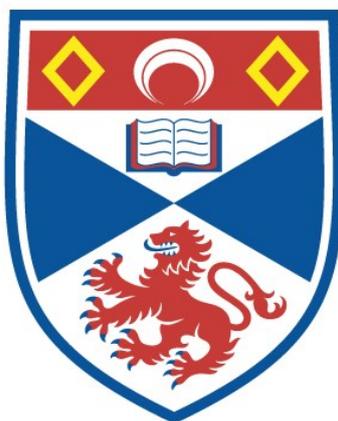


**DIPLOMACY & DECEPTION:
KING JAMES VI OF SCOTLAND'S FOREIGN RELATIONS
WITH EUROPE (C. 1584-1603)**

Cynthia Ann Fry

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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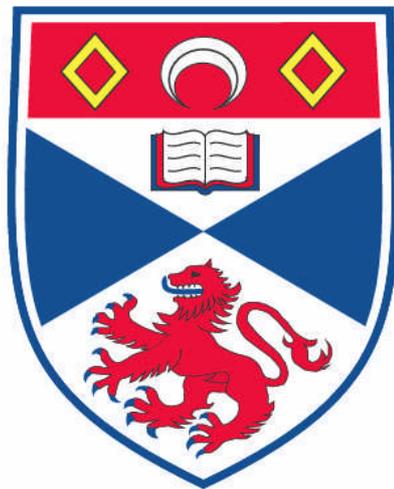
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DIPLOMACY & DECEPTION:
King James VI of Scotland's Foreign Relations
with Europe (c. 1584-1603)

Cynthia Ann Fry



This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the
degree of PhD at the University of St Andrews

October 2014

ABSTRACT

This thesis is the first attempt to provide an assessment of Scottish-Jacobean foreign relations within a European context in the years before 1603. Moreover, it represents the only cohesive study of the events that formed the foundation of the diplomatic policies and practices of the first ruler of the Three Kingdoms. Whilst extensive research has been conducted on the British and English aspects of James VI & I's diplomatic activities, very little work has been done on James's foreign policies prior to his accession to the English throne. James VI ruled Scotland for almost twenty years before he took on the additional role of King of England and Ireland. It was in his homeland that James developed and refined his diplomatic skills, and built the relationships with foreign powers that would continue throughout his life. James's pre-1603 relationships with Denmark-Norway, France, Spain, the Papacy, the German and Italian states, the Spanish Netherlands and the United Provinces all influenced his later 'British' policies, and it is only through a study such as this that their effects can be fully understood. Through its broad scope and unique perspective, this thesis not only contributes to Scottish historiography, but also strengthens and updates our understanding of Jacobean diplomacy. Furthermore, it adds to European perspectives of international politics by re-integrating Scotland into the narrative of late sixteenth century European diplomatic history.

DECLARATION

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Cynthia Fry, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length (not including appendices and bibliography), has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree. I was admitted as a research student in September 2010 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in September 2010; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out at the University of St Andrews between 2010 and 2014.

Date: 15 October 2014 Signature of candidate:

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>ABSTRACT</i>	<i>I</i>
<i>DECLARATION</i>	<i>II</i>
<i>TABLE OF CONTENTS</i>	<i>III</i>
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	<i>V</i>
<i>STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS</i>	<i>VII</i>
<i>ABBREVIATIONS</i>	<i>IX</i>
INTRODUCTION: SCOTLAND AS A PERIPHERY?	1
<i>HISTORIOGRAPHY</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>THE HISTORY OF EARLY MODERN DIPLOMACY</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>METHODOLOGY & SOURCES</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>SCOPE & OVERVIEW</i>	<i>21</i>
CHAPTER ONE: ESTABLISHING POLICIES, 1584-1587	24
<i>THE RUTHVEN RAID</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>THE AULD ALLIANCE'S FAILURE TO AID</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>PROSPECTIVE INVADERS & JAMES'S PETITION TO SPAIN</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>ESTABLISHING POWER AT HOME & ABROAD</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>THE LEAGUE OF AMITY</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>RUMOURS OF LEVIES & PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>THE EXECUTION OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	<i>54</i>
CHAPTER TWO: THE HUNT FOR A WIFE, 1584-1595	56
<i>MARRIAGE NEGOTIATIONS</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>AN 'IVEL-SEASONED JOURNEY'</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>AN EXERCISE IN ABSENTEE GOVERNMENT</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>THE PROPOSAL FOR A PROTESTANT LEAGUE</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	<i>79</i>
CHAPTER THREE: FEARS, HOPES & REALITY, 1588-1595	81
<i>ENGLAND'S NORTHERN NEIGHBOUR STAYS TRUE</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>UNFULFILLED PROMISES & THEIR CONSEQUENCES</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>THE PARMA LETTERS & THE SPANISH BLANKS</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>ROYAL CONVERSIONS TO CATHOLICISM</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>THE BIRTH OF AN HEIR</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>'THE CHIEF AND PRINCIPAL STAY'</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	<i>109</i>
CHAPTER FOUR: NEW FRIENDS & OLD ALLIES, 1596-1603	111
<i>GAUGING SUPPORT & ESTABLISHING AMBITIONS</i>	<i>111</i>
<i>KEEPING FRIENDS CLOSE & ENEMIES CLOSER</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>TAKING THE DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE</i>	<i>127</i>
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	<i>133</i>

CONCLUSION: THE IMPACT OF EXPERIENCE & AMBITION	136
<i>JAMES'S FOREIGN POLICY: THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF EUROPE</i>	137
APPENDIX I: AMBASSADORS TO SCOTLAND, 1584-1603	144
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM BRUNSWICK (BRU)</i>	144
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM DENMARK-NORWAY (DN)</i>	144
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM ENGLAND (EN)</i>	147
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM FRANCE (FR)</i>	154
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM MECKLENBURG (ME)</i>	157
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM THE PAPAL COURT (PC)</i>	157
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM SPAIN (SP)</i>	158
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM THE SPANISH NETHERLANDS (SN)</i>	159
<i>AMBASSADORS FROM THE UNITED PROVINCES (UP)</i>	159
APPENDIX II: AMBASSADORS FROM SCOTLAND, 1584-1603	161
<i>AMBASSADORS TO BRANDENBURG (BRA)</i>	161
<i>AMBASSADORS TO BRUNSWICK (BRU)</i>	162
<i>AMBASSADORS TO DENMARK-NORWAY (DN)</i>	162
<i>AMBASSADORS TO ENGLAND (EN)</i>	166
<i>AMBASSADORS TO FRANCE (FR)</i>	170
<i>AMBASSADORS TO FLORENCE (FL)</i>	174
<i>AMBASSADORS TO HAMBURG (HA)</i>	176
<i>AMBASSADORS TO HESSE (HE)</i>	176
<i>AMBASSADORS TO MECKLENBURG (ME)</i>	177
<i>AMBASSADORS TO THE PAPAL COURT (PC)</i>	178
<i>AMBASSADORS TO PERSIA (PE)</i>	179
<i>AMBASSADORS TO POLAND-LITHUANIA (PL)</i>	179
<i>AMBASSADORS TO POMERANIA (PO)</i>	180
<i>AMBASSADORS TO SAXONY (SA)</i>	180
<i>AMBASSADORS TO SAVOY (SY)</i>	181
<i>AMBASSADORS TO SCHLESWIG (SE)</i>	182
<i>AMBASSADORS TO SPAIN (SP)</i>	182
<i>AMBASSADORS TO SWEDEN (SW)</i>	184
<i>AMBASSADORS TO THE UNITED PROVINCES (UP)</i>	185
<i>AMBASSADORS TO VENICE (VE)</i>	186
BIBLIOGRAPHY	188
<i>ARCHIVAL SOURCES</i>	188
<i>PRINTED PRIMARY SOURCES</i>	193
<i>MONOGRAPHS</i>	203
<i>CHAPTERS IN EDITED COLLECTIONS</i>	213
<i>JOURNAL ARTICLES</i>	226
<i>UNPUBLISHED THESES</i>	236
<i>DIGITAL REPOSITORIES & DATABASES</i>	238

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STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS

This thesis uses the Gregorian calendar (with the new year commencing on 1 January) for all events and manuscript documents, and they are cited with the new style year, rather than both (i.e. 1588, not 1587/8); new style days and months have also been used. Exceptions have been made only where the date on the manuscript is part of the reference, or when the date is mentioned in a direct quote, in which case the Gregorian date is placed in brackets next to the original date.

Modern spellings have been used for all place names, except when in direct quotes or where the modern equivalent is unclear. Personal names have been spelt as they would have been at the time, and not anglicised, thus Henri for the French king, but Henry for the English king; Anna of Denmark, as the queen spelt her own name, not Anne, its anglicised version – where necessary reference is made to alternate spellings. The author has expanded abbreviations used in manuscripts. Where the author has added word(s) to clarify a quote then square brackets “[]” have been used.

Printed primary sources have included the date and location of the original document’s writing where possible, and this has been placed in square brackets “[]” prior to the author and addressee of the document. Manuscript material is formatted differently, with the date appearing in parentheses “()” after the title of the document.

Where not specifically stated it should be assumed that government institutions such as the Privy Council are Scottish. Weights, measures and financial currencies (with clarification added for £ Sterling and £ Scots) have been left as they are found in the sources unless explicitly stated otherwise.

The bibliography contains all of the printed and archival material viewed whilst conducting research for this thesis; however, only those items that contained relevant information are referenced in the text. Citations are given in full in their first instance, with shortened references used thereafter (these do not re-start at the beginning of each chapter). Archival material listed in the bibliography is given at the collection level in the form in which it appears in that archive’s catalogue. References to specific archival documents may be found throughout the thesis. Documents cited from the *British Library* and the *National Archives of Great Britain* were largely (although not exclusively) obtained from State Papers Online, and the documents used from Hatfield House from the Cecil Papers website. Documents from *Archivo General de Simancas* are given with their folio number if they have one, however many documents are not foliated and those that are may not be in numerical order within their boxes in the archive. All documents from *Statens Arkiver Rigsarkivet* are not foliated and therefore are

given with their box number only. In order to make it easier to find the archival documents cited in the thesis their titles have been left as they are printed in the catalogue or archive finding aids; however, where necessary clarifications have been placed in square brackets “[]”. For example, ‘Bowes to the King [James VI]’.

The appendices for this thesis are a catalogue of the official and unofficial agents employed by various European powers to perform diplomatic duties in Scotland, and vice versa, during the personal reign of James VI. The catalogue includes only those individuals and missions which were discovered during the course of doctoral research and it is likely that further research - and a broader scope than this project allowed - will no doubt identify further embassies, both formal and informal. Despite these limitations, the catalogue’s range and detail represents the scale of diplomatic activity that Scotland was engaged in during the late sixteenth century. The appendices are arranged first by the place of the missions’ origin (appendix I) or their destination (appendix II). The missions are grouped first alphabetically by their country/kingdom/state of destination and then chronologically.

Within each appendix the missions are numbered in a code; the first set of letters refers to the place of origin, followed by a dash “-” and a second set of letters indicating the destination. This is followed by an underscore “_” and the mission number, indicating its place in the chronological order of missions identified from that origin and to that destination within the stated period for this thesis. For example, SC-DN_01 is the first diplomatic mission identified between 1584 and 1603 from Scotland to Denmark-Norway. These codes appear in the footnotes of the thesis indicating that further details and sources for the mission discussed in the text may be found in the appendix. Within the appendices uncertainties in dates are listed as *c.*, or where an event is known to be before or after a specific date this is indicated with the greater than “>” and less than “<” symbols. Where a date is not known at all, the information is left blank. Where names or ranks are unknown these are left blank, and where uncertain they are indicated by a question mark “?”.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AGS Archivo General de Simancas (Simancas, Spain).
- APC Dasent, John Roche, ed. *Acts of the Privy Council of England 1540-97*. 27 vols. London, 1890-1964.
- ASV Archivio Segreto Vaticano (Rome, Italy).
- BL The British Library (London, England).
- Calderwood* Calderwood, David. *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*. Edited by Thomas Thomson. 7 vols. Edinburgh, 1842-1849.
- Carew MS* Brewer, J. S., and William Bullen, eds. *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts, Preserved in the Archbishopal Library at Lambeth*. 6 vols. London, 1867-1873.
- CLP Borders* Bain, Joseph, ed. *Calendar of Letters and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the Borders of England and Scotland...* 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1894-1896.
- CSP Domestic* Lemon, Robert, and Mary Anne Everett Green, eds. *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic Series of the Reign of Elizabeth*. 7 vols. London, 1856-1871.
- CSP Foreign* Lomas, S. C., Allen B. Hinds, and Richard Bruce Wernham, eds. *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth*. 22 vols. London, 1861-1950.
- CSP Scotland* Bain, Joseph, William K. Boyd, Henry W. Meikle, and Annie Isabella Dunlop, eds. *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots* 13 vols. Edinburgh, 1898-1969.
- CSP Spain* Hume, Martin Andrew Sharp, ed. *Calendar of State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain Preserved In the Archives of Simancas and Elsewhere*. 19 vols. London, 1864-1947.
- CSP Venice* Brown, Horatio, Rawdon Brown, G. Cavendish Bentinck, and Allen Hinds, eds. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice* 38 vols. London, 1864-1947.
- DNB Matthew, H. C. G., and B. Harrison, eds. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online Edition. Oxford, 2004. <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>>.
- EEBO Early English Books Online, <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com>>.

<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i> (Oxford, England).
<i>Foedera</i>	Rymer, Thomas, ed. <i>Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, Et Cujuscunq̄ue Generis Acta Publica, Inter Reges Angliae Et Alios Quosvis Imperatores, Reges,</i> 17 vols. London, 1816-1869.
Hatfield House, CP	Cecil Papers (Hertfordshire, England). < http://cecilpapers.chadwyck.com/ >.
NA	Nationaal Archief den Haag (The Hague, The Netherlands).
NLS	National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh, Scotland).
NRAS	National Register of Archives for Scotland (Edinburgh, Scotland).
NRS	National Records of Scotland (Edinburgh, Scotland).
<i>Papiers D'état</i>	Teulet, Jean Baptiste Alexandre Théodore. <i>Papiers D'état, Pièces Et Documents Inédits Ou Peu Connus, relatifs a L'histoire De l'Écosse Au XVIe Siècle, Tirés Des Bibliothèques Et Des Archives De France.</i> Paris, 1852-60.
<i>Relations Politiques</i>	Teulet, Jean Baptiste Alexandre Théodore. <i>Relations Politiques De La France Et De l'Espagne Avec l'Écosse Au XVIe Siècle: Papiers D'etat, Pièces Et Documents Inédits Ou Peu Connus, Tirés Des Bibliothèques Et Des Archives De France.</i> 5 vols. Paris, 1862.
<i>RPCS</i>	Masson, David, ed. <i>Register of the Privy Council of Scotland.</i> 13 vols. Edinburgh, 1877-1970.
<i>RPS</i>	Brown, Keith M. <i>Records of the Parliaments of Scotland,</i> 2007. < http://www.rps.ac.uk >.
<i>Salisbury</i>	Cecil, Robert. <i>Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury [Robert Cecil], Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire.</i> 14 vols. London, 1833-1976.
SAR	Statens Arkiver Rigsarkivet (Copenhagen, Denmark).
SCA	Scottish Catholic Archive (Aberdeen, Scotland).
<i>SHR</i>	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i> (Edinburgh, Scotland).
SPO	State Papers Online < http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714.aspx >.
<i>Spottiswood</i>	Spottiswood, John. <i>The History of the Church of Scotland: Beginning the Year of Our Lord 203, and Continued to the End of the Reign of King James VI.</i> 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1851.
<i>SSNE</i>	Murdoch, Steve, and Alexia Grosjean. "The Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern European Biographical Database" (1995-2013). < http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/ssne >.
TNA	The National Archive of Great Britain (London, England).
<i>Warrender Papers</i>	Dunlop, Annie Isabella, ed. <i>The Warrender Papers.</i> 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1931-1932.

INTRODUCTION: SCOTLAND AS A PERIPHERY?

*There were still around the periphery of Europe many small or relatively underdeveloped states – the Scandinavian kingdoms, Poland, Scotland, Hungary, Portugal ... – whose role in international relations was secondary, whose outlooks and interests were limited, and who often reacted to the initiatives of the greater states rather than taking any of their own.*¹

Traditional European diplomatic historiography has cast certain kingdoms as the ‘main characters’ of diplomacy and left those on the ‘periphery’ to serve as a backdrop; they are noticed only when the supposed main characters interacted with them. This thesis fits with a range of work currently being undertaken to challenge the view that smaller powers did not make an important contribution to early modern European diplomacy. Through analysing the role of Scotland within European diplomacy from the perspective of the Scottish court, it is possible to show that although often considered financially poor and militarily weak James VI could be influential in European politics.² Scotland’s geographic position and the claim of the King of Scots to succeed to the English throne, in combination with James’s role in the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe at the time, meant that Scotland was anything but a diplomatically peripheral kingdom in the late sixteenth century.

The subject of early modern Scottish diplomacy has often been minimised or overlooked even within a Scottish context. In Michael Lynch’s *Scotland: A New History* the topic is entirely ignored, whilst the *New Penguin History of Scotland* discusses only Anglo-Scottish relations when dealing with foreign policy, and then for less than a paragraph.³ This is not necessarily because historians have been unaware of the need for such a study. In 1994, Alan MacInnes urged Scottish historians to re-incorporate Scotland into European historiography, although few took his advice.⁴ According to Keith Brown this has largely failed, despite being both a necessary and valid methodology, due to the wide range of reading required and the lack of time scholars have to undertake such a broad

¹ M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450–1919* (London, 2001), p.2. This quote is referring to late mediaeval Europe; however, early modern historians share the sentiment.

² The view of Scotland as militarily weak in the sixteenth century is challenged in *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years’ War, 1618–1648* (London, 2014), pp.11–24.

³ Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History*, Rev. ed (London, 1992); R. A. Houston and William Knox, eds., *The New Penguin History of Scotland: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London, 2001), pp.195–6.

⁴ Allan MacInnes, “Early Modern Scotland: The Current State of Play,” *SHR* 73, no.195 (April 1994), pp.30–1.

project due to the pressures of modern academia.⁵ Brown also noted that despite the issue of the succession, Scottish foreign policy post-1560 has not yet ‘inspired a major study’ - meaning a holistic study of the kingdom’s diplomatic activities.⁶ Indeed, he argued that sixteenth century Scottish diplomacy is one of the major gaps in early modern Scottish historiography, highlighting the requirement for this thesis and others like it.⁷ The absence of works which incorporate Scotland into European events may be the reason that so few early modern European historians look to Scottish history for comparison and consideration.⁸

Diplomatic history necessitates the study of complex and interrelated events, and requires the historian to examine both the affect of and effect on events that were occurring simultaneously across Europe at any given point in time. Such an interrelated web of information has to date produced two basic methodologies. The first is a type of general history of events: this approach gives the broad picture of what was taking place in Europe and provides little if any detail on specific diplomatic events. Such works are necessary in order to gain some understanding of the ‘big picture’, highlighting the broad trends and the development of diplomacy as a discipline within Europe. The downside to such studies is that they have a tendency to oversimplify events and to focus only on those kingdoms that they have deemed the most important based on retrospective knowledge of the historical development of kingdoms, nations and states.⁹ The second methodology for diplomatic history, wherein this thesis falls, is the specific case or kingdom/state study, which examines in detail the diplomatic events of a particular kingdom or looks at a specific foreign relationship.¹⁰ These works are,

⁵ Keith Brown, “Early Modern Scottish History – A Survey,” *SHR* 92, Supplement (April 2013), p.6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.9–10. Whilst a cohesive study of Scotland and Europe has not been completed several excellent bi-lateral studies of relationships between Scotland and European powers do exist, for example: Steve Murdoch, “Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart 1603-1660 : A Diplomatic and Military Analysis” (PhD Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1998); Alexia Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654* (Leiden, 2003); Kathrin Zickermann, *Across the German Sea: Early Modern Scottish Connections with the Wider Elbe-Weser Region* (Leiden, 2013); Siobhan Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713* (London, 2014); Claire McLoughlin, “Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730” (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2014).

⁷ Brown, “Early Modern Scottish History – A Survey,” pp.9–10, 23.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁹ See for example: Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*; Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory, and Administration* (London, 1995); David Jayne Hill, *A History of European Diplomacy*, 3 vols. (New York, 1967); Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955); Joycelyne Gledhill Russell, *Diplomats at Work: Three Renaissance Studies* (Gloucestershire, 1992); Joycelyne Gledhill Russell, *Peacemaking in the Renaissance* (London, 1985); Malcolm Thorp and Arthur Joseph Slavin, eds., *Politics, Religion & Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honour of DeLamar Jensen* (Kirksville, MO, 1994).

¹⁰ See for example: Gary Bell, “Elizabethan Diplomacy: The Subtle Revolution,” in *Politics, Religion & Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honour of DeLamar Jensen*, ed. by Malcolm Thorp and Arthur Joseph Slavin (Kirksville, MO, 1994), pp.267–88; Cristina Borreguero Beltrán, “Philip of Spain: The Spider’s Web of News and Information,” in *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Brendan Maurice Dooley (Burlington, 2010), pp.23–50; Charles Howard Carter, *The Secret*

by nature, told from a particular perspective, leaving out or glossing over the detailed events occurring elsewhere on the diplomatic stage. This is understandable, for if it was not done, there would be no room for the level of detail these works present. The drawback of these studies is that they can, if the author is not careful, lose context and skew the importance of the location under scrutiny by ascribing too much significance to it. This thesis endeavours to avoid this pitfall by examining, where possible, the way in which foreign powers perceived Scotland and the role of James VI in European affairs, in addition to trying to understand James VI's own perception of his role. Nevertheless, by necessity of the subject this thesis cannot discuss every single European event or perspective, although efforts have been made to present as fair and as broad a view as possible.

Historiography

In undertaking the research on James VI's foreign relations numerous historians of both Scottish and European history have proved influential in enlightening this project and providing the foundation on which this thesis builds. Without the broad studies done on the kingdoms considered most powerful in the early modern period – namely England, France and the Habsburg Empire – and their diplomatic activities, we would have no context in which to place studies that are more detailed. In addition, in recent years the importance of Denmark-Norway, Sweden and Poland-Lithuania have been noted in diplomatic historiography as historians have realised that the seventeenth century cannot be viewed through the lens of nineteenth century great power politics.¹¹ Indeed, Luc Duerloo has created the term 'middling powers' to identify:

states that are too small to compete single-handedly with the great powers, but too big to be ignored completely. In

Diplomacy of the Hapsburgs, 1598-1625 (New York, 1964); Loretta Burns, "Cleric-Diplomats and the Sixteenth-Century French State," *The Historian* 57, no.4 (1995), pp.721–83; F. Jeffrey Platt, "The Elizabethan 'Foreign Office,'" *The Historian* 56, no.4 (June 1994), pp.725–40; Concepción Saenz-Cambra, "Scotland and Philip II: 1580-98" (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2003); Murdoch, "Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart."

¹¹ Denmark-Norway held a trans-Atlantic empire in the early modern period and Sweden held large tracts of Europe and was a signatory at Westphalia, showing that although located on the northern periphery, these kingdoms were far from insignificant on European history. Martin Bellamy, *Christian IV and His Navy: A Political and Administrative History of the Danish Navy, 1596-1648* (Leiden, 2006); Paul Douglas Lockhart, *Frederik II and the Protestant Cause: Denmark's Role in the Wars of Religion, 1559-1596* (Leiden, 2004); Steve Murdoch, *Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Association in Northern Europe, 1603-1746* (Leiden, 2006); Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*. Other middling powers have also received recent attention, including the Spanish Netherlands and Savoy. Luc Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety: Archduke Albert (1598-1621) and Habsburg Political Culture in an Age of Religious Wars* (Farnham, 2012); Toby Osborne, *Dynasty and Diplomacy in the Court of Savoy: Political Culture and the Thirty Years' War* (Cambridge, 2002).

practical terms they are the lesser states that great powers prefer to have on board as allies in times of conflict.¹²

This more nuanced perspective on the early modern dynamics of power is an essential and crucial step forward; however, more work is required on the kingdoms that heretofore have been sidelined by the major European powers, because even these smaller, less powerful kingdoms had an impact on international relations. Diplomacy is by nature interconnected, and the policy of one kingdom was reliant on and a response to the policies of others.¹³ Therefore, it is impossible to view any one kingdom's diplomacy in a vacuum. The kingdoms traditionally considered to be 'peripheral' were actually integral to the policies of the great powers, and without detailed surveys of their foreign policies the complex nature of diplomatic history is lost.

Early modern European diplomatic histories written in English have largely concentrated on the houses of Tudor, Guise, Valois and Habsburg to the detriment of other smaller dynasties. These large kingdoms are often focused on because of their perceived importance to diplomatic events, and it is true that they often did drive politics of the period. European histories of early modern diplomacy are more diverse and show that historians have recognised the valuable archival resources in Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Germany and Italy. However, because these excellent histories are often not written in English they generally have little impact on British historiography. The differences between histories written in English and other European languages exemplifies the barrier that language can and does cause for historians working on numerous kingdoms and powers. Whilst this thesis has relied heavily on the translation work of others to assist in the use of documents in German, Latin, Italian, French, Swedish, Danish and Dutch, it too falls prey to the limitations of language and the complete mastery of multiple nations' historiographic traditions. These difficulties are unavoidable for all but the most skilled linguist, but recognition of these limitations and sincere attempts to balance these where possible will continue to improve diplomatic histories written in any language.

In addition to the general diplomatic histories of major European powers this thesis also draws on the work done on Scottish commercial and military relations that has significantly advanced our understanding of Scotland's role in Europe in the late sixteenth century. Whilst these works focus on different aspects of Scottish relations, their nature required them to touch on the formal and informal aspects of diplomacy that influenced trade or the levying of soldiers. Those working on military communities abroad have also noted the role that soldiers played in carrying messages and acting as agents for the Stuart court in

¹² *Dynasty and Piety*, p.9.

¹³ Diplomacy is also more than the formal signing of treaties or embassy visits. It included the personal networks of the ambassadors and agents – particularly their patronage and cultural networks – and is much broader than traditional diplomatic histories have considered. This 'new diplomatic history' has recently become popular and has done much to advance our understanding of early modern diplomacy. See especially: Osborne, *Dynasty and Diplomacy*, pp.2–4; Daniela Frigo, ed., *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, 2000), p.4.

the absence of formal ambassadors, and these studies have enriched our understanding not only of diplomacy in general but also Scotland's role within it.

