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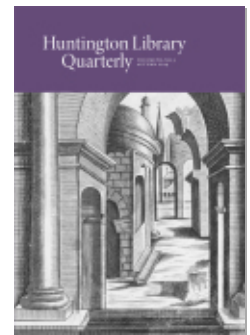
Lord Berners, the Earls of Huntingdon, and the First English
Edition of *Huon of Bordeaux*

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Lord Berners, the Earls of Huntingdon, and the First English Edition of *Huon of Bordeaux*

Mary L. Robertson

ABSTRACT Modern scholars of early Tudor chivalric prose romance identify Francis Hastings, second Earl of Huntingdon, as the probable patron of Lord Berners's translation and publication of *Huon of Bordeaux*. This essay argues instead, based in part on the Hastings family manuscripts at the Huntington Library, that George Hastings, the first earl, was the actual patron; analyzes the financial commitment this entailed; and suggests the first earl's possible motivations. More generally, it presents a detailed case study of the social and political role of aristocratic patronage for this popular genre during the reign of Henry VIII. **KEYWORDS:** Henrician court; early Tudor chivalric literature; patronage in the sixteenth century; John Bouchier; cost of early sixteenth-century books

☞ **WHEN THE FIRST EDITION** of Lord Berners's translation of the medieval French chivalric romance *Huon of Bordeaux* appeared in Henry VIII's reign (1509–47), the printer was careful to thank the Earl of Huntingdon for his support, both of Berners and of the printer himself:

let me not herewithall forget, that the right noble Earle of *Huntingdon* Lord *Hastings*, was a continuall spurre to him [i.e., to Berners] in the pursuite of such paines, & likewise a cheerefull encourager of me in the imprinting, assisting euer both with his purse and honourable countenance, the trauaile that sorted to so good example[.]¹

1. *The Ancient, Honorable, Famous and Delightfull Historie of Huon of Bordeaux* (London, 1601; STC 13999), sig. ¶2v. All references to the *Short Title Catalogue* in notes refer to the second edition of 1986 unless otherwise noted. The standard modern edition of *Huon*, published in two volumes for the Early English Text Society and quoted extensively throughout this essay, is *The Boke of Duke Huon of Burdeux, Done into English by Sir John Bouchier, Lord Berners . . . Edited from the Unique Copy of the First Edition*, ed. and introd. S. L. Lee, 2 vols. (London, 1882–87) [hereafter *Huon*, EETS]. Because the first edition and so the modern edition based on it are missing the prologue and colophon, the two quotations above are instead taken from the

Only one known copy of that first edition now survives, missing both preface and colophon, and it has been for many years in a private collection.² It is a handsome folio volume with numerous woodcut illustrations and decorated initials: clearly an expensive production. Huon's adventures remained popular throughout the sixteenth century, and when a (probably) third edition appeared in 1601, now reduced to a cheaper quarto format and with "the rude English corrected and amended," its printer, Thomas Purfoot, noted at the end of the text that the original work was

Translated out of French into English by Sir *John Bouchier* Knight, Lord *Berners*, at the request of the Lord *Hastings* Earle of *Huntington*, in the year of our Lord God one Thousand, Fiue Hundred, Threescore & Ten: and now newly reuised and corrected, this present year 1601.³

For the aging and habitually insolvent Berners, none of whose longtime occupations of scholar, soldier, or diplomat was notable for its financial rewards, the earl's continuing personal encouragement and financial support would have been more than welcome. But *which* Earl of Huntingdon spurred Berners and his printer to bring this romance to print, and why? Two separate men held that title and moved in Henrician court circles during Berners's lifetime; *Huon's* acknowledgement does not specify which man was thanked. S. L. (later Sir Sidney) Lee, who edited the work for the Early English Text Society in the nineteenth century, supposed his patron was George Hastings (1488–1544), third Baron Hastings and from 1529 the first Earl of Huntingdon.⁴ Modern scholars, however, believe him to have been the first earl's eldest son Francis (ca. 1513?–1560), who after 1529 bore the courtesy title Lord Hastings and who became the second earl at his father's death in 1544.

The following essay argues for restoring Earl George to his rightful place as the recipient of Berners's gratitude, places him within the small circle of Berners's close friends and family at court, analyzes the financial commitment his support would have entailed, and considers what this episode might say about the possible motives for aristocratic patronage of this particular title in this particular court.

later edition of 1601; the references to Berners, Huntingdon, and the printer as contemporaries, however, strongly suggest that the wording was lifted from the first edition. For more on this and on the as-yet-unknown date of the first edition, see below pp. 340.

2. I am extremely grateful to the curatorial staff of the National Library of Scotland, to whom further inquiries about this volume may be directed.

3. Purfoot's title page refers to the 1601 edition as the third, and his concluding statement, quoted above, says Berners's translation, requested by Huntingdon, was made in 1570, but by this date both author and patron were long dead. If a second edition was indeed issued in 1570, it has apparently not survived.

4. S. L. Lee, introduction to *Huon*, EETS, liv.



The courtier who promoted the publication of a medieval chivalric romance in the early years of Henry VIII's reign could expect both censure and praise from the social and intellectual leaders of the day, and these conflicting reactions suggest what that patronage might tell us about *Huon*'s influence both in court circles and in the expanding audience of readers beyond them.

Censure because the genre, no less than the idealization of war it promoted, was vehemently denounced by humanists at the English court. On Good Friday 1513, as the king prepared for an invasion of France that summer meant to win military glory and reclaim England's honor from an ancient enemy, John Colet preached in the Chapel Royal before the king and court that war was neither great, nor glorious, nor Christian.⁵ More's *Utopia* (1516) attacked waging war, the original *raison d'être* and all-consuming focus of a medieval military aristocracy, as an activity for beasts, and extended his condemnation to the aristocratic sport of hunting—practice exercise for a warrior's skill set—as a base trade better suited to butchers.⁶ Erasmus's treatise on the proper education for princes, written in London that same year as a guide for the future Charles V (to whom he had just been appointed counsellor), warned against too many youths "taking delight in the tales of Arthur and Lancelot, and other tales of a similiar nature which are not only about tyrants but are also very poorly done, stupid, and fit to be 'old wives' tales."⁷ Juan Luis Vives, charged by Catherine of Aragon with devising a plan of study for the young Princess Mary, railed against vernacular romances, "the which were written and made by such as were idle and knew nothing. These works do hurt both man and woman, for they make them wily and crafty, they kindle and stir up covetousness, inflame anger and all beastly and filthy desire."⁸ And by the end of Henry's reign, Roger Ascham would warn gentlemen and yeomen alike against the literary fashions of "our fathers tyme [when]

5. The argument of Colet's sermon survives only through Erasmus's account of the event in his *Epitome* of June 13, 1521, summarized in Robert P. Adams, *The Better Part of Valor: More, Erasmus, Colet and Vives on Humanism, War, and Peace* (Seattle, Wash., 1962), 69–71, and discussed at length in J. H. Lupton, *A Life of John Colet* (London, 1909), 189–93.

6. Sir Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. and introd. Edward Sirtz, S.J. (New Haven, Conn., and London, 1964), 96, 118–20.

7. Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. and introd. Lester K. Born (New York, 1936), 200, as quoted and discussed in Adams, *The Better Part of Valor*, 116.

8. Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women, ed. Foster Watson (New York, 1912), 196, quoting from Thomas Paynell's 1550 translation into English of Vives's 1529 *De officio mariti*. More generally, see Robert P. Adams, "Bold Bawdry and Open Manslaughter: The English New Humanist Attack on Medieval Romance," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (1959): 33–48; and Dominic Baker-Smith, "'Inglorious Glory': 1513 and the Humanist Attack on Chivalry," in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. Sydney Anglo (Woodbridge, U.K., 1990), 129–44.

nothing was red, but bookes of fayned cheualrie, wherein a man by redinge, shuld be led to none other ende, but onely to manslaughter and baudrye.”⁹

By midreign, evangelical reformers too had begun to echo these criticisms, but from a new direction. In 1529, William Tyndale’s *The Obedience of a Christian Man* railed against the laity for reading “Robin Hood and Bevis Hampton, Hercules, Hector and Troilus with a thousand histories and fables of love and wantonness and of ribaldry as filthy as heart can think, to corrupt the minds of you withal, clean contrary to the doctrines of Christ and of his apostles,” when they should instead be focused on scripture. His concerns, like Ascham’s, suggest a wider audience for chivalric romance than just the social elites of court and country.¹⁰

Yet the field on which these cultural and literary offensives occurred was not uncontested, and the promotion of chivalric romances could also win praise. Crucially, the young King Henry, despite a conventional early grounding in the Latin classics and his celebrated youthful encounters with More and Erasmus, was also a product of the imported Franco-Burgundian culture of his father’s and grandfather’s courts, and he was deeply addicted to the glamour and trappings of that chivalric past: military training and prowess, jousting, tournaments, quests, heraldry, allegorical entertainments, the conventions of courtly love, and—a sign of updated realpolitik—absolute loyalty to the crown.¹¹

Such royal and aristocratic tastes were both reflected in and reinforced by the literature of early print. In 1485 William Caxton published Malory’s influential *Morte Darthur* in response, as he explained in his prologue, to the

many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royame of Englonde [who] camen and demaunded me many and oftymes wherfore that I haue not do made & enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal and of the moost renommed crysten Kyng [Arthur] . . . to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chyualrye . . . , humbly bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates of what estate or degre they been of that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke that they

9. Roger Ascham, *Toxophilus (1545)*, ed. Peter E. Medine, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 244 (Tempe, Ariz., 2002), 4.

10. William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, ed. David Daniell (London, 2000), 24. For a telling example of London apprentices enjoying *The History of Oliver of Castile* (1518), see Susan Brigden, *Thomas Wyatt: The Hearts’ Forest* (London, 2012), 218.

11. Arthur B. Ferguson, *The Indian Summer of English Chivalry: Studies in the Decline and Transformation of Chivalric Idealism* (Durham, N.C., 1960), 25–28 and passim; Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford, 1969). For the political implications of this cultural atmosphere, see also Steven Gunn, “Chivalry and the Politics of the Early Tudor Court,” in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. Anglo, 107–28. For the Burgundian flavor of Henry VII’s court, see Gordon Kipling, “Henry VII and the Origins of Tudor Patronage,” in *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton, N.J., 1981), 117–63.

*take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce and to folowe the same.*¹²

Between 1475 and his death in 1492, Caxton published seven additional romances, some adapted from classical mythology but given a chivalric makeover, and all in the expensive folio format, suggesting a limited but wealthy and primarily gentle audience; his associate and successor Wynkyn de Worde printed twenty-one romances in varying formats that reflected an expanding and economically more varied readership.¹³ Helen Cooper's meticulous survey of the genre in the early days of print (including its changes over time, format, and geography) identifies at least twenty-seven separate English-language romances printed in the first two decades of Henry's reign, and Joyce Boro analyzes the continued if evolving popularity of the romance genre throughout the sixteenth century.¹⁴

And in 1523, with English forces again fighting in France, John Bourchier (ca. 1467–1533), second Baron Berners, published the first volume of his translation of Froissart's famous *Chronicles*, titled in English *Cronycles of Englande, Fraunce . . . and other places adioynnye. Tra[n]slated out of frenche into our maternall englysshe tonge, by Iohan Bourchier knight lorde Berners: at the comaundement of oure moost highe redouted souerayne lorde kyng Henry the. viii. kyng of Englande and of Fraunce, [and] highe defender of the christen faythe*, an account in full chivalric mode of England's fourteenth-century victories over France in the Hundred Years' War.¹⁵ The popular history, already familiar in its original French from countless fifteenth-century manuscript copies and several printed editions following Antoine Vérard's first four-volume set in 1495, now offered a triumphant procession of "noble adventures of featis of armes," valiant knights, desperate battles, sieges, heralds, fair ladies, pageantry, tournaments, and military glory, the whole cast in vivid and graceful if slightly old-fashioned English prose with an overlay of Malory, and undertaken, said

12. Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur* (Westminster, 1485; STC 801), quoted in *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton*, ed. W. J. B. Crotch, Early English Text Society 176 (London, 1928), 92–95, emphasis mine. For Malory's influence on Henry VIII's conscious self-identification with King Arthur, both in his early years and in the politics of the break with Rome, see David Starkey, "King Henry and King Arthur," *Arthurian Literature* 16 (1998): 171–96.

13. George D. Painter, *William Caxton, A Biography* (New York, 1977), 211–15; Ronald S. Crane, *The Vogue of Medieval Chivalric Romance during the English Renaissance* (Menasha, Wisc., 1919), 2–3; Carol M. Meale, "Caxton, de Worde, and the Publication of Romance in Late Medieval England," *The Library*, 6th ser., 14 (1992): 283–98; H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers, 1475–1557* (Cambridge, 1952), 190.

14. Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford, 2004), 409–29; Joyce Boro, "All for Love: Lord Berners and the Enduring, Evolving Romance," in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485–1603*, ed. Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford, 2009), 87–102.

15. Jean Froissart, *Cronycles of Englande* (London, 1523; STC 11396).

Berners, at the explicit command of Henry VIII.¹⁶ It presented a model of behavior that was didactic in nature, according to Berners's preface: designed to compel kings and governors "to do noble dedes, to thende they may optayne immortal glory"; to move and steer "strong hardy warriours, for the great laude that they have after they ben deed, promptly to go in hande with great and harde pannels in defence of their countre"; and to deter those who might "do mischeuous dedes, for feare of infamy and shame." There was even, perhaps, a more subtle message: a wise ruler read history, said Berners, "for none other cause, but that those thynges are founde written in bokes, that the frendes dare nat shewe to the prince."¹⁷ Printed by the king's printer, Richard Pynson, in a handsome folio volume with an elaborately designed heraldic frontispiece of the Tudor arms and numerous decorated woodcut initials throughout the text, the Froissart was an immediate hit; volume 2 followed in 1525.¹⁸ The history influenced a century of Tudor historians: by Elizabeth's reign John Stow noted that "Frossard's History is common in men's hands."¹⁹ The *Chronicle* proved a long-lived and influential accompaniment to the young king's fascination with the elaborate yet increasingly artificial culture that characterized his court in this "Indian Summer" of English chivalry.²⁰ But Froissart was not Berners's only translation, nor the king his only patron.



Royal and aristocratic patronage of literature and the arts had long been a staple of medieval and Renaissance Europe, but the new technology of print opened further opportunities both for aristocratic largesse and for the promotion of its underlying value system. A wave of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century translations from largely French and Spanish sources made numerous chivalric texts newly available in English, in formats more widely accessible than the exclusive and expensive medieval manuscripts of individual collectors. By the later sixteenth century, the popularity of these stories, as well as native English tales, buoyed by rising literacy rates and falling

16. For Berners's prose style, see Dennis Joseph O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: Its Cultural Content and Its Language" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1986); Joyce Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books: A New Survey," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (2004): 236–49, esp. 246; and M. I. Cameron, "Such Joy at the Heart: Lord Berners' *Huon de Bordeaux*," *Florilegium* 16 (1999): 107–23.

17. Jean Froissart, *The Chronicle of Froissart, Translated out of the French by Sir John Bouchier, Lord Berners, Annis 1523–25*, vol. 1, ed. and introd. William Paton Ker, Tudor Translations, 1st ser., 27 (London, 1901), 4–5. For the French-language Froissart, see J. J. N. Palmer, introduction to *Froissart: Historian*, ed. Palmer (Woodbridge, U.K., 1981), 2.

