Three Gigli of Lucca in England during the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries: Diversification in a Family of Mercery Merchants

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Lucca’s prosperity in the early decades of the fifteenth century derived largely from the sale of such mercery as ribbons, buttons, and leather work, supplemented by the infinitely more valuable silk cloth and brocade, often fashioned into luxurious dress and hats for the nobility. Remember in theory sumptuary laws – if not consistently enforced – dictated that the dress and display worn conformed to the individual’s rank. By the 1430s Lucca had developed the manufacture of wool cloth as a counter to over-dependence on silk. There was an awareness that Lucchese exports were more costly than the products of its larger neighbour, Florence, and that Lucca, a small state, inevitably relied on importing raw materials for its manufactures. Expensive luxury goods produced in Lucca were primarily for sale at foreign courts beyond the Italian peninsula, notably those of France, Burgundy and England, where they were highly esteemed for their quality and artistic design. Sale inevitably involved monarchs, princes and nobles, and as the sums disbursed were considerable they often required credit, with bankers as intermediaries. In consequence a Lucchese merchant family selling expensive items abroad might either ensure that some family members went into banking, or that the merchant family formed a partnership with one predominantly in banking, perhaps strengthened by marriage alliances between two families. Over time it became normal for a family of Lucca to have agents resident in one or more of the prime centres renowned in Western Christendom for the sale of luxury goods: above all Venice, Paris, Bruges and London; in the early decades of the fifteenth century.


century Bruges was seen as epitomising world economy with its range of exotic commodities for sale.\textsuperscript{3} Usually the agents were expatriate family members who cultivated acquaintance with potential clients and with those frequenters of court likely to be alert to prospective customers, and able to provide the partnership with reliable topical news of political circumstance: say a change of government, or an impending war, as such events could be catastrophic for negotiating a costly sale, or for a debt recovery. Newsletters circulated between the agents of a partnership in the main centres, providing current information on the trading situation.\textsuperscript{4}

In each of the main continental centres expatriate Lucchese formed a brotherhood, or guild, for the mutual benefit and protection of its members. Most contemporary guilds aimed at keeping the foreigner out; those Lucchese brotherhoods abroad were to provide solidarity for Lucchese trading and living in a hostile foreign environment. The concept was probably less unusual than may be supposed among traders of a particular community: one thinks of expatriate English in Rome in the later middle ages, with their hospices to protect English visitors from exploitation, and links to London merchants for the bulk purchase of devotional mementoes to be sold by the English expatriates, and for trading in coveted English wool.\textsuperscript{5} In the case of the Lucchese brotherhood in Bruges, which dated from 1369 (that of the English in Rome was established in 1362), it was obligatory for every male Lucchese expatriate on taking residence to become a member, and each had voting rights from the age of fourteen. Expatriates thereby gained trading protection through association, as well as contact with other Lucchese and retained the cultural heritage with which they were familiar. They maintained a religious fraternity with devotion to the \textit{Volto Santo}, Lucca's famous wooden carving of Christ crucified: worship was in the Augustinian church of Bruges, where a chapel was dedicated for their use. The closely akin brotherhoods in the other main continental centres formed an interconnected network for Lucchese merchants as they travelled.\textsuperscript{6}

Members of a brotherhood remained in close touch with their families in Lucca, the centre of the network, at the heart of the state's trade and prosperity. Family ties and bonds of friendship remained paramount, constantly strengthened by marriages within its merchant families; seemingly only very exception-


ally was a native woman of the region chosen as bride. Obviously an expatriate might die abroad, but the intention of virtually all was to retire to Lucca; they appear to have sent profit from their trade home for investment in property and land. Wealth accumulated in Lucca brought the family prestige, enhancing its influence in government. A family's standing and wealth were visibly displayed by its substantial palazzo, and enabled rich dowries to be provided, ensuring daughters married into families of comparable rank. Such marriages, as mentioned, were fundamental for trading associations or partnerships. A family's standing and wealth were significant factors, too, in attaining richly endowed ecclesiastical positions in Lucca and its state, the first step for a Lucchese, usually, to higher office in the Church. Obviously some profit from trade returned to Lucca in the normal way of business by the acquisition there of further stock of luxury goods for sale abroad. Supposedly as the fifteenth century progressed and Lucca's woollen industry matured, Lucchese agents in England sought to purchase wool there for shipment home, where it was made into best quality cloth: one among various examples of two-way traffic between Lucca and its centre of trade abroad.

Such is the background for appreciating the attitude of a Lucchese expatriate, who consciously sought not to be integrated into the foreign community where he traded. Even so something more than a symbiotic relationship could develop. To stimulate still further Dr Anne Sutton's interest in this period she has made her own, an attempt here is made to illustrate such an exceptional situation with the case study of three expatriate Lucchese of the Gigli family, in the context of England in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Unsurprisingly the Gigli in question did not marry into English families (two never married), or seek permanent residence in England, though one certainly found it advantageous to become a denizen, and the other two (though there is no documentary testimony extant) presumably did, to trade or to hold English benefices. Two of them were fortunate in having a professional training much in demand in England, ensuring state office and church benefices. During the fifteenth century Italian Renaissance concepts became ever more dominant in diplomacy within Western Christendom. A requisite was the capacity to declaim orations in classical Latin modelled on the rhetoric of Antiquity, as learnt by those following humanistic courses — the Studia humanitatis — at universities on the Italian peninsula. Comparatively few Englishmen had such professional skill, so in favourable circumstances there could be vacancies for dedicated Italians. The present study illustrates how this fortuitous situation was exploited by two expatriate Gigli of Lucca.

7 Family ties: Bratchel, Lucca, pp. 164-68; Dahl, Trade, pp. 274-75.
9 C.H. Clough, 'Late fifteenth-century English monarchs subject to Italian Renaissance influence', in England and the Continent in the Middle Ages: Studies in Memory of Andrew Martindale, 123
It is to be emphasised that what follows, hopefully an original contribution, certainly is not definitive. Archival and documentary material existing in England has been examined in some depth; that on the Italian peninsula, notably the Gigli papers at Lucca and allied documents in the Vatican Archives, has been merely sketched; that relating to Bruges, such as is utilised, derives from a few published sources. However, what has been gleaned in Lucca does appear generally reliable, as it is a compilation dated 1618, made by one of the family, based on Gigli papers (some now lost). A very brief notice of Giovanni Gigli was written in 1510 by Pietro Griffo of Pisa, who then was a papal nuncio in England, perhaps drawing on oral tradition.

On the night of 14 August 1430 a band of disaffected Lucchese nobles captured Paolo Guinigi, who in his capacity as 'Captain and Defender of the People' had ruled Lucca autocratically since 1400. Two days later, at a parlamento of ninety-seven citizens representing the city's prominent families, republican government was re-instituted. At this assembly the Gigli representative was Nicolao, son of Antonio, then the family's head in Lucca; Nicolao's uncle, Piero, was living in self-imposed exile in Bruges to escape from Guinigi's tyranny. It is with Piero's son, Carlo, that the case-studies of this paper commence.

