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SIR NICHOLAS THROCKMORTON: A DIPLOMATIC  
ADVISOR TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

by

Kenneth M. Kisner

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

Approved:

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Logan, Utah

2003



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## ABSTRACT

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton: A Diplomatic

Advisor to the Queen

by

Kenneth M. Kisner, Master of Arts

Utah State University, 2003

Major Professor: Dr. Norman L. Jones

Department: History

This study concentrates on Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, a resident ambassador sent to France in the first years of Elizabeth's reign. He had never held a high level government position before this time, but was remembered for his ability to give advice on matters of foreign policy. Typically historians have approached the subject of the Queen's policy from a top down perspective. This thesis attempts to redress this view by looking at how diplomacy was conducted through the eyes of a diplomat.

The culture of diplomacy created statesmen and foreign policy advisors out of the diplomats in Elizabeth's reign. Ambassadors and diplomats like Throckmorton provided incalculable service to their monarch. Throckmorton utilized the opportunities for Elizabeth's success in securing her kingdom from those who sought to exploit the weakness of her position. Among the topics discussed in this work are diplomatic culture, advice, and early Elizabethan foreign policy.

(140 pages)

DEDICATION

For Valena

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Rarely does work of this scope ever occur without the assistance of numerous individuals who have sacrificed considerably for its completion. Indeed many have assisted in this process and I am grateful for the friendship, time, money and knowledge they rendered in its completion.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to professor Norman Jones whose patience and guidance were unequaled during the writing of this paper. He helped steer me from the lifeless aspects of diplomatic history, replacing them instead with a personal and cultural touch that this topic deserved. I am grateful for Robert Mueller who aided me with great insights into certain historical arguments and provided me a measure to ensure my success. Thanks to Liz Woolcott for listening to my endless concerns about this project. I must recognize my parents, Garland Kisner and Ilene Johnson, for instilling in me a great work ethic. Thanks to my grandmother, Mary Kisner, for her generosity. I am grateful for my wife's family, Keith Jr. and Nena Caldwell, Keith & Lila Caldwell, and Valda & Donna Massey, for their encouragement and financial support, which helped make this venture possible. While it is a modest token of acknowledgement, I wish to thank Annie Caldwell, who gave cheerfully until the end of her days. Further, I am indebted to the Seely-Hinkley scholarship fund for their financial contribution to my education. Lastly, I would like to give thanks to my loving wife, Valena, who patiently bore the burden of parenthood, poverty, and the difficulty of collegiate widowhood during these two years.

Kenneth Kisner

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this work dates are Old Style, but the year is taken to begin on January 1.

CSP, For	Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth I.
Forbes	Forbes, P., ed. <i>A Full View of the Public Transactions in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth</i> . 2 vols. London, 1740.
Hardwicke Papers.	Hardwicke, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Earl of, Philip Yorke, ed. <i>Miscellaneous State Papers from 1501 to 1726</i> . 2 vols. London, 1778.
Haynes.	<i>A Collection of State Papers...Left by William Cecil, Lord Burghley</i> . Edited by Samuel Haynes and William Murdin. 2 vols. London, 1740-1759.
SP	State Papers, Public Record Office.

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORIOGRAPHY

In February 1571, one of the most renowned Elizabethan diplomats, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, "departed to God's mercy." Since the reign of Edward VI, Throckmorton had devoted his life to the service of his sovereigns. His life epitomized the tribulations ambassadors suffered for their monarchs. During his tenure as diplomat in France his country hailed him, scorned him and at times utterly ignored him. The French blamed him for their wars of religion, imprisoned him on numerous occasions, and the Parisian Catholic population leveled harquebuses on his ambassadorial residence. All this he suffered for the service of his monarch, Elizabeth I. Hearing of Throckmorton's death, his friend and successor, Sir Francis Walsingham, reported to Robert Dudley: "For, be it spoken without offence to any, for council in peace and for conduct in war, he has not left of like sufficiency his successor that I know."<sup>1</sup> Ambassadors and diplomats like Throckmorton provided incalculable service to the crown. Few historians have adequately elaborated on their importance to the political structure and formation/implementation of foreign policy. This chapter presents an opportunity to ascertain how historians describe the place of Elizabethan diplomats in European statecraft. Congruently, this essay evaluates how scholars have answered the question -- Who influenced policy in various diplomatic events of the first decade of Elizabeth's reign? In this examination several different genres of historical writing will be utilized: Foreign policy studies, political studies, biographies, and diplomacy studies. The examination will demonstrate the paucity of reference to the role of diplomats in

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<sup>1</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), 27.

Elizabethan history. Twentieth century historians have often limited this topic only to short or passing arguments within their much broader topics. Thus the criticism contained within this text is based exclusively on the issues of diplomacy, advice and power.

Before the 1960s, few writers devoted scholarly energy to Elizabethan foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> Following John Seeley's *The Growth of British Policy*, published in 1903, the majority of political histories incorporated diplomatic history.<sup>3</sup> It appeared that historians had tired of Elizabethan diplomacy until Garrett Mattingly revolutionized the field of early-modern diplomacy with his intellectual jewel *Renaissance Diplomacy*.<sup>4</sup>

Renowned for his diplomatic histories that include *The Armada* and *Catherine of Aragon*, Mattingly was educated at Harvard University and was a professor at Columbia University until his death in 1962.<sup>5</sup> He has left an indelible mark on the study of diplomacy and foreign policy, with his focus on Anglo-Spanish diplomacy during the early modern period. His work *Renaissance Diplomacy* has become the part of the historical canon for the early-modern period.

Taking his stylistic cues from the great cultural historian Jacob Burckhardt, Mattingly delivered a historical narrative composed of both the political and social elements of diplomacy. His work traces the origins of diplomatic service to the early-

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<sup>2</sup> The twentieth century adaptation of the word "policy" is very problematic. In sixteenth century England, policy had a negative connotation, and was perceived as a Christian evil. But for the purpose of this work, policy will stand as the term of choice.

<sup>3</sup> John Seeley, *The Growth of British Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903).

<sup>4</sup> Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1955).

<sup>5</sup> Garrett Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1941). Garrett Mattingly, *Armada* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1959).



modern period by revealing how Italian princes, popes and European monarchs employed diplomats for political purposes. Mattingly saw the formation of diplomacy as a result of the political geography of Renaissance Italy. According to him, diplomacy developed primarily "as one functional adaptation of the new type of self-conscious, uninhibited, power-seeking competitive organism."<sup>6</sup> The narrowness of the Italian peninsula created a number of power struggles between independent cities, kingdoms and bankers. Whether for self-preservation or political advantage, these entities negotiated by utilizing secular representatives as emissaries to other courts.

Mattingly framed the values and conventions of diplomats based on the various writings and diplomatic missions of real and fictitious courtiers. The duties of the diplomat of the Renaissance period were "to do, say, advise and think whatever may best serve the preservation and aggrandizement of his own state."<sup>7</sup> Diplomats had to work not in their interest but for that of their king. During the Renaissance period they were more likely to be highly educated than nobles. Diplomats needed to speak several different languages. The most important of these were Italian and French, but they also needed to speak the native language of their resident court. Mattingly also argued for a diplomatic model based on Castiglione's courtier, who had grace, and panache as well as intellect.

Having established diplomacy from its Italian roots, Mattingly began a European exploration of the expansion of early modern diplomacy. Here Mattingly retells the rise of power of the European. It is not until France and Spain invade Italy that they became

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<sup>6</sup> Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 52.

<sup>7</sup> Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 95.

students of Italian diplomacy. But unlike the Italian Peninsula, Mattingly noted that the French policy was a single-minded policy of warfare.

The innovation detailed in *Renaissance Diplomacy* was the resident-ambassador. While princes still sent diplomats on missions, sovereigns relied on a new type of agent - the resident ambassador. The Italian Peninsula's compact political geography created instability. To combat this, princes and elite members of society sent agents to live in other city-states to act as personal representatives, to affirm peace, and to discover threatening plots. These new instruments were the foundation of what the "new diplomacy."

Mattingly excels at describing the entire evolutionary process that was founded in renaissance Italy, and then spread throughout Western Europe. Each country employed resident ambassadors to further their designs. His thorough examination of how certain courts incorporated diplomats into their foreign policy was well executed. He chose numerous examples of how diplomats functioned for each court, proving to the reader that the evolution of diplomacy continued into early modern Europe, and was adapted by each European state. His work influenced later diplomatic and foreign policy histories.

DeLamar Jensen, a disciple of Mattingly, extended the examination of diplomacy in his work *Diplomacy and Dogmatism* and in several other works on French and Spanish diplomacy during sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Jensen focused on the diplomacy of the French court during the sixteenth century. His work "French Diplomacy, and the Wars of Religion," disagreed with Mattingly's argument that, "the religious wars nearly wrecked

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<sup>8</sup> De Lamar Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism, Bernardino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964). See also: De Lamar Jensen, "Catherine Medici and Her Florentine Friends," *Sixteenth Century Journal* vol. 9, no. 2 (July, 1978) : 57-74. "French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion," *Sixteenth Century Journal* vol. 5, no. 2 (Oct., 1974) : 23-46.

the diplomatic institutions with which Europe had been trying to adjust its quarrels."<sup>9</sup>

Using a panoramic view of France's diplomacy and resident ambassadors, Jensen demonstrated that diplomacy did not die on the battlefields of Europe, but was conducted continuously and simultaneously during the periods of warfare.

According to Jensen, sixteenth century France was on the brink of destruction: First, from outside forces like the Habsburgs, who attempted to bring France back into the Holy Roman Empire, and second, from within as French Calvinists (Huguenots), began to assert their religious presence. For Catherine de Medici, the Queen mother of France, diplomats were the key to her policy. Both as informers and peacekeepers, Jensen saw that "It was becoming increasingly important to Frenchmen, Englishmen and Spaniards themselves to be recognized and represented."<sup>10</sup>

Jensen's article enlarged our understanding of how France utilized diplomacy to ensure its safety and reaffirmed Mattingly's views on the important uses of the resident diplomat: "The ambassador represented and reflected the power and prestige of his own ruler, he was also considered a valuable extension of our country."<sup>11</sup> Sadly, in Tudor studies, most of these assertions were swept aside for the larger view of foreign policy.

In 1966, R.B. Wernham published *Before the Armada*, the first major work on Tudor foreign policy since Seeley's treatise.<sup>12</sup> Wernham presented a survey of Tudor foreign policy that established the growth and role of policy through the reigns of Tudor

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<sup>9</sup> Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy, 195-196*. Also cited in Jensen, "French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion," 24.

<sup>10</sup> Jensen, "French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion," 46.

<sup>11</sup> Jensen, "French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion," 46.

<sup>12</sup> R. B. Wernham, *Before the Armada: The Emergence of the English Nation, 1485-1588* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966).

monarchs. His scholarship revitalized interest in the extrinsic relations of England by focusing on England's foreign policy. Wernham's thesis argued that England's traditional relationship with other powers changed as a result of the loss of its holdings on the European continent in 1556. Notwithstanding the English desire for French real estate, Wernham maintained, "The turbulence and hostility of their British neighbors prevented the Tudor statesmen from ever becoming indifferent to events on the continent."<sup>13</sup> Wernham implied that although England's continental holdings were gone, the monarch still had a material interest in who ruled territory on the other side of the channel. England also came to believe that its prestige could increase if it arbitrated successfully between other countries.

Wernham opened the first chapters on Elizabeth's reign with a notable discussion of her authority in foreign policy decision-making. He argued that the Queen became the focal point of policy, since whoever secured her hand in marriage also obtained England. Wernham suggested that Elizabeth's marriage was too personal "for her to allow anyone but herself to decide it."<sup>14</sup> He further argued that while she guarded her matrimonial decisions, on other matters of state Elizabeth received advice from William Cecil and her Privy Council.

Wernham noted that the beginning of Elizabeth's reign was mired in constant threats to her sovereignty. Her first diplomatic action ended the futile conflict against France that was jointly pursued by England and Spain. Henry II offered Elizabeth a way out if she abrogated the Spanish alliance and married someone amicable to France.

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<sup>13</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 13.

<sup>14</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada* 235.

Elizabeth used this offer as leverage against Philip II, who had fleeting matrimonial hopes for her, and the result of this maneuver thwarted French attempts to have her excommunicated. Thus Elizabeth successfully bargained her way out of a difficult position by luring men with powerful marriage prospects.<sup>15</sup>

The difficulties of marriage and succession permeated Elizabeth's foreign policy. Wernham argued that even though the settlement of religion in 1559 angered hard-line Catholics, most held their tongues in hopes of a marriage arrangement. Her flirtations with marriage proved to be an effective tactic and diplomatic weapon. Wernham emphasized that the Queen's deceptive courtship practices did not ease the realm's hope for her marriage to "bring [them] a blessed prince."<sup>16</sup> With neither husband nor heir, Elizabeth opened an opportunity for her Catholic cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, to exploit her claim to the throne.

Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, played the role of archrival in Wernham's thesis. Excluded from English succession by an act of Parliament, she flaunted the coat-of-arms of England signifying her claim to the throne. Under the influence of her father-in-law, Henry II, Mary advanced her right to the throne. After the deaths of Henry II and her husband, Francis II, Mary became more amicable toward Elizabeth and sought her friendship as well as a place in the succession of the throne of England.<sup>17</sup>

Religion, Wernham argued, became the other important issue of policy. Elizabeth sought to gain allies by supporting religious faction. In 1560, Protestant lords of Scotland

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<sup>15</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 245-246.

<sup>16</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 259.

<sup>17</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 263.



rebelled against Mary of Guise, Mary Stuart's mother. Coerced by her advisors, Elizabeth intervened, first with secret payments of cash to encourage the Scottish Protestant lords to rebel, and then military forces to threaten the French Garrison in Scotland until they signed the Treaty of Edinburgh.<sup>18</sup> The event demonstrated several factors that caused England to enter a war against France in Scotland: England did not want to be assaulted on two fronts by France, and Elizabeth and her council wanted an alliance with a Protestant Scotland.

Elizabeth later attempted this same policy to regain Calais. England's Newhaven expedition in northern France was an ambitious and disastrous undertaking as the French civil war proved too much for the Queen's policy. French Calvinists, who ceded the French port town of Newhaven to England, turned upon their English ally and united with the Catholic Duke of Guise to defeat Elizabeth's forces. The disaster taught Elizabeth not to trust her advisors' religious zeal. She never again entered a war based upon religious alliances.<sup>19</sup>

Even though surviving diplomatic documents contain bountiful information on diplomatic roles during this expedition, Wernham only gleaned the actions of certain crown servants involved in the mission as he emphasized the Queen's role in the expedition. Important questions were overlooked: How did information travel between Prince Condé and Elizabeth? Who led French Calvinists toward an agreement with the English Crown? Unfortunately, the narrow scope of Wernham's account failed to illuminate the internal work of agents and diplomats.

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<sup>18</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 249.

<sup>19</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 264-267.

Wernham noted England's trade practices and alliances as an important aspect of policy. England lost its continental possession in Calais where English wool merchants had exclusively traded raw wool to the continental markets. This forced England to rely on the port of Antwerp for marketing wool. International trade brought new negotiations with various regions including Russia and North Africa. This change in the market resulted in an alliance shift.

Spain's reassertion of its authority in Flanders and Antwerp forced England to again look for other trade ports, and concluded with agreements in German and Russian ports. Elizabeth then chose to help the Protestant cause in the Netherlands, compelling Spain to send their Armada in 1588. Wernham stated, "English trade had broken out of its dependence upon Antwerp and English foreign policy was to feel the benefit in a greater freedom of maneuver."<sup>20</sup>

Wernham's survey provided an interesting outline of Tudor foreign relations, which acknowledged only Elizabeth as the true power that controlled foreign policy, ignoring the diplomats and Privy Council who, by customary mandate, advised the Queen on such matters.

So why did such an examination not spark more interest in the field of Tudor studies? In a review of Wernham's book, G. R. Elton reflected that among many historians: "foreign policy and diplomatic history have long ceased to dominate the minds and interest of English historians. A feeling prevails that all that sort of thing has

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<sup>20</sup> Wernham, *Before the Armada*, 285.

been done, or that it lacks the profundity of analysis to which one should aspire."<sup>21</sup> For many historians, the study of diplomacy and policy had lost its appeal.

Wernham continued his research into policy, presenting his second volume on foreign policy. With the exception of G. D Ramsay, Wernham became the lone voice of foreign policy history.<sup>22</sup> In 1980, Wernham published a series of lectures dedicated to Tudor foreign policy that centered on the Anglo-Spanish relations. This work changed direction from *Before the Armada*, and included a full chapter on policy makers. As in his previous policy history, Wernham relegated all authority in policy matter to Elizabeth. But he also admitted, "the Principal Secretary obviously had considerable influence in the shaping of foreign policy and even more influence upon its carrying out."<sup>23</sup>

Wernham admitted that even Ambassador Throckmorton tried to shape the Queen's policy. "Sir Nicholas Throckmorton wrote to her somewhat avuncular discourses on policy in general, beside seeking to guide her on particular issues by his dispatches during his French and Scottish embassies."<sup>24</sup> As his work was a series of lectures that outlined how Elizabeth's policies led to war with Spain, Wernham did not go into details on Throckmorton's advice.

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<sup>21</sup> G. R. Elton, review of *Before the Armada The Growth of English Foreign Policy, 1485-1588*, by R. B. Wernham, *English Historical Review* vol 83, no (Jan, 1968): 122-5.

<sup>22</sup> R. B. Wernham, *After the Armada: Elizabethan England and the Struggle for Western Europe, 1588-1605* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984). Historians still published on the topic of Tudor foreign policy but most of these works were text books. Crowson, P. S. *Tudor Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1973). Alan Gordon Rae Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State, 1539-1660* (London: Longman, 1984). Susan Doran, *Elizabeth and Foreign Policy*, Lancaster Pamphlets (London: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>23</sup> R. B. Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, 1558-1603* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 7.

<sup>24</sup> R. B. Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy*, 13.



Wernham clarified an important point of policy. He stated that while the documents revealed much about the execution of policy, "they [the documents] tell a great deal less about the making of policy."<sup>25</sup> This was an important assessment, as many historians, particularly those who have sought to understand government, could not identify how policy was made from the state papers.

G. D. Ramsay's 1984 article, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," described the ambassador corps as a "makeshift organization."<sup>26</sup> Ramsay argued that Elizabeth controlled her diplomats through her principal secretaries. Thus Cecil managed all diplomats until he was raised to the peerage, then Sir Francis Walsingham oversaw the operations. Diplomats had to be of a certain quality of men who could communicate his monarch's wishes at foreign courts. Because of the rigorous demands of ambassadorship, only highly educated men could fill the position thereby limiting the number of candidates.

Ramsay's article presented a monarch who actively engaged her neighbors. In the first four years of her reign, Elizabeth took part in two different wars. After eleven years, she captured the eminent rival to her throne, Mary Queen of Scots and realigned her trade policy. As for Elizabeth's control of policy, Ramsay stated, "It is beyond question that she was a highly intelligent woman, with a will very much of her own, and with an intense interest in the march of events outside her island kingdom."<sup>27</sup> Ramsay saw the

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<sup>25</sup> Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy*, 7.

<sup>26</sup> G. D. Ramsay, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," in Christopher Haigh (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (London: MacMillan, 1984), 151.

<sup>27</sup> Ramsay, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," 153.

Queen as someone who was politically savvy and kept a close watch on events outside her kingdom. For this, Elizabeth depended on her diplomatic corps.

Ramsay focused on both politics and diplomats to understand whether or not foreign policy existed in Elizabethan England. For him, no policy per se existed. Rather that it was thrown together and reactionary.<sup>28</sup> His short but thoughtful essay provided an interesting look at diplomacy. He sought to prove his thesis by focusing on the diplomats specifically and relating their actions to politics, whereas past historians looked at court politics specifically and used diplomatic documents to bolster their views.

The question of why diplomatic history has suffered from such a paucity of intense scholarship has a very simple answer. For many historians, foreign policy was integral to politics, and political historians could discuss the details and events much better than diplomatic historians, since they understood policy at its source--the government. Geoffrey Elton led this charge with his work *England under the Tudors*. In it, he illuminated governmental aspects of foreign policy.<sup>29</sup> Elton's thesis described the Tudor regime in terms of government as a central machine. Elton argued that both the English Queen and Cecil worked together to create policy, but cautioned, "one great difficulty in arriving at a fair verdict lies in the association with her chief minister."<sup>30</sup> Elton vacillated from this view when he acknowledged that the Queen listened to several people for advice, but ultimately she made decisions on her own, a view that reflected Wernham's treatment of power. Elton never explored the ambassadors and their role in

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<sup>28</sup> Ramsay, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," 167.

<sup>29</sup> G. R. Elton, *England Under the Tudors*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Methuen & Co., 1974).

<sup>30</sup> Elton, *England Under the Tudors*, 263.

government. His argument set the stages for the later studies that held to the notion that Cecil and the Queen set policy.

In 1968, Wallace MacCaffrey published a political work that engaged the formation of Elizabeth's reign titled *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime*.<sup>31</sup> Whereas Wernham's *Before the Armada* encompassed the entire Tudor dynasty, MacCaffrey focused exclusively on the early years of Elizabeth's reign, concluding his study with the Northern Rebellion and the ruin of the Duke of Norfolk in 1571. The book explained how Elizabeth triumphed through the most difficult season of her reign. MacCaffrey advocated that this happened because the Queen employed able men who both counseled her and obeyed her orders. Said Elizabeth, "and for counsel and advice I shall accept you of my nobility and such other of the rest as in consultation."<sup>32</sup> MacCaffrey agreed with Wernham that the Queen controlled the implementation of policy but he asserted that Elizabeth with the aid of her councilors endorsed policy. These councilors put forth their advice and it "remained for the Queen to accept, reject, or modify their proposals."<sup>33</sup>

MacCaffrey submitted that one of the best tools Elizabeth used in relationships with Europe was procrastination. She often delayed decisions until she had no choice or events resolved themselves. This tactic backfired at times and caused men like William Cecil, Principal Secretary, and Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, to take drastic measures to force the Queen to capitulate to their ideas.

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<sup>31</sup> Wallace MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1968).

<sup>32</sup> MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime*, 26. The text of Elizabeth's speech is also found in SP12/1/ fol. 7-8.

<sup>33</sup> MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime*, 461.

The formation of policy occurred under competing interests in the council.

