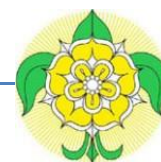


# The Life of Anthony Bacon

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*A brief historical sketch of the life of Anthony Bacon, poet and intelligencer, brother of Sir Francis Bacon and son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper.*

Author: Peter Dawkins

## Birth, Upbringing and Education

Anthony Bacon was born in 1558 as the first son of Nicholas Bacon and his second wife Ann Cooke, second daughter of the great scholar and humanist Sir Anthony Cooke, after whom Anthony Bacon was named. Like her sisters, Sir Anthony's daughter Ann was one of the most highly educated and accomplished women of her time who, according to Sir Henry Chauncey, was "exquisitely skilled in the Greek, Latin and Italian tongues".

The Cooke family held strong Protestant views, and indeed Sir Anthony, reputedly one of the most learned men of his time, who had been a tutor and companion to Henry VIII's son Prince Edward (later King Edward VI), had lived in voluntary exile in Strasbourg during the last four years reign of the Roman Catholic Queen Mary. (He had been imprisoned in the Tower of London by Mary in her first year as queen). Sir Nicholas was also a dedicated Protestant and humanist, but had managed to remain in England during Mary's reign and retain the position of Attorney of the Court of Wards and Liveries, as well as being Treasurer of Gray's Inn 1553-1560.

It is not known where Anthony Bacon was born, or what time of year, or even exactly which year, 1558 or early 1559,<sup>1</sup> although 1558 is normally assumed, and sometime between March and November 1558 for several good reasons;<sup>2</sup> nor is it known when or where he was baptised. Until Christmas 1558 his parents' main home in London was Bacon House<sup>3</sup> in Noble Street, Foster Lane, Aldersgate Ward. In the country they had a house called Bedfords on the Gidea Hall estate, the Essex home of Sir Anthony Cooke and his family. There was also Redgrave Hall in Sussex, which Nicholas Bacon had built for his first wife Jane Fernley and his six surviving children by her—Nicholas (b. 1540), Nathaniel (b. 1546), Edward (b. 1548/9), Elizabeth, Anne and Elizabeth. Jane died in the latter months of 1552, and in the spring of 1553 Sir Nicholas married Ann Cooke, who already had been helping to look after Jane's children during Jane's sickness and who continued to do so afterwards as the children's stepmother. From this it looks likely that Anthony was probably born in one of these three houses: Bacon House, Bedfords or Redgrave Hall.

On 17 November 1558 Queen Mary died and her half-sister Elizabeth succeeded to the throne as Queen of England. Sir William Cecil, Nicholas Bacon's friend and brother-in-law, who had married Ann's eldest sister Mildred, was immediately appointed Secretary of State, and shortly after, on 22 December 1558, Nicholas Bacon was knighted and made a member of the Privy Council and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, with the duties of Lord Chancellor. Sir Nicholas then moved as soon as he could from Bacon House (which he sold) to York House, a mansion on the Strand near Charing Cross, where he could house both his household and his large retinue of retainers required as Lord Keeper. York House was in the ownership of the archbishopric of York, but Sir Nicholas obtained a lease of it when he took over as Lord Keeper (and Lord Chancellor in all but name) from Queen Mary's Lord Chancellor, Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York.

In a letter dated 17 June 1560 Sir Nicholas Bacon wrote that that his young son Anthony “was recovering from a dangerous fever.” Seven months later Anthony’s brother, Francis, was born at York House (or York Place)<sup>4</sup> on 22 January 1561 and baptised on 25 January at St Martin-in-the-Fields (a church then lying in the fields just north of and close to York House). The two brothers were to become very close friends.

In 1561 Sir Nicholas bought Gorhambury Manor, St Albans, from Sir Ralph Rowlett, the aim being to provide a suitable country home and legacy for Lady Ann Bacon and her children, Anthony and Francis. Sir Nicholas and Sir Ralph were probably brothers-in-law, as Sir Ralph was said to have married Margaret, the youngest daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke and sister of Lady Ann Bacon.<sup>5</sup> The building of Sir Nicholas’ new mansion at Gorhambury, to replace the previous and rather small manor house, began in 1563 and was not completed until 1568, although it was habitable by 1566. When the Queen first visited Gorhambury in August 1568, when the house was only just finished, she remarked on how little it was, so Sir Nicholas added on an extra wing with a long gallery and rooms at the end for the second visit of Queen Elizabeth in July 1572. Two further visits of the Queen are recorded, in March 1573 and May 1577.

Special attention was given to the garden as well as the house. Beyond the garden surrounding the house was a walled orchard entered by a gateway dedicated to Orpheus and containing a banqueting house dedicated to the Liberal Arts, which was painted with representations of men who had excelled in each of them and verses expressive of the benefits of studying them. The main house, which was built around a courtyard and contained a great hall, a library and a west-orientated chapel, was plastered white outside, whilst inside it contained sculptures, paintings, carved fireplaces and wainscoting, murals and tapestries portraying classical myths and philosophical teachings. It was created to be a place of learning as well as a home. The long gallery with cloisters beneath became renowned for philosophical and educational conversation, in academy style, whilst beneath the cloisters was a concealed chamber of initiation; and so the reputation of Gorhambury grew as a Platonic academy dedicated to the arts and sciences, and also, more privately, to the Mysteries.

As they grew up, Anthony and Francis were given a privileged private education by some of the best teachers of the time, who included their maternal grandfather, Sir Anthony Cooke, who acted as their principal tutor, their father Sir Nicholas, and their mother Lady Ann.

Before her marriage, Lady Ann had assisted her father in the early schooling of both Edward VI and Elizabeth I. She became a friend and confidant of Queen Elizabeth, and became one of the Queen’s ladies-in-waiting and principal lady at court after the Queen when Sir Nicholas became the Queen’s Lord Keeper. Lady Anne was conversant in Greek, Latin, French and Italian, and translated various sermons from Italian into English, for which she was commended. She was vehemently Protestant and anti-papist.

Sir Nicholas, on the other hand, was far more moderate and followed his own motto of “*Mediocria firma*” (“the middle way is best”). Besides being a noted lawyer, scholar and philosopher, and also something of a poet,<sup>6</sup> he was praised for his eloquence, learning, wisdom and interest in education which was far in advance of his age. In Henry VIII’s time he had become involved with the secret society founded in London by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim that was led by Sir Thomas More, similar to the one Agrippa had set up in Paris.<sup>7</sup> (This English secret society continued on into the reign of Queen Elizabeth, eventually

being refounded in 1570 as the Society of the Rosy Cross, to which John Dee also belonged.) Bacon was moreover chosen by Cromwell, together with Robert Cary and Thomas Denton, to advise on the establishment of a new Inn of Court for the training of “Kings students of the law” for the public service.<sup>8</sup> Hoping that the confiscated revenues of at least some of the dissolved monasteries might be applied to useful purposes, they put forward a scheme to establish a college in London for the education of statesmen, where young men of good family and attainments should be taught civil law, Latin, French, and various other accomplishments, with some of them, where appropriate, furthering their training by being attached to foreign embassies. Henry VIII, though, did not agree to the proposed use of the monastic revenues and instead distributed the estates among his friends. During the reign of Edward VI, Nicholas Bacon initiated a reform of the Court of Wards and, following this, during the reign of Queen Mary he proposed a project for the education of the Crown wards along similar lines as the earlier proposal. This educational project also came to nothing.

However, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth both educational projects were brought to a kind of fruition. In 1561 Sir Nicholas contacted Sir William Cecil concerning his project for reorganising the education of the Crown wards. In addition, he sketched out a system for the advancement of learning and training of young men and women not only in literature and the arts but also in morals and athletic exercises. These ideas were utilised in Roger Ascham’s book, *The Schoolmaster*, which was commissioned by the Queen in 1563 for the education of the children of noblemen and princes. The project was carried out through the suitable development of the educational system of Gray’s Inn and, to a lesser extent, the other Inns of Court, and by means of the private academies set up at the Bacon and Cecil homes. In addition, both men raised and educated certain Crown wards as well as their own children. It thus came about that two wards, one of whom was named Edward Tyrell, came to live and be educated with Anthony and Francis.

The other known tutors of Anthony and Francis included John Walsall, a scholar from Christ Church, Oxford; Robert Johnson, the household chaplain, who instructed the boys in religion; Amias Paulet, their French tutor; John Florio, their Italian tutor; Eduardo Donati, their music tutor; and a fencing tutor called Bonetti. Other religious tutors included a succession of visiting preachers with strong puritan leanings, and various household chaplains who included the nonconformists Thomas Fowle and Robert Jonson.

At a young age both Anthony and Francis were thoroughly learned in the Classics and could read, write and speak Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Italian fluently. They also learnt Spanish and Dutch, studied mathematical subjects and music, played the lute (and perhaps also the virginals, as Anthony was to possess one later in his life), and were proficient in the art of fencing and horse riding. They were also trained in archery, as indicated in their later university records, which they would have needed for hunting, a required necessity for being part of any aristocratic or high-ranking society. In addition to all this they learnt classical mythology and philosophy, and had a thorough grounding in the scriptures. Grammar, logic, rhetoric and astronomy must also have been part of their curriculum, as they were given as full a humanistic Renaissance education as possible in all the liberal arts. Moreover, from the evidence of Gorhambury, the circles they walked in and what shows up in their subsequent lives, Cabala and the Mysteries appear to have been included.

Part of the boys' education would have taken place at York House, the family's London residence, and part at Gorhambury, the special built-for-purpose family home in the country. There were also frequent visits to nearby Theobalds House, the country home of their uncle Sir William Cecil, and to Gidea Hall, the home of their grandfather, Sir Anthony Cook. Like Gorhambury, both of these fine houses with their libraries and gardens were established as places of humanistic Renaissance learning as well as being homes and places of leisure and enjoyment. In London, Anthony and Francis had regular access to Cecil House (renamed Burghley House in 1571), the London mansion of their uncle, who was created Lord Burghley in 1571 and appointed Lord Treasurer in November 1572. The mansion, located on the north side of the Strand a little way east of York House, housed a substantial library and operated as a school for young noblemen who included, at one time or another, the Earls of Oxford, Surrey, Rutland, Southampton and Essex, plus Fulke Greville and Sir Philip Sidney.

Since Sir Nicholas Bacon was the Queen's Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and also performed the role of Lord Chancellor (without being given that title officially), he and his family attended on the Queen and so were part of the Court. The palaces, gardens, pageants, culture, life and politics of Court were therefore familiar to both Anthony and Francis Bacon, although it did not mean that they were always at Court or were always travelling with the Queen. The usual Court programme for the year was to spend winter (November–January) at York Palace (Whitehall), and in the spring to embark on a circuit of the Greenwich, Richmond and Nonsuch Palaces. This might be broken by a visit to Windsor in April for St George's Day and the Ceremony of the Knights of the Garter, and in some years a return to Whitehall for the Royal Maundy. Occasionally the routine was varied with by-progresses further afield, in which Gorhambury and Theobalds as well as other great houses were included. August and September were usually set aside for major progresses to 'royal' places like Kenilworth Castle, Warwick Castle and Woodstock Palace. Late autumn would be spent at Windsor, Oatlands, Hampton Court or Nonsuch. The Queen's Accession Day tournaments, on 17 November each year, took place at Whitehall.