Carlo was born probably in the early years of the fifteenth century, perhaps the eldest son of Piero Gigli and his wife, Conchiara Fatinefli, daughter of
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Bartolomeo, their marriage being about 1398.14 Carlo’s grandfather Fatinelli was described as a silk merchant, and was of the standing to be the family’s representative at the parliamento of 1430.15 All the seventeenth-century family historian could report of Carlo’s education was that it was classical and that he could write good Latin, perhaps implying a university training. He was said to be on friendly terms with Pope Nicholas V (1447—55), who in 1446 had sent him a privilege to that effect. It is possible they were fellow-students when Tommaso Parentuccelli, as he then was, read law at Bologna, a speculation supported by the fact that this university was chosen for Giovanni, Carlo’s son.16 Presumably by 1430 Carlo had married Camilla Cagnoli of Lucca, as by that year they were living in Flanders, probably in Bruges, where Carlo’s father, Piero, lived until his death in 1432, and where he was buried. It was in Bruges about 1434 that Giovanni, the couple’s only child, was born.17

From the beginning of Carlo’s trading ventures in Flanders the sums involved were notable, testimony that he sold luxury items. In Bruges Carlo had some contact with Duke Philip of Burgundy, presumably on commercial matters, as in 1433 the duke granted him a trading concession.18 Unsurprisingly, given Piero’s transference abroad, not only Carlo but other sons were expatriate merchants: Francesco, Andrea and Filippo in Bruges, Girolamo in Paris; ser Nicolao, Carlo’s younger brother, lived in Bruges, but visited London to sell silk on commission there from about 1445 to January 1449.19 Certainly by early 1461 Carlo was in London, possibly a resident of some standing, and he was in England in October 1464.20 The move could have had commercial advantages, with the family network covering more evenly the three principal trading centres for luxury goods beyond the Italian peninsula itself. Assuming Carlo made the move, it remains unknown when, and that it was in Giovanni’s early youth is unsubstantiated.21 Family papers existing in the seventeenth century testified that Carlo had correspondence with court officials of Henry

15 Bratchel, Lucca, p. 139, n. 44, and App., p. 297.
19 Ibid, ff. 22v, 22; Nicolao in London: below, at n. 102.
20 Below, at nn. 24 and 28.
21 Griffo, De officio, stated of Giovanni: inde educatus in Anglia apud Oxfamise Gymnasmum, Anglorum linguam et morum optimae cultum. Weiss, ‘Lineamenti’, p. 380, concluded this was when Giovanni was a youth (era ancora assai giovane), hence the 1440s. This is followed by A.V. Antonovics in Dizionario biografico degli italiani, Rome 1960— . . . [in progress] vol. 54, p. 675.
VI, presumably on commercial matters. In February 1451 Carlo, then in London, was granted a safe-conduct in the king’s name, which suggests that until then he was not a resident; thereafter he may have continued to reside in England, while Nicolao had returned to Lucca by August 1452, and his political career there can be charted from 1453.22

Perhaps in the early 1440s and prior to leaving Bruges, Carlo had helped a young Venetian, Marco Barbo (born 1420), a son of the Patrician Marino. The youth’s desired vocation was an ecclesiastical career, but family interests determined that he was sent as a merchant to Flanders, where he went bankrupt. Carlo on learning this wrote to his friend Parentuccelli, then at the curia, suggesting that he might be able to find Barbo a post. This was done at Carlo’s recommendation; when in 1446 Parentuccelli, then a cardinal, wrote to Carlo, he thanked him for sending Barbo, as he was proving outstanding in papal service.23 As will be seen, Barbo’s sense of indebtedness to Carlo was a determining factor in advancing the ecclesiastical career of Giovanni, Carlo’s son.

In early 1461 Carlo was in London writing of the civil war in England in newsletters, several of which are extant. Three, dated 14, 19, and 22 February, were addressed to Michele Arnolfini, who was the younger son of Arrigo, another well-established Lucchese expatriate family in Bruges.24 Michele’s cousin was Giovanni, son of Nicolao, whose portrait with his second wife dated 1434, painted by Jan van Eyck, is now one of the treasures of the National Gallery, London.25 In the newsletters political developments in England were outlined, supposedly to suggest how trade could be affected. On 23 February Angelo, perhaps Michele’s illegitimate son, likewise in Bruges, wrote on the same theme to an unnamed Italian, perhaps the bishop of Terni, who had been sent by the pope to arbitrate between the warring factions in England.26 Certainly a letter from Michele, dated 9 March, addressed to the bishop, mentioned Carlo, indicating Michele was aware of Carlo’s correspondence with him. On 19 February Carlo had indeed informed the bishop of the deteriorating situation in England.27

22 Weiss, ‘Lineamenti’, p. 380, n. 9; Nicolao back in Lucca: below at n. 102.
25 Campbell, ibid., pp. 193–98, convincingly rejects the couple as portraying Giovanni, son of Arrigo, and his wife, Giovanna Cernani (as in Seidel, Portrait) since they married only in 1447.
27 Hinds, State Papers Milan, no. 72, p. 56; no. 68, pp. 52–53.
A newsletter, dated 5 October 1464, tenuous in its information about Carlo, at least indicates he was then in England, and provides another glimpse of how the political situation could be disastrous for commercial interests. This letter sent from Bruges was written by an Italian to an unidentified addressee in Milan; a casual mention of Carlo Gigli in the letter suggests the recipient was an expatriate Lucchese. The information in the letter originated with Venetian merchants, who had recently left England for the Low Countries. Of interest to them and to the writer in Bruges was the plague in London, and a council at Reading, which commenced in September and touched on a new debased coinage of Edward IV; the Venetians did not know whether Gigli or the earl of Warwick had attended.28 England's own cloth trade had significantly expanded during the fifteenth century, with serious consequences for the Low Countries, notably Bruges. On several occasions Duke Philip had prohibited the sale of English cloth and wool-yarn in his territories and even prevented the transit of either across them. A trade war developed, which proved so detrimental to the cities of the Low Countries that Duke Philip was forced to revoke the protection against English wool.29

Even so in 1464 there remained in force an English retaliatory measure imposed against the duke's protection by the English parliament, whereby raw wool was not to be exported from England, or imported into it, by foreign merchants—one can appreciate why becoming a denizen could be advantageous—and all payment received for export was to be in gold or silver bullion. The cities of the Low Countries remained particularly affected and had appealed to Duke Philip to take remedial action when the commercial treaty between England and Burgundy expired on 1 November 1464. The future of trade was made more uncertain because in 1464 Edward IV had asserted his rights to the French throne, and threatened to recover those continental territories lost by Henry VI in 1453. Such circumstances explain why Carlo was sending newsletters to expatriate Lucchese and others in Bruges in 1461 and why in 1464 he may have attended the council at Reading.30

Despite the claim that Edward IV's court culture became strongly influenced by that of Burgundy following the Yorkists' short period of exile there in 1471, Carlo Gigli appears to have become deterred by the uncertainty of trading prospects in England, leaving for Bruges.31 When Carlo left is uncertain, but apparently after 1464. Duke Philip's death in 1467 may have been the factor that permitted the move, given that there was a quarrel between the

28 Ibid., no. 137, p. 113.
29 Munro, Wool; Scofield, Edward, vol. 1, p. 357.
two, which may have provoked Gigli's move to England years before.\textsuperscript{32} It was in Bruges Carlo died and was buried with his father.\textsuperscript{32} It seems to me that Burgundian influence on the English court was not negligible in Henry VI's reign and that 1471 was less of a watershed than has been supposed.