Mercantile histories have previously recognised the importance to diplomacy of Scottish conservators and factors – men who acted as a type of residential ambassador who mediated trade disputes and private matters between Scots and foreign kingdoms.¹⁴ This often meant that they were fully integrated within their host communities, with access to complex networks of merchants of various nationalities. They also had access to news from all over the world and the ability to transport that news as well as goods back home. Socio-economic historians, such as Kathrin Zickermann, Siobhan Talbott and Claire McLoughlin, have all touched upon the importance of these individuals to Scottish diplomacy; however, more work is needed to fully understand their role and influence in the period under consideration here.¹⁵

Siobhan Talbott's work on Franco-Scottish communities and trade has highlighted the continuance of the 'Auld Alliance' – which included special diplomatic as well as mercantile privileges – past 1560; however, both her thesis and book have a relatively large time-period to cover and thus spend very little time on the 1580s and 1590s.¹⁶ In addition, Talbott has focused on the commercial networks more than the diplomatic policies that informed them, providing a broader context for this work without overlapping it. Talbott is in the minority, however, when it comes to recognising the importance of Scotland to southern European kingdoms. John Elder's book on Spanish influences in Scottish history presents a one-sided view of Scotland's history that gives little

¹⁴ The conservators were in regular communication with the Scottish court and offered an informal and personal venue to pursue diplomacy. *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.650–3 [12 July 1591, Edinburgh, "Actis, statuis, Constitutionis and Ordinances concernign the office Conservatorie, and Marchantis of this natioun trafficquing within the Law Cuntreis, for the honour of the realme and weill and commoditie of the saidis merchantis"]; Andrew Halyburton, *Ledger of Andrew Halyburton, Conservator of the Privileges of the Scotch Nation in the Netherlands, 1492-1503: Together With, The Book of Customs and Valuation of Merchandise in Scotland, 1612* (Edinburgh, 1867). Conservators were also sometimes former ambassadors, such as George Hackett, who was an ambassador for James to Denmark-Norway and later served as the conservator at Campvere in 1591. SSNE 1527; SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. James VI, "Regarding George Hackett," (2 March 1590); Thomas Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot: Scottish-Danish Relations, C. 1450-1707* (Odense, 1988), vol.2 pp.62–3.

¹⁵ Siobhan Talbott, "An Alliance Ended?: Franco-Scottish Commercial Relations, 1560-1713" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2010); McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730"; Kathrin Zickermann, "Across the German Sea: Scottish Commodity Exchange, Network Building and Communities in the Wider Elbe-Weser Region in the Early Modern Period" (PhD, University of St Andrews, 2009). See also: Alexia Grosjean, "Scotland: Sweden's Closest Ally?," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.143–71; Steve Murdoch and Andrew MacKillop, eds., *Military Governors and Imperial Frontiers C. 1600-1800: A Study of Scotland and Empires* (Leiden, 2003); Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean, eds., *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period* (Leiden, 2005).

¹⁶ Talbott, "An Alliance Ended," pp.26–35, 124–30; Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713*, pp.15–33. See also: Elizabeth Bonner, "French Naturalization of the Scots in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Historical Journal* 40, no.4 (December 1997), pp.1085–1115; Elizabeth Bonner, "Scotland's 'Auld Alliance' with France, 1295-1560," *History* 84, no.273 (1999), pp.5–30.

credit to the king or his subjects for influencing events in Spain.¹⁷ Concepción Saenz-Cambra has conducted some fruitful research on the Scoto-Spanish relationship, focusing specifically on the reasons that Philip II failed to return Scotland to the Catholic faith and bring it under the authority of the Habsburg Empire.¹⁸ Although her research is very informative, it lacks insight into how the Scoto-Spanish relationship was important to Scotland, and simply examines why the relationship was important to Spain.

Claire McLoughlin's research on Scottish trade with Iberia looks at the relationship from the Scottish perspective, and whilst she considers wider political events the focus of her work is on the individual merchants and their networks rather than on the diplomatic policies and foreign relations of the court that influenced them.¹⁹ Like Talbott, McLoughlin recognises the importance of Scottish trade and merchants to Europe; however, both focus on the mercantile aspects of Scotland's diplomacy, as well as devoting the majority of their attention to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, their work has been important in providing context for this thesis.

Important work has also been done on Scotland's relations with the Netherlands in the late medieval and early modern periods.²⁰ In particular, the work of James Ferguson on the Scots-Dutch brigades and of Douglas Catterall on Scottish communities in the Netherlands has shown the importance of the United Provinces to the Scottish economy and military power, as well as Scotland's importance to the Netherlands.²¹ Ferguson's is principally a calendar of documents relating to military and diplomatic relations between Scotland and the United Provinces in the early modern period. As it is a collection of primary papers rather than a monograph there is little analysis of the documents within the book. The comments that are included, however, strongly support the presentation of Scoto-Dutch relations as being important to both powers. They also show an

¹⁷ John Rawson Elder, *Spanish Influences in Scottish History* (Glasgow, 1920).

¹⁸ Saenz-Cambra, "Scotland and Philip II: 1580-98"; Concepción Saenz-Cambra, "Colonel William Sempill of Lochwinnoch (1545-1630): A Strategist for Spain," *Tiempos Modernos* 13, no.1 (2006), pp.1-20; David Worthington, "Alternative Diplomacy? Scottish Exiles at the Courts of the Habsburgs and Their Allies, 1618-1648," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.51-75; David Worthington, *Scots in Habsburg Service, 1618-1648* (Leiden, 2004).

¹⁹ McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730," pp.61-75.

²⁰ John Davidson and Alexander Gray, *The Scottish Staple at Veere: A Study in the Economic History of Scotland*. (London, 1909). See also Halyburton, *Ledger*; Esther Mijers, "News from the Republic of Letters": *Scottish Students, Charles Mackie, and the United Provinces, 1650-1750* (Leiden, 2012).

²¹ Catterall's book makes no mention of James VI&I within the text, which focuses on the mid and latter seventeenth century, however it is useful in providing a broad context for Scots-Dutch relations. James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899); Douglas Catterall, *Community without Borders: Scots Migrants and the Changing Face of Power in the Dutch Republic, C. 1600-1700* (Leiden, 2002); Douglas Catterall, "Scots along the Maas, c.1570- 1750," in *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean (Leiden, 2005), pp.169-90.

understanding of the military, commercial and diplomatic links which influenced this complex yet fruitful relationship.

Historians of northern Europe have traditionally been more considerate of Scotland's longstanding interactions with the Baltic. Thomas Riis's work on the relations between Scotland and Denmark from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries highlights the numerous individuals who travelled between the two kingdoms and the diplomatic relations of their respective monarchs.²² Whilst this work is influential in providing both a Danish perspective to Scotland's role in Europe as well as Scotland's view of Denmark-Norway, Riis fails to fully situate this relationship within a wider European context. Likewise, David Stevenson's monograph on the marriage of James VI and Anna of Denmark updates some of the historiography regarding the specific event but fails to place this within a broader spectrum.²³ Steve Murdoch's work on the Stuart-Oldenburg relations moves forward from Riis and Stevenson to provide a longer period of study that is focused on the royal households, yet this is still a study of one relationship and focused on the seventeenth century. Whilst it alludes to James's diplomacy pre-1603, it is not the focus of the book and therefore it acts as a compliment rather than a competitor to this thesis.²⁴ Alexia Grosjean's research on the informal yet highly influential interactions between Scotland and Sweden show that the kingdom was, without a doubt, intimately involved in Europe in the seventeenth century.²⁵ In regards to Scoto-German relations, Kathrin Zickermann's work shows the strong relations of two geo-political regions in terms of trade. This mercantile connection affected not only the social history of the time but also politics, and whilst it is not the focus of the book the few mentions there are to James's pre-1603 reign support the assertions of this thesis that Scotland was involved in Europe and influential in its politics.²⁶

Peter Paul Bajer's research on Scottish nobles in Poland-Lithuania provides an informative account of the Scottish community there and their activities within Poland.²⁷ Equally, Anna Kalinowska has done substantial work on Jacobean diplomats in Poland-Lithuania throughout the early seventeenth century,

²² Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*. In addition, Danish political histories of the seventeenth century reference Scotland and its interactions with northern Europe, for example: J. A. Fridericia, *Danmarks Ydre Politiske Historie (1629-1660)*, 3 vol., Second Edition (Kjøbenhavn, 1972).

²³ David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996).

²⁴ Murdoch, "Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart"; Steve Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart, 1603-1660: A Diplomatic and Military Analysis* (East Linton, 2000), pp.22-43 passim.

²⁵ Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*, pp.11-135 passim.

²⁶ Zickermann, *Across the German Sea*, pp.77-83 passim.

²⁷ Peter Paul Bajer, "Scotsmen and the Polish Nobility from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," in *Britain and Poland-Lithuania: Contact and Comparison from the Middle Ages to 1795*, ed. by Richard Unger (Leiden, 2008), pp.329-54. See also Anna Biegańska, "The Learned Scots in Poland (From the Mid-Sixteenth to the Close of the Eighteenth Century)," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 43, no.1 (March 2001), pp.1-27; Waldemar Kowalski, "The Placement of Urbanised Scots in the Polish Crown during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean (Leiden, 2005), pp.53-104.

although she has yet to find evidence of a formal diplomatic relationship between Scotland and Poland-Lithuania prior to 1603.²⁸ Other historians, such as Robert Frost, have also noted the close ties between the Stuart and Polish-Vasa crowns throughout the early-modern period.²⁹ Whilst not specifically discussed in this thesis, the informal nature of the relationship requires historians to be aware of it and respectful of the influence it had on other foreign policies.

During research for this thesis, a few fragments have emerged to suggest that it is possible that a formal, albeit distant and intermittent, diplomatic relationship did exist between Scotland and Poland-Lithuania during the reign of James VI. The first diplomatic correspondence identified were copies or drafts of two letters sent from James VI to Sigismund III, both dating from August 1598, held in the private collection of Lord Moray. The first letter concerns a Scot by the surname of Cox, who had been born a bastard. When he travelled to Poland-Lithuania and he claimed to have been legitimised, and procured false documents supporting this claim in order to obtain the rights of a citizen, therefore defrauding subjects of both Poland-Lithuania and Scotland. James claimed ignorance and outrage at his subject's behaviour and desired to inform Sigismund and apologise to him for any inconvenience caused.³⁰ The second letter is more interesting, and describes how James had received a letter from Sigismund (carried by a Scottish soldier, Andrew Keith) and is responding to it.³¹ It appears that James had previously offered soldiers to the King of Poland, and although they were not needed at this juncture, James is reiterating the offer of a levy and promises it at any time in the future should Sigismund desire them.³² Therefore, it

²⁸ Anna Kalinowska, "Pardon Me My Lord, That I Wrytte to Your Honor in Scottish..." - William Bruce as the First Stuart Diplomatic Agent in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," in *Scotland and Poland: Historical Encounters, 1500-2010*, ed. by Thomas Martin Devine and David Hesse (Edinburgh, 2011), pp.51-61; Anna Kalinowska, "The Polish Match? - British Diplomacy, Poland-Lithuania and the Stuart-Vasa Dynastic Alliance Project," *Sarmatia Europaea: Polish Review of Early Modern History* 2 (2012 2011).

²⁹ Robert Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State, and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558-1721* (New York, 2000); Robert Frost, "The Penury of These Malignant Regions': Comparing the Rural Economies of the Scottish Highlands and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Early Modern Period," in *Scotland and Poland: Historical Encounters, 1500-2010*, ed. by Thomas Martin Devine and David Hesse (Edinburgh, 2011), pp.109-34; Robert Frost, "Hiding from the Dogs: The Problems of Polish-Scottish Political Dialogue, 1550-1707," in *Scotland and Poland: Historical Encounters, 1500-2010*, ed. by Thomas Martin Devine and David Hesse (Edinburgh, 2011), pp.21-37. See also: Martyna Mirecka, "British Perceptions of Poland-Lithuania in the Long Seventeenth Century" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2014).

³⁰ NRAS217, Box 14/525. "James VI to Sigismund III of Poland (Copy)," (17 August 1598).

³¹ NRAS217, Box 14/522. "James VI to Sigismund III of Poland (Copy)," (17 August 1598). It is highly likely that the Andrew Keith referred to in this letter is the same man who served in Sweden and Denmark as a soldier and who also worked as an agent for James VI in the marriage negotiations of 1584-9. SC-DN_05.

³² It is known that when the Catholic Sigismund was deposed as the King of Sweden in 1598 many Scots sided with Sigismund's replacement, the Protestant Karl X. For more on Scotland and Sweden's relations see: Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*, pp.11-40 passim.; Steve Murdoch, "Oxenstierna's Spies: Sir James Spens and the Organisation of Covert Operations in Early Seventeenth-Century Sweden," in *The Dangerous Trade: Spies, Spymasters and the Making of Europe*, ed. by Daniel Szechi (Dundee, 2010), pp.45-65.

is likely that James was only paying lip service in the letter rather than having a genuine interest in supplying men to Sigismund in the late 1580s.

The only other reference to formal diplomatic relations between the two kingdoms is in the journal of John Skene that includes Poland-Lithuania in a list of places that he and Colonel Stewart were sent to in their 1590 mission to attempt to form a Protestant League in support of James's claim to the English succession.³³ Skene's journal, however, does not appear to mention any details of this part of their mission, and it is unclear if they ever made it to Sigismund's court or if they only intended to go there.³⁴ These few documents indicate that there was a formal diplomatic relationship between Scotland and Poland-Lithuania, but as they are the only letters known to historians at this time, it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding their relationship.³⁵

Thomas McCoog's histories of English, Scottish and Irish Jesuit activity on the continent, and their attempts to influence monarchs, shows that this group was influential in early modern politics and diplomacy. Due to the fragmented and often individual nature of their activities, however, the Jesuits do not tend to fall within the traditional confines of diplomatic history and are therefore not discussed in great detail here.³⁶ Nevertheless, these individuals were important and ought to be remembered when reading this thesis, as they were often either Scots themselves or involved with the expatriate Scottish Catholic communities.³⁷ Whilst the majority of the 'Scot Colleges' were founded or at least began to flourish after the period covered in this thesis, the communities and hospices which allowed their creation were well established on the continent by the

³³ For more on this mission see: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584-1595.

³⁴ SC-PL_01.

³⁵ For more on British perceptions of Poland-Lithuania in the seventeenth century see: Martyna Mirecka, "Monarchy as It Shoul Be?": British Perceptions of Poland-Lithuania in the Long Seventeenth Century" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2014). For more on James's relations with Sigismund after 1603 see: Robert Frost, "Scottish Soldiers, Poland-Lithuania and the Thirty Years' War," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.191-213.

³⁶ Thomas McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588: "Our Way of Proceeding"* (Leiden, 1996); Thomas McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589-1597* (Farnham, 2012); Thomas McCoog, "Pray to the Lord of the Harvest: Jesuit Missions to Scotland in the 16th Century," *Innes Review* 53 (2003), pp.127-88. See also: Michael Yellowlees, *So Strange a Monster as a Jesuit: The Society of Jesus in Sixteenth Century Scotland* (Argyll, 2003).

³⁷ These communities existed in the Catholic German States, the Spanish Netherlands, France, Spain and elsewhere. They were often connected to mercantile or military networks. See for example: Steve Murdoch, "The French Connection: Bordeaux's Scottish Networks in Context, 1670-1720," in *Scotland and Europe, Scotland in Europe*, ed. by Gilles Leydier (Newcastle, 2007), pp.26-55; Siobhan Talbott, "Communities on the Continent: Franco-Scottish Network Building in a Comparative European Context, 1560-1685," in *Ecosse et Ses Doubles Ancien Monde Nouveau Monde Old World New World Scotland and Its Doubles*, ed. by Munro Landi Morag J (Rives, 2010), pp.21-42; R.A. Marks, "The Scots in the Italian Peninsula during the Thirty Years' War," in *The Ulster Earls and Baroque Europe: Refashioning Irish Identities, 1600-1800*, ed. by Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (Dublin, 2010), pp.327-48.

beginning of James's personal rule in Scotland.³⁸ These Catholics were aware of what was going on at home and used their personal connections and networks to lobby the Papacy, foreign monarchs and even James to support policies that would allow them freedom of conscience at home.³⁹ It is hoped that further study into these networks, using research such as this thesis as a basis, will further enlighten our understanding of these informal aspects of early modern politics and religion.

Whilst these works have been largely influential on this thesis, they often cover substantial periods of time which does not allow for a full exploration of the specific nature of James VI's diplomatic relations during his personal rule in Scotland. Moreover, this broad chronological scope does not allow for a complete assessment of the effect that James's foreign policies had on commercial and military communities abroad. Nevertheless, the work previously done on these specific mercantile, religious and military relations has greatly influenced and advanced this present study.

James VI's biographers have, like the general histories of Scotland, largely ignored the role of diplomacy within the king's reign. Perhaps this oversight is due to the fact that many have apparently agreed with Alan Smith, who wrote:

The great objective of James's policy in Scotland was to secure the English throne, and he thought that the best way of doing so was to try and stay on good terms with all foreign powers. He put the success of this policy down to his own skill, although the main reason was that Scotland was a poor and unimportant kingdom, well out of the main-stream of European politics: foreign rulers were pleased enough to accept James's friendship and goodwill, but this was a mark of their indifference to Scotland's

³⁸ The Scots college in Rome (1600), which was created from a pre-existing hospice for Scottish Catholics, was founded in response to news of Queen Anna's conversion and the belief that this would lead to James's conversion. Mary Queen of Scots, had helped to found the Scots College at Paris (1580) and the residential ambassador of both her and James - James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow - was closely integrated with this network and the individuals at the college, despite its early difficulties with funding, students, and changing locations. Tom McInally, *The Sixth Scottish University: The Scots Colleges Abroad: 1575 to 1799* (Leiden, 2012), pp.6-61 passim. Scots were also present in the English Catholic colleges and the two interacted on occasions for the joint goal of restoring the Isles of Britain to the Holy See. William Forbes-Leith, ed., *Records of the Scots Colleges at Douai, Rome, Madrid, Valladolid and Ratisbon*, vol. 1 [Registers of Students] (Aberdeen, 1906); Marks, "The Scots in the Italian Peninsula."

³⁹ Thomas McCoog, "Harmony Disrupted: Robert Persons, S.J., William Crichton, S.J. and the Question of Queen Elizabeth's Successor, 1581-1603," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* 73, no.175 (January 2004), pp.149-220; Tom McInally, "Scottish Catholics Abroad, 1603-88: Evidence Derived from the Archives of the Scots Colleges," in *British and Irish Emigrants and Exiles in Europe, 1603-1688*, ed. by David Worthington (Leiden, 2010), pp.263-77; J.F. McMullin, "The Innes Brothers and the Scots College, Paris," in *The Stuart Court in Exile and the Jacobites*, ed. by Eveline Cruickshanks and Edward T Corp (London, 1995), pp.91-100; Albert Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 34, no.4 (1971), pp.303-16; Keith Brown, "The Making of a 'Politique': The Counter Reformation and the Regional Politics of John, Eighth Lord Maxwell," *SHR* 66, no.2 (1987), pp.152-75.

attitude rather than, as James saw it, a tribute to his own importance.⁴⁰

Such Anglocentric dismissal of the importance of Scottish diplomacy in its own right would support historians' decisions to remain mute on the subject within their texts. Smith's assessment of the situation was unsubstantiated; Scotland was neither unimportant to foreign kingdoms, nor were her neighbours indifferent to Scotland. During James's personal rule in Scotland his diplomatic relations were largely independent of, although influenced by, England, France or the Habsburg Empire. He remained ostensibly neutral while surrounded by war, and he was able to obtain assistance from both Spain and England at a time when those two countries were at war with each other. Rather than be insignificant, James demonstrated not only Scotland's importance on the diplomatic playing field but also his own ability to negotiate foreign relations with skill and fineness.⁴¹ Smith's overall assessment of James's foreign policy was that he only sought peace and to insure James's title to the English throne. This is true in the most basic sense; however in reality James's diplomatic activities were much more ambiguous and complex. Smith gives very little attention to James's Scottish diplomacy, touching it only briefly before swiftly moving on to his post-1603 activities.⁴²

Many other historians of James have taken the same approach, to the detriment of diplomatic history in general and to the full understanding of James's post-1603 reign of both England and Scotland.⁴³ This thesis, by contrast, provides a comprehensive study of James's foreign policy and diplomatic relations during his time as King of Scots, thus providing the proper context in which to judge whether James's reign in Scotland was important to both Scottish and European history or not. As a result of this research it is clear that Scotland was neither insignificant nor diplomatically peripheral in the early modern period, and this was especially true in the reign of James VI. Throughout his personal rule, James maintained relationships with all of the major European powers, as well as quite a

⁴⁰ Alan Smith, ed., *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1973), p.8.

⁴¹ Elizabeth spent over £58,000 Sterling on James's pension and the placement a residential ambassador in Scotland between 1586 and 1603; whilst Philip II was reported to having sent 40,000 crowns directly to James in 1592, as well as financially supporting many of the pro-Spanish nobles in Scotland. Ruth Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair, the Sixth Earl of Huntly and the Politics of the Counter-Reformation," in *The Reign of James VI*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (East Linton, 2000), p.103; Susan Doran, "Loving and Affectionate Cousins? The Relationship between Elizabeth I and James VI of Scotland, 1586-1603," in *Tudor England and Its Neighbours*, ed. by Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (Basingstoke, 2004), p.208; TNA, SP 12/242 f.214. "James Young [alias] Dingley, a Priest, to Lord Burghley," (27 August 1592).

⁴² Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, pp.8, 14-7.

⁴³ Irene Carrier, *James VI and I, King of Great Britain* (Cambridge, 1998); Roger Lockyer, *James VI and I* (London, 1998); Maurice Lee, Jr, *Great Britain's Solomon: James VI and I in His Three Kingdoms* (Urbana, 1990); William McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom: The Reign of King James I and VI* (London, 1958); W. B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997); Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*; Alan Stewart, *The Cradle King: A Life of James VI and I* (London, 2003); David Willson, *King James VI and I* (London, 1956).

few of the more minor ones. His foreign policies and diplomatic relationships were independent of the larger powers such as England, Spain or France.⁴⁴

Whilst a comprehensive survey of James's foreign policies is lacking, the waters are not altogether uncharted. Works discussing James's designs on the English throne necessarily have included James's diplomatic relations with England and those kingdoms to which he looked for support; likewise when historians have considered James's marriage to the Princess Anna of Denmark-Norway in 1589, there is always an acknowledgement of the diplomatic sphere included.⁴⁵ These references to James's foreign policy do not, however, give a coherent view, as they are often focused on a specific incident or relationship. The result of this is that a singular instance has been taken for a trend, and the various factors that led to a diplomatic decision are often absent from discussion. It is vital to address James's foreign policies and diplomatic relations for the entirety of his personal rule in Scotland, in order to understand both its impact on the wider diplomatic history and to see if and how James's foreign policies shifted once he became king of England in 1603.⁴⁶

Historians of England have traditionally been the guiltiest of ignoring or minimising the importance of late sixteenth-century Scotland to its neighbours. Susan Doran and many others have given great attention to Anglo-Scottish relations at this time; however it is generally done from an English or teleological perspective.⁴⁷ Such a focus often presents a skewed or oversimplified version of events, failing to account for the multitude of relationships and factors that played on every decision. Doran, for example, has argued that James's foreign policy was relatively independent of English influence prior to 1595, but that after the publication of *A Conference about the next succession...* by Robert Parsons, James became very insecure of his claim to England being successful, and therefore was much more compliant in the latter sixteenth century.⁴⁸ Whilst this research has detected the decreasing importance of Spain to Scotland after 1595, Doran's work

⁴⁴ This is not to suggest that the policies and activities of foreign powers did not influence and affect James's policies, but rather that there was never a time when any foreign power had complete control over James's policies.

⁴⁵ Helen Georgia Stafford, *James VI of Scotland and the Throne of England* (New York, 1940); Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*.

⁴⁶ Dr Lee has noted the influence of James's Scottish experience with foreign policy on his English reign, but fails to provide any real analysis of what James's pre-1603 foreign policies were. Maurice Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV: An Essay in English Foreign Policy, 1603-1610* (Urbana, 1970), pp.5-16.

⁴⁷ Susan Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," in *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government*, ed. by Ralph Houlbrooke (Aldershot, 2006), pp.40-1; Susan Doran, *England and Europe, 1485-1603* (London, 1986), p.74; Doran, "Loving Cousins"; Jennifer Brown, "Scottish Politics 1567-1625," in *The Reign of James VI and I*, ed. by Alan Smith (London, 1973), p.27; Pauline Croft, *King James* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp.10-47; Julian Goodare, "Scottish Politics in the Reign of James VI," in *The Reign of James VI*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (East Linton, 2000), p.35; Jenny Wormald, "James VI and I (1566-1625), King of Scotland, England and Ireland," in *DNB*; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.124.

⁴⁸ Parsons's book was published under the pseudonym of R. Doleman in London in 1595. Robert Parsons, *A Conference about the next Succession to the Crowne of Inghland ...Directed to the Right Honorable the Earle of Essex of Her Maiesties Priuy Councell, & of the Noble Order of the Garter. Published by R. Doleman.*, EEBO STC (2nd ed)/19398 (London, 1595).

does not recognise the importance of James's other allies and connections, namely those with Denmark-Norway, the German Princes and the Italian States.⁴⁹ Despite these shortcomings, historians of Elizabethan and Tudor diplomacy have provided a useful structure and methodology that this thesis benefits from.⁵⁰

Prior to Smith's assessment of Jacobean diplomacy, in 1958 William McElwee wrote, 'the reign of James VI in Scotland was unimportant in the history either of the nation or of the world ... the historically important part of the life of James VI and I was lived in England'.⁵¹ Whilst this opinion was eventually abandoned regarding studies of James VI in general, the sentiment appears to have lingered in the case of diplomatic history.⁵² James's own abilities as a diplomat have also been ignored prior to 1603, as both Smith and McElwee show.⁵³ More recently, Jean-Christophe Mayer has recognised that the King of Scots was a capable diplomat, arguing:

James was not a lazy inept and self-important sovereign who only acceded to the throne of England thanks to primogeniture, to the absence of any other realistic alternative, and to the work of Robert Cecil, who in his secret correspondence with the King is supposed to have facilitated his accession.⁵⁴

Mayer's comment comes in the introduction to an edited collection on the English succession, and whilst the authors who follow are equally aware of James's experience and skill as a monarch and diplomat, their articles are focused on the succession issue and thus lack the breadth that this thesis provides.⁵⁵ Indeed Mayer goes further, arguing that this 'misconception' has been 'nourished by

⁴⁹ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.27.