At the age of fourteen, Anthony suffered some kind of illness wherein he nearly lost his eyesight. Whatever illness it was, throughout his whole life Anthony was stricken with sudden bouts of illness, including gout and 'stone' like his father. In addition, he was to be made lame after a riding accident when he was in France in the 1580s.

Anthony Bacon was described as being as great in wit but not so profound in knowledge as Francis. The two brothers were greatly attached to each other, sharing the same philanthropic ideals, literary pursuits and passion for life. In letters Francis refers to Anthony as his "comfort" and "second self". In the dedication to Anthony prefacing Francis' first version of his *Essayes*, published in 1597, Francis addresses Anthony as his "dear Brother" and "Loving and beloved Brother", whilst on the cover of a manuscript collection of Francis Bacon's writings is written, "Anthony Comfort and consort".<sup>9</sup> Throughout their lives they worked together as partners on Francis' grand scheme, which they hatched whilst in their teens at university.<sup>10</sup>

## University

In April 1573 Anthony entered Trinity College, Cambridge University, accompanied by his brother Francis and their father's ward, Edward Tyrell. Anthony was then aged fifteen, but Francis was only twelve years old. It was unusual for a twelve-year-old to be allowed to enter

university at that time, and indeed the 1570 code for Cambridge ordered that no scholar be admitted unless he had completed his 14th year,<sup>11</sup> but Anthony and Francis were very close and had been raised and educated together, with Francis already having been recognised as a genius, so this was clearly the kindest and easiest solution for the boys as well as the parents. Also, because of their high level of education, family wealth and social status as sons of the Lord Keeper, they entered as fellow commoners rather than as scholars, pensioners or sizars, which meant that certain matters could be waived and allowed them special privileges including that of not having to complete the ordinary requirements for a degree. They were placed under the direct charge and tuition of the Master of Trinity College, Dr John Whitgift, one of the Queen's private chaplains, and lodged in a set of rooms under his roof. (Whitgift afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury.) Later they were joined by a Mr. Griffiths, and then a Mr. Whitaker. Their contemporaries and friends at Cambridge included William Clerke, Edmund Spenser, Philemon Holland and Gabriel Harvey.

Gabriel Harvey, fellow of Pembroke Hall and professor of English, was the tutor of Anthony and Francis in rhetoric and poetry. He was an extreme classicist, who headed an attempt made in England to force upon a modern language the metrical system of the Greeks and Romans. In the 1580's he became one of the members of the English Areopagus of scholar-poets led by Sir Philip Sidney, as also did Edmund Spenser.<sup>12</sup>

Philemon Holland came to be well known to Anthony and Francis. He was a Fellow of Trinity College, who translated into English Livy's *History* (1600), Pliny's *Natural History* (1601) and Plutarch's *Morals* (1603).

William Clerke matriculated as a sizar of Trinity College in June 1575 and went on to graduate and become a fellow of the college. He became a friend of the Bacon brothers at Cambridge, which friendship continued afterwards. It was Clerke who was the probable author of *Polimanteia*, published by the Cambridge authorities in 1595, in which he lists the author Shakespeare as an alumnus of Cambridge University.

It was whilst they were studying at Cambridge, and during the time when the supernova in Cassiopeia was blazing away in the heavens (1572-4), that Francis had his first great vision of his life's work, which he was later to call the Great Instauration. This was to some extent a grand transmutation of Sir Nicholas Bacon's project for the advancement of learning and training of statesmen and women, coupled with a strong reaction against the Aristotelian teaching method of academia, which he felt was "barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man".<sup>13</sup> To this should be added a distinct love and appreciation of nature that was no doubt nurtured not only by the horticultural interests of their father and uncle, but also by the brothers' experience of the gardens, parkland, woods and countryside of Gorhambury and the other manors and estates they visited. Anthony, as Francis' most intimate friend as well as brother, was certainly privy to this vision and went on to support Francis and his project in every way he could for the rest of his life.

Another possible influence was the magnificent entertainment put on at Kenilworth Castle by the Queen's favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, which took place 9-27 July 1575 during the summer vacation,<sup>14</sup> which the Queen and all her courtiers attended. This of course would have included Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Queen's Lord Keeper, and Lady Ann Bacon, the Queen's friend and senior lady at Court. There is no record of either Anthony or Francis accompanying them, but it is not unlikely that they did so, as they were following a special educational

training for noblemen and princes endorsed by the Queen, were well known and accepted in court circles, and the Kenilworth Entertainment was an event of a lifetime.

Although resident at Cambridge during term times, this did not prevent Anthony and Francis from making visits during each term to either London or Redgrave by horseback. Some of these visits were for health reasons, as both brothers suffered from bouts of sickness—Anthony particularly so, including eyesight problems—for which they sought out medical help (i.e. herbalist or otherwise, including mild opiates).

In August 1574 the plague broke out and, as a result, the university was closed until the following March, meaning that Francis and Anthony would almost certainly have stayed on at Redgrave or Gorhambury at the end of the summer vacation, until it was safe for them to go back to Cambridge. During this time Anthony's marriage was planned, and on 16 December 1574 Sir Nicholas signed an agreement with James Paget of Grove Place, Southampton, for Anthony to marry Paget's daughter Dowsabell, the only child of his second wife. Anthony was then sixteen, Dowsabell a year or so younger. The marriage was to take place the following year, in May 1575.<sup>15</sup>

In the event, however, for whatever reason, this marriage did not take place. Instead, Anthony returned to Cambridge with Francis in April 1575. In August 1575 they were at Redgrave, which their half-brother Edward, in a letter to Nathaniel Bacon, wrote was due to the plague being about Royston and Cambridge. Being privileged fellow commoners, they requested to leave Cambridge before completing the four years normally required for a degree, having learnt all that the University could offer. They came down on 23 December 1575, just before Christmas, after which they were immediately enrolled for further education at Gray's Inn.

### Gray's Inn 1576-1579

Both Anthony and Francis were admitted to Gray's Inn at the pension of 27 June 1576, as *de societate magistrorum* ('of the society of masters')—the Grand Company of Ancients. This gave them certain privileges including not being bound to any vacations and the possibility of not actually following the legal profession, the training being "for persons of distinction to form their manners and preserve them from the contagion and of vice". In fact, the education system at Gray's Inn was designed not only to train barristers for the legal profession but also to enable sons of noblemen and others "of distinction" to learn sufficient law to run the estates they would inherit, perform courtly duties and serve either the State or their local community in an official capacity. This status had also applied to Sir Nicholas Bacon's sons by his first marriage—Anthony's and Francis' half-brothers—who had been admitted to Gray's Inn in previous years (Nicholas and Nathaniel on 15 December 1562, and Edward in 1566).

Francis, at his request, was sent abroad to join the embassy in France; but Anthony remained in England, ostensibly to study law at Gray's Inn, sharing the Bacon Chambers with his half-brother Edward Bacon. These chambers were those of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who had retained them for the use of his sons. They were in a prime position next to the library and facing the main gateway across Chapel Court. Gray's Inn rules allowed up to two persons at a time to inhabit them. The Pension Book of 21 November clarified their use stating that "Mr. Edward Bacon shall be admitted in my Lord Keeper's chamber in the absence of Mr. Nicholas Bacon his son, and that Mr. Anthony Bacon shall be admitted in the same chamber in the absence

of Mr. Nathaniel Bacon.” It was a loose arrangement and none of the brothers were serious about studying law as a career. Both Nicholas and Nathaniel were fully engaged on other things and residing elsewhere, Nicholas at Redgrave Hall and Nathaniel at Stiffkey, and both had London houses; thus, the chambers were now left for the use of Edward and Anthony.

Edward was ten years the senior of Anthony, Edward being 28 years old in 1576 and Anthony being 18 years old. Both were good friends of each other. However, for the next three years Anthony had the Bacon Chambers to himself, as Edward accompanied Francis to Paris with Sir Amias Paulet’s embassy and then continued on a tour through France, Italy, Austria and Switzerland, staying with Theodore Beza in Geneva, and returning to England via France in 1579. In the vacations Anthony probably visited his parents and lived in their households at York House and Gorhambury. Whether he studied law seriously is doubtful, as he admitted freely to his “want and defect” in the law.<sup>16</sup> So here we have three years (1576-1579) when we do not really know what Anthony was doing.

### Sir Nicholas Bacon’s Death 1579

Although he was by now of a portly frame and suffered from gout and the “stone”, Sir Nicholas Bacon died unexpectedly on 20 February 1579. The cause given was that he had caught a chill as a result of going to sleep in his chair in front of an open window of York House after having been given a shave by his barber, at a time when London was snowed up and freezing cold. This premature death of a much beloved and wise Lord Keeper was a shock to everyone, including the Queen. News of his death was sent via a postscript that Francis Walsingham added to his dispatch to William Davison of the embassy in Paris. As soon as Francis Bacon was informed, he made immediate preparations to return home.

The funeral of Sir Nicholas Bacon took place on 9 March 1579, all being done according to his will, in which no expense was spared. It included a procession bearing the coffin from York House to St Paul’s Cathedral, where the Lord Keeper’s body was finally interred, with both York House and St Paul’s draped in black for the occasion. The procession was headed by 16 beadles, followed by 68 poor men (the number being the same as the Lord Keeper’s age) who had been given morning cloth for the purpose and a shilling each for dinner. The Lord Keeper’s household, comprising 70 persons, followed. After them came the Lord Treasurer Burghley, the principal mourner, accompanied by the earls of Leicester and Huntingdon and Sir Francis Walsingham, the Principal Secretary of State. Behind them walked the Lord Keeper’s sons and three sons-in-law, his brothers-in-law William Cooke and Henry Killigrew, his friend Sir Thomas Gresham, and the Master of the Rolls, the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General and the Master of the Queen’s Jewel House. These were the chief mourners, all clothed in black. Immediately after them came the Lord Keeper’s coffin, followed by Lady Ann Bacon, mounted upon a horse. Sir Nicholas’ three daughters by his first marriage and his two daughters-in-law did not form part of this funeral procession; they went separately to the cathedral for the funeral service.