The career of Giovanni, Carlo's only son, can be much more fully detailed than that of his father. Its fascination is in the light it throws on the eventual absorption of the son of an expatriate Lucchese merchant into the affairs of the English church and state. As mentioned already, Giovanni was born about 1434 in Bruges. Probably from infancy he was recognized as very intelligent, so from the age of about six he was likely to have had a private tutor for instruction in the Latin curriculum of the \textit{Studia humanitatis}, already by 1440 recognized as the way to high office in church and state on the Italian peninsula.\textsuperscript{34} It is probable that in early youth Giovanni went to Lucca to stay with

\textsuperscript{32} Gigli, 'Descrizione', f. 20.

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}

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relatives, it being likely (as was typical for a patrician boy on the Italian peninsula) that he received the tonsure and was ordained acolyte; thereby he had the right to hold ecclesiastical lands and give effect to family rights of church presentation, and was well-placed should a career in the church be decided upon; in Giovanni's case Lucca rather than Bruges would have been the more fitting location for this ceremony.\(^35\) In any event by the age of fifteen Giovanni was on the Italian peninsula, commencing studies at Bologna, probably taking courses of the Studio humanitatis, which included Latin and classical Greek, and probably law. Seemingly he studied at Oxford in the early 1450s (when his father was in London), prior to attending Ferrara University, where he acquired a doctorate in civil law.\(^36\) On 21–22 December 1466 he was orally examined at the Studio of Lucca by its College of doctors of law, and awarded a doctorate in canon law, thereby becoming doctor in utroque iure. At Lucca he passed so highly that immediately the College invited him to become a member; intermittently between 28 December 1466 and 19 October 1476 he either presented, or examined, candidates for law doctorates at Lucca.\(^37\)

It is likely that by the late 1450s Giovanni was employed in the papal curia, probably through the good offices of a family friend, Giacomo da Lucca, then secretary to pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini).\(^38\) By the time of his oral examination at Lucca in 1466, or shortly after, he had become one of the familia of Marco Barbo, Bishop of Vicenza, who in 1467 was created Cardinal of San Marco; Marco had been helped by Carlo Gigli when in the Low Countries some twenty-five years earlier and repaid his debt to the son.\(^39\) Be it also noted that Barbo was highly favoured in his turn by his relative, the Venetian patrician Pietro Barbo, elected in 1464 as Pope Paul II. Cardinal Marco Barbo was sent by the pope to several states of Eastern Christendom in an effort to promote solidarity with the West in the face of Turkish expansion; Giovanni Gigli was chosen to accompany the cardinal on the mission to Hungary.\(^40\) For his loyal service Giovanni was rewarded in 1470 by the cardinal with the appointment (hence revenues) as abbot of Cantignano. Moreover it

\(^{35}\) While no record remains for Giovanni, there is for Silvestro and his brothers, below, at n. 97.


\(^{39}\) Ibid., f. 20; above, at n. 23.

\(^{40}\) Ibid., f. 20v.
was the cardinal’s solicitations to the pope that resulted in Gigli being sent to England: on 1 April 1476 the pope appointed him collector of Peter’s Pence and papal nuncio in England.41

It is not known precisely when Gigli reached England; on 19 October 1476 he was in Lucca; faculties for him as nuncio were dated only 28 February 1477. On 10 April 1477 he was in London, in correspondence with the humanist scholar William Sellyng, who some twenty years earlier had studied Greek at Bologna and taken a doctorate in theology. In 1477 Sellyng, a Benedictine, was the mitred prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, and his path may have crossed with Gigli’s at Oxford in the 1450s, and again in Rome, as he visited the curia in 1466 and again in 1468.42 On 24 October 1477 Gigli was presented to an English benefice, as will be seen, and on 12 December 1477 he obtained papers as a denizen, essential for holding any English ecclesiastical or state office; this so soon after his arrival suggests he enjoyed royal favour.43 Moreover, Gigli’s activities in England sufficiently impressed the pope for him in 1478 to extend his jurisdiction to comprise also Wales.44 Already he had resolved an acrimonious dispute between the papal treasury and John Sante, the Benedictine abbot of Abingdon. Apparently the matter concerned payments submitted by Sante, received as his responsibility for the extension to England of the Jubilee Indulgence of Rome of 1475, probably authorised by Sixtus IV in the summer of 1476, and certainly issued before 13 December 1476. The money was intended by the pope to fund a Christian fleet to halt Turkish advances in the eastern Mediterranean.45

In the later middle ages church and state were closely interwoven. A ruler tended to assign as rewards, or encouragements, church offices and benefices as they became vacant to clerics in his service, be that in an ecclesiastical, administrative or diplomatic capacity. The church was used as a means for rewarding servants at little cost to the royal treasury. Accordingly, and conversely, an ecclesiastical career could result in office in state service, which eventually brought high office in the church. The careers of both Giovanni Gigli and his cousin Silvestro Gigli in English royal service testify to this. Giovanni acquired his first English benefice on 24 October 1477, when admitted rector at St George’s, Southwark. He may have been presented to it in

41 Ibid., f. 20r-v; see also n. 21, above.
43 Emden, Oxford, p. 764; for his first English benefice, below at n. 46.
gratitude for resolving Sante's dispute with the papal treasury. Sante was highly valued in the court circle and any aspersions regarding his conduct or integrity reflected adversely on the English crown. Thereafter Gigli almost annually received some English preferment; he relinquished the least rewarding, retaining those most advantageous in terms of either stipend or kudos, and at least some of these were at royal recommendation.

Gigli's arrival in England coincided with a phase of intense diplomatic activity between Edward IV, Sixtus IV and Louis XI in consequence of Edward's war of 1475 with France. Gigli's appointment in 1476 was probably not coincidental. John Shirwood, of a Yorkist family and an outstanding scholar, in January 1474 had been sent to the papal curia on royal business, returning to England early in the next year. By the spring of 1476 he had been sent back and was certainly in Rome by 2 May. At Rome Shirwood had found a patron in Cardinal Marco Barbo and it is likely, therefore, he became acquainted with Gigli. Gigli's appointment on 1 April as collector, at Barbo's behest, was probably shortly after Shirwood's return to Rome. Sante was also known at the curia. In August 1474 in connection with Edward IV's campaign against France, Sante as royal proctor had accompanied the monarch's herald, Bartelot de Rivière, taking the Garter robes for Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, who was general of the pope and of the king of Naples. Most likely the investiture was in early October at Grottaferrata, after the general's installation in Naples as a knight of the Ermine by the king of Naples; certainly Sante had secret proposals on behalf of Edward IV to make to both general and monarch. Sante remained at the papal court until after the 1475 Jubilee celebrations in Rome, returning the following year to England with the Jubilee Indulgence for sale. In the summer of 1475 John, Lord Scrope of Bolton, who had attended the celebrations, visited Urbino presumably on matters relating to Sante's mission of the previous summer. This business undoubtedly concerned military support for Edward IV's summer campaign of 1475 against France, though this backing did not prove forthcoming. Yet Gigli's appointment in April 1476 was probably welcomed, even encouraged, by both Shirwood and Sante, then in Rome, as likely to further English interests.