⁵⁰ For example, Doran wrote: 'Unlike most of her Tudor predecessors, Elizabeth demonstrated little or no interest in absorbing Scotland into England; perhaps she was aware that the task would be done for her through the succession of James to the English throne.' This statement ignores the fact that the matter of the succession was not considered certain by anyone until it actually happened in 1603, therefore Elizabeth could not have 'known' that James would succeed her. Doran, *England and Europe, 1485-1603*, p.74.

⁵¹ Quotes from McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom*, pp.14-5.

⁵² Numerous histories have been completed on the reign of James VI in Scotland and have shown conclusively that there was significant historical value to his time there in terms of British history. See for example: Croft, *King James*; Pauline Croft, "The Reign of James VI and I: The Birth of Britain," *History Compass* 1, no.1 (2003), pp.1-13; Doran, "James VI and the English Succession"; Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*; Jenny Wormald, "James VI and I: Two Kings or One?," *History* 68, no.223 (1983), pp.187-209; Jenny Wormald, "James VI & I," *History Today* 52, no.6 (2002), pp.27-33; Steve Murdoch, "James VI and the Formation of a Scottish-British Military Identity," in *Fighting for Identity: Scottish Military Experience C. 1550-1900*, ed. by Steve Murdoch and Andrew MacKillop (Leiden, 2002), pp.3-33.

⁵³ McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom*, p.14; Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p.8.

⁵⁴ Jean-Cristophe Mayer, "Introduction," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), p.4.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Jean-Christophe Mayer, ed., *Breaking the Silence on the Succession: A Sourcebook of Manuscripts & Rare Elizabethan Texts (c. 1587-1603)*, Astraea Texts no.1 (Montpellier, 2003).

sometimes biased and often incomplete interpretations of primary sources'.⁵⁶ These comments show that historical attitudes towards the first Stuart monarch of England are changing, and the role of James VI in foreign relations is slowly being recognised.

Similarly, William McElwee discussed James's relations with Spain and other Catholic powers, but he failed to put this into context. Moreover, the research of Jenny Wormald and Susan Doran have argued that the control Elizabeth had over Scotland during James's minority was not as strong as McElwee initially suggested.⁵⁷ Caroline Bingham briefly discusses Anglo-Scottish relations in regards to the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and the Armada period, but little detail is given to James's direct involvement in this diplomacy and no other relations are discussed.⁵⁸ The rest of James VI biographers dedicate only a small portion of their time to his life in Scotland, putting the emphasis of their research into his time as James I of England.⁵⁹ There are, however, a few exceptions to this rule. J. D. Mackie, A. W. Ward and G. F. Warner have published articles on James's relationship with the Papacy in the late sixteenth century.⁶⁰ Their work has focused on the king's attempts to ally himself with the anti-Spanish, Catholic factions in response to the growing power of Spain and the internal politics of the Papacy, and give some detailed insights into James's method of conducting foreign diplomacy.

In regards to James's covert diplomatic activities the historiography is limited to articles and tangents in general studies of early modern espionage. Most of the research done on James's secret diplomacy revolves around his activities and relationships with various Catholic powers. Mackie's work on James's relations with Italy include much on his covert operations, and Warner's article on the same relationship gives an example of how James utilised the religion of his wife to allow for a means of separating himself from events should they be discovered.⁶¹ N. E. Evans has highlighted another episode of covert diplomacy where, in 1601, the Scottish ambassador in England approached the Russian embassy under a false identity to impress the Scottish king's name on a new diplomatic contact who had no previous dealings with James and who might prove useful in years to come.⁶² Mackie has also recognised James's use of agents to promote his reputation throughout Europe in the faint hopes of gaining support for his claim

⁵⁶ Mayer, "Introduction," p.4.

⁵⁷ Doran, "Loving Cousins," pp.205, 228; Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," pp.26–7; Wormald, "James VI & I."

⁵⁸ Caroline Bingham, *James VI of Scotland* (London, 1979).

⁵⁹ For example: Irene Carrier, *James VI and I, King of Great Britain* (Cambridge, 1998); Antonia Fraser, *King James VI of Scotland, I of England* (London, 1974); Roger Lockyer, *James VI and I* (London, 1998); David H Willson, *King James VI and I* (London, 1956).

⁶⁰ John Duncan Mackie, "A Secret Agent of James VI," *SHR* 9, no.36 (1912), pp.376–86; John Duncan Mackie, "The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI in Italy prior to His Accession to the English Throne," *SHR* 21, no.84 (July 1924), pp.267–82; A. W. Ward, "James VI and the Papacy," *SHR* 2, no.7 (1905), pp.249–52; G. F. Warner, "James VI and Rome," *EHR* 20, no.77 (January 1905), pp.124–7.

⁶¹ Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy"; Warner, "James VI and Rome."

⁶² N. E. Evans, "The Meeting of the Russian and Scottish Ambassadors in London in 1601," *Slavonic & East European Review* 55, no.4 (October 1977), pp.517–28.

to the English crown.⁶³ These initial investigations, along with the methodology pioneered by researchers of Elizabeth's intelligence network, have revealed the need for, and ability to complete, a more comprehensive survey of James's covert diplomacy.

Hiram Morgan began, but unfortunately never completed, a systematic study of the ambassadors travelling to and from Scotland between 1473 and 1603. This project's goal was to compile a database of embassies similar to the one found in the appendices to this thesis, but only a skeletal and incomplete list of missions exists.⁶⁴ Whilst Morgan's work was inspirational to this thesis, due to the unfinished nature of the project many of the missions recorded in his published findings have had to be corrected and many more missions have been uncovered.

The History of Early Modern Diplomacy

In contrast to the lack of work undertaken on early modern Scottish diplomacy, much attention has been given to the general history of diplomacy and the diplomat in the sixteenth century.⁶⁵ Mediaeval diplomacy was in many ways quite different from the diplomacy of the early modern era; contact between kingdoms was often sporadic and ambassadors were only sent on short-term missions to conclude specific items of business.⁶⁶ The most important diplomatic relationships were regionally based, where military aid and mercantile interests propelled such relations. Throughout the middle ages it was not only monarchs who employed ambassadors; nobles and merchants sent and received agents throughout the fifteenth century and in addition, heralds would also act as ambassadors.⁶⁷ It was not until the sixteenth century that the right to accredit ambassadors was solely associated with sovereignty. Ambassadors were also not the only ones who dealt in diplomacy; into the sixteenth century monarchs still were personally conducting their own foreign relations.⁶⁸ For example, in 1520 Henry VIII met with Francis I at the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold'. In 1589, James VI visited Denmark-Norway to retrieve his bride, but he also discussed politics with Christian IV, who likewise visited his sister and brother-in-law in England in 1606 and 1614.

⁶³ Mackie, "Secret Agent."

⁶⁴ Hiram Morgan, "Scotland in Renaissance Diplomacy, 1473-1603" Database, 2008.

⁶⁵ See for example: E. John Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe* (The Hague, 1972); Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*; Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca, 2009); De Lamar Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino De Mendoza and the French Catholic League* (Oxford, 1964); Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*; Donald Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1967); Russell, *Diplomats at Work*; James Westfall Thompson, *Secret Diplomacy; Espionage and Cryptography, 1500-1815*, ed. by Saul Kussiel Padover (New York, 1963); Nancy L Roelker, "The Two Faces of Rome: The Fate of Protestantism in France," in *Politics, Religion & Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of DeLamar Jensen*, ed. by Malcolm Thorp and Arthur Joseph Slavin (Kirksville, MO, 1994), pp.95-112.

⁶⁶ Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages*, p.26.

⁶⁷ Alexia Grosjean, "A Time When 'Fools and Dwarfs' Were Highly Esteemed? Seeking the Late Medieval Scandinavian Herald," in *The Herald in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. by Katie Stevenson (Woodbridge, UK, 2009), pp.165-98.

⁶⁸ Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.17.

As the sixteenth century progressed diplomacy became more consistent and refined. Treatises began to appear discussing the ideal traits of an ambassador, the moral obligations they had to their monarchs and those they were accredited to, and the legal immunities granted to ambassadors as royal representatives. James VI advised his son to choose men for all public offices, including that of ambassador, who were ‘men of knowen wisdom, honestie, and good conscience, well practised in the points of the craft, that yee ordaine them for’.⁶⁹ With the development of the diplomatic profession and the advent of the residential ambassador came the moral and legal questions regarding their obligations and limitations. Ambassadors were now remaining with hosts for much longer periods, often staying after business had been concluded, for the sole purpose of improving relations between the two kingdoms. The obligations of these men, to themselves, God, their sovereign and their host became hotly debated topics. Particularly when the accrediting sovereign was undertaking some deceptive policy towards another, the ambassador involved would often have to lie to their host monarch, who trusted them to tell the truth and give sound advice. Numerous texts were written regarding the morality of the ambassador, and the majority agreed that the first responsibility was to the accrediting monarch, rather than to their host.⁷⁰

The sixteenth century was the period in which the residential ambassador was born.⁷¹ Differing from the mediaeval, special ambassador in rank and purpose, the residential ambassadors were sent to serve as the eyes and ears of their monarch; they were often little more than official spies.⁷² From the sixteenth century onwards those ambassadors sent on special missions were primarily nobles, whereas the new corps of residential ambassadors were generally attorneys and clerics from the middling classes.⁷³ The primary goal of the residential ambassador was to gather intelligence and report to their king; negotiations were generally left to special ambassadors. The great benefit to historians of the advent of residential ambassadors is their intelligence reports – these letters give the facts and the rumours, the perceptions and the moods of courts where they were resident. These incoming reports were often kept, and copies made of all outgoing correspondence, in what became some of the most extensive archives of the period for some diplomatic states.⁷⁴ In addition to residential ambassadors, early modern diplomacy had its share of spies, agents and double agents, all working in advanced intelligence networks.⁷⁵ These networks allowed residential ambassadors

⁶⁹ James VI&I, *Basilicon Doron or His Majesties Instructions to His Dearest Sonne, Henrie the Prince*, EEBO STC / 558:07 (Edinburgh, 1603), p.68.

⁷⁰ For example: Bernard du Rosier’s *Ambaxiator Brevilogus* (1436), Ernolao Barbaro’s *de officio legati* (1490), and Torquato Tasso’s *Il Messaggiero* (c 1588).

⁷¹ The first record of the term ‘residential ambassador’ was in 1560, when the Duke of Savoy sent his agent to Rome for an indefinite period. Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.6. See also Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages*, p.82.

⁷² Michael Jacob Levin, *Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Ithaca, 2005), p.154.

⁷³ Anderson, *Rise of Modern Diplomacy*, p.12.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.20–1.

⁷⁵ Badeloch Noldus, “Loyalty and Betrayal: Artist-Agents Michel Le Blon and Pieter Isaacs and Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna,” in *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by

to gather information from far outwith the court they resided at and filter this information before relaying it back to their own monarch.⁷⁶ In addition to intelligence, these ambassadors also dealt in culture and often used art and book dealers to transmit their intelligence and cement themselves in local culture.⁷⁷

The intelligence these ambassadors were passing on required secret modes of communication; ciphers and keys were used to encode diplomatic correspondences from at least the fifteenth century onward. Secrecy was of the greatest importance with much of the correspondence, and yet there were surmountable difficulties in maintaining this.⁷⁸ Protocols differed between countries regarding the privacy of communications being sent from or through a host's domain.⁷⁹ Sometimes the privacy of diplomatic documents was respected, sometimes they were intercepted and sometimes they were copied and then sent on their way. Often secretaries who knew the cipher were bribed to translate the documents for their host or another power. The royal postal systems developed in the late fifteenth century had become outdated by the late sixteenth; nevertheless, it was within this framework that diplomats and monarchs sent their personal couriers, rather than using the traditional but extremely un-reliable couriers employed by the domestic postal systems.⁸⁰ Laws and agreements were made to try to resolve the legal issues surrounding the transportation of diplomatic correspondence, but there was always a risk when sending information. Along with issues regarding correspondence, the individual actions of an ambassador were also of critical significance.

Diplomatic immunity appears to have been an assumed right of the diplomat from the Middle Ages; however its full significance was not felt until the sixteenth century. Ambassadors were granted immunity from arrest, as well as and the right of free passage, because they were an embodiment of their accrediting monarch. There was debate over the extent of these rights, particularly when the ambassador began to subvert or plot to harm their hosting ruler. By the late

Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek, and Badeloch Noldus (Hilversum, 2006), pp.51, 58; Murdoch, "Oxenstierna's Spies"; Steve Murdoch, "Diplomacy in Transition: Stuart-British Diplomacy in Northern Europe, 1603-1618," in *Ships, Guns and Bibles in the North Sea and the Baltic States c 1350-c1700* (East Linton, 2000), pp.93-113; Steve Murdoch, "Scottish Ambassadors and British Diplomacy 1618-1635," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.27-50.

⁷⁶ For example, see James Spens's intelligence network in Murdoch, *Network North*, pp.251-79.

⁷⁷ Hans Cools, "Francesco Feroni (1614/16-1696): Brokers in Cereals, Slaves and Works of Art," in *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek, and Badeloch Noldus (Hilversum, 2006), pp.39-50; Noldus, "Loyalty and Betrayal"; Filip Vermeylen, "The Art of the Dealer: Marketing Paintings in Early Modern Antwerp," in *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek, and Badeloch Noldus (Hilversum, 2006), pp.109-28.

⁷⁸ For more on ciphers and codes in practice see: Nadine Akkerman, "The Postmistress, the Diplomat, and a Black Chamber?: Alexandrine of Taxis, Sir Balthazar Gerbier and the Power of Postal Control," in *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture*, ed. by Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (Houndmills, 2011), pp.172-88; Tracy Sowerby, "The Role of the Ambassador and the Use of Ciphers," *State Papers Online* (2009); Osborne, *Dynasty and Diplomacy*, pp.279-81.

⁷⁹ Grosjean, "A Time When 'Fools and Dwarfs' Were Highly Esteemed."

⁸⁰ Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe*, p.21.

sixteenth century it was most common for these ambassadors to simply be forced to leave their host country, rather than be imprisoned or punished. In 1584, the Spanish ambassador Bernardo de Mendoza was told to leave England after his role in the Throckmorton plot was discovered.⁸¹ Just two years later, the Bishop of Ross was imprisoned for similar activities; however his case was slightly different, in that he was an ambassador of Mary Queen of Scots, who had been deposed in 1567.⁸² English lawyers had decided that because his creditor was no longer a monarch, Ross was no longer an ambassador and therefore no longer immune to prosecution.⁸³

The work which has been done on the history of diplomacy and the ambassadorial profession gives context to this project, for it allows the historian to understand the social and political implications of the use of various agents, types of missions, and even the language used in documents. Studies of early modern postal systems and communication routes explain the practicalities of how correspondences were transmitted, what the standard expectations of the period were, and provide a comparative backdrop against which the analysis of James's diplomatic relationships and foreign policies may be considered.

Methodology & Sources

This thesis utilises a number of sources, including some which might not appear immediately relevant to diplomacy, notably Church histories and burgh records, as well as the traditional ambassadorial reports, private papers, royal correspondence and government records to reconstruct James's foreign relations. This project also benefits from techniques developed in similar works on early modern diplomatic relationships and prosopographical studies, particularly the use of both formal and informal records to inform perceptions of events.⁸⁴ The advantage of combining both the official records and private correspondence is that it shows multiple vantage points, often bringing to light events and factors that would otherwise have been obscured.

The diplomatic history of the kingdoms within the British Isles has often been based upon the reports published in the *Calendars* – domestic, foreign, and

⁸¹ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.513–5 no.366 [26 January 1584, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

⁸² TNA, SP 53/20 f.21. Unknown, "Ambassadors Practising Against the State," (October 1586).

⁸³ In another example, Colonel William Semple, an agent of James VI and Philip II and Philip III ran a network of unofficial informants and intelligencers, including one who was brought before the Spanish inquisition. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Inquisición 108/24. Unknown, "Proceso de fe de Alejandro Hay y de Alejandro Mac Mat," (1592).

⁸⁴ See for example: Paul Hammer, "The Crucible of War: English Foreign Policy, 1589-1603," in *Tudor England and Its Neighbours*, ed. by Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (Basingstoke, 2004), pp.235–66; Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy, 1558-1603* (London, 2000); Beltrán, "Philip of Spain: The Spider's Web of News and Information"; Levin, *Agents of Empire*; Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*; Luca Riccardi, "An Outline of Vatican Diplomacy in the Early Modern Age," in *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: The Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800*, ed. by Daniela Frigo, trans. by Adrian Belton (Cambridge, 2000), pp.95–108; Osborne, *Dynasty and Diplomacy*.

those relating to the negotiations between England and various kingdoms.⁸⁵ Because of the differing focus of those who compiled the *Calendars*, there is obviously a focus on England at the expense of Scotland that is not necessarily representative of the actual nature of 'British' diplomatic activity.⁸⁶ Unfortunately Scotland does not possess such an archive of diplomatic material, or more accurately the collection has been scattered or lost throughout history. Many documents were sent to London and only some of these were ever returned to Scotland. Of these, several were lost when *the Elizabeth* of Burntisland sank carrying part of the archive back to Scotland in 1660.⁸⁷ The absence of a State Papers collection for Scotland is the reason that this thesis relies so heavily on continental archives. From these collections it is possible to recreate, in part at least, the Scottish diplomatic secretariat.⁸⁸ The appendices illustrate the results of this research and shows not only how Europe's repositories hold clues to Scotland's diplomatic activities, but also how important it is to reconstruct an account of the numerous foreign embassies that Scotland received in the early modern period.⁸⁹

Archival research from across Europe forms the core of this thesis and has enabled previously under-researched or unmentioned events to be fully explored. Despite the implication from current historiography that there is little such evidence the reality is that a large number of primary sources have survived and are often in remarkably good condition. It seems likely that the geographic, linguistic and subjective breadth of archival research required for this project has proved off putting to historians, despite the richness of material that exists.⁹⁰ Along with the official correspondence of ambassadors, records of the Kirk or the Burghs often record the dates of ambassadorial arrivals and departures, accounts of audiences and the motivations behind changing royal foreign policies.⁹¹ This

⁸⁵ *SCP Scotland*, 13 vols. (Edinburgh, 1898); *CSP Venice*, 38 vols. (London, 1864); *CSP Spain*; *CSP Domestic*, 7 vols. (London, 1856); *CSP Foreign*, 22 vols. (London, 1861).

⁸⁶ Hammer, "Crucible of War," pp.235–8.

⁸⁷ In addition, Scottish secretaries in the early modern period often thought of public papers as personal possessions, and thus these documents were scattered into private archives. Some, such as the papers of John Lindsay of Balcarres, James VI's secretary between 1596-1598, have survived and now reside in the Advocates collection in the National Library of Scotland. Scottish Record Office, *Guide to the National Archives of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp.ix–xi, 1–2.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.1–2.

⁸⁹ See: Appendix I: Ambassadors to Scotland, 1584-1603 and Appendix II: Ambassadors from Scotland, 1584-1603.

⁹⁰ The time consuming nature of working with archival material in numerous languages and in numerous countries, whilst excelling in the current Research Excellence Framework, may have also put contributed to the lack of work done on this subject. Brown, "Early Modern Scottish History – A Survey," p.6.

⁹¹ For example: *Calderwood*; John Colville, *Original Letters of Mr. John Colville, 1582-1603: To Which Is Added, His Palinode, 1600*, ed. by David Laing (Edinburgh, 1858); Patrick Gray, *Letters and Papers Relating to Patrick Master of Gray: Afterwards Seventh Lord Gray*, ed. by Thomas Thomson (Edinburgh, 1835); James Marwick, ed., *Records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland: With Extracts from Other Records Relating to the Affairs of the Burghs of Scotland 1295-1711*, 6 vols. (Edinburgh, 1866); *RPCS*; Patrick Vaus, *Correspondence of Sir Patrick Waus [Vaus] of Barnbarroch, Knight: Parson of Wigtown, First Almoner to the Queen*,

thesis utilises all of these resources to make up for the absence of a collection of Scottish foreign papers, and they fill in the blanks extremely well.

There are also the official treaties and royal correspondences which were taken into account during this research. In the early modern period diplomatic relationships were still based on the personal relationships between monarchs as much as by trade interests or religious concerns, therefore royal correspondence holds an essential perspective when considering Scotland's place in European diplomacy.⁹² The nature of covert and confidential communications must also be considered; many of the letters and reports were written in code, and often the most sensitive information was transmitted orally via the letter carrier.⁹³ The reports included rumours that were circulating at royal courts, second or even third hand information that would never stand up in a modern court of law, and even the most meticulous agents passed on false information. Where there is no evidence to contradict ambassadors' and agents' reports they have been included with caution in the belief that even if there was some rumour or exaggeration included in them they contain at least a grain of truth, if not an entirely accurate report.

In some cases reports have been included which were known to contain erroneous information, as in the case of Asheby's report regarding James's marriage, however the false information within these has been identified.⁹⁴ The English agent Robert Aston, for example, reported in July of 1589 that the Danish match had failed, and that it was suspected that James would marry Henri of Navarre's sister, or more likely the Spanish Infanta.⁹⁵ This report came less than a month before James's marriage to Princess Anna of Denmark took place, and exemplifies the proverbial grain of salt with which these sources must be taken.⁹⁶ In Aston's case, the marriage negotiations were not finalised until late July, so it is quite possible that he believed his information to be correct. That his information was not reveals that especially where predictions are concerned it is necessary to consider later reports for validity. Whilst it is essential to use these reports despite

Senator of the College of Justice, Lord of Council, and Ambassador to Denmark, ed. by Robert Vans Agnew, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1887).

⁹² For example: G. P. V. Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI&I* (Berkeley, 1984); John Bruce, ed., *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI of Scotland: Some of Them Printed from Originals in the Possession Of the Rev. Edward Ryder and Others from a Ms. Which Formerly Belonged to Sir Peter Thompson, Kt* (London, 1849); James VI&I and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, *Negotiations between King James VI. and I. and Ferdinand I. Grand Duke of Tuscany: A Selection of Documents Transcribed from the Denmilne Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and from a Manuscript in the Staats-Bibliothek at Munich*, ed. by J. D. Mackie (Edinburgh, 1927).

⁹³ For example: TNA, SP 52/58 f.113. Unknown, "Scottish Advices," (June 1596); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.228. "William Asheby to Walsingham," (26 November 1588); Hatfield House, CP 18/21. "Thomas Fowler to Archibald Douglas," (25 June 1589); Murdoch, *Network North*, pp.6–7; Grosjean, "A Time When 'Fools and Dwarfs' Were Highly Esteemed," pp.175–6.

⁹⁴ For more on this see: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584–1595.

⁹⁵ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII. "Roger Aston to Burghley," (31 July 1589).

⁹⁶ James married Anna of Denmark by proxy on 20 August 1589. They were married again in person on 23 November in Oslo. Wormald, "James VI and I" in *DNB*; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.22.

their inherent errors and biases, the context for each individual document is important.

Scope & Overview

The title of this thesis describes some of the scope of this work – it is not a study of Scottish foreign relations but of James VI's foreign relations. Therefore this thesis does not include the numerous mercantile, religious and expatriate missions that often influenced and conducted diplomacy in the early modern period unless they were doing so on the king's behalf.⁹⁷ Due to the limits of time and space rather than a lack of awareness or material, what follows is a study of communication between rulers and their ambassadors in a broad sense, although in many cases, such as that of the pro-Spanish Scottish nobles led by George Gordon, sixth Earl of Huntly, the activities of others are included where they directly affect royal policies. Nevertheless others are largely omitted, such as the activities of the Catholics – primarily the Jesuits – as a religious rather than a political group which attempted to convert James and overthrow Scotland are not given much attention in this thesis as Thomas McCoog and Michael Yellowlees have already done a substantial amount of work on this subject.⁹⁸ In addition to the role of religious expatriates, John Davidson and Alexander Gray have previously examined the important role of the Scottish conservators, although in a different context. It is to be understood however that this work was important and an integral part of international politics, especially given that the purpose of diplomacy was often to increase trade profits or achieve concessions from foreign powers regarding religious, territorial or economic issues.

These broader interpretations of diplomatic activity, as well as the relationships between Scotland and each individual power mentioned within this thesis could be easily expanded in future research to form their own independent studies, and it is the hope of the author that these will one day be undertaken. What follows here is a survey, rather than a complete and comprehensive study, of Jacobean diplomacy. By focusing on the personal relationships (through ambassadorial representation and direct communication via letters) that James VI created and maintained, this thesis provides an assessment which, when placed

⁹⁷ See for an example of these methodologies: Alexia Grosjean, "Scotland: Sweden's Closest Ally?," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.143-71; Murdoch, *Network North*; Murdoch, "The French Connection"; Talbott, "Communities on the Continent: Franco-Scottish Network Building in a Comparative European Context, 1560-1685."

⁹⁸ McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541-1588*; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589-1597*; Yellowlees, *So Strange a Monster*. Tom McNally has also done some work on the Scots colleges and their networks of Catholic exiles involved in covert diplomacy, however the reliability of this research is somewhat questionable. For example, McNally incorrectly identifies Robert Bruce as James Bruce and also mistakes his missions in Scotland in the late 1580s (as well as failing to provide citations for his claims). Tom McNally, "Scholars and Spies - Three Humanists in the Service of James VI/I," *Recusant History* 31, no.2 (October 2012), p.135.

alongside the existing historiography, provides a thorough coverage of the major issues arising from early modern Scottish diplomacy.