Sir Nicholas unfortunately died before the Queen had managed to find a title for him, as she had for his brother-in-law, William Cecil, Lord Burghley. If he had had a title, he would not only have been referred to as Lord Chancellor rather than just Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, but also the title could have been handed down in the family. In addition, Sir Nicholas, who had spent many years settling estates on his elder sons, had not managed to complete the arrangements for either Anthony or Francis. Nicholas, Nathaniel and Edward received legacies

as well as having already been endowed with substantial estates, Nicholas with Redgrave and various other estates, Nathaniel with Stiffkey and some smaller manors, and Edward with an estate at Bradford and a London house, Bramfield, in Fetter Lane, and some other valuable London properties. To Anthony Sir Nicholas bequeathed Gorhambury and various smaller manors, lands and tenements in Hertfordshire and Middlesex, plus £360 p.a.; but conditional upon his wife Ann having a life interest in Gorhambury and the other properties. Ann also received Sir Nicholas' interest in York House (which she could sell) and a substantial amount of plate, jewels and gold. Francis was left but a small legacy, as Sir Nicholas died before the arrangements for buying an estate for him had been completed, and the sum set aside for this purchase was absorbed into the general fund used to pay the debts which Sir Nicholas had left.

This meant for Anthony that, although according to his father's will he would inherit Gorhambury once he reached the age of 24, it was nevertheless his mother's home until she should die, whilst the other properties bequeathed to Anthony could also, if Lady Ann wanted or needed, provide her with extra income. The difficulties for Anthony and Francis were somewhat mitigated by the fact that Sir Nicholas stipulated in his will that, in consideration of the legacies and assurances of manors, lands and tenements assured unto his wife, "for all the loves that have been between us," she should "see to the well bringing up of my two sons Anthony and Francis that are now left poor orphans without a father." This meant that Anthony, at least, could call upon funds generated by the property left him, as long as his mother agreed. Francis, however, would have to rely on the goodwill and available resources of his mother and brother to boost his meagre income when needed.

Further difficulties then transpired, as it turned out that Sir Nicholas had left larger debts to repay than originally realised. The two eldest sons of Sir Nicholas by his first marriage, even though well-endowed by marriage as well as by their father's gifts and legacies, were determined to hold onto and gain further as much as they could, even at the expense of Lady Ann, Anthony and Francis. Thus it was that in the ensuing months the two families became embroiled in fierce legal wrangling, with Nicholas and Anthony, as eldest sons of each family, leading the fray, and with Lady Ann 'silently' in the background fighting to get or retain as much as she could for her two sons. The biggest point of contention was the ownership and rental income of Pinner Park in Middlesex, which the Lord Keeper had left in his will to Anthony, but which Nicholas argued should be his by right as the eldest son of Sir Nicholas. Eventually Lord Burghley was called upon to act as arbitrator. He became upset at what he considered were unfair and unmannerly charges levelled against Lady Ann by Nicholas, and also by the disagreements between the elder brothers and their uncompromising attitudes. Eventually matters were settled, but the two pairs of half-brothers were never close again. The friendship remained, however, between Edward and his half-brothers, Anthony and Francis.

After York House had been sorted out, and Lady Ann and her household safely moved to Gorhambury, Anthony requested leave to go on tour on the continent. For this he asked not only the Secretary of State, Sir Francis Walsingham, but also his uncle, Lord Burghley, since part of the arrangements that Sir Nicholas had made in the event of his death was that his brother-in-law should take on the role of *in loco parentis*. Burghley promised to do so, but in the event he turned out to be not too keen on helping either Anthony or Francis financially or in promoting their interests, although he would (and did) guide their actions and determine



to some extent what they could or could not do. This can be seen not only in Burghley's subsequent actions but also in the letter of recommendation for Anthony to use when needed abroad. In the draft of the letter Burghley writes: "The bearer is named Mr. Anthony Bacon son to him whom you knew here a great counsellor, the late Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England, and to me allied in that his mother, the Lady Bacon, is my wife's sister, and since his father's death, the care of the bringing up of him and his brother, being by the testament of his honourable good father committed to me, and by his mother referred absolutely to my consideration..." Burghley then clearly reconsidered what he had written, and so, in the finished version of the letter, the words "the care of the bringing up of him and his brother" do not appear. For many years both Anthony and Francis trusted their uncle as a "father", until eventually their eyes were opened.

## Anthony Bacon on the Continent 1579-1592

In December 1579 Anthony Bacon set out on a long continental tour in search of political intelligence—a tour which, ultimately, was to last for over twelve years. Many commentators in the past have considered that this was purely for his own interest, basing their opinion largely on a letter written by Burghley to La Motte-Fenelon, dated December 1579, in which Burghley says that this journey was made at Anthony's own request and that he assented to allow Anthony, "according to his honest desire, to travel into France, to see the country and to learn the language, and to enable himself by learning good things there, to serve his country better." This, however, was only a partly true explanation. The suggestion to go was Lord Burghley's, and the real aim was so that Anthony could contact spies abroad, gather political intelligence to send home and act as a key English agent or intelligencer abroad. Anthony reveals this disguised fact some years later (in September 1596) in an interview with his aunt, Lady Elizabeth Russell: -

The Lord treasurer should call to mind the confidence he had in the firmness of my religious beliefs when he sent me over to France seventeen years ago, and persuaded me to meet with the traitor Parry.

In working as an intelligencer, Anthony was part of the intelligence service set up and run by Sir Francis Walsingham, the Queen's principal Secretary of State. Walsingham in turn was responsible to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, the Queen's Lord Treasurer, and, ultimately, to the Queen. Walsingham's intelligence service comprised a network of spies all over Europe together with intelligencers, cryptologists and secretaries, with a headquarters in London at The Papey, near Bishops Gate, and subsidiary bases in other countries. Where possible they were connected with the embassies—the main one being in Paris. In 1579-80 over fifty agents were involved in the network abroad, and possibly a similar number in the British Isles, ranging from the ordinary spy to the master-spy and intelligencer. Those abroad were based in twelve towns or cities in France, nine in Germany, four in Italy, three in the Low Countries, four in Spain, and some within the vast Turkish Empire in Algiers, Tripoli and Constantinople. Most of the agents were recruited from universities and then given special training at the 'spy school' in London. In the topmost ranks of the agency were Francis Walsingham's nephew, Thomas Walsingham (who recruited the agents, as well as being a patron of poets), Dr. John Dee (who used the cipher '007' in this capacity, and was a master-teacher of mathematical cryptology, telepathy, psychic communication and far-sight), Nicholas Faunt, Francis Milles, William Waad and Robert Beale (Walsingham's secretaries), Thomas Phelippes (probably the

best of the cryptanalysts as well as a widely-travelled agent), Anthony Bacon and Francis Bacon.

Gathering intelligence for his uncle and the Queen, however, was not the sole reason for Anthony's sojourn abroad. The other reasons were (a) in fulfilment of his father's educational scheme for the education and training of statesmen, in which travel and experience abroad, learning the languages and gathering knowledge of many kinds, especially concerning places, people, governments, religion, laws, culture and history, were a vital component, and (b) to help his brother Francis in his literary, philosophical and poetic endeavours.

The two brothers were greatly attached to each other, sharing the same philanthropic ideals, literary pursuits and passion for life. Throughout their lives they worked together as partners on Francis' grand scheme, which they hatched whilst in their teens at university.<sup>17</sup> In the first edition of his *Essayes* (1597), which he dedicated to Anthony, Francis addresses his brother as "Loving and beloved brother" and "you that are next myself". In letters Francis refers to Anthony as his "comfort" and "second self", and on a manuscript<sup>18</sup> belonging to Francis is written, "Anthony Comfort and consort" — "consort" having the meaning of companion and partner, and "comfort" having the meaning of strength, support, assistance, encouragement, consolation, cheer, solace.

Anthony was described as being as great in wit but not so profound in knowledge as Francis. Like his brother, he was a classical scholar and able to read, write and speak Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and several modern European languages. In Anthony's case, he ended up being able to converse fluently in six to eight different European languages, including especially French, Spanish, Italian and German. Moreover, his fluency eventually became such that he was able to pass for a native of several countries and he was even known to correct the language of many people who sent him their writings and asked for his help. He was also a poet.

Anthony left England for France in Sept 1579, accompanied by one or two attendants and armed with letters of recommendation from Burghley and the French ambassador, Michel de Castelnau, seigneur de Mauvissière. His first port of call was Paris, where a new English Ambassador, Sir Edward Stafford, had taken the place of Sir Amyas Paulet. From Paris Anthony started sending intelligence to Burghley as to the state of France. Whilst in Paris Anthony met Nicholas Faunt, one of Walsingham's secretaries, with whom he commenced a close friendship and correspondence. He also became involved briefly (April-May 1580) with a Welsh Catholic, Dr. William Parry, who was another agent for Walsingham, but a misunderstanding concerning the reasons for Anthony's contact with Parry arose in England (which contact was in fact according to Burghley's orders), and in May or June 1580 he was recalled to England, to give a full report.

Anthony Bacon was back in France again and had arrived in Bourges by the 15th December 1580. He remained in Bourges until the following spring, with Nicholas Faunt (who had gone to Germany to gather intelligence) communicating with him from Frankfurt. Whilst in Bourges, Anthony wrote two letters to his uncle, Lord Burghley, on 14 January and 13 February 1581. In the second letter Anthony enclosed a note of advice and instructions for his younger brother, Francis.<sup>19</sup>

However, if all the information in letters is to be believed at face-value, Anthony found the people of Bourges to be too corrupt and irreligious to want to stay for long, and so, in either

April or May 1581, he moved to Geneva, where he lodged in the house of Theodore Beza, leader of the Protestant Reformation centred at Geneva and the most famous exponent of the Reformed faith since Calvin. Beza esteemed Anthony so highly as to dedicate, out of respect to Anthony and at Anthony's request, his *Meditations* to Lady Anne Bacon, and to send to Anthony's uncle, Lord Burghley, an ancient copy of the Pentateuch in six languages for presentation to the university of Cambridge.<sup>20</sup>

Geneva was a good place from which to reach the German States, Central Europe or Italy (as well as France), and it was an important crossroads between East and West, North and South Europe. Anthony's move to Geneva corresponded with Nicholas Faunt switching his activities from Germany to Northern Italy, communicating with Anthony from Padua and travelling frequently between Northern Italy and Geneva. Whether Anthony also travelled to Italy during this time is not known, but possible.

From November 1581 Faunt was mostly in Geneva with Anthony Bacon, from whence, in February 1582, he had to return home to England, carrying with him the results of the intelligence work to date. Anthony asked Faunt to procure for him a licence of absence for another three years, intending to visit Italy—in particular Padua, Verona and Venice—then returning to France via the Mediterranean coast. Faunt left for England in February 1582, travelling via Paris where he stayed a few weeks before returning to London at the beginning of April 1582.