47 Ibid.
49 Ibid., p. 308.
51 Above, at n. 45.
52 Clough, 'Relations', p. 205; Coronation, pp. 392–93.
By early 1477 the situation on the Continent was even more complicated, following the death of Charles, Duke of Burgundy, and the partitioning of his state. Shirwood, who remained posted at the curia, was reappointed royal proctor on 12 December 1477. On 7 April 1479 Shirwood, Sante and John Doget, another highly qualified diplomat, together with Gigli were nominated to represent the king before the pope, seeking peace terms between England and France. On 9 April, on the eve of departure, Gigli was admitted canon of St Paul's, London, with the prebend of Portpool; one can assume this was at the king's behest to encourage Gigli's devoted support. The English mission assembled in Rome on 8 May, and on 12 May one of them, one suspects Gigli, delivered an impassioned oration, protesting that the French wanted war, not peace. On 23 May, after another audience, the pope dismissed all envoys, concluding that there was no hope of a peace treaty. Shirwood remained at the curia, Sante probably went on to Naples, while Doget and Gigli returned to England.

Gigli was fortunate that his curial background brought him to Edward IV's attention, as it could mean acceptance into important royal office was much accelerated. However, the determining factor was perhaps his humanistic training, for he was recognized as an outstanding Latin rhetorician with the advantage of a knowledge of Greek, an ability possessed by only a handful of native English. Yet from Henry VI's reign such ability was appreciated in England as essential for successful diplomacy; it was requisite for all resident representatives at the court of Rome, and for at least one envoy on a mission to Rome; by about 1466 it was appreciated by Edward IV that one such at least was vital for an embassy to any monarch. There is some faint testimony that Gigli sought to maintain his humanistic interests in England. In 1477 he bought in London a copy of Poggio Bracciolini's Latin translation of Diodorus Siculus, Historiarum priscarum, liber primus-sectus (Venice, Andreas de Psaltasichis, 1476/7); presumably he concluded the translation was better than nothing. The only other known book he owned is Cicero, Tusculanarum quaestionum, liber primus-quintus (Venice, Nicholas Jenson, 1472), in which he wrote fourteen lines of elegiacs that he had composed.

By late 1479 Sixtus IV was much disturbed by the threat of an Ottoman attack on Rhodes, and to provide funds for its defence an indulgence was released for sale in late March 1480 to John Kendale, the Turcopoliere, as

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53 Clough, 'English monarchs', p. 308.
56 Hinds, State Papers Milan, p. 237, nos 356, 357.
57 Ibid., p. 238, nos 358, 359.
58 Clough, 'English monarchs', p. 313.
commissary; there were variant issues, printed at Caxton's press in Westminster, as had been the case for the 1475 Jubilee issued by Sante.60 Another indulgence, undated but assigned to 1480 and likewise printed by Caxton at Westminster, was issued on behalf of St Mary of Rounceval, Charing Cross, associated with Rhodes, and further evidence of anti-Turkish sentiments. It stated that one of its procurators was John Kendale, a royal valet, hence not to be conflated with the Turcopoliere.61 In the spring Edward IV, following the Grand Master of Rhodes' petition, took him and his Rhodes' convent of knights of St John under royal protection, though he provided little practical support when in the summer the Turks besieged the island. In January 1481, when the Grand Master summoned Sir John Weston, prior of the order, to the island to fight, the king refused Weston permission to leave England. The pope continued to press for financial aid, this time through his nuncio and collector, Gigli. A convocation of clergy had been called to St Paul's, London, commencing on 26 March, and there on 9 April Gigli made an impassioned speech in the pope's name, urging members of convocation to give financial aid, the fund to be used against the Turks. He reminded them that the pope had converted all his plate and jewels into money for Rhodes' defence. With choking sobs he pleaded with members to do likewise, but there was little tangible response.62 In further support, as commissary, Gigli promulgated indulgences some time in 1481, probably in the spring, similar to that of Kendale, the Turcopoliere, of the previous year, likewise printed by Caxton at Westminster.63

Subsequently early in 1489 Gigli, with an associate commissary, Perseo Malvezzi of Bologna (perhaps sent by the curia to check Gigli's finances), was responsible for yet another indulgence supporting a military campaign against the Turks, likewise printed by Caxton in two issues, the earlier sometime before

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62 W. Wake, The State of the Church and Clergy in England and their Public Convocations . . ., London 1703, p. 381, under 9 April 1481 (Gigli is not named, but indicated as 'Pope's Collector'); D. Wilkins, Consilia Magnae Britanniæ et Hiberniæ, 4 vols, London 1737, vol. 3, p. 612, under 9 April 1481 for the oration of magister Johannes de Sigis, sacerdos juris doctor. Recent historians have caused confusion with erroneous information regarding the date of the oration and the convocation's location.

63 Needham, Printer, p. 86, Cx 49, Cx 50.
24 April. Sixtus had rewarded Gigli, naming him an apostolic subdeacon by 1483. Innocent VIII, almost immediately on election, re-appointed him on 25 January 1485 papal collector in England. It is not known when, but by 1488 Gigli had been created an apostolic protonotary, an appointment virtually du rigueur for a royal proctor at the curia. Yet what he craved eluded him, for the pope did not make him a cardinal. One can suppose that Gigli concluded that enthusiastic royal support for this was essential, not least as royal nomination was normally required for an archbishopric, or even a bishopric, under the king of England’s control. Accordingly, while substantiating his merits in the eyes of the pope, Gigli turned more blatantly to the crown for preferment. Gigli appears to have courted Edward IV’s favour through the patronage of John Russell, said by Sir Thomas More to be ‘a wyse manne and a good, and of muche experyence, and one of the beste learnede menne’ of his day. He had been appointed keeper of the privy seal on 28 May 1474, an office vacated only on 10 May 1483 on becoming chancellor of England; that was the day that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was confirmed protector shortly before Edward V was confined to the Tower. Russell had become bishop of Rochester by papal provision dated 17 July 1476 and was translated to Lincoln by a papal bull dated 7 July 1480. According to its dedication Gigli wrote a theological treatise: ‘On the Reasons for Lenten Abstinence’ at Russell’s prompting. It addressed Russell as bishop of Lincoln and keeper of the privy seal, and hence seemingly this dedication, at least, was written between July 1480 and May 1483. The treatise was probably composed towards the end of this period, as Gigli was collated a canon of Lincoln and prebendary of Marston St Laurence on 24 September 1484, which may be connected to the presentation to Russell. Already on 22 June 1482 Gigli had become archdeacon of London, and that same day was translated from his Portpool prebend in St Paul’s, held since 1479, to that of Hoxton and Morea associated with

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64 Ibid., p. 89, Cx 88, Cx 89. A copy executed for John Pampyne, dated 3 March 1490, was until 1981 in the Somerset Record Office, Taunton, Bundle 13, 11/13/1, but now it has only the photocopy; I am indebted to Mr and Mrs Rupert Crosbee of Bristol and to Miss S. Berry of the Somerset Record Office for this information.


