with fever and the stone to be able to venture outside.⁵⁶

Peckham could not remain wholly detached, however, from the political crisis facing the new regime. When the Prayer Book Rebellion broke out in 1549 in the south-west, he was summoned on 1 July to attend the king at Windsor with 'able horsemen and footmen'.⁵⁷ Peckham was no soldier, and the summons may have been part of moves to ensure the young king's personal safety. In the autumn of 1549, Protector Somerset feared an imminent armed insurrection in the capital, and ordered the Lieutenant of the Tower to admit no one without his approval.⁵⁸ The dissidents

moved more quickly, however, and on 6 October they 'commanded [Peckham] to enter into the Tower as associates to the same Lieutenant for the better presidy and gard of the same'. Thereupon Dudley 'entered the Tower of London... [and] made Peckham lieutenant'. Improbably Peckham, a conservative bureaucrat, had become Lieutenant of the Tower.⁵⁹ Dudley and his friends presumably saw him as someone they could trust, and they would naturally want to keep the mint in safe hands. On the same day, Peckham was also appointed to the Privy Council. On 11 October Somerset was proclaimed a traitor by the Council, and on 14 October he was taken to the Tower, where Peckham was directed to ensure 'that none be suffered to speke with the duke of Somersett or any other prisoner by us committed'.⁶⁰ But Peckham lost his place on the Privy Council, and his place as Lieutenant, before the end of the month. His close association with Wriothesley, who was now plotting with Arundel and other religious conservatives, was enough to raise doubts in Dudley's mind about his political reliability and bring about his expulsion from the council.⁶¹ His membership had lasted only 24 days.⁶² As Jennifer Loach has commented, it was 'humiliatingly brief', and he played no further part in the politics of Edward's reign.⁶³ But his removal did not affect his position as treasurer of the mint, for he was too valuable a servant to lose. In the last four months of 1549, the stand-off between Dudley and Seymour rendered Peckham's position more precarious than at any other time in his career,⁶⁴ but he survived the crisis. The turbulence in the Council over the turn of the year ended with Wriothesley's removal and arrest, eliminating any further threat to evangelical progress, and leaving the conservative faction without a leader. Wriothesley's health worsened and he soon became 'verie sicke'.⁶⁵ He died on 30 July 1550, allegedly from grief and vexation. Peckham, acting with the earl's widow Jane and three others, was granted probate to his estate.⁶⁶

Peckham's work at the mint was also not without its troubles. In October 1550 the *Chronicle of King Edward* records a strange arrangement made with Sir John York, master of one of the mints in the Tower, designed to discharge all the king's debts.⁶⁷ Peckham, as treasurer of the mint, was instructed to give York all the coin and bullion brought into the mint, for a speculative venture

on the Antwerp exchange. York's scheme failed, resulting in the loss of £2000 of silver bullion, or more.⁶⁸ The eventual outcome was further debasement of the coinage. York was eventually pardoned in 1552, after paying £9,532 to amend his accounts following an audit that revealed serious failings.⁶⁹

Peckham's religious leanings may also have brought problems. In 1551 the council discovered a plot by exiles on the Continent to smuggle works of 'Catholic polemic and instruction' into England. Peckham was implicated, and possibly deeply involved. His servant Walter Prince admitted having received for his master twenty items in Latin and eighty in English.⁷⁰ Thus while the Act of Uniformity was being vigorously imposed on a reluctant country, Peckham, a senior state servant, was in touch with those of his own religious persuasion abroad. Yet there is no evidence that this created any difficulties for him. His financial expertise made it more convenient to turn a blind eye and blame his subordinates.⁷¹

Peckham was still at the very heart of the government's financial operations. Around this time he received from Sir William Sharrington and Sir Maurice Denny 200,000 crowns, part of the sum the French King had agreed to pay for the return of Boulogne.⁷² Between the beginning of Edward's reign and 1 January 1551, £537,000 was realised from the debasement of the coinage,⁷³ while it is estimated that between 1544 and 1551 the mints between them produced debased coin worth £1,323,281 in gold and £3,015,895 in silver. In a lengthy letter to Peckham in September 1551, the council sent urgent directions on the design and quality of new coins to be minted, and asked him to implement with speed.⁷⁴ In May 1552, Edward VI appointed a commission 'to sell some part of the chantry lands, and of the houses, for the payment of my debts which is £251,000 sterling at the least'.⁷⁵ Huge sums passed through Peckham's hands. From 1552 he regularly received part of the proceeds of the sale of chantry lands, in his capacity as special crown treasurer.⁷⁶ It also became necessary to sell some of the crown lands, with the proceeds paid to Peckham 'for the king's use', and in 1552–3 he received £153,479 from those sales.⁷⁷ Later in the year, Peckham was instructed to pay to Thomas Gresham £2,000 out of money he received from the 'Sales of Chauntries and Colledge landes', to pay for a 'juell' bought by the king and in settlement 'of his Highnes' debtes in Andwerpe'.⁷⁸ In

September 1552 a 'Brief Declaration of principal military and naval charges of Henry VIII and Edward VI' showed that the sum spent in Henry's reign was £2,134,784 from 1 January 1544, and in Edward's reign, the sum of £1,356,687.⁷⁹ Committing such huge sums of money into the hands of Peckham demonstrated the total confidence the Privy Council had not only in his reliability and integrity but his competence to manage and safeguard them.