At the end of February 1582 Anthony's passport duly arrived. However, because Italy was now threatened with invasion by the King of Spain, English travellers were being imprisoned and the Inquisition had been set up in Venice, Faunt advised Anthony not to undertake the journey but to return home. Anthony took only part of the advice—he didn't go into Italy but instead went into southern France. From March to April he was in Toulouse, from May to June he was in Lyons (where, in May, he received permission via Faunt to remain abroad three years longer), and from July to August he was in Montpellier. In September he arrived in Marseilles, by which time he had accrued a larger retinue. During all this time he was sending letters and intelligence (and sonnets) home—to his brother Francis and to both Burghley and Walsingham.

Anthony stayed in Marseilles until the following summer, enduring over the winter months a severe illness of some kind. During this time, he reported back to Faunt regularly and, on one occasion at least, enclosed some more of his sonnets.<sup>21</sup>

By July 1583 he had left Marseilles and was in Bordeaux by August or September. Here he was able to be of service to Leicester, acting as a go-between for Henri, duc de Montmorency and Leicester. The letters from Anthony and Montmorency were delivered to Leicester by Francis Bacon, and on 10 October 1583 Leicester replied to Anthony, reporting that the Queen was "glad she may have so good a mean as you to send and receive letters by, and will write, to the Duke again, if she may first understand that you shall still have occasion to be in place where her letters may safely both come to you and by you be delivered to the Duke".<sup>22</sup>

Whilst at Bordeaux Anthony used his influence to improve the position of the Protestants there, in which (as he wrote to his old tutor, Whitgift, then archbishop of Canterbury) he ran the risk of personal danger. He also made the acquaintance of Michel de Montaigne, the essayist, who became a good friend.

Montaigne, who had had the first edition of his *Essais* ('Essays') published in 1580, had made a lengthy journey through France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy during 1580-1581, so he and Anthony would have had a lot in common to talk about. Montaigne had kept a detailed journal recording various episodes and regional differences he observed on his journey, which eventually was published in 1774 under the title *Travel Journal*, all of which would have been useful to the Bacons. An English translation by John Florio of Montaigne's *Essais* was published in 1603, and many scholars believe that there are influences from them in some of the Shakespeare plays, such as *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. Montaigne was the first author to describe his work as essays, which were developed from his commonplaces and inspired by the works of Plutarch, especially *Oeuvres Morales* ('Moral Works') which had been translated into French by Jacques Amyot. The *Essais* had a strong influence on both French and English literature. Francis Bacon's *Essays* (1597) were the first works in English to be described as essays.

Anthony had planned to spend Christmas in Paris, with the intention of returning to England, but he wrote home saying that he had fallen ill and was forced to remain in Bordeaux. In fact, although this may have been true, there was more to it which he had to keep secret at the time, revealing it later in a letter to the earl of Essex written in 1596. He had been accused of housing rebellious Huguenots and being their intelligencer and director of their commotions, which landed him in a very perilous position. But Anthony's value not only to the Queen but also to Henri de Navarre and Henri III, who were in the midst of negotiations, brought him assistance. Michel de Montaigne, the mayor of Bordeaux, intervened to help, and the Marechal Matignon, reported Anthony, "very honourably and kindly drew the matter into his own hand and protected me in all quietness and safety".<sup>23</sup>

In December 1583 he received yet another letter from Faunt with a request from Lady Anne Bacon, Francis Bacon and Sir Francis Walsingham, for him to return home to England on account of "the troubled state of France" and "the sickly state of his body". Faunt, who heard the truth of Anthony's circumstances on 16 January 1584, wrote to Anthony, warning him to leave Bordeaux as soon as possible. At the same time, Lady Anne was threatening to withhold all monies from Anthony. In the spring all this changed. Faunt reported to Anthony in March 1584 that Walsingham and Burghley began to be satisfied with Anthony's longer stay abroad, and that Lady Anne would not urge his return. The instructions that Anthony should stay longer in France on "her Majesty's service" came from the Queen herself. Walsingham transmitted the Queen's request to Anthony by letter, the reason given being that he could provide "better intelligence in that corner than have been received from any others in those parts," and that he should stay and continue his intelligence "with the parties with whom it seemeth you can prevail".<sup>24</sup>

The background to the royal request that Anthony should stay longer in France was that Alençon, the heir apparent to the throne of France, was dying, and that the Duc d'Épernon was being sent by Henri III to Henri de Navarre in order to try to persuade him to convert to Catholicism, in return for which the French king would make Navarre his heir. Navarre's right-hand man, Philippe du Plessis Mornay, confirmed this news to Sir Edward Stafford, the English ambassador in Paris, who then wrote to Walsingham (in an encrypted letter) to urge the Queen to write to Navarre, assuring him of English support and to strengthen his Protestant resolve. The person chosen to deliver the letter safely and secretly to Navarre was Anthony Bacon, who was already in close contact with the court of Navarre.

So it was that in early July 1584 Anthony travelled to the Kingdom of Béarn, to pay his respects to Henri de Navarre who, in June of that year, had become the heir to the throne of France (Henri was 32 years old; his sister Catherine was 25 years old). The capital was Pau, where the kings of Navarre resided in the Chateau de Pau and from where Catherine de Bourbon, Navarre's sister, governed Béarn as regent, having been entrusted by her brother with this role since 1576 when he escaped from captivity at the Court of France. Navarre's Court was sometimes at Pau, at other times at Nerac, capital of the Pays d'Albret, or at Agen, or less frequently at Montauban. Navarre had recently "furnished his Court with principal gentlemen of the Religion [Protestant] and reformed his house". He had also, the previous year, set up an Academy. Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* references Navarre's Academy and caricatures Henri of Navarre as Ferdinand, King of Navarre. Anthony stayed at Navarre's Court with Henri and his sister Catharine de Bourbon throughout the summer of 1584, and he and Henri became good friends.

Whilst in Béarn, Anthony wrenched his foot in an accident, which appears to have made him lame for the rest of his life. Because of the injury, Navarre persuaded him to stay longer. During this time Anthony met Lambert Danaeus, an eminent protestant theologian and professor of theology in Geneva, who dedicated to Anthony, with affectionate admiration, his commentary on the Minor Prophets (published at Geneva in 1586). Eventually, however, Anthony had to return to Bordeaux, where he promptly fell ill and where, in September 1584, the poet and soldier Guillaume de Salluste, le sieur Du Bartas, wrote to him to consult as to whether his letters were suitable to send to Elizabeth I and to be delivered reliably by Anthony via his correspondence route with Walsingham, Burghley and his brother Francis. Anthony also continued to send useful books to Francis.

By October 1584 Anthony had moved to Montauban, a key Protestant stronghold. He was persuaded to go to Montauban by Phillippe de Mornay, sieur du Plessis-Marly, chief councillor to the King of Navarre, and his wife. Whilst there, on 20 June 1585 Henri III of France signed the Treaty of Nemours, effectively declaring war on Navarre. In September Walsingham sent Anthony a message of recall from the Queen, as the situation was so dangerous; but this was seemingly disregarded as Anthony remained in Montauban, living on close terms of intimacy with Navarre's counsellors, the leaders of Protestant France, for the following five years. (As revealed in a report made by Anthony after he had returned home nearly seven years later, it would appear that he had been asked to stay on in France by his uncle Burghley, so as to continue gathering intelligence. He must also have had his passport renewed to enable him to do so.)

In the summer 1586 a difficult situation arose: not only had Madame du Plessis tried to arrange a marriage between her daughter and Anthony, which Anthony declined, but there was an unfortunate incident concerning Madame du Plessis' appearance in church, in which Anthony found himself unwittingly embroiled. The strong-willed, proud lady felt doubly snubbed by Anthony and, using her influence, had him arrested on a charge of sodomy with his servants. Whether true or untrue, if found guilty the punishment would have been death, so Anthony was in extreme danger. On 23 September 1586 Henri of Navarre intervened. Monsieur du Plessis was ordered to give Anthony 1,500 écus, and on 17 November 1586 the evidence against Anthony was heard again and the charges dropped. By this time Anthony was heavily in debt and had to remain in Montauban until the debts had been repaid. It was not until July 1589 that his debts were finally cancelled, leaving him free to leave Montauban.

The following month, on 1 August 1589, Henri III was assassinated and Navarre became Henri IV of France. During this time Anthony had sent his travelling companion, Thomas Lawson, to England with intelligence, but by then his mother Lady Ann was so furious that Anthony had not yet come home that she compelled Burghley to imprison Lawson for suspected Catholicism, telling another of Anthony's emissaries that her son was "a traitor to God and his country".

Towards the end of 1589 Anthony Bacon left Montauban for Bordeaux, where he lived until the end of 1591. During this time, despite being ill for the first five months, he developed further his friendship with Michel de Montaigne, who had just published (in 1588) the third book of his *Essais*. He also procured the release from prison of Anthony Standen, an English Catholic who was in prison at Bordeaux on suspicion of holding treasonable correspondence with Spain but who was in fact one of Walsingham's spies. He and Standen became good friends and Standen was afterwards one of Anthony's many regular correspondents and then his assistant. Anthony also continued to maintain friendly correspondence with Henri of Navarre, now Henri IV of France, and on 14 April 1590 Henri sent Anthony an autograph letter in which he expressed his high esteem of Anthony's "prudence in the conduct of public affairs". The following month (May 1590) Anthony was visited by the Duke de Bouillon, Henri IV's envoy to England.

Anthony finally left Bordeaux and France in January 1592, setting foot in England on 4 February 1592. There he joined his brother Francis at Gray's Inn.

### Anthony Bacon in England 1592-1601

For the next two years, until April 1594, Anthony lived chiefly with his brother Francis, either in their shared chambers at Gray's Inn or at Twickenham Park, Francis' house by the Thames. At intervals he visited his mother at Gorbambury, or went to reside at Kingston and Redbourne in Hertfordshire, where he had inherited property from his father.

Not only had Anthony Bacon met and befriended many of the literary and philosophical elite abroad, but also he had become and remained the correspondent and friend of spies, scholars, poets, writers, ambassadors, noblemen and women, courtiers, princes and princesses, kings and queens, in many countries. These included Henri of Navarre, now Henri IV of France, Michel de Montaigne, Theodore Beza and Lambert Danaeus, all of whom had become good friends.

Anthony's correspondents not only praised him for his intellect, wit, scholarship and virtue, but they also knew him as a poet and musician. He played the lute and virginals, and had sent sonnets home from France from the mid-1580's onwards. Always he had kept his brother Francis well provided with foreign intelligence as well as with books and other literature. He had a good library of his own and in addition had been able to use the libraries of the kings, princes, noblemen and others whom he befriended.

After he came home in February 1592, Anthony carried on distributing his sonnets privately amongst his friends in England as well as to friends in Europe. Moreover, poets of Europe sent their poems to Anthony for his appraisal and critique, including the French poet Jean de la Jessée (in 1597). An anonymous continental poet eulogised Anthony as the English Phoenix of celestial origin—a poet of rare and perfect virtue.