18. Jean Froissart, *Chronycles of Englande* (London, 1525; STC 11397).

19. John Stow, *A Summarie of the Chronicles of England* (London, 1574; STC 23324), sig. Aviii recto.

20. The influential characterization is Ferguson's, *The Indian Summer of English Chivalry*, but see also the more nuanced discussion of the survival of chivalric literature and ideology (if not the conduct of war) well into the seventeenth century, in Alex Davis, *Chivalry and Romance in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, 2003).

costs, would spread far beyond aristocratic circles to saturate popular Elizabethan literature, drama, and culture. But in the world of early Tudor print, they still hovered between a primarily upper-class audience and broader general appeal.²¹

Among the earliest translators for this new market in print, few were more prolific or distinguished than Berners, the courtier, soldier, diplomat, scholar, and (twice) lord deputy of Calais. His five published translations (*Froissart's Chronicle*, *Arthur of Litell Brytayne*, *Huon of Bordeaux*, *The Castell of Love*, and *The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius*) have been carefully analyzed in valuable, detailed surveys by N. F. Blake in 1971 and Joyce Boro in 2004, and other scholars have dealt with individual titles, but he has not yet been accorded a full-scale biography.²² Four of Berners's five books explicitly recognized in print the encouragement he received from a circle of family and friends at the Henrician court, through connections that suggest genuine personal engagement rather than a conventional acknowledgment of gratitude or a simple plea for financial support. The most important, famous, and widely read of these works was the *Froissart*. Blake believes its dedication to Henry VIII is mere pro forma tradition, arguing that the king's request would likely have come in 1520–21, upon Berners's first appointment as deputy of Calais, and would not have left enough time for the work of translation. It is more likely, Blake suggests, that Berners began the work independently and presented the first volume to the king upon its completion, adding the dedication then in the hope of future favor and perhaps financial reward. But Berners, as master of the king's ordnance, had crossed the Channel with Henry and the Army Royal in June 1513, and was present at the siege of Théroouanne when the youthful king first went adventuring against England's traditional enemy. Berners's personal heroism during that summer campaign was widely known, and the initial royal request for his *Froissart* translation might have come at any time during or after this earlier campaign, despite—or even, perhaps, because of—its ultimately ambiguous conclusion. *Froissart's* history of the long struggle between England and France during the wars of the fourteenth century celebrated both an emerging English nationalism and the romanticized chivalric culture of a medieval world that helped inspire it; both would have appealed to Henry VIII.

Only *Arthur of Litell Brytayne*, taken from a printed French text and probably Berners's first effort, seems to have lacked a recognized patron. A prologue in the first

21. In addition to Cooper, *English Romance; Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. Anglo; and Ferguson, *Indian Summer*, see also Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England* (Washington D.C., 1986); Crane, *The Vogue of Medieval Chivalric Romance*; and Dennis J. O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: The Survival of Medieval Ideals in the Reign of Henry VIII," in *Medievalism in England: Studies in Medievalism IV*, ed. Leslie J. Workman (Cambridge, 1992), 36–44. See also note 10 above for the example of a London apprentice.

22. N. F. Blake, "Lord Berners: A Survey," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s., 2 (1971): 119–32; Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 240–42; *The Chronicle of Froissart*, ed. Ker, 1:5–6. See also *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter ODNB], s.v. "Bourchier, John, second Baron Berners (c. 1467–1533)," by James P. Carley, last modified September 23, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2990>.

surviving edition of 1560 records that Berners initially abandoned the work for doubt of its value, but later returned and finished the project.²³ Boro notes that the antiquary John Bale mentioned seeing a copy of *Arthur* in a bookshop a few years before this, but an edition from Berners's lifetime is not now known; perhaps he decided not to publish because he still had doubts about the merit of his translation or, as she convincingly suggests, because a work praising the advice of cardinals would have been impolitic just as Wolsey fell from favor. No patron has yet been identified.²⁴ Berners's other books included *The Castell of Love*, translated from the Spanish sometime after 1526 and published, according to the title page, "at the instance of lady Elizabeth Carew," Berners's niece. She was the wife of Sir Nicholas Carew, the diplomat, soldier, tournament star, future Garter knight, and longtime friend of the king; Nicholas later fell disastrously from favor and was executed in 1539. The first extant edition of *Castell* was printed circa 1548 by Reyner Wolfe for John Turke, with two more editions shortly thereafter, circa 1552 and circa 1555.²⁵ Berners's next published translation was *The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius*, a highly fictionalized biography of the Roman emperor taken from a French version of the Spanish text of Antonio de Guevara; it was completed, according to its colophon, by March 1532 "at the instant desyre" of his nephew (and Elizabeth Carew's brother) Sir Francis Bryan, the "Vicar of Hell," another courtier-diplomat, poet, and royal companion. It was first published in 1535 by Thomas Berthelet.²⁶

Berners's remaining work, the one known surviving copy of which now lacks both the date of publication and the identification of the printer, was the romance that the Earl of Huntingdon supported, a translation of *Huon of Bordeaux* based on one of the French editions printed by Michel le Noir in 1513 and in 1516.²⁷ It is a gloriously crowded and magic-filled chivalric tale from the popular French genre of Charlemagne romances, recording the adventures in France, Rome, Jerusalem, and Babylon of young Duke Huon of Bordeaux, who triumphs over unjust emperors, palace intrigues, perfidious younger brothers, dark and dangerous woods, besieged castles, deep dungeons, sleeping giants, pirates, shipwrecks, desert islands, and countless bloody battles fought against overwhelming odds. He is aided by a hero's full complement of romanticized feudal accoutrements: fervent oaths, impossible quests, trials by combat, captive maidens, faithful companions, spirited destriers,

23. *Arthur of Brytayne* ([London], 1560; STC 807).

24. Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 238–39, and "All for Love," 98–99.

25. Diego de San Pedro, *The Castell of Loue* ([London], [1548?]; STC 21739.5), *The Castell of Loue* ([London], [ca. 1552?]; STC 21740), *The Castell of Loue* ([London], [ca. 1555]; STC 21742); Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 242–45.

26. Antonio de Guevara, *The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius* ([London], 1535; STC 12436); Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 245–46.

27. Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 239; for the French editions of Le Noir, see F. W. Bourdillon, "Some Notes on Two Early Romances—*Huon de Bordeaux* and *Melusine*," *The Library*, ser. 4, vol. 1 (1920–21): 21–39.

beautiful Saracen princesses, exquisite courtesy, moral temptations, named swords, magic horns, and several timely intercessions on his behalf by Oberon, King of the Faeries. An extended coda then takes his initial story from an apparent triumphal return to Bordeaux through further adventures in Germany, Egypt, Arabia, and Persia, endows him with the kingdom of Fairyland at Oberon's death, follows his descendants, and allows an occasional cameo appearance by Cain, Judas Iscariot, King Arthur, and Morgan Le Faye.

But *Huon of Bordeaux* is more than just an exciting story: it also offers a model for noble conduct in life, as appropriate for Henry VIII's court as it was for Charlemagne's. "Serue your soueren lorde well & trewly, as subgettes ought to doo," advises Huon's widowed mother, the duchess, when he first sets off for the emperor in Paris:

be delygent at all tymys to serue hym trewly, and kepe company with noble men such as ye se that be of good condysyons / be not in the plase where yll wordys be spoken, or yll conusell gyuen / fly fro company of them that louyth not honour & trouthe / open not your eeres to here liers, or false reporters, or flaterers / haunt often the chyrche, and gyue largely for goddes sake / be lyberal and courteys, & gyue to poore knyghtes / fly the company of ianglers [idle chattering] / and all goodnes shall folow therby.²⁸

The duchess presents an idealized model of court life. Huon's experience is different: as central to the story as his many adventures in desert lands are the dangers that await him upon his return to the emperor's court and to his own in Bordeaux: there, hidden agendas, malign advice, deceitful courtiers, rebellious lords, confiscated estates, and whispers and lies imperil our hero once again. He is saved only through the continued patronage of Oberon, who brings even Charlemagne to the recognition of his unjust mistreatment of the faithful duke, and to the restoration of Huon's honor and position: "Huon, quod ye kinge, I holde you quyt, and I render to you all your londes and seynoryes, & pardon you of all myn yll wyll, and put al rancoure fro me, & fro hense forth retayne you as one of my peeres. . . . When the lordes saw that they wept for ioy, & thanked god that the peace was made."²⁹ Whatever its wider audience may have been, *Huon* spoke directly to an aristocratic courtier class. From that class came both the scholar and the patron who first brought it to English readers.