In March and April 1553, further commissions were set up to secure as much as possible of the valuables held in cathedrals and parish churches. Churchwardens were ordered to prepare a full inventory of all goods, jewels, plate, ready money, vestments, crosses, candlesticks, and chalices, and with the exception of one chalice and linen for the altars, they were to surrender everything to the commissioners for sale. Again, the proceeds went to Peckham.⁸⁰ Every source of revenue was pursued. In November 1553, Peckham was appointed special treasurer to receive the revenues of the realm during the interim period of reorganisation, and he acted as central paymaster and receiver general for the government.⁸¹ His value as a financial manager remained of prime value to the state throughout these years of political and religious upheaval.

Edward VI died on 6 July 1553, aged only 15. His death was kept secret for a few days, while the Duke of Northumberland sought to have Lady Jane Grey recognised as Queen.⁸² The 1544 Act of Succession had provided for Mary to succeed should Edward die childless, but Northumberland had contrived a 'Devise', later written out in Edward's own hand, for the crown to pass instead to Jane Grey. Northumberland and his friends proclaimed Jane queen but their attempts to secure Mary and take control of London failed. They had completely misjudged the strength of support for Mary in the capital and in the country at large.

Peckham could not remain neutral in this situation. Edward Hastings had given him details of Northumberland's scheme 'to assassinate' Mary. Hastings 'at first... refused to credit this most wicked crime', but he and Peckham decided 'to join forces ... proclaiming the death of the king and the fact that Mary was heir to the throne'.⁸³ Contemporary reports show that 'worde was brought to the queen [Jane] at the Tower that sir Edmonde Peckham sir Edward Hastings and lord

Windsore with others were up proclaiming Mary in Buckinghamshire.

Peckham had been quick to support Mary's right to the crown. Nearly 10,000 men flocked to join Peckham and his sons, and with Hastings they resolved to march on London to secure her throne.⁸⁴ Peckham thus played a key role in securing Mary's accession, facing down the threat from Northumberland. His authority in Buckinghamshire – his home county – and the adjacent counties where he had held office helped secure the support he needed. The Spanish State Papers record that:

the treasurer [Peckham] ... who kept the late king's privy purse has gone off to my Lady [Mary] to place it at her disposal... Mr. [Robert] Peckham and Sir John Williams... stood up for the Lady Mary at [Watlington] in Buckinghamshire... [he] hathe 6 or 7000 men thear... and thear is with him sir Edmonde Peckham the sherive of Oxfordhsire.

The Venice State Papers record that Peckham had 'distinguished himself by his loyal zeal and opposition to Lady Jane Grey... he was the first to proclaim queen Mary in his own county of Buckingham'.⁸⁵ Peckham was upholding constitutional right, determined to avert civil war and secure the return of Catholicism, or at least a more conservative religious settlement.⁸⁶ A chronicler recorded that 'Sir Edmonde Peckham is gone with al his power and treasure to assist her grace... So, by his frutes, that is, by all his doinges, we may knowe what he is; howe true and faithful hath he shewed him selfe to be at all times to Henry theight, of famous memory'.⁸⁷

In the days immediately after Edward's death, not all great lords rallied to Mary's cause; no doubt some waited to see how the wind blew.⁸⁸ The possibility of losing their monastic spoils may also have influenced some. To Peckham duty and integrity were everything. In a tract circulating in July 1553, Peckham's meticulous honesty was noted: 'he [Sir Edmund Peckham] never robbed his grace [King Henry VIII] when he had all the rule of his treasure, he used not to buy silver for 4s. an oz. and make the King pay 5s. 4d. as other false traitors did'. He had 'left house, lands, and al, and his power and treasure, to assist her grace'... [Mary]. Truly, we have to few such faythfull men.⁸⁹

Mary was proclaimed Queen on 19 July: on 29 July, Peckham was sworn once more a member of the Privy Council.⁹⁰ His expertise took him to the very heart of Mary's government, and this time

he remained a member throughout her reign. His professional experience and skill were invaluable, and his religious views chimed precisely with those of Mary. For his 'service at Framlingham' he was given an annuity of £60.⁹¹ On 15 August a pamphlet was circulating in London, urging those 'favouring the Word of God' to abandon Mary because she was served by 'detestable papists'. Peckham was among those named, alongside lords including Pembroke and Arundel.⁹² The pamphlet had no impact. Seven days later, on 22 August, John Dudley was executed. On 15 December 'sir Edmonde Peckham was apoynted treasurer general of all the quenes treasure whatsoever'.⁹³ He had now attained the highest point in his career. By Christmas 1553, Mary's government had largely restored the religious settlement of Henry VIII, to the satisfaction of the larger part of the population.⁹⁴ However, the former church lands were beyond recall, for Catholics held more land than Protestants.⁹⁵ Peckham's rewards 'were found in a grant of lands and in the constant favour of his grateful mistress'.⁹⁶

Discontent in some parts of the country came to a head, however, in January 1554, when Sir Thomas Wyatt attempted to raise an armed rebellion in Kent, to install Jane Grey on the throne. It speedily collapsed when he found London barred against him. Wyatt surrendered before any blood was spilt, but his ill-advised insurrection ensured the execution of Lady Jane Grey and her husband Guildford in February 1554, as well as his own.