MacCaffrey identified a schism between the Queen's favorite, Robert Dudley, and Cecil. The effect of this schism reverberated through the political world. MacCaffrey's interpretation of Elizabeth's first decade became canon for Tudor History. His political history placed Cecil the head of politics, and placed Dudley as an upstart who could sway the Queen.

In 1984, Norman L. Jones wrote an article titled "Elizabeth's First Year."<sup>34</sup> He outlined the problems Elizabeth faced during what he saw as the most critical time of her reign. While it addressed several internal political issues, it also incorporated foreign problems. Jones submitted that the Queen did not want a war with Scotland as proposed by Cecil. She did not like supporting rebellious subjects because it weakened her monarchical position. He acknowledged that Elizabeth controlled policy and the relationships between her and other countries, but suggested that due to the volatile nature of her first year of reign, she made policy in a haphazard manner.

Geoffrey Parker wrote a key work enlarging our understanding of Elizabethan foreign policy entitled *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*. His work reflected an effort to expound on the policy strategy of the most powerful monarch in Europe. In many ways it diminishes earlier arguments on the success of English Queen. Parker had effectively demonstrated that Philip played an important role in the formation of England's policy. It was Philip's "inertia rather than policy that decided the outcome of the 'British crisis' of

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<sup>34</sup> Norman L. Jones, "Elizabeth's First Year," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh (London: MacMillan, 1984), 151.

the reign."<sup>35</sup> The most wealthy and powerful monarch of the sixteenth century, King Philip of Spain's actions dictated the reactive policy of Elizabeth. His study underlined the influence of Europe on Tudor policy.

The broad base historical scholarship of Elizabeth's relationships with her fellow sovereigns is incomplete in several respects. The discussion of events always takes the perspective of Elizabeth and her council. Overviews of wars and diplomatic maneuvers kept political narratives flowing but damaged the perception of diplomacy. A fine example of this is MacCaffrey's article on the Newhaven Expedition. He saw that "Cecil was essaying the role of mentor for his novice Queen."<sup>36</sup> MacCaffrey continued to limit diplomacy and policy to the Queen and the Privy Council. However, questions remain on how the policy was fully implemented. What were the short-term goals? How were the ambassadors carrying information? Interpretations of foreign policy and diplomacy read nearly the same from one book to another. Esther Hildebrandt noted, "It is a sad fact that the study of diplomacy in history often seems too concerned with policies, countries and the top people in government at that time."<sup>37</sup> With the exception of the token mentioning of diplomats, most political histories written on Elizabeth's early years are focused only on the Queen and her court.

As foreign policy books and articles provide rich texts on empowerment, the biographies of Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, and William Cecil have policy interwoven in

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<sup>35</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 152.

<sup>36</sup> Wallace MacCaffrey, "The New Haven Expedition, 1562-1563," *The Historical Journal*, vol. 40, no. 1 (1997) : 4.

<sup>37</sup> Esther Hildebrandt, "Christopher Mont, Anglo-German Diplomat," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 15, no 3, (Autumn, 1984) : 281.



them. Many historians have written biographies on Elizabeth and her chief minister, but only a few works on her men of state were written after 1970. Contrasted with the number of great biographies written on Elizabeth since 1970, this gap is disappointing. Yet, in comparison to the survey studies, the biographies add a different perspective to Elizabethan policy.<sup>38</sup>

Christopher Haigh's political study of Elizabeth's relationships portrayed her as a metaphorical mother, wife, nanny and sister. He categorically examined the relationship of the Queen with a multitude of subjects and "the book [sought] to analyze Elizabeth's exercise of political power."<sup>39</sup> His interpretation of the relationship between Elizabeth's courtship and the Queen of Scots differed from the foreign policy works. Haigh argued that the marriage issue remained purposely unresolved "to entice suitors and to tame claimants to the throne" and to make Mary "behave herself."<sup>40</sup>

Haigh examined how Elizabeth managed important institutions of her kingdom from the church to the Privy Council. As he examined the role of the Privy Council as advisors, he noted that Cecil and the council sometimes acknowledged the Queen's decision only to order the diplomats to continue on the plan set by the Council.<sup>41</sup> By

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<sup>38</sup> Many biographies were read and assessed for this study, including some would be seen as popular culture studies. Most of the studies reflected the same accounts of Elizabeth's life and reflected little upon her management style. While many of those studies are excellent accounts of the Queen's life they do not offer enough discussion of policy, and diplomacy to include them in this study. Maria Perry, *The Word of a Prince: A Life of Elizabeth I from Contemporary Documents* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1990). Anne Somerset, *Elizabeth I* (New York: Knopf, 1991). Alison Weir, *The Life of Elizabeth I* (New York: Ballantine, 1998). Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Susan Bassnett, *Elizabeth I: Feminist Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

<sup>39</sup> Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I. Profiles in Power* (London: Longman, 1988), vi.

<sup>40</sup> Haigh, *Elizabeth I*, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Haigh, *Elizabeth I*, 69.

1568, the council had ordered diplomacy against the Queen's desires. Haigh thereby determined that during the early years of her reign, Elizabeth was in control, but failed to note when and how this power became usurped.

MacCaffrey's biography, *Elizabeth I*, researched the Queen within the bounds of her government and authority. This work centered on Elizabeth as a powerful political monarch, as opposed to his political trilogy that discussed the Queen in reference to the men who were placed around her.<sup>42</sup> MacCaffrey's interest in policy permeated this work. He provided the reader with an adequate biographical background of Henry's daughter, and his work intensely scrutinized the political reign of Elizabeth. He derived that the Queen aptly established her regime and proved that she could rule as well as any man.<sup>43</sup> His discussion of policy changed very little from his other works.

The work suffered in several ways and made Elizabeth appear autocratic in administering the Anglican Church, but weak in the face of her councilors concerning foreign policy. For MacCaffrey, Sir William Cecil was the hero of diplomacy and policy. He successfully manipulated the Queen by threatening her with his resignation. Thus the two were at odds with each other, and the principal secretary did not get his way. MacCaffrey's work demonstrated that he had no intention of scrutinizing the work of the Queen's diplomatic corps as his biography the Queen only discussed the top down politics of court.

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<sup>42</sup> Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I* (London: E. Arnold, 1993). The Trilogy contained the following works. Wallace MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime: Elizabethan Politics, 1558-1572* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); Wallace MacCaffrey, *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1558* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588-1603* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>43</sup> Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, 445.

Opposed to Queen Elizabeth, comparatively few full biographies exist on Sir William Cecil. The sheer volume of manuscripts he left behind may have caused this paucity. He managed so many aspects of government that his life was as much a part of England as was Elizabeth's. The historian Conyers Read has written the best biography of Cecil. His two-volume work on the great Elizabethan statesmen has remained at the forefront in the Tudor canon of historical writing. Read interpreted Cecil as the political force of England. For years his work stood as a hallmark biography despite its breadth of topic. Later authors, who have published more recent works on Cecil, have endeavored to focus on his office and character.<sup>44</sup>

Malcolm Thorpe wrote an article in 1994 about the Queen's secretary titled "William Cecil and the Anti-Christ: A Study in Anti-Catholic Ideology." According to Thorpe, Cecil drove policy based on his anti-Catholic ideals. "Cecil's conviction that England was engaged in a war against the forces of evil was reinforced as a result of his encounters with Counter-Reformation diplomacy."<sup>45</sup> Thorpe implied that early diplomacy caused Cecil to ruthlessly repress Catholics. Thorpe embellished the early crises of the Queen's regime to prove his theory. The question of whether or not Cecil ever controlled policy that early in Elizabeth's reign deserved more investigation. An alternative thesis is that the secretary's hatred of Scotland derived from the wounds he earned in Scotland while battling for Henry VIII. The nature of the crises that transpired among England, Scotland and France resulted from multiple issues including ardent Protestantism.

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<sup>44</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (New York: Knopf, 1961).

<sup>45</sup> Malcolm Thorpe, "William Cecil and the Anti-Christ: A Study in Anti-Catholic Ideology" In *Politics, Religion & Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Malcolm Thorpe and Arthur Slavin, Sixteenth Century Essay & Studies vol. 25 (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), 290.



In 1998, Michael Graves wrote a condensed study of power on William Cecil, Lord Burghley. His notion of Cecil, in regards to religion, agreed with Thorpe's assessment but differed in scope. Graves focused on the events that elevated Cecil to the peerage. He noted that Cecil endured extensive work in foreign policy as he managed letters and instructions to and from diplomats and foreign monarch. Graves' treatment of the Secretary illuminated a complex man who believed in his duty to Queen and country. At times, Cecil's work proved frustrating because the Queen would not act, so he resorted to manipulation: "He labored in the royal interest, but this sometimes necessitated lobbying against the queen in order to compel her into action."<sup>46</sup> Cecil's ruse often angered the Queen, who threw violent tantrums for his tampering in her affairs.

When Elizabeth's cousin the Queen of Scotland arrived in England, diplomacy experienced a role-reversal. England established an amiable relationship with France. The traditional Anglo-Spain alliance slowly deteriorated. Graves pointed out that Cecil did not support pirates who raided the Spanish shipping nor did he advocate involvement in the Netherlands but had "taken up an anti-Spanish position."<sup>47</sup> Perhaps the series in which he published this biography limited Graves from delving deeper into the character of Cecil. However, the author gave an enlightening view of the Queen's secretary. As Graves finished his biographical approach to Cecil a new historian also challenged the old view of Cecil.

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<sup>46</sup> Michael A. R. Graves, *Burghley, Profiles in Power* (New York: Longman, 1998), 43.

<sup>47</sup> Graves, *Burghley*, 50.

Stephen Alford's book *The Early Elizabethan Polity* approached the life of the Queen's secretary by examining his philosophy in the relationship of the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign. Alford suggested that Cecil began his duties with a foreign policy already in place.<sup>48</sup> He claimed Cecil saw England, Scotland, and Ireland as one single political unit with England as the senior kingdom with a hybrid republican monarchy. The Queen was subordinate to law and the advice of her council who advised her on marriage, succession, religion and policy. This council had no factions, only political disagreements. Alford's research deserves praise, as he utilized archival sources as opposed to printed sources such as the calendars. His approach to Cecil's life demonstrated a turn in scholarship as Alford looked at Cecil from his beginnings to determine what influenced him. To support this view, the author reprinted several documents in his appendix with correction marks to help demonstrate the mentality of Cecil. He also critically analyzes the secretary's jottings and notes that sometimes prove fruitful.

Alford asserted that there was no Dudley faction in Council. He cites several times that Dudley and Cecil get along amicably. He omits from his thesis the distress that Cecil felt upon returning from his success in Scotland to find himself nearly pushed out of government.

Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scots, competed against her cousin for the crown of England. Mary receives a wealth of attention from scholars because of her claims to the throne of England. During her reign as Queen of France she flaunted her pretension to the English throne on the basis that she, unlike her cousin, was not a bastard. Mary's

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<sup>48</sup> Stephen Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558-1569* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

claim dominated England's policy until her death in 1585. Men who sought to restore England to Catholicism engaged in dangerous plots to advance the Scottish Queen's right. In 1969, Antonia Fraser published *Mary Queen of Scots*. This perspective of Mary offered a different insight into England's policy toward France and Scotland.

As Fraser's work focused on the plight of the Scottish Queen it rightfully ignored and avoided debate over who controlled policy in England. She did, however, uncover an important aspect of it, as Mary faced imprisonment in Scotland in late 1569. Elizabeth had closely monitored the debacle in Scotland. The English sovereign, according to Fraser, wanted to rescue her cousin, but England's Privy Council persuaded the English monarch to incarcerate Mary. The Queen of Scots' imprisonment in England secured Elizabeth's throne for a short time. The event illustrated that even though the Queen did not want to keep her cousin captive, she would capitulate to the demands of her council if they swayed her enough.<sup>49</sup>

Fraser utilized the letters of diplomats to examine the imprisonment of the Queen of Scots, including those of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who arrived in Scotland as English ambassador shortly after the rebellion against Mary. Fraser uses his letters to Elizabeth to illustrate the condition of Mary and how her cousin responded to her needs. Throckmorton claimed that his efforts saved Mary's life.<sup>50</sup>

During Mary's imprisonment in England and subsequent trial, Fraser utilized the letters of the Privy Council and Sir Francis Knollys, the liaison between Mary and Elizabeth. The correspondence portrayed the Privy Council as the makers of policy by

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<sup>49</sup> Antonia Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1969), 379.

<sup>50</sup> Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots*, 342.

incessant badgering of the Queen. While admittedly Fraser's discussion offers very little toward policy debate, it does provide an in depth, though not always accurate, view of a policy matter. The study of Mary's life brings an added thread of why policy formed and how it functioned.

Biographies offer a possible way to examine how diplomacy was formed. Biographies, both long and brief provide an in-depth method of examining the actions, desires, and thoughts of one individual. Multiple biographies of the Tudor diplomats would explain more about diplomacy and help us understand the role of each courtier in the processes of government, therefore enlightening historians about policy formulation. Another avenue to understanding policy and diplomacy requires the historian to look at one aspect of policy or diplomacy to understand its intricacies.

In 1989, Susan Doran focused on the Habsburg courtship of Elizabeth. "Religion and Politics at the Court of Elizabeth I: the Habsburg marriage negotiations of 1559-1567" studied the intricate negotiations and court factions involved in this process. Doran's article focused on the marriage bargaining. Often "seen as an elaborate charade devised by Elizabeth to deceive either her councilors or foreign ruler,"<sup>51</sup> the role of Elizabeth's marriage had been debated for years. Doran took the initiative to discover if these were legitimate negotiations. Her article confirmed how impassioned court politics could be when she suggested that court factions dominated the Habsburg suit. Religion played a key role since the Habsburg Archduke, Charles of Austria, was Catholic, and many in court and country feared for their religious freedom. The Duke of Norfolk

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<sup>51</sup> Susan Doran, "Religion and Politics at the Court of Elizabeth I: The Habsburg Marriage Negotiations of 1559-1567," *The English Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 413 (Oct., 1989) : 908.

advocated the match because of his papist tendencies, whereas Robert Dudley opposed them because of his self-interest and religious views.

The proposed marriage was merely a political ploy by Elizabeth to keep "the friendship of Spain during a time of confrontation with France."<sup>52</sup> Later she used the match to ease tensions with the Antwerp trade embargo. Her use of this proposed match demonstrated that Elizabeth controlled policy very well. The article also demonstrated the effective need for her diplomatic corps.

Marriage and European relations commanded the lion's share of Tudor politics in the above works. But in the 1990s a shift in historical scholarship occurred. It appears that historians were no longer interested solely in how government worked, but what drove its members to think and act in certain ways. Tudor research shifted to a cultural study of society, court and state. The prime example of this type of study was a compilation of articles presented in *Tudor Political Culture*.

*Tudor Political Culture* contains a medley of articles that help define how politics functioned in Tudor England. The proliferating theme of this work is the culture that existed around the politics of state. Various contributors to the work adhered to a simple equation: Explain political events or ideas by examining the culture involved.

Norman Jones used the model of Reformation towns to describe the makeup of Parliament. From this cultural method Jones concluded that M.P. did not function like modern democratic representatives as J. E. Neale supposed. John Guy's article analyzed the concept of consultation, and how it affected Tudor political structures and culture. Using contemporaries such as Peter Wentworth, Guy argued that freedom of speech was

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<sup>52</sup> Doran, "Religion and Politics," 910.



a right based upon consultation, and proves that the House of Lords did not have any conciliatory rights. Robert Tittler's article discussed the transformation of towns during the Tudor/ Stuart period. The purpose of his paper is to show that the rise of oligarchical and hierarchical classes in towns can be directly linked with the change in architecture during the sixteenth century. Dale Hoak sought to show that Henry VIII attempted to find precedence for the elevation of his title from king to emperor. The iconographical evidence for this criterion centers on the crown of state. David Dean writes a fascinating article on the pomp and circumstance that existed with the commencement and dismissal of Parliament. He discusses the use of symbols utilized at the procession of the monarch to Parliament. His description proves that this event reflected the feudal nature of court, both in class and distinction. Then Dean reviews the House of Commons' diminutive role in the pageantry. The lowest house of Parliament arrived after the procession, only to receive instructions and then dismissal. His thesis describes a very different culture to the lower house that proves that parliament lacked strong political power during the Tudor period.<sup>53</sup>

The work demonstrated that culture and politics could provide us with a more complete understanding of how politics functioned during this period. If culture could enlarge our understanding of politics then the same would be so for diplomacy and

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<sup>53</sup> Dale Hoak, ed. *Tudor Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Norman L. Jones, "Parliament and the Political Society of Elizabethan England," In *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 226-42. John Guy, "The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England," In *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 292-311. Robert Tittler, "Political Culture and the Built Environment of the English Country Town, c. 1540-1620," In *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 133-56. Dale Hoak, "The Iconography of the Crown Imperial," In *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 54-103. David Dean, "Image and Ritual in the Tudor Parliaments," In *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 243-71.

policy. The result of these historians moving toward a cultural interpretation changes Tudor history from a skeleton of politics and people to fleshy history that allows for individual thought and participation. A fine result of this style was Retha Warnicke's, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves*.<sup>54</sup>

Warnicke constructed an engaging thesis based upon the marrying habits of Henry VIII and his marriage to Anne of Cleves. She established that Henry tended to follow the chivalric model that his peers used. She incorporated examples of Philip, Charles, and James V of Scotland and their attempts to enamor potential Queens.

Although the thesis revolves around the marriage of Anne of Cleves, it was an excellent study of what monarchs and their ambassadors endured to make a royal marriage. Warnicke uses excellent sources from both sides of the bargaining table to illustrate the amount of negotiating that went into the marriage. The thesis is solidly proven through the marriage contract. Beyond this topic, the thesis is mired in the wearisome courtly life of Henry VIII and his disillusionment with Queen Anne. Here Warnicke tried to take time to finish Anne's story as the King's Good Sister.

Warnicke had a multi-faceted critical technique for proving her thesis. Where period documents were not available, she sought sources from different eras, including papers of events that occurred 120 years after the King's death. Warnicke also sought for precedence in documents from earlier periods.

Gary Bell led the charge for the study of Elizabethan diplomats. He published several articles describing various aspects of diplomatic life. In 1990, Bell published A

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<sup>54</sup> Retha Warnicke, *The Marrying of Anne of Cleves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

*Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1668*, a significant work concerning diplomatic relations. While no thesis existed in the work, it served as an excellent list of diplomats and special ambassadors. His hope was to provide a guide for historians about diplomatic missions and their known documentation. Bell's work demonstrated that no less than 88 diplomatic missions were sent from 1558-1575. He outlined where manuscripts were located and the length of each mission. His work indicated thirty years of scholarship dedicated to finding the documents related to each diplomatic mission.

Bell developed his ideas in "Elizabethan Diplomatic Compensation: Its Nature and Variety" which examined the pecuniary aspect of diplomatic service in Tudor England. He stated that "Diplomacy was critical to Elizabeth's England, and effective diplomatic rewards underpinned this crucial state function."<sup>55</sup> Bell argued that the Queen took good care of her diplomats. Whatever short-lived poverty the ambassadors suffered was later rewarded with "illustrious governmental careers."<sup>56</sup>

He outlined his thesis by inspecting the various degrees of ambassadors and diplomats according to the pay ratio they received. Servants to the queen were honored with extraordinary income and their expenses were paid including money for intelligence. The article demonstrated that the Queen valued her corps of diplomats and rewarded them well.

From Garrett Mattingly to Gary Bell this study comes full circle. As Mattingly sought to illuminate the rise of the diplomat in European diplomacy, Bell hoped to ignite

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<sup>55</sup> Gary M. Bell, "Elizabethan Diplomatic Compensation: Its Nature and Variety," *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2 (Spring, 1981) : 20.

<sup>56</sup> Bell, "Elizabethan Diplomatic Compensation," 16.



interest in the study of Tudor Diplomats. From this historiographical debate, several conclusions are certain about the topic of diplomacy in Elizabethan England and the formation of foreign policy. As Wernham tried to reinvigorate the field of policy history in the late 1960s, he met stiff opposition because his critic Elton noted that politics and diplomacy were too closely conjoined to separate the two. Similarly, most diplomacy history has fallen to the wayside in order to fully understand the politics of Elizabeth's government, and has been the sad misconception of Elizabethan Polity. Stephen Alford's work tried to define Cecil by the foreign policy he advocated. As Alford attempted this approach, he left out the aspects that diplomats brought to the table of politics and policy.

Historians have also argued that the formation of policy came from three specific groups: the Queen, Sir William Cecil, and the Privy Council. This argument needs to be challenged as it leaves out the diplomats, who like the secretary and the Queen's council, were equally empowered by Elizabeth to act in her name and interest. Likewise the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign was defined by her attempts to keep France and Spain from invading her lands both by force and succession. She manipulated monarchs, princes, courtiers and diplomats to gain her desires. Diplomacy has importance in history and fits nicely into the current trend of cultural history.

Warnicke's effort demonstrates the possibilities of using diplomatic events from a cultural perspective to tease out meaning in diplomatic actions and protocol. Mattingly utilized culture and history to write a hallmark diplomatic work of the twentieth century. Later historians followed political histories hoping to understand the structure of Tudor government. Unfortunately, hard documents and political treatise will only take the

subject so far. More must be done by focusing on the diplomats first as subjects of the crown; second, as politicians; and third as citizens of a European culture.

The study of diplomacy and diplomats has suffered from a lack of enthusiastic discussion in the twentieth century historiographical debate. However, with the shift in cultural studies, diplomacy has a chance to emerge into the debate, if studies focus on culture and how it relates to politics.

The following study focuses on Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, a man whose diplomatic roles during the first years of Elizabeth's reign have been misunderstood. The following chapters dispel some of the misunderstandings in source material, and emphasize Throckmorton's role in the formulation of Elizabethan policy.

## CHAPTER II

## A HOT GOSPELER?

“A prince should always seek advice,” wrote Niccolo Machiavelli.<sup>57</sup> Every sovereign desired good advice on matters of state. Advising a monarch was an ancient right held by the peerage of England, but had been extended to those whom the monarch thought worthy and capable. Founded upon the king’s desire to counsel with his subjects, Parliament became a king’s source of political insight. Each monarch utilized this institution to his own advantage. A sovereign had other avenues for obtaining counsel including courtiers, Privy Council counselors, and friends. Following the customs of her kingdom, Elizabeth Tudor sought advice from many sources during her reign.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton gave advice to the Queen and others during his lifetime. In 1564, he wrote Elizabeth’s archrival Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland to advise her about the state of her political position in England. It was in this advice to Mary that he wrote:

Your Majesty has in England many friends of all degrees, that favor your title; but for divers respects. Some for very conscience sake, being persuaded that in law your right is best; some for the good opinion they have conceived, by the honorable report they have heard of your Majesty’s virtues and liberties, whereby they esteem you most worthy to govern; some for factions that favor your religion; some for they evil will they bear unto your competitor, seeing their own peril, give my Lady Katherine [Grey] should come in that place.