Modern scholarly notice of the first edition of *Huon*, with its frustratingly ambiguous acknowledgment of the patron given at the beginning of this essay, first surfaced

28. *Huon*, EETS, 10.

29. *Huon*, EETS, 266.

in two mid-nineteenth-century sale catalogues: that of Dr. Bliss's library, sold at Sotheby's in 1858,³⁰ and that of the Corser sale, eleven years later in March 1869, when it was purchased by Bernard Quaritch for Alexander Lindsay, twenty-fifth Earl of Crawford, for £85.³¹ These were followed by Lee's full-scale description and edition for the Early English Text Society in 1882–87. All three accounts agreed that the volume as it was in the nineteenth century lacked a formal title page or any prefatory material, and that the final page, presumably including a colophon, had been torn away; they could only speculate about the date of publication, the printer, or any dedication that might have been given, none of which could be confirmed by the extant copy. Lee, however, went on to argue convincingly that the preface to the 1601 edition of *Huon* had been adapted from now missing preliminary leaves in the first edition, and that this text preserves the printer's original statement of Huntingdon's support.³² The 1601 colophon also preserves a reference to Huntingdon.

Although the theory that a preface and perhaps a formal title page had originally existed in the first edition cannot at present be proved (the volume has been rebound in fine morocco with gilded edges, which process could well have destroyed relevant physical evidence), it seems entirely plausible and gains some support from the anonymous but expert and highly technical description of the volume, with a full collation, prepared for the 1910 catalogue of the *Bibliotheca Lindesiana* at Haigh Hall: "there are possibly several preliminary leaves wanting. These would contain the title, translator's preface, table of chapter headings, etc."³³ The earliest extant copies of each of Berners's four other translations all have both formal title pages and prefaces or prologues; it is not unreasonable to assume that *Huon* once did as well. Dennis O'Brien, who examined the unique copy of the first edition for his 1986 PhD thesis, also thought it likely that preliminary pages had once existed but were now lost: "the difference between the 1601 edition's actual chapter heading[s] and the corresponding lines in its table of contents suggests the possibility at least that the original English version did contain a table of contents."³⁴

Questions of the date of the first edition and the identity of the printer or printers will be considered below. My primary concern here remains the identity of Berners's patron. The explicit claim in the 1601 edition that the earl requested and encouraged Berners to undertake the translation, and then helped both transla-

30. *Catalogue of the First Portion of the Extensive, Interesting and Valuable Library formed by the late Rev. Philip Bliss . . . [sold at auction] by S. Leigh Sotheby & John Wilkinson, . . . June 1858* (London, 1858?), lot 2384.

31. *Catalogue of the Second Portion of the . . . Library formed by the Rev. Thomas Corser . . . 17th March 1869* (London, [1885]), lot 707.

32. Lee, introduction to *Huon*, EETS, lii–liv.

33. *Bibliotheca Lindesiana: A Catalogue of the Printed Books Preserved at Haigh Hall, Wigan* (Aberdeen, 1910), column 4575.

34. O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: Its Cultural Content and Its Language," 196n3.

tor and printer, limits the choice to the first two earls, who were alive during Berners's lifetime;³⁵ the third earl, Henry, was not born until after Berners's death. Lee in his introduction to the 1882–87 EETS edition believed that the earl in question was George Hastings, the first Earl of Huntingdon, and that the book was printed by Wynkyn de Worde circa 1534.³⁶ More recently the three principal modern authorities on Berners and his work, while acknowledging the ambiguity in identification, argue instead for George's son Francis Hastings, the second Earl. Their reasoning rests chiefly on the belief that Francis was a friend of Berners in Calais and the executor of his will, under which he inherited Berners's house and goods.³⁷ Boro argues further that no connection between Berners and Earl George can be established.³⁸ Both of these propositions must now be reexamined.

In 1533, the year of Berners's death, Francis Hastings, the future second earl, was not yet twenty years old and had been married for less than a year to Katherine Pole, the eldest daughter and co-heiress of Henry Pole, Lord Montagu, and the granddaughter of Margaret (née Plantagenet) Pole, suo jure Countess of Salisbury. Francis's exact date of birth is not known, but was almost certainly 1513 or early 1514: William Dugdale's seventeenth-century autograph manuscript history of the Hastings family, based on original family documents, says he was about thirty in June 1544 when he received livery of his father's lands upon the latter's death.³⁹ At the end of May 1533 he was at court with his father, taking part in Anne Boleyn's coronation ceremonies with

35. Two earlier peers, Thomas Grey, later first Marquess of Dorset (d. 1501), and William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke (d. 1491), each also briefly held the title during Edward IV's reign, when Berners was scarcely out of his teens and long before his literary career began; they may be discounted here.

36. Lee, introduction to *Huon*, EETS, liv–lv.

37. Blake, "Lord Berners: A Survey," 124; Joyce Boro, "The Textual History of *Huon of Burdeux*: A Reassessment of the Facts," *Notes & Queries* 246, no. 3 (2001): 233–37, and Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 240; *ODNB*, s.v. "Bourchier, John, second Baron Berners." O'Brien is concerned primarily with Berners's language and values and does not deal with the publication history of *Huon* or with issues of patronage: see O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: Its Cultural Content and Its Language," and O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: The Survival of Medieval Ideals in the Reign of Henry VIII."

38. Boro, "Lord Berners and His Books," 240; and Boro, "The Textual History," 236.

39. Sir William Dugdale, "Historicall and Genealogicall collection of the family of Hastings Earls of Huntingdon, Extracted from Originall deeds, charters, manuscripts, And other Authentick Evidences," 1677, Hastings Family Papers: Correspondence, HA 16250, fol. 48, Huntington Library; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* [hereafter *L&P*], ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie, 21 vols. in 35 (London, 1862–1910), 19:812[46] (p. 496), <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol19/no1/pp475-510>. References to *L&P* are to individual item numbers, followed by page numbers given in parentheses, unless otherwise noted. In April and May of 1513, Francis's father George began entailing various properties for himself and his heirs male: Hastings Family Papers: Deeds, HAD 128, 422–25, 2450, Huntington Library; with one exception the deeds did not yet specify heirs male of *his body*, which perhaps suggests that his heir might be expected but was not yet born; alternatively, it could merely have been a standard precaution before going to war in France that summer.

the courtesy title of Lord Hastings as the heir apparent to the earldom, and on the evening of the twenty-ninth of that month he was bathed and shriven in preparation for being dubbed one of the Knights of the Bath. He spent the 1530s at court, on his family's estates, and with his Pole in-laws.⁴⁰

Lord Berners's executor and heir Francis Hastings was a different man altogether: one of the "spears" of Calais (an elite subset of about two dozen men of good family in the garrison there) throughout the 1530s, styled merely "Esquire" in Berners's will and plain "Mister" in subsequent records, married (perhaps bigamously) to a woman named Jane, and once called Berners's nephew. It was the marriage to Jane at which Berners gave the newlyweds gifts of jewelry, silver, linens, chamber hangings, and an old furred nightgown: generous gifts to a lesser client and younger friend, but inappropriate for the heir to an earldom.⁴¹ After Berners's death, this Francis Hastings claimed to act as Berners's executor, but the king, who had immediately seized Berners's principal assets, was displeased and ordered him not to meddle. He nevertheless rented the deputy's house to Lord Lisle, the incoming lord deputy, but because at his death the financially strapped Berners still owed money on the mansion to its previous owner, Sir Gilbert Talbot, as well as to the king, the title was clouded. Hastings was then enmeshed in a long-running legal dispute over debts, titles, and rival claims. Lord Chancellor Audley was reported to have purchased the house separately, from Talbot, and to have called Hastings a "naughty and crafty fellow."⁴² Hastings was briefly imprisoned for debt in 1537, and by the fall of 1539 his friends were petitioning Lisle for 6d. a day and a room for the impoverished former spear.⁴³ Whether or how he may have been related to the immediate family of the Hastings earls is as yet unknown.