Peckham continued to retain a central role in the state's financial concerns. In June 1554, a review of his accounts showed receipts of £337,952, of which £144,878 had been received during Edward's reign.⁹⁷ To raise money for the treasury, Peckham was commissioned on several occasions between 1540 and 1560 to sell crown and chantry lands to help replenish the almost empty royal purse.⁹⁸ Such sales were also critical in improving Mary's parlous financial state. Those who had opposed her, or who were implicated in the attempt to crown Jane Grey, were heavily fined, and it was Peckham who had to collect these penalties.⁹⁹ There is every reason to suppose he was as close to Mary in the management of financial matters as he had been to Henry and Edward. In July 1556 a commission, which included Peckham, arranged for quantities of silver to be melted down at the Tower mint: two months later, the bishop of Ely, Thomas

Thirlby, and others were directed to 'bargain and sell certain crown lands' and pay the proceeds to Peckham.¹⁰⁰ Such measures were unavoidable; at Mary's accession there were huge debts to be serviced, mostly a direct consequence of Somerset's misguided social and military policies.¹⁰¹ In July 1556 it was proposed that 'silver monies' current in both England and Ireland should be collected and converted by the mint into the coin so desperately required.¹⁰²

Peckham's concern over the perilous condition of the coinage throughout the reigns of Henry, Edward and Mary is highlighted by the number of commissions established to grapple with the problem of stabilising a currency undermined by devaluation and debasement. One short-term means to increase the bullion available to the mint was to turn broken or unserviceable plate held in the treasury into coin.¹⁰³ He was also a member of a commission established in 1554 to investigate the counterfeiting of coin.¹⁰⁴ A few years later, Peckham was to be involved in a more ambitious scheme proposed by Elizabeth for the wholesale re-coining of the English currency, a task not completed until the end of 1561.

While Peckham's work kept him mainly in London, he had also become an influential figure in his native county of Buckinghamshire. He was elected a member of parliament for the county in October 1553 and again in November 1554, for the first and third parliaments of Mary's reign.¹⁰⁵ As Mary's representative, in the last year of her reign, Edmund Peckham attended the funeral of Anne of Cleves, whose executor he was.¹⁰⁶ She left him 'a jugge of gold with cover, or a crystal glass garnished with gold and sett with stones'.¹⁰⁷

Mary's restoration of the Catholic faith was a welcome development for Peckham, as for many of his contemporaries. But the nation's religious divisions were deepening. As Peter Marshall has argued, 'the evangelicals...were evolving into a more determined and doctrinaire Protestant movement' while at the same time 'there was emerging a more articulate, combative and committed Roman Catholicism'.¹⁰⁸ Another major religious shift was almost inevitable with Elizabeth's accession in November 1558. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 has been called 'idiosyncratic and uncategorizable', but it re-established a firmly Protestant church.¹⁰⁹

Mary's death predictably marked the end of

Peckham's membership of the Privy Council, though he remained treasurer of the mint. Peckham was one of a very small group of crown servants who served four successive monarchs.¹¹⁰ One of the others, William Paulet, changed his religious affiliation four times, and acquired substantial ex-monastic property. Another, Richard Rich, benefited even more from the dissolution, while William Petre, who had served as Henry's secretary, was also ready to compromise his faith by acquiring enormous amounts of former monastic property.¹¹¹ Peckham's acquisitions were small by comparison with the others.

Peckham implemented Elizabeth's plans to re-establish the coinage after many years of debasement and devaluation. In 1559 a strong committee was appointed, with Peckham its most influential member, to examine the whole condition of the mint and the country's coinage.¹¹² It is possible that Peckham was also involved in Elizabeth's decision to melt down a quantity of surplus plate from the jewel house, in consequence of which some 8000 ounces of surplus plate and utensils were delivered to the Mint for coining.¹¹³ The results went a long way towards stabilising the country's currency.¹¹⁴

Peckham's name appears less frequently in official records as Elizabeth's reign progressed. He was growing old, by the standards of the age. He would not have welcomed the new religious settlement, but appears to have conformed quietly.

Peckham had succeeded in establishing his family as a powerful force in Buckinghamshire. His sons, who followed very different paths, failed to build on, or even maintain, what their father had achieved. Henry, the second son, was elected four times to parliament for Chipping Wycombe, but became involved in a wild conspiracy against Mary. He conspired with Henry Dudley and others to rob the exchequer to finance an army to unseat her, for they 'did very sore mislike such Catholic proceedings as...the Queen... went about'.¹¹⁵ He even used his father's home to plan the conspiracy.¹¹⁶ After trying in vain to save his life by betraying his accomplices, Henry was executed on Tower Hill in July 1556.¹¹⁷ It speaks volumes for Mary's confidence in Peckham that his son's treason did not imperil his position as high treasurer. Robert, the eldest son, entered Mary's service, became for a short while a member of her Privy Council, was elected to parliament for Buckinghamshire in 1554, and was knighted in 1555.¹¹⁸

But his commitment to his Catholic faith was so strong that in 1564, the year of his father's death, he left England. Religious dividing-lines were hardening, and a bishop declared that Robert 'was not fit to be trusted'. He never returned, and died at Rome in 1569.¹¹⁹ The third son, George, knighted in 1570, was also a firm Catholic, and was awarded a pension of £10 for life as a reward for his service to Mary at the start of her reign. In 1572 he served as sheriff of Buckinghamshire. George belonged to the new breed of merchant adventurers and became involved in colonial ventures in North America. He saw a possible solution to the problems of English Catholics under Elizabeth through the establishment of settlements sufficiently remote to avoid the crippling fines that were now imposed on recusants. In 1574, with Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Richard Grenville, George petitioned the queen to 'allow an enterprise for the discovery of rich and unknown lands'. His ventures failed, and when he died in 1608, George had lost most of the estate he had inherited from his father, 'by reason of his debt to the crown'.¹²⁰ Of the youngest son, Edward, also knighted, little is known save that he died in 1560 and was buried in Denham Church.