68 The text was probably written in the same period, comp. Weiss, ‘Lineamenti’, p. 383, n. 44. The earliest known copy of ‘De observantia quadragesimali’ is of c. 1487 in the collection of Gigli’s writing presented to Richard Fox, n. 80, below. There is a copy in New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 25 (formerly Z. 109. 041), which is not a presentation text, B. Shailor, Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 3 vols, Binghampton, NY, 1984–92, vol. 1, pp. 40–41.

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Fig. 2. Sixteenth-century portrait in oils of Silvestro Gigli, church of S. Michele in Foro, Lucca, perhaps taken from his tomb effigy in that church. The painted inscription errs in only referring to his service for Henry VIII; probably this passage should have been on Giovanni’s portrait (fig. 1).

that office. The following 8 August as archdeacon he attended the king’s council at Westminster. He was listed as archdeacon in the London alien subsidy roll of mid-June 1483, residing in Coleman Street ward. He was exempt payment with his household by writ, and it is included two relatives living with him, Sebastiano Gigli, said to be a merchant staying for three months, and Silvestro Gigli, specified as Giovanni’s servant, both of whom will be mentioned again shortly.

A possible consequence of Russell’s patronage was Gigli’s appointment as ‘tutor’ to what were stated to be Edward IV’s children. It is not known who were meant by this term, or when he obtained the post, but perhaps it was in succession to Bishop John Alcock, who had been appointed tutor to

71 Weiss, ‘Lincamonti’, p. 382, n. 3.
the prince of Wales in November 1473. Shortly after Edward's death on 9 April 1483 Gigli was owed a not insignificant sum as salary, so one deduces that he had been in the post for some months unpaid. Gigli was probably one of young Edward's attendants barred from access to him on the protector's orders, when the king was lodged in the Tower on 19 May, where he was joined by his younger brother on 16 June; probably both were murdered by the following August, according to Gigli's Epitaphamium of 1486 by order of their uncle. Archdeacon of London though he remained, there is no indication that Gigli participated in Richard III's coronation on 6 July; he was not one of the monarch's circle and received no royal preferments during his reign. Significantly Russell fell out of favour, perhaps suspected of supporting Henry Tudor, who on his succession did treat both Russell and Gigli generously.

Gigli as archdeacon of London played an important role in charting the initial course of Henry VII's reign. The pope sent as nuncio to England the bishop of Imola with powers as legate a latere to deal specifically with the proposed matrimony between the king and Elizabeth of York. On 16 January 1486 Gigli and Robert Morton, Archdeacon of Winchester, appearing as procurators for the couple, in the bishop's presence petitioned for the marriage, which was within the prohibited degrees, to be permitted by means of a papal dispensation. This being granted, the wedding took place on 18 January, and by March Elizabeth was pregnant. In mid-March a papal bull furnished the dispensation, and another dated 27 March followed confirming the previous one, adding the decree that in the event of Elizabeth predeceasing her husband without surviving offspring, children of a subsequent lawful wife should succeed. The desired son and heir, christened Arthur, was born on 20 September 1486.

With Henry's accession Gigli's quest for royal patronage shifted to Richard Fox, the king's secretary. Competition for royal favour was fierce, and included the Italians Pietro Carmeliano and Cornelio Vitelli. Probably late in 1486 Gigli

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74 Coramion, p. 13; for the salary, previous note.

75 As was barred John Argentine, Edward V's physician, D.E. Rhodes, John Argentine, Proveot of King's, Amsterdam 1967, pp. 12–13; Coronation, pp. 18, 22. Epitaphamium: n. 80, below.

76 Not in Coronation; he had participated at the king's council in 1482, above, at n. 71.


presented a volume of his apposite writings to Fox. The accompanying dedication gave fulsome praise for Fox’s love of literature, exceptional among his fellow countrymen. Heroes of the Old Testament and Antiquity, with the Latin Fathers, were marshalled, justifying such devotion to letters. The collection comprised the treatise on Lenten abstinence, previously sent to Russell, a marriage song or *Epitbalamium de nuptiis* of 500 hexameters to celebrate the royal wedding, and a verse *Genetblasio* with two epigrams on Arthur’s birth. The marriage song was political in tone, rejoicing in the end of civil war, and looking forward to protracted peace. This theme was given emphasis by the symbolic decoration of two roses intertwining around the royal arms, supported by two white greyhounds. Probably the king and queen had received presentation copies of the marriage and birth songs. The king was sufficiently impressed to write to the pope lauding Gigli’s merits. Perhaps it was at this time that Gigli dedicated to Lady Margaret Beaufort, the king’s mother, his liturgical text concerning the Mass to celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus, and presumably presented a copy to her.

On 17 March 1488 Gigli was appointed one of the English envoys sent to arbitrate peace between France and Brittany, but gout prevented his participation. The eventual outcome was the Treaty of Redon of 14 February 1489, whereby Henry VII, if reluctantly, sent a force to assist Brittany against Charles VIII of France. In August the French king sent a mission to London to offer Henry VII peace terms, it being stated that peace would enable Charles VIII to take what he claimed as his rightful possession of the kingdom of Naples. Chancellor John Morton, who headed the English delegation, retorted that the English had a superior claim to France than the French to Naples. Two months later the French diplomats returned to meet the English delegation, headed this time by Gigli, at Calais (English territory) in late October. Following hostile gibes between the two parties, the meeting concluded with nothing

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Gigli was praised for his part in besting the French in an epigram written by the court poet, Bernard André.

Gigli appears to have resigned his post as collector before the encounter at Calais, since Adriano Castellesi was nominated his successor on 14 October 1489, though there was a delay before the replacement was effective. The family historian of the Gigli throws interesting light on this matter, previously unexplained. Seemingly Giovanni sent Sebastiano Gigli to the papal treasury in Rome on his behalf in an attempt to explain notable deficiencies in the money due to the treasury from his accounts as collector; severe gout was Giovanni's justification for not going in person, and probably not just an excuse. The family historian commented wryly that by nature Giovanni was born to spend money rather than accumulate it; it was Cardinal Barbo who influenced him to resign the post of collector. Castellesi was sent to England by way of Austria, reaching Innsbruck on 18 April 1490; he took this route in order to present Maximilian, King of the Romans, with the papal cap and sword, an honour awarded annually to a ruler by the pope. He probably reached England a month later. On 1 July 1490 Gigli was nominated as Henry's resident orator at the court of Rome. He was accompanied in the capacity of proctor by David William, Archdeacon of St David's (died October 1491). Henry VII was wont to appoint two individuals for such a mission, the one being a check on the conduct of the other; moreover Rome was a key embassy, vital for ensuring the pope's support for the Tudor monarch's insecure throne. The two envoys probably left England in late July. At Lyon Gigli was forced to halt, incapacitated by gout, William going forward alone. By 4 October Gigli had reached Milan and travelled slowly on to Rome.