With Francis the second earl's apparent link to Berners removed, his father, Earl George, reclaims the role of Berners's patron. There is both circumstantial and direct evidence of a close relation between the first earl and the scholarly lord. Both belonged to the outer rim of a small inner circle of court-centered high nobility:

40. *L&P*, 6:601 (p. 276); Hastings Family Papers: Correspondence, HA 16250, fol. 48, Huntington Library; *The Lisle Letters*, ed. Muriel St. Clare Byrne, 6 vols. (Chicago, 1981), 1:338–39, 2:137–38, 3:489; references to *The Lisle Letters* are to page numbers, not letter numbers. *L&P*, vol. 12, pt. 2, 911 (p. 320), 1060 (pp. 373–74); vol. 13, pt. 1, 317 (p. 106); vol. 14, pt. 1, 652 M 11: musters for Leicestershire (p. 276).

41. *L&P*, vol. 6, appendix 2 (p. 681); Richard Turpyn, *The Chronicle of Calais . . . to the year 1540*, Camden Society 35 (1846), 136–37, 164; H. F. Chettle, "The Burgesses for Calais, 1536–58," *English Historical Review* 50, no. 199 (July 1935):493; *Lisle Letters*, 1:447, 683, 688 (p. 447 is Byrne's reference to Francis Hastings as Berners's nephew, but the term was then sometimes used to signify either an illegitimate son—of which Berners had at least three known others—or an unspecified relative); for wedding gifts, see *L&P*, vol. 6, appendix 2 (p. 681); for Archbishop Cranmer's belief that an earlier marriage of Hastings's wife, Jane, had not been properly dissolved, *L&P*, 7:40 (p. 8).

42. *Lisle Letters*, 2:90, 399; 3:317.

43. *Lisle Letters*, 4:268; 5:661.

Berners had been a ward of the first Howard, Duke of Norfolk, a stepson of the second, and half-brother to the third. Hastings was a nephew of the fourth Earl of Shrewsbury, brother-in-law of the second Earl of Derby, and son-in-law of the second Duke of Buckingham. His wife's niece was the Duchess of Norfolk, and his maternal grandmother was a Percy.

From the very beginning of Henry VIII's reign the two barons (Hastings would not be created Earl of Huntingdon until 1529) were thrown together not only by such ties of birth and marriage but also by court ceremonies, in Parliament, and at war. They were two of the six peers chosen as official mourners for a set of three funeral masses held over Henry VII's coffin in the chapel at Richmond on May 5, 1509.⁴⁴ Although annotated presence lists for sessions of Henry VIII's House of Lords during Berners's lifetime exist for only the Parliament of 1515 (none survive for the Parliament of 1523 or the first five sessions of the Reformation Parliament), on the only two days of that session when Berners and Hastings were both in attendance at the same time—November 19 and December 23, 1515—they were quite literally seated next to each other, their places formally predetermined according to the dates of their peerage creations.⁴⁵ Both sat on the king's council.⁴⁶ On January 13, 1530, both signed the petition of England's spiritual and temporal lords to Pope Clement VII, praying him to grant Henry a divorce from Catherine of Aragon.⁴⁷

Even more pertinently for the present argument, as fellow members of the late-medieval military aristocracy whose values *Huon* celebrated, they were comrades in arms: both men had gone to war in the summer of 1513 when Henry VIII invaded France. Hastings was commanded to provide and outfit 60 archers, 40 billmen, 2 captains, a petty-captain, a chaplain, 2 carriages, and 24 horses. His retinue was assigned to the vanguard under the command of his uncle Shrewsbury, and when it reached France in the second week of June, it numbered 115 in all. Berners came to Calais two weeks later in the rear ward, under the king himself. As master of ordnance for the entire Army Royal, he was in charge of more than a thousand gunners and pioneers, a massive iron bombard known as the "red gonne," and Henry's famous "Twelve Evangelists," a dozen large and expensive bronze Flemish cannon.⁴⁸ Berners's personal

44. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. 1, pt. 1, No. 1–No. 1805, 2nd ed. [hereafter *L&P* vol. 1, 2nd ed.], ed. J. S. Brewer, rev. R. H. Brodie (London, 1920), 20 (p. 20).

45. *Journals of the House of Lords*, vol. 1, 1509–1577 (London, 1846), 11–75; for seating by precedence in Henry VIII's parliaments, see Alasdair Hawkward, "The Journals, the Clerks of Parliament, and the Under-Clerks, 1485–1601," *Parliamentary History* 33, no. 3 (2014): 389–421 at 394; Kenneth G. Madison, "The Seating of the Barons in Parliament, December 1461," *Medieval Studies* 37 (1975): 494–503 at 501; and G. R. Elton, "The Early Journals of the House of Lords," *English Historical Review* 89, no. 352 (1974): 481–512 at 508.

46. Helen Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility* (Oxford, 1986), 102–4.

47. *L&P*, 4:6513 (p. 2929).

48. *L&P*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., 1804[28] (p. 826), 2053[1–2, 5] (pp. 924–27), 2542 (p. 1117); C. G. Cruickshank, *Army Royal: Henry VIII's Invasion of France, 1513* (Oxford, 1969), 16, 37–40.

bravery was prominently displayed during the march to attack Théroouanne, when he directed the daring rescue under French fire of one of the heavy guns that had fallen into a stream along the route and had been abandoned by an earlier rescue party. This exploit was remembered and celebrated in *Hall's Chronicle*, and would have been known to Hastings and Shrewsbury when their forces successfully attacked the town with the recovered cannon.⁴⁹ Ten years later, when Hastings returned to France for the 1523 campaign under the Duke of Suffolk's command, he was stationed at Calais (where Berners was then the king's lord deputy) for more than a month before setting out into the countryside.⁵⁰ By 1531 both had been nominated eleven times in Henry's reign, unsuccessfully, to that ultimate chivalric honor of English knighthood, membership in the Order of the Garter.⁵¹ If word of those private proceedings leaked out, not impossible given court gossip, shared disappointment alone might well have brought them even closer together.

Most convincing of all as evidence for the first earl's close association with Berners, however, is that in at least three instances between 1510 and 1513 Berners was named one of a handful of trustees for various properties belonging to George Hastings: for his manors of Bagworth and Thornton in Leicestershire, in 1510 and again in 1513, and for his London house in Thames Street, also in 1513.⁵² The last two transactions, in May of that year, were probably made in preparation for going to war. In each of the three cases, the trustees included close relatives of George Hastings: the Duke of Buckingham and Earl of Wiltshire were his brothers-in-law, Shrewsbury his uncle, and Sir Richard Sacheverell his stepfather. By both shared experience and known association, then, George Hastings has by far the stronger claim than Francis to the identity of Berners's patron for the publication of *Huon of Bordeaux*.