This study is divided into four chapters that cover the key chronological periods and are then subdivided by political themes. The first chapter focuses on James's establishment of his personal rule, both within and outwith his kingdom.⁹⁹ It examines his first diplomatic activities as an independent monarch and focuses on Scotland's relations with England, France, the Papacy and Spain. The chapter begins in 1584, after James escaped from the pro-English 'Ruthven Raiders' and ends in 1587 after the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. As part of James's bid to secure his position as King of Scots, the young monarch sought foreign assistance to balance the power factions within his kingdom by bolstering the pro-Catholic and pro-French nobles and weakening, although not destroying, the pro-English lords. James is seen from the very beginning of his personal rule to have a natural ability to balance power between groups and ensure that no one party was strong enough to overpower him. This was achieved through carefully maintaining a multitude of friends on opposing sides of the political, religious and diplomatic spectrum.

The second chapter examines James VI's marriage negotiations and his eventual choice of Anna of Denmark. This section focuses on James's northern relationships with Denmark-Norway and the German princes, although it also discusses France and the proposed match with Henri of Navarre's sister, Catherine. After James chose a Danish bride, he did something which historians have traditionally considered quite foolish – he travelled to Denmark-Norway for over six months to retrieve his bride and conduct his diplomacy in person. By examining the reasons for and effects of this journey within a diplomatic context, this chapter argues that a more nuanced interpretation of the mission than a simple youthful folly is required. In addition to marriage negotiations, this chapter also discusses James's attempts to create a Protestant League, which would oppose Habsburg hegemony and the spread of Catholicism, but in doing so would support his claim above all other Protestant claimants to the English throne and defend him against any Catholic opponents. Although this League never materialised its attempted creation is worthy of study.

The years 1588-1595 are covered in the next chapter, which analyses James's relations with England and Spain in the years surrounding the *Gran Armada*. It also examines the birth of James's first-born son, Prince Henry Frederik, and the impact that this had on the King of Scots succession claim and his position in Europe. The threat of a Spanish invasion allowed James to show himself loyal to Elizabeth, whilst maintaining peace with Philip II through coy diplomatic posturing. James's bid to secure the English succession in this period failed, however, and in the early 1590s the King of Scots turned elsewhere in an attempt to improve his position in European politics. As a result of this policy James strengthened his relations with Spain and continued the Auld Alliance with France. It was also done through a propaganda campaign at the birth of his son to

⁹⁹ Wormald, "DNB, James VI and I." James's personal rule began in 1584, however the king was not legally recognised as having full authority by Parliament until his twenty-first birthday in 1587. *RPS*, sec.1587/7/11 [29 July 1587 Edinburgh Parliament].

establish himself as a Protestant prince (with ties to Catholic powers) who had a secure line of succession and the taste, knowledge and ability to rule not only his current kingdom but also his rightful inheritance of England after Elizabeth's death.

James's relations with Europe in the late 1590s and his attempts to secure not only his place as Elizabeth's heir but also Scotland's influence in European affairs forms the backbone of the final chapter. It looks at the numerous communications James had with Denmark-Norway and the German Princes, the United Provinces, the Republic of Venice, the Papacy, Spain and even his chief rival in the English succession, the new Archdukes Albert and Isabella in the Spanish Netherlands – all with the purpose of securing the aggrandisement of his crown, his family prestige and himself through the English succession. Although all of these missions failed to gain fast promises, they show that the King of Scots was actively involved in his succession claims and aware of the role that Europe played in choosing Elizabeth's eventual successor. These missions also had a broader context than the English succession, as is evidenced by the constant discussion of a Protestant League against the growing Hapsburg Empire as well as a united Christian force to fight the Turks. These wider European ambitions played into James's overall goals of improving his standing in Europe through whatever means possible, and reveals a depth to the Scottish king's diplomacy that has often been overlooked.

The thesis ends in March 1603 with the Union of the Crowns – when as one author poetically put it, James 'had arrived on the throne that was rightfully his now that the old lady in Whitehall had finally passed from the scene'.¹⁰⁰ When James ascended the English throne ambassadors from across Europe came to congratulate him, ambassadors of monarchs who knew James as king already, and who were no stranger to his diplomatic tactics. In the conclusion the influence these pre-existing diplomatic relationships between the King of Scots and European powers on the new 'Stuart British' diplomacy is briefly discussed, although further research outwith the scope of this thesis is required to do this subject full justice. What is clear is that whilst the addition of two new kingdoms did influence James VI's diplomatic policies after 1603, his foreign relationships did not begin at his coronation in London. Moreover, it was the long and pre-existing history of these foreign relationships that acutely influenced the diplomacy of the first Stuart monarch of Great Britain.

¹⁰⁰ Lee, Jr, *Great Britain's Solomon*, p.105.

CHAPTER ONE: ESTABLISHING POLICIES, 1584-1587

I now perceive that the strength of my enemies and rivals is growing daily, with so many means and aims ... for the subversion of my State, and the deprivation of my own life, or at least my honour and liberty, which I prize more than my life, and that it will be impossible for me to resist for long without the aid of God and my good friends and allies.¹

James VI began his personal rule in 1584 surrounded by contesting factions who threatened his authority. Due to political uncertainties throughout Europe a number of foreign powers were eager to maintain or improve their influence at the Scottish court, whilst James simultaneously tried to regain control of that court and to establish his own foreign policies. This chapter follows the key diplomatic events relevant to James that occurred during these early years. Some of these events, such as the Treaty of Berwick and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, have already received considerable attention from historians; nevertheless, they have not yet been assessed with an eye to their effect on James's diplomatic policies beyond the immediate impact on Stuart-Tudor relations. When viewing events from this wider diplomatic perspective, it becomes very clear that James VI was not only responding to foreign actions at this juncture, but that he also actively attempted to influence events for his own benefit. This chapter also highlights that whilst England was important to Scotland in the early years of James's reign, he also maintained significant relations with France, and cultivated existing bonds with Denmark-Norway and even Spain.² Through consideration of all of the relationships James was engaged with between 1584 and 1587, this chapter shows that he effectively altered the way foreign princes viewed the position of Scotland within European politics. Moreover, it demonstrates that he had established his position and his policies as an adult monarch, both at home and abroad, by the mid-1580s.

The Ruthven Raid

James VI became a king in name at the age of thirteen months, but the first seventeen years of rule were dominated by a series of regents and councillors.³ The

¹ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.517-8 no.370 [19 February 1584, The King of Scots to the Duke of Guise].

² Danish-Scottish relations, and particularly the negotiations relating to the marriage of James VI to Anna of Denmark, will be addressed in: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584-1595

³ For more information on the regents and their regimes see: Claire Webb, "The 'Gude Regent?': A Diplomatic Perspective Upon the Earl of Moray, Mary Queen of Scots and the Scottish Regency, 1567-1570" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2008); Charles Haggerty,

young king tried to assert his will in the early 1580s by expressing favour for his pro-French and sometime Catholic cousin, Esmé Stuart, Duke of Lennox.⁴ Lennox's rapid rise and seemingly complete control over the king worried and angered many, both within and outwith the Scottish court. In 1582 during the Ruthven Raid, a group of Protestant, pro-English nobility kidnapped the king.⁵ The new regime drove Lennox from the kingdom and ruled in James's name for over a year; however, by the summer of 1583 James had escaped.⁶ This meant that by January 1584 the king was on the offensive, eager to assert his autonomous and inviolable royal authority.

James's need to establish his control was two-fold; he not only had to convince his own subjects of his command over the many noble factions, but also to establish his authority to an international audience. Contemporaries and historians have accepted that during the king's minority regents and factions ruled Scotland. Scottish lords as well as foreign powers supported these factions for their own ends, and as James reached adulthood, he saw such interference as an affront to his royal dignity.⁷ External influence in Scottish affairs was nothing new, and therefore James's attempts to end this were a break with Scotland's recent history. Since the death of James V in 1542 and the resulting regency of his French bride, Mary of Guise, both England and France had sought to influence Scottish affairs.⁸ As part of an Anglo-French peace agreement, both kingdoms agreed to withdraw their troops from Scotland in 1551, but this did not happen until they concluded the 1560 Treaty of Edinburgh.⁹ Despite this arrangement,

“...unredeemed by Any One Single Virtue?»: Esmé Stuart's Political Career in Scotland, 1579-1583” (MRes Dissertation, University of Strathclyde, 2010); Maurice Lee, Jr, “The Fall of the Regent Morton: A Problem in Satellite Diplomacy,” *Journal of Modern History* 28, no.2 (June 1956), pp.111-129; Amy Blakeway, “The Response to Regent Moray's Assassination,” *SHR* 88, no.225 (April 2009), pp.9-33.

⁴ Lennox had arrived in Scotland in 1579 from France as a Catholic but in early 1581, he declared his conversion to Protestantism, although the sincerity of his conversion was always suspect. *Calderwood*, pp.468-9; Rosalind Marshall, “Stuart [Stewart], Esmé, First Duke of Lennox (c.1542-1583), Courtier and Magnate,” in *DNB*.

⁵ William Ruthven, first Earl of Gowrie led the raid. Roger Mason, “Scotland, Elizabethan England and the Idea of Britain,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (Sixth Series)* 14 (2004), p.289; David Moysie, *Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1830), pp.37-8.

⁶ The Duke of Lennox left Scotland on 18 December 1582, first riding to London, and from there returning to France. He fell ill in February 1583, and died on 26 May 1583. Marshall, “DNB, Esmé Stuart.” The king escaped with the help of a pro-Catholic faction of his nobility, led Huntly. Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.45; Grant, “The Brig o'Dee Affair,” p.97; *Spottiswood*, vol.2 pp.300-2.

⁷ “The period between 1578 and 1585 was a time of turmoil in Scotland's government as one short-lived regime followed another.” Quote from: Alan MacDonald, “Best of Enemies: Andrew Melville and Patrick Adamson, c. 1574-1592,” in *Sixteenth-Century Scotland: Essays in Honour of Michael Lynch*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Alasdair MacDonald (Leiden, 2008), p.271.

⁸ Marcus Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1542-1551* (East Linton, 2000).

⁹ The Treaty of Bourbon (1550) and the Treaty of Norham (1551) marked the end of the Anglo-French war, the Treaty of Edinburgh (1560) marked the end of both kingdoms military presence in Scotland. For more information see: Pamela Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548-1560: A Political Career* (East Linton, 2002), pp.10-60; *RPCS*, vol.1 p.116 [3 September 1551, Edinburgh]; W. K. Jordan, ed., *The Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI*

their covert attempts to subvert Scottish policies that would harm their own interests continued throughout the sixteenth century.¹⁰ They were able to do this because of the weak and changeable nature of the regency governments. At this juncture, James urgently sought friends and allies; however, his actions from 1584 onward suggest that the king hoped to work with foreign princes as equals rather than be subservient to them as had been the case with his mother.¹¹ James well understood the importance of royal authority, and set out to secure it for himself, by punishing anyone who infringed upon it.¹²

The Ruthven Raid and the subsequent regime perfectly illustrate the foreign influences at work in Scotland, as well as the king's need to suppress them. The raiders were more than a coalition of Protestant Scottish nobles; they were also decidedly pro-English in their foreign policy, and their coup was undertaken with the support and funding of the Queen of England, who was as uneasy at the rapid rise of Lennox and the growing pro-French, pro-Catholic sentiments he symbolised.¹³ Elizabeth had had good reason to be nervous, for as soon as Lennox came to power in Scotland Henri I, third Duke of Guise and James VI's maternal uncle, along with English and Scottish Jesuits, began discussions to consider a Spanish and French invasion of England routed through Scotland. Their three-fold aim also included an ambition to rescue Mary Queen of Scots, and to reconvert the king to Catholicism.¹⁴ The success of the Ruthven Raid stalled these

(London, 1966), p.21; *Spottiswood*, vol.1 pp.321-5 [1560, Treaty of Edinburgh]; Talbot, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713*, pp.15-7.

¹⁰ See for example: Lee, Jr, "The Fall of the Regent Morton."

¹¹ During Mary Queen of Scots minority France had largely been in control of Scotland through the regency of Mary of Guise and the marriage treaty of Mary Queen of Scots. Ritchie, *Mary of Guise*, pp.30-60 passim. Parliamentary proclamations made in 1584, such as the 'Black Acts' defined and enhanced royal powers in an effort to do domestically what James was doing diplomatically - establish his authority. *RPS*, sec.1584/5/8, 14; Julian Goodare, "Scottish Politics in the Reign of James VI," in *The Reign of James VI*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (East Linton, 2000), pp.32-54; Julian Goodare, *The Government of Scotland, 1560-1625* (Oxford, 2004).

¹² Despite James's education under George Buchanan, who argued that the people had a right and a duty to remove a monarch whom they felt had failed in their royal duties, James's own interpretation of royal authority more closely followed the 'absolute monarch' school of thought. Both published their opinions of royal authority, see: George Buchanan, *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship Among the Scots: A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan's De Iure Regni Apud Scotos Dialogus*, ed. by Roger Mason and Martin Stirling Smith (Aldershot, 2004); James VI, *The True Lawv of Free Monarchy, or The Reciprocall and Mutuall Duty Betwvixt a Free King and His Naturall Subjects*, EEBO Thomason Tracts; 41:E238[23] (London, 1642); James VI, "Basilicon Doron," in *King James VI and I: Political Writings*, ed. by J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge, 1994), pp.1-61.

¹³ The speech given to James VI explaining the Ruthven Raider's motivations can be found in: Masson, *RPCS*, vol.3 p. 506-7n - [26 August 1582 - Edinburgh]. James's response to Elizabeth's involvement in the Ruthven Raid may be seen in his interview with the English ambassador, Sir Francis Walsingham, who was sent in 1583 to try to repair the relations between the two kingdoms. *Spottiswood*, vol.2 pp.302-3.

¹⁴ James was baptised a Catholic at birth but raised as a Protestant. Richard Bruce Wernham, *Before the Armada* (London, 1971), pp.363-4; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589-1597*, p.52; A. Lynn Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians* (Genève, 1973), pp.67-8, 74, 106-8; John Huxtable Elliott, *Europe Divided 1559-1598* (London, 1968),

plans and kept Scotland from joining irrevocably with the Catholic cause.¹⁵ During the Ruthven regency, Henri III and Guise remained interested in regaining influence in Scotland and attempted to aid James by sending an ambassador, Francois de Roncherolles, Seigneur de Mayneville, to try to secure his release. Mayneville arrived in January 1583 with two sets of instructions: one from Henri III to try and secure the king's freedom, and the other from Guise to form a strong, pro-French, pro-invasion faction within James's nobility and also gain the king's support for the invasion of England. Mayneville was not given any specific advice as to which Scottish nobles to seek out to form such a faction, although it is likely that he would have sought out the traditional noble families who were thought to be pro-French and pro-Catholic, such as the Gordons and Maxwells.¹⁶ The ambassador clearly failed in Henri's mission to secure James's immediate release, but his effectiveness in Guise's mission is more difficult to determine. The Earl of Huntly and other pro-Catholics were among the nobles who eventually helped to free James from the Ruthvens, and afterward they supported plans for an invasion to reconvert Scotland to Catholicism. How much of this was due to Mayneville's efforts, and how much to their pre-existing sympathies, is impossible to know. As far as Mayneville was concerned, he returned home after only five months in Scotland feeling that he had nothing tangible to show either the King of France or Guise for his efforts.¹⁷

After gaining his independence from the Ruthven faction, James quickly turned his attention to limiting the influence of his captors' foreign supporters – primarily the English.¹⁸ James's policy towards England was much more complex than a response to the Ruthven Raid; however, particularly in the early years of his personal rule, the king's desire to gain authority over his subjects made him wary of any foreign power who sought to unduly influence his government by controlling his nobles. James's escape from captivity gave him the theoretical ability to do this, but he also needed supporters and funding if he was to successfully overthrow the hostile regency. The king first looked to those who assisted in his escape, the group of primarily Catholic, pro-French Scottish nobles

p.303; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.xl–xlili; Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), pp.193–5.

¹⁵ McCoog, "Lord of the Harvest," p.144.

¹⁶ Throughout James's rule reports on the Scottish nobles and their political and religious affections were often made, such as the one the Charles Rogers edited and published: *Estimate of the Scottish Nobility During the Minority of James the Sixth* (London, 1873).

¹⁷ Mayneville [Mainville] was sent to Scotland in October 1582 but did not arrive in Scotland until January 1583. He left some time in May 1584. FR-SC_01.; Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion: The Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998), p.190; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.44; Thomson, *Historie*, p.193.

¹⁸ Ruth Grant, "George Gordon, Sixth Earl of Huntly, and the Politics of the Counter-Reformation in Scotland, 1581-1595" (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2010), pp.62–3. According to an unknown individual, 'The King [of Scots] is enemy to the Queen of England and her estate; which needs no probation, for it is manifest. Therefore "I conclud that his felicite is his infelicite".' BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII f.32. Unknown, "My Opinion Concerning the Scottish Effaris Presentit to My Lord Secretary," (April 1594). Quote taken from *CSP Scotland*, vol.7 p.101 no.84.

led by Huntly.¹⁹ Despite their unpopularity with the Kirk and certain foreign allies, James allowed this pro-Catholic faction to survive throughout his reign, using them as a counter-balance to the Protestant and pro-English factions already established in Scotland.²⁰ Similarly, James also used his foreign relations with the Catholic powers outwith his kingdom as a counterweight to English attempts at interference.

The Auld Alliance's Failure to Aid

When considering foreign allies, James understandably first looked to France and specifically to his uncle because of the concern the French had shown for him in 1583.²¹ James was linked to France not only by blood, but also through the Auld Alliance, which had existed between Scotland and France since 1296. Whilst some have argued that the alliance ended in 1560 with the Scottish Reformation, Siobhan Talbott and others have shown that it did continue, albeit in an altered form, through at least the first half of the seventeenth century.²² In December 1583, James sent George, Lord Seaton, to France in an attempt to strengthen Franco-Scottish relations and seek Henri III's support.²³ In addition, the ambassador carried secondary instructions from the burghs of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Perth and Dundee to discuss issues of trade. In return, the burghs agreed to underwrite a large portion of the mission.²⁴ Throughout his reign James regularly used the burgh's desire to negotiate trade as a means of funding his

¹⁹ The 'Catholic' faction included the Earls of Huntly, Errol and Crawford, Lords Maxwell and Harris, and occasionally the Protestant Earl of Bothwell. See: Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.97; William Forbes-Leith and David Hay Fleming, eds., *Narratives of Scottish Catholics under Mary Stuart and James VI: Now First Printed from the Original Manuscripts in the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Collections* (Edinburgh, 1885), p.216. George Gordon was the sixth Earl of and later first marquess of Huntly. J. R. M. Sizer, "Gordon, George, First Marquess of Huntly (1561/2-1636), Magnate and Politician," in *DNB*.

²⁰ Thomas Graves Law, *Collected Essays and Reviews of Thomas Graves Law*, ed. by Peter Hume Brown (Edinburgh, 1904), pp.264-5; Barry Robertson, "Continuity and Change in the Scottish Nobility: The House of Huntly, 1603-1690" (PhD Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2007), pp.37-8; Murdoch, "James VI and the Formation of a Scottish-British Military Identity," pp.6-10.

²¹ During this period in France there were three main factions of power: the Valois, represented by Henri III, the Guise, and the Bourbons, led by Henri of Navarre, eventually Henri IV. David Buisseret, *Henry IV* (London, 1984), p.15.

²² Talbott, "An Alliance Ended"; Talbott, "Communities on the Continent: Franco-Scottish Network Building in a Comparative European Context, 1560-1685"; Siobhan Talbott, "Beyond 'the Antiseptic Realm of Theoretical Economic Models': New Perspectives on Franco-Scottish Commerce and the Auld Alliance in the Long Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 31, no.2 (November 2011), pp.149-68; Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713*, pp.15-33.

²³ SC-FR_01. Seaton was commissioned in October 1583, with funds being raised in November of that year for his departure. Masson, *RPCS*, vol.3 p. 604 [26 October 1583, Stirling], p. 612 [29 November 1583, Holyrood House]. See also: Michael Lynch, "Seton [Seaton], George, Fifth Lord Seton (c.1530-1586), Politician," in *DNB*.

²⁴ James Marwick, Marguerite Wood, and Helen Armet, eds., *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1869), vol.4 pp.319-20 [14 January 1584]; p.378 [11 December 1584].

diplomacy, and this enabled him to maximise his limited resources.²⁵ Seton arrived in France on 29 December, along with his son Alexander, and remained there until early 1585.²⁶ The ambassador worked with Henri III and Guise, as well as the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mary Queen of Scots' representative in Paris, to strengthen James's position within his kingdom.²⁷ They also endeavoured to secure the liberation of the Mary Queen of Scots from captivity and promoted a Franco-Spanish invasion of England via Scotland, hopefully with a newly converted Catholic James at the head.²⁸ Elizabeth discovered Seaton's activities, and consequently when it came time for him to return to Scotland Elizabeth refused to grant him a passport to travel through England.²⁹

Henri III supported his nephew and sought to improve James's position in Scotland through a variety of methods.³⁰ He authorised an annual pension of 20,000 *livres*, and instructed his ambassador in London, Seigneur Michel de Castelnau de Mauvissière to handle the transaction.³¹ Despite Henri's willingness to financially provide for James, he was not willing to involve himself in the invasion plots of Guise or Philip. Whilst Guise was plotting to invade England and replace Elizabeth with James, Henri III was attempting to play peacemaker between Scotland and England. In August 1584, after obtaining permission from Elizabeth, Henri instructed Mauvissière to go to Scotland and attempt to restore Anglo-Scottish relations, although it is unclear if the ambassador visited Scotland

²⁵ See for example the mission of the Duke of Lennox to France in 1601. SC-FR_12.

²⁶ Calderwood dates Seaton's departure as 16 January 1584, which coincides with the Edinburgh Burgh records of 14 January 1584; however Seaton's arrival in Paris is recorded as 29 December 1583 by the English ambassador to France, Sir Edward Stafford. *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.2 [16 January 1584, Seton's embassy to France]; Marwick, Wood, and Armet, *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh*, vol.4 pp.319–20 [14 January 1584]; Hatfield House, CP 162/138. "Sir Edward Stafford to Sir Francis Walsingham," (29 December 1583). The exact date of his departure from France is not known; however it was reported on 7 February 1585 that James has received Seaton sternly in public, but that afterward James had gone in person to visit him at his home, and in truth he approved of the ambassador's actions. *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.530–1 no.386 [7 February 1585, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

²⁷ In March 1584 Seton wrote to the Pope requesting his support for James and warning that if Elizabeth succeeded in causing a rebellion in Scotland then all hope of the kingdom's return to Catholicism would be lost. Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, pp.186–8 [14 March 1584, Paris, George Seaton to Pope Gregory XIII].

²⁸ ASV, Segr. Stato Inghilterra vol.1 f.279. "Archbishop Glasgow to Pope Gregory XIII" (16 April 1584); TNA, SP 53/13 f.98. "Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary Queen of Scots," (June 1584); TNA, SP 78/11 f.86. "Sir Edward Stafford to the Queen," (2 May 1584); Hatfield House, CP 163/14. "Sir Edward Stafford to Sir Francis Walsingham," (2 May 1584); Hatfield House, CP 163/27. "Sir Edward Stafford to Sir Francis Walsingham," (21 June 1584); TNA, SP 78/12 f.273. "Thomas Beckner to Walsingham," (20 October 1584); Robert Parsons, *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons*, ed. by L. Hicks, vol. 1, 1st ed., Catholic Record Society Publications 35 (London, 1942), p.224 [Persons? to Englefield. Paris, 24 July 1584].

²⁹ TNA, SP 52/35 f.63. "Walsingham to Lord Hudson," (29 July 1584); TNA, SP 12/173/1 f.17. "Robert Beal, Clerk of the Council, to Walsingham," (7 September 1584).

³⁰ *Relations Politiques*, vol.3 p.288 [27 June 1584, Henri III to James VI].

³¹ *Papiers D'état*, vol.2 p.658–9 [26 June 1584, Patent pension for James VI]; *Relations Politiques*, vol.3 p.287 [26 June 1584, Paris, gift of a pension of 20,000 livre to James VI], p.288 [27 June 1584, Henri III to James VI]. A note on the manuscript margin indicates that the patent was not delivered.

or simply worked with Scots residing in London to further this end.³² Regardless of these attempts by the French to mediate, Anglo-Scottish relations did improve after 1584. This was, however, more likely due to James's concern over his succession claim and his councillors' desire for peace (which culminated in the Treaty of Berwick) than French mediation.

James was well aware of Guise's desire to liberate Mary Queen of Scots, and to invade England and Scotland to force a restoration of Catholicism.³³ Mayneville informed the king of these plans in 1583, and his ambassadors in France continued to keep the king abreast of their progress throughout the period. James followed up his embassy to the French king with a letter to Guise in February 1584.³⁴ James's letter to his uncle uses these desires to try to obtain the assistance he needed for his own ambitions; he vaguely suggests his willingness to cooperate in Guises's operations, but only after his own position had improved.

... I now perceive that the strength of my enemies and rivels is growing daily, with so many means and aims of the queen of England for the subversion of my State, and the deprivation of my own life, or at least my honour and liberty, which I prize more than my life, and that it will be impossible for me to resist for long without the aid of God and my good friends and allies. I therefore beg you, my dear cousin, to use all your influence with the princes who are your friends, and even with our holy father ... with the object of obtaining prompt and speedy help ... *If by your means I can obtain some succour I hope, God helping, that with the support of a good number of adherents that I have, both in Scotland and in England, I shall soon be out of these difficulties, and I shall be more free to follow your advice in all things, both in religion and State affairs, as I wish to do in all things reasonable.*³⁵

From the above letter we see James, within the first year of his personal rule, displaying the skills and aptitude of a seasoned diplomat, using the fears and desires of foreign powers to manipulate the situation for his own benefit. James not only wrote to Guise in this instance, but also directly petitioned the Papacy for assistance against the English.³⁶ In his papal address, James offered his

³² *Papiers D'état*, vol.2 pp.619-21 [9 April 1584, London; M. de Castelnau to the Queen Mother]; *Relations Politiques*, vol.3 p.288 [27 June 1584, Henri III to James VI].

³³ The invasion of Scotland would be ideally with James's blessing and consent. Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion*, pp.175, 188-90.

³⁴ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.517-8 no.370 [19 February 1584, James VI to the Duke of Guise].

