

was 27 years old in 1603. I have not the least proof that he was ever with this Earl Howard, whom our old author seems not to have ever heard of. But the Comptons are known to have been friends of Dudley and his Nicolls' kinsmen. Compton (who afterwards, in 1629, became Earl of Northampton), was one of those, that recommended Dudley for steward to Theophilus in 1618. Our old biographer says it was Lord Say and Lord Compton and others who recommended Dudley. Who could it have been but Compton or Nicolls, that got the Captain's commission for him, in 1597, from Queen Bess. Robert Dudley, who probably knew Thomas' father, as a warrior, was then dead. The old biographer further reports that Dudley remained with "the Earl till he became ripe for higher services."

At that time, (about the year 1597) when he was twenty one years old, there came down from the Queen, a demand for volunteers to go over into France and help Henry the Fourth, the Protestant Henry of Navarre, in time of his civil war. But the lads of Northamptonshire were none of them willing to enlist in that service, till a commission was sent from Queen Bess to the gallant young Dudley to be their Captain, and then immediately more than four score offered to march under him to the scene of conflict. With this corpse he was sent over to France, which being at that time an "academy of arms, as well as of arts," he had opportunity to improve his military skill and fit himself for command in the field and other martial affairs.

The service assigned his command was to help Amiens in Picardy, which city was at that time besieged by the Spanyards, and to its relief King Henry was advancing. But it so happened that when both the contending armies were marshalled before the ramparts, a treaty prevailed, June 1. 1598, which prevented a battle. Whereupon, as there was no further call for aid from the English troops, the king of France resolving to sheathe his sword, Capt. Dudley returned home.

After bringing his company back to England, and with them being honorably discharged from Henry's service, Mr. Dudley came to Northamptonshire and was employed as a clerk or Secretary by Judge Augustine Nicolls, of Faxton, who, "being his kinsman by the mother's side, took special notice of him;" so that he had opportunity to acquire much knowledge of the Law. He could draw up documents of every sort with apt and succinct expression, and the judge was highly pleased with him, and esteemed him a very prominent young gentleman. Had he lived he would never have suffered Dudley to leave his service, but would have raised him to some still more eminent and profitable employment. But this was not so