Having worked hard for Burghley all those years abroad, sometimes in dangerous circumstances and at his own expense, Anthony naturally sought the favour of his uncle in the hope of some kind of advancement. However, he received nothing but fair words, just like his brother Francis had been receiving for twelve years—and such words, according to Anthony's own account, as “make fools fain, and yet even in these no offer or hopeful assurance of real kindness, which I thought I might justly expect at the lord treasurer's hands, who had inured my ten years' harvest into his own barn without any halfpenny charge.”<sup>25</sup> Both brothers were consistently denied positions at Court suited to their ability, experience and service, and for which they had been trained, and the reason for this, as Anthony discovered, was Burghley and his younger favourite son, Robert Cecil (son of Mildred née Cooke, Burghley's second wife and elder sister of Lady Ann Bacon).

The only thing that really goes anywhere near explaining this antagonistic behaviour by the Cecil combo of father and son is that they felt their own power base would be threatened if the Bacon brothers acquired the positions for which they were suited. Anthony in particular would have been well suited to be Secretary of State, like Walsingham. It is interesting to note that when William Davison was dismissed from the post of Secretary in 1587, the Queen did not appoint a successor and Burghley abstained from giving any advice. Instead Burghley quietly appointed his second son Robert as temporary acting Secretary, in which position Robert Cecil remained until, on his father's death in 1598, he became Secretary of State by default. Moreover, if Francis Bacon really was the Queen's son, as evidence tends to show, then if the Queen ever acknowledged and named him as her heir, which she was entitled to do, then Burghley and his son would definitely lose the supreme power they enjoyed over the Queen and country. Another or an added reason, or at least the reason Burghley used as an excuse when advising the Queen, was because his strict Protestant viewpoint frowned on poets or “dreamers”, as he called them, considering such matters detrimental to the holding of office—but this was a poor excuse in the light of what the Bacon brothers actually did, the intelligence they supplied, the contacts they made, the high esteem they were held in, and the knowledge and experience they accrued.

A few years later, in September 1596, in an interview with his aunt, Lady Elizabeth Russell, Anthony was forced to put the record straight and explain how he was being wronged. Lady Elizabeth questioned Anthony's activities and involvement with foreign intelligence, spies and friendships abroad in Scotland, France and other countries, suggesting that he had abandoned “the kind old nobleman” Burghley. Anthony suggested that she should ask his uncle “what makes him so loath to advance his nephews”, and pointed out that his cousin Robert Cecil “has sworn that he holds me for a mortal enemy, and will make me feel it when he can”.

However, it might have helped if Anthony had been able to get himself to Court to pay his respects to the Queen. His brother Francis and others urged him to do so when he first arrived home, but Anthony fell so ill that he had to take to his bed in Gray's Inn, where he remained for the first six months after his return from the continent. He again fell ill in early August 1592 when he was invited to his aunt Elizabeth's house at Bisham, where the Queen was visiting and expecting to see him, and he retreated to Gorhambury instead. In the autumn 1593 he tried to go to Bath in the hope of some cure, but that journey was aborted because of the gout and pain with which he was seized, preventing him from even standing. Shortly after, Francis pressed Anthony to come to Court at Windsor, to see the Queen, but to start

with Anthony was laid low with a long fit of ague and the stone. In October 1593 Anthony made a special effort to travel to Windsor where the Queen and Court were, but he only managed to get as far as Eton, where he was seized with “a sharp fit of the stone”. News reached the Court at Windsor and Lady Russell came to see Anthony where he was laid up, and saw that he was indeed in no fit state to attend the Queen. She told him that the Queen had protested with an oath that if he (Anthony) had half as much health as honesty, she knew nowhere throughout her realm where to find a better servant or one who was more to her liking. By October 1595, with Anthony still not having managed to go to Court to see the Queen, his mother Lady Ann wrote to him that she had on good authority that her Majesty had marvelled he had not yet been to see her in all this while.

A meeting with the Queen at Court never did happen. It seems that ill-health really was the cause. As Anthony reported in a letter to Dr Barker of Shrewsbury in 1592, he had inherited “gout and stone” from his father and suffered from the condition right from birth: “My complexion sanguine, my constitution of body even from my youth sickly and rheumatic, having been at 14 years of age in danger of losing both my eyes.” Thenceforth he “began to be made a piste of phisic” (i.e. a field of play for a fencing match of medicine). After seven years in France he wrenched his right foot, making him lame and leading to “a running gout” affecting his shoulder, arm, hand, knee and foot, with intermittent pain, coupled with “stiffness and weakness” in his joints and a “swelling and dissolution” of his sinews—all of which took him “by fits as well in the summer as winter”. His stomach was weak and he suffered from wind, “light purifyings” and vomiting. In complete frankness to his doctor, he stated that he had never been troubled by “*leues veneria*” (i.e. venereal disease) and was sexually virgin—which one supposes he remained to the end of his life.

Not long after he had returned from the continent, Anthony, at the request of his brother Francis, put himself at the service of the Earl of Essex, whom Francis had been assisting even before the Anthony arrived back in England.

And when not long after I entered into this course [helping Essex], my brother Master Anthony Bacon came from beyond the seas, being a gentleman whose ability the world taketh knowledge of for matters of State, specially foreign, I did likewise knit his service to be at my Lord's disposing.

Francis Bacon, *Apology concerning the Earl of Essex* (1603)<sup>26</sup>

Anthony undertook to obtain foreign intelligence earlier than and possibly unavailable to others in the Queen’s service, so that Essex might thereby not only be better informed than others but also, and especially, maintain and advance himself in the Queen’s royal favour by keeping her Majesty well informed. Anthony headed an intelligence service, partly inherited from Walsingham and partly developed by himself, which he ran for Essex. Francis Bacon was, naturally, also involved, as a partner who assisted with cryptology, translations and, aided by his ‘good pens’, with correspondence and copying, although his main focus of labour, besides legal work and advising the Queen, was on developing his Great Instauration and writing plays and speeches, for which the supplied intelligence was of enormous use. For his part, Anthony supported Francis in his great endeavours, which, because Anthony was lauded as a poet and was a member of Gray’s Inn, sharing chambers with Francis, may well have included an input into the poetic aspect of the Great Instauration (i.e. the plays and revels).



Of the many spies and intelligencers engaged in this intelligence service, Anthony Standen was a key agent, Thomas Phelippes was a key cryptographer and Henry Wotton was a key secretary. Wotton went abroad in 1589 for six years, travelling via Vienna, Venice, Rome and Geneva, and sending intelligence home to Anthony and Essex. When he returned to England in 1594, he became a secretary to Essex, assisting Anthony Bacon in the handling of intelligence material connected with Transylvania, Poland, Italy and Germany. Standen—who had been a member of the court of the Duke of Tuscany, from whence he used to send secret reports to Sir Francis Walsingham, including details of the Spanish armada, and who had travelled extensively in Turkey, Italy, France and Spain gathering intelligence of all kinds, and who had set up spy networks in Spain and France that served the English Crown— returned to England in 1593, bearing copious intelligence and expecting to be welcomed by Burghley and the government; but, on his arrival on the shores of England, Burghley showed unwillingness even to allow him to land. Anthony came to Standen's rescue and offered him accommodation in his chambers at Gray's Inn: hence Standen shared his 28 years of experience with the Bacon brothers, working closely with them and providing the link with his agent, Anthony Rolston, in Spain.

Anthony also performed a statesmanlike role and, to this end, he entered into correspondence with agents in Scotland, where Essex was anxious to advance James VI's claims to the English throne, and made a visit to Scotland towards the end of 1594. He became well trusted by King James and received in 1594 the King's thanks for the zeal he was displaying in his behalf. He likewise kept up a good correspondence and friendship with Henri III in France. On 14 April 1590 Henri sent Anthony an autograph letter in which he expressed his high esteem of Anthony's "prudence in the conduct of public affairs" and, shortly after, in May 1590, Henri IV's envoy to England, the Duke de Bouillon, visited Anthony. In this quiet way, Anthony helped to build up and maintain friendly and peaceful relations between the three countries.

In February 1593 Anthony was returned to parliament as M.P. for Wallingford. The fact that he opposed a government bill imposing new penalties on recusants would not have helped his hopes for preferment. His brother Francis did something similar in the same parliament, by opposing a request by the government to the House of Commons to raise additional taxes to support the war abroad. Francis opposed it because Burghley and the Queen were dictating how much tax should be raised and proposing that all future discussions about such matters should be done in the presence of the Queen and council. This was actually an attack on the fundamental basis of democracy in England, wherein the House of Commons had the right to raise and set the level of taxes free of governmental interference and to discuss such matters privately. Burghley and the Queen were trying to destroy that basis of democracy. Francis Bacon won his argument, resulting in the Queen being furious and him being out of favour for more than a year. So, both Bacon brothers stood up against the very government that they hoped to join. Not a good move, some would say.

Having first stayed at Gray's Inn until August 1593, then Twickenham Park until mid-November 1593, Gorhambury until mid-December, and Redbourne until April 1594, Anthony moved in April to a house in Bishopsgate Street, which had been found for him by his friend Nicholas Faunt. The house was almost next door to the Bull Inn where plays were performed that attracted the fashionable men about town such as the Earl of Essex. It was also within easy reach of Shoreditch, where James Burbage's two playhouses, the Theatre and the

Curtain, were located and which had just reopened after being closed during 1592-3 because of the plague. The Burbages (James and his sons Cuthbert and Richard) and their fellow-players were lodged in Bishopsgate. At that time Will Shakspeare was one of the actors in James Burbage's company, whilst Edward Burbage, son of William Burbage of Pinner Park, was one of Anthony's servants. (William Burbage was well known to the Shaksperes, having been engaged in a dispute with John Shakspeare, Will's father, over a house in Stratford-upon-Avon.) Another of Anthony's servants was Edward Spencer, the nephew of Alderman Sir John Spencer, to whom Anthony sold his manor of Barley for £3,500. Sir John Spenser, who that year became Lord Mayor (1594-5), was one of the wealthiest men in the City of London. He owned Crosby Hall in Bishopsgate, his London home, and Canonbury Manor in Islington, his country residence.

Anthony needed this London townhouse not just for himself, to provide privacy and freedom, but also so that there could be easier access and better communication between him and Essex and others at Essex House, including especially Antonio Perez, the King of Spain's former Secretary of State. Perez, after being denounced, imprisoned and tortured by order of Philip of Spain, managed to escape into Aragon, then from thence to Béarn, taking refuge in Pau at the residence of King Henri's sister, Princess Catherine of Bourbon. Perez then acted as an agent for Henri and journeyed to England in April 1593 and again in July 1593 as Henri's envoy. Elizabeth disapproved of him, and Burghley and Cecil were cool towards him, but Essex was friendlier. Perez, therefore, offered his services and intelligence to Essex, and stayed on in England, ignoring Henri's orders to return to France in October 1593. To begin with, Perez lodged at the French Embassy in London, but then moved into rooms in Essex House.