³⁵ Italics added by author for emphasis. *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol.16 pp.518-9 no.371 [19 February 1584, James VI to Pope Gregory XIII]. The original letter does not survive in the ASV, however the archive does have a copy of a letter from James, dated 10 March 1584 that might be related to the one in *CSP Spain*. ASV, Segr. Stato Inghilterra vol.1 f.172. James VI, "Copia de Instructio rorum qua cpmsamguinous n'r car[mus] Johanes Stuardus cum[m] s D.N. Greg[o] Pont[o] Maximo por agenda Sabit." (10 March 1584). George Seaton also wrote to Pope Gregory XIII on James's behalf, claiming that the

potential conversion to Catholicism in exchange for overwhelming support that, crucially, must result in the king's accession to the English throne after Elizabeth.³⁷ His early experiences of managing court factions had taught him to always have something to offer in negotiations, and to hold off payment until he had achieved his goals.

James's petitions fell on willing ears but his timing made turning those into actions incredibly difficult. When Lord Seaton arrived in France, the king and the French Catholic nobility were in the midst of a power struggle that effectively prohibited either the king or Guise from doing anything to assist James. The conservative nobility, led by Guise had renewed the Catholic League as a means of opposing Henri III's attempts to compromise with his Protestant opponents.³⁸ The death of the Duke of Anjou on 19 June ensured that the heir to the French throne was now Henri of Navarre, one of the leaders of the French Huguenots. The League's purpose was now clear: to keep Henri of Navarre, or any other protestant, from inheriting the French crown. This, along with Henri III's attempts to reconcile with Navarre, frightened not only the conservative Catholics of France, but also the Papacy and Spain, who wanted to stop the spread of Protestantism and to keep France in domestic turmoil as a way of limiting her power.³⁹

Guise and the Catholic League eventually forced Henri III to sign the Treaty of Nemours in June 1585, retracting every pro-Protestant edict the king had made up to that point.⁴⁰ This sustained attack came at a great cost to the League, which had quickly found its resources exhausted whilst the Huguenots were still gaining strength and support. In order to continue their attack Guise and the Catholic League signed the Treaty of Joinville with Spain in December 1584, which dictated that the League would return Cambrai to Spanish control, and in return Philip would provide the money needed to drive the Huguenots

lack of funds was all that prevented James from taking up the Catholic cause. The letter is printed in: Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, pp.186-8.

³⁷ James's letter to the Pope reads, 'I hope to be able to satisfy your Holiness on all other points, especially if I am aided in my great need by your Holiness.' *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.518-9 no.371 [19 February 1584, James VI to Pope Gregory XIII].

³⁸ The League had begun in the mid-sixteenth century, but dispersed in the 1570s after failing to unify the nobility for a single purpose. For a more information on the League and their relations with Henri III see: J. Bergin, "The Decline and Fall of the House of Guise as an Ecclesiastical Dynasty," *Historical Journal* 25, no.4 (1982), pp.781-803; Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino De Mendoza and the French Catholic League*; R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, 2nd ed (London, 1996), pp.120-8; H. G. Koenigsberger, "The Organization of Revolutionary Parties in France and the Netherlands during the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of Modern History* 27, no.4 (December 1955), pp.335-51; Mark Konner, *Local Politics in the French Wars of Religion: The Towns of Champagne, the Duc De Guise, and the Catholic League, 1560-95* (Aldershot, 2006), pp.161-2; Alexander Wilkinson, "Mary Queen of Scots and the French Connection," *History Today* 54, no.7 (July 2004), pp.37-43.

³⁹ Vincent Pitts, *Henri IV of France: His Reign and Age* (Baltimore, 2009), pp.108-15.

⁴⁰ Buisseret, *Henry IV*, pp.18, 25; Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, pp.124-5; Wernham, *Before the Armada*, pp.370-1.

from France and prevent Henri of Navarre from inheriting the French throne.⁴¹ With the Treaty of Joinville Guise became financially reliant on Philip, and this limited the ways in which he was able to assist James.⁴² The English ambassador in France noted this, saying:

I do not doubt the Duke of Guise's good will and promises to help the King of Scots, but see no reason to fear his performing anything, for his means are small and his credit smaller, unless outward shows are deceptive...⁴³

Despite the absence of material assistance on the part of Guise for James, the English account does at least show that the King of Scots had earned the respect and some loyalty of his foreign allies; this political currency would prove more beneficial than money or men in advancing his reputation across Europe.

Prospective Invaders & James's Petition to Spain

Despite his lack of resources, it seems the Duke of Guise genuinely wanted to help James overthrow England's influence in Scotland. His instructions to Mayneville were only one in a series of communications the duke had with his nephew since the early 1580s. From at least 1578, there had been discussions in France and Spain regarding an invasion of England; however, Guise and Philip had differing goals. In the Guise plan a Franco-Spanish army would invade England via Scotland, free Mary Queen of Scots and secure her, and then her son's, right to the English throne. This would result in the return of both kingdoms to the Catholic fold.⁴⁴ This plot, known as *l'Impresa*, was supported by several of the pro-French, pro-Catholic Scottish nobility, but was temporarily halted when the Ruthven regime ousted the Duke of Lennox.⁴⁵ James re-ignited these plans with his liberation from the Ruthvens and his later communications with his uncle. Ultimately, however, James's agents in France discussed these plans with Guise, in conjunction with French agents in Rome, thus limiting the influence that the King of Scots personally had on their development. Despite these restrictions, because these agents were working on behalf of James they were indirectly advancing his influence on international negotiations, if not obtaining significant concessions in James's favour.

⁴¹ Archives des Affaires étrangères, CP Espagne vol.10 ff.256-267. "Treaty of Joinville," (1584); Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, pp.120-2; Elliott, *Europe Divided 1559-1598*, p.306.

⁴² Koenigsberger, "The Organization of Revolutionary Parties in France and the Netherlands during the Sixteenth Century," p.347; Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, pp.121-2; Buisseret, *Henry IV*, p.17.

⁴³ TNA, SP 78/11 f.97. Sir Edward Stafford, "Sir Edward Stafford to Walsingham" (11 May 1584).

⁴⁴ The first mention of a Scottish invasion was put forward in 1578. Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion*, pp.175, 188; *CSP Spain*, vol.8 pp.xl-xliii. These plans came amongst the numerous other assassination plots concocted by the Catholic laity, priests and Jesuits, such as the Throckmorton plot of 1583. *Calderwood*, vol.4 pp.65-9.

⁴⁵ Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians*, pp.67, 74, 106.

Philip's primary concern remained the reassertion of Spanish influence in England and returning that kingdom to the Catholic fold.⁴⁶ The Spanish ambassador, Bernardino de Mendoza, was expelled from England in January 1584 for his part in the Throckmorton plot to assassinate Elizabeth and replace her with Mary Queen of Scots.⁴⁷ Mendoza was sent to Paris after his expulsion, where he remained active in his attempts to overthrow Elizabeth and return England to Catholicism. Mendoza spearheaded the succession plan of Philip II and managed much of the intelligence as it came from England and France.⁴⁸ It was also Mendoza's presence in France that allowed Guise to attempt to merge his invasion plans with Philip's, although by this point Philip had already resolved to no longer include Guise or the Catholic missionaries in his invasion plans.⁴⁹ Guise and the Scottish Catholic nobility were unhappy with Philip's attempts to remove them from the decision-making process, since they saw in Philip's plans to forcibly convert England the chance, not only to have their queen back, but also to free Scotland and her king from the grip of the Kirk.

Guise and the Scottish Catholic nobility collectively approached Bernardino de Mendoza in Paris in 1585 with an alternative plan for invading England via Scotland despite Philip's attempts to deter them.⁵⁰ Guise claimed he could raise Scottish troops from the Borders and combine these with Catholic forces raised in northern England. Guise would then come over with a French force to aid in overthrowing Elizabeth. Whilst Guise wanted Philip to believe that he would comply with the Habsburg invasion strategy, the duke hoped to use the invasion to establish James, with or without his mother, as the monarch of England.⁵¹

Despite the hope and conviction of the Guise faction, they were operating with very little real power behind their plans due to the Treaty of Joinville. Guise tried to use the Pope, Sixtus V, to influence the king of Spain, but Philip's agent at the Vatican was well connected at the papal court and thus able to prevent the Guises from gaining such an advantage. Sixtus wanted to convert England and Scotland without giving over power of these kingdoms to Spain, but he also wanted to make a name for himself within the Catholic world, and the reconversion of England would be a great boost to his career. Therefore, whilst not ecstatic about Philip's plan, he would not refuse it if the scheme were the most likely to succeed. In February 1586, the Pope received word from the Guise

⁴⁶ Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion*, pp.175, 191.

⁴⁷ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.513-5 no.366 [26 January 1584, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, vol.16 p.xliv.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vol.16 pp.xl-xliii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, vol.16 pp.xlv, 539-40 no.397 [9 July 1585, Philip II to Bernardino de Mendoza].

⁵¹ Because of Mary's imprisonment in England James would have to lead the invasion force from Scotland and be a willing ally of Catholicism, France and Spain in case Mary was killed before the invasion force could free her. Thus, Guise's plans often discussed James ruling alone, although with his mother's advice. As a male who was still capable of siring children, he would ultimately be the one to establish a dynasty in Scotland and England, rather than Mary. ASV, Segr. Stato Inghilterra vol.1 f.279. James Beaton, "Archbishop Glasgow to Pope Gregory XIII" (16 April 1584); ASV, Segr. Stato Inghilterra vol.1 f.271. "Unknown to Pope Gregory XIII," (16 February 1584); Gray, *Letters & Papers*, pp.71-4 [10 April 1586, Master of Gray to Thomas Mills]; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.xl-xlvi; Parsons, *Letters and Memorials of Father Parsons*, 1:p.224 [24 July 1584, Paris, Parsons? to Englefield]; Wernham, *Before the Armada*, pp.363-4.

faction, informing him of their invasion plan and ‘begging him [the Pope] not to have anything to do with an enterprise unless they were included’.⁵² The Pope informed Philip of this, but he did not promise the Guise faction anything.

Philip had several reasons for being reluctant to include Scotland in his invasion plans. Firstly, the King of Spain coveted Elizabeth’s crown for himself, and thus did not want to support James’s rival claim.⁵³ The second reason was one of military strategy; Juan Bautista de Tassis advised Philip in April 1584 that if the invasion were to start from Scotland the distance the army would then have to travel would mean that all chance of surprise would be lost despite the advantage of a safe landing point.⁵⁴ It would be likely that Mary would be moved by the time the invasion force arrived to free her. On the subject of Scottish troops joining the invasion force - something that the Scottish Catholic nobility and the Guise faction had previously suggested - Bauista felt that as long as there were equal numbers of Scots and English forces, then the English would not be opposed to it. Nor, for that matter, would the Scots object to the number of men they were providing.⁵⁵ Philip was very much aware of the fact that England still regarded Scotland as a friend of France, and therefore linked them with an historic enemy.⁵⁶ Thus, whilst Philip believed a Spanish force coming into England might be seen as liberators by English Catholics, he also saw that if the invasion force were to be dominated or led by Scots, then the army might be seen by English Catholics as the start of a Scottish domination of England. That Scotland played such a large part in both Philip and Guises’s invasion plans reveals the integrated nature of the kingdom – and her king - to European politics. James might not have had much of a say in these discussions, but simply being a continual subject of discussion was ultimately a positive thing for his Continental reputation.

⁵² *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.561 no.426 [24 February 1586, Count de Olivares to Philip II].

⁵³ Philip II held out hopes for a Spanish succession to Elizabeth’s crown until his death, and his son only eventually released the claim after it was clear that James had already succeeded to the throne. William Goldman, “The Political Culture of Empire: The Spanish Council of State and Foreign Policy under Philip III, 1598-1621” (PhD Thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 2009), pp.78–9; Albert Loomie, “Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603,” *Revue Belge de Philologie et D’histoire* 43, no.2 (1965), pp.492–514. For more information on the nature of James’s claim to the succession see: Doran, “James VI and the English Succession”; Joel Hurstfield, *Freedom, Corruption and Government in Elizabethan England*, 1973; Janel Mueller, “To My Very Good Brother the King of Scots: Elizabeth I’s Correspondence with James VI and the Question of the Succession,” *PMLA* 115, no.5 (October 2000), pp.1063–71; Nick Myers, “The Gossip of History: The Question of the Succession in the State Papers (Domestic and Foreign),” in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.49–64; Parsons, *A Conference*.

⁵⁴ Bauista was a Spanish agent who was sent by Philip to negotiate with Scottish Catholics. He argued that although a safe port would be highly beneficial in an invasion plan, the length of time it would take to transfer an invasion force over land from Scotland into England would eliminate the advantage of surprise and allow Elizabeth too much time to move Mary to a more secure location. *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.521–5 no.377 [18 April 1584, Juan Bautista de Tassis to Philip II].

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, vol.16 p.xliv.

The relationship between England and Scotland was one of the main reasons why James never had a central role in Philip's succession plan – if he had, the English Catholics were more likely to reject it. Moreover, at this point many Scottish Catholics were wary of Spain and Philip's intentions for Scotland, making them less likely to join forces with him.⁵⁷ The tension between Scottish, English and other Catholics regarding national pride and ulterior motives was something James struggled with throughout his reign. The fears of Scottish Catholics subsided once it became apparent France could do nothing for them, whilst the English Catholics only sporadically and never fully warmed to the idea of having a Scottish king – whatever his religion.⁵⁸ What James gained from this debate and tension was a place in the spotlight, and he used this to make the most of his peaceful relations with Catholic Europe and his friendly treatment of those who followed the Pope.⁵⁹ This, along with James's logistical and practical uses, ensured that he was at least mentioned in discussions, if not directly involved in continental schemes. It also allowed Philip to see what policies James would pursue, and how astute a diplomat he was.

Despite being uninterested in including James in his invasion plans, Philip could not afford to alienate the King of Scots either. Thus, when James contacted Philip to ask for assistance in breaking Elizabeth's hold over Scotland the King of Spain did what he could to help. James had previously contacted Philip in 1583, when he sent Sir John Seaton as his ambassador with an 'order from the Scotch King to inform King Philip that his subjects hold him prisoner and to demand his counsel and aid'.⁶⁰ Seaton remained in Spain until early 1584, returning to Scotland via Bordeaux, yet even when James did not have an agent in Spain his relations with Philip continued.⁶¹ Later that year James passed a letter to Philip, likely via the Archbishop of Glasgow and then onto Juan Bauista de Tassis, Philip's agent in France. James had asked the king to look into Colonel Stuart, a Scot in the service of the Spanish Netherlands. Philip instructed de Tassis to inform James's agent in Paris that the he had written the Duke of Parma to

⁵⁷ A survey of the Scottish nobility in 1586 asked not who was for England or Spain, but who was for England or France, showing that at this time France was the seat Scottish Catholic hopes. Rogers, *Estimate of the Scottish Nobility*, p.45; Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion*, pp.175, 191; CSP Spain, vol.16 pp.xl–xliii; Elder, *Spanish Influences*, pp.113–4.

⁵⁸ Hubert Chadwick, "Father William Crichton, S.J., and a Recently Discovered Letter (1589)," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* 6 (1937), pp.262–3; Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion*, p.191. In the late 1590s the English Catholics asked Philip III to nominate a candidate for the English throne. Although they did not want him, they also did not want a heretic (pointedly James VI) either. Paul Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598-1621: The Failure of Grand Strategy* (New Haven, 2000), p.26.

⁵⁹ Croft, *King James*, p.32.

⁶⁰ SC-SP_01. James also wrote to Philip in 1586, to ask for assistance. SC-SP_03.; Hatfield House, CP 138/167. "Sir Henry Cobham to Walsingham," (24 June 1583).

⁶¹ BL, Cott. Calig. C. VII., fol. 251. "Robert Bowes to Walsingham," (17 June 1583); TNA, SP 78/11 f.17. "Waad to Walsingham" (2 February 1584); BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII ff.6-7. "Robert Bowes to Walsingham," (5 April 1584). For more information on the networks on which news and diplomacy relied, see: Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe*; Beltrán, "Philip of Spain: The Spider's Web of News and Information"; Joop Koopmans, ed., *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Leuven, 2005).

inquire into the matter, and also ‘assure him [James] of my great pleasure at reading the other points in the king’s letter, and of my willingness to oblige the King in all things’.⁶² A few days later Philip again wrote to de Tassis regarding James, this time to congratulate the Scottish king for his victory over the Ruthven rebels who had attempted to take Stirling castle in April, but had failed.⁶³ In this letter Philip promised to send ‘money for the guard ... shortly’, implying that some form of assistance was at least intended for the Scottish king, whether or not it ever materialised.⁶⁴

By the end of the first year of James’s personal rule, there had already been discrete communication with Spain, a trend that would continue throughout James’s reign. The potential for an open diplomatic relationship was such that Philip had even considered a marriage between James and the Infanta Margaret in 1584. However, her mother, the Holy Roman Empress Maria of Austria, was so violently opposed to the match that she threatened to make her daughter a nun rather than have her marry the King of Scots.⁶⁵ Philip initially considered pursuing the issue without the Empress’s consent, but he quickly moved away from this plan, and indeed from open and honest relations with James, as issues of religion and the English succession caused both monarchs to remain guarded with each other.

Regarding the Scottish king’s religion – which had a significant affect on how foreign powers viewed him – one early description of James noted that ‘he is naturally so deceitful and shifty that the Scottish heretics themselves do not trust him’.⁶⁶ James’s requests for assistance from the Catholic powers of Europe always included the suggestion that he would be willing to convert from Protestantism if he obtained his goals by Catholic assistance. Whether this was simply an attempt at deception or a genuine offer remains debatable, but it was not so outrageous as to be inconceivable from the start. The king had been baptised a Catholic, after all, and his continued association with Catholic nobles and communication with Catholic powers allowed those who wanted to believe in James’s potential conversion (often for their own ends) to keep their hopes alive. Speculation concerning James’s reported feelings on the subject varied throughout his reign; nevertheless, especially in the early years, many were hopeful of his conversion. This was so much the case that the Pope authorised a mission in Scotland, during

⁶² Sadly James’s letter has not survived. The Colonel in question is unknown, but we can eliminate William Stuart of Pittenweem, who was in Danish service until 1582 and in Scotland until 1586 when he left for Denmark as an agent, nor is it Colonel James Stuart, former Earl of Arran. *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.525 no.378 [1 May 1584, Philip II to Juan Bautista de Tassis].

⁶³ The rebels were remnants of the Ruthven Regime, which had hopped for English assistance to recapture James VI.

⁶⁴ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.527 no.381 [29 May 1584, Philip II to Juan Bautista de Tassis]. James continually sought funding to provide for a royal guard, and Elizabeth I’s ambassador also offered to provide funding in 1588. NLS, Adv MS 33.1.7 vol.21 f.21. William Asheby, “Offers Made to James by Asheby [Copy]” (4 August 1588); Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years’ War*, p.17.

⁶⁵ *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.83 no.199 [1 March 1584, Vincenzo Graedenigo, Venitian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate].

⁶⁶ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.588–92 no.608 [1591, Document headed “the present state of the Catholic religion in Scotland”].

which Jesuits and lay clerics alike became involved with the plans for the forced conversion of Scotland to the Catholic fold.⁶⁷ In 1585, the Conde de Olivares encouraged the Pope against an attempt at uniting French factions in order that they might jointly invade England and place James on the throne. One of the count's main reasons for this advice was that he doubted the conversion of James to Catholicism would actually take place.⁶⁸

Throughout these invasion plans and discussions it is possible to view James as merely a pawn, rather than a player in events. Nevertheless, whilst it was true that Scotland was not a primary mover in these plans, James was not merely a passive participant either. The king initiated conversations and had agents who were working on his behalf, just as the Duke of Guise and Philip II did. Despite ultimately being excluded from Philip's invasion force of 1588, James nevertheless made his skills and abilities as a diplomat and a European prince felt amongst his contemporaries.

Establishing Power at Home & Abroad

Regardless of the international aspirations, James still had to establish power at home. His early requests for foreign assistance in this regard went largely unanswered, more due to a lack of ability than desire by the foreign princes. Nevertheless, James was able to break the hold of the pro-English faction in Scotland without foreign support by establishing his authority with indigenous resources. With a strong domestic faction behind him, the king banished the Ruthven lords and, when they attempted to take Stirling Castle in April 1584, led a force to crush the rebellion and execute the leaders.⁶⁹ The remainder of Ruthven's most prominent supporters were banished, and it was only after many months of negotiations with the English ambassadors that they were eventually allowed to return to Scotland.⁷⁰ James prosecuted those who had taken advantage of his minority with English backing quite harshly, and their treatment served as

⁶⁷ The Archbishop of Glasgow petitioned the pope to this purpose, as did Father William Holt, a Jesuit who had been in Scotland for several years. Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, pp.195-8; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541-1588*, p.244; McCoog, "Lord of the Harvest," pp.141-5; Yellowlees, *So Strange a Monster*, pp.92-4; Saenz-Cambra, "Scotland and Philip II: 1580-98," pp.77-8.

⁶⁸ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.541 no.399 [15 July 1585, Count de Olivares to Philip II]. Philip remained sceptical of James's alleged Catholic sympathies, and he believed that James was actually inhibiting the restoration of his kingdom to Catholicism. *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.605; Law, *Collected Essays*, p.206; Hatfield House, CP 163/133. "R. Douglas to Archibald Douglas," (28 March 1586).

⁶⁹ The Earl of Gowrie was executed on 3 May 1584 along with several other involved in his regime. "RPS," sec.1584/5/13, 1584/5/74; *RPCS*, vol.3 p.626 [31 January 1584, Holyrood House]; *Memoirs*, pp.48, 50; TNA, SP 52/34 f.44. "Mr. William Davison to Burghley," (4 May 1584). This was one of six times that James led an army between 1587-1594. Murdoch, "James VI and the Formation of a Scottish-British Military Identity," p.6.

⁷⁰ "RPS," sec.1584/5/74 [22 August 1584, Edinburgh Parliament] – An act for disinheriting of the posterity of the persons that are, or shall happen to be, convicted of the treasonable attempt at Stirling. For the negotiations concerning their return, see *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.x, xvii, 13n [Stirling Castle, 11 September 1585], 27n [Stirling Castle, 26 October 1585].

an example to Elizabeth as much as to his own nobility, that interference in his rule would not be accepted.⁷¹ Along with the king's dismantling of the Ruthven regime, he also restored those who had been near to him under the Lennox regime, specifically Colonel James Stuart, fourth Earl of Arran, whom he appointed as Chancellor in May 1584.⁷² The king was asserting his authority, almost deliberately doing things that irritated Elizabeth seemingly to show her that he could.⁷³ Elizabeth sent William Davison as a special ambassador in late April 1584 to try to regain her influence, and to repair the damaged relations between England and Scotland. His mission was to treat for the retraction of the banishment of the Ruthven leaders and to report to England on James's dealings with them, as well as to generally improve Anglo-Scottish relations.⁷⁴ The ambassador was also given funds to purchase the support of Scottish nobles in an effort to strengthen the pro-English faction at James's court.⁷⁵

Along with Davison, Elizabeth also sent one of her privy councillors, Henry Carey (later first Baron Hudson) to Berwick in June 1584, where he acted as Lord Governor intermittently throughout his career.⁷⁶ His instructions saw him treat with Arran for the advancement of Anglo-Scottish relations in the wake of the Ruthven Raid, and to determine whether or not Elizabeth could trust Arran, given his history as a leader of the pro-French regime under Lennox.⁷⁷ James VI wrote to Hudson and invited him to meet in Edinburgh. The letter also informed Hudson that if he did not have a commission to treat with the king then Arran had been instructed to oblige Hudson as much as possible.⁷⁸ Hudson eventually met with Arran on 14 August 1584 at Falden, near Berwick, and the two men discussed the return of those Scottish lords involved in the Ruthven regime who

⁷¹ James assertion of his authority of the Kirk in the 'Black Acts' was part of this policy, and another sore spot in Anglo-Scottish relations was that in response to the acts several Scottish ministers had gone into exile rather than accept them, and had found refuge in England. Maurice Lee, *John Maitland of Thirlestane and the Foundation of the Stewart Despotism in Scotland* (Princeton, 1959), pp.82-4; Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.53-4 no.9 [9 June 1584, James VI to "The Fugitive Ministers of the Kirk"].

⁷² *RPCS*, vol.3 p.652n [Holyrood, 17 April 1584]; Rosalind Marshall, "Stewart, James, Earl of Arran (c.1545-1596), Courtier and Administrator," ed. by H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, *DNB* (Oxford, 2004).

⁷³ In October 1586 Courcelles reported that Douglas had informed James that Elizabeth was unhappy with the proposed marriage of the Duke of Lennox to the daughter of lord Hamilton, and that 'the Kinge tooke it verie ill, as though the Queene of England sought to controule him in his owne realme, and that he was resolved to goe forward therwith notwithstanding.' Monsieur de Courcelles, *Extract From the Despatches of M. Courcelles, French Ambassador At the Court of Scotland, 1586-1587*, trans. by Robert Bell (Edinburgh, 1828), pp.5-6 [4 October 1586, Courcelles to Henri III]. Quote from p.6.

⁷⁴ EN-SC_01.

⁷⁵ BL, Harley 286 f.48. "A Direction for Mr. Wyllyam Davyson for the Imployment of the 2000 L. Committed unto Sir John Foster's Custodye," (25 April 1584).

⁷⁶ His name, also spelt as Hunsdon, although for standardizing purposes the text will always refer to him as Hudson. Quotes and references, however, have kept the original spelling. EN-SC_02.

⁷⁷ TNA, SP 52/35 f.28. "Instructions by Elizabeth for Hunsdon," (30 June 1584).