Precisely when the work was published remains uncertain, and there are currently two broadly competing arguments about both the date of publication and the identity of the printer. Nineteenth-century bibliographers believed it was late in Henry's reign: the Bliss sale description offered circa 1540 and noted disagreement among experts about whether the printer was Copland, Redbourne, or Berthelet; the Corser sale entry would not commit to a date but claimed the printer was Pynson and identified the type as both Pynson's and de Worde's. Lee, in his EETS introduction, proposed that Berners probably translated *Huon* sometime after 1525, when he finished

49. [Edward Hall], *Hall's Chronicle; Containing the History of England* (London, 1809), 541–43, 551–52. Originally published in 1548 as *The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke*.

50. *L&P*, 3:3288 (p. 1371), 3516 (pp. 1463–64).

51. John Anstis, *The Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter . . . usually called the Black Book*, vol. 1 (London, 1724), 270–387 passim.

52. Hastings Family Papers: Deeds, HAD 425, 2450, 3374.

Froissart, but that it was not actually printed—by de Worde—until circa 1534, after Berners's death in 1533. As he pointed out, "it will be noticed that the reference to Lord Berners's labours [in the preface] is couched in the past tense and could scarcely have been penned in his lifetime (i.e., before 1533)."⁵³ This scenario would also agree with the explicit reference to Hastings as Earl of Huntingdon, a title he bore only from December 1529. The detailed *Bibliotheca Lindesiana* entry appears to follow Lee and accept de Worde in circa 1534.

More recent scholarship, however, proposes an earlier date and a different printer. No help is found in the first edition of the *Short Title Catalogue* (1926), since the first edition of *Huon* remained in private hands and was thus excluded from listing. By the STC's second edition in 1986, both new information and more generous standards of inclusion had changed the story. The first edition of *Huon* (STC 13998.5) was now added, although still privately owned, with a date of circa 1515 and the statement that it had been printed by Julian Notary, a decision apparently made by editor Katharine Pantzer based at least in part on the intervening work of Edward Hodnett, whose *English Woodcuts 1480–1535* identified the type and most of the cuts as Notary's.⁵⁴ The original volume was also examined in the 1980s by O'Brien for his PhD thesis and a subsequent essay, but his primary concern was in analyzing Berners's language and the development of a consciously English prose style, rather than with the bibliographic details of *Huon*'s publication history. He accepts Pantzer's identification of Notary's type and woodcuts, and her dating of "as early as 1515."⁵⁵

The year 1515, however, seems remarkably early: Le Noir's Paris edition did not appear until late November 1513.⁵⁶ It is not impossible that Berners could have acquired a copy of the French book, translated its 188 folio leaves of text (yielding 672 pages in the 1601 English quarto), found a printer who then assembled the necessary woodcut illustrations (at least nineteen of which were newly commissioned, with still others copied from other printers), and set the entire book, all within two years at most. But it seems improbable. A further complication arises from an examination of the watermarks in the paper of the sole surviving copy of the first English edition, carried out on my behalf with the owner's permission through the generous assistance of the National Library of Scotland. There are at least seven separate marks,

53. Lee, introduction to *Huon*, EETS, lii–liii; Lee acknowledged the advice of R. A. Graves at the British Museum that the typeface, initial letters, and woodcuts most likely suggested the late work of de Worde.

54. Edward Hodnett, *English Woodcuts 1480–1525, with Additions and Corrections* (Oxford, 1973), xii, 11, 36–39; Hodnett stated that his identification was based on a microfilm and report provided to him by Dr. Robert Donaldson at the National Library of Scotland and that Pantzer had identified the type as Notary's.

55. O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: Its Cultural Content and Its Language," 41, 196; and O'Brien, "Lord Berners' *Huon of Bordeaux*: The Survival of Medieval Ideals in the Reign of Henry VIII," 36–44.

56. The colophon, on fol. clxxxviii recto, gives a date of November 26. Bourdillon, "Some Notes," 21–39.

four of which are similar to those catalogued in Briquet's *Les Filigranes*: nos. 1738, 11179, 11200, and 12500 (the remaining three have not yet been identified). These suggest, no real surprise, that the printer's paper came from a variety of sources in northern France over a spread of years. Briquet 1738 (a version of the familiar shield with three fleurs-de-lis) appears only on papers produced between 1523 and 1528, making an earlier English printing in the previous decade impossible. The uncertainties about *Huon*'s date of publication remain, but if the watermark here is indeed Briquet 1738, then the publication date would have to have been after 1522.

Whenever it appeared, *Huon*'s first English edition was not an inexpensive book. Without the printer's precise business accounts, the total production costs can only be broadly estimated from our incomplete understanding of the finances of early Tudor printing, but perhaps a general range can be proposed.

Fortunately we have a detailed description of the physical appearance of the volume, beginning with Lee's account for the EETS edition that it is "a black-letter folio of 191 leaves . . . embellished by grotesque initial-letters, and by numerous woodcuts which are more than once repeated, and often indicate much delicacy of workmanship." He argued that "the book almost certainly began . . . with an address to the reader, followed by 'a table with all the chapters as they stand in the boke in order,' both of which the extant volume now lacks. In its present condition it abruptly opens with the statement that 'here begynneth the boke of duke Huon of Burdeaux, and of them that issued fro him.'"⁵⁷ The description in *Bibliotheca Lindesiana* adds that the volume was printed in "gothic" or black letter in two forty-two-line columns, measured ten and one-half inches high (presumably trimmed down for the "morocco extra" binding with gilded edges described in the Bliss and Corser sales), and contained "69 woodcuts, but many of them are repeated several times." Hodnett, working from the microfilm, concluded that there were thirty-four separate cuts involved, all one-column but of varying sizes, and that although nineteen of them were new cuts, which he provisionally assigned to Julian Notary, several of the others seem copied from Le Noir's Paris edition of November 1513 or from de Worde's *Four Sons of Aymon*, circa 1505: "Virtually all are in good condition, [and] create a freshness and harmony of impression characteristic of an earlier rather than a later date."⁵⁸



How much did this first edition of *Huon* cost? Determining the production, wholesale, and retail costs of early English printed books is an exercise frustrated by notoriously limited direct evidence. Based on estimates that the retail price of an early sixteenth-century book was approximately ½d. per paper sheet, *Huon*'s 191 surviv-

57. Lee, introduction to *Huon*, EETS, lii, and see p. 335 of this essay for the missing prefatory material and colophon.

58. Hodnett, *English Woodcuts*, xii.

ing folio leaves (requiring an absolute minimum of ninety-six sheets, and more if there were originally preliminary leaves as well) would have sold for about 4s.⁵⁹ This is roughly consistent also with the posted retail prices of legal printer John Rastell, whose yearbook colophons listed a standard 2d. per five sheets; for *Huon*'s ninety-six, but without the added costs of illustrations, using Rastell's rates would give a retail price of 3s. 2d.⁶⁰ If the retail price represented approximately three times the actual costs of production, following Gaskell, then *Huon* would have cost the printer at least 1s. 4d. per volume, and (again) certainly more, once the extra expense of acquiring, adapting, and setting decorated woodcut initials and sixty-nine illustrations was included, especially if the nineteen new cuts and those copied from *Le Noir* were specifically commissioned for this book, and if the other cuts had to be copied or rented from other printers.⁶¹

The size of the press run, crucial for calculating final profit and loss, is equally unknown either for *Huon* in particular or for most early Tudor books in general. Bennett suggests 600–700 as an upper limit for “ordinary” works in the first seventy-five years of English printing, and Blayney estimates an average of circa 480 copies during the first decade of the sixteenth century and 600 during the years 1526–34,⁶² but *Huon* in the first edition's generously illustrated folio format would have represented a riskier proposition for a printer than the cheaper and quicker-selling unillustrated quarto or octavo volumes more commonly produced for a wider audience by the later sixteenth century. (The 1601 *Huon* appeared in quarto, without the sixty-nine woodcut illustrations.) Using a conservative estimate of 500 copies, and again without including the unknown additional costs of illustrations, *Huon*'s printer's total investment would probably have been *at least* £33 and almost certainly more. This too is generally consistent with the total production costs of slightly more than £34 for Robert Wyer's 1535 printing of William Marshall's translation of Marsiglio of Pad-

59. H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers*, vol. 1, 1475–1557 (Cambridge, 1952), 224–34; Bennett's figures are based in part on a lawsuit of 1510 between printer and wholesaler and in part on the conditions of a 1523 production contract between Pynson and Palsgrave analyzed at greater length by Peter W. M. Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501–1557*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 2013), 199–202, which specified that the cost of paper and printing was 6s. 8d. per ream of 480 sheets. See also Philip Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford, 1972), 178. None of these estimates allow for the additional costs of adding illustrations.