The public careers of at least two of Peckham's sons show how he had established his family as an influential force in Buckinghamshire and beyond. Peckham received several grants of lands from the crown, and also made considerable purchases. Three manors in Flint are mentioned in a draft of a grant to him in March 1527, while early in his career he obtained the reversion of the office of Constable of Scarborough Castle.¹²¹ He purchased the manor of Ledburn in 1529, selling it in 1546,¹²² while in 1538, following the dissolution of Woburn Abbey, the manor of Stewkley Grange came into his possession.¹²³ Peckham was not one of the rampant profiteers speculating in ex-monastic property, though his faith was plainly not an issue. He built his estate mainly through purchase and grants. As we have already noted, in 1540 he purchased for £700 the manor of Biddlesden from Thomas Wriothesley (at the time Henry VIII's Secretary) and in the same year Henry granted Denham Manor to him.¹²⁴ Later, he acquired another estate in the same area.¹²⁵ Most of Peckham's estates were acquired in Henry's reign, but though later monarchs proved less generous, he died a wealthy man. With his growing status came a desire to serve his commu-

nity. Like many substantial landowners, Peckham played an important role in the foundation of a local grammar school. A school at Wycombe, financed from the rents of lands in the patronage of the mayor and burgesses of the town, was established largely through his efforts.¹²⁶

Despite forty-five years of dedicated service to the crown, Peckham was never raised to the peerage, unlike many contemporary royal servants, such as Thomas Wriothesley, William Paget, John Russell, William Herbert, Edward Seymour, John Dudley, William Paulet and William Parr.¹²⁷ He was always primarily an administrator, a bureaucrat, not a courtier and politician. Only during the troubles following the introduction of the new Prayer Book in 1549 and the crisis triggered by the death of Edward did Peckham become politically engaged. On the latter occasion he acted with speed and decisiveness, playing a significant role in securing Mary's accession. His reliability and financial expertise were always highly valued, and he served successive monarchs with honesty and diligence, whatever his private reservations about their religious policies.¹²⁸ Through a period of unprecedented upheaval, he displayed an unwavering commitment to the crown and his duties. Only his death on 29 March 1564 terminated his treasurership of the mints.¹²⁹

Peckham was buried in Denham Church on 18 April, where a substantial monument was erected, now somewhat decayed. He is shown dressed in plate armour with his head resting upon a spherical pillow incised with his name and the date 18 April 1564. His wife rests beside him. Peckham had made a will in May 1563, in which he referred to his 'body and vile carcas which is but earthe and duste'. He left 20 marks for his 'poore neighbours of Denham to pray for his soule', a clear affirmation of his Catholic convictions. He bequeathed £500 and a life interest in Denham Manor to his 'wellbeloved wife Anne Peckham' (who died in 1570), £100 each for his sons George and Robert, bequests to servants and friends, and £40 'to be bestowed in dedes of charitie'.¹³⁰ So far as is known no likeness of Edmund Peckham exists. As noted above, his family's devotion to the Catholic faith continued and strengthened in the next generation. The Jesuit priest Robert Dibdale [Debdale] had served for some time as 'chaplain of a Catholic recusant family in Denham, the Peckhams', before his capture and execution in October 1586.¹³¹

What did it mean to be a Catholic in the latter years of Henry VIII? The 1534 Act of Supremacy had created a new situation for every subject of the crown. Henry was now the arbiter in matters religious and the oath that went with the Act required acceptance of his Headship and the rejection of papal authority. The Act gave the king authority to 'repress, redress...and amend... heresies, abuses... whatsoever they be'. Royal authority dictated what had to be done. The Injunctions issued by Thomas Cromwell in 1536 and 1538 particularised the matters that were to change, such as the veneration of saints, indulgences, and cult of relics. The Catholic Church in England by the later 1530s was already very different from what Peckham had known in his early years. But no one knew how far Henry's changes would go, or whether they would prove permanent. Major changes in church services came only years later, in Edward's reign. Most clerics, even almost all bishops, conformed reluctantly to Henry's ever-changing directives. That makes it hardly surprising that most lay servants of the crown would do likewise. Peckham's religious instincts were conservative, but he was no theologian and saw himself as a dutiful and loyal subject of the crown.

The Act of Supremacy provided that refusal of the oath was treasonable, and the execution of the two most notorious opponents of the oath (Fisher and More) sent a clear warning to others of the risks of rejecting Henry's claim to the 'Headship' of the church. Peckham had to find a way to live with the religious changes, and to conform outwardly to the law's requirements was the obvious way to live in safety. Peckham was a Member of Parliament and a Justice of the Peace sworn to maintain the law of the land. He also had his employment under the crown, his family of six children, and his own personal safety to consider. His readiness to acquire former monastic land, however, was a different matter, a voluntary act. We do not know how Peckham squared this with his conscience, but his behaviour was no different from that of many others, religious conservatives among them. The Elizabethan Settlement would have been deeply unwelcome to him, but he would have no reason to suppose it would last any longer than the previous settlements. Like most contemporaries, Peckham had no wish to abandon his parish church, and his community. His private faith becomes evident only in his will. His sons, by contrast, soon came to feel

that the Elizabethan Settlement demanded a very different response.