⁷⁸ BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII f.94. "James VI to Hudson," (26 July 1584), printed in: G. P. V Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI & I* (Berkeley, 1984), pp.57-8. See also: TNA, SP 52/35 f.53. James VI, "Commission for the Earl of Arran," (10 July 1584).

had taken refuge in England, and James's dealings with Spain, France, and the Papacy against Elizabeth.⁷⁹ Arran denied James had any intrigue with Catholic powers against Elizabeth, and although the two men did not come to an agreement in respect to the banished Earls, Arran returned to Edinburgh apparently pleased with the meeting.⁸⁰

Elizabeth was less convinced of Arran's trustworthiness, and looked to Davison to try to secure the freedom of the Ruthven leaders. Her efforts to restore the pro-English faction, with both Davison and Hudson working to that end, reveals the established interest she had in Scotland, and how fragile she knew her influence to be without a strong presence in James's court. James also recognised this, and although he was initially quite cold towards Elizabeth, once James established his strength and reduced her covert influences at his court, he grew more amenable to his cousin and consequently Anglo-Scottish relations began to improve.⁸¹

The League of Amity

Pressure from Spain began to mount in England after Elizabeth increased her support of the United Provinces. Because of this, the queen sought to secure her northern Border and to consolidate her allies.⁸² In March news reached England that Guise and Philip II had signed the Treaty of Joinville on 16 January, cementing the union between the Catholic League and Philip II for the eradication of Protestantism in France. This information caused Elizabeth to

⁷⁹ TNA, SP 52/35 f.58. Henry Carey, "Lord Hudson to Mr. William Davison," (23 July 1584); *Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1830), p.51; TNA, SP 52/35 f.60i. James Stewart, "Earl of Arran to [Henry Carey] Lord Hudson," (20 July 1584); TNA, SP 52/36 f.12i. James Stewart, "Earl of Arran to Henry Carey, Lord Hudson," (3 August 1584); TNA, SP 52/35 f.11. James Stewart, "The Earl of Arran to [Henry Carey] Lord Hunsdon," (15 June 1584); Wallace MacCaffrey, "Carey, Henry, First Baron Hudson (1526-1596), Courtier and Administrator," in *DNB*; Hiram Morgan, "Scotland in Renaissance Diplomacy, 1473-1603" Database, 2008.

⁸⁰ *Calderwood*, vol.4 pp.175-91 [14 August 1584]. Note: Calderwood describes this meeting as taking place at Berwick, although according to Hudson the meeting was to take place at Falden, which was located between Berwick and the Scottish Border.

⁸¹ "RPS," sec.1584/5/13, 1584/5/74; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.526 no.380 [27 May 1584, Juan Bautista de Tassis to Philip II]; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.48-50; BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII ff.6-7. "Robert Bowes to Walsingham," (5 April 1584).

⁸² Elizabeth signed the Treaty of Nonsuch with the United Provinces in the autumn of 1585, committing her to open support for the Dutch rebellion. Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy, 1558-1603*, pp.51-3; Alexandra Gajda, "Debating War and Peace in Late Elizabethan England," *Historical Journal* 52, no.4 (December 2009), p.853; Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477-1806*, Oxford History of Early Modern Europe (Oxford, 1995), p.405; David Trim, "Fighting 'Jacob's Warres': English and Welsh Mercenaries in the European Wars of Religion: France and the Netherlands" (PhD Thesis, Kings College, University of London, 2003), pp.162, 164; Charles Wilson, *Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands* (London, 1970), p.120. For a detailed analysis of the Anglo-Scottish peace see Elliott, *Europe Divided 1559-1598*, p.306; Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy, 1558-1603*, pp.42-4; Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino De Mendoza and the French Catholic League*, pp.41-3; Wernham, *Before the Armada*, pp.370-1; Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.205.

significantly increase the amount of troops and money already being sent in support of Henri of Navarre. Thus, in April 1585, Edward Wotton was sent by Elizabeth to encourage James to enter into an offensive and defensive League with England.⁸³ Whilst England initiated these negotiations, James was anxious to use this opportunity to set down in formal terms the relationship between Scotland and England, and hopefully, between James and Elizabeth.⁸⁴

A sign of the warming relations between Scotland and England came in May, when the English Privy Council had passed the 'Act for the security of the Queen's royal person'. This singled out Mary without naming her and made it illegal for her to inherit the English throne if she had any part in the attempt or success of an assassination plan targeting Elizabeth. Significantly, whilst this was more specific to Mary, it did not automatically disinherit James for his mother's actions.⁸⁵ The distinction between James and Mary in these laws again re-emphasised improving Anglo-Scottish relations. Despite these advances, Elizabeth still met some resistance from Arran, who was in charge of the early negotiations, as he was pushing for harsh terms that included James being named as Elizabeth's heir. This situation was resolved when those who opposed Arran's rule, specifically Patrick, Master of Gray and John Maitland of Thirlestane, formed a faction that overthrew Arran in November 1585.⁸⁶ From this point on Maitland and Gray, who were both favourable to England, led the Scottish side of the negotiations.⁸⁷ Both sides eventually agreed on the terms and an offensive and defensive League of Amity was signed at Berwick in July 1586.⁸⁸ The terms of the

⁸³ EN-SC_03.; *CSP Scotland*, vol.7 p.611 no.587 [April 1585, Instructions by Elizabeth for Mr Edward Wotton].

⁸⁴ Ruth Grant, "The Making of the Anglo-Scottish Alliance of 1586," in *Sixteenth-Century Scotland: Essays in Honour of Michael Lynch*, ed. by Alasdair A MacDonald and Julian Goodare (Leiden, 2008), pp.211-36.

⁸⁵ The previous law, the 'Instrument of an Association for the Preservation of the Queen's Person', passed in October 1584, had automatically disinherited the offspring of anyone convicted of plotting to kill Elizabeth, even if the offspring had had no knowledge of or involvement in the plot. BL, Add. Mss 48027 f.248. English Privy Council, "Bond of Association for the Safety of the Queen," (19 October 1584).

⁸⁶ Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.71-6. Lee classifies the overthrow of Arran as the start of James's personal rule, rather than his escape from the Ruthven Raiders in 1583. Although the exact date cannot be dated, it was likely a gradual shift that began at James's escape and was complete by 1585.

⁸⁷ Gray came from a traditionally pro-English family. His grandfather, Patrick, fourth Lord Gray, was in the pay of Henry VIII and voted in the 1543 parliament that agreed to the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots and Prince Edward VI. He also surrendered Broughty Castle to the English in 1547 for a price. Steve Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas? Scottish Maritime Warfare 1513-1713* (Leiden, 2010), p.60; Mary Black Verschuur, "Gray, Patrick, Fourth Lord Gray (1515x20-1584), Nobleman," in *DNB*.

⁸⁸ The League of Amity is also referred to as the Treaty of Berwick. SC-EN_03.; TNA, SP 52/40 f.79. "The League," (5 July 1586); *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, Et Cujuscunque Generis Acta Publica, Inter Reges Angliae Et Alios Quosvis Imperatores, Reges, Pontifices Principes, Vel, Communitates Habita Aut Tractata* (London, 1816), vol.15 pp.803-7 [5 July 1586, The Treaty of Berwick]; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.86n [July 1586]; Gray, *Letters & Papers*, pp.84-6 [June 1586, Memorial Concerning a Treaty with Scotland]; Wernham, *Before the Armada*, pp.370-1, 380; Mason, "Scotland, Elizabethan England and the Idea of Britain," p.290; Grant, "George

treaty were not explicit enough to prevent contemporaries from forming differing interpretations of them. Moreover, confusion was caused due to the fact that the annual pension or annuity paid to James VI was negotiated alongside, although technically separately from, the treaty.⁸⁹

Whilst Maitland and Gray were negotiating the Anglo-Scottish alliance Henri's ambassadors did everything in their power to prevent England usurping France as the main foreign ally of Scotland.⁹⁰ Spain was also interested in the negotiations, as Scotland's closer links with England would affect Philip's invasion plans. The king of Spain remained well informed of events by his ambassadors in France, although he never directly interfered or offered James a counter League with Spain.⁹¹ The pro-Catholic faction within Scotland also looked on the treaty negotiations with alarm, and it spurred their intent on including Scotland in the existing foreign invasion plans. Before the League of Amity was even ratified, three Scottish Catholic nobles sent blank letters to Guise, who filled them in, requesting Philip's assistance in the invasion of Scotland and England in order to free James from the pro-English and Protestant factions, as well as to reconvert England to Catholicism.⁹² These were then to be secretly carried into Spain. Philip was not going to grant the Scots' request, but he hoped to use the Scottish Catholics for his own advantage. Therefore, Philip lead the nobles on, making them wait until his invasion force was ready, hoping that disturbances in Scotland might act as a diversion that would weaken England before the Armada landed.⁹³

Significantly, by the time Philip received the letters, Mary Queen of Scots had already made Philip her heir to the English throne over her son.⁹⁴ The captive queen said she had little hope of her son's conversion, and therefore must place

Gordon, Sixth Earl of Huntly, and the Politics of the Counter-Reformation in Scotland, 1581-1595," pp.125-7.

⁸⁹ Julian Goodare, "James VI's English Subsidy," in *The Reign of James VI*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch, Short Run Edition (Edinburgh, 2008), pp.112-3; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, pp.8-10, 293; Mason, "Scotland, Elizabethan England and the Idea of Britain," p.290.

⁹⁰ FR-SC_03; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.50-1n [25 February 1586].

⁹¹ When a Border dispute between England and Scotland in which the anti-English Earl of Arran was involved led to the murder of an Englishman, Edward Wotton sought his arrest and removal from power in order to weaken Scottish opposition to the League. This was reported to Philip by his ambassador in France, Mendoza. *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.545-6 no.406 [11 September 1585, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

⁹² *Ibid.*, vol.16 p.580 no.439 [15 May 1586, George, Earl of Huntly, to Philip II]; pp.589-90 no.451 [16 July 1586, The Duke of Guise to Bernardino de Mendoza].

⁹³ *Ibid.*, vol.16 pp.665-6 no.514 [27 November 1586, The Duke of Parma to Bernardino de Mendoza].

⁹⁴ Mary's will which dictates this was written in 1577; however it was not until 1586 that Philip was made aware of it. Simon Adams, "The Succession and Foreign Policy," *History Today* 53, no.5 (2003), p.47; BL, Add. Mss 48027 f.530. "Extract from the will of Mary Queen of Scots" (February 1577); *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.581-2 no.442 [20 May 1586, The Queen of Scotland to Bernardino de Mendoza]. James was made aware of his mother's will shortly before her death, and may have contributed to his reserved behaviour towards Philip in regards to the Spanish invasion plans. Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.9-11 [31 October 1586, Courcelles to Henri III].

the good of the kingdom and of the church above her maternal instincts.⁹⁵ This action meant that, as far as Philip was concerned, James was out of the line of succession and Mary was in full support of Spain's plan. Despite this, Philip remained cautious, knowing that it was foolish to alienate Scotland too much, lest she move even closer with England. Mendoza advised his king:

Whilst at war with the Englishwoman, His Majesty should on no account fail to welcome the Scots, and keep them in a good humour, because whenever His Majesty wishes to invade her, any movement in his favour in Scotland will be of the highest importance, and, moreover, the Scottish intention [that is, the conversion of Scotland and James to Catholicism] is so holy a one that it may be hoped that God in his clemency will crown it with success.⁹⁶

Philip needed Scotland to remain neutral, if not an ally, and he needed to ensure that James was not powerful enough to gain control over England, which was just as important to Philip as that kingdom's conversion to Catholicism. This potently illustrates not only how smaller European powers often served as the lynchpin to wider events but also how complicated, and at times contradictory, the relationships between early modern powers could be. James was still an unknown quantity, and Philip was concerned over his increasing affiliation with Protestant powers.

Rumours of Levies & Plausible Deniability

Both France and Spain had due cause for concern in the spring of 1586, when rumours reached them that James had allowed Gray to fill a levy of 6,000 Scots, paid for by Elizabeth, to be sent to fight in support of the French Huguenots and the Dutch rebels.⁹⁷ Henri had not thought his nephew capable of such an act against France, and had asked his ambassador, the Baron d'Esneval, to remind James that such open support of Henri's enemies would constitute a termination of the Auld Alliance.⁹⁸ D'Esneval's opinion was that the levy had been done without James's approval, and Bernardino de Mendoza reported the same, adding that as yet no soldiers had been recruited, although he believed that as many as 400 men had secretly gone to the United Provinces to fight on their behalf.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.581-2 no.442 [20 May 1586, The Queen of Scotland to Bernardino de Mendoza].

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol.16 p.638 no.492 [15 October 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to the Prince of Parma].

⁹⁷ Chadwick, "Father William Crichton, S.J., and a Recently Discovered Letter (1589)," pp.266-8; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.595 no.457 [23 July 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II]; TNA, SP 53/17 f.65. James Beaton, "Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary," (10 May 1586).

⁹⁸ *Relations Politiques*, vol.4 pp.44-8 [End of June 1586, the Baron of Enseval to James VI].

⁹⁹ For more on Scots fighting in the United Provinces and the Spanish Netherlands see: Murdoch, "Scottish Ambassadors and British Diplomacy 1618-1635"; Adam Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2012); Murdoch, "James VI and the Formation of a Scottish-British Military Identity"; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.595

The rumours did have some basis in fact. In December 1585, Gray told Walsingham that:

If hir majestie be of porpose to levie gentlemen & soldaris in yis realme she vil find [it more] ready of gallant fellowis than ever vent firthe of Scotland & I am afirmed his majestie wil condeseend to satche a great comander as shall please hir majestie...¹⁰⁰

Elizabeth responded to this by authorising the Lord Treasurer to release £2,000 Sterling to Gray for a levy of footmen to serve in the United Provinces under the Earl of Leicester.¹⁰¹ There is no mention in her order of the Scots being sent into France, showing that at least D'Esneval's opinion was justified.¹⁰² Indeed, Courcelles reported that when he asked the king again about the rumour of the Scots going to France instead of the Netherlands, that James had assured him that he would never send men to support those who rebelled against their king.¹⁰³ Courcelles did report that James had allowed Elizabeth to levy Scots to serve in the United Provinces, and that the levy was indeed led by Gray.¹⁰⁴ According to Courcelles, James had become flattered by the pro-English factions at his court, 'who have so persuaded him that he has let himself go so far as to imagine himself henceforth heir of England without any difficulty; and consequently that the defence of the Low countries ... concerns him as if his greatness were involved.'¹⁰⁵ In the same report Courcelles also said that the levy would not move on to serve Navarre, not because they had no desire to do so, but rather because, as Gray and James Colville of Easter Wemyss had publicly declared, Navarre was unable to pay

no.457 [23 July 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II]; Worthington, *Scots in Habsburg Service, 1618-1648*.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, SP 52/38 f.105. "Master of Gray to Walsingham" (13 December 1585).

¹⁰¹ FR-SC_03.TNA, SP 84/6 f.73. Elizabeth I, "The Queen to the Lord Treasurer," (17 January 1586). By all reports these men were to join the Earl of Leicester's campaign. TNA, SP 53/13 f.98. "Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary Queen of Scots," (June 1584); TNA, SP 52/41 f.11. "Mons Courcelles to M. D'Esneval," (20 August 1586); TNA, SP 52/41 f.66. "Monsieur De Courcelles to Henri III," (30 November 1586); Robert Dudley, *Correspondence of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester, during His Government of the Low Countries, in the Years 1585 and 1586*, ed. by John Bruce (London, 1844), p.179 [20 March 1586, Walsingham to Leicester], 220 [5 April 1586, Leicester to Walsingham].

¹⁰² Gray's response to receiving the money indicates again that the men were to be sent to the United Provinces. TNA, SP 52/40 f.33. "The Master of Gray to Thomas Randolph" (19 June 1586); TNA, SP 53/17 f.65. "Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary," (10 May 1586); *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.572 no.431 [20 March 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II], p.595 no.457 [23 July 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II]; TNA, SP 52/41 f.11. "Mons Courcelles to M. D'Esneval," (20 August 1586); Courcelles, *Extracts*, p.12 [31 October 1586, Courcelles to Henri III].

¹⁰³ TNA, SP 52/41 f.66. "Monsieur De Courcelles to Henri III," (30 November 1586).

¹⁰⁴ Gray, *Letters & Papers*, pp.77-8 [5 May 1586, Master of Gray to Walsingham].

¹⁰⁵ FR-SC_03.; TNA, SP 53/19 f.48. "Monsieur Courcelles to Monsieur Pinart," (20 August 1586). The quote is taken from the transcription in *CSP Scotland*, vol.8 p.622 no.712.

for the regiment, and Elizabeth's funds only covered their service in the United Provinces.¹⁰⁶

A Scottish levy for the United Provinces would still have been a cause for concern in Spain, as this was whom the Scots would be fighting. Despite Courcelles's belief that James was wholly persuaded by his English sympathies, the king did inform Elizabeth that he would not allow Scots to fight for the United Provinces, as this could be construed as an act of war against Spain, unless Elizabeth was also willing to declare war on the Habsburgs.¹⁰⁷ Despite the Anglo-Spanish war being a reality, as far as international politics was concerned, England had not formally declared war against Spain, nor Spain against England. Elizabeth was officially supporting the United Provinces with soldiers and funding, just as she was to the Huguenots in France.¹⁰⁸ James, despite his protestations to Elizabeth regarding the Gray levy, was also already supporting the Dutch – albeit through less official means. The Scots-Dutch brigades were well established in the Low Countries by this point, and whilst they were managed and paid for by the United Provinces, the Scots serving there were still under the ultimate control of the Scottish king.¹⁰⁹ This makes James's reluctance to approve the Gray levy somewhat confusing; however it is possible that at the time he was presented with the request the king felt this new action would cause offense. It is also possible that this was simply one other way of attempting to influence Elizabeth regarding James's mother.

In addition to James's refusal, Gray also eventually lost the support of Elizabeth for his leadership of the levy, as she decided she needed him in Scotland to advocate on her behalf.¹¹⁰ In December 1586, Gray nominated Archibald

¹⁰⁶ Despite the requests of d'Esneval and Courcelles, James never officially prohibited the levy from fighting in France, and in fact, aside from the implied permission given for the levy by its occurrence and Douglas's leaving with it, James makes no official statement one way or the other in regards to the levy. TNA, SP 53/19 f.48. "Monsieur Courcelles to Monsieur Pinart," (20 August 1586).

¹⁰⁷ TNA, SP 52/39. "Mr. Archibald Douglas to Walsingham" (6 May 1586). Elizabeth had not yet, nor indeed would she ever, formally declare war on the Habsburgs. However, it was accepted that she was at war with them by this period, a war which did not end until the Treaty of London in 1604. In addition to James's personal motives regarding Elizabeth and Gray's levy, the desire to avoid war with Spain was widespread throughout Scotland. Due to the importance of Scottish-Spanish trade, it was important to many of the merchants that the peace be maintained. Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.93; TNA, SP 52/39. "Mr. Archibald Douglas to Walsingham" (6 May 1586); McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730," pp.24-89 passim.

¹⁰⁸ David Trim, "The 'Secret War' of Elizabeth I: England and the Huguenots during the Early Wars of Religion, 1562-1577," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 27 (1999), pp.189-99; David Trim, "Conflict, Religion and Ideology," in *European Warfare 1350-1750*, ed. by Frank Tallett and David Trim (Cambridge, 2010), pp.279-99; Michael Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV: Politics, Power, and Religious Belief in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, 1993), p.182; Elliott, *Europe Divided 1559-1598*, p.306; Paul Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp.119-30.

¹⁰⁹ Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.3-35 passim.

¹¹⁰ Elizabeth's favour for the levy and for Gray's attendance with it faltered throughout 1586, and was tied in part to her shifting policy towards the Earl of Leicester and his power in the United Provinces. See: Dudley, *Correspondence of Robert Dudley*, pp.281-2 [26 May 1586, Walsingham

Douglas to go as colonel in his stead, and the Earl of Leicester accepted this and the reduction of the levy to 3,000 foot and 500 horse.¹¹¹ Gray's levy is never mentioned in the records of the Scots brigade in the United Provinces, nor is it mentioned specifically in the Earl of Leicester's correspondence. Therefore, it is likely that the levy was not filled as described, although reports of Scots arriving and joining existing units in 1586 suggests the money did pay for some soldiers to be sent abroad.¹¹² What is clear is that James was entirely aware of the negotiations that surrounded this levy. Despite this knowledge, the king ensured that he could deny his involvement to Henri III or Philip II, whilst at the same time allowing the more fervent Protestants and unemployed soldiers a chance to leave Scotland before they caused him any trouble at home. In addition, this policy allowed James to take credit for any success these Scottish soldiers might have for the Protestant cause and furthered the long-term gratitude of the United Provinces.¹¹³ This image of James as a Protestant Prince was one that he would strengthen throughout his personal rule but it began here, as the provider of military support for the United Provinces.

The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots

Mary Queen of Scots had been imprisoned in England since 1568, during which time numerous plots had been hatched and foiled regarding Mary's escape and her accession to Elizabeth's throne. However, it was only with the evidence discovered in August 1586, linking Mary unequivocally to the Babington plot, that the queen was charged with treason against her cousin. The others involved with the plot were tried and executed on 20 September 1586.¹¹⁴ Mary was put on trial on 14 October and she was condemned to death on 25 October, barely three months after the Treaty of Berwick was signed. When James was initially informed of the sentence he did not believe that Elizabeth would go through with it, the execution

to Leicester], p.343 [11 July 1586, Walsingham to Leicester], p.348 [15 July 1586, Leicester to Walsingham], p.361 [21 July 1586, Burghley to Leicester], p.396 [15 August 1586, Walsingham to Leicester].

¹¹¹ Hatfield House, CP 16/60. "Colonel Archibald Douglas," (October 1586). Either this is a different Archibald Douglas than the one sent as ambassador, or Douglas never went with the troops to join Leicester, as Archibald Douglas was in London as James's ambassador from September through December 1586; SC-EN_04. The original number for their levy was 6,000 foot. For more on Scots in both French and Dutch service see: Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.28-31.

¹¹² 150 Scots arrived, via Amsterdam in September 1586 to join existing units. Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 p.96. Scots were also fighting for the Spanish Netherlands, see for example: *Ibid.*, vol.1 p.46n.

¹¹³ Hatfield House, CP 16/60. "Colonel Archibald Douglas," (October 1586); Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 p.50. More information on the 'Protestant Cause' may be found in: Trim, "Fighting 'Jacob's Warres'," pp.29, 38; Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War," pp.40-60; John Young, "The Scottish Parliament and European Diplomacy 1641-1647: The Palatine, the Dutch Republic and Sweden," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.89-91.

¹¹⁴ *Acts of the Privy Council of England 1540-97* (London, 1890), vol.14 p. 224 [18 September 1586, Windsor]; BL, Harley 290 f.170. "Confession of Ballarde and Others," (20 September 1586).

of a person of royal birth and blood was not something any monarch took lightly, especially one whose right to her own royal status was questioned by the Catholics within her kingdom and abroad.¹¹⁵ Although the sincerity of James's emotional response to his mother's plight may never be known for certain it is possible to see the king's diplomatic response, and to place it into context with his other contemporary policies.¹¹⁶ It was this diplomatic response, rather than any real or feigned emotions behind it, that influenced James foreign relations with continental Europe and with England.

When James was first informed of the Babington Plot and told that Mary had been accused of participating in it, he told Lord Hamilton:

... that the Queene, his mother, might well drinke the ale and beare which her selfe had brewed: Further, that having bound her selfe to the Queene of England to doe nothing againste her, she ought to have kepte her promise, notwithstanding that he woulde nowaye faile in his dutie and naturall obligatione he ought her.¹¹⁷

From the beginning, James realised that he would be expected to react in a specific way if his mother were to be executed, a knowledge that was repeated by Lord Hamilton and the French ambassador in Scotland, Monsieur Courcelles. The ambassador even suggested that Mary's enemies in England had contrived the trial for the purpose of eliminating her as a threat as well as damaging James's foreign reputation.¹¹⁸ James was aware of this, and once Mary's conviction was sure he instructed his ambassador, Archibald Douglas, to vigorously plead for Mary's life. Douglas - who was pro-English, fearful of breaking the League of Amity and in Elizabeth's pay - tempered his master's words and advised Elizabeth that James would not go to war if his mother were executed.¹¹⁹ William Keith was also sent to London in November, with Sir Robert Melville and Gray following in late December 1586.¹²⁰ James also raised funds to send ambassadors to Spain, France and Denmark-Norway to seek their support in case he should need to

¹¹⁵ James made the comment that "King Henry the Eighth's beheading his bedfellow was a tragedy far inferior to this if it proceed as seemeth to be intended" when arguing with Elizabeth for the life of his mother to be spared by reason of her royal blood and honour. *RPCS*, vol.4 p.144n-145n [8 February 1587]; *TNA*, SP 52/41 f.74. "King James to [Archibald Douglas]," (November 1586).

¹¹⁶ Susan Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder? The Impact of Mary Stewart's Execution on Anglo-Scottish Relations," *History* 85, no.280 (2000), pp.589-612.

¹¹⁷ The conversation occurred between James VI and Lord Hamilton, who then repeated James's response to Monsieur Courcelles, the French ambassador at court. Courcelles, *Extracts*, p.4 [4 October 1586, Courcelles to Henri III]. In Paris it was reported that James had told Elizabeth 'yat giff she attend any thyng agains ye Quein of Scotland yat he will labour to revenge it be all meyns he kane'. *SCA*, SM1/2/2. "James Tyrie to Father Hold, Rome" (23 November 1586).

¹¹⁸ Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.3-9 [Courcelles to Henri III, 4 October 1586].

¹¹⁹ *TNA*, SP 52/42 f.79. "Discourses between Elizabeth and Mr. Archibald Douglas," (October 1587); Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.591; Elder, *Spanish Influences*, p.137; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.13; Rob Macpherson, "Douglas, Archibald (c.1540-c.1602), Conspirator and Church of Scotland Minister," in *DNB*.

¹²⁰ *SC-EN_05.*; *SC-EN_06.*; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.58.

avenge his mother's death.¹²¹ Despite these preparations, however, Courcelles reported that James did not truly believe that Elizabeth would execute his mother, for fear of insulting him and risking war. James's nobility, however, were not so confident, and informed the French ambassador that if necessary they would be willing to take up arms to revenge their queen, even though she had been deposed by them.¹²²

Melville relieved Douglas of his duties upon his arrival in London, being loyal to Mary Queen of Scots and feeling, rightly, that Douglas had not supported Mary's interests. It is uncertain if he knew that his colleague Gray was also in English service.¹²³ In truth these men, and many more within Scotland, were more concerned with saving the League of Amity than Mary's life.¹²⁴ After all of the hard work they had done to repair relations after the Ruthven regime's collapse, and because of the danger that Mary could pose as an obstacle to James's rule in Scotland or his claim to the English throne, the pro-English faction of James's court, headed by Gray and Douglas, were bent on keeping the League intact. James was also not eager to break it, but he was keen to ensure that his current reputation and honour was no more impinged than his likelihood of succession.¹²⁵ In the few months between Mary's conviction and her execution many letters were sent, pleas and threats were made, and differing advice was given to all sides. Ultimately, Mary was executed; now the world waited to see how James would react.¹²⁶

After Mary's execution Elizabeth sent Robert Carey as an ambassador to declare her innocence in the matter. James was furious, and stopped the English agent at Berwick, refusing permission for him to enter Scotland.¹²⁷ Carey sent the letter he carried from Elizabeth on to Edinburgh.¹²⁸ After a month of silence, James eventually sent his councillors to Berwick to meet with Carey, where they proposed that Elizabeth offer compensation for the death of Mary, in the manner

¹²¹ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.605. Even if some of these missions did not take place, letters most certainly were sent: AGS, E 839.13. "James VI to Philip II" (31 August 1586).