Of there some are papist and some protestants; and yet how ever they differ amongst themselves, in religion or other particularities they are both of a mind for the advancement of that purpose that touches your

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<sup>57</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Daniel Donno (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), 82.

Majesty. Your Majesty has also many enemies, for diverse respects not unlike the other ... (unless they may be made friends...)<sup>58</sup>  
 This correspondence informed Mary that she had supporters in England and could gain more if she acted wisely. He also informed her that she could win a place for herself in the succession to the throne of England. Throckmorton's exposition struck a chord with Mary. The renewed prospect of inheriting her cousin's throne must have been intoxicating.<sup>59</sup>

Counseling Mary on such delicate matters was an audacious move by Sir Nicholas. Imparting such daring and bold counsel to a foreign monarch, and Elizabeth's rival no less, demonstrated that Sir Nicholas had some expertise in these matters. Sir Nicholas had lived a fairly successful political life. He grew up in the service of the Parrs. He was knighted by King Edward VI, and became a Groomsman of his Privy Chamber. He had also been caught in several intrigues: The Wyatt Rebellion and the Dudley plot against Mary. But the pinnacle of his career happened in Elizabeth's reign where he was employed as resident diplomat to France. During his time there, he gave Elizabeth suggestions on how to proceed in certain matters. Overall his counsel to the Queen of Scots presents an entirely different side of Sir Nicholas, one that opposes the

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<sup>58</sup> Sir James Melville, *Memoirs of His Own Life*, ed. T. Thomson, reprint (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 141-143. Throckmorton's speech did not make Mary the second in line for the throne of England. Instead, his advice suggested how she might remain in the succession after Katherine Grey.

<sup>59</sup> Sir Nicholas further intrigued the Scottish queen by revealing the exploits of her enemies in England, who attempted to ensure that Catholicism never returned to the now protestant monarchy. But the English ambassador recommended countermeasures to the Queen of Scots to secure her succession. According to Melville, the Queen of Scots' ambassador to England, all of the necessary respects were considered and implemented by Mary to ensure herself into the succession. Throckmorton wisely told Mary that, "she governs in a manner that would not set England against her." This included avoiding treaties with Catholic countries. Avoiding the persecution of Protestants also enhanced the affection of the English toward the Catholic Queen.

view that he was an ardent follower of the Protestant ideology, a description imputed by historians from an "advice" that Throckmorton wrote at beginning of Elizabeth's reign.

Sir John Neale found the advice in Sir Nicholas Bacon's papers at Corpus Christi College at Cambridge University sometime in the 1930s and later published it under the title "Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's Advice to Queen Elizabeth on her Accession to the Throne."<sup>60</sup> According to his account, the document was a seventeenth century copy with no reference to its author or where the copyist had found the original. Adding to this obscurity is the lack of a date. Taken as a whole, the document is quite puzzling. First, Throckmorton, whose relationship to the new Queen is largely unknown and whose former public offices lack any political weight, boldly writes Elizabeth about whom she should place in positions of government. We do not know what motivated the author to write the document or even if the advice made it to Elizabeth. Such questions argue for a reexamination of Neale's famed document.

In an effort to clear up the ambiguity, let us first review the historiography of Elizabeth's first days as Queen, and then establish the credit of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. It is also critical to dispense with some of the myths that have developed around this document by identifying the time(s) in which the advice was written.

The commencement of Elizabeth's reign has fascinated many Tudor historians. This enchantment may be due, in part, to the fact that the beginning of the reign was a watershed moment in Tudor history, not only for politics, but also religion, foreign

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<sup>60</sup> J.E. Neale. "Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's Advice to Queen Elizabeth on her Accession to the Throne," *The English Historical Review*, vol. 65 (1950): 91-98.

affairs, and local government. Central to these issues were the decisions the Queen made. Why did the Queen prefer less experienced men for stations in her government while retiring veteran men of state? Who recommended them? Historians have examined these various questions, producing some of the best works on early Elizabethan polity. The subsequent historiography demonstrates the extent that "Throckmorton's advice" has served historians.

Many historians have endeavored to utilize the government membership of Elizabeth's reign to identify who controlled the avenues of government and to whom the Queen listened for advice. The concept of advice was not a novelty in Tudor England, considering that all lords of the realm had the right to advise the monarch as they saw fit. At the commencement of her reign, Elizabeth welcomed counsel in a speech given to her attendant peers at the Hatfield house saying, "I mean to direct all my action by good advice and counsel."<sup>61</sup> While advice was a normal aspect of monarchical rule, historians have been fascinated by an advice written at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. Written by a minor political figure and not discovered until the twentieth century, "Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's advice to Queen Elizabeth," contains puzzling instructions to Queen Elizabeth.

This document had an impact on Neale's research on the 1559 Parliament in his two-volume treatise entitled *Elizabeth and her Parliaments*.<sup>62</sup> Neale asserted that Elizabeth's settlement of religion was based on a Puritan faction in the House of Commons. His work sparked many books and articles on the beginning of Elizabeth's

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<sup>61</sup> PRO, SP 12/1/ fol. 7.

<sup>62</sup> J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth and her Parliaments, 1559-1581* (London, 1953; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1958). J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth and her Parliaments, 1584-1601* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957).



reign to discuss the formation of her government, the parliaments, and her reign.

Historians have subsequently interpreted the events of Elizabeth's rule in many different ways.

Conyers Read saw the event from the perspective of William Cecil, a bright politically savvy knight, who became the Queen's right hand man. Read believed that Cecil shaped Elizabeth's government with the Queen's consent, and that the formation of the government was based primarily on Cecil's decisions. In 1969 Wallace MacCaffrey furthered this discussion with his work on the formation of Elizabeth's regime. For him the shaping of Elizabeth's government was best represented by Throckmorton's advice, and even though the governments positions were not assigned as Sir Nicholas advised all the men were placed somewhere in the bureaucracy.<sup>63</sup>

Winthrop Hudson tried a modified approach to the formation of Elizabeth's government. He saw the leaders of Elizabeth's regime as a fraternity of men conjoined by family relations and school. He noted that most of these men had attended Gray's Inn or Cambridge University. Hudson termed this group the "Athenian Tribe." These men permeated the court of Henry VIII and Edward VI in lesser posts, but held important positions as tutors and chaplains to the royal family."<sup>64</sup> They then became essential to Elizabeth during the 1559 settlement. Leading the group was William Cecil, who had a plan to form the Queen's government. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton played a supporting

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<sup>63</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 123. Wallace MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 52.

<sup>64</sup> Winthrop Hudson, *The Cambridge Connection* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press: 1980), 3.

role to Cecil, and it is Hudson's contention that Cecil collaborated with Elizabeth's future diplomat.

Norman Jones also entered into the retelling of Elizabeth's first year. Based upon his work with the 1559 parliament, Jones moved the center of power from Cecil to Elizabeth. No longer was secretary Cecil the center of power at court, but rather the Queen herself created her government. She accepted the advice from Throckmorton that "neither the old or new should wholly understand."<sup>65</sup> Jones's interpretation of Elizabeth yields the best understanding of the first year and Elizabeth's subsequent policy formation that continued until her death. While others focus on Cecil or the periphery of friends, Jones focused on the issue of religion and the survival of the English Crown.

As historians have diversely interpreted Throckmorton's advice and his role in the formation of the government, it becomes apparent that the majority of their criticisms of Sir Nicholas were based upon Neale's discourse on the 'advice' to Queen Elizabeth. The trouble lies in perspective, as the document continues to compel some historians to identify Throckmorton as "one of the leading spirits among those most hostile to the old religion and its political order."<sup>66</sup> Others see him as brash for giving the Queen unsolicited advice. The various verdicts were, for the most part, based wholly upon this enigmatic document. Many have concluded that Throckmorton received his diplomatic post to France as a prize for writing the "advice".

While each of the preceding works contribute to the picture of how Elizabeth initially formed her government, the various theories on this subject are inherently

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<sup>65</sup> Norman Jones, "Elizabeth's First Year," in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh (London: MacMillan, 1984), 30.

<sup>66</sup> MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime*, 40.

flawed. The main reasons for this are two: First, Sir Nicholas did not write most of the advice contained in Neale's document. Second, the suggestions he did make were not as ground shaking as Neale surmised.

This document is troublesome and has befuddled many, including Neale, who was not satisfied with it when he presented its discovery for criticism. In truth, he was rather perplexed by the seemingly anti-climatic nature of the whole affair as recorded in the *State Papers*. Neal supposed that such an audacious move by Throckmorton would have resounded in diplomatic discourses. His rationalization left "Throckmorton's biographer to expatiate the intimacy between Elizabeth and Throckmorton."<sup>67</sup> Perhaps Neale hoped that a study of Throckmorton's life would reveal how he conceived his counsel or how he was able to advance a list of prospective government officials. Yet even a brief sketch of his life does not provide adequate background as to why Sir Nicholas might have written to Queen Elizabeth.

Born in 1515, the fourth son of Sir George Throckmorton and Anne Vaux, Sir Nicholas came from a prominent family. His grandfather was the Master of the Horse for Henry VII, and his father was a close associate of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey. When Henry VIII broke with Rome, Sir Nicholas's father lost his patron. Sir George Throckmorton was later imprisoned over a land dispute with Thomas Cromwell, Henry's primary minister during the 1530s.<sup>68</sup> These trying times left Sir Nicholas with little prospect for advancement, since as fourth son he would only inherit £500 from his

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<sup>67</sup> Neale, "Sir Nicholas's Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth," 92.

<sup>68</sup> Penry Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 382. While Sir George was one the leading voices in Parliament against his split with Rome. He was also one of the witnesses against Cromwell at his trial.

father's estate. Throckmorton held no public office during his career prior to Elizabeth's accession. He served instead in the households of some of the greatest people in the realm such as Henry Fitzroy, the Duke of Richmond; William Parr, the Earl of Northampton; and Queen Catherine Parr. His most prestigious position was in the royal household of Edward VI, as a Groom of the Privy Chamber. Throckmorton had no legal training and there are no records of him attending any university or college.<sup>69</sup>

The beginning of Mary's reign marked a period of turmoil in Throckmorton's life. His wife, Anne Carew, was invited to be a Lady of the Privy Chamber for Lady Jane Grey. In 1553, Anne was placed under arrest along with the usurping Queen, but she was later released. For Throckmorton, Mary's accession meant exclusion from court, and from most avenues of royal patronage. Mary did, however, make him the keeper of Brigstock for his role in notifying her of the death of King Edward and supporting her during the opening days of her regime.<sup>70</sup>

Influenced by Charles V, Mary chose to marry Philip II of Spain. In response to this, Throckmorton became involved in the famous plot to overthrow the Queen, known as Wyatt's Rebellion. The coup failed in early 1554 and Sir Nicholas, having been found complicit, was imprisoned in the tower where he awaited trial for treason. It was the most dangerous period of his life. He was denied a lawyer. He could not call witnesses for his defense. He was even refused law books with which to defend himself. The Marian government seemed sure to orchestrate Sir Nicholas's demise. Nonetheless, the result was other than what Mary had anticipated. Throckmorton pleaded for his life in front the

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<sup>69</sup> A. L. Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons* (London: The Reprint Society of London, 1962), 9.

<sup>70</sup> Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 19.

judges and jury using Parliamentary law. He argued that the basis of the prosecution's case was his violation of the Six Articles, but since these had been repealed the crown had no case. The jurors agreed, and returned a not guilty verdict. Mary, however, retaliated. She would not accept defeat and returned Throckmorton to the tower along with the jurors. He stayed there for a year, and was released only when he secured £2000 for the assurance of his good behavior.<sup>71</sup>

After his eventual release from the tower, Sir Nicholas was immediately forced to flee across the Channel into France. This occasion was John Dudley's plot to rob the Exchequer. Throckmorton fled because he was so closely associated with the Dudley's and he feared guilt by association. Once on the continent, Throckmorton's resourcefulness shined forth. He contacted Sir Nicholas Wotton, the English ambassador in France, through his cousin Henry Middlemore.<sup>72</sup> Wotton was very careful in the way he dealt with Throckmorton, not wanting to be accused of harboring an enemy of the Queen. Throckmorton refused Mary's request that he return and stand trial for his alleged part in the Dudley plot, and instead he offered to gather information that would be pertinent to the war effort against France. Eventually, Mary employed him to gather intelligence, and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton became a key part of her intelligence network in France.

Sometime in early April 1557, Wotton wrote an advertisement to Mary about a plot that Throckmorton discovered. It involved the Guise family and Admiral Montmorency who was aided by two unidentified Englishman. One of the unnamed

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<sup>71</sup>Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 24.

<sup>72</sup>CSP, For., Mary, 241.

plotters was a kinsman to a captain of the English castle at Plymouth and the other a servant of Thomas Stafford.<sup>73</sup> Later Sir Nicholas also presented intelligence to Wotton that the French were preparing for an attack on Calais and then possibly England.<sup>74</sup> Throckmorton also took part in the battle of St. Quentin, part of the war that pitted England and Spain as allies against France. There he served with his friend the Earl of Bedford. But other than this, there is very little archival evidence of Throckmorton's whereabouts in the last year of Mary's reign before Cecil restored him to the keepership of Brigstock in August 1558.<sup>75</sup>

When Mary's health started to decline in late 1558, many men began to prepare for Princess Elizabeth's inevitable accession and the regime change that would naturally follow. To what extent Throckmorton participated is uncertain. His own personal relationship with Elizabeth probably started sometime in the 1540s when he served in Queen Catherine's household. For a short time after Henry VIII's death, he attended Queen Catherine Parr and her new husband, Lord Thomas Seymour, while Elizabeth was in their care. Other evidences of their relationship are less definite. But we do know from a dispatch to King Philip of Spain, written three days before Mary's death, that Sir Nicholas had found favor in Elizabeth's eyes.<sup>76</sup> So Throckmorton had gained some credit with the Princess. But what did he think of Elizabeth? In 1560, Sir Nicholas revealed to Sir William Cecil how he felt for his monarch. "The love, duty, and affection, that I bear

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<sup>73</sup> CSP, For., Mary, 293.

<sup>74</sup> CSP. For., Mary, 298-299.

<sup>75</sup> Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 25.

<sup>76</sup> Rodriguez-Salgado and Simon Adams, eds. "The Count of Feria's Dispatch to Philip II of 14 November 1558." In *Camden Miscellany XXVIII* 4<sup>th</sup> ser. vol. 29, (1984): 334-35.



to the Queen's Majesty, and to surety of herself, and her realm, doth, and shall, during my life, take more place in me, than any friendship, or any particular case."<sup>77</sup> While the full nature of their relationship remains unknown, the friendship between the monarch and servant seems to have been mutual.

This brief biographical sketch of Throckmorton has demonstrated that although he was resourceful, it does not explain how he came to counsel her Majesty without incurring repercussions since their friendship has no documented historical source. The lacking biographical evidence demands a different approach to Neale's "advice." In analyzing this "advice" the question must be asked; when was the document actually written? Many historians who used this document have followed Neale's findings that Throckmorton was outside of England during the writing of this advice. A. L. Rowse surmised that the first part of the document had been written while Throckmorton was on the continent in Mary's reign.<sup>78</sup>

The date is the key to understanding this document. If a date can be derived from the text then it can be linked to Sir Nicholas. While it is impossible to give a calendar date for this document, we can discover if it was written before or after Mary's death. To do so, one must first understand the format of the document.

The "advice" is divisible into five sections. The first section is the introduction, which, in the copied text, occupies only one-third of the first folio page with the remaining portion left blank.<sup>79</sup> The second section of the "advice" starts on the next folio

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<sup>77</sup> Hardwicke Papers, 122.

<sup>78</sup> A. L. Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 25-6.

<sup>79</sup> Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS. 543, fol. 31b. See Appendix for transcription.

page and is the last portion of a speech given by Elizabeth at Hatfield upon her sister's death.<sup>80</sup> The third section begins on the obverse of this page with the words: "this be sufficient for the first access."<sup>81</sup> The fourth section of this document begins with the words: "meete to bee in election..."<sup>82</sup> In this section, the discourse changes from a direct speech to the Queen to a list of prospective office holders.<sup>83</sup> The fifth and final section of the document begins on a new folio page with the words: "I would like to renew my suit for my cousin Henry Middlemore."<sup>84</sup> Each section was written at different times.

Why five sections? The introductory paragraph was written to Elizabeth addressing her as "Your Grace," the title of a princess. Whenever the title "Your Grace" appears, it refers to Elizabeth prior to Mary's death. Therefore, section one was written while Mary was still alive. Section two is Elizabeth speaking and therefore written in her voice. The text of her speech indicates that Mary has died and that the new Queen has not yet taken up residence in the Tower. Section three identifies Elizabeth as "your Highness" giving us a time frame after November 17, 1558. Section four, which contains no direct address, cannot be dated. The fifth section refers to Elizabeth as "Your Grace," and thus must come from the period before the death of Mary Tudor. The chronology of each section of the document suggests that Throckmorton's "advice" is an amalgamation of five different documents, each written at different times and by an unknown number of authors.

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<sup>80</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32a.

<sup>81</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b

<sup>82</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 33b

<sup>83</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 33b

<sup>84</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 34b.

Did Sir Nicholas author all of the suggestions contained in this hybrid document? Critical analysis of the contents reveals that he could have written some portions, but certainly not all. Some portions are too ambiguous to tell for certain. Let us take a closer look at each section.

Section one suggests that the author was far from the princess, and relying upon rumors.

The bruits which I hear consonant to some advertisements, the place where I am presently, so far distant from your presence, the faithful zeal which I owe to Your Grace's honor safety and happy government, which is to succeed happily through a discreet beginning. Hath moved me to tell Your Grace my poor opinion ether in the beginning or before your gracious acceptation (where of I have experienced) because I mean well. I do nether despair of a good sequel (god forbid I should speak to arrogantly) if it shall like Your Grace to put in your my young and peradventure singular device.<sup>85</sup>

So what can we learn from the first document? The writer must have served Elizabeth before. The writer tells the princess that he had given her advice before. She must have accepted the author's advice because the writer informed the princess that upon that premise he sought to advise her again. Throckmorton could have very well written this section of the document. He was in exile in France for a relatively short time before becoming a spy for Mary. He served under the young Earl of Bedford during Philip's campaign in France. He fought against France at the battle of St. Quentin. But Throckmorton had returned to England before August 1558.

There was a whole cast of possible authors in the North of France. Those who fled from England during the two rebellions against Mary could have written this section. They include such men as Henry Knollys, who would serve as one of Elizabeth's

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<sup>85</sup> C.C.C.C. MS 543, fol. 31b.

diplomats and eventually, for a short time, the jailor of Mary Stuart. Likewise there was a community of Englishmen in and around Calais. Also, Mary had several ministers and diplomats far removed from her presence. When Throckmorton first escaped to the continent he contacted Sir Nicholas Wotton. Sir Edward Carne marveled that he asked several Englishmen "if they had heard of him of his being here; they say they have not which seems strange, his person and that of a his man be well known."<sup>86</sup> Sir Nicholas Wotton also cautiously dealt with Throckmorton, not wanting to be involved or accused of harboring the enemy of Mary. A number of others were in Zurich where many Protestants anxiously awaited the death of Queen Mary, including Sir Francis Knollys, Anthony Cooke, and Edmund Grindal. Since no hard evidence points to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the first paragraph could have been written by anyone who had given the Princess some advice previously. It is not clear whether Throckmorton wrote the introductory paragraph of this document, but he certainly did not write the second section. The Queen herself wrote it. The following text was written in Elizabeth's voice and its presence in the document is rather perplexing.

Of the resumption apperteyneth to my prerogative being by Gods ordinance called to the imperial crown of this Realm by the death of the late Queen and is also consonant to the presidents and proceedings of my noble progenitors kings of this Realm. In other matters also I think good to confer with you in and to use your council and advise.

Neale compared this speech to one given by the queen contained in the State Papers Domestic.<sup>87</sup> The content of the two speeches does not match. Both speeches address the Privy Council, and the text speech refers to all of the necessary preparations

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<sup>86</sup> CSP. For., Mary, 245.

<sup>87</sup> SP 12/1/ fol. 7-8.

that must be made. If the speech occurred on November 17, 1558, as may have well have been the case, this would explain why Throckmorton wrote a letter to Elizabeth dated November 18, 1558. In that letter Throckmorton addressed several important issues to his Queen about her preparation for coming to the Tower. "There must be nothing done at the Tower at the dispatch here of for the lack of your majesty's warrant."<sup>88</sup> While she addressed the issues in her speech Elizabeth did not give anyone a warrant to act in her name.

It becomes apparent from the first two sections of text that the amalgamation argument holds firm. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton may have not written the first section, as there is no firm evidence to tie him to that section. Elizabeth wrote the second section.

Section three is significant because Neale used the reference "my brother George Throckmorton" to attribute the document's authorship to Sir Nicholas. Easily the argument could be made that the title "brother" had many connotations during this period, denoting a brother-in-law, a kinsman, or even a very close friend; as well as a blood relative. Also why had Sir Nicholas not referred to his brother Kellam Throckmorton by the title "brother?" Neale omitted an interesting mark in the manuscript when he had published its transcription. In the left-hand margin of the advice, between George and Throckmorton lies a textual note, an "x" in the air next to a short note that looks like "aspt." While the short note may mean nothing, it is interesting that the copyist used the "x" above a mistake made in his copy.<sup>89</sup> Despite Neale's assertion that the

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<sup>88</sup> SP 12/1/ fol. 2.

<sup>89</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.33b.

reference to George Throckmorton assures that the author must be Sir Nicholas, the textual evidence is not conclusive.