Most historians have ignored or overlooked Edmund Peckham. Geoffrey Elton, one of the few exceptions, pointed to Peckham's extensive and complex responsibilities, and showed how the dissolution of the monasteries necessitated the rationalisation and strict control of the operation of the royal finances.¹³² Peckham successfully discharged his duties and retained the confidence of successive monarchs for forty-five years. Twice in his long life he was called upon to help save the country from armed rebellion and in one instance, in 1553, he intervened critically to save the Marian and Catholic cause. Generally, however, he seems to have compartmentalised his life, serving successive rulers in the secular world of finance, while holding firm to his personal religious beliefs. The strong Catholic convictions of his sons, Robert and George, reflect the very different circumstances of the Elizabethan regime, but they also provide a clue to those of their father. Edmund Peckham's will shows that he died a committed Roman Catholic, and his sons' far more visible Catholicism suggests something of how they had been raised. Peckham enjoyed a successful public career, with an expertise and integrity that made him valued and trusted throughout the bewildering upheavals of the age.

Peckham's ability to achieve his sovereigns' trust while remaining true to his religious instincts makes him a figure still worth remembering today. His sons chose to display a far more overt commitment to Catholicism in the increasingly hostile world of Elizabethan Protestantism. That explains why the family's influential position in Buckinghamshire, so painstakingly built up by Edmund over a lifetime, was lost within a generation.

NOTES

1. G. Gibbons, *The Political Career of Thomas Wriothesley, First Earl of Southampton, 1505–1550* (Lampeter, 2002), 285–297.
2. C. E. Challis, *The Tudor Coinage* (Manchester, 1978), 28, 87.
3. Act for the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries, 27 Henry VIII, c. 28.
4. *Victoria County History, Buckinghamshire* (hereafter *VCH*), vol. iii, 261.
5. His name is spelt variously Pekham, Peckeham, Pecham, Peckam, Peckkam, Peckhame and

- Peckham in contemporary documents.
6. 'Access to the king was the essential ingredient of political success': D. M. Loades, *The Seymours of Wolf Hall* (Stroud, 2015), 11.
 7. Ann Cheyne was a niece of Stephen Gardiner (1483–1555). Peckham and Ann Cheyne had four sons and two daughters, one of whom married Edmund Verney, eldest son of Sir Edmund Verney: J. Bruce, ed., *Letters and Papers of the Verney Family*, Camden Series, old series, 56 (1853), 57.
 8. D. Wilson, *In the Lion's Court: Power, Ambition and Sudden Death in the Reign of Henry VIII* (London, 2001), 303. Well before his elevation to the see of Winchester Gardiner was in the employment of Cardinal Wolsey, and acted as an ambassador for Henry VIII: G. Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic: The Life of Stephen Gardiner* (Oxford, 1990).
 9. Thomas Cheyne (1482/87–1558) was also Warden of the Cinque Ports through the reigns of Henry VII to Elizabeth: S. T. Bindoff, ed., *The House of Commons, 1509–1558* (London, 1982), i.634.
 10. W. Jerdan, ed., *The Rutland Papers*, Camden Society, old series, 21 (1842), 57.
 11. *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII (L&P)*, III, nos. 2348 and 2750; W. C. Richardson, *Tudor Chamber Administration* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1952), 238. Brian Tuke became treasurer in 1528 and served until his death in November 1545.
 12. Richardson, *Tudor Chamber Administration*, 238, 485. He was described in January 1529 as 'cofferer of the household' (*L&P*, V, 308), and as 'cofferer of the king's house' in July 1530, (*L&P*, V, 1529). His duties involved keeping the king and court supplied, fed, and clothed. He was responsible to the Comptroller of the Royal Household.
 13. There were Royal Mints in the Tower and, over the years, others were established at Durham, York and Bristol. On the office of cofferer, and the mints, see G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government*, (Cambridge, 1953); F. C. Dietz, *English Public Finances, 1485–1558*, (New York, 1964); Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, and Richardson, *Tudor Chamber Administration*.
 14. He held the office under The Lord Steward of the Household.
 15. Elton, *Tudor Revolution in Government*, 388–9.
 16. *L&P*, XVI, 1488 (4 and 25).
 17. *L&P*, IV, 522. In June 1524 he made payments for war expenses under warrants issued by Henry and Wolsey for the sum of £123,325. (*L&P*, IV, 417), and in April 1525 he received from bishops and prelates £35,569, and from the general clergy £17,682, in addition to moneys from the Mayor and inhabitants of London and 'temporal' men and the Fellowship of the Staple of Calais. *L&P*, IV, App. 37.
 18. *L&P*, VI, 717. He made payments, by way of example, to the Abbot of Pershore (£10), to the Prior of Worcester (£30), and to the Abbot of Borsley (£5).
 19. *Ibid*, VI, 562 (ii), in 1533 he was ordered to attend the coronation of Anne Boleyn in his capacity as almoner.
 20. *Acts of the Privy Council (APC)*, 1, 1542–47, 165. In May 1545 a warrant for £54 6s 8d. to outfit 200 sailors was issued.
 21. *L&P*, X, 788, 801. Money was delivered in October 1536 by 'Mr Cofferer' to the Duke of Norfolk for the intended army against the rebels in the north (Pilgrimage of Grace). He made a payment of £18,000 in August 1546 to the garrison at Boulogne, and £4,000 to pay the wages of labourers working on the fortifications. From February 1551 to March 1552 Peckham paid £25,500 for the expenses of Calais. (Dietz, *English Public Finances*, i.189, n.2).
 22. On this see R. Hoyle, 'War and Public Finance' in D. MacCulloch, ed., *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (Basingstoke, 1995), 75–99.
 23. Hoyle, 'War and Public Finance', 75–97.
 24. Brereton had been executed for his alleged association with Anne Boleyn: *L&P*, X, 908.
 25. Gibbons, *Thomas Wriothesley*.
 26. In July 1535 Peckham had written to Wriothesley addressing him as his 'heartily beloved cousin'. *L&P*, IX, App. 3. Gibbons, *Thomas Wriothesley*, 305.
 27. Gibbons, *Thomas Wriothesley*, 19, 133, Wriothesley 'attached himself' to Peckham for three years.
 28. The National Archives (TNA), SP 1/143, fo. 13 (*L&P*, XIV, (1), 233)
 29. See *L&P*, V, 1529, where Wriothesley is