Although it alarmed Lady Ann Bacon, Anthony struck up a good friendship with Perez and the two worked closely together. Perez was a humanist scholar and had translated Homer's *Odyssey* from Greek into Spanish. His Spanish letters and aphorisms, which Anthony copied out for himself and his friends, were in great demand in England. Perez also wrote a best-selling book, *Pedacos de Historia o Relaciones* ('Pieces of History and Relationships'), under the assumed name of "Raphael Peregrino", whilst he was in London. The book, dedicated to Essex, was published later that year by Richard Field, intended for sale in the Netherlands and Spain. According to a newsletter written in Flanders at the beginning of 1595, the *Relaciones* had been printed at the expense of the Queen of England and a great number of copies had been conveyed into Aragon to incite that kingdom into rebellion.<sup>27</sup> In reality, of course, it was Essex who defrayed the costs of the printing. In addition, Essex employed Arthur Atey, one of his secretaries, to translate the *Relaciones* into English. When completed, on 27 March 1595 Atey submitted his English translation to Anthony Bacon with the request that he should go through it carefully and make emendations where necessary.<sup>28</sup> The title of the translation, *Pieces of the storye or Relaciones (so called) by the Peregrini their Authors* (now in the Bodleian Library), suggests that Anthony and possibly others may have contributed some stories to add to those of Perez.<sup>29</sup> Another of Essex' secretaries, Henry Wotton, wrote a review of the book, which he appended to his treatise on contemporary politics, *The State of Christendom*. Presentation copies of Perez' book were given not only to the dedicatee, the Earl of Essex, but also to the Earl of Southampton, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Mountjoy, Sir Robert Sidney, Anthony and Francis Bacon, Henry Wotton and Lord Burghley.<sup>30</sup>

The word "peregrinate" is constantly used in Perez's letters, in ironic reference to his own travels and misfortunes, and to himself as "el peregrino" (hence his pseudonym, "Raphael

Peregrino"). This word, 'peregrinate', meaning 'to travel from place to place', was firmly introduced into the English language as a new word via *Love's Labour's Lost* ("He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd as it were, too peregrinate"),<sup>31</sup> whilst the character of the Spaniard Don Armado in the Shakespeare play is based on Antonio Perez.

Perez eventually went to France (in July 1595) and then was sent to Italy to build up an intelligence service there that would supply Anthony with intelligence. It was fully operational from February 1596 until the beginning of 1598. Giovanni Basadonna, their Venetian friend in London, was the forwarding agent; his friend, Giacomo Marengo, was employed as intelligencer. Peter Wroth was sent to Venice to set up the headquarters in the house of Giovanni's brother but, as he died on the way there, his role was taken by Dr Henry Hawkins.

At the end of 1594, during the Gray's Inn Christmas Revels (for which, that year, Francis Bacon was responsible as co-Treasurer of Gray's Inn), a dramatic work by Francis Bacon hinted publicly at the existence of a Rosicrucian society associated with the pseudonym of 'William Shakespeare'. The twelve days of revels included certain 'Grand Nights', the first of which became known as the "Night of Errors", named after the Shakespeare comedy, *The Comedy of Errors*, that had been performed there that evening (Holy Innocents' Day, 28th December) and the general commotion that had taken place. This supposedly brought the good name of Gray's Inn into disrepute and so a second Grand Night was arranged five days later to put matters right. The entertainment for this was called *The Honourable Order of the Knights of the Helmet*, written by Francis Bacon, in which he presented his philosophical ideals and an Order of Knighthood dedicated to carrying them out. The purpose of the Order was to correct the errors and bring order out of chaos. The name of this philosophical Order relates to the divine spear-shaker, Pallas Athena, the tenth Muse and Patroness of the Arts and Sciences, who presents helmets of illumination to her knight-heroes. These helmets are said to bestow invisibility on the wearer as well as being 'will helms' (the derivation of 'William')—helmets of strength, or clear perception and judgement.

During this time Anthony must have been involved with intelligence work in Ireland as well as the rest of Europe, as Francis Bacon wrote to him on 25 January 1595 from his "lodging at Twickenham Park", asking Anthony to send him something more for the student-lawyers he was employing, for his literary and poetic activities, to write out. In the letter Francis says that they have almost finished Anthony's "Irish collection" and requests that Anthony send "a collection of Dr James of foreign states largeliest of Flanders" which he, Francis, would be glad to have.<sup>32</sup> In the same letter Francis further suggests to his brother "whether it were not a good time to set in strongly with the Queen to draw her to honour your travels"; but, as mentioned earlier, Anthony never managed to get himself to Court to see the Queen.

In October 1595 Essex invited Anthony to take up residence in Essex House, occupying the rooms that had previously accommodated Antonio Perez. Anthony accepted and moved into Essex House as a kind of 'Secretary of State' to Essex, where he set up a secretariat dealing with political intelligence, cryptography, translations of correspondence and books in foreign languages and the classics, invention of new words, and literature generally. Besides Anthony's own secretariat, Essex also had four secretaries working at Essex House, including Henry Cuffe, a Greek scholar, and Henry Wotton, the friend and cousin of the Bacon brothers who published his memoirs, *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, in 1651.

Essex house, previously known as Leicester House, was the centre where the Walsingham-Sidney-Pembroke-Essex literary circle (i.e. the Shakespeare circle) frequently met, following on from the Earl of Leicester's time when it was the meeting place for poets, scholars, writers and artists of various kinds who were patronised by Leicester.

From this time until his death, Anthony worked faithfully to help Essex with political intelligence and his brother Francis with the same intelligence but also literary matters, so that Francis could forward his own project of the reformation of all arts and sciences, particularly via the theatre. Gout and stone continued to oppress him, and he not only had to spend a considerable amount on running a secretariat at Essex House and an intelligence network across Europe, but also on heating his quarters in Essex House, which, although commodious, were somewhat damp and a danger to his health. Anthony also supported Francis' work financially as well as intellectually. All this expense meant that he was constantly borrowing money and gradually alienating his estates to cover his debts. Francis, although a beneficiary of this, nevertheless was worried as to where it all might lead, to which Anthony replied that he was, "by an imperfection of nature, not only careless of myself, but incapable of what is best for myself."

Anthony's regular correspondents from 1596 onwards were wide-spread and included Sir Thomas Bodley, the English ambassador at The Hague; Sir Anthony Sherley, the renowned traveller; John Napier, the inventor of logarithms (who sent Anthony mathematical papers); Dr. Hawkins, the ambassador at Venice; and Sir Thomas Challoner, an accomplished scholar, whom Anthony had introduced into Essex's service.

In the spring of 1596, with an attack upon Cadiz having been resolved upon by the Government, Essex was given command of the land forces. The fleet sailed from Plymouth on 2 June and on the 21st June Cadiz was successfully captured and the Spanish fleet (a planned new Armada) destroyed. Essex immediately despatched to England an account of the Cadiz action; but, when this came to the knowledge of the Queen, she forbade its publication. Anthony did his utmost to persuade the printers to proceed, but they dared not disobey the order; so, he caused written copies to be made, which he sent to the Earl's friends to copy and pass on. By this means a copy was sent to Scotland; Bodley forwarded one to the Low Countries; and M. de la Fontaine sent one in French to the French Court.

Immediately prior to the Iberian (Cadiz) expedition, Antonio Perez returned to England in the embassy of the Duc de Bouillon, who had been sent by Henri IV to negotiate an Anglo-French treaty and persuade Elizabeth to provide troops to aid the French king who, although now a 'convert' to Catholicism (in 1593, to bring an end to the wars of religion in France), needed assistance in dealing with Spanish forces (France having declared war on Spain in January 1595). The idea of a formal alliance between England and France had at first been strongly supported by Essex, and Anthony had been working to facilitate friendly relations between the two kingdoms, but now the Iberian expedition against the Spanish loomed, Essex had withdrawn his support. Nicolas Harlay de Sancy, Henri IV's Superintendent of Finances, who had preceded the others of the French delegation to England, brought a letter from Henri to Anthony, asking for Anthony's assistance in persuading Essex to renew his support. The letter and Anthony's reply were conveyed by Monsieur Le Doux, a key agent in the intelligence network. As for Perez, he was hoping to obtain permission to reside permanently in England. However, Sancy had spoken deprecatingly of the Spaniard to the Queen, who as a result

denied Perez access to her presence. With Essex absenting himself, Perez turned to Anthony and, for next few weeks, proved to be an unremitting scourge, with his almost non-stop complaints and demands. Eventually, in exasperation and with no help forthcoming from Essex, Anthony fled to “the wholesome pleasant lodge and fine-designed garden” of Twickenham Park, to find some privacy and peace.<sup>33</sup> Bouillon finally returned to France on 28 May 1596, with Perez in tow, and with the treaty successfully ratified (The Treaty of Greenwich).

When Essex arrived safely back in England with the fleet, the Queen, instead of being delighted, expressed her intense dissatisfaction that her share of the plunder was not larger. Essex wrote despairingly to Anthony: “Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.” This was to be compounded still further. On the 8th of September the Earl again wrote to Anthony, reporting that the Lord Treasurer and Sir Robert Cecil had been arguing with him before Her Majesty, saying that it was inexcusable his having brought no booty home. “This day,” he told Anthony, “I was more braved by your little cousin than ever I was by any man in my life.”

In terms of the people of England, Essex was a hero and the best-loved man in England, This, however, only made the antagonism between the Essex and Cecil factions grow ever stronger. Anthony even called Burghley “the old man,” and Antonio Perez dubbed Robert Cecil, “Roberto il Diavalo” (“Robert the Devil”). Burghley did, however, make an attempt to conciliate Essex by supporting his claim to profit from the ransoms of the Spanish prisoners, although much to the Queen’s indignation. Anthony exulted at the old man’s humiliation: “Our Earl hath made the old fox to crouch and whine.”

In July 1596, whilst Essex was absent, Robert Cecil was officially made the Secretary of State. With her two sons still not honoured, Lady Ann Bacon wrote to Anthony advising him to be “more circumspect and advised in your discoursings, doings and dealings in your accustomed matters, either with or for yourself and others.” Anthony replied that: -

For mine own part, the reading and Christian meditation of the 36th and 37th psalms shall, with God’s grace, serve to keep me from emulating any worldly prosperity or greatness, or fearing the effects of human power or malice, so long as it please God to comfort and strengthen the best part of me, as hitherto He hath done with extraordinary effect...

This reply to his mother gives an important insight into Anthony’s mind-set and dedication to a life of righteousness and service without desire for worldly power, wealth or fame. Psalm 36, in particular, contains the verse (verse 7) from which the motto of the Rosicrucians was derived: -

How excellent is Thy loving kindness, O God!  
Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.

Psalm 36, 7.

A little that a righteous man hath is better  
Than the riches of many wicked.

Psalm 37, 16.