Gigli was in his element at the curia, being familiar with its organization, and having there the strong support of a relative and friend, Nicolao Sandonnino, Bishop of Lucca. The two were instrumental between February and March 1492 in the selection of the bishop's friend, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, as cardinal protector of England, a position of considerable influ-

83 Ibid., p. 478; Clough, 'New light', p. 102, errs, referring to Gigli as then being 'bishop of Worcester'.
85 Weiss, 'Lineamenti', p. 386; unknown to P. Paschini, Tre illustri prelati del rinascimento, Rome 1957, p. 50; and see n. 86, below.
87 Paschini, Illustri prelati, p. 51, n. 36.
ence. One of Gigli's important functions was attending papal ceremonies, at which he was sometimes required to deliver Latin orations in the name of the king. For instance, John Shirwood, Bishop of Durham, in February 1492 was appointed royal proctor to replace the deceased William, and on 14 June was formally presented by Gigli to Innocent VIII. Following Innocent's death in late July, they were confirmed in their posts by the new pope Alexander VI. On 14 December they gave Henry's obedience to the pope, Shirwood delivering the oration; fittingly, in the light of their failed mission of 1479, Gigli, accompanied by Shirwood, informed the pope that peace terms had been agreed between England and France.

Vital for English pilgrims to Rome and for longer-term English residents was the Hospice of St Thomas the Martyr. Following Shirwood's death on 14 January 1493 Robert Morton, Bishop of Worcester, was sent in his place, and according to custom he and Gigli had responsibilities as officers of the Hospice. King Henry VI had been murdered in May 1471 on Yorkist orders and a cult associated with him flourished thereafter, miracles being attested. Henry VII, his Lancastrian successor, venerated him and wanted Henry's corpse to be placed in a chapel in Westminster Abbey, which the king was renovating as a shrine for his dynasty. In the early 1490s Henry sought ecclesiastical authority to translate the corpse of Henry from Windsor to Westminster, and at the same time set in motion the lengthy process of invoking the pope to sanctify him. In 1494 Cardinal John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, took the initiative: in his episcopal register a long document was inserted listing the requirements. This document owed much to Gigli, who had dedicated a short treatise on canonization to the cardinal.

When in May 1497 the see of Worcester became vacant on the death of Bishop Robert Morton, the pope consulted Cardinals Todeschini Piccolomini and Lopez, who recommended Gigli; they wrote to Henry VII supporting his nomination and he accepted it. The papal bull was issued on 30 August. At the ceremony on 5 December for Gigli to receive the temporalities from the king, he was represented by Gian Paolo Gigli, a brother of Silvestro and

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Sebastiano, already mentioned. Gigli was enthroned likewise by proxy at Worcester on 12 April 1498. He never visited his see, but administered it by a vicar-general, Thomas Wodyngton, and he did not long enjoy his promotion, as he died, reportedly of gout, in Rome on 25 August 1498, shortly after Henry VII had written to the pope soliciting a cardinal’s hat for him, which undoubtedly had long been his ambition.

Silvestro Gigli, who in Rome was in Giovanni’s service, as previously in London, arranged for Giovanni’s funeral and his burial (wearing a pair of red gloves belonging to the Hospice) in the latter’s church of St Thomas. He also commissioned an elaborate tomb with a bas-relief of Giovanni wearing episcopal robes, surmounted with the Gigli arms and an inscription; the latter still exists in the entrance of the present-day English College. A sixteenth-century painted portrait of Giovanni, now in the church of S. Michele, Lucca (fig. 1), may likewise have been commissioned by Silvestro, perhaps taken from the face of the bas-relief, itself possibly based on a death mask. Silvestro’s career was closely interwoven with Giovanni’s, and indeed had been fostered by Giovanni and conformed to his. In 1498 in succession to Giovanni, Silvestro became bishop of Worcester at the youthful age of thirty-five, whereas Giovanni’s elevation was at sixty-three. Silvestro appeared destined for the cardinalate, undoubtedly his objective, but vaulting ambition resulted in his implication in a cardinal’s murder; he died somewhat embittered, still only bishop of Worcester. His rapid rise to the episcopate reveals family solidarity, his failure to advance testifies to the pitfalls in royal service and the jealousies that an Italian suffered among English-born rivals. After indicating the nature of his rise, focus will be on the more interesting features of his royal service.

Two of Silvestro’s brothers have been mentioned already in the context of being in England at least for a time. In mid-June 1483 his elder brother, Sebastiano, was listed in the London alien subsidy roll as a merchant residing as a guest for three months. This information presumably had been given as a ploy to confuse over-zealous officialdom, as he appears to have come to England to trade in 1475, and was to remain until 1489, when he visited the

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97 Perhaps all four were tonsured at an early age, Sebastiano: above, nn. 72, 93, below, n. 98; Gian Paolo: above, n. 93, below, n. 100; Marc’Antonio: below, nn. 98, 107, and S. Adorni-Bracessi, Una Città infetta’, Florence 1994, p. 13. Silvestro, below, n. 104; Giovanni, above, n. 35.

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papal treasury on behalf of Giovanni Gigli. Six months later he was back in England, remaining apparently until 1494, when he returned to Rome; he died at Lucca in 1499. He had acquired papers of denization on 20 January 1485 and again on 25 October 1491, probably in the interest of commercial benefits, perhaps even in the hope of a benefice. Another brother, Gian Paolo, two years his junior, has been mentioned as receiving for Giovanni the temporalities of Worcester on 3 December 1497; he remained at Worcester as the bishop's surveyor (sometimes at London as his representative) until 1501. Early in 1505 he brought a message from the curia to the royal court, probably on Silvestro's behalf. By 1509, however, described as a merchant, he resided in Lucca and was elected an Anziano. He died in Lucca in 1528.

The brothers were the sons of Ser Nicolao, son of Piero Gigli; Nicolao seemingly was Carlo's younger brother; hence Carlo's son was a cousin of Silvestro, Sebastiano, Marc'Antonio and Gian Paolo, though they were at least some twenty years younger. Nicolao was most likely brought up in Bruges (even born there) where his father and brothers were then residing, but probably sent to Lucca for notarial training following the establishing of republican government there in August 1430. In 1448 he married Francesca, daughter of a wealthy Lucchese silk merchant, Giusfredo Rapondi, and fathered a large family. In the later 1440s he visited London, above all selling silk to the wardrobe of Henry VI on commission for Nicolao, son of Michele ser Federighi. In 1456 he made several journeys between Lucca and Paris, presumably selling silk, and about this time he seems to have abandoned trading to reside in Lucca and, utilising his notarial training, he took part in city affairs. He was regularly an Anziano from 1465, one of the city's envoys to Florence in 1473, and in consequence of services rendered to the king of Naples, Ferrante d'Aragona, he was named as a royal councillor in 1477. He died in Lucca in 1485. Nicolao's wealth and standing played their part in advancing Silvestro's career, especially in ensuring that he obtained benefices in the city and the state, notably from his cousin Giovanni and from his own brothers.