This section is obviously from after Mary's death, and is the most intriguing. This section of the "advice" has confused some historians about Sir Nicholas. Norman Jones has commented that Throckmorton's advice was more Catholic than any other advice written at this time. For Jones, Sir Nicholas seemed to border on "lessè majesty."<sup>90</sup> On the surface the argument appears to be correct, as the text reveals that Elizabeth's future diplomat asked that she wait until they could conference on the subject. An in-depth analysis of the text reveals something different, not so much avuncular speech as simply general advice, the recommendations and reminders followed the custom of the time. It says, "it may please your highness also to command Mr. Weston the late Queen's solicitor to attend upon your person forthwith to direct you in the law and to resolve you in doubts as may occur."<sup>91</sup> The author wrote to his queen recommending men to help her prepare for her coronation in January. "It may please you to command Honinges and Hampton, clerks of the council, to attend upon your person for the dispatch of your letters and orders. It may please you to call Mr. Cecil to exercise the room of Secretary about your person forthwith and no other until I may speak with your highness."<sup>92</sup> According to the author, the key for Elizabeth to have a happy and discreet beginning required that a wealth of dispatches be sent into the realm of England and throughout

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<sup>90</sup> Norman Jones, "Faith by Statute: The Politics of Religion in the Parliament of 1559" (Ph. D. diss., Clare College Cambridge University, 1977), 36.

<sup>91</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.

<sup>92</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.



Europe. This required that Elizabeth expediently call William Cecil to the post of principle secretary to act officially by using the seals of state.

The author further recommended to the English Queen "it may also please you that the Lord Deputy of Ireland and the council in the Marches of Wales be with speed by your letters advertised of you coming to the imperial crown of both the realms and that they be required to proclaim your highness Queen &c in the notorious places of their charge."<sup>93</sup> All of the advice the author wrote to Elizabeth appears to be routine for a new monarch to prepare for her reign, but the tone is of one who is used to being obeyed.

The author wrote to his Queen advising, "It may please you that all such as you shall admit unto your presence may find Grace in your looks and words, but in any wise it may like your highness to suspend your grants to all persons with good words for a time."<sup>94</sup> This advice also follows the standard advice that most gave their monarchs and similar to the political advice of Niccolo Machiavelli. "I refer to the flatterers with whom the courts of princes are crowded. Because men are so easily pleased with their own qualities and are so readily deceived in them, they [monarchs] have difficulty in guarding against these pests."<sup>95</sup>

The author also recommended several diplomatic actions. "There be great respects which have moved me to nominate the fore named persons to be your highness' Ambassadors presently to the princes aforesaid. I mean not to have every of them resent

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<sup>93</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.

<sup>94</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.

<sup>95</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 81.

whither now he passeth in post."<sup>96</sup> The writer already has a grand plan for diplomacy and seeks to advance it to Elizabeth. These most likely were ambassadors that negotiated a peace between England and France: Sir Nicholas Wotton, The Bishop of Ely, and Lord Cobham. The author also recommended that:

Your Highness do not discover to any of the old council and but to a chosen few others that Mr. Wroth, doctor Cope, and Henry Knollys shall treat with any princes protestant other than the King of Bohemia and that for no league of religion but because he is the Emperors son and in great reputation with the whole world, for those matters must be handled with secret instruction signed with your own hand.<sup>97</sup>

In this section the author reminded Elizabeth of the protocol that must be used to keep England safe. If Elizabeth sent her ambassadors to officially meet with any Protestant prince in the Holy Roman Empire so soon she might jeopardize the kingdom's relation with Catholic princes.

The author also recommended several people to lesser positions in the royal household including Edmund Martin and Thomas Powle, who were clerks of the Chancery to attend on the Great Seal until Elizabeth had organized the government. He also recommended Richard Weston for counsel on legal matters and for the office of the General Attorney. The author advanced Sir Edward Warner as the Constable of the Tower, "when it shall be meet to displace the other."

He recommended that either Sir Peter Mewtas or George Throckmorton supplant Sir Leonard Chamberlain, an ardent Catholic, from the island fortress of Guernsey "if he be there to be politically revoked thence so as he may not upon suspicion have

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<sup>96</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.

<sup>97</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 32b.

opportunity to practice with the French.”<sup>98</sup> Neale noted that the author, whom he assumed was Sir Nicholas, did not get his way on this issue, but Neale overemphasized the point. Only a year later Chamberlaine was removed from office.

The author shows some supreme self confidence in his when he wrote “it shall be very requisite that your highness do appoint some privy councilors to associate the old council and to sit with them; but it may please you to defer the swearing and nominating of them until I may inform you of some most necessary respects.”<sup>99</sup> This part of section three was to help Elizabeth in keep the old Privy Council in check. But for him to ask the Queen to wait until he could inform her of necessary respects would appear to be an audacious move. Unless the “necessary respects” have more to do with the information on the Marian council, or the councilors she was going to call, or qualities that a councilors should have.

For the author of the section it appears that he was involved in every aspect of the organization of Elizabeth’s government.

Item, for the appointing a meet officer in the Tower of London for the time of your coronation, for the summoning your parliament, for creating noble men and knights of the bath, for the manner and the persons of such as ought to be touched and called to reckoning for the usage of the present prisoners. For the nominating of meet officers to every place, for making you a better party in the Lords house of parliament, for appointing a meet common house to you proceedings, for fit and serviceable gentlemen to be of your privy chamber, for the appointing a meet chancellor or keeper of the seal and for nominating a meet speaker in the common house and what matters shall be meet for this parliament, for nominating apt commissioners to take a view of your whole review, debts, jewels, apparel, munitions, navy, mints, and sundry other things, it may please

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<sup>98</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol. 33b.

<sup>99</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.32b,

you to defer the resolution until I have played the fool in the discourse of them as I have done in the premise.<sup>100</sup>

The writer was aware of specific people in the Tower of London who could be utilized in Elizabeth's settlement. He knew people who were fit to be in her Chamber, and understood the inventory process that needed to be completed. The text of this "advice" demonstrates that all government offices were in discussion before Elizabeth began her reign and included in this conversation was the author. Thus, he played a role in all aspects of the formation of her regime. The key to understanding this role leaves the reader befuddled as he wrote to Elizabeth; "it may please you to defer the resolution until I have played the fool in the discourse of them as I have done in the premise."<sup>101</sup> Why was he acting the part of the "fool" as if he had no ability to judge? And if the Queen knew of this action for what purpose did it serve?

So far in our discussion of section three, the author has advised Elizabeth on matters that would help her begin her reign. He reminded her to send ambassadors, and how they should be directed. He recommended friends for relatively low positions in the court and bureaucracy and urged her to call her secretary to make all the necessary preparations.

It is highly doubtful that the author of section three could have been Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. Within the textual evidence, it appears that the author is someone of authority, someone who is used to being obeyed, possibly a member of Mary's government. Even so, the ambiguity of authorship continues into section four.

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<sup>100</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.33a.

<sup>101</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.33a.

While the pagination of the copyist's text would leave the reader to believe this section of the advice was written from one document, the text reveals two documents. Section four of the document changes from the familiar format that the author assumed earlier to a list format, showing possibilities for office with some explanation of changes. This section does not address Elizabeth either directly or indirectly. It is also difficult to believe that the same author, who recommended Cecil to be called forth a few lines earlier in section three, would place him on list of secretaries as a mere possibility in section four.<sup>102</sup>

The text reads more like a prospectus than a recommendation. Earlier in the "advice", the author recommended Weston with such words as "the man is very honest, discreet, and very well learned and the meetest man to be your highness general attorney." In this section it simply states "Weston to be General Attorney."<sup>103</sup> This pattern does not match with the pattern Throckmorton presents to Elizabeth when he advanced his cousin, Henry Middlemore, to be placed in her Privy Chamber, Sir Nicholas wrote, "I am to answer for his behavior and honesty he is endued with good qualities."<sup>104</sup> Following this pattern, Throckmorton gives an excellent reference for his cousin, as he does with all his friends.

Section four has some revealing statements that indicate a possible difference in intent and perhaps authorship. Major offices have several men who were capable of fulfilling the office, and some of the men were actually appointed to the offices. But the

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<sup>102</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.33a. After the recommendation of Sir Peter Mewtas and George Throckmorton begins the fourth section.

<sup>103</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.34a.

<sup>104</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.34b.

list appears as a probability sheet, as most of the men in the lesser offices have but one recommendation. Beyond this there are details of government contained, such as, "if a church man have the Great Seal then a man well learned in the laws of the Realm is meet to be Master of the Rolls."<sup>105</sup> This is a speculative statement and lacks any advice addressed to Elizabeth. The author further states, "My opinion is that the captainship of the Guard should be sundered from the vice-chamberlainship and thereby two of the forenamed may be conveniently placed."<sup>106</sup> This is a very specific opinion that a household reorganization would allow for another office, thus expanding the rewards Elizabeth could dispense. Again there was no mention of Elizabeth. With the specific discussion of the changing of the household office and the lists of possible lawyers and solicitors, the author of this section had to have some experience at the upper levels of government. Who could have written such a document with a highly detailed list of possible office holders?

One possibility for an author was the most senior statesman in Mary's government, William Lord Paget. Paget had gained recognition during Henry VIII's reign. As a friend and follower of Stephen Gardiner, Paget had risen through the secretarial positions at court, eventually becoming the clerk of the Privy Council and privy councilor himself by the death of Henry. David Starkey has argued that he was the key man in a change of Henry VIII's will, and essentially gave Somerset the Protectorate.

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<sup>105</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.33b.

<sup>106</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.34a.



And he served in England in a variety of high offices during both Edward's and Mary's reign.<sup>107</sup>

Barret L. Beer described Paget as a conservative who abhorred discontent and instability. "Like the Tudor monarchs whom he served, he feared rebellion and held that the maintenance of law and order was the highest priority of government. He was frequently consulted on financial questions and an articulate proponent of councilor government. On religious questions he favored caution and moderation."<sup>108</sup> Samuel Gammon, who wrote Paget's biography, demonstrated that in both political matters at home and abroad Lord Paget would not shy away from deceit.<sup>109</sup>

In a letter of the Spanish ambassador, Count De Feria, discovered by Simon Adams, there is further evidence that Paget was ambitious at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. Count De Feria visited Paget, Cardinal Pole, and Elizabeth and reported back to King Philip II, three days before Mary's death. He related to King Philip that Paget "is full of ambition and as deeply enmeshed in affairs as he used to be when younger and healthier... Either he wanted to be believed that he will play an important role in affairs or else he will actually do so." De Feria further noted that Paget was aware of some of the people who were to occupy positions of government. In another portion of the letter De

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<sup>107</sup> David Starkey, "Intimacy and Innovation," In *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987), 117.

<sup>108</sup> Barrett L. Beer, "The Letters of William, Lord Paget of Beaudesert, 1547-1563," in *Camden Miscellany XXV* 4<sup>th</sup> ser., vol. 13 (1974): 2.

<sup>109</sup> Samuel Gammon, *Statesman and Schemer: William, First Lord Paget-Tudor Minister* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1973), 250-51.

Feria noted that Elizabeth had been in contact with Lord Paget and "was on good terms with him."<sup>110</sup>

This tells us that Paget was well informed of who might become members of Elizabeth's government. Having been an official since Henry VIII's reign, Paget had both the skill and leadership to recommend men to the new queen. Hence there are ten recommendations for office of the Keeper of the Great Seal, three candidates for the office of Lord Steward, three candidates for Lord Chamberlain, and six nominations for the office of Vice Chamberlain. This reflects the information given in De Feria's letter. Paget knew all the great offices that were filled but only advised Elizabeth on four important offices. He had even written Elizabeth at the beginning of her reign advising about the kingdom. Whoever wrote this section knew the household and government far better than Throckmorton. The descriptions and recommendations to split several offices, and the deep description of law, moves the selection away from Sir Nicholas. It would take senior-statesmen such as Paget or another like him for the authorship.<sup>111</sup> Section four contains no advice to Queen Elizabeth. It does, however, reveal that the author had great and intimate understanding of the inner workings of Tudor government.

The fifth section of document was identified as having been written sometime before Queen Mary's death. Throckmorton no doubt wrote this section of the document. Sir John Neale identified Sir Nicholas through the textual reference to his cousin Henry Middlemore. He also admonished Elizabeth in a dispatch on November 18, 1558, trying

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<sup>110</sup> Rodriguez-Salgado and Simon Adams, eds "The Count of Feria's Dispatch to Philip II of 14 November 1558." In *Camden Miscellany XXVIII* 4<sup>th</sup> ser. vol. 29 (1984): 334-35.

<sup>111</sup> Haynes, 210.

to place Middlemore into the Privy Chamber. All attempts failed, because Elizabeth appointed primarily her family members to the Privy Chamber.<sup>112</sup>

The text of the fifth section is quite revealing in that we can date the document to just a few weeks before Mary's death and it reveals Throckmorton's true pattern of giving advice. It is meet to discuss the main points of this section. After the recommendation of his cousin Throckmorton breaks into his advice. Here he recommends just two men for positions, Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Richard Warner, who served in the Mint with Throckmorton.

He reminds the Queen of three aspects pertaining to the instructions to ambassadors, a second secretary and the calling of some councilors to use as dispatchers between Hatfield House and London at the time of Mary's death. Then Throckmorton wishes to discuss Mary's privy council. Here Throckmorton wanted only to act as an informer to Elizabeth.

Throckmorton told Elizabeth that he did not want to recommend anyone for a particular office because "places will be void and require ministers."<sup>113</sup> He knew the future Queen would not follow her sister in keeping so many offices. Some offices would no longer be used. An example of this is the Lord Privy Seal, which was used in Mary's reign but never during Elizabeth's.

We should not assume that Throckmorton wanted to be the second secretary as some historians have derived from this section of the document. "The second concerneth

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<sup>112</sup> Pam Wright, "A change in direction: the ramifications of a female household, 1558-1603" in *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987) 147-71.

<sup>113</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.34b.

the placing of another Secretary together with Mr. Cecil."<sup>114</sup> Sir Nicholas most likely wanted to advise the Queen on the benefits or pitfalls of a second secretary. He knew that several wanted the Queen to hearken back to Edward's reign or even late Henry's reign to a time when two secretaries conducting the monarch's business. I would argue that Throckmorton knew the capability of Cecil and therefore "second" may have referred as a secretary to the Privy Council a position given to Sir William Petre.

The date of document is revealed in that the first councilor to be discussed is Cardinal Pole, who died just hours after Queen Mary. The rest of the list is itemized with the names of men that made up the core of the dying Queen's council. Throckmorton wanted to come to Elizabeth's presence and speak personally about these men. The final importance of this section will be discussed later. But there is a sequel to this advice contained in a document that Throckmorton wrote to the Queen on November 18, 1558.<sup>115</sup>

This letter noted that he had fulfilled his orders for the closing of ports. It is interesting that Throckmorton only sought to advise Elizabeth on the Mint, which office he held in Edward's reign. This also fits with his recommending his cousin to the Privy Chamber, an office he held during her brother's reign. His broad general advice is the same as in section five; that she appoint someone to run the affairs until Elizabeth comes to London.

Returning to section five of Throckmorton's 'advice,' Sir Nicholas closed his letter to the then Princess with some important suggestions.

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<sup>114</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.34b.

<sup>115</sup> SP 12/1 fol. 2.

And to The intent until the funeral be past the Realm may perceive you will use the advice of many and the wisest, it may like Your Grace that no oath be ministered to any nor no nomination be had or used for a time privy councilors; and nevertheless it may like you to appoint these hereafter ensuing to talk of such your affaires as you are pleased to be attendant as occasions shall be offered from time to time. It shall not be meet that either the old or new should wholly understand what you mean, but to use them as instruments to serve yourself with: for some be meet to countenance your service and some meet to give advise and serve indeed.<sup>116</sup>

The queen utilized the last section of this advice for her speech given at Hatfield in which reminded the lords present that their advice was welcomed but on a limited basis "and for counsel and advice I shall accept you of my nobility, and such others of you the rest as in consultation I shall think meet and shortly appoint, to the which also, with their advice, I will join to their aid, and for ease of their burden, other meet for my service."<sup>117</sup> The similarities do not guarantee that she accepted Sir Nicholas's advice. It does, however, demonstrate that his advice was based upon sound political ideas. It also reveals that the "advice" was standard advice that all councilors gave their monarch.

The analysis of this document has demonstrated that old idea, which touted that Sir Nicholas Throckmorton tried to usurp the Secretaryship from Sir William Cecil by giving Elizabeth counsel, has no foundation. Four of the five sections of this advice cannot be definitively attributed to Sir Nicholas.

When, in April 1559, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton received his commission to be the ambassador to France, it came as a surprise. He wrote to Cecil requesting a more complete set of instructions than the one that Elizabeth had sent. For Neale this was quite an unexpected conclusion to such a political device. In his mind, Throckmorton was

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<sup>116</sup> C.C.C.C MS. 543, fol.35b..

<sup>117</sup> SP 12/1/ fol.8.

wrangling for position in Elizabeth's new government and anything less than Privy Councilor demonstrated the Queen's displeasure in the matter.

The reason for Neale's anticlimactic despair belies the fact that Sir Nicholas never quit advising the English Queen. In June 1559, he wrote Elizabeth about the dangerous position of the prominent Protestants in France, and the situation in Scotland. He wrote, "it may therefore please your majesty to be informed, that (in my poor opinion, saving your Highness' grave judgment) considering what Knox is able to do in Scotland; which is very much, all this turmoil there being by him stir, his former faults were forgotten, and that no means be used to annoy him for the same."<sup>118</sup> Throckmorton continued on that it would be a benefit to see Knox's wife and allow them to gain some favor in her majesty's eye "which may work some what good purpose" Qualifying his bold entreatment over a man whose writing had so greatly offended her, Sir Nicholas deferred to her "I doubt not, your Majesty can consider better than I."<sup>119</sup>

Indeed, Throckmorton always deferred to Elizabeth's judgment with such words of praise. Earlier in the same correspondence he wrote on another issue "your Majesty by your wisdom can consider."<sup>120</sup> This was Throckmorton's style, to give advice and to defer to the Queen. For Elizabeth she consistently wrote during this period "Trusty and well beloved" and during these times she would sometimes continue "Your service is very acceptable to us: wherein we doubt not but ye will continue, and so shall ye find in

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<sup>118</sup> Forbes, 130. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, June 13, 1559.

<sup>119</sup> Forbes, 127. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, June 13, 1559.

<sup>120</sup> Forbes, 127. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, June 13, 1559.



us the continuance of our singular favor towards you.”<sup>121</sup> He had found favor in the Queen’s eyes as he had admired her strength and wisdom.

Throckmorton’s “advice” to Queen Elizabeth contains nothing that would have earned him a spot on the Privy Council. The sections we have identified as authored by him contain only small recommendations of an able and willing servant. The most Throckmorton hoped for was to serve his Queen. He did proffer advice. In his letter of November 18, 1558, he offered to advise her on possible reforms to the Mint, something he had experience in managing. His part in Elizabeth’s accession was small, and the role Sir Nicholas had played in the previous Tudors’ reigns, making this his hope for Elizabeth’s reign as well.

Why then did Elizabeth choose this man to become the ambassador to France during the most dangerous time in her reign? As in the case of the latter half of section three, whose author still remains unidentified, the writer noted the scarcity of learned men. Previously Sir William Paget and Sir Nicholas Wotton had dominated the position, but both were aged men at this time and naturally no longer able to serve. Throckmorton’s service to Mary as a spy and plot spoiler qualified him for intelligence gathering, and the legendary case where he was acquitted for treason proved he was a master of rhetoric, something respected in politics. And at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign he proved himself useful to serve his Queen.

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<sup>121</sup> Forbes, 156. The Queen to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, July 10, 1559.

### CHAPTER III

#### DIPLOMATIC CULTURE

Garrett Mattingly described diplomacy as an affair of honor and deception. This oxymoron developed from the dual diplomatic purpose of amity intertwined with trickery. Diplomatic agents had ulterior motives: As they consistently affirmed their majesty's honorable words of friendship to the host monarch, they also sought to find political weaknesses that their sovereign could exploit to his or her own advantage. This suggests that there was a cultural aspect involved in diplomacy. Every nation that participated in diplomacy engaged in a conversation that outwardly contained all the "right and honorable" actions but inwardly meant something else. In order to understand how policy formation occurred during the five-year period from 1559-1564, this chapter will investigate the life, education, and cultural formation of ambassadors through the letters of one diplomat, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. Throckmorton is essential in this study because there are numerous documents that exist from his missions in France. He provides an important example of the complex and arduous work which diplomats engaged in, and how their work influenced the monarch.

In the first ten years of her reign, Elizabeth created approximately 88 diplomatic missions. Thirty percent of those missions were to France and twenty percent to Scotland. Compare that to Henry VIII's first ten years where only twenty-two percent of his missions were sent to France and nine percent to Scotland.<sup>122</sup> With Spain still tenuously allied with the English, Elizabeth had to quickly diminish the threat of a

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<sup>122</sup>Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990).

French invasion of England. The new English Queen launched a very apt and experienced, albeit unorganized, diplomatic corps to help her secure the crown.

Regrettably, England had no bureaucratic department that trained men to formulate and execute policy. Instead Elizabeth enlisted a haphazard group of men to represent her abroad.

Early Elizabethan diplomats were an interesting mix of servants, ranging from Sir Nicholas Wotton, one of the eldest man in service, to Ralph Sadler, a bureaucrat held over from Henry VIII's reign; to Christopher Mundt, a German first recruited in Henry VIII's reign. Wotton began his career as a diplomat in the service of Henry VIII, and was held the Deanery of both York and Canterbury since 1541.<sup>123</sup> He served as diplomat and resident ambassador for Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, and was no doubt a revered man who survived the winds of religious change. Likewise, Ralph Sadler was considered one of the best men for service into Scotland. He began his service in Henry VIII's reign, as first a secretary and then diplomat to Scotland, a mission he reprised in both Edward VI's and Elizabeth's reigns.<sup>124</sup> Christopher Mundt who a visitor to the court of England, was employed by Henry VIII to represent "Henry's view on a General Council of the Church, a League of Protestant princes and proposed German embassy to England. Later he would serve in negotiations with the Anne of Cleves match." After Henry VIII's death

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<sup>123</sup> Norman L. Jones, *The English Reformation: Religious and Cultural Adaptation* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002) 68.