Later, in September 1596, Lady Russell, his mother's sister, called on Anthony and told him that the Lord Treasurer was vexed at Anthony's "alteration" in his mind, "which is said to be corrupted in religion, factious and busy, undutiful and unnatural" and at Anthony's estrangement from him, and "sorrowing to hear that you have diminished what your father left you." She also accused her nephew of carrying on a suspicious correspondence with Scotland and France, and being too much concerned with foreign politics: -

The daily resort of these unto you, nephew, makes you odious. Secondly, you are too well known and beloved in Scotland to be a true Englishman, and busy yourself with matters above your reach as foreign intelligencies and entertainment of spies. You have not only abandoned the kind old nobleman your uncle, but you do him ill offices, not only with the Earl here in Essex House, but in France and Scotland by means of your acquaintance. In one word, you oppose yourself more directly than any nobleman in England durst do, how great soever.

Anthony refuted these charges by listing and explaining some of the chief contacts he had made and situations he had been in, and pointing out that his uncle Lord Burghley had asked him to do this, that the chief men of the State appreciated the information he drew from abroad, and that his actions had the approval and gratitude of the Queen: -

The Lord treasurer should call to mind the confidence he had in the firmness of my religious beliefs when he sent me over to France seventeen years ago, and persuaded me to meet with the traitor Parry. He assured both her Majesty and the Earl of Leicester, that Parry would never shake either my religion or my honesty. Let him recall how I lodged with Théodore Beza, who dedicated his Meditations to my mother. Let him recall how I visited the King of Navarre and his sister the Princess Catherine in Béarn, and later in Bordeaux roused the hostility of certain Jesuits there, and found protection from the kindness of the Marshal Matignon...

And if you wish for further good confirmation of my character I will read you a letter written some thirteen years ago by the late Secretary of State, Sir Francis Walsingham, to me in her Majesty's name, expressing her gracious acceptance of my poor endeavours, and the assurances of her princely favour and good opinion.

Lady Russell, having heard all this and read the letter, exclaimed: "God's body, nephew, thou art mightily wronged: for here is not only warrant but encouragement." Anthony then pointed out how he had received no reward or thanks of any kind from his uncle, even though Burghley was the chief beneficiary of all Anthony's labour and had made promises to Anthony, as he had to Francis, all of which turned out to be empty: -

Is it not a hard case, than an honest and loyal subject, son of so faithful a servant and true patriot, should reap no other fruits than jealousies, suspicions, and misinterpretations? I deny not, that in France I encountered many Scots gentlemen both well and ill-affected, but never sought them out until I received the warrant you have seen; since when I confess to have tilled, as industriously as I could, so barren a soil, only for her Majesty's service, which I hope the Lord Treasurer will grace with fitter names than faction and outrecuidance, seeing such poor fruits as grew in my own poor ground hath hitherto come free both to her Majesty and to his Lordship...

Ask my uncle what makes him so loath to advance his nephews, madam. And this my brother and myself have found too true, howsoever it pleases him to protest to the contrary. And his son, Mr. Cecil, has sworn that he holds me for a mortal enemy, and will make me feel it when he can.

When a summary of the meeting was conveyed to Burghley by Lady Russell, he in turn refuted the charges made against him, blaming Anthony for falling ill when called to meet the Queen. But this in no way explains why he never kept his promise to Francis Bacon, who was perfectly well and able, or why he did not appear to help either brother, morally, financially or in terms of position, but rather the contrary. Burghley and his son Robert were entirely antagonistic to Essex, just as they had been earlier towards the Earl of Leicester, both of whom were favourites of the Queen, and they included in that antagonism anyone who was a close friend and helper of either favourite, and thus a potential threat to their own near-absolute power base.

At the beginning of 1597 Francis Bacon had his first book of essays published, which he dedicated to Anthony, his “Loving and beloved brother”, in the most affectionate terms: -

But since they [the essays] would not stay with their Master, but would needes travaile abroade, I have preferred them to you that are next my selfe, Dedicating them, such as they are, to our love, in the depth whereof (I assure you) I sometimes with your infirmities translated uppon my selfe, that her Majestie mought have the service of so active and able a mind, & I mought be with excuse confined to these contemplations and Studies for which I am fittest, so commend I you to the preservation of the divine Majestie. From my Chamber at Graies Inne this 30. Of Ianuarie. 1597. Your entire Loving brother. Fran. Bacon.

Francis Bacon, *Dedicatorie, Essayes. Religious Meditations. Places of persuasion and disswasion.* (London: 1597)

Since books usually required patronage from some eminent person, normally an aristocrat, Anthony, clearly concerned that his brother’s literary endeavours should do well, sent a copy of the book to Essex, offering to have the dedication to him (Anthony) transferred to the Earl, if Essex would grant his “acceptance and trustworthy protection” for the book.

As my brother, in token of a mutual firm brotherly affection, hath bestowed by dedication the property of them upon myself, so your Lordship to whose disposition and commandment I have entirely and inviolably vowed my poor self, and whatever appertaineth unto me, either in possession or right—that your Lordship, I say, in your noble and singular kindness towards us both, will vouchsafe first to give me leave to transfer my interest unto your Lordship, then humbly to crave your honourable acceptance and trustworthy protection.

Anthony did an immense amount of work for Essex, running an intelligence network which necessitated employing many people at home and abroad for the purpose, most of which Anthony funded himself out of his limited remaining private resources and by raising loans. There seems no doubt that Essex always intended to repay Anthony, but never actually managed to do so. When, for instance, Essex was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on 24 March 1599—a position that both Anthony and Francis advised him not to take—and before he set out for that country at the head of 17,000 troops to put an end to the rebellion led by the Earl of Tyrone, he appears to have given, or offered to give, Essex House to Anthony in

lieu of the debt he owed. This information is derived from a letter written from John Chamberlain to his friend Dudley Carlton, dated 28 June 1599: -

The Queen is given to understand that he (Essex) has given Essex house to Antonie Bacon, wherewith she is nothing pleased; but as far as I heare it is but in lieu of 2000 l. he meant to bestow upon him, with a clause of redemption for that sum by a day.

Chamberlain's Letters. Camb. Society.<sup>34</sup>

This gift, however, was never ratified and therefore never received by Anthony.

Matters did not go well in Ireland. Essex not only failed to engage properly and as expected with the Irish forces, but he wasted his funds, dispersed his army into garrisons, and bestowed knighthoods promiscuously, all of which infuriated the Queen and her Council. Then, in September 1599 Essex unexpectedly returned from Ireland, ostensibly to explain matters to the Queen. This, however, was treated as disobeying orders and, under pressure from Cecil, on 10 March 1600 Essex was placed under house arrest. On 5 June 1600, he was tried before a commission of 18 men, convicted, deprived of public office and returned to virtual confinement. On 26 August 1600 his freedom was granted, but the source of his basic income—the sweet wines monopoly—was not renewed, making his situation desperate. In early 1601 he began to fortify Essex House and, on the morning of 8 February 1601, he rode out of Essex House with a party of nobles and gentlemen in an attempt to raise support from the Londoners, force an audience with the Queen and remove Cecil and his faction. The uprising failed and, on 19 February 1601, Essex was tried on charges of treason, found guilty and, on 25 February 1601, beheaded on Tower Green in the Tower of London.

Before Essex's house arrest, on 10 March 1600, Lady Leicester, Lord and Lady Southampton, Sir Fulke Greville and Anthony Bacon were ordered by the Queen to quit Essex House. Where Anthony went, we do not know. Several possibilities have been suggested: (1) his chambers in Gray's Inn that he shared with his brother Francis, (2) Twickenham Lodge, Francis' retreat, (3) Sir William Cornwallis' house at Bishopsgate, or (4) Lady Walsingham's house in Seething Lane. The latter seems the most likely, at least in the last few weeks or months before Anthony died, because of the place where his body was interred on his death. Lady Walsingham was the widow of Sir Francis Walsingham and mother of Frances, Countess of Essex, and her house in Seething Lane was close to St Olave's Church, Hart Street, in the City of London. Anthony died in May 1601 and on 17 May 1601 his body was "buried in a chamber within the vault" of St Olave's Church.<sup>35</sup>

Only one surviving letter, from Chamberlain to Carleton dated 27 May 1601, mentions that Anthony Bacon had died:

Antony Bacon died not long since; but so far in debt, that I think his brother is little the better by him.

Chamberlain's Letters. Camb. Society.<sup>36</sup>

There is no mention of Anthony's death or burial amongst Francis Bacon's papers, and no will of Anthony's has been traced. Moreover, Anthony's name was omitted from State Papers between December 1600 and February 1601; his name was only mentioned twice during Essex's trial and then only as a passing reference of no great import; and all of Anthony's correspondence during and after 1598 is missing, perhaps destroyed, whereas previous



correspondence had been carefully collected and preserved by Anthony, then kept by Francis Bacon and passed on to Thomas Tenison who, after he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1594, presented it to Lambeth Palace Library.

How or why Anthony died when he did, aged only 42 or so, we will probably never know. From a long letter dated 30 May 1601 and addressed to Anthony by an anonymous writer (which was never seen by Anthony, for he died some days before it was written),<sup>37</sup> we learn that Anthony strove to the last to prove Essex innocent of the worst accusations brought against him. Moreover, Anthony was left deeply in debt as a result of Essex's execution, and we know from a letter which Francis wrote to the Queen earlier that he feared that Anthony "will endeavour to put away Gorhambury", presumably to repay those debts.

It may have been from heartbreak and the shock of finally realising the extent of Essex's treason, compounded by the worry and stress of the situation and his own ill-health, which caused Anthony's death. Some historians have suggested that Anthony might have committed suicide because of the terrible loss he had incurred, coupled with the fear that he might be arrested and sent to the Tower (or worse) as a suspected accomplice of Essex. Personally, I think suicide is unlikely, as it would have gone against Anthony's strong religious beliefs and, moreover, his body was interred in the vault beneath the floor of St Olave's Church, which would not have been allowed if he had committed suicide. It is possible that Anthony was murdered, as being someone who knew too much and was too dangerous to certain parties in what he might reveal. As it appears that one of his men (a Frenchman) might have been interred in the same vault a few days after his own body was laid to rest there, it makes this possibility seem even more likely.<sup>38</sup>

Letters of administration were granted to Anthony's brother Francis on 30 May 1601, for dealing with Anthony's estate. Anthony had already sold or mortgaged most of his estates, but had managed (just) to hold onto Gorhambury. Chamberlain wrote in May 1601 that Anthony had died "so far in debt that I think his brother is little the better by him".

