Montaigne on Cicero and the Case of Gaius Blossius (Essais I.28)

Mark F. Williams, Calvin University, emeritus (kinda); wilm@calvin.edu

Primary sources:

1. 
In the friendship I speak of, our souls mingle and blend with each other so completely that they efface the seam that joined them, and cannot find it again. If you press me to tell why I loved him, I feel that this cannot be expressed, except by answering: because it was he, because it was I. (Frame, p. 137)

2. 
They were friends more than citizens, friends more than friends or enemies of their country or friends of ambition and disturbance. Having committed themselves absolutely to each other, they held absolutely the reins of each other’s inclination; and if you assume that this team was guided by the strength and leadership of reason, as indeed it is quite impossible to harness it without that, Blossius’ answer is as it should have been. If their actions went astray, they were neither friends to each other, nor friends to themselves. (Frame, p. 140)

3. (On his friendship with La Boétie)
So many coincidences are needed to build up such a friendship that it is a lot if fortune can do it once in three centuries. (Frame, p. 136)

Some relevant secondary scholarship:


P. Manant, 2020. *Montaigne. Life without Law* (South Bend, IN)