60. J. H. Baker, “Books of the Common Law,” *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, 1400–1557, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 425.

61. I am grateful to Joseph Gwara for directing me to the work of Simran Thadani on the vexing question of the production costs of woodcuts and to Dr. Thadani for referring me to the interesting if ultimately inconclusive string on this topic at SHARP-L@listserv.indiana.edu, November 19–24, 2009, <https://list.indiana.edu/sympa/arc/sharp-l/2009-11/msg00054.html>. She estimates that the cost of a single new woodcut in the 1560s might have been as much as a shilling, in Thadani, “Black, White, and Dead all Over: Reading Monsters on 1560s News/Ballad Broad-sides” (unpublished manuscript, December 2009), 10, cited by permission of the author.

62. Bennett, *English Books*, 238; Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 102.

ua's *The Defence of Peace*, a folio volume of 144 leaves but with no illustrations other than a handsome title page, a few decorated initials, and Wyer's device at the end.⁶³ Some evidence that *Huon's* printer (or publisher) calculated wisely in planning the project comes from a 1553 inventory of the remaining stock of the printer William Powell, whose business at the Sign of the George had formerly belonged to Richard Pynson. The majority of the 150-plus identifiable titles were books printed by Pynson, de Worde, or their successors. Out of the 12,000 volumes listed, there are only ten copies of *Huon of Bordeaux*. It does not seem to have been a glut on the market.⁶⁴

Huon's popularity, however, was still in the future. The printer's choice of folio format and numerous illustrations for the first edition suggests an ambitious project but perhaps a risky one: the mixture of old and new woodcuts also suggests that he may not have had unlimited funding in advance for such an enterprise. Financial support or subvention, even if it covered only part of the costs, would have been welcome and might have been critical.

For Hastings, any substantial contribution toward the total printing costs represented a serious financial commitment rather than a token donation. Regular detailed annual accounts for his income and expenditures no longer exist, but the several records that *have* survived give a generally consistent view of his financial position, which was not strong. The receiver's accounts for the year 1499–1500, during the lifetime of his father, Edward, second Baron Hastings (d. 1506), record that the family estates brought in an annual income of £1,734.⁶⁵ A surviving valor of those estates from just after his mother's death in 1533 shows a roughly comparable if slightly depressed figure of £1,672⁶⁶ but most of that was not available to George Hastings during her lifetime. His mother, the formidable Mary (née Hungerford) Hastings Sacheverell, was a substantial heiress in her own right and *suo jure* Baroness Hungerford, Botreaux, and Moleyns. A valor of her dower lands discloses that in the year of her death they were rated at £1,175, leaving her son George with an effective disposable landed income of roughly £500 per annum, but the valor may be incomplete: a separate assessment of the value of her lands made six years earlier in

63. Blayney, *Stationers' Company*, 199; Marshall to Thomas Cromwell, undated but probably late 1536, *L&P*, 11:1355 (pp. 542–43). For detailed calculations later in the century for another and even more lavishly illustrated folio, see John N. King, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge, 2006), 82–89.

64. Blayney, "The Site of the Sign of the Sun," in *The London Book Trade: Topographies of Print in the Metropolis from the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (Newcastle, Del., 2003), 1–20; this inventory was formerly misidentified by Henry R. Plomer as belonging to Wynkyn de Worde, "An Inventory of Wynkyn de Worde's House, 'The Sun in Fleet Street,' in 1553," *The Library*, 3rd ser., vol. 6, no. 23 (July 1915): 228–34.

65. Hastings Family Papers: Correspondence, HA 16250, Dugdale's autograph history, as copied from the original receiver's accounts in Hastings Family Papers: Misc., Box 10(5), Huntington Library. All figures in this paragraph have been rounded to the nearest pound.

66. Valor of Hastings estates, ca. 1533–34, Add. MS 48591, fols. 177b–176b (rev.), British Library.

1527 for the next payment of Wolsey's 1523 subsidy puts the figure at £1,333, in which case George's effective income was even less.⁶⁷ These figures are consistent with his assessment for Wolsey's 1523 subsidy on lands valued at 600 marks, or £400; his first annual payment of the 5 percent tax in 1524 was £20. (The average assessed value for the annual income of all peers in Henry VIII's reign was £800–900, placing Hastings relatively far down the list.)⁶⁸ There were also debts to the Crown: in 1521 he had somehow managed to repay £1,700 owed to the king, but two years later he still owed an additional £1,000; it is not clear whether a further £500 listed then as repaid was part of the earlier £1,700.⁶⁹ By the late 1530s he was effectively bankrupt, and at his death in 1544 he still had remaining debts of more than £9,000.⁷⁰

Huon's 1601 preface recognized Hastings's role as both a "continuall spur" to Berners in the pursuit of his translation and a "cheerful encourager" of the printer, "assisting euer both with his purse and honorable countenance." Both statements suggest an ongoing personal interest, not a one-time-only gift. Nor is he known to have sponsored or patronized any other printed book.⁷¹ Given his effective available income in the early years of the reign and the numerous other expenditures necessary for the self-presentation and display of a young nobleman making his way through Henry's image-conscious court, Hastings's support for the printing of *Huon* represented a serious commitment: even the conservative estimate of £33 proposed above would have represented slightly more than half of the entire annual income from the Hastings family's principal estate at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire, set at £64 16s. 6d. in the valor of his late mother's properties in 1533–34, or an even greater part of the annual income of £43 13s. 5d. that same year from Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire, the earl's favorite home closer to London (in the chapel of which he and his wife were subsequently buried).⁷² His investment in *Huon* was not a bagatelle. Can we know why he did it?

67. Hastings Family Papers: Misc., Box 10 (2), Huntington Library; *L&P*, 4:2972 (p. 1331).

68. *L&P*, 4:331 (p. 137), 2972 (p. 1332). For the reliability of the 1523 assessments on the peerage, at least, see Roger Schofield, *Taxation under the Early Tudors, 1485–1547* (Oxford, 2007), 205.

69. *L&P*, 3:1153 (p. 427), 3694 (pp. 1528, 1530).

70. Hastings Family Papers: Deeds, HAD 3451, Huntington Library, printed in Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Late Reginald Rawdon Hastings Esq.*, 4 vols. (London, 1928–47), 1:313–14; Exchequer, Inquisitions Post Mortem Series 2, E 150/1146/5, The National Archives, Kew, as cited in *ODNB*, s.v. "George Hastings, first earl of Huntingdon," by Claire Cross, last modified January 3, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12570>.

71. Franklin R. Williams, *Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verse in English Books before 1641* (London, 1962).

72. Hastings Family Papers: Misc., Box 10(2), Huntington Library; Valor of Hastings estates, ca. 1533–34, Add. MS 48591, British Library.