¹²² Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.9-11 [Courcelles to Henri III, 31 October 1586]; pp.12-4 [Courcelles to D'Esneull, 31 October 1586].

¹²³ *RPCS*, vol.4 p.130n [19 December 1586]; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), pp.315-7; Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.80-1 no.25 [January 1587, James to Patrick, Master of Gray]; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.58.

¹²⁴ Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," pp.590-1.

¹²⁵ Thomas M'Crie, *The Life of Andrew Melville: Containing Illustrations of the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Scotland, during the Latter Part of the Sixteenth and Beginning of the Seventeenth Century. With an Appendix, Consisting of Original Papers* (Edinburgh, 1824), vol.1 pp.461-2 [Of James's conduct on the Execution of Mary Queen of Scots]; Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?"

¹²⁶ Mary's death was reported throughout Europe, along with rumours and speculations of how her son would respond. AGS, E 949.163. Enrique de Guzmán, "Sobra la muerte dela Reyna de Escocia" (24 June 1587); *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.50-4 no.52 [27 March 1587, Count de Olivares to Philip II]; Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.3-9 [4 October 1586, Courcelles to Henri III].

¹²⁷ EN-SC_07.

¹²⁸ BL, Cotton Caligula C/VIII f.212. "Elizabeth to James VI," (14 February 1587). James's response to the news of his mother's death are recorded in: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.59-60; Thomson, *Historie*, p.225.

traditionally used in Scotland to end bloodfeuds. They also reported that James demanded the names of all those involved in the execution of his mother, and for their punishment for the offence to him.¹²⁹ The king did not content himself with Elizabeth's apology. He took action not only to promote his standing abroad, but also in an attempt to intimidate Elizabeth into naming him as her heir in order to maintain her peace with him and to end the possibility of war. On 2 March 1587, James confirmed James Beaton, the Archbishop of Glasgow and former representative of Mary Queen of Scots in France, as his own personal ambassador in Paris.¹³⁰ Sir William Stewart was also commissioned to go to France in order to negotiate a closer alliance with Henri III and to ask for his assistance in revenging Mary's death.¹³¹ This return to favour for the French alliance shows the change in royal policy from the newly minted treaty with England that was almost undone by Mary's execution.

James also used the court at Paris as a neutral meeting place for his ambassadors to conduct unofficial negotiations with the Spanish representatives in France. These covert discussions allowed the king plausible deniability if Elizabeth's spies discovered these meetings, whilst at the same time giving the king extended leeway in his discussions due to their informal nature. The French ambassador in Scotland reported to Henri III that James had instructed his resident ambassador in France to speak to the Spanish ambassador residing in Paris. Beaton was to pass on James's apologies to Philip for not dealing with the Spanish king directly, and to request Spanish assistance in avenging Mary's death.¹³² Philip was not in a position to completely ignore Scotland; whilst he did not trust James, the King of Spain did not want to make an open enemy of Scotland either. This was partially because Philip had yet to receive papal approval for his planned invasion of England, since the Holy Father and many in Europe

¹²⁹ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.61; Jenny Wormald, "Bloodfeud, Kindred and Government in Early Modern Scotland," *Past & Present* no.87 (May 1980), p.54. It is interesting that in this same period James was trying to end bloodfeuds in Scotland. For more on this see: Keith Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland, 1573-1625: Violence, Justice and Politics in an Early Modern Society* (Edinburgh, 1986); Wormald, "Bloodfeud, Kindred and Government."

¹³⁰ The Archbishop of Glasgow receives this news in April 1587. He remained James's ambassador until his death in France in 1603. SC-FR_03.; *The Warrender Papers* (Edinburgh, 1931), vol.2 pp.56-68 no.10 [The archbishop of Glasgow's Report, January 1588]; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.61-2; SCA, SM1/2/7. "James Tyrie to Father Holt (Rome)" (12 April 1587). Glasgow was being treated as James's ambassador in France even before his official confirmation, for the Scottish merchants refer to him as James's agent in February 1587 when they wrote asking for the ambassador to petition the French government regarding trade issues. Marwick, *Records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland*, vol.1 pp.269-73 [8 February 1587, Edinburgh, The Burghs to the Archbishop of Glasgow]. Susan Doran wrote that the Archbishop of Glasgow was William Erskine, however this is incorrect, it was James Beaton. Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.601.

¹³¹ SC-FR_04. Although Stewart was commissioned in March his mission was delayed due to his impeaching Gray for trying to influence his instructions to obtain liberty of conscience for Catholics. It is unclear if Stewart ever made his mission or not. *RPCS*, vol.4 p.xxi; p.164n [26 March 1587 - Holyroodhouse, Convention of Estates]; p.166 - [15 May 1587 - Holyrood House Convention of Estates]; *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.615 [31 May 1587]; TNA, SP 59/25 f.53. "Sir John Forster to Walsingham" (18 March 1587).

¹³² Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.61-5 [Courcelles to Henri III, 12 May 1587].

did not believe Philip's intentions solely for spiritual advancement. On 18 March 1587, Melino gave his opinion on how Philip ought to conduct himself with Rome to convince the Pope to give his blessing to an invasion of England.¹³³ This enterprise, which had grown from the invasion plans discussed earlier in this chapter, was re-invigorated by Mary's execution. Melino advised that Philip's plans for England should remain secret, lest he turn the papacy and others against him out of fear for his growing hegemony. He also suggested that the Scots especially should be kept ignorant, for they 'will be of the greatest importance in the enterprise, and they may be easily brought over, if this claim of his Majesty is kept secret'.¹³⁴

Despite his lack of interest in promoting James's claim or involving him in the invasion plans, Philip did at least pretend to be interested in the King of Scots' plight. He sent James his condolences for Mary's death, and James responded by expressing his gratitude and eventually sent an unofficial agent to Spain.¹³⁵ On 14 April 1587, James VI banished John, Lord Maxwell, Earl of Morton, with instructions not to return to Scotland without royal licence.¹³⁶ One month later a Convention of Estates supported Maxwell, arguing that the King should not have banished the lord, suggesting that the punishment was considered excessive for the suggested crime. However, Maxwell had already made up his mind to go to

¹³³ Melino was a servant of the Guises who had been converted by the Jesuit Father Allen and the Duke of Parma to support Spanish policies *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.41-3 no.42 [18 March 1587, Considerations why it is desirable to carry through the Enterprise of England before discussing the succession to the Throne of that country, claimed by his Majesty].

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, vol.17 pp.79-80 no.82 [3 May 1587, Bernardo de Mendoza to Philip II]. Unofficial agents, those lacking official commissions or letters of accreditation, were common in early modern diplomacy, and they were one of James's favourite methods for maintaining indirect foreign relations with those powers whom he did not feel comfortable openly approaching. Dr Alexia Grosjean has noted in the late medieval period heralds were being used as unofficial diplomatic envoys, and the practice of unofficial diplomacy continued well into the sixteenth century. See: "A Time When 'Fools and Dwarfs' Were Highly Esteemed." The Historian J.D. Mackie has astutely argued that, James's practice was to first send in 'unofficial emissaries' often armed with blanks, to test the position of a particular kingdom and report back as to the attitudes of that particular government towards James, his claim to England and to compliment the host country. '... his emissary was seldom fully accredited'. Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," p.273.

¹³⁶ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.158-9 [14 April 1587, Holyrood House, Bond for John, Lord Maxwell, Earl of Morton]. Morton's earldom was given to Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus on 29 July 1587. See: *RPS*, sec.1587/7/72 [29 July 1587, Edinburgh Parliament: Protestation of [Claud Hamilton], commendator of Paisley, for [John Maxwell], Lord Maxwell]. Archibald Douglas died in 1588 and the title went to William Douglas; however, Maxwell still claimed the title, and it was returned to him in 1592. See: Margaret Sanderson, "Douglas, William, Sixth Earl of Morton (c.1540-1606), Magnate," in *DNB*. Because of this, contemporary documents sometimes refer to 'the Earl of Morton' when it appears, based on the location and religious and political persuasions of the individual in question, that they are indeed referring to John, Lord Maxwell. It is not possible to know for certain; however it seems likely that this is the case. I have used the name 'Maxwell' throughout for consistency's sake; however where the reference uses the title 'Morton' I have noted this in the citation.

Spain.¹³⁷ Maxwell arrived in Lisbon on 24 June 1587, and met with Philip in early July.¹³⁸ Maxwell supposedly promised Philip II a safe port and a secure fort should he use Scotland as an invasion point, and also suggested that James was willing to declare himself Catholic and march against England.¹³⁹ Whilst these promises were most likely exaggerated, if not false, they were likely intended to create opportunities in Spain, ensuring that James would be well positioned should a Spanish invasion succeed.

Just as Philip was wary of James's affinity for Catholicism, so too was James wary of inviting a powerful king to invade England via his kingdom. Nevertheless, it was expected that an invasion would occur, and thanks to Guise, James was aware of the plans. It appears that James was ensuring - by offering assistance he did not believe would be utilised - that should things go well for Spain his support was recorded. Equally, if things went poorly, James could easily deny an unaccredited noble as someone who had acted without his knowledge or approval.¹⁴⁰ Just two days after Maxwell's assertions, James signed a letter of accreditation for Archibald Lamb to carry letters to Philip II.¹⁴¹ The letters carried by Morton and Lamb have not survived; however, from the Venetians' report in October of 1587, it would appear that some promises of Spanish assistance had been given and accepted.¹⁴² What is certain is that throughout these negotiations James avoided fully committing himself to Spain; he never declared himself Catholic or irreparably broke with Elizabeth. Spain was important to him, yet it was not important enough for James to formally commit to a treaty or make an enemy of England.¹⁴³

James's reluctance to capitulate to Catholic pressures caused Philip to withhold his assistance. Philip believed - as did many of his councillors - that James would never convert to Catholicism.¹⁴⁴ In August, the Venetian ambassador mistakenly reported that Maxwell was to depart for Scotland via Bilbao, but

¹³⁷ Brown, "The Making of a 'Politique,'" p.163; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.166-7 [15 May 1587, Convention of the Estates, Holyrood house].

¹³⁸ SC-SP_03.; *CSP Venice*, vol.8 pp.289-90 no.538 [27 June, 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano in Spain, Venetian Ambassador to the Doge and Senate], pp.290-1 no.539 [2 July, 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano in Spain, Venetian Ambassador to the Doge and Senate], p.294 no.548 [12 July 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano in Spain, Venetian Ambassador to the Doge and Senate]. The Venetian Ambassador refers to 'the Earl of Morton' throughout his correspondence. See: Brown, "The Making of a 'Politique,'" pp.163-4.

¹³⁹ *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.294 no.548 [12 July 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate].

¹⁴⁰ Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," p.273.

¹⁴¹ SC-SP_04.; NRS, GD/103/1/73. James VI, "Letters under the Privy Seal of King James VI Directed to All Kings, Princes Ecclesiastical as Well as Secular, Etc, Desiring Honourable Treatment and Safe Conduct to Archibald Lamb, Whom the King Has Commissioned to Carry Letters to Philip, King of Spain, Etc." (14 July 1587).

¹⁴² *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.316 no.591 [27 October 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate].

¹⁴³ Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," p.275.

¹⁴⁴ *CSP Spain*, vol.8 pp.320-3 no.595 [4 November 1587, Letter from the Marquis of Santa Cruz to the King]; Brown, "The Making of a 'Politique,'" p.164.

instead the Scot returned to Lisbon and remained at Philip’s court for several months thereafter.¹⁴⁵

In November 1587, Philip II sent both Maxwell and another Scot in his service, Colonel William Semple, to Mendoza in Paris.¹⁴⁶ The king wrote to his ambassador, recommending the two men, and Semple in particular, but warned his ambassador that although Semple was a ‘religious zealot’, he was still ‘very Scottish’, meaning his alliance remained with Scotland over Spain.¹⁴⁷ Maxwell and Semple arrived in Paris in mid-December, and quickly ingratiated themselves with Mendoza.¹⁴⁸ Philip sent Semple to the Duke of Parma carrying letters from Mendoza. He returned with Parma’s support for the proposed mission to send Semple and Maxwell back to Scotland in an attempt to convince James to side with Spain against England.¹⁴⁹ If this were to fail, they were to incite the Scottish Catholic nobility to force their king to convert.

Philip was not alone in sending agents to Scotland; Pope Sixtus V was doing the same. The Bishop of Dunblane, William Chisholm, was sent in October 1587 with a commission from the Pope to James, to try to convince him to convert to Catholicism, but the King refused to see him on multiple occasions.¹⁵⁰ Finally, Chisholm was invited to meet with the king, and wrote to the Archbishop of Glasgow on 11 March 1588, describing his meeting with James and Chancellor Maitland in the most optimistic of terms. This report encouraged Mendoza to send Semple and Maxwell on their mission.¹⁵¹ Despite Chisholm’s optimism, Mendoza remained sceptical of James’s true motivations and wrote to Philip that, ‘I cannot make out what can be the cause of this sudden change of

¹⁴⁵ *CSP Venice*, vol.8 pp.305–6 no.567 [18 August 1587, Hieronimo Lippomano, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate]; Brown, “The Making of a ‘Politique,’” p.164.

¹⁴⁶ For more on Semple’s career as a Spanish agent see: Albert Loomie, “Sir William Semple and Bristol’s Andalucian Trade,” *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* 82 (1963), pp.177–87; Glyn Redworth, “Between Four Kingdoms. International Catholicism and Colonel William Semple,” in *Irlanda y la monarquía hispánica: Kinsale, 1601–2001: guerra, política, exilio y religión*, ed. by Enrique García Hernán, Biblioteca de historia 51 (Madrid, 2002), pp.255–264; David Worthington, “Alternative Diplomacy? Scottish Exiles at the Courts of the Habsburgs and Their Allies, 1618–1648,” in *Scotland and the Thirty Years’ War, 1618–1648*, ed. by Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2001), pp.56–8; Concepción Saenz-Cambra, “Colonel William Sempill of Lochwinnoch (1545–1630): A Strategist for Spain,” *Tiempos Modernos* 13, no.1 (2006), pp.1–20; Patrick Williams, “Sempill [Semple], Sir William (1546–1633), Soldier,” in *DNB*.

¹⁴⁷ ‘...y parezce hombre de buen zelo, aunque deve ser muy Escoces.’ *Relations Politiques*, vol.5 p.509 [27 November 1587, Philip II to Don Bernardino de Mendoza]. Mendoza later wrote to Philip that, ‘I see not a trace of Scottish prejudice in him.’ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.255 no.259 [5 April 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King].

¹⁴⁸ *Relations Politiques*, vol.5 pp.510–5 [22 December 1587, Don Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

¹⁴⁹ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.201–2 no.211 [End of January 1588, Duke of Parma to Bernardino de Mendoza]; pp.255–6 no.259 [5 April 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King]; Brown, “The Making of a ‘Politique,’” pp.164–5. The Duke of Parma refers to ‘the Earl of Morton’ in his correspondence.

¹⁵⁰ PC-SC_01.; Thomson, *Historie*, p.235; TNA, SP 59/25 f.229. “James Hunsdon to Burghley” (14 December 1587); TNA, SP 59/26 f.13. “James Hunsdon to Burghley” (22 January 1588); Enrique García Hernán, *Ireland and Spain in the Reign of Philip II* (Dublin, 2009), p.329.

¹⁵¹ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.255–6 no.259 [5 April 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King].

front'.¹⁵² Mendoza was right to be cautious, and Semple and Maxwell quickly discovered that many of the reports of the state of Catholicism in Scotland had been overly optimistic.¹⁵³ The two men returned to Scotland in April 1588, and although they attempted a rebellion in the west march, it failed to take hold, and James's forces quickly rebuffed the Catholic faction.¹⁵⁴ Maxwell was imprisoned on 5 May before being released in October before James's departure for Denmark in October 1589, but he did not regain full favour until 1592.¹⁵⁵

Semple eventually met with James in August when he offered the king the chance to declare himself a Catholic and join an alliance with Spain.¹⁵⁶ Unfortunately, this meeting occurred just after James had been told of the Armada's defeat, thus making Semple's offer moot before it was ever really considered.¹⁵⁷ Semple was imprisoned, although he soon escaped and made his way back to the Netherlands, where he continued to serve the Habsburg cause.¹⁵⁸ James almost instantly forgave Semple's jailers for allowing his escape – suggesting that the king was compassionate towards the Catholic cause or was complicit in his escape.

The attempts of Philip and the Papacy to convert James and gain his support for the coming invasion appeared insincere, but then again, so did James's response to them. James's meeting with the papal envoy gave Chisholm hope for a Catholic future in Scotland. Maxwell and Semple's rebellion was put down, but

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, vol.17 p.255 no.259 [5 April 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King].

¹⁵³ Over the past several years Mendoza and others had been reporting of the high number of Scottish Catholics and the likelihood that the kingdom would be open to 're-conversion' to the Holy See. Chadwick, "Father William Crichton, S.J., and a Recently Discovered Letter (1589)," pp.266–8; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.635–8 no.492 [15 October 1586, Bernardino de Mendoza to the Prince of Parma]; Yellowlees, *So Strange a Monster*, pp.93–6.

¹⁵⁴ SP-SC_01.; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, p.53; Saenz-Cambra, "Strategist for Spain," p.6.

¹⁵⁵ Maxwell was moved to Blackness in August after Semple was arrested, as Semple took Maxwell's place in the custody of Sir William Stewart. He was subsequently released from Blackness BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.276. "Sir Henry Woddryngton to [Hunsdon?]," (11 August 1588); *RPCS*, vol.4 p.767 [11 July 1592, Action in favour of Lord Maxwell].

¹⁵⁶ Loomie, "Sir William Semple and Bristol's Andalucian Trade," pp.180–1; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, p.53; Redworth, "Between Four Kingdoms," p.258; Thomson, *Historie*, p.235; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.316n [20 August 1588, Edinburgh].

¹⁵⁷ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.201–2 no.211 [End of January 1588, Duke of Parma to Bernardino de Mendoza]; *Spottiswood*, p.356; *Historie*, p.235; TNA, SP 52/43 f.2. "Thomas Fowler to Walsingham," (4 January 1589); Loomie, "Sir William Semple and Bristol's Andalucian Trade," pp.180–1; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541–1588*, p.53; Redworth, "Between Four Kingdoms," p.259.

¹⁵⁸ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.201–2 no.211 [End of January 1588, Duke of Parma to Bernardino de Mendoza]; Thomson, *Historie*, p.235; TNA, SP 52/43 f.2. "Thomas Fowler to Walsingham," (4 January 1589); Loomie, "Sir William Semple and Bristol's Andalucian Trade," pp.180–1; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541–1588*, p.53; Redworth, "Between Four Kingdoms," p.259; *Calderwood*, vol.4 pp.680–1 [August 1588, Semple's Apprehension and Escape]; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.316, 316n [20 August 1588, Edinburgh]. Although the *RPCS* dates Semple's arrival in Leith as August it is known that he arrived initially in April, and only returned to Leith in August to meet with James VI. Thomson, *Historie*, p.235 [April 1588]. Thomson refers to Semple arriving with 'the Lord Maxwell'.

Maxwell was not executed for treason, only briefly imprisoned. James was deftly responding to quickly changing circumstances and inaccurate foreign intelligence in the same way that Philip was, and ultimately it meant that neither king was willing to put their full trust, or confidence, in the other. The King of Scots, young though he may have been, proved skilled and intelligent enough to know that he could not afford to lose all his other allies at the expense of a solid relationship with Spain. Moreover, James was astute enough to realise that Philip was playing for his own advancement, not James's; therefore, like any foreign power, the Spaniard could not be completely trusted.

Whilst Philip maintained the illusion of possible assistance throughout 1587, no such pretences came from France. Henri III did initially halt diplomatic relations with England on hearing of Mary's death, but the King of France quickly resumed these, as he could not afford to offend Elizabeth given his domestic and foreign political difficulties. He was already tied down between the Catholic League and the Huguenot rebellion, and had neither men nor money to spare to support his cousin.¹⁵⁹ Henri said as much to the papal nuncio at his court, informing the Pope that 'he was so much disturbed by a great fire raging in his own house, that he was sure both his Holiness and all the world would blame him if he began to set fire to another's before the flames in his own were extinguished'.¹⁶⁰

The Scottish resident ambassador heard of this meeting and requested his own with the king of France. He reminded Henri of James's claims to the English throne and the benefits this could bring to France if James were to succeed, but although Henri 'wished him [James] all increase of State' he was not willing to divert any of his sparse resources to his nephew's aid.¹⁶¹ This second failure to provide any real form of assistance affected Franco-Scottish relations, and although James continued to be concerned with French affairs, he never again shows any real expectation of French aid, although the belief in French support likely continued. The Auld Alliance was not dead, but, due to France's weakened state because of the religious wars, it could offer little in the way of money or military aid, and its diplomatic influence was weakened.¹⁶² Nevertheless the Guise, Valois and in future Bourbons always did what they could they could to assist their ancient ally.

Ultimately James had little choice but to reconcile with Elizabeth. France and Denmark-Norway had refused to support James in a war with England, and

¹⁵⁹ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.213. Henri III, "King of France to Monsieur de Courcelles," (13 April 1587).

¹⁶⁰ *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.311 no.580 [11 September 1587, Giovanni Dolein, Venetian Ambassador in France, to the Doge and Senate].

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Mendoza reported to Philip that 'In order to oppress the Gusies, the King [Henri III] says that no heretic shall succeed him, and he has endeavoured to get Bearn to profess Catholicism. He has thus tied his hands, and cannot help the king of Scotland against England, nor can the Guises, seething the claims they are raising here.' *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.79 no.82 [3 May 1587, Bernardo de Mendoza to Philip II].

Spain was too caught up in its own plans for invasion and revenge.¹⁶³ Although many in Scotland were angered by the execution of their former queen, the overwhelming resources needed for a military victory over England were not available.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, any hostilities were likely to be seen by Elizabeth and her subjects as grounds for removing him from the succession line altogether, and as part of James's power in international politics was his potential ascension to the English throne, this was something he could ill afford. The League of Amity, and the pension that came along with it, in combination with the lack of any other real alternative, ensured that James eventually, and possibly begrudgingly, made peace with Elizabeth.¹⁶⁵ This was made easier by the approaching threat of a Spanish invasion, which would offer James the chance to play the role of devoted protector, and another opportunity to use a crisis to try and leverage confirmation, and thus future security, for his claim.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, James VI's diplomatic activities have shown a young man eager to establish himself whilst at the same time needing to create allies at home and abroad. His punishment of those involved in the pro-English Ruthven regime and adhering to the French ambassadors showed Elizabeth that she would have to change her foreign policy regarding Scotland if she hoped to maintain any influence there. She still held two bargaining chips, James's mother and his fate as her successor, and these, along with financial incentives in the form of an annuity and the increased respect given to the young king, allowed Scotland and England to form an offensive and defensive alliance.¹⁶⁶

The alliance faced serious challenges after the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, but it was held together by determination and practicality. James was placed in a difficult situation by trying to please those who sought revenge and ensuring that both he and his kingdom benefited as much as possible from the whole affair. His show of anger and demands for retribution, along with Elizabeth's denial of any involvement and the punishment of those who were, however superficial on both sides, allowed political reputations to be saved and ensured that relations, although strained, would continue.¹⁶⁷ Despite the loss of Mary as a bargaining chip, Elizabeth still had the succession. However, as she realised in the wake of Mary's execution, England was not Scotland's only friend, and James was more

¹⁶³ Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.77-8 [22 August 1587, Courcelles to Henri III]. Frederick II wrote to Elizabeth informing her of his refusal to assist James against her, and of his attempts to convince James to make peace with her. TNA, SP 75/1 f.243. "Frederick II., King of Denmark, to the Queen [Elizabeth]" (10 January 1588).

¹⁶⁴ This was due to the significant militarization of England under Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, pp.9-53 passim.

¹⁶⁵ Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?"

¹⁶⁶ Susan Doran notes that it was not until the early 1590s that Elizabeth returned to her pre-League of Amity policy of direct interference in Scottish affairs via support of specific factions at the Scottish court. "Loving Cousins," p.212.

¹⁶⁷ Wernham, *Before the Armada*, pp.382-3.

than willing to seek alliances and consider using force to protect his honour and his authority.

Along with changing relations with England, James also came to understand exactly what he could expect from his French allies, Henri III, the Duke of Guise, and even Henri of Navarre. Because of the domestic instability and shifting balance of power, France as a whole was able to offer little more than petitions and pleas on Scotland's behalf. Because of the Treaty of Joinville, Guise was not able, even if he had possessed men or money to spare, to support James at the expense of Spain, who was paying the bills. Henri III had no resources to spare, and Navarre was too busy establishing his own place as the heir to the French throne to do anything for James. Spain and Denmark-Norway also turned their backs on James when it came to providing men or money; nevertheless, in the early years of his reign, the king managed to establish personal relations with each of these kingdoms, independent of the control of regents or factions. From the mid-1580s, onwards James VI was known to be an adult monarch with a significant role in international relations. After his extensive diplomatic dealings in the first years of his personal rule, foreign powers realised that if they wanted Scotland's support, they would need to have something to offer its king in return.

Through all of this, James learned several valuable lessons and established the diplomatic policies he would follow throughout his reign. Firstly, the king saw that the best way to strengthen his position was to ensure that opposing forces both looked to him for the advantage. The king presented himself as a potential convert to the Catholics, whilst at the same time professing his devotion to the Protestant Cause to Elizabeth and his Danish and German allies. This policy of supporting opposing factions to promote his own interests is one that served James well throughout his rule, and something he became well known for by foreign powers. The King of Scots also developed the tool of plausible deniability to further his policies. He was able to discuss a levy to the United Provinces with Elizabeth whilst convincing the French and Spanish that he knew nothing of it, and was able to deploy agents to Spain whilst pretending to Elizabeth that he would never deal with her enemies.