<sup>124</sup> Arthur J. Slavin, *Politics and Profit: A Study of Sir Ralph Sadler 1507-1547* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

Mundt was continuously employed by letter to serve diplomatic mission until his death.<sup>125</sup>

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was one of the men sent early in Elizabeth's reign to France. Some historians presume that Throckmorton gained this post for the advice he gave the Queen at the beginning of her reign.<sup>126</sup> This advice was only one aspect of what qualified him for service. Sir Nicholas's diplomatic appointment was based on several other qualifications. England did not have a school to train each diplomat in the country of their choice. Instead, the art, or culture, of diplomacy matured from a larger pan-European movement that emphasized ancient Roman and Greek culture commonly known as the Renaissance. Mattingly and Jacob Burckhardt viewed Italian city-states as the leaders in the cultural revolution. Thus, one key to unlocking the enigma of early Elizabethan diplomats is to understand their education and experience before they entered into an ambassadorship.<sup>127</sup>

Most Elizabethan diplomats had been trained from their youth as humanist. This multifaceted education was composed of, but not limited to, language training, rhetorical studies, and writing. Latin and Greek were the hallmark languages of the humanist education, and although it is unlikely that Sir Nicholas knew Greek, his consistent use of Latin in his letters demonstrated his mastery of the Roman language.<sup>128</sup> French and

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<sup>125</sup> Esther Hildebrandt, "Christopher Mont, Anglo-German Diplomat," *Sixteenth Century Journal* vol. 15, no. 3 (Autumn, 1984), 281.

<sup>126</sup> A. L. Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 26.

<sup>127</sup> Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (London: Penguin, 1990).

<sup>128</sup> Throckmorton always referred to a Latin story of one variety or another to illustrate the current position of his service.

Italian were desired for travel and education. Not coincidentally, mastering these languages qualified men to serve at court in England and abroad.

Renaissance education carried on the traditional elements of the medieval learning namely the "trivium and quadrivium." The trivium level of learning was founded upon three elements reading, writing, and rhetoric. Rhetoric was one of the most significant aspects of the trivium education. Walter Ong noted, "rhetoric is the art developed by a literate culture to formalize the oral communication skills which had helped determine the structure of thought and society before literacy."<sup>129</sup> This level of education was often gleaned from Latin texts such as Cicero.

Most students of Latin during the early Tudor period learned the language by translating texts of Cicero.<sup>130</sup> Within the context of Cicero's works on politics, his trials of the Catiline conspiracy provided readers their primary experience in rhetoric as Richard McKeon noted "rhetorician of the Middle ages followed Cicero or suggestions found in his works when they discussed civil philosophy as the subject matter of rhetoric."<sup>131</sup>

This ability to debate matters was a prized attribute of a courtier. Sir Thomas Hoby noted to Lord Hastings in his translation of Castiglione's work *The Courtier*, that "both Cicero and Castilio profess, they follow not any certain appointed order of precepts or rules, as is used in the instruction of youth, but call to rehearsal, matters debated in their times to and fro in the disputation of most eloquent men and excellent wits in every

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<sup>129</sup> Walter J. Ong, "Tudor Writings on Rhetoric," *Studies in Renaissance* vol. 15 (1968) : 39-69.

<sup>130</sup> Robert Whittington, *Syntaxis* 1534. [STC 25547], This text is just one of a continuing publication of grammar books that are contemporaneous with Throckmorton's life.

<sup>131</sup> Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Speculum*, vol. 17, no. 1 (Jan, 1942), 4.

worthy quality." Behind the Roman politician, the translator advocated Castiglione as the next of the great orators. So prized was *The Courtier* that Castiglione was invited to England to be enrolled as a knight of the order of the bath.<sup>132</sup> Thomas Wilson noted in his dedication of *The Art of Rhetoric* that Pyrrhus King of the Epirotes [sic] confessed "that Cineas through the eloquence of his tongue, won more cities unto him, then ever himself should else have been able by force to subdue."<sup>133</sup>

The skill of rhetoric also extended into writing techniques. Diplomats in Tudor England received training in speaking and writing. Composing letters that accurately portrayed the thoughts and perspectives of the hosting kingdom were crucial to a diplomat's success. He had to communicate news clearly, and advise in a fashion that gave his monarch a full view of the current situation. The monarch's position is aptly summed up by a Spanish ambassador who stated to Philip II "your Majesty is like a blind man who has excellent understanding but can only see the exterior objects... through the eyes of those who describe them to you."<sup>134</sup> Diplomats were the eyes and ears of their monarch. Mary Dewar noted that on several occasions Sir Thomas Smith was censured at court, with Elizabeth complaining, "that his letters were too long, too tedious but still lacked all the real information needed."<sup>135</sup> The success of diplomacy rested on the diplomat's ability to communicate the state of the world around him, to see beyond the

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<sup>132</sup> Baldassare Castiglione, *The Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, reprint (New York: AMS Press, 1967) 7.

<sup>133</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, 5. [STC 25803]

<sup>134</sup> Quoted in Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Phillip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) 58.

<sup>135</sup> Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 100.



façade of pomp and ceremony at court, and perceive the real meaning of the fine things said at a foreign court.

As language and rhetoric were the cornerstones of diplomatic culture, logic and political philosophy provided the cement. Students were expected to become competent in these topics and use them to build competence in political understanding. For Sir Nicholas, no evidence exists that he had received any formal schooling; thereby his education came from life experience rather than formal education.

Although Sir Nicholas never attended a university or other formal schooling, he received an excellent education at the hands of the Parrs. Sir Nicholas, a cousin to Queen Catherine and her brother the Marquis of Northampton, served both notables.<sup>136</sup> He mastered French while serving in the household of Henry Fitzroy the Duke of Richmond. His consistent use of Latin in his diplomatic letters signified his mastery of the language.

Outside of scholastic education, diplomats had to be well trained in decorum. A common practice among the more affluent or prominent families was to send their children into "service," meaning into the families of peers or other prominent households. Sending children to be reared in household of others served two purposes. First, it built up a relationship between the two families. Second, it taught etiquette and courtly behavior.

Robert Mueller noted that Sir Francis Knollys, a senior official in Elizabeth's royal household, received his education at a young age in the household of Henry VIII

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<sup>136</sup> Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 10, 13.

while he served as a henchman. There the king required the young gentlemen to know all the rules of proper conduct, "with its emphasis on courtesy and etiquette."<sup>137</sup>

Throckmorton began his service in the household of the Duke of Richmond as a page, where he learned etiquette and protocol. The exact details of what service he performed are largely unknown but several contemporaneously published works on manners provide some insight. Hugh Rhodes, in his *Book of Nurture, or, School of Good Manners*, described the proper ways to serve knights, lords and others. "First ye must be diligent to know your Masters pleasure and to know the ordinance and custom of his house; for diverse masters are of sundry conditions and appetites."<sup>138</sup> During his time as a page, Throckmorton must have learned the intricacies of service that prepared him for other positions.

Later Sir Nicholas became the steward in the household of William Parr, the Marquis of Northampton, and then his sister Queen Catherine Parr. As steward, Throckmorton administrated the affairs of a nobleman's house where he oversaw the household of the lord to ensure his master's comfort. With this rise in the ranks, Sir Nicholas entered into more demanding service. During his service to the Marquis, who enjoyed great prestige in the court of Henry VIII and played a significant role in the "rough wooing," Henry VIII negotiated the marriage of his son, Edward to the infant monarch Mary Stuart. Mary of Guise, the Queen's mother did not agree to this match and

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<sup>137</sup> Robert J. Mueller, "Service to the Sovereign: A Prosopographical Study of the Royal Household, Court and Privy Council of Elizabeth I of England through an Examination of the Careers of Sir Francis Knollys, Sir James Croft and Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford." (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1993) 79.

<sup>138</sup> Hugh Rhodes, *The Book of Nurture, or, School of Good Manners for Men, Servants, and Children: with Stans Puer ad Mensam*, 1577, [STC 20958] 6.

sent her child to France where she was betrothed to Dauphine. Throckmorton and his brother Kellam led Parr's men on several important raids with distinction.<sup>139</sup> For his service in Scotland, Sir Nicholas was knighted. Parr then placed him in the royal household, gaining him the enviable position of Groom of the Privy Chamber to Edward VI. Service in the royal household marked the pinnacle of his informal education and prepared Sir Nicholas for future royal service.

In addition to this informal education, Throckmorton learned about the political world through his work in Parliament. Coming from a prominent and influential family, Sir Nicholas was elected to Parliament several times, and his experience at that institution instilled in him a sense of importance for law and custom.

Political and literary historians have long debated the influence of *The Prince* on Elizabethan politics. While the text of *The Prince* was not based on a new political philosophy, but rather advice that had been given to monarchs for centuries, but the label of "Machiavellian" existed. Its exact meaning is somewhat unclear. In Edward's reign, sometime after the overthrow of the Duke of Somerset by the Duke of Northumberland, Throckmorton speculated to his friend, Richard Morrison, that even though Somerset had been treated leniently he would try to attain power again. His prediction proved right. Morrison wrote Sir Nicholas, "I must needs confess, you saw deeper into the Duke of Somerset's nature than I did and guessed rightlier of his doings than I could. As you were a Machiavellist and did think it best to mistrust the worst."<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> This was the term used to refer to the war that ensued when the Scots broke their agreement with England over the Marriage of Mary Stuart to Prince Edward.

<sup>140</sup> Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, 72.

The extent of Throckmorton's political knowledge is unknown, but we do know that he zealously devoured learning. A collection of his books still exists at Oxford, and these works are heavily annotated. While what exactly he read is still unclear, there are a few hints as to some of his readings. From his court case, it was obvious that he had perused civil laws, and he also studied the politics of other countries. In his efforts during the beginning of the Newhaven expedition, he sent his man Hawes to recover some of his books to discover a proclamation of Henry II of France.<sup>141</sup>

Because of his involvement in Wyatt's Rebellion, some historians have condemned Throckmorton as a religious zealot bent on bringing war between an England and France who had barely settled on peace. Alternatively, historian Garrett Mattingly saw the ambassador as a "sensitive and ardent intriguer."<sup>142</sup> There is some merit to his observation, as Throckmorton skillfully manipulated the French Protestant and Catholic factions for Elizabeth's purposes. Part of Throckmorton's reputation evolved out of events that had the trappings of Protestant fervor, and each event had religion as an undercurrent of its importance. So, what were Throckmorton's views toward religion, and how did they affect his advancement of policy to Elizabeth? The evidence seems to suggest that religion may be overrated as a motivating factor his political judgments. Throckmorton was an ambassador first and a Protestant second.

A review of his family helps make this point. Throckmorton's own family was divided in their religious beliefs. His father, Sir George Throckmorton, supported Cardinal Wolsey even after his political decline. Author David Starkey contends, "Sir

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<sup>141</sup> CSP, For., Eliz. William Hawes to Throckmorton July 15, 1562, 163.

<sup>142</sup> Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 170.

George became the most outspoken parliamentary critic of Henry VIII's divorce.

When the King asked him in person why he opposed his remarriage to Anne Boleyn, Throckmorton replied by accusing the King of sleeping with both Anne 's sister and her mother. The double charge of incest stunned Henry, who was rarely lost for words, into silence".<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, Sir Nicholas's uncle, Michael, was an assistant to Cardinal Pole and took flight with him when Henry exiled him from England. Several of Throckmorton's siblings remained faithful to the Catholic faith without any hint of his disgust for their religion. While there is no doubt Protestantism influenced Sir Nicholas, it was not his sole political motivating factor.

At the beginning of Mary Tudor's reign, Sir Nicholas informed Mary of Edward's death and received the keepership of Brigstock as a handsome reward.<sup>144</sup> This he did even though his wife had been placed in the household of Lady Jane Grey. But he soon became disenchanted with Mary, as she seemed to be a pawn to her uncle, Emperor Charles V. Queen Mary had agreed to a match with King Philip II of Spain. The match would make England a puppet state to Spain, an idea that Throckmorton and others disliked.

Her proposed marriage sparked the secret intrigue that generated Wyatt's Rebellion, and Sir Nicholas was embroiled in the entire affair. However, his political education helped Throckmorton as he faced the executioner's ax in 1555 for his involvement in the Rebellion. His incarceration in the tower lasted fifty-eight days, and then he was tried for treason. Facing death for his actions, the courts stonewalled any

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<sup>143</sup>David Starkey, *Elizabeth: Apprenticeship* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), 245.

<sup>144</sup>Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 19.



possible defense; he was not permitted legal council or legal books, or witnesses to speak on his behalf. Yet, the defendant successfully argued that he could not be tried for treason under the Six Articles of Henry VIII's reign because they had been repealed.<sup>145</sup>

But the Rebellion had less to do with religion and more to do with Queen Mary's marriage to a foreigner and the heir apparent to the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>146</sup> In 1556, after his famous acquittal, Throckmorton spied for Mary and fought under her husband's banner at the battle of San Quentin.

As Queen Elizabeth's ambassador, Throckmorton well understood the quagmire that religion presented for Elizabeth and her court. Indeed, the 1559 Settlement of Religion left many questions about the Queen's beliefs. The settlement satisfied neither the English Catholics, because it renewed the break with Rome, nor the Protestants as the liturgy reflected the Catholic belief. King Edward VI faced similar difficulties with religion during the latter part of his reign, which was "characterized more by division than by such inclusiveness."<sup>147</sup> To ignore religion as a factor in the conflict would diminish its importance; it served as a unifying ideal to allow alliances to be formed beyond England's borders, but the motivation for those alliances originated out of a different need for the English. England was in peril of being invaded by foreign powers over the issue of Protestantism, and Elizabeth needed to manipulate foreign powers to maintain the sovereignty of England. As the eyes and ears of his monarch,

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<sup>145</sup> Annabel Patterson, *The Trial of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton*, (Toronto, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1998) 56. This work should be used sparingly as a biographical source, as the introduction contains some errors.

<sup>146</sup> The greatest protest was against Spain itself, as Englishman did not want their country to become a puppet state of Spain or the Holy Roman Empire.

<sup>147</sup> Jennifer Loach, *Edward VI*, eds. George Bernard and Penry Williams (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 116.



Throckmorton found opportunities that Elizabeth could use to succeed in securing her borders.

By 1558, forty-three year old Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was trying to maintain his career. This leads to the question of why Elizabeth chose Sir Nicholas to be her diplomat in France? Unlike Cecil, of whom Queen Elizabeth gave a rousing speech signifying her confidence in him, Throckmorton's pick is less certain. He and Elizabeth had known each other from the time she spent with Queen Catherine. She, like her brother, may have admired his qualities. Throckmorton also had many friends who were in the Queen's confidence that would eagerly vouch for him. And, at the beginning of her reign he was conducting her business as she had commanded him.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's position as a diplomat may have resulted from his success as a spy for Mary in France. The Queen had an extra bonus with Sir Nicholas; secret intelligence. He had the ability to gather information from anyone. During his trial he set the judges on their heels when he caught them in a lie. Likewise, Throckmorton had an uncanny ability to gather intelligence and use it. After the capture of the Prince of Condé, the Duke of Guise invited Sir Nicholas to dine with him and gather some sort of information as to the intentions of Elizabeth. Guise hoped to corner Throckmorton with his rhetoric, but found himself set on his heels.

"When the Duke spoke of the offers made to the Prince [Condé], I answered that the Prince esteemed them as traps to beguile them, as appeared by their late proceedings at Paris, when they secretly practiced to observe nothing that should be concluded with the Prince. At this the Duke was somewhat offended, and marveled how [I] knew it."<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> CSP, For. Eliz. 1563, 9. Throckmorton to the Queen Jan. 3, 1563.

Here the Duke hoped to somehow convince Throckmorton that the Prince had been the aggressor by not keeping his word to the Queen Mother of France, Catherine de Medici. But Throckmorton had already discovered their secret plots against the prince and could place the blame for the conflict squarely on the Catholic Guise faction.

The foundation of diplomacy rested heavily on treaties. They bound nations to each other and created a role for ambassadors. These men had to ensure that the countries kept every aspect of both ancient and modern treaties. If a monarch defaulted on their covenants, a rival kingdom could justify itself in any action. An example can be seen in 1559, as Throckmorton discussed Mary Stuart with the French, saying that she styled herself as the Queen of England even though, by parliamentary statute, the then Queen Dauphiness of France had no claim to the throne. When confronted by Sir Nicholas, Constable Montmorency quickly retorted that Elizabeth styled herself the Queen of France. But Throckmorton reminded the Constable that quartering the arms of England was an odious sign against friendship between the two realms.<sup>149</sup>

Throckmorton received his first commission as resident ambassador to France in May 1559. He was to accompany a peace commission down to France and take up residency there, with the instruction "after having accomplished the purposes for which he is associated with the Lord Howard of Effingham and Dr. Wotton, he shall continue as ambassador resident with the French King, and in this capacity is to promote the increase of amity between the two realms."<sup>150</sup> His mission was to be one of friendship, but embedded in the instructions were additional orders: "In the transmission of intelligence

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<sup>149</sup> Forbes, Throckmorton to the Privy Council, June 21, 1559, 139.

<sup>150</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1559, 241.

he shall send duplicates of all letters of importance, either by the merchants of Rouen, or Dieppe, or by the way of Germany, from Geneva or Strasburg."<sup>151</sup> These instructions were the key to his service. Because he was sent only to Henry II, he could not operate outside the bounds set in his warrant. But Throckmorton's orders were vague and he was left with many unanswered questions concerning his service. He received no instructions on how to behave towards the Dauphin and Dauphiness of France or the Cardinal of Lorraine, and later he begged the Queen to send him the directions needed.

Throckmorton's call had come somewhat unexpectedly, considering that he did not discuss the matter with Elizabeth, and had no idea what was contained in the letters he bore to France.<sup>152</sup> Cecil responded to this minor crisis by reminding Sir Nicholas that he was the resident of the French King. "He can have no resident or permanent charge with the Dauphin." The resident ambassador had no authority to hang around the court of Dauphin. Cecil also notified him that "the letter which ye have to them is but a recommendation of you, to give you credit hereafter in anything you do with them."<sup>153</sup> Elizabeth's secretary was further informed that if anything had to do with Scotland, Elizabeth would notify him and he would pass it on to the Dauphin. Likewise, he had no particular charge to the Guises other than to find and kindle a relationship with them. The bounds of his service were set, he was to continually affirm peace with Henry II and remain at his court.

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<sup>151</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1559, 242.

<sup>152</sup> Forbes, 88. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 10, 1559.

<sup>153</sup> Forbes, 89. Sir William Cecil to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, May 11, 1559.

The ambassador could not operate beyond the service that the Queen outlined in his formal instructions. It is also important to understand that Sir Nicholas's service could not be altered by anyone, except Elizabeth herself. Throckmorton was not England's diplomat, or Cecil's. He was the Queen's. In every case when Sir Nicholas's orders were altered, it was by Elizabeth's letter. Throckmorton's ability to serve well encompassed significant aspects including personal finances and the reporting of news and other notable information.

To ease the financial burden of establishing an embassy, Throckmorton was sent to France with a loan of £1000. Some of the money may have been for buying information, or buying gifts for members of the French court or for Elizabeth. But there was no other financial help beyond this one time loan that Throckmorton received. Running an embassy brought many diplomats to the verge of financial ruin. Garrett Mattingly pointed out that a diplomat was paid at a daily rate, but generally reimbursed at the end of his mission. So, much of a diplomat's earnings were spent on living expenses, such as quarters and meals. But a diplomat also employed numerous people about his person. Sir Nicholas had several secretaries working with him that were also paid through his per diem expenses. This often taxed the personal resources of each ambassador. Throckmorton had even more difficulties. As he trusted only men from his household in England, he often employed them as servants and spies in France. Lady Throckmorton complained to her husband as she sent the last man of her household to France to help Sir Nicholas.

In addition to employees, noblemen often sent their children to embassies to learn to further their education. Throckmorton's letters were filled with reports to friends,

including the Queen's principal secretary, about the progress of their children. Jeffrey Platt who has research Elizabethan diplomatic service, has commented, "Such guests burdened the embassy's finances and also took a great deal of the ambassador's time."<sup>154</sup>

Gary Bell takes issues with the claims of the adverse financial state that the Queen's ambassadors were subjected. He stated, "the ruination that most diplomatic correspondents claimed would occur, and that most historians assumed did occur, simply did not."<sup>155</sup> His view was based upon the amount of money that each ambassador was paid and how often. He also claims that often diplomats received lucrative positions in government. In Throckmorton's case Bell's assessment does not adequately scrutinize the nature of the embassy, or the external circumstance involved in diplomacy such as extra men for certain missions, the cost of informants, and the expenses of visitors, such as Cecil's son. Nor does it adequately address other issues of purchasing for the Queen who was frequently late in paying. While diplomats were promised much, and likely received much, they had to pay for the day-to-day means of their employment out of their own pockets until the Queen compensated them. To Elizabeth's discredit the financial distress of her diplomats reflected poorly on her wealth and power.

Regardless of their compensation, diplomats were required to be competent in the job they were sent to do. Those prompted into royal service had to be proficient enough to fulfill their duty. Elizabeth expected the very best from them not only before her person, but among foreign courts as well. While the function and culture of European courts during the mid-sixteenth century still remains clouded in uncertainty, David

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<sup>154</sup> Jeffrey Platz, "Elizabethan Diplomatic Service," *Journal of Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* vol. 9 (1988) : 96.

<sup>155</sup> Gary Bell, "Elizabethan Diplomatic Compensation: Its Nature and Variety," 2.



Starkey has led the charge in court studies. Starkey saw the court of Henry VIII as a powerful political center. Gentlemen of the Privy chamber formed an elite group of friends who catered to the king's person. For Starkey, power in Henry's court was not based upon birth, but rather access to the monarch's person.<sup>156</sup>

Whether in the court of France or England, resident ambassadors were distant from the host monarch. Keeping foreign diplomats away from court served a simple purpose, security. At court, letters of state importance were read, and general business of the nation was openly reported. The king of France demonstrated power by maintaining who could be in his presence, and thereby controlled the general philosophy and mood of court. For diplomats, no foreign policy or treaty was ever negotiated at court; the court served ambassadors as a stage to affirm their sovereign amity, to gather intelligence and to perceive power. The host monarch was then the audience who tried to perceive the meaning.

Meaning is the weapon of all diplomats and ministers involved in complex negotiations or accusations. It is amazing that letters from Sir Nicholas to Elizabeth's councilors or letters from the councilors to Throckmorton, describe, at times, a court in fluidity. Since 1560, Robert Dudley had won the affection of Elizabeth, Cecil had asked Throckmorton to write to Elizabeth and sway her from the Dudley Match. Early in 1561 when Cecil wrote to Throckmorton "writings remain, and coming into adverse hands may be sinisterly interpreted;" Cecil could not openly tell Sir Nicholas that his attempts to keep the Queen from marrying had been mistreated, Cecil could only offer the

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<sup>156</sup> David Starkey, "Intimacy and Innovation," 83.



following advice for the diplomat's interpretation, "contend not where victory cannot be had."<sup>157</sup>

The French used ambiguity of meaning to stall the signing of the Treaty of Edinburgh in 1560. While Cecil received praise for negotiating the treaty with Scotland, it was up to Sir Nicholas to push for its ratification by Francis II, King of France. Francis' chief minister, the Cardinal of Lorraine, emphatically opposed the document that legitimized the Protestant faith in Scotland. To stall, the Cardinal perused every aspect of the document and tried to find a possible loophole in the treaty. This attempt was done in hopes that the explanation would offend the King of France and cause him not to sign or, at the very least, to create chaos within the text of the accord that rendered the text useless in meaning.<sup>158</sup> Ultimately the French won out by refusing to sign the Treat of Edinburgh.