Determining motive, absent a specific explanation from the young peer or those who knew him, is an exercise even more notoriously difficult than finding the precise production costs of an early printed book. But some speculation may be permissible. First and generally, support for the arts validated the cultural and social role of an aristocracy: from the Tudor humanists who appreciated Maecenas to Hastings's own famous and politically powerful grandfather William Lord Hastings, a noted patron of the arts in Edward IV's Burgundian-inspired court, wealthy courtiers enhanced both their own stature and that of their rulers through their largesse.⁷³ By 1548 the scholar/dramatist Nicholas Udall could boast that "now dooe Kynges, Quenes, princes, and other piers (especially here in Englande) of their own mere mocions and good zele not onely with their propense favour, and with their beneficial aide, comforte, and liberalitee, help foreward the good endeavour and sedulitee of studious wryters[.]"⁷⁴ More immediately, Hastings was connected to Lord Berners through friends, family, court occasions, legal dealings, and their shared military experience in the 1513 campaign. Little wonder if the younger man might look on the scholar and war hero with admiration and affection.

Further to this, Hastings's own family heritage exemplified the military and chivalric values of an older generation: his famous grandfather, a Garter knight buried near Edward IV in St. George's Chapel at Windsor; his uncle Shrewsbury, also a Garter knight and the current head of a family whose Talbot name was synonymous with battlefield valor; his stepfather, Sir Richard Sacheverell, treasurer of the 1513 campaign, who led 111 men into battle in the vanguard under Shrewsbury's command and was knighted for his service in the church at Tournai; his own role in that same campaign.⁷⁵ Three years later Hastings fought pretend battles when the king held "jousts of honor" at Greenwich in the spring of 1516,⁷⁶ and as an attending nobleman at that ultimate chivalric fantasy enacted on the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520, he almost certainly took part in the carefully choreographed tournaments and jousting. His stepfather Sacheverell was there too, as one of the five ceremonial assistants to the Earl of Essex, the marshal appointed to order the field.⁷⁷

73. For the artistic interests and patronage of William Lord Hastings, see Janet Backhouse, *The Hastings Hours* (London, 1996), esp. 39–43. Caxton translated and printed *The Myrroure of the World* in 1481 at the request of Hugh Bryce, a London alderman, for presentation to the first Baron Hastings; both the baron and Earl Rivers were recognized friends and patrons of England's first printer.

74. From Udall's Introduction to *The Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Newe Testament* (London, 1548; STC 2854) quoted in Bennett, *English Books and Readers*, 40.

75. *L&P*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., 2051–52 (pp. 923–24).

76. *L&P*, vol 2., p. 1507.

77. Joycelyne Gledhill Russell, *The Field of Cloth of Gold: Men and Manners in 1520* (London, 1968), 114, 117.

It is also possible that in assisting Berners, Hastings hoped to increase his own prestige and credit with the king. As a young nobleman at court in the first decade of Henry's reign, his prospects for a successful career as courtier-peer might have seemed bright, but major successes and the political influence that went with them stayed tantalizingly just out of reach. Hastings participated in the usual round of royal ceremonies and entertainments, was appointed one of the lords triers of petitions in Parliament in 1510 and 1512, followed his king into war, was regularly named to local commissions of the peace in his home county of Leicestershire (but seldom beyond it), and with his wife Anne (a sister of the third Duke of Buckingham) had rooms at court and liveries for breakfasts when the king was at Greenwich, privileges "confined to a small circle of the Kings close friends."⁷⁸ But underneath the surface, real power of the sort his grandfather had exercised under Edward IV never materialized. Some roadblocks can be identified. In 1510 Anne was involved in a major scandal over her rumored affair with the king (or perhaps with Henry's close friend Sir William Compton), resulting in a scene with Queen Catherine and Lady Hastings's temporary banishment from court.⁷⁹ The king was especially close, furthermore, to Thomas Grey, second Marquess of Dorset, and the long-standing Hastings-Grey rivalry for power in the Midlands and at court, dating back to Edward IV's reign, still occasionally erupted into disorder, with the Greys usually having the upper hand.⁸⁰ An accomplished royal jousting-companion at courtly entertainments, Dorset was also the commander of a disastrous military defeat in 1512, when English forces attempting to retake Guyenne were decimated through Dorset's incompetent leadership (and the double-dealing of their putative Spanish allies). But this fiasco barely dimmed his standing with the king, although Wolsey kept the marquess from further high command. In early summer 1516, both Hastings and Dorset were hauled into Star Chamber, where Wolsey accused them of illegal retaining, and Hastings was indicted in King's Bench for riot, trespass, and unlawful assembly. Hastings occasionally attended the Council, but only Dorset was accepted into its inner core, and Dorset, not Hastings, was named to the Privy Chamber. Hastings was often nominated for but regularly denied the Garter, while Dorset had been a member of the order since 1501.⁸¹ Their rivalry ended only with the latter's death in 1530, and despite Hastings's attaining the earldom the

78. *L&P*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., 1549 (p. 713); vol. 2, pp. 1444, 1490, 1504, 1507; 3:702 (p. 236), 703 (p. 238), 704 (p. 240), 2288 (p. 966), 2333[6] (p. 988), p. 1533; 4:1906 (p. 845). Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, 82.

79. *L&P*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., 474 (p. 286), citing the full account in *State Papers Spanish, Supplement to Vol. 1 and Vol. 2*, ed. G. A. Bergenroth (London, 1868), 39–41.

80. For more on this ongoing rivalry, see Mary L. Robertson, "Court Careers and County Quarrels: George Lord Hastings and Leicestershire Unrest, 1509–1529," in *State, Sovereigns and Society in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of A. J. Slavin*, ed. Charles Carlton (Stroud, U.K., 1998), 153–69.

81. Anstis, *Register*, passim; *ODNB*, s.v. "Thomas Grey, 2nd Marquess of Dorset (1477–1530)," by Robert C. Braddock, last modified September 23, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11561>.

previous year, he was never personally as close to the king as Dorset had been. Shadowed throughout the reign by increasing financial insolvency, the new earl never held that national political influence enjoyed by others in his aristocratic circles.

But when Berners was translating *Huon*, and Hastings encouraging him, these ultimate disappointments were still in the future. Neither direct complaints nor explicitly expressed discontent would have been wise in Henry's court, but the literature of the early Tudor world could provide a strong and effective platform for addressing the politics of the day under the protective guise of fiction. More, Colet, and Erasmus despised war and the nobles who waged it. Skelton, Bryan, Wyatt, and Surrey, no less than the formal humanists, used verse to consider the moral and political failings of a rapidly changing world.⁸² And so, finally, did Malory, Caxton, Froissart, and Berners see in chivalric accounts of the past not just an appealing story of wondrous adventures fit for leisure hours, but an active model for present behavior, with a still-relevant emphasis on the values of personal loyalty, physical prowess, courage, nobility, and honor.

The early Henrician court to which Hastings returned from France in 1513 had become a battlefield of its own, for personal advancement against rivals but also for ideas and cultures, where fashionable and influential humanists failed to recognize—indeed actively denigrated—the martial values of his chivalric world. For George Hastings, sponsoring *Huon* and the work of Lord Berners may ultimately have been a rearguard action, since the values it celebrated were under assault from modernity as well as humanists.⁸³ As the Tudor century wore on, gunpowder, heavy artillery, and other innovations in early modern warfare made single combat by mounted knights in shining armor a fading phenomenon, and members of the wider audience made possible by growing middle-class literacy and cheaper print were less likely to have led men into battle themselves, or to have formally pledged personal fealty to a liege lord. Chivalric literature as the didactic model for behavior that Berners had proposed became less realistic and gradually evolved into still influential but ultimately artificial escapist romance. In encouraging and assisting Lord Berners, not only a distinguished older scholar of his father's generation but also an authentic aristocratic military hero fallen on hard financial times, perhaps Hastings was planting his standard on a chivalric field beneath which the solid ground of reality was slowly slipping away.

82. See generally Alastair Fox, *Politics and Literature in the Reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII* (Oxford, 1989); or, for important extended examples, Susan Brigden, *Thomas Wyatt: The Heart's Forest* (London, 2012); and Brigden, "Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and the 'Conjured League,'" *Historical Journal* 37, no. 3 (1994): 507–37.

83. For the changing value systems of postmedieval warfare, see Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (Athens, Ga., 1981).

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