Silvestro was born in Lucca in 1463, probably on 1 January. On 2 February 1472 he was tonsured and ordained acolyte in Rome. Giovanni was there in Cardinal Barbo's familia, which may have determined where Silvestro publicly attested the likelihood of an ecclesiastical career. Silvestro graduated probably

98 Gigli, 'Descrizione', f. 27v, 28; above, n. 86; Bittins, Domkapitel, p. 237.
99 Gigli, 'Descrizione', ff. 23, 27v, 28; Bolton, Alien Communities, p. 86, n. 158.
101 Gigli, 'Descrizione', f. 22.
102 Ibid., f. 22; Bratchel, _Lucca_, p. 161, n. 177.
103 Gigli, 'Descrizione', f. 22r-v; Bratchel, _Lucca_, pp. 95, n. 28, 96. Prof. Bratchel supplied the details on his later years.
in law, perhaps at Bologna, where Giovanni had studied. The London alien subsidy roll of mid-June 1483 shows that by then he was in London, living in the house of his cousin Giovanni. The roll specifies Silvestro as ‘servant’, which may mislead in its implication. It is known that several individuals were employed by Giovanni in his capacity as Papal Collector, engaged in writing letters and calculating dues for Peter’s Pence; Silvestro was probably one of them. It is likely he accompanied his cousin Giovanni to Rome in 1490 as one of his familia; his residence in London meant he was familiar with the English language and English political events, so admirably placed to assist his cousin at the curia. In 1495 Cardinal Borgia resigned to him a significant portion of the revenues of the priory of S. Michele in Foro, and the associated rectory of S. Giorgio. In 1494 Giovanni had resigned to him the revenues of the abbey of Cantignano. The following year there was a contested election to a canony of the cathedral of S. Martino, Lucca, which involved Giovanni; it passed to Silvestro’s brother, Marc’Antonio, who resigned it expressly to Silvestro on 7 September 1495, with the approval of his relative, the bishop of Lucca, Nicolao Sandonnino. Backed by the latter and by Giovanni in 1498 other benefices and revenues were added, so Silvestro’s source of income in Lucca was not unlike that of Giovanni in his initial years in England.

It was Silvestro’s long service under Giovanni, together with the strong backing of the latter’s friends in England and Rome, that determined his promotion after Giovanni’s death. The English cardinal protector, Todeschini Piccolomini, commended Silvestro to Henry VII to be Giovanni’s successor as royal orator at Rome and to the see of Worcester. Both were quickly approved and on 1 December 1498 Silvestro was admitted in absentia to the see of Worcester (fig. 2). This rapid action on Henry VII’s part was untypical, but a fait accompli was needed. Giovanni had died at the papal court, which gave the pope the right to nominate his successor, and Henry VII had no wish to have foisted on him an uncongenial Italian as bishop. On 24 December the cardinal protector persuaded the pope to accept Silvestro; he was confirmed

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105 Text above at n. 72.

106 Text above at n. 88; Creighton, ‘Italian bishops’, p. 212; Gigli, ‘Descrizione’, f. 23; Bittins, Domkapitel, pp. 225–26, 245.

107 Gigli, ‘Descrizione’, ff. 20v, 23; Bratchel, Luce, pp. 270–71; Bittins, Domkapitel, p. 244. Marc’Antonio was tonsured with his brother Sebastiano, 11 Nov. 1465; he became one of the familia of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga and acquired many benefices; in 1496, incapacitated by leprosy, he founded the Cappella della Madonna dell’ Assunta, Bittins, Domkapitel, pp. 236–38, Gigli, ‘Descrizione’, f. 22v.
Fig. 3. Madonna and Child, sculpted in marble by Baccio di Montelupi (1460–1533) and his son, Raffaello, for the original tomb of Silvestro Gigli, subsequently destroyed, with that tomb’s inscription; church of S. Michele in Foro, Lucca.

in the temporalities on 7 March 1499, and enthroned by proxy on 16 April.\textsuperscript{108} Throughout his episcopate he administered by vicars-general, as had his predecessor, Silvestro being much assisted by the Benedictine prior of the Cathedral Church of St Mary, Worcester, particularly John Wednesbury, prior from 1507 to 1518.\textsuperscript{109} After Bishop Sandonino’s death in 1499, Gigli had the added responsibility of representing Lucca’s interests to the pope, particularly in August and September 1504, during its dispute with Florence.\textsuperscript{110}

Silvestro became involved in rivalry, that was to endure over a decade and become increasingly bitter, with Adriano Castellesi, who had replaced Giovanni Gigli as collector in England. Castellesi, a favourite of Alexander VI, and


\textsuperscript{109} Text below at n. 115; Wednesbury: Greatrex, \textit{Biographical Register}, pp. 889–90; he died at Rome 23 August 1518, Gigli erected a tombstone to him, Cardinal Gasquet, \textit{A History of the Venerable English College, Rome}, London 1920, p. 50 (‘Widdisbury’).

created cardinal by him, was resentful of Silvestro’s high standing at the English court. After his replacement as cardinal protector of England, a post he held for some months from September 1503 following Todeschini Piccolomini’s election as pope, he sought to discredit Gigli in Henry VII’s eyes; Castellesi knew that it was Gigli who had been responsible for the pope’s nephew (who was also bishop of Lucca) becoming the new cardinal protector. These circumstances tended to advance Gigli in favour with Pope Julius II (elected 1 November 1503) since he ardently had opposed Alexander VI and was eager to promote his own relatives. On about 17 March 1505 the pope sent Gigli as nuncio to England, taking what the king so much desired: the authenticated papal dispensation that permitted Prince Henry to marry Princess Catherine of Aragon, widow of his elder brother Arthur. Gigli also took the pope’s personal honours of the sword and cap. Andrea Ammonio of Lucca, who became Henry VIII’s Latin secretary in 1511, and was in England by 1506, almost certainly had accompanied Gigli there. Baldassare Castiglione’s plans to do so, however, were frustrated by the pope’s procrastinations, and he did not leave the Italian peninsula until late August 1506. He was destined to attend the Garter ceremony at Windsor Castle as proxy for his lord, Duke Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, the adoptive father of the pope’s nephew, and elected to the Garter at Castellesi’s recommendation on 4 January 1504 in a fruitless bid to hasten the dispensation that Gigli eventually carried. Gigli remained as papal nuncio at the English court for seven years; as a reward he was created a royal chaplain. What was to his greater advantage was that he made himself aware of who was influential at court and what were English political concerns. In the autumn of 1505, following the only recorded visit to his diocese at a cost of £12, Gigli appeared before the Court of the Star Chamber regarding a contested election and riot in Stratford-upon-Avon, within his diocese, apparently a rare instance of his involvement in diocesan affairs.