The news that ambassadors sent to their homeland was invaluable to monarchs, as it kept them in the know of what other kingdoms were planning. It was also a point of prestige. Geoffrey Parker noted that Philip II of Spain had such a command of the post system in Europe that he would often times receive information before visiting ambassadors could inform him.<sup>159</sup> Throckmorton, not yet departed from England, wrote his first letter of news from France in which he recommended the bearer to Cecil to relate the news of religious matters in France, and current movements of important men. Moreover, news bits were sometimes interesting, such as Throckmorton reporting on the

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<sup>157</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1560-1561, 498. Sir William Cecil to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Jan. 15, 1561.

<sup>158</sup> Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, 218.

<sup>159</sup> Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Phillip II*, 48-9.

health condition of Henry II who "having much exercised himself at tennis and other pastime, was driven into a disease wherewith he hath heretofore been used to be troubled, called by them vertigo."<sup>160</sup> Such news did not advance diplomacy or even give strategy, but found favor with court audiences.

Most of Throckmorton's letters to the English court conveyed military intelligence and advice. In one early letter he informed Cecil that, "fifty thousand persons in Gascoigne, Guyen, Anjou, Poitiers, Normandy and Main, have subscribed to a confession in religion conformable to that of Geneva."<sup>161</sup> Such news would have interest to Elizabeth and her privy councilors. Faction, whether based upon friendships or ideology, was a powerful destabilizing factor. Likewise, Protestantism in Catholic France offered the Queen an opportunity to exploit the French Huguenot faction for her benefit.

Accuracy was vital in these dispatches. Names and events were crucial. One of the men sent to England as a hostage of the Treaty of Chateau Cambresis in 1559, was named "Nantuouilet." Unfortunately, Throckmorton sent ahead a message of that man's name as De Nesle, and the mistake damaged the ambassador's credibility. Sir Nicholas begged Cecil "I shall beseech you to excuse the matter as you can, (being but one name written for another, th'effect indeed being satisfied and performed) and to help, incase any thing be said therein, to make the best of it."<sup>162</sup> There was no rebuff from court, but the mistake demonstrated that in such important matters diplomats could not afford to be sloppy in their work.

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<sup>160</sup>Forbes, 92. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 15, 1559.

<sup>161</sup> Forbes, 92. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 15, 1559.

<sup>162</sup> Forbes, 125. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, June 13, 1559.

Throckmorton's duty was also to report the handling of officers at the French Court. This specifically included reporting gifts given to special diplomatic envoys. For instance, the Lord Chamberlain, William Lord Howard of Effingham, received a gift of plate that was worth £2066. Sir Nicholas Wotton, Dean of Canterbury and York, received a plate worth £2000. Sir Nicholas received nothing but a promise that at the end of his service he would "be considered for all together at [his] departure."<sup>163</sup> Such announcements were crucial to Elizabeth so that she could give an appropriate gift that either matched that given to her servants or exceeded it. The first gesture was to look adequate, the second gesture showed power by giving a more prestigious gift than that given.

Lodgings provided by the court of France were also reported to Elizabeth. As prestigious individuals, the Lord Chamberlain and Sir Nicholas Wotton found "their lodgings handsomely trimmed and hanged, and were at the King's charges of their diet." The new ambassador, Throckmorton, was forced to find his own lodging at his own charge. Throckmorton asked Sir William Cecil "what curiosity and entertainment is to be used towards the French commissioner" in England.<sup>164</sup>

The ranks among diplomats followed the same model as general society in England. The monarch was the head of the state and diplomacy; next in line were the noblemen, ranked according to title, and then the knights and scholars. When several diplomats were sent out, as in the case of ratifying the Treat of Cateau Cambresis, the host monarch honored them according to their social status. This was reflected in the

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<sup>163</sup> Forbes, 116. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 30, 1559.

<sup>164</sup> Forbes, 100. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 24, 1559.

plate the diplomats received at their reception at Henry II's court. Thus, Lord Howard's plate was worth more than Sir Nicholas Wotton's plate. It was also reflected in the places that the diplomats were lodged. Lord Howard stayed in the palace in a well-decorated room, Wotton stayed with the head of the royal guard, and Throckmorton was left to fend for himself. Lord Howard, the ranking ambassador, introduced Sir Nicholas Throckmorton and presented his letters of credit. While the diplomat could have introduced himself by the letters of credit from his monarch and passport from the French ambassador resident in England, ceremony demanded that nobility speak for the Queen at the French Court. Although no diplomacy ever happened at the court, the treatment of diplomats had significance, for it demonstrated how the whole country should be treated. If the diplomat was well received, his whole kingdom was honored.

Special ambassadors were sent to France at times for varying purposes. The first was to send word to the resident diplomat that they dare not send by regular post. The second was to speak directly to the hosting monarch. Special occasions often called for nobles to be sent. When Henry II died from wounds inflicted at the tournament grounds, the French were incensed that Elizabeth sent a knight and not a nobleman to convey condolences. Throckmorton apologized for the absence of the special envoy but reminded the French that they had not given the Queen very much time.

During Throckmorton's mission as a resident ambassador to Henry II, Sir Nicholas followed the grand model of diplomacy described by Mattingly. England's position at the signing of the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis was tenuous at best. France's Dauphiness was a rival claimant to the throne of England. France promised that Calais

would be returned to England in eight years, but Henry II had other plans; Sir Nicholas uncovered the French quartering of English arms.

For the French, the possibility of Elizabeth marrying the Duke of Austria became a critical issue. An Anglo-Hapsburg match would revive the war that had concluded only a few months earlier. For England, the match would solidify their friendship with Spain. France hoped to block such a measure. Throckmorton reported, "Whereupon it is discoursed, that if the French do mind any practice indirectly for our annoyance, or to the working of some other enterprise of importance; that by means of this great alliance, which they here do marvelously mislike."<sup>165</sup> Susan Doran noted that Elizabeth's early marital offers "were candidates supported by Spanish Habsburgs in their quest to keep England both Catholic and pro-Spanish."<sup>166</sup> Throckmorton had to diffuse Henry II's apprehension and reaffirm Elizabeth's friendship.

Just as Queen Mary Tudor had many Protestants flee into exile after she reconciled with Rome, Elizabeth also created defectors because of her religious settlement. The defection of English Catholics to France and Italy created many hardships for Throckmorton. One example was Henry Dudley. Throckmorton reported his coming to the "Cardinal of Lorraine and Duke of Guise; and hath very good countenance showed, and hope of his desire"<sup>167</sup> Such men tried to come to Throckmorton posing as good English subjects hoping to intercept his post or gain his trust in order to

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<sup>165</sup> Forbes, 124. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, June 10, 1559.

<sup>166</sup> Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 1996), 22.

<sup>167</sup> Forbes, 119. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Secretary Cecil, June 7, 1559.



“practice” or inform for the Guises. Spies were everywhere, including English Catholics hopeful to win some booty by becoming agents for France.

One of the best examples of problems that Throckmorton endured during this mission began with the wounding of King Henry II at a joust that celebrated the marriage of his daughter, Elizabeth of Valois, to King Philip II of Spain. The mission tested the diplomat to the core, and placed him in great peril. The most quoted account of the incident that mortally wounded Henry II came from Sir Nicholas Throckmorton. He reported to the Privy Council, on the first of July 1559, that he was in attendance at a joust on the June 28. “Whereat it happened, that the king, after he had run a good many courses very well and fair, meeting with young Monsieur de Lorg, captain of the Scottish guard, received at the said de Lorg his hands such a counter-buff as the blow first lighting upon the king’s head, and taking away the pannage, which was fastened to his head piece.”<sup>168</sup> The lance broke, and the remaining portion drove into the king’s head, just above his right eye. Despite such a deadly blow, the king lived.

It is rather odd that such an event was not reported immediately to Elizabeth. However, Throckmorton reported to the Privy Council “whereupon with all expedition he was unarmed in the field, even against the place where I stood: and as I could discern the hurt seemed not to be great; where by I judge, he is but in little danger.”<sup>169</sup> Nevertheless, he held the letter until he could ensure that the King’s wounds were minor. Little did Throckmorton know that, within ten days, the King would die from his wound.

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<sup>168</sup> Forbes 151. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to the Privy Council, July 1, 1559.

<sup>169</sup> Forbes 151.



That night the Guises gathered around the king and watched over him. The ten days between Throckmorton's report and the kings' death were filled with tumult. On July 4, 1559 Sir Nicholas reported to Cecil the happenings in Scotland. The Earl of Argyle and several others had been seized for their disobedience to the Guises. Throckmorton interpreted the information for the Queen's secretary, "For, say they, so long as these men remain, Scotland cannot be kept in obedience either to the church, or to the King or the Queen Dauphin."<sup>170</sup>

The news got worse. Throckmorton was under suspicion of the French, as was the intention of England towards Scotland. "We have great cause to suspect the French meaning towards us...and the suspicion there of on this side doth daily rather increase then decrease: for besides other tokens of the same. I am the third of this present informed, that there is great await laid for my letters, and secret means used to know when, wither, and how I send the same."<sup>171</sup> The French's intentions were rather unclear at this point. Attacking Sir Nicholas's post would be a useful move if they wanted to discover the ambassador's knowledge of the Protestant factions in either France or Scotland, two topics that the English diplomat frequently wrote about to the Queen and her advisors.

But he appeared undeterred by the new French threat. In the same letter, he revealed the suspicions of the French. He wrote to Cecil about John Melvin, a Scot in the service of Mary Stuart, who had offered his service to Elizabeth. He wrote, "His offer is, that forasmuch as his well known to the greatest number of nobleman and gentlemen in

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<sup>170</sup>Forbes, 152. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil July 4, 1559.

<sup>171</sup>Forbes, 153. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, July 4, 1559.

Scotland, and also in good credit with them, to be employed in some part of the border, or with Sir James."<sup>172</sup> Throckmorton further recommended Elizabeth act against the French in Scotland.

Although undeterred, Throckmorton was cautious toward the new threat to his post, and he used the most sensitive words to make sure he had enough room to maneuver. On the fourth of July, he wrote the Lords of the Council about the current state of King Henry II. He reported that the King was in no great danger, but that he may lose his eye. A secretary to the Constable came to him a day later and questioned whether he had reported to his Queen the recent misfortunes of the French king. Throckmorton reported he had not, stating he was waiting to make sure his information was correct as to the health of the King. In this, Sir Nicholas lied, as he had reported the incident to the Privy Council, who reported the information to Elizabeth. However, Throckmorton could honestly say he had not written to Elizabeth about the French's misfortune.<sup>173</sup>

The King's subsequent death became an important diplomatic moment for both France and England, as it was an opportunity to demonstrate the amity between England and France. For England's part, Elizabeth ordered a funeral procession in honor of Henry II. Such a gesture openly demonstrated kinship and loss on the part of the English Queen. As a visual tribute to the posthumous French King, Elizabeth sent a second diplomat to announce her actions. Funerals were a great diplomatic occasion in early modern Europe; while many mourned the loss of a monarch, it was also usually a time for renewal of goodwill and peace among the various kingdoms. For instance, the death of Mary Tudor

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<sup>172</sup> Forbes 153. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, July 4, 1559

<sup>173</sup> Forbes, 154. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Privy Council, July 4, 1559.

helped bring about the treaty of Cateau Cambresis. In the case of Henry II, no such favor existed.

Monarchial funerals had particular diplomatic rules. First, word was sent by diplomats to signify the king's death with the approximate date of internment. Foreign monarchs sent special ambassadors to the funeral to convey condolences and congratulations to the new monarch. But Henry II's funeral was different.

Whether by failure of the post or diplomatic maneuvering, Elizabeth never received formal word from the French ambassador that Henry II had died. This was deliberate; it provided an opportunity to discredit Elizabeth in front of Italian ambassadors who did not know that the French were to blame for the special envoy's dilatory arrival. It was two days before the funeral that Noallies, the French ambassador to England announced '*Le Roy est Morte*,' to which the English Queen promptly sent Sir Peter Mewtas. However, because of time constraints, Sir Nicholas had to fill the space instead, a fact that did not go unnoticed by other ambassadors. In the procession, Throckmorton's Venetian counterpart wondered how Elizabeth could have committed such a faux paux.<sup>174</sup>

With the death of Henry II, Throckmorton's service became more difficult and Sir Nicholas pressed Elizabeth for his recall. While diplomats continually pleaded for their release from service because of homesickness, Sir Nicholas saw a legitimate excuse for his revocation. Throckmorton had failed to gain credit with the powerful Guise faction. Their niece, Mary Stuart, was the Guises' pawn. The Guises' were not for peace; instead they were for the eradication of Protestantism, and they now had an opportunity

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<sup>174</sup> Forbes, 197-203. Throckmorton to the Queen, Aug. 15, 1559.

to gain the whole realm of England. Somewhere in the French mentality, the idea of gaining the kingdom of England must have been intoxicating. In their mind they held the trump card, Mary Stuart, the current Queen of France and Scotland.

Making matters more difficult for Throckmorton, he was ambassador to the King and Queen of France, but the leaders of government were the regents, namely the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Duke's brother. The duties of state were divided between them; the first handled all military matters and the second handled the affairs of court. Throckmorton's ambassadorship to Francis II and Mary Stuart had little meaning other than show, as they controlled none of the diplomatic trappings and were merely puppets of the Guises.

Elizabeth moved to a diplomatic defensive as Throckmorton pleaded his case, and she decided to utilize Throckmorton to her advantage. She sent instructions for Throckmorton to watch how the French treated her title and "in deed publish or put in execution the former deliberations, and thereby and ways touch or prejudice our just right and title to the crown of this realm."<sup>175</sup> This was a specific directive to the ambassador that if Francis II usurped her title, Throckmorton was to stay his letters to the new king and remain a private citizen in Paris. Fortunately the affair was quickly resolved, and Throckmorton disappointedly received a new commission to be the resident ambassador to Francis II.

While this study has only briefly discussed the subject of diplomatic culture, it becomes apparent that it does exist, and through this culture it has been demonstrated that Sir Nicholas played an important role in Elizabethan politics as a diplomat. His

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<sup>175</sup> Forbes, 170. Queen Elizabeth to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, July 21, 1559.

informal education in the many aspects of household government aptly prepared him for his service to the Queen.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE MOST DANGEROUS INSTRUMENT OF HIS NATION

Various Elizabethan scholars have deduced that Elizabeth dictated foreign policy either by herself or in conjunction with her councilors. Other historians discount Elizabeth's ability, and argue that her secretary, William Cecil, directed policy on his own. The discussion of foreign policy in Elizabeth's reign has been extensively debated during the late twentieth century.

The questions center on: first, did foreign policy exist, and second, if foreign policy existed, who created it during Elizabeth's reign? Both questions are very important in understanding how the last Tudor monarch reigned for such a long period of time even though many outside of England wanted to remove her from the throne. This chapter advocates that there was no such thing as foreign policy for Elizabeth. Rather, all "policy" created was reactionary.

The culture of diplomacy created statesmen and foreign policy advisors out of the diplomats in Elizabeth's reign. Because these men were capable of thinking for themselves and then advising the Queen, they should no longer be seen just as doers of the Queen's will nor should they be seen as drones of Sir William Cecil. They were, for the most part, apt and capable men who had the ability to communicate the desires and salutations of their Queen to foreign monarchs.

As essential eyes and ears of their monarch, diplomats assessed the political situations and tried to gain some perception of the peoples that they were emissaries to. No foreign policy existed without the diplomat first assessing its feasibility. Nor was any



action undertaken without the advice of the current ambassador who gauged the ramifications of each action. In this sense, Queen Elizabeth had two different groups of advisors: The first, Sir William Cecil and her Privy Council; the second, her diplomats. This chapter will discuss how Sir Nicholas Throckmorton thereby influenced Elizabeth's policy during his time in France. This task must first scrutinize the definition of policy, and then examine Sir Nicholas's relationship with Sir William Cecil and Lord Robert Dudley, the traditional faction leaders of court. The final portion will discuss Sir Nicholas's role in the formation and execution of policy.

While there were many occasions upon which Throckmorton influenced the Queen's decisions during his embassy, this chapter seeks to discuss three important policy crises that he influenced directly. First, the war in Scotland to end the domination of the French, second, the English Queen's proposed marriage to Sir Robert Dudley, and last, the ill-fated Newhaven Expedition. These were key events of the first years of Elizabeth's reign and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had tremendous significance in their implementation.

In 1980, R. B. Wernham outlined the debate on whether foreign policy existed in his book *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy 1558-1603*. In his mind, policy existed, and as evidence Wernham cited that from 1567 onward, Elizabeth had three main goals with the Netherlands: "getting the Spanish army out of the Netherlands; to prevent the French getting into the Netherlands; and to restore to the Netherlander themselves."<sup>176</sup> But was this really policy?

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<sup>176</sup> R. B. Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, 1558-1603*, 4,

In 1984, G. D. Ramsay challenged Wernham's assertion on the existence of policy with his assessment of the foreign affairs during the entire reign of Elizabeth. He concluded, "To dignify the dealings of Elizabeth Tudor and her continental neighbors with the title of 'foreign policy' perhaps suggests more than her often hesitant groping could substantiate." In Ramsay's view, Elizabeth set such matters aside instead of making important decisions on what could be construed as policy. His argument seems the most plausible view of policy during the early modern period.<sup>177</sup>

England had no government bureaucratic department to monitor and enforce foreign policy. Politics during the early modern period were largely a personal affair. Elizabeth's true policies were based on a very simple premise: self-preservation and the defense of England. Doran supported this view with her statement that "Her (Elizabeth's) goals were primarily defensive."<sup>178</sup> To make this policy work, Elizabeth exploited opportunities presented in other countries to secure her country from invasion and destruction. This required her to send diplomats and ambassadors among her rivals to provide information about possible plots against England.

This idea of Elizabeth's personal policy corresponds with Garrett Mattingly's conclusions; he saw Italian cities during the early Renaissance period as a miniature model of the European nations during the rest of the early modern period. At the root of diplomacy or policy was the egocentric "state." This state existed from the policy of

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<sup>177</sup>G.D. Ramsay, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," 167.

<sup>178</sup>Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy: 1558-1603* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 65.

self-aggrandizement, and everything that perpetuated the state was in the state's best interest.<sup>179</sup>

While Mattingly's assessment of the evolution of diplomacy has no scholarly rival, his view of England minimizes the most important element of Elizabeth's reign, religion. The various religious beliefs in Europe placed England in the tumultuous position of being the only major Protestant nation in Europe. Making matters worse for England, the monarch was a bastard child by Catholic standards and therefore liable to be removed from the throne by someone with a more legitimate claim.

Protestantism and Elizabeth's questionable legitimacy presented opportunities to both France and Spain. France had permanently displaced England from the continent at the end of Mary Tudor's reign. France had also temporarily resolved its conflict with the Habsburgs, giving their nation an opportunity to root out the Protestant faction that arose in their country.<sup>180</sup> France's greatest threat to England was in the person of Mary Queen of Scots, who France touted as the legitimate heir to the throne of England. The French nurtured the Stuart princess and betrothed her to the Dauphine Francis. Her mother, Marie de Guise, ruled Scotland as Queen Regent, making France the greatest immediate threat to England during the early years of Elizabeth's reign. England's first concern became preservation of sovereignty and ideology rather than self-aggrandizement.

When Protestantism became the English national religion, England was displaced in its traditional role in Europe. Instead of being openly aggressive toward France and Scotland, like all the previous Tudor monarchs had been, England now had to use

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<sup>179</sup> Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 78.

<sup>180</sup> See Richard Knecht, *The French Civil Wars: 1562-1598* (London: Longman, 2000).

diplomacy and limited warfare to keep foreign powers from overrunning the kingdom. Further, whereas Spain traditionally allied itself with the English Crown, their friendship became a tenuous matter by the 1560s.

Throckmorton had the lion's share of service as he traveled to France in 1559. The court in France was fluid as the kingdom suffered the loss of two monarchs within two years. But Elizabeth's court was in motion as well. Robert Dudley had gained the queen's affection and began to draw power to himself. Elizabeth's court had become somewhat factional. For Throckmorton, who befriended both Cecil and Dudley, the political power struggle appeared daunting.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's friendship with Sir William Cecil, and Lord Robert Dudley, the Queen's Master of the Horse and object of her affection, has generated much speculation. Historians have generally cited that Throckmorton and Cecil were friends until Sir Nicholas, angered by Cecil's inaction toward his revocation as resident ambassador, found an ally in Dudley. Unfortunately, historians have not fully explored the supposed disintegration of the Cecil/Throckmorton alliance or the factual extent of the Dudley friendship.

State papers reveal that Sir William Cecil and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton associated with each other during Edward VI's reign. Mary Tudor commanded Cecil to restore Sir Nicholas to his keepership to Brigstock after his triumphal return from France. But Sir Nicholas's embassy to France tried their friendship as Throckmorton admonished Cecil to get him revoked. From Cecil's letters it appears that he tried in earnest. However, the ambassador learned from others, possibly even his wife, Anne Throckmorton, that this was not Cecil's intent. The first falling out between the two

occurred when Cecil sent an ultimatum of return to Sir Nicholas by the Queen's person, in which he had to secure Mary's signature on the treaty of Edinburgh before he could return home. Sir Nicholas knew that Mary would never sign, as did Cecil, and Throckmorton's famous temper unleashed itself. But by November, the two tentatively patched up their friendship, and indeed their friendship continued as evidenced by Throckmorton's gift of a mule to Cecil in 1563.<sup>181</sup>

We know very little about Throckmorton and Lord Dudley's friendship until Elizabeth's reign. Sir Nicholas admired Dudley to such an extent that his last son Robert, born in 1559, was named after the Queen's favorite. Many historians argue that Sir Nicholas abandoned his friendship with Lord Robert when he attempted to marry Elizabeth. The evidence shows a much wiser stance by Sir Nicholas. He said once, "I do like him for some respects well, and esteem him for many good parts and gifts of nature, that be in him, and do wish him well to do." However, the flirtations of marriage between the Queen and Dudley so disheartened the ambassador that he wrote to Cecil "I do assure you, the matter succeeding, our state is in great danger of utter ruin and destruction."<sup>182</sup> In this respect, Throckmorton's concern for the success of his Queen superceded his friend's desires. But even so, Sir Nicholas did not abandon Dudley completely although he disagreed with Dudley's desire to marry the Queen.