- described as ‘clerk to the said cofferer’. In October 1529 money was delivered to Peckham by the hands of ‘Thomas Wriothesley, Peckham’s servant’: *L&P*, IV, 5979.
30. Peckham had four sons and two daughters of his marriage.
 31. J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London, 1968), 331–2. See also Ceri Law, *Contested Reformations in the University of Cambridge, 1535–1584* (Woodbridge, 2018).
 32. P. Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven, Conn., 2017), 210.
 33. R. Whiting, ‘Local Responses to the Henrician Reformation’, in *Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. MacCulloch, 205.
 34. R Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989), 118.
 35. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 340.
 36. *L&P*, XII, 170.
 37. C. Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England during the Reigns of the Tudors from 1485 to 1559*, ed. W. D. Hamilton, Camden Society, new series, 11, 20 (1875–7), i.135.
 38. The Exchequer and Augmentations now provided £10,000 each annually, and moneys from other sources financed the King’s Household: S. E. Lehmborg, *The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII 1536–1547* (Cambridge, 1977), 116.
 39. Elton, *Tudor Revolution in Government*, 404.
 40. After his death in 1549 Denny was described as ‘an enemy to the Pope and his superstition’: M Dowling, *Humanism in the age of Henry VIII* (London 1986), 63.
 41. Initially his salary was £200 p.a. together with the house of the Master of the Mint at Blackfriars: *L&P*, XIX (1), 610 (102), XX (1), 620 (23); *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Edward VI*, (hereafter *CSPD*), 57, where he is described as High Treasurer of all the Mints.
 42. *L&P*, XX, (1), 620 (11–26), Richardson, *Tudor Chamber Administration*, 417, 484.
 43. Challis, *Tudor Coinage*, 100–1.
 44. Dietz, *English Public Finance*, i.165–7. Interest was as high as 14%. See also W. C. Richardson, *Stephen Vaughan: Financial Agent of Henry VIII; a Study of Financial Relations with the Low Countries* (Baton Rouge, 1952).
 45. *L&P*, XIX, (1), 513: XIX, (1), 1035 (86) (87): XIX, (2), 328. J. D. Gould, *The Great Debasement*, explores in depth the debasement and its effects. See also C E Challis, ‘Mint Officials and Moneyers of the Tudor Period’, *British Numismatic Journal*, 45 (1975), 52.
 46. Gould, *Great Debasement*, 1.
 47. The output of the various mints between 1542 and 1552 are set out in Gould, *The Great Debasement*, 38.
 48. *L&P*. XX. (2), 729.
 49. *APC*, II, 1547–1550, 323. Peckham received his £200 legacy in September 1549, two and a half years after Henry’s death. It is expressed as follows: ‘Warrant to Mr Peckham to retain in his owne hands cc. bequethethe to him by Kinge Henri theight that dead is’. See Gibbons, *Thomas Wriothesley*, 213 and notes; Bruce, ed., *Letters and Papers of the Verney Family*, 57.
 50. They included Edward Seymour, John Russell, John Dudley, Thomas Wriothesley and William Herbert all quickly raised into the ranks of the nobility after Henry’s death.
 51. *CSPD*, *Edward VI*, 11. There were eventually mints at the Tower, Bristol, Southwark, York and Canterbury.
 52. Dietz, *English Public Finances*, i.198; *Calendar of State Papers, Edward, Mary and Elizabeth*, i.18.
 53. G. Gibbons, ‘William Sharrington c.1495–1553: Public Career, Patronage and Corruption’, in *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, 111 (2018), 264–275.
 54. S. E. Lehmborg, *Sir Walter Mildmay and Tudor Government* (Austin, Texas, 1964), 18; *L&P* VIII, vol. 19 (1), dated 31 March 1544.
 55. D. M. Loades, *John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, 1504–1553* (Oxford, 1996), 122. Peckham was ‘commended to the Protector’s attention’: Muriel St. Clare Byrne, ed., *The Lisle Letters*, (Chicago, 1981), i.11.
 56. *CSPD*, *Edward VI*, 114. Peckham asked Smith to obtain a warrant to the exchequer or Court of Augmentations for money to meet a £2,000 liability to two merchants from Flanders that the Mint was unable to meet.
 57. *CSPD*, *Edward VI*, 120–1, under ‘Buckinghamshire’, though his name is shown as being deleted. His son Robert Peckham is also included.