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The final phase of Gigli's life saw him for nine years back in Rome, once more serving the English crown, but the promise of his early career was unfulfilled. Unlike Giovanni, Silvestro appears to have been prone to make enemies; he was devious by nature and obviously self-seeking. In February 1512, probably upon Wolsey's suggestion, since he saw in him an admirable tool for his own purposes, Gigli was commissioned as the king's special representative to the Fifth Lateran Council. His departure being delayed, he reached Rome late in October during the second session, thereafter attending only sporadically.\(^6\) A guardian of the conclave that elected Leo X in March 1513 (as he had been twice in 1503, at the elections of Pius III and Julius II), by September 1513 he was once again appointed resident orator of the English monarch at the court of Rome, being under Christopher Bainbridge, who was effectively (though not titular) cardinal protector of England.\(^7\) By then Bainbridge's diplomatic schemes were being seen as failures, and quarrels regarding policy between him and Gigli quickly followed. On 31 December 1513 Gigli wrote to Wolsey taking the credit for the pope awarding Henry VIII the papal sword and cap.\(^8\) It was evident that Gigli was Wolsey's client and probably had been for the previous two years, engaged by him to undermine Bainbridge. To this end, in February 1514, Gigli's coup was to obtain the services of Giulio de' Medici as cardinal protector of England, a shrewd move, given the cardinal's close working relationship with his relative Leo X.\(^9\)

On 14 July 1514 Bainbridge died of poison in Rome, one of his household under torture confessing to having administered it at Gigli's behest. Gigli, enjoying diplomatic immunity, was not arrested, probably strongly supported by Wolsey. Ostensibly he was rehabilitated, as on 3 September he sang mass at the church of Santa Maria del Popolo to celebrate peace between England and France, sealed by the marriage of Mary Tudor, the king's sister, to Louis XII of France. On 9 January 1515 Leo X absolved Gigli of all complicity in the murder.\(^10\) Even so the episode remained shadowy and doomed Gigli's ambition to become cardinal, while ending his prospects of advancing in royal or papal service.

Gigli's one hope lay in Wolsey's protection, and in September 1515, as his agent in Rome, he successfully negotiated his promotion to the cardinalate, and in 1518 to the English legation.\(^11\) Gigli in Rome, simultaneously with Wolsey and Ammonio in England, worked to take revenge on Castellesi, still collector in England, and also on his sub-collector Polydore Vergil, rivals over


\(^8\) Chambers, *Bainbridge*, pp. 54–60.


the years. Success eventually came in 1518 with Castellesi's fall. Meanwhile events over the years reveal the sordid intrigues into which Gigli was drawn. Ammonio, the king's Latin secretary, was devoted to Gigli and, being opposed to both Bainbridge and Castellesi, had welcomed the former's demise. By late September 1514 antagonism had flared between Wolsey and Castellesi over the collectorship, sought by Wolsey as a reward for Ammonio. In his brief dated 31 October Leo X agreed that the post should be assigned to Ammonio. Castellesi replied that he was the victim of a smear campaign (as indeed he was) to deprive him of the post, though he continued sending informative dispatches from Rome to Henry VIII. Early in 1515 Vergil, Castellesi's man, was back in England, sending dispatches to Castellesi in Rome, as had long been his custom. Ammonio had these intercepted and found that one, dated 10 February, abused Wolsey as a bitter enemy and likewise Ammonio himself. In May Vergil was imprisoned, his goods sequestered and his house closed; in June Ammonio was appointed Castellesi's deputy as collector. In the spring of 1516, at Wolsey's prompting, Gigli obtained Leo X's initial agreement to the title for Henry VIII (eventually awarded in 1521) of Christianae Fidei Defensor, but which, faced with Francis I's opposition (he was Christianissimi), and the fact that the French monarch then held Milan with a victorious army, the pope shelved.

Two examples illustrate the tendentious nature of English foreign policy in these years in support of Wolsey's ambitions, while reflecting Gigli's involvement as his client. In 1517, when Wolsey was seeking to curb the power of Francis I on the Continent, and particularly on the Italian peninsula, at the same time as promoting his personal ambition to become cardinal legate of England, he was anxious to retain the pope's favour by promoting, through Gigli, Medici interests. In the summer of 1517 Wolsey was aware that the papal treasury was exhausted through supporting the protracted Urbino war. He obtained in the king's name an English subsidy of 100,000 ducats for the military campaign, consigned only after 11 August when the pope had secretly ratified his agreement to join a league with England, Spain and the king of the Romans directed at France. Secondly at this very time Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, who had French backing and was opposed to Leo X, refused to make any concession in a dispute over land rights with Monsignor Giangaleazzo Boschetti; the latter's brother, Roberto, was high in Medici favour, for on 22 September 1517 he became governor general of Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino. Monsignor Boschetti was a close friend of Ammonio, and he begged the latter to bring royal pressure to bear on the duke of Ferrara. To this end a letter was signed by the king, dispatched to Gigli, Ammonio's close friend, who had it consigned to the duke of Ferrara. The latter ignored it and following Ammonio's death of the plague on 19 August Gigli himself


123 Wilkie, Cardinal Protectors, pp. 122, 124.
abandoned further negotiations regarding the matter. Ammonio being dead, Gigli's reward from Wolsey for his endeavours at the end of August 1517 was the collectorship of which Castelflesi was deprived.\textsuperscript{124} Not surprisingly Polydore Vergil took his revenge on both Ammonio and Gigli by omitting mention of them in his \textit{Anglica Historia}—such negative personal prejudices tend to be overlooked in any evaluation of the work.\textsuperscript{125}

Over the years 1516 to 1520 Gigli resident in Rome assisted Erasmus in obtaining several papal dispensations, and in January 1521, out of gratitude, Erasmus dedicated to him his paraphrase of the \textit{Epistle to the Hebrews}.\textsuperscript{126} By then Gigli had fallen foul of Giulio de' Medici, who believed he undermined his authority as cardinal protector. On 21 March 1521, fearing dismissal as royal orator at Cardinal Giulio's prompting, Gigli sent the king in a counter bid for royal favour his own anti-Lutheran pamphlet; by late February, as Gigli was likely to have known, Henry VIII was considering writing his attack on Luther, published the following July as \textit{Assertio septem sacramentorum}.\textsuperscript{127} On receiving his congé, Gigli was taken ill (probably a stroke) before his replacement reached Rome, and he died there on 18 April, being buried the next day in the church of the English Hospice where he had interred his cousin Giovanni.\textsuperscript{128} On 11 May 1521 the pope authorised Gigli's heirs to transfer his remains to the church of S. Michele, Lucca.\textsuperscript{129} There, in a chapel dedicated to S. Silvestro that Gigli had founded, an impressive tomb was erected, sculpted by Baccio di Montelupo and his son Raffaello. All that remains of his tomb today is the relief of the Madonna and Child (fig. 3), though in 1618 it was still intact.\textsuperscript{130}


\textsuperscript{125} Vergil, \textit{Anglica Historia}, only refers to Giovanni; this aspect is not covered by Hay.

\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Contemporaries of Erasmus}, vol. 2, p. 98.


\textsuperscript{129} Wilkie, \textit{Cardinal Protectors}, p. 121.