Also, at times Sir Nicholas was weary of Dudley as he "makes a demonstration of his conceit towards [Throckmorton] for his doings past, and present."<sup>183</sup> Before the

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<sup>181</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1563, 154. Lady Throckmorton to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Feb. 24, 1563.

<sup>182</sup> Hardwicke Papers, 124.

<sup>183</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1562, 36. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Robert Dudley, May 18 1562.

Newhaven Expedition occurred, Throckmorton seemed to have lost credit with his supposed friend. It appears that Dudley tried to out maneuver Sir Nicholas. Chapter two discussed the sanctity of the diplomat's correspondence with his monarch and her secretary. On political matters Throckmorton wrote specifically to Cecil, the Queen, or the Privy Council. Thus Elizabeth had Sir Nicholas's dispatches in hand, with news and unadulterated advice from him. But Dudley violated that sanctity when he read the letters from Sir Nicholas to Elizabeth and "imparted those of most consequence."<sup>184</sup> Dudley in effect censored Throckmorton's letters and effectively abrogated any advice they contained.

Sir Nicholas's friendships had intense political ramifications. Both Cecil and Dudley were seen as power brokers at court. They wanted the attention of Elizabeth to advance their ideas and their supporters. But what were they to do with Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the Queen's advisor, spy, and faithful subject who at times had more influence on Elizabeth's will than they?

Sir William Cecil's political nadir occurred after he returned from parleying the Treaty of Edinburgh in Scotland, only to arrive at court and find Lord Robert Dudley in control. In his despair he wrote to Francis Russel, Earl of Bedford, saying, "As soon as I can get Sir Nicholas Throckmorton placed, so soon I purpose to withdraw myself."<sup>185</sup> In November 1560, Lord Paget wrote to Sir Nicholas announcing that he would become the new secretary.<sup>186</sup> Despite Paget's letter, Throckmorton never received an offer of the

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<sup>184</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1563, 97. Lord Robert Dudley to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Feb 3, 1562.

<sup>185</sup> Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, 199.

<sup>186</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1562, 619.



position, and Elizabeth forbade Cecil's departure. Although many feared the repercussions at court if Cecil resigned, Cecil had confidence in Throckmorton.

As we have defined the necessary points of policy and Sir Nicholas's friendships with the Elizabethan power brokers, Cecil and Dudley, it now behooves us to tackle the larger question of whether a mid-level servant such as Throckmorton motivated, shaped, or created Elizabeth's foreign policy. No one ruled Elizabeth, and she made all policy decisions, though at times she could be manipulated or goaded into these resolutions. Thus, as with all monarchs of the period, advisors played an integral part in policy formation.

At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the kingdom teetered on the edge of destruction. The Protestant Queen offered her subjects welcome relief from Mary's inept rule. While the death of Mary made many jubilant, others were fearful of an unmarried queen on the throne of England. In Europe, Elizabeth was a heretical bastard child and they believed her cousin Mary Stuart should replace her. England's long-standing alliance with Spain was in peril as the French courted an alliance with its old enemy. But Elizabeth, the hope of England, was a single woman of twenty-five years and considered perfect marriage material. This single aspect then became the foundation of Elizabethan foreign policy.

The three ensuing events represent three different case studies of diplomacy and policy: The support of Scottish Protestants, the Queen's proposed marriage to Robert Dudley, and the Newhaven Expedition. The support of the Protestant Lords of the Congregation was an attempt to secure the northern border of the kingdom and reduce France's ability to wage war against England. Elizabeth and Dudley represent an affair

that would have destroy England's ability to keep her enemies at bay. The Newhaven Expedition was an opportunity to regain Calais.

In Stephen Alford's eyes, William Cecil was the originator of the war in Scotland. In his work *Early Elizabethan Polity*, Alford attempted to make Cecil as the instigator of the war and drafter of subsequent treaties. Alford's argument was based upon several elements from interpreting plays to the editorial notes that the Queen's secretary had printed on drafts of documents. This evidence demonstrated, in Alford's eyes, the singular efforts and mental set of Cecil. But he may have taken this line of reckoning too far, as he failed to mention that Cecil wrote out ideas that were a part of ongoing arguments among others in the Queen's court. Alford also muted the wisdom and power of Queen Elizabeth. Cecil could not negotiate, make terms, or ratify a treaty without Elizabeth's approval. Indeed, Cecil relied heavily on the ambassador's reports to Elizabeth and himself to accomplish anything.

Elizabethan scholars have looked to 'a Memorial of Certain Points Meet for Restoring the Realm of Scotland to the Ancient Will'<sup>187</sup> as evidence that Cecil commanded the formation of Elizabeth's diplomatic actions. In this document, Cecil outlines the optimum conditions that should take place in Scotland for the safety of England. Cecil outlined the question of what role England would take with Scotland. But the Memorial was written four months after Sir Nicholas had taken residence in France.

As keen as a sword, Sir Nicholas immediately commenced his report concerning Scotland even before he left England to go to France in 1559. On the coast of Dover he wrote "2000 Allmayns which have long lain at Newhaven, and now were mustered and

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<sup>187</sup> Lansdowne MSS, n. 4, fol. 9.

paid, be returned or retained: for I suspect if they be stayed in France, it is meant to send them into Scotland.”<sup>188</sup> Troop movements of the French raised concern with England as peace had not yet been fully concluded and France sought to plant troops in the North. While at Paris, the English diplomat continued to dispatch intelligence reports into England about troop movements of the French.

And when in Paris, Throckmorton also tried to communicate how the French court handled the affairs of Scotland. Religion was the first great issue for Henry II. Throckmorton reported, “They are in doubt, what to do, and whom they shall send thither;... In the meantime...[they send letters] touching order for the appraising of the garboil there, with advise to the Queen Dowager of Scotland, to tolerate those for a time, till they here may overcome these great matters here.”<sup>189</sup> Even when Henry II tried to keep information from Sir Nicholas, Throckmorton still discovered news from Scotland. He reported to Elizabeth, “I learned, that he doth report, that the Earl of Argyle and certain other noblemen are risen up in the defense of the preachers, and are assembled at St. Johnstown, to the number of 20,000 men, and Queen Dowager and the Duke of Chatellerew have levied against them 5,000 men.”<sup>190</sup> Protestant Lords had risen up against Mary of Guise, and they sought to remove French authority in the Scottish realm.

Sir Nicholas recruited intelligence assets for the upcoming campaign in Scotland. He led the task of smuggling out the Earl of Arran, who was a claimant to the Scottish throne after Mary, Queen of Scots. Early in his mission to France he began to meet with

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<sup>188</sup> Forbes, 91. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, May 15, 1559.

<sup>189</sup> Forbes, 118. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, June 7, 1559.

<sup>190</sup> Forbes, 130. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, June 30, 1559.

the Earl's men. But having no way to judge their credibility or intentions, the ambassador had to proceed with caution.<sup>191</sup> He recommended a key number of individuals to Elizabeth and Cecil to utilize in securing Scotland. He tried to convince Elizabeth to use John Knox, and he enlisted several Protestant Scots, including John Melvin, as spies in the French court.

But the key argument against Alford's Cecil-centered formation of policy was in France. No matter what Cecil wished to happen in 1559, his plans were for naught if France intervened. Likewise Throckmorton was already operational on the Scottish issue. Undeniably Throckmorton's assessment of the situation contained all the elements of a careful and watchful servant.

Sir Nicholas received a furlough from Elizabeth in October 1559 to return home under the illusion of his wife's sickness. During his leave of absence, Sir Nicholas supplied Elizabeth and Cecil with considerable news and advice of the disposition of France and Scotland. Sir Nicholas requested that he be recalled because of his need to consult with the Queen, so his wife's condition was used as a convenient excuse.<sup>192</sup>

One of the first letters that Sir Nicholas wrote on his return to France was addressed to the Queen's Privy Council. During his time back in England, the Guises sought to reaffirm their friendship with Elizabeth and hoped to dissuade her from conflict in Scotland. As Sir Nicholas traveled to France, he intercepted the new French resident ambassador to England. Throckmorton immediately wrote and warned the council "if ear will be given to boned words, if sweet language will persuade, if speech well applied and

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<sup>191</sup> Forbes, 120. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, June 7, 1559.

<sup>192</sup> Forbes, 251. The Queen to Throckmorton, Oct. 11, 1559.

couched will be believed, if large offers of these things and effect of nothing will work; now shall your lordships know, that he that can do all these things is now arrived.”<sup>193</sup> Sir Nicholas knew from his visit that Elizabeth was waning in her commitment in Scotland, and France’s latest diplomatic weapon, by Throckmorton’s judgment, was a very cunning man. “From his youth trained up in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Almain, and all other places... He hath not been in these countries to learn the tongues only; but he hath so by experience and good judgment bridled his own nature and affectionate passions.” This man so awed Throckmorton that his abilities appeared nearly superhuman in his capacity to blend into the country. Ultimately Sir Nicholas warned “rare in this nation; he is, kept in store as a select vessel, to be employed in such a time as this is, and to be alone maker of a dissembled friendship and a soon broken peace.”<sup>194</sup> Whether this man could be such an ardent intriguer is not important, but Throckmorton’s concern about the possible effects of this man’s coming demanded consideration. He entreated the Queen to be replaced to keep the new ambassador in check.

Sir Nicholas warned that France had “too many irons in the fire.” The ambassador reminded the Privy Council that the Guises needed peace at the moment with England. “The factions in religion springing everywhere; having also to deal presently with the Empire, and that they are not able to embark any Almaynes.” The ambassador warned that Francis II would offer to remove all troops except four hundred, which in the short-term would ease tension, but in the long-term left Scotland as threat to England’s sovereignty. Sir Nicholas nailed his argument shut with an admonishment to “make these

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<sup>193</sup> Forbes, 316. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to the Privy Council, Feb. 4, 1560.

<sup>194</sup> Forbes, 317. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to the Privy Council 4<sup>th</sup> February 1560.



men call to remembrance the injuries done to her brother, King Edward VI, wherein these rulers here were then ministers and of council, who (King Edward having his realm in an uproar and commotion, and in danger of his person) came...to Bullion; and there carried away certain pieces," which caused the loss of all of England's holdings in France. During Edward's reign, England was embroiled in two wars – one with Scotland, the other with France. Unable to endure the cost of warfare, England was lulled into safety by the promise of peace.

It also appeared that Throckmorton's credit had become unstable with the Queen's court. During his discourse he took considerable pains to ensure the Council that he was not inclined to war, but he warned "I have of these men's double dealings."<sup>195</sup> By this time Throckmorton had seen how the Guise faction used deceit towards the English. The French were hoping to use the guise of peace to lull the English into a false sense of security.

Throckmorton's arrival in France had all the trappings he could expect. The French clamored for his return, but when he arrived they refused him access to Francis II for some eight days. Sir Nicholas wondered if they planned to arrest him. He related to Cecil, "you know, and have seen from good authority, how odious I am to these men...that I have been the only stirrer and worker of all that is done."<sup>196</sup>

As Throckmorton pressed the key members of Elizabeth's court, he hoped to keep her on course of removing the French from Scotland. This removal began with the assurance that he had credible evidence from the Spanish Ambassador in France that the

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<sup>195</sup> Forbes, 319. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to the Privy Council February, 4 1560.

<sup>196</sup> Forbes, 328. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil February 20, 1560.



French meant to break their friendship. Then Sir Nicholas gave the Queen a history lesson that began with her grandfather Henry VII, saying, "he knew not how to make war, and his regard to peace and to grow rich did more hinder the strength of the realm and his successors." He then reminded her of her own father's difficulties that resulted from his inaction. The Protestant Scottish leaders would pay with their lives if France gained power over them. "The Queen shall have commodity to order some policy and reduce the people and country to more service and profit than she now has them, or predecessors ever had."<sup>197</sup> Throckmorton's affirmation of the course set out in Scotland demonstrated that he monitored the pulse of policy. When Elizabeth doubted her movements and expenditures, Sir Nicholas introduced rhetoric, evidence, and intelligence to follow, with the goal of attaining friendship with Scotland, thereby weakening France against England.

Cecil's role in Scotland should not be considered diminished by Throckmorton's participation nor should the ambassador be thought subordinate to the Queen's Secretary. Cecil also served one diplomatic mission to Scotland to negotiate the peace between England and Scotland, and met with great success. However, during his absence the Queen became enamored with Robert Dudley.

What could advisors do when Elizabeth was determined to bring down the kingdom with a marriage to Robert Dudley? It was clearly evident from the beginning of her reign; the Queen herself was the most important aspect of policy. Entertaining suitors from the Habsburg Empire ensured amenity between England and Spain. But late in

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<sup>197</sup> CSP For., Eliz. 1559-1560, 389.

1559, rumors spread through the courts of England and France that the Queen's Master of the Horse had caught her eye.

Dudley's attempt to marry Elizabeth was not only a personal matter but also a foreign policy matter. Cecil attempted to block the Dudley match, but the Queen would not hear of it. After he returned from Scotland he wrote the Earl of Bedford, "the court is as I left it and therefore do I mind to leave it as I have too much cause."<sup>198</sup> Dudley had the Queen's ear and Cecil was frustrated by it. He wrote to his friend, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, venting about his inability to communicate with the Queen. Cecil penned, "God send me hence with words to pray and sue for her Majesty with all the power of mind and body."<sup>199</sup> While he was the Queen's principal secretary, he had no ability to sway her from the folly of her desires toward Dudley.

In Throckmorton's eyes, the matter had serious implications for the survival of England, and he took direct action in this affair by sending Robert Jones, his secretary, to Elizabeth for a direct and discreet answer about the proposed marriage and what he should report. The full extent of what Jones was supposed to report to Elizabeth is unclear. All that remains is the response Elizabeth made to Jones. He reported to Throckmorton first about his interview with Sir William Cecil and that Cecil prepped him to make sure that he related how the French monarchy thought over this matter. In a letter, Jones reported to Sir Nicholas, and it enlightens us on several issues. Jones spoke only to the Queen what Throckmorton commanded: First, the ambassadorial gossip from rival countries present in France. Next, Jones rehearsed the advice of Sir Nicholas and his

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<sup>198</sup> Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil*, 199.

<sup>199</sup> Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil*, 199.

cousin the Marquis of Northampton. Jones wrote of the affair, "her Majesty promised me *fidem*, *taciturnitatem*, and *favorem*, the last whereof I found towards myself but as for your Lordship, she not once made mention of you unto me."<sup>200</sup> Elizabeth appeared to be irritated by her ambassador's intrusion into her personal life. But Jones continued his orders and "vehemently" repeated the "*beneficii* and *maleficii* rues"<sup>201</sup> which the French monarchy delighted itself in jubilation of the English Queen's infatuation with her "stable boy." The tale so inflamed Elizabeth that she made Jones repeat it word for word twice and then a third time. Jones concluded to Sir Nicholas, that from his point of view, the Queen would not marry Dudley.

In this matter, Sir Nicholas tried, with his advice, to influence the Queen's decision by appealing to her about her social credit. Diplomacy relied upon the power of perspective. The wealthier and more powerful a monarch appeared, the more prestige they attracted. If Elizabeth continued her affair with Dudley, it diminished her prestige among rival monarchs. Where Cecil was shut out of favor and disaffected of the Queen's person, Throckmorton audaciously sent Jones on his word and credit alone to report and reason with the Queen. In the aftermath, for a short while Throckmorton felt the sting of Queen's indignation, but his service to the crown remained invaluable and unchanged.

Soon a different problem emerged. With the success of Elizabeth in Scotland, many at the English court saw it was time to aid the French Calvinists, called Huguenots. From the beginning of his tenure as ambassador, Sir Nicholas saw that this group could be exploited for England's advantage. It is not my intent to recount the Newhaven

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<sup>200</sup> Hardwicke Papers, 165.

<sup>201</sup> Hardwicke Papers, 166.

expedition with a day-by-day account, but to discuss how the Queen's ambassador worked the policy. This section will look at the beginning of the Newhaven Expedition, Throckmorton's detention by the duke of Guise and Catherine de Medici, and finally the negotiation of the Treaty.

Throckmorton had many different friends at Elizabeth's court pulling for his return throughout his tenure as ambassador to France. This position of ambassador held much prestige, but the distance from court, family, and friends made the mission unbearable.<sup>202</sup> His wife, Anne Throckmorton, was Elizabeth's invited guest at court. It can be deduced from her letters to her husband that Lady Throckmorton was every bit her husband's equal in intelligence and perception. When Sir Nicholas was in dire straits for money, his wife pressed the Queen on the issue. Lady Anne often reported to Sir Nicholas about the debate that was present at court and how his "friends" treated him. She even headed a diplomatic mission in 1561 to aid Sir Nicholas when he had fallen ill.<sup>203</sup> She brought from Elizabeth new plate, instructions and affirmations. She even established a friendship with the Queen of Scots' court by endearing herself to a French woman who was in Mary's household. Indeed, if her letters were ever found, Anne Throckmorton's story would prove as fascinating and important as her husband's.

While Sir Nicholas's wife provided her husband with reports of the happenings at court, she may have indirectly authored some of the discontent that he felt during this time. Lady Throckmorton was a member of court, but not a member of the Queen's household. While she was welcomed at court, very little is known of Elizabeth's

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<sup>202</sup>Distance from court excluded the diplomat from the patronage of the Queen it also limited prestige earned in her presence.

<sup>203</sup> Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons*, 34.

affections toward her. In order to move the Queen in favor of her husband's suits, Lady Anne used men at court, including Robert Dudley and other friends of her husband to advance her husband's requests.

In early 1562, William Cecil's son, Thomas Cecil, traveled to Paris for language training and various other experiences. Upon arriving Paris, he found the English ambassador and promptly stayed, supposedly because of illness, but reports from his servant Windebank suggested he fell in love with a nun. Sir Nicholas received continuous reports from his wife that Sir William Cecil had been the key reason for his revocation's delay. This inflamed the diplomat's temper. Throckmorton then vented his frustrations to Windebank, who promptly wrote to Sir William Cecil about Throckmorton's rage. Many at court heard of the diplomat's ranting.

Complicating matters further was the debate about English intervention for the Protestants in France. Sir Nicholas believed early on that Elizabeth could intervene in France using the Huguenots to regain Calais. He pressed Elizabeth, noting that the French monarch was bankrupt and could not pay for troops. He also knew that Spain had the same problem, having been embroiled in wars against France and the Turks. While early in his tenure Throckmorton cared only for the cause of England, something changed in late 1561. Sir Nicholas began using the term "papist" to refer to Catholics, especially those who sought to murder English Protestants, namely himself. And although he remained loyal to Elizabeth's command and her prerogative, he had also become sympathetic to the Huguenot cause.

The Wars of Religion in France grew out of the Guises' intolerance of Protestantism in their realm. The affair first came to a head in the 1560s, when the



Parisians began slaughtering Huguenots as fast as they could find them. Catherine de Medici, the Queen Mother, could not bring herself to allow the practice of Protestantism to go on openly in her kingdom. She committed to allowing this new religion to be practiced only in residents' minds and homes. Throckmorton, who began his life as a Catholic and then embraced the new religion, warned the Queen Mother that her restrictions would backfire. Sir Nicholas understood that the plight of the French monarch would endure, as he had seen Protestantism embraced and rejected during his lifetime. Had Queen Catherine relented to allowing an open worship for the new religion, the intervention of England would have never occurred.

With the commencement of 1562, the advice contained in the letters to Throckmorton changed, and the Queen demonstrated that she was in control of policy. Sir Nicholas was to act as a bearer of peace and good will. Elizabeth wanted to try to resolve the dispute peacefully, and it appeared that if the Huguenots were granted some open religious rights, Elizabeth would be satisfied.

Sir Nicholas offered to intervene in the conflict to try and mediate peace. He sent letters to the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and the Duke of Guise to get them to settle on peace. Sir Nicholas also advised the Queen Mother of France on the steps to take for peace. Though for a short time peace reigned, the Queen Mother only allowed free thought in the home. Throckmorton, by Elizabeth's command, warned her that with such tight controls Protestants would be denied "teaching, preaching, the administration of sacraments and baptism, and of Christ's Body, for how could they be married or



buried if they have no ministers appointed to them.”<sup>204</sup> The tumult increased daily and the Parisian population threatened Sir Nicholas’s life. After receiving his orders of revocation, he remarked to the Queen, “the fury of these people comes upon by the tides.”<sup>205</sup> Parisians encircled Throckmorton's embassy residence in Paris, they leveled guns on his home, and he announced that he feared for his life. The Parisians adamantly despised those of the Protestant faith. Their anger towards Throckmorton was even greater, as he represented the largest Protestant nation in Europe.

Originally Elizabeth planned to revoke Sir Nicholas and replace him with Sir Thomas Smith, and then have Throckmorton remain as a “private” citizen to act as a spy.<sup>206</sup> But with Sir Nicholas’s life in danger, Elizabeth finally sent his revocation to him and ordered him home. When he delivered his orders to the Queen Mother, she asked for Throckmorton to remain until her ambassadors were recalled. Sir Nicholas could not object.<sup>207</sup> Unfortunately he underestimated the Queen, and she sent a diplomat to Elizabeth to discredit him.

Discrediting Throckmorton was an important move for the French. They first hoped to create discontent with his service by destroying his credit with Elizabeth. By doing so, Queen Catherine could use him as a pawn to blame the whole affair on, and then have him executed. It also was indirect attack against Elizabeth. No monarch dared to openly discredit another openly, so they attacked the servants. The French monarchy

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<sup>204</sup> CSP, For., Eliz. 1562, 175. Throckmorton to Queen July 23, 1562.

<sup>205</sup> CSP, For., Eliz. 1562, 209, Throckmorton to Queen August 5, 1562.

<sup>206</sup> CSP, For., Eliz. 1562, 139. Throckmorton to Cecil June 29, 1562.

<sup>207</sup> CSP, For., Eliz. 1562, 209, Throckmorton to Queen August 5, 1562.

knew that Sir Nicholas was the most dangerous man to their cause. In every case he had outwitted them or discovered their plots, and he needed to be controlled.

Sir Nicholas's problems increased. Paris was no longer safe for Protestants to inhabit, and the court of France removed itself eighty miles from the tumultuous town. Sir Nicholas received orders from his Queen to redeliver her words and submit them in writing to the Queen Mother.<sup>208</sup> But Throckmorton could no longer travel on his own accord in France. As he went to redeliver his message to the Queen Mother, the Prince of Condé ambushed him in an attack and his train was looted. They captured his plate, orders, cipher and horses.