58. Paget had written to Somerset in July 1549, 'every man of the Council have misliked your proceedings...would to God you had followed the matter hotly': J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* Oxford, 1822), II, ii, 431–3.
59. *APC, II, 1547–50*, 332; Loades, *John Dudley*, 133–4; *CSPD, Edward VI*, 140. His tenure lasted about one month.
60. *CSPD, Edward VI*, 150; N. Pocock, ed., *Troubles connected with the Prayer Book of 1549*, Camden Society, new series, 37 (1884), 120.
61. Loades, *John Dudley*, 141, 143. On Wriothesley's ill-fated attempts to engineer a Catholic revival see Gibbons, *Thomas Wriothesley*. 211 *et seq.* and D. Loades, *Intrigue and Treason; the Tudor Court 1547–1558* (Kings Lynn, 2004), 85.
62. J. Loach, *Edward VI*, ed. G. Bernard and P. Williams (New Haven, 1999), 139; D. E. Hoak, *The King's Council in the reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge, 1976), 58.
63. Loach, *Edward VI*, 175.
64. Edward Seymour was executed in January 1552.
65. Richard Scudamore wrote to Philip Hoby on 31 July 1550, 'yesternight God hath called to his mercye the Erle of Southampton, for the which I geave to God most high thanks': S. Brigden, ed., 'The Letters of Richard Scudamore to Sir Philip Hoby' *Camden Miscellany*, XXX, (1990), 143.
66. Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, ii.41. For Wriothesley's will see *Trevelyan Papers prior to 1558*, ed. J. P. Collyer, Camden Society, old series, 67 (1857), 206–214. Peckham received a bequest of £40.
67. York was a supporter of Northumberland and Lady Jane Grey and was almost lynched in the streets as a result of his close association.
68. Sir Andrew Judd and Sir John Gresham, both London merchants of known honesty, suffered similar losses: W. K. Jordan, *Edward VI, The Threshold of Power* (London, 1970), 458–9.
69. *Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI*, 81n.
70. S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989), 454.
71. The Act of Uniformity required that ministers should 'be bound to say and use' the Book of Common Prayer 'and none other or otherwise: 2 & 3 Edw. 6, c 1.
72. Dietz, *English Public Finance*, i.188: *APC, III, (1550–52)*, 5, 33, 93; W. K. Jordan, ed., *Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI* (Ithaca, New York, 1966), 25.
73. Dietz, *English Public Finance*, i.186.
74. *CSPD, Edward VI*, 203–4. The letter was expressed as setting out the King's wishes and urged an expeditious response: Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor* (London, 1979), 185.
75. T.F. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby, Tudor Bishop* (London, 1964), 116.
76. W.C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations 1536–1554* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1961), 177, n.36.
77. *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward VI*, iii.354, 355, 390, 397; J. G. Nichols, ed., *Literary Remains of King Edward the Sixth*, Roxburghe Club (1857), i.414; Jordan, ed., *Chronicle of Edward VI*, 121–2; Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 116; Richardson, *Court of Augmentations*, 235.
78. *APC, 1552–54*, 183. In 1547 parliament had passed an act to dissolve chantries, colleges and religious guilds: Loach, *Edward VI*, 48.
79. *CSPD, Edward VI*, 258–61.
80. Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, ii.84.
81. Richardson, *Court of Augmentations*, 249.
82. Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, ii.85; J. G. Nichols, ed., *The Chronicle of Queen Jane and of two years of Queen Mary*, Camden Society, old series, 48 (1850), 8.
83. R. Wingfield, *Vita Mariae Reginae*, ed. D. MacCulloch, *Camden Miscellany*, XXVIII (1984), 26. Mary had written to the Council on 9 July to assert her title: *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, Appendix.
84. Wingfield, *Vita Mariae Reginae*, 190, 260: armed men from Oxford Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Middlesex planned 'to merche forth towards the Palaice of Westminster'. See also *APC IV (1552–54)* 293.
85. *CSP Venetian*, V. 6. 9th May 1553. Venetian Ambassador to the Doge.
86. D. M. Loades, *Mary Tudor: The Tragical History of the first Queen of England* (Richmond, 2006), Chapter 6; Loades, *John Dudley*, 263
87. Bruce, ed., *Verney Papers*, 57
88. Loades, *John Dudley*, 263.
89. Nichols, ed., *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, 119.
90. *CSP Spanish*, xi, 92, 107.