During his 12-plus years' sojourn on the continent, Anthony Bacon had corresponded regularly with Walsingham's secretary, Nicholas Faunt, with his uncle Lord Burghley, with his brother Francis Bacon, and with the English agents in various parts of Europe. He also corresponded with princes, nobles, ministers, ambassadors, philosophers, poets and writers, and he carried on this correspondence, enlarging it further, when returned to England until the end of his life. Sixteen volumes of these letters are extant in manuscript, preserved at Lambeth Palace Library. Some additional letters are at the British Museum and others are in the Public Record Office. They provide as full a picture of European history as any extant collection of documents, and may be the reason for their careful preservation in the first place by both Bacon brothers. Dr. Thomas Birch utilised them by using extracts for his *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, published in 1574, and in his *Historical View of the Negotiations between France and England, 1592-1617*, published in 1749.

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## Suggested reading

Dr. Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (1574).

Daphne Du Maurier, *Golden Lads: A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis, and Their Friends* (Victor Gollancz Ltd, London: 1975).

Lisa Jardine & Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune* (Victor Gollancz Ltd, London: 1998).

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The Tudors used the Julian Calendar in which each year ended on 24 March and the new year began on 25 March. The Julian Calendar, which by the late 16th century was inaccurate by ten days, remained in use in Britain until the Gregorian Calendar was adopted in 1752 and the new year moved to 1 January. In this essay the years, where given, have been updated where necessary to suit the modern Gregorian calendar.

<sup>2</sup> The good reasons include:

- (1) Anthony went up to Cambridge with his brother Francis in April 1573. The 1570 code for Cambridge ordered that no scholar be admitted unless he had completed his 14th year. University terms were October to Christmas, January to Easter, Easter to July, so this means that Anthony took up residence in Trinity College, Cambridge, in the Easter to July term, the third term of the academic year. Normal practice was for students to be in residence three terms a year, but the fact that Anthony went up to Cambridge with his brother Francis when he did is probably because Francis had to be at least twelve years old, the youngest age ever allowed by special permission. Francis was 12 on 22 January 1573, too late for the January to Easter term but acceptable for the Easter to July term. Anthony was clearly 15 years old by then, so he could have been born sometime between 25 March 1558 and 24 March 1559 in terms of modern year dating, which would have been the whole year 1588 in Elizabethan year dating.
- (2) Anthony left England to travel abroad in November 1579, and it is most likely he was able to do this then and not previously because that year he had come of age (21 years old) and therefore could make his own decisions as to what he could do. Assuming that he was 21 when he left England for France, his date of birth then would fall sometime between 25 March 1588 and Oct/Nov 1588.

<sup>3</sup> The house was previously known as Shelley House (named after its owner in the time of Henry IV) but renamed Bacon House by Nicholas Bacon when he bought and rebuilt it. The record of Nicholas Bacon's ownership and occupation of the house is in *Stowe's Survey of London*.

<sup>4</sup> York Place or Palace is the alternative (and older) name of Whitehall Palace, the Queen's London residence.

<sup>5</sup> The marriage of Margaret Cooke to Sir Ralph Rowlett is said to have taken place the same day as the marriage of Elizabeth, another of Sir Anthony Cooke's daughters, according to G. Ballard's *Learned Ladies* (1752). See *Gorhambury: 1561—1652* by H. M. M. Lane, B.A. ([http://www.stalbanshistory.org/documents/1932\\_02\\_with\\_copyright\\_notice.pdf](http://www.stalbanshistory.org/documents/1932_02_with_copyright_notice.pdf)).

<sup>6</sup> Sir Nicholas Bacon wrote, for instance, an affectionate poem of five rhyming seven-line verses for his second wife Ann in the last year of Queen Mary's reign (1557-8), probably to comfort her for the death of her (and his) second daughter, the first also having died young. See Lisa Jardine & Allan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, p.27 (Victor Gollancz, London: 1998).

<sup>7</sup> Bricaud, Joanny: 'Historique du Movement Rosicrucien,' *Le Voile d'Isis*, Vol. 91, July 1927, pp. 559-574. See also Hereward Tilton: *The Quest for the Phoenix: Spiritual Alchemy and Rosicrucianism in the Work of Count Michael Maier* (1569-1622).

Maier is alleged to have stated, in a manuscript residing at the University of Leiden (or Leipzig), that the Fraternity of his time was formed in ca.1570 by followers of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von

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Nettesheim, who had founded a secret society in London in 1510 similar to the one in Paris, with secret signs of recognition; and that this society gave rise to the Brethren of the Gold and Rosy Cross in 1570 and founded corresponding chapters of their society throughout Europe.

<sup>8</sup> M. Fisher, 'Thomas Cromwell, humanism and educational reform', *Bull. IHR*, I. 151-63. See A. D.K. Hawkyard, 'Bacon, Nicholas (1510-79), of Gray's Inn and York House, London; Redgrave, Suff. Gorhambury, Herts.' *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1509-1558*, ed. S.T. Bindoff, 1982R.

<sup>9</sup> The Northumberland Manuscript.

<sup>10</sup> Spedding, VIII: *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, Vol I, Bk I, Ch 1, p 4.

<sup>11</sup> Craig R. Thompson, *Universities in Tudor England* (Associated University Presse, 1979).

<sup>12</sup> It is generally assumed that Edmund Spenser was Immerito, the author of the poems published with his name on the title pages, but there are indications that this may be another case of masking.

<sup>13</sup> William Rawley, 'Life of Bacon', *Resuscitatio* (1657).

<sup>14</sup> Students were bound to be in residence three terms a year: October to Christmas, January to Easter, Easter to July. The long summer vacation extended through July to the beginning of October. They had brief respites after each term and sometimes unscheduled ones when plague broke out. Craig R. Thompson, *Universities in Tudor England* (Associated University Presse, 1979).

<sup>15</sup> James Paget was the son of a wealthy London merchant and alderman, and had also been sheriff of the City of London. He had been married three times to wives who were very well connected and heiresses in their own right. In the marriage agreement, Sir Nicholas Bacon promised the couple an allowance of £75 for the next three years, plus £100 a year, various leases, and a further £500, whilst James Paget offered an estate of £314 a year after his own death and that of his wife. (Daphne Du Maurier, *Golden Lads*, page 36.)

<sup>16</sup> Lisa Jardine & Allan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune*, p.71, note 5: AB to Roger Wilbraham, 11 January 1581. EU L Lane MS La.iii.193, fo. 108a.

<sup>17</sup> Spedding, VIII: *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, Vol. I, Bk. I, ch.1.

<sup>18</sup> The Northumberland Manuscript.

<sup>19</sup> Letters from Anthony Bacon to Lord Burghley, written from Bourges, in the State Papers Record Office: 14 Jan. and 13 Feb. 1581. 'Queen Elizabeth - Volume 147: February 1581', *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Elizabeth, 1581-90* (1865), pp. 4-9:-

(14 Jan. 1581) Anthony Bacon to Lord Burghley. All the letters he has received from England mention the honourable and fatherly dealing of Burghley towards him, for which he offers his devoted service. Is grateful for his assistance in prosecuting his right to Pinner Park.

(13 Feb. 1581) Anthony Bacon to Burghley. It is three weeks since he wrote about his right to Pinner Park. Sends letters of advice and direction to his brother Francis, Mr. Alderman Martin, and others. Money transactions. Commends the bearer, Mr. Blanshard, for his well-grounded knowledge in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

See also William Smedley, *The Mystery of Francis Bacon*, ch. XI, p. 86 (London: Robert Banks, 1912).

<sup>20</sup> Strype's *Annals*, III. i. 110, ii. 197.

<sup>21</sup> Nicholas Faunt to Anthony Bacon, 31 May 1583 (LPL 647, art. 73; Birch, *Memoirs*, 1:35). See L. Jardine & A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune* (Victor Gollancz: 1998), p.90.

<sup>22</sup> Leicester to Anthony Bacon, 10 October 1583 (LPL MS 647, fo 160 (art. 75). See L. Jardine & A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune* (Victor Gollancz: 1998), p.91.

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- <sup>23</sup> Anthony Bacon to Essex, 12 September 1596 (LPL MS 659, fo. 24). See L. Jardine & A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune* (Victor Gollancz: 1998), p.92.
- <sup>24</sup> Francis Walsingham to Anthony Bacon, 1 March 1584 (LPL MS 647, art. 68; *LL* 3:8. See L. Jardine & A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune* (Victor Gollancz: 1998), p.94.
- <sup>25</sup> Daphne du Maurier, *Golden Lads*, ch. VIII, p. 89.
- <sup>26</sup> Spedding, *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, Vol. III, Bk. III, p.143.
- <sup>27</sup> "Avisos de Inglaterra", *Archivo de Simancas, Estado, Flandes*, legado 609; quoted from M. Mignet, *Antonio Pérez et Philippe II.* (Paris, 1854). See: Por Gustav Ungerer, *Biographical Notes on the Works of Antonio Perez.*
- <sup>28</sup> A. Bacon Papers, Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 653, no. 32.
- <sup>29</sup> *Pieces of the storye or Relaciones (so called) by the Peregrini their Authors* (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. hist. c. 239).
- <sup>30</sup> In addition, Lord Herbert of Cherbury acquired a presentation copy (now in the possession of Dr Bernardo Mendel). Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe also had one (now in Cambridge University Library, press-mark T. 10.49). Two more presentation copies, with some notes in a contemporary hand, are in the Bodleian Library (press-mark Art. 4.° B. 11) and in the British Museum Library (press-mark C. 38. f. 37). A copy in Lambeth Palace Library bears the autograph inscription of one "ffrancis Freeborne" and is part of Archbishop Bancroft's bequest. The book is also mentioned in Archbishop Whitgift's library list (Trinity College Library, Dublin, MS. E. 4. 13, fol. 9).
- <sup>31</sup> Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, V, i, 15.
- <sup>32</sup> Francis Bacon to Anthony Bacon, dated 24 Jan 1594 (i.e. 1595). Spedding, *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, Vol. VIII, Bk. VIII, ch. X.
- "I have here an idle pen or two specially one that was cozened, thinking to have got some money this term. I pray you send me somewhat else for them to write out beside your Irish collection which is almost done. There is a collection of Dr James [Dean of Christchurch] of foreign states largeliest of Flanders, which though it be no great matter, yet I would be glad to have it."
- <sup>33</sup> Anthony Bacon to Francis Bacon, c. 14 May 1596. LPL MS 657, art. 9; Ungerer, *Spaniard*, 1: 226-7; *Hostage*, 7: 183.
- <sup>34</sup> *Cal. State Papers, 1598-1601*, p. 222.
- <sup>35</sup> Entry in the register of St Olave's Church, Hart Street, City of London:-
- May 17th, 1601, Mr Anthonye Bacon buried in the chamber within the vault.
- See Daphne du Maurier, *Golden Lads*, ch. XXV, p. 258 (Victor Gollancz, 1975).
- <sup>36</sup> *Cal. State Papers, 1598-1601*, p. 222.
- <sup>37</sup> Camden, *Annales*, ed. Hearne, 957-61.
- <sup>38</sup> According to Daphne du Maurier.