The French Catholics shortly thereafter returned Sir Nicholas's train, and all the other things pertaining to his embassy, and the Prince of Condé received Throckmorton into his protection. Throckmorton demanded that he receive safe conduct to the French Queen's presence. Catherine refused to grant him the pass, commenting, "I see no reason why he should demand a safe-conduct, unless he knows more by himself than any of us do"<sup>209</sup> But the diplomat had received word that if he moved from Orleans, he would be arrested.

It then became France's policy to use Throckmorton as a pawn of diplomacy. For quite some time the diplomat noted that the French Queen disliked him and his conduct in France. Sir Nicholas warned Elizabeth that his person was the target of the French

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<sup>208</sup> The whole incident was a ploy by the Queen Mother to abrogate Elizabeth's confidence in her diplomat as the Queen noted in her instructions that she understood what Catherine de Medici was trying to do.

<sup>209</sup> Forbes, 111. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, Oct. 15, 1562.

court. He discovered a communication at the French court and related the contents to his Queen:

What so ever it cost, I [Throckmorton] must be gotten into their hands; and that without delay they must cut off my head. For, that man may in no wise be suffered to live; for he is the most dangerous instrument of his nation for us: and to make the matter allowable to the world, said he, we will find articles enough to make his process. In the mean time we must leave no means unassayed and unpracticed to bring him into the Queen his mistress disgrace; which will be done with no great difficulty. For, said he, we be well informed, his prosperity and surety dependeth only upon the Queen his mistress favor; for there be enough about her of great authority and trust, that can be very well contented he were in heaven.<sup>210</sup>

If the Queen Mother and her advisors could discredit the ambassador, then they might find a bargaining point against Elizabeth.

During his stay in Orleans, he acted as advisor to the Prince of Condé as he vacillated between war and capitulation. Sir Nicholas wrote to his Queen of his doings, but unknowingly his post had been compromised and a French noble captured an entire packet. MacCaffrey noted that Elizabeth was angry with Throckmorton because he tarried too long with the Prince of Condé.<sup>211</sup> The case, though, was misleading, as she did not understand why he could not move. It was only a few days later that Elizabeth praised Sir Nicholas.

Compounding Throckmorton's problems, Elizabeth sent Sir Thomas Smith as his replacement. Smith, a scholar and author, was not as apt to the task as his predecessor. Many times Throckmorton criticized Smith, among their peers, because of Smith's passive approach. However, Smith presented an opportunity for the Queen Mother of

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<sup>210</sup> Forbes 112, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, Oct. 15, 1562.

<sup>211</sup> MacCaffrey, *Shaping of the Elizabeth Regime*, 133.

France. Sir Nicholas reported to Elizabeth the implications of the French's plan for his demise:

That the Queen mother, and this King's council have given in charge to Monsieur de Severe and other, to practice with Sir Thomas Smith, your Majesty's ambassador, by all the means he and they can to bring me into the evil opinion of the said Sir Thomas Smith; and so to discredit me and my doings unto him, as that he may take occasion from time to time to deface and discredit my former doings.<sup>212</sup>

It is important to note that Catherine Medici allowed Throckmorton to remain with the Prince of Condé. It was part of her duplicitous scheme to call Throckmorton to her and have him arrested for consorting with the enemy. The English diplomat was tipped off about her intentions and demanded that he receive a writ of safe conduct to her. This guaranteed that he would be received safely to her. The Queen showed her hand and refused to grant the passport, but tried to entreat him by saying he was free to roam about as he willed. Catherine then began turning Smith against Throckmorton by saying that Sir Nicholas was ungovernable.

Was Smith ever persuaded against Throckmorton? The Queen Mother's plan appeared to have worked. As Smith came to negotiate peace while Sir Nicholas was imprisoned, he wrote that he wished to be revoked so as to not to be imprisoned as well. Smith had fallen into the trap Sir Nicholas had predicted. Later Smith wrote Cecil, whining of his plight with Throckmorton citing the vehement expression, "harrow, catch the fox, and when ye have him hold him fast, it is he that has marred all. This I am made believe and somewhat I see myself."<sup>213</sup> Smith took the bait, and his distrust toward the diplomat destroyed Sir Nicholas's credit further.

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<sup>212</sup> Forbes, 112. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth Oct. 15, 1562.

Further complicating Throckmorton's position was the arrival of the Newhaven Expedition. As MacCaffrey noted, Elizabeth was not thrilled about the whole affair and neither was Cecil.<sup>214</sup> Therefore, Throckmorton and Dudley have been distinguished as the leaders of the entire affair. Sir Nicolas pleaded for some kind of intervention in order to regain Calais, as it would provide England with a much-needed port into Burgundy where England traditionally sent their wool. It is important to note that Throckmorton's concern was for a restoration of England to its continental holdings, and not to the salvation of the French Huguenots. He hoped to exploit the division and the financial weakness of the French monarchy to an English advantage.

Elizabeth hoped only to use the expedition to exploit the war to become a mediator and to hold it hostage until France gave back Calais. The plan might have worked if Elizabeth had invested the whole 100,000 crowns she promised Condé. Additionally, if the troops had moved out of Newhaven, they would have avoided contracting the plague.

But Elizabeth was not willing to invest that much cash nor was she willing to move her troops into the battle as she hoped to avoid getting embroiled in the civil war. While MacCaffrey blamed the war on Dudley, and its failure as simply a bad plan, the elements of the campaign demonstrate that if the Queen had been more courageous in her efforts and met the full measure of the negotiated treaty between her and Condé, she would have been successful. The blame for the disaster rightfully belongs to the Queen for not carrying out the obligation she promised by treaty. Also the blame should be

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<sup>213</sup> CSP For., Eliz 1563, 508.

<sup>214</sup> MacCaffrey, *Shaping of the Elizabeth Regime*, 122-3.

shared with her servant for not recognizing that Elizabeth was more concerned with her treasury than with supporting any cause on matters of real estate and religion.

But what of Sir Nicholas? What role did he play in the forming of the Newhaven Expedition? Unfortunately, the answer is not clear. From his first days as a diplomat in France, Throckmorton advised Elizabeth that there was an opportunity for them. The diplomat knew Elizabeth felt dissatisfied with the outcome of the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis. Her dissatisfaction with Spain for not requiring that Calais be immediately returned to England during the negotiation of the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis also infuriated her. She, as well as the rest of her council, knew that the ancient lands would never be arbitrarily returned to her. It was not unlikely that Throckmorton was sent with secret instructions to be vigilant for Calais' return.

Sir Nicholas's advice and intelligence gathering resulted in his imprisonment by the French monarch three times, the first, after the train incident; the second after he witnessed a battle between the Duke of Guise and the Prince of Condé. The final and the longest imprisonment occurred when he was sent to negotiate peace between England and France. Why the Queen sent Throckmorton back to France as negotiator for peace belies reason. The French hated Sir Nicholas, and when he arrived in France, he was promptly arrested.

Catherine had previously captured the Prince de Condé, negotiated a treaty and forced him to capitulate to its terms. After Throckmorton's arrest, the Queen Mother declared war on the English, and Newhaven expedition, stricken with plague, surrendered.



Throckmorton's imprisonment occurred for two fundamental reasons: first he proved himself too resourceful and the French could not afford for him to continue freely during the negotiations. France, knowing they had the upper hand as English troops died from disease could now afford to attack England in France openly and thereby retain Calais. Elizabeth offered to send other negotiators in Throckmorton's place but the French could not afford him to oust their control. Many historians have noted that Throckmorton had a horrible temper. He often raged when others in the Queen's court worked against him. Sir Thomas Smith was one target of that rage. The reasons came from his imprisonment as Sir Nicholas felt that Smith never did enough of the right things to demand for his release. While trying to negotiate peace, Smith showed his hand too soon, and provoked rage in Throckmorton. The result was a knife fight between the two where they shouted insults against each other. Eventually the treaty was negotiated, and a year after his imprisonment, Throckmorton was ransomed from his detention.

The evidence above clearly shows that Throckmorton was an integral part of the formation and execution of foreign policy and diplomacy. Sir Nicholas, bound both by the culture of diplomacy and his ability to advise Elizabeth, was a key advisor and minister of policy. He urged the Queen to take action in Scotland and provided many referrals to help England aid the Scottish Protestants. He also provided troop movements and other intelligence. When Elizabeth nearly destroyed policy with her marriage, he took occasion to inform her of the consequence to her actions and he warned her of the ruin to her honor such a marriage would bring. Finally, he helped bring about the Newhaven expedition. His Machiavellian nature discovered a way to exploit the French Protestants to weaken the French Monarchy and regain Calais. While Cecil and Dudley

certainly had the Queen's ear, so did Sir Nicholas who constantly proved himself accurate and worthy.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

Elizabethan diplomatic history is virtually non-existent. Except for the work of a few historians who have examined the intricacies of diplomatic service, most of the things written about diplomacy have been included in political histories. Unfortunately, the result of this top-down travesty is that historians have overlooked the value of the crown servant, the diplomat.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had advised three monarchs by the end of his life. He served as a loyal and faithful advisor to Elizabeth to the end of his days. He was a man of great learning, but he did not write the entire "advice" that Neale discovered and published in 1950. Evidence from this paper shows that a number of people, who had specific training in government and law, could have written a majority of the "advice."

As for diplomacy, Throckmorton wrote direct letters to Elizabeth, Cecil, and the Privy Council. In those letters, he told the recipients the state of affairs concerning France, Scotland, and Spain. In 1560, when it appeared that Elizabeth was waning in her efforts in Scotland, Sir Nicholas put forth a policy of persistence, and was not fooled by gestures of peace when the French hoped to bide their time for better war conditions.

In regards to Elizabeth's marriage prospects, Throckmorton knew what would happen to England if the Queen continued her fascination with Master of the Horse, Robert Dudley. He took direct action by sending Robert Jones to discuss the matter. Even though it was a bold attempt to sway the Queen, Throckmorton never hesitated.

During the Newhaven expedition, the French changed their attack strategy not only to fight the English at Le Havre, but to attack the diplomat directly: Their aim was to discredit him, to imprison him, and to isolate him. His replacement, Sir Thomas Smith, a man who hated Throckmorton from earlier associations, was quick to join the French and accept their lies about Sir Nicholas.

These events demonstrate the importance of diplomatic ambassadors to their rulers, and that Elizabeth's policy-making was simply a reaction to the policy implementation of her neighbors, namely France, Scotland, and Spain. For example, the Newhaven Expedition started over the possibility of regaining Calais, which was lost with the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis. Marriage was a personal affair, but innately tied to England's welfare. In Scotland, Elizabeth did little more than try to solve a threat to succession. Indeed, Elizabethan foreign policy appears to be a set of goals to be accomplished: namely to secure their borders, regain lost land and ports, and preserve England's sovereignty.

These general goals were far from policy, and judging from the letters of Sir Nicholas, most advising members of court were well aware of the dangers that each action took, made apparent in France's possibility to wage a two-front war against England if Elizabeth continued her current course. So, as an ambassador to his Queen, Sir Nicholas took the lead and discovered the intent of the French and their goals for Scotland and England. As he presented their "policy," he also outlined a possible counteraction. As Ramsay explained, the actions of Elizabeth and her advisors therefore

were reactionary.<sup>215</sup> Indeed, during the first few years of her reign, much of the policy that Elizabeth advocated had no direct course of action, since England could not control the variables that interdicted into such matters. How could the Queen predict the outcome of Knox entering Scotland, or the actions of Philip II? She could not.

Elizabeth had to rely on diplomats to continuously inform and warn her, and her council, on the state of affairs at their embassies. The Queen's men were groomed in matters of court from an early age, and served along the frontlines of the Queen's reactionary policy.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had influence on this policy. His reports and advice kept the Queen alerted to the plots of the French. His ability to use rhetoric to justify Elizabeth's actions proved invaluable at times. Sir Nicholas continually admonished his monarch to not to be fooled by hollow gestures. She continued her support for the Protestant Scots. Throckmorton told members of court of the consequence of a royal marriage to Robert Dudley, and he took direct action to sway the Queen. In Newhaven, Throckmorton moved toward peace when others were for war and peace failed. He informed his Queen to be wary of the Prince of Conde. He consistently supported the Queen's actions when told to do so, and advised the monarch in each matter.

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<sup>215</sup> Ramsay, "The Foreign Policy of Elizabeth I," 167.

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## APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

**Section One**

[fo. 31b]

The bruits which I hear consonant to some advertisements, the place where I am presently, so far distant from your presence, the faithful zeal which I owe to your Grace's honor safety and happy government, which is to succeed happily through a discreet beginning. Hath moved me to tell your Grace my poor opinion ether in the beginning or before your gracious acceptation (where of I have experienced) because I mean well. I do nether despair of a good sequel (god forbid I should speak to arrogantly) if it shall like your grace to put in you're my young and peradventure singular device.

**Section Two**

[fo. 32a]

"Of the resumption apperteyneth to my prerogative being by Gods ordinance called to the imperial crown of this Realm by the death of the late Queen and is also consonant to the presidents and proceedings of my noble progenitors kings of this Realm. In other matters also I think good to confer with you in and to use your council and advise. I doe think good that you take order for the funerals and obsequies of my sister the late queen And as I doubt not but you will sufficiently consider her estate in the said funerals, so I Pray you in proportion the matter consider substantially the state of the Princes revenue, the debt and the thresor, all which my Lords bee better known unto you then unto me. And when you shall have given order for this matter I pray signify unto me your proceedings and opinions. For I think good the burial bee stayed until I bee advertised from the king of Spain my brother what order for his honor he mindeth to take about the funeral. It is also meet that I congratulate the princes my allies with salutations as appertained, and therefore I think good to send my Ambassadors to the Pope, to the Emperor, Electra. And because I would conform myself to the example of my wise progenitors I would know of you whether the kings of Denmark, Sweden, or Pole, and also in what terms wee stand with those Princes for the stilliard matters and for the new amity with the Muscovite, who as I understand is in war with the King of Poles; in the choice of which Ambassadors I will use some deliberation and the upon will signify unto you my pleasure. Moreover I pray give order that present provision bee made in the Tower for me and also that the house of Westminster bee cleansed and provision there laid in also As touching the day of my repair to the Tower I will upon resolution advertise you, that you may give your attendance on me.

**Section Three**

[fo. 32b]



This is sufficient for their first access.

Martin and Pole must then be commanded to attend upon the great Seale, being expert ministers in the forms of the books of sundry natures and in sealing them. It may please your highness also to command Mr. Weston the late Queen's solicitor to attend upon your person forthwith to direct you in the law and to resolve you in doubts as may occur. The man is very honest, discreet, and very well learned and the meetest man in to be your highness general attorney. Mr. Goodrich is not able to attend. The said Weston is brother unto the civilian before named.

It may please you to command Honinges and Hampton, clerks of the council, to attend upon your person for the dispatch of your letters and orders. It may please you to call Mr. Cecil to exercise the room of Secretary about your person forthwith and no other until I may speak with your highness, what time I will present unto you other remembrances meet to be without delay put in execution.

It shall be very requisite that your highness do appoint some privy councilors to associate the old council and to sit with them; but it may please you to defer the swearing and nominating of them until I may inform you of some most necessary respects.

It may please you that all such as you shall admit unto your presence may find Grace in your looks and words, but in any wise it may like your highness to suspend your grants to all persons with good words for a time. For religion and religious proceedings I will not treat of at this time and yet it may like to require the Lords to have a good eye that there be no invocations no tumults or breach of orders in these general words.

It may also please you that the Lord Deputy of Ireland and the council in the Marches of Wales of Wales be with speed by your letters advertised of you coming to the imperial crown of both the realms and that they be required to proclaim your highness Queen &c in the notorious places of their charge.

There be great respects which have moved me to nominate the forenamed persons to by your highness Ambassadors presently to the princes aforesaid. I mean not to have every of them resent whither now he passeth in post.

Item, for the appointing a meet officer in the Tower of London for the time of your coronation, for the summoning your parliament, for creating noble men and knights of the bath, for the manner and the persons of such as ought to be touched and called to reckoning for the usage of the present prisoners. For the nominating of meet officers to every place, for making you a better party in the Lords house of parliament, for appointing a meet common house to you proceedings, for fit and serviceable gentlemen to be of your privy chamber, for the appointing a meet chancellor or keeper of the seal and for nominating a meet speaker in the common house and what matters shall be meet for this parliament, for nominating apt commissioners to take a view of your whole review, debts, jewels, apparel, munitions, navy, mints, and sundry other thing, it may please you to defer the resolution until I have played the fool in the discourse of them as I have done in the premise.

Item, That your Highness do not discover to any of the old council and but to a chosen few others that Mr. Wroth, doctor Cope, and Henry Knollys shall treat with any princes protestant other than the King of Bohemia and that for no league of religion but

because he is the Emperors son and in great reputation with the whole world, for those matters must be handled with secret instruction signed with your own hand.

Item, that Sir Edward Warner is very meet man for many and diverse respects to be constable of the Tower when it shall be meet to displace the other, where in there is to be used cunning dealing for avoiding alarm.

Item, that Sir Peter Mewtas or my brother George Throckmorton be apt persons to take the charge of Garnesey forth with, and Sir Leonard Chamberlaine if he be there to be politiquely revoked from thence, so as he may not upon suspicion have opportunity to practice with the French.

#### Section Four

[fo. 33b]

Meete to bee in election for the Chancellourship or for the keeping of the great seal

The archbishop of York

The Dean of Canterbury: Doctor Wotton

Sir Anthony Cooke

The Lord Rich

Mr. Carell, The attorney of the Dutchy

Justice Dyer. And if a church man have the Greate Seal then a man well learned in the lawes of the Realme is meet to be Master of the Rolls,

Thomas Denton

Bacon, Attorney of the Wardes

Richard Goodriffe [sic]

Sir Richard Sattfeild {sic, but meeter to be made a Baron for many respects.

To be Lord Steward of the House

The Lord Marquess of Northhampton

The Earl of Darbie

The Earl of Arundel

Sir Thomas Cheney, Treasurer.

Sir Edward Rogers, Controller.

Sir Peter Carew, Master of the horse.

To be Lord Chamberlain

The Earl of Bedford

The Lord William Howard

The Lord Williams of Tame.

To Bee Vice-Chamberlaine

Sir Thomas Wroth

Sir Thomas Barkely

Sir Francis Knollys

Sir Richard Blount

Sir William Seyntlowe

Sir William Fitzwilliams.

My opinion is that the captainship of the Guard should be sundred from the vicechamberlainship and thereby two of the aforementioned may be conveniently placed.

Weston to be General Attorney

Because the present scarcitie of well learned men will not suffer Gerard of Graies in to be from the coif, it is meet he be made you sergant and some other better learned then Frevil to be your general solicitor because successively the solicitour must become the General Attourney and at liesur Frevill may be otherwise placed conveniently enough.

To be your general solicitor

Nowell

Gaudie

Corbett

Harper

To be Master of the Request

Common Lawyer Williams

Onsley

Civilians

Doctor Haddon

Doctor Weston

Secretaries

Sir William Cecil

Sir Walter Mildmay

If it be meet to revive the office of Treasurership of the chamber

Sir John Mason

Sir Ambrose Cave

Master Parry cofferer and to have knighthood.

Master of the Jewell house

Mr. Medley, the Lord St. Johns brother

Kellam Throgmorton

Clerkes of the counsel

Honinges

Hampton

Thomas Randoll

Summer, Doctor Wottons man

## Section Five

[fo. 34b]

It may please your Grace that I renew my humble suit unto you to accept my cousin Henry Middlemore to be presently one of the Grooms of your Privy Chamber. I am to answer for his behavior and honesty he is endued with good qualities. I trust your grace will be pleased with his service, and though he be not pas xxiii years of age, he hath a well stayed mind and store of good condition. I had rather he should perform then I would speak either too affectionately or too largely.

It may please your Grace I do at this present forbear to nominate meet persons for many other places and charges, as well because the time serveth not as also because new occasion may cause new advice, and as places shall be void and require ministers I will be ready to do as I have done. The place before named do require in manner at present

disposition. To be assistant to the constable of the Tower, Sir Ralf Hopton and Robert Warner, brother to Sir Edward and very well affected to your grace, be sufficient.

And in my former Articles there be three which require conference with yourself. The first concerned the instruction for you Ambassadors, which require no hasty dispatch. The second concerneth the placing of another Secretary together with Mr. Cecil, which is satisfied in this. The third concerneth the appointing of councilor as well to attend upon your person as to be resident at London to take orders and to make dispatch of your graces affaires, where in, before I show your grace mine own opinion, I think it meet to remember unto you the names and number of your sister councilors, which after some of them hath had access unto your presence, it were met they should keep together at St. James for a time, saving the day of your Graces repair to the tower what time it shall be meet the best of them do give their attendance on your person.

Item, the Cardinall  
 Item, the Archbishop of York  
 Item, the Bishop of Durham  
 Item, the Bishop of Elie  
 Item, the Lord Treasurer  
 Item, the Earl of Arundel  
 Item, the Earl of Shrewsbury  
 Item, the Earl of Pembroke  
 Item, The Earl of Derby  
 Item, The Earl of Oxford  
 Item, The Lord Privy Seal  
 Item, The Lord Admiral  
 Item, the Lord Chamberlain  
 Item, The Lord Mountagu  
 Item, Sir Thomas Cheney  
 Item, Sir Thomas Cornewallis  
 Item, Sir William Peter  
 Item, Sir John Baker  
 Item, Sir Francis Englefield  
 Item, Sir Edward Walgrave  
 Item, Sir Henry Jernengham  
 Item, Sir Thomas Wharton  
 Item, Sir Richard Southwell  
 Item, Sir William Cordell  
 Item, Sir John Borne  
 Item, Sir John Mason  
 Item, Sir Henry Benefield  
 Item, Doctor Wotton  
 Item, Doctor Boxall.

And to The intent until the funeral be past the Realm may perceive you will use the advise of many and the wisest, it may like your grace that no oath be ministered to

any nor no nomination be had or used for a time privy councilors; and nevertheless it may like you to appoint these hereafter ensuing to talk of such your affaires as you are pleased to be attendant as occasions shall be offered from time to time. It shall not be meet that either the old or new should wholly understand what you mean, but to use them as instruments to serve yourself with: for some be meet to countenance your service and some meet to give advise and serve indeed.