91. S.R. Gammon, *Statesman and Schemer, William First Lord Paget- Tudor Minister*, (Newton Abbot, 1973), 190. Peckham was also allowed to continue as cofferer: *APC*, IV, 419, 425.
92. *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, XI, 173–4.
93. Nichols, ed., *Chronicle of Queen Jane and ... Queen Mary*, 33; Elton, *Tudor Revolution in Government*. 240: ‘He was to be temporarily in charge of all the revenue of the crown’.
94. Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, 373–76.
95. D. MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England* (Basingstoke, 1990), 20–1.
96. Bruce, ed., *Verney Papers*, 57
97. TNA, E351/2080. Huge sums had been disbursed to maintain the garrisons in the Borders and on expenses relative to Boulogne, Calais, Guines in France, Scotland, fortifications, and the suppression of rebels in 1549. In the reign of Edward VI expenditure had totalled £1,356,687.
98. In the 12 months from Michaelmas 1552 Peckham received £153,479 in purchase money from the sale of chantry and other crown estates, rectories, parsonages and other spiritualities: Dietz, *English Public Finance*, p. 198. Edward’s debts in May 1552 were in the region of £251,000.
99. *CSP Philip and Mary*, 1, 194–5. 412.
100. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 168. Peckham received a New Year’s Gift of £12 in cash and a gilt bowl from Mary in 1557 and gave her one in return: D. M. Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life*, (Oxford, 1989), 362.
101. M. L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (Montreal, 1975), 1–6.
102. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 168; *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Mary*, iii.554.
103. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 168.
104. *APC*, V, (1554–56), 85.
105. Bindoff, ed., *House of Commons, 1509–1558*, iii.79.
106. R. M. Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves* (Cambridge, 2000), 255. The others were Nicholas Heath archbishop of York, earl of Arundel and Sir Richard Preston, all committed Catholics.
107. J. G. Nichols, ed., *Diary of Henry Machyn*, Camden Series, old series, 42 (1848), 145; Bruce, ed., *Verney Papers*, 57. Peckham no doubt had to deal with the problems following the vandalising of Anne’s hearse two weeks after her funeral: *Diary of Henry Machyn*, 148, 358. Machyn mistakenly states that the funeral was that of the King of Denmark.
108. Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, 415.
109. Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, 446, 449.
110. For William Paulet, Marquess of Winchester (1475–1572), William Paget (1506–63), William Petre (1505–72) and Richard Rich (1496–1567) see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).
111. D.M. Loades, *The Cecils: Privilege and Power behind the Throne* (London, 2007), 143.
112. Lehmburg, *Sir Walter Mildmay*, 55–60; Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, (London, 1962), 195.
113. D. Starkey, *Elizabeth* (London, 2000), 294.
114. John Guy, *Elizabeth: The Forgotten Years* (Falkirk, 2016).
115. For Henry see *ODNB*. It has been suggested that he was a Protestant, but his membership of the Commons in Mary’s reign, his opposition to Lady Jane Grey, his resistance to Thomas Wyatt, and his ‘Godly and catholic end’ suggest otherwise: D.M. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies* (London, 1965), 176–237. Robert Peckham was the only other member of the Peckham family to be examined about the conspiracy. See also Bindoff, ed., *House of Commons, 1509–1558*, iii.79; Brigden, *London and the Reformation*, 597.
116. *CSPD, Mary*, 200. There were ‘divers conferences at Peckham’s house’: 71.
117. Peckham had transferred some of his lands to Henry and these were forfeited upon his attainder for treason. The conspiracy was on a considerable scale, and over 60 persons were arrested, many of them formerly members of Edward’s governmental machine: Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*; Nichols, ed., *Diary of Henry Machyn*, 102, 109. Mary directed that he should be treated with utmost severity at his execution because of his ‘ingratitude’.
118. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, 217, 224. Robert Peckham, a zealous Catholic, was neither implicated nor suspected of involvement in Henry’s conspiracy. He was considered ‘equal to his father in the worth of his character’ and knighted after Mary’s coro-

- nation: *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Philip and Mary*, i.375; Nichols, ed., *Diary of Henry Machyn*, 46, 334.
119. Bindoff, ed., *House of Commons, 1509–1558*, iii.79–80.
 120. *Patent Rolls of Edward, Mary and Elizabeth*, 252.
 121. *L&P*, IV, 3139 and 5906.
 122. *VHC*, III, 399.
 123. *L&P*, XIII, (2), 1119, 1182 (18d and 21). These were purchased from the duke of Suffolk and sold by Peckham in 1541.
 124. *Patent Rolls of Henry VIII*, 32, pt. III, no. 2.
 125. *VHC*, III, 261. Peckham purchased Hedsor Manor from Wriothsley in 1549 and sold it in 1557. He acquired the former Abbey and the Demesne lands of Lavendon in 1543.
 126. L.J. Alford, 'Foundations of the School', in *The Wycombiensian* (April 1954). The school was established in 1551 on former ecclesiastical premises acquired by Peckham following the dissolution of the monasteries.
 127. Many of those arose out of William Paget's 'interpretation' of the intentions of Henry VIII.
 128. The National Archives have many scores of examples of Peckham's day to day involvement in financial matters. From the Exchequer Records account books can be examined e.g. E 101/422/4 and E 101/423/4 and from the Court of Chancery, C1/1376/68 and C3/140/12 concerning land transactions. *The Acts of the Privy Council* regularly refer to the issue of warrants to Peckham.
 129. Challis, 'Mint Officials and Moneyers', 65.
 130. TNA, PROB 11/47, fols 215v–216v.
 131. Michael Wood, *In Search of Shakespeare* (London, 2003), 301. Robert Didbale [Debdale] was born in Shottery, a village near Stratford-upon-Avon, c.1556 into a Catholic family and was ordained priest at Rheims in 1584.
 132. Elton, *Tudor Revolution in Government*, 370–414.