In addition, James saw that due to the importance of trade to his burghs he could use their need to regularly re-negotiate customs and taxes with foreign kingdoms to encourage others to pay for his diplomatic missions. For a king who was limited in finances this was an efficient use of resources, and this was one of the many ways that James aptly used his assets to extend his reach. All of these lessons served to prepare James for the challenges that would face him throughout the 1590s, and the policies that the king established informed how the rest of Europe saw him, and what influence he would have on international politics in the coming decades.

CHAPTER TWO: THE HUNT FOR A WIFE, 1584-1595

First of all consider, that Mariage is the greatest earthly felicity or miserie, that can come to a man, according as it pleaseth God to blesse or curse the same. Since then, without the blessing of God, yee cannot looke for a happie successe in Mariage, yee must bee carefull both in your preparation for it, and in the choice and vsage of your wife, to procure the same.¹

From the beginning of James's independent rule, and long before, the search for an appropriate bride for the Scottish king was a subject of international negotiation.² This was far from unusual in an early modern context, and his choice of bride presented James with a number of opportunities and difficulties. How he managed these is not only revealing in the context of the time but also in illustrating how James's political mind-set was formed and what diplomatic considerations were given to his choice of bride. In 1584, there was brief consideration, on the Spanish side at least, of a Habsburg match for James, but the Empress Maria's strong objections quickly closed the subject.³ In 1585, the Danes initiated talks of a match in conjunction with a settlement over the ownership of the Orkney and Shetland islands.⁴ A further match with the Navarre family was also suggested in 1587, with the bride being Henri's sister, the Princess Catherine du Bourbon.⁵ Over the next few years the Navarre and Danish matches contended for success, and the pros and cons of each for Scotland were discussed in detail. The first part of this chapter gives an analysis of these proposals and the decision for one over the other. In the second part, this chapter examines the diplomatic repercussions of James's six-month voyage to Denmark-Norway to retrieve his new bride. In doing so this chapter demonstrates that James's hand

¹ James VI, "Basilicon Doron," p.38.

² Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.3.

³ The Empress of the Holy Roman Empire had declared that, 'she would rather make a nun of her daughter [Margaret] than marry her to a King of Scotland.' *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.83 no.199 [1 March 1584, Vincenzo Graedenigo, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate]. Incidentally, Margaret did end up becoming a nun, although this was much later and unrelated to the proposed marriage between her and James VI.

⁴ The Orkney and Shetland islands had been given to Scotland as promise of payment of the dowry for Queen Margaret, wife of James III. The dowry was never paid, and so Scotland retained ownership of the islands, although Frederick II wanted to regain the territory. Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.1 p.33; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.53; Thomson, *Historie*, pp.211-2.

⁵ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.54-5 no.8 [Henri of Navarre to James VI, 3 August 1587]; Hatfield House, CP 165/47. "Richard Douglas to Archibald Douglas," (7 June 1587); Courcelles, *Extracts*, pp.79-80 [18 September 1587, Courcelles to Henri III]; Wormald, "DNB, James VI and I."

was sought by foreign powers, that the negotiations surrounding his marriage were intertwined with European politics, and that James's voyage abroad was a political statement rather than the rash and youthful folly it has typically been described as.⁶

Marriage Negotiations

When James VI began his personal rule, it was assumed and expected that he would marry and secure the Stuart line in Scotland. Throughout his adulthood, there were two primary contenders for his hand, one French, the other Danish. Both presented James with opportunities as well as drawbacks. There were several benefits of the Navarre match to Scotland. Henri of Navarre was the heir apparent to the French throne, and therefore a rising star in European politics. His family was reputedly wealthy, thus potentially bringing a large dowry for Scotland, and the fact that the Princess Catherine's brother, Henri, was still without an heir meant that she was due to inherit much of his lands and wealth upon his death.⁷ The rhetoric of the Auld Alliance was also brought forward, and although religion differed between Scotland and the current French regime, Navarre was a Protestant, and furthermore a fellow Calvinist. If he succeeded in gaining the French throne the proposed marriage would mark a new union based not only on trade and tradition, but also religion. In contrast, the Danes were Lutheran, and so whilst Protestant, did not represent as satisfactory a religious alliance such as the Kirk of Scotland ideally hoped for. Navarre was keen to have a marriage alliance with James; a memorandum highlighting the benefits of this French match over the Danish alternative for Scotland was likely written by one of Navarre's supporters.⁸ Moreover, when Henri discovered that his sister was in love with the Comte de Soissons, he urged and threatened her to change her mind and agree to the match with James, which she refused to do.⁹ The king of Scotland was unaware of the lady's feelings, and in any event, there were multiple political factors for him to consider in the negotiations.

As far as Henri of Navarre was concerned, James VI represented not only a traditional friend, but also a potentially strong supporter. Scotland and France had long been linked and James's grandfather had travelled to France in 1536 to cement this relationship through marriage.¹⁰ The importance of Scottish trade and soldiers, such as the *Gardes Écossaises*, was well known in France, and Navarre

⁶ For example, David Stevenson called the mission, 'irresponsible'. Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.28.

⁷ Due to French Salic law Catherine would not inherit Henri's royal titles, so James could not hope to be made king of France by marriage. Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.195.

⁸ BL, Add MS 36530 f.4. Unknown, "Paper Concerning the King's [James VI's] Marriage," (1588).

⁹ Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, ed. by Jules Berger de Xivrey and J. Guadet (Paris, 1843), vol.2 pp.400–1 [30 November 1588, Henri IV a Madame la Comtesse de Gramont]; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.195–6; Hesketh Pearson, *Henry of Navarre: His Life* (Heinemann, 1963), p.145; Pitts, *Henri IV of France*, pp.188–90.

¹⁰ Caroline Bingham, *James V: King of Scots, 1512–1542* (London, 1971), p.118.

hoped to use these resources for his own cause.¹¹ Scotland had traditionally been allied with the Catholic king and with the Guise family, but Navarre hoped that if James married his sister then the Huguenots would gain control of the Scottish networks and influence in France.¹² Navarre's ambassador to Scotland, Guillaume Salluste, Seigneur Du Bartas, wrote to him encouraging him to pursue the Scottish match, saying:

If it is a question of mating her with a Christian Prince, the King of Scotland seems the only choice, for he professes the same doctrine and maintains the same ecclesiastical ceremonies and discipline; if with a Monarch, there is none save the King of Scotland, who is already in possession of one crown and in very certain hope of those of England and Ireland; if with a Potentate, handsome, brave, eloquent, active, and discreet - in short your own image and picture - you must accept the King of Scotland. Sire, you have given your goods, your age, your life, to this cause; now give to it your sister, for on this happy union is founded the felicity of Christendom.¹³

A minority of Scots who preferred the Auld Alliance or wanted Scotland involved in the Protestant war favoured the Navarre match to a renegotiated one with Denmark-Norway. Despite this marginal support for France the majority of Scots saw serious drawbacks to the Navarre proposal. Because Henri of Navarre was still immersed in the religious wars in France, all of his wealth was currently tied up, meaning that although large, the dowry of Princess Catherine would be delayed, probably for several years, if it arrived at all. Furthermore, if James joined with Navarre he would be forced into open opposition of Spain, closing Scotland's trade links with that kingdom and drawing Scotland into a foreign war.¹⁴ Not only would such a war weaken Scotland's trading economy, but it also risked plunging the kingdom into financial ruin. Many in Scotland were fearful of the costs, both in men and money, which the union would incur because of the inevitable involvement of Scotland in France's religious wars. They had seen what this had

¹¹ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.56–68 [January 1588, The Bishop of Glasgow's Report]; p.72 [prior to September 1588, Navarre to James VI]; Talbott, "An Alliance Ended," pp.51–2, 56; Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.28–9.

¹² Although the match eventually failed, James did not forsake the French Protestants, and in 1590 promised aid as Henri IV tried to win back Paris. James promised 3,000 men but he never sent them; he did however, write to the German princes on Henri IV's behalf. Talbott, "An Alliance Ended," p.130; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.146–8 [26 December 1590, Holyrood House – James VI to the Viscount Turenne]; TNA, SP 52/46 f.74. "Robert Bowes to Burghley" (26 December 1590).

¹³ Du Bartas made several trips to Scotland in this period to discuss the marriage negotiations; this quote is from the second trip. FR-SC_05.; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.68 [14 February 1588, Du Bartas to Navarre].

¹⁴ For more on Scoto-Spanish trade, see McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730."

done to England's coffers under Henry VIII, and were not keen to follow suit.¹⁵ Although this was a significant drawback on the Navarre marriage, it was also perhaps exactly what Elizabeth wanted, for she supported the Navarre match, and tried to influence James and his councillors to this end over the Danish option.¹⁶

In contrast with the Navarre match, the Danish proposal could guarantee an instant and impressive dowry payment, along with the absence of any immediate threat of being drawn into a continental war. Scotland had traditional links with Denmark-Norway as well as France, and trade links here were particularly strong.¹⁷ In addition to trade with Denmark-Norway, marriage with a Danish princess would allow Scotland to remain neutral in regards to Spain, and would thus protect Scottish merchants' interests in that theatre as well. However, just as with the Navarre match, there were drawbacks - the most significant being the issue of the ownership of the Orkney and Shetland Islands. Furthermore, although Elizabeth had originally given tacit approval to the Danish marriage, as the years passed and her own relationship with that kingdom was strained over trade issues, her support shifted to the Navarre match.¹⁸ The absence of Elizabeth's approval could have not only threatened current relations with England, but also James's claim to the throne after the Queen's death. Thus, whilst anxious not to be bullied by his godmother, James knew that his choice of wife had far reaching implications, and needed to be acceptable to Elizabeth and the English, as well as his current kingdom.¹⁹

Between 1585 and 1589, the negotiations for both matches ebbed and flowed, and rumours on the status of each ran rampant. After the Danish embassy first floated ideas of a marriage in 1585, James sent Peter Young to Denmark in

¹⁵ Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, pp.25–34; Richard Hoyle, "War and Public Finance," in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*, ed. by Diarmaid MacCulloch (Basingstoke, 1995), pp.75–100.

¹⁶ Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.326; Lee, Jr, *Great Britain's Solomon*, p.98; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.199. This was not the first time that an English monarch had tried to influence a Scottish royal marriage. In the late 1520s Henry VIII did all he could to block James V's attempts to marry first a French and then a Danish princess, in what was known as the 'Rough Wooing'. James Cameron, *James V: The Personal Rule, 1528–1542*, ed. by Norman Macdougall (East Linton, 1998), pp.60–1; Merriman, *The Rough Wooings*.

¹⁷ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, pp.15–35; Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway*, pp.22–36. See for example the treaty between Scotland and Denmark in 1468 upon the marriage of James III to Margaret of Norway, Douglas Simpson, *Charters and Other Records of the City and Royal Burgh of Kirkwall: With the Treaty of 1468 between Denmark and Scotland*, ed. by John Mooney (Aberdeen, 1952), pp.96–102.

¹⁸ *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.200 no.402 [24 August 1586, Hieronimo Lippomano, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to the Doge and Senate]; TNA, SP 52/42 f.79. "Discourses Between Elizabeth and Mr. Archibald Douglas," (October 1587); Walther Kirchner, "England and Denmark, 1558–1588," *The Journal of Modern History* 17, no.1 (March 1, 1945), p.14; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.13. After the defeat of the *Gran Armada* in 1588 it was rumoured that the Spanish ships were heading to the Sound for Danish aid, something that could have also contributed to Elizabeth's lack of favour for Denmark-Norway. Lockhart, *Frederik II*, p.302.

¹⁹ BL, Cotton Julius F/VI f.76. "Concerning the Marriage of James VI," (1588).

1586 to pursue the issue and test the waters.²⁰ This was a very informal mission, which overtly was meant only to deal with the issue of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, not a marriage negotiation.²¹ This mission had little success, due in part to the lower rank of the ambassadors and to the delicate and complex nature of the disputed islands. Another embassy was sent the following year with more detailed instructions, this time with the addition of the more highly ranked ambassador, Sir Patrick Vaus of Barnbarroch.²² Colonel William Stewart, who had served in the Danish military and who had travelled with Young on the first mission joined the party once again, although whether he was working for James's interests or Frederick II's is not entirely clear.²³

In 1587 Vaus, Young and Stewart returned to Denmark-Norway, this time to officially ask for the hand of the Princess Elizabeth, Frederick's eldest daughter.²⁴ They met with Frederick on 29 July, although only briefly, and were later informed that Elizabeth was already betrothed, but that the younger daughter, Anna, was still available. Disgruntled, the mission returned in the autumn of 1587, approximately one month before du Bartas returned to France. Robert Melville, the Laird of Tungland, joined du Bartas on his journey, having been sent by James to report on the proposed Navarre match and the qualities of the princess.²⁵ Du Bartas, a poet and entertainer, had arrived in Scotland in June 1587 and was in 'very good credit' with the king during his stay.²⁶ Du Bartas was

²⁰ According to Melville the English ambassador, who did not want James to marry, had biased the king against them. The king had to be convinced of the merits of the Danes and informed how highly the King of France and Queen of England regarded Frederik II before he would give them respect. DN-SC_01.; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.53; Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.295; Sir James Melville, *Memoirs of His Own Life*, ed. by T. Thomson (Edinburg, 1827), pp.335–45. Peter Young arrived at Elsinore on 26 July 1586 and was back in Scotland some time before October of the same year. SC-DN_01.; Courcelles, *Extracts*, p.9; TNA, SP 52/40 f.103. "Peter Young, Scottish Ambassador in Denmark, to the King of Scotland" (30 July 1586).

²¹ Lockhart, *Frederik II*, p.287. See also David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism* (London, 2013), pp.118–9.

²² The mission was delayed because James could not afford to send it sooner; he finally resorted to issuing an arrest on all ships leaving from Scotland until the ambassadors were furnished with transport. *Correspondence of Sir Patrick Vaus of Barnbarroch*, vol.2 pp.381–2 [17 March 1587, King James's arrestment of all ships till the Ambassadors to Denmark-Norway have secured such as they want]; Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, pp.362–3; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.169–70 [16 May 1587, Holyrood House – Assignation to the town of Edinburgh for the payment of the sum of £2000 Scots which is to be advanced by the Provost, Bailies and Council of the same, for the expenses of an embassy to the King of Denmark]; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.8. The ambassadors were paid with gifts of land, RPS, sec.1587/7/117, 118.

²³ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.7–10; Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.213; Courcelles, *Extracts*, p.9 [Courcelles to Henri III, 4 October 1586].

²⁴ SC-DN_02.

²⁵ SC-FR_05.; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.54–5 [3 August 1587, Henri of Navarre to James VI]; Melville, *Memoirs*, pp.321–2.

²⁶ FR-SC_04.; Hatfield House, CP 165/47. "Richard Douglas to Archibald Douglas," (7 June 1587); *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.54–5 no.8 [Henri of Navarre to James VI, 3 August 1587]; pp.68–9 no.11 [14 February 1588, Du Bartas to Henry of Navarre]. James even published some of du Bartas's verses in: James VI&I, *His Maiesties Poeticall Exercises at Vacant Houres*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 14379 (Edinburgh, 1591). BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.321. "William

the only official ambassador sent to discuss the Navarre match, but it continued to remain a real contender throughout the following years. For example, on 30 July 1588 Asheby reported that a Monsieur Cleirmont had landed on the west coast of Scotland, claiming to have been driven there by the storms. He did not directly discuss the Navarre match with James, 'but he haith made a solicitour here in courte for the entertening of that matter'.²⁷ These negotiations were serious not only for Denmark-Norway and for Navarre, but also for Scotland, who in addition to paying for the expenses of the numerous missions involved in the negotiations also authorised a tax to pay for the king's eventual marriage in the July 1587 Parliament.²⁸

In January 1588, Colonel Stewart was once again in Denmark-Norway to pursue the marriage negotiations in an informal manner. He met with the Danish king in February 1588, and he was received positively.²⁹ Frederick II died in April, and this caused a delay in further negotiations whilst a new minority government was set up in Denmark-Norway. Frederick's son, Christian IV, was to be king; but until his majority the kingdom was to be ruled by a group of regents, including Frederick's wife, Queen Sophia.³⁰ This new government was anxious to conclude a marriage treaty with Scotland, and sent an agent in May 1588, to move negotiations forward.³¹ James responded by sending Colonel Stewart to Denmark-Norway once more in August 1588, this time to establish contact with the new regime.³² In November the English ambassador in Scotland reported that Stewart had returned and the negotiations for the Danish match had advanced, with the promise of a large dowry for the Danish princess. Despite this, some in Scotland still preferred the Navarre match.³³ Due to the distraction caused by the imminent arrival of the *Gran Armada*, James failed to send a formal mission to Denmark-Norway during the winter of 1588-1589 to conclude the negotiations.³⁴

Discussions on both the French and Danish matches resumed promptly after the end of the armada crisis in the summer of 1589. By this point Elizabeth

Asheby to Walsingham," (30 July 1588). The following day Roger Aston reported that no word had come from Denmark, and it was suspected that the Navarre match, or possibly (in reality only a wild rumour) a Spanish match would be successful. BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII. "Roger Aston to Burghley," (31 July 1589).

²⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.321. "William Asheby to Walsingham," (30 July 1588).

²⁸ This was issued in April 1588. *RPS*, sec.1587/7/20 [8 July 1587, Edinburgh Parliament]. 1587/7/20 [8 July 1587, Edinburgh Parliament]; A1588/4/2 [4 April 1588, Convention at Holyrood House]

²⁹ SC-DN_03.; TNA, SP 52/42 f.92. Unknown, "____ to Walsingham," (24 February 1588); Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.14.

³⁰ Lockhart, *Frederik II*, pp.299-316; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.14; Paul Douglas Lockhart, *Denmark, 1513-1660: The Rise and Decline of a Renaissance Monarchy* (Oxford, 2007), pp.42-3. Stevenson incorrectly dates Frederick's death as February 1588, not April.

³¹ The regency faced several serious domestic issues, and Sophie had always favoured the Scottish match, and an ally close to England and with the potential future king of Scotland, England and Ireland could only help the insecure and unsteady regency government. Lockhart, *Frederik II*, pp.299-316; Kirchner, "England and Denmark, 1558-1588," pp.14-5; Lockhart, *Denmark, 1513-1660*, pp.42-3.

³² SC-DN_04.; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.70.

³³ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.228. "William Asheby to Walsingham," (26 November 1588).

³⁴ This is discussed in Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588-1595.

was becoming increasingly concerned with James's potential marriage. Although she had initially supported the Danish match, the introduction of the Navarre proposal and trading disputes with Denmark caused her to shift her favour to the Navarre option.³⁵ On 16 June, Burghley wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury saying, 'the King of Scots wooeth the King of Denmark's daughter, but we could better like the match with the King of Navarre's sister'.³⁶ In July, the king wrote to Navarre, expressing his pleasure at the news that Navarre and Henri III had joined forces against the Catholic League, his hope that the union would continue, and his desire 'to be knit with you in the closest friendship'. In the letter, he also apologised for not writing to the Princess Catherine directly, as he had not the time to do so properly.³⁷ By this time James had informed his council that he had decided on the Danish match; however the treaty had not yet been finalised, since rumours continued to circulate that the Navarre match was still a possibility, or that James would not marry in the near future at all.³⁸

It was not only the king who was interested in the marriage negotiations; Scottish merchants, who hoped to improve their trading opportunities, were also keenly aware of the importance a royal match would have on their income. They preferred the Danish match because of the control Frederik II had of the Sound, and were worried lest the Navarre match drew Scotland into a war that would damage her trade with Spain. The Scottish merchants blamed Chancellor John Maitland of Thirlestane for encouraging the Navarre match. He had done so initially, but once it was discovered that Navarre could not offer a comparable dowry to the Danish proposal, he changed his mind.³⁹ The merchants of Edinburgh were not convinced of this and in combination with other complaints against the Chancellor's execution of his power, they rioted on 28 May 1589, forcing the king to confirm the Danish alliance. James did so, and appointed George Keith, Earl Marischal on 2 June, to lead the mission finalising the treaty.⁴⁰

³⁵ Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.326.

³⁶ Lambeth Palace Library, MS 3200, f.42. William Cecil, "Lord Burghley to the Earl of Shrewsbury," (1589). Printed in Edmund Lodge, *Illustrations of British History: Biography and Manners in the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth & James I, Exhibited in a Series of Original Papers Selected from the Mss. of the Noble Families of Howard, Talbot and Cecil, with Numerous Notes Observations*, Second Edition (London, 1838), vol.2 p.377.

³⁷ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.107–8 [c. July 1589, James VI to Navarre]. Quote from p.107.

³⁸ The return from England of James Colville, Laird of Easter Wemyss and friend of Henri of Navarre encouraged these rumours, as well as reports that Elizabeth was seeking to delay James marrying for the next three years. SC-EN_08.; TNA, SP 52/44 f.20. "Thomas Fowler to Walsingham," (17 May 1589). Like much of early modern intelligence, the gossip and rumours were intermixed with factual information, and it is often only through comparison that one can be identified from the other. It does not appear, however, that James was encouraging as official policy these rumours and contradictory reports.

³⁹ Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.195–6. James V's marriage had also been influenced by the need for financial security, thus he chose a French bride over a Scottish noblewoman. Bingham, *James V: King of Scots*, p.99.

⁴⁰ The Dane's had also been urging James to conclude negotiations and sent an agent in the spring of 1589 for this purpose. DN-SC_02. The Scottish mission (SC-DN_05.) sailed on 18 June 1589 and most remained there until 30 November 1589. Those who did not return then travelled with James VI during his voyage there, and returned to Scotland in May 1590. The Danish Account of James's visit to Denmark-Norway, from which Peter Graves made his

Over the summer months James waited to hear news that the treaty had been concluded. Notwithstanding domestic tensions between nobles and the Kirk, the king tried to maintain a sense of peace and tranquillity in his kingdom as a welcome for his new bride, and more importantly the retinue of Danish officials she would bring with her. James did what he could to avoid any future incidents such as the Edinburgh riot, although the king did lash out on occasion. Despite superficially good relations, James heard that the General Assembly had deprived the Bishop of St Andrews from his holdings in June, without consulting the king in this matter.⁴¹ Although loath to upset the peace in his kingdom whilst he was daily expecting the arrival of his bride, James felt that this affront to his authority could not be ignored. In retaliation against the Kirk - for their actions against his bishop - and to show his authority in all matters James released the lords involved in the Brig O'Dee rebellion, deferring his judgement against them until after his new bride arrived.⁴² This allowed them to show him that they had repented of their ways through displays of their loyalty, as well as to more effectually counter the power of the Kirk as the leaders of the pro-Catholic faction within Scottish politics.

Despite these initial domestic disturbances, the kingdom was relatively quiet for the rest of the summer, and on 20 August 1589 the marriage treaty was concluded and James married the Danish princess Anna by proxy, with the Earl Marischal representing the king.⁴³ Colonel Stewart brought the news to James at Stirling on the 28th of that month, whereupon the king immediately returned to Edinburgh to prepare for his bride's arrival.⁴⁴ James had chosen to pursue the Danish match against the wishes of Elizabeth, and he had failed to ask either her permission or her blessing on the match. Fortunately for him, Elizabeth, once she realised that she could not stop James, chose to support him rather than cause an international incident. On 18 August, instructions were sent to Asheby informing him to pass on the news that Elizabeth would not oppose a Danish match.⁴⁵ This was followed up two days later with her open if grudging support of the union.⁴⁶ Once the marriage was completed James turned to Elizabeth to help him fund the ceremony and refurbishments required to receive his new bride, and Elizabeth

translation is P.A. Munch, ed., "Samtidig Beretning om Prindsesse Annas, Christian 4des Systers, Giftermaal med Kong Jakob den 6te af Skotland og paafølgende Kroning," in *Norske Samlinger*, vol. Første Bind (Christiania, 1852), pp.450-512.

⁴¹ Thomas Thomson, ed., *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland from the Year MDLX* (Edinburgh, 1839), vol.2 p.746 [17 June 1589].

⁴² *Spottiswood*, vol.2 p.399 [June 1589].

⁴³ L. Laursen, *Traité du Danemark et de la Norvège: Danemark-Norges Traktater 1523-1750 med Dertil Horende Aktstykker Paa Carlsberg fondets Bekostning* (København (Copenhagen), 1916), pp.14-21 [20 August 1589, Kronborg, Ægteskabstraktat mellem Kong Jakob VI af Skotland og Kong Frederik II's Datter, Prinsesse Anna]; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.22; *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.59 [20 August 1589].

⁴⁴ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.78.

⁴⁵ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.43. "Walsingham to William Asheby [Ashby]" (18 August 1589).

⁴⁶ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.47. "Walsingham to William Asheby [Ashby]" (20 August 1589).

gave him a set of gilt plate worth £2,000 Sterling as a wedding present.⁴⁷ In the weeks that followed, whilst James waited for his bride to arrive, Scotland was in a flurry of activity scrounging up money and refurbishing apartments for Anna's arrival. The news came on 10 October that the queen would not arrive until the following spring brought this preparation to a grinding halt, and initiated the most unique embassy to leave Scotland during James's reign.

An 'ivel-seasoned journey'

Historians have long assumed that James's voyage to Denmark-Norway to retrieve his bride was one of the most foolish decisions the king ever made. According to David Stevenson:

... it can only have been irrational obsession (otherwise known as love) with Anne, which led him [James] to so dangerous an act. A king's place, unless leading armies of invasion or very occasionally making royal visits with serious diplomatic purposes, was in his kingdom.⁴⁸

Yet, for all of the disparaging remarks made about this mission, surprisingly little research has been completed on the effects of this 'ivel-seasoned' journey.⁴⁹ In October 1589, James VI left his kingdom for over six months, and in that time there were no rebellions, no riots and no major disturbances. In fact, according to Calderwood, 'the countrie was never in greater peace than during his absence'.⁵⁰ Despite this, one of the primary concerns during James's absence was that unrest and plots would overthrow his government. Given the timing of his departure, these were reasonable fears.

The year before the *Gran Armada* had been destroyed, but at the time of James's departure, there were still several hundred Spanish survivors in Scotland, being cared for by pro-Spanish nobles and, in large part, by the merchants of Edinburgh.⁵¹ This, along with the increased activity of the Jesuits in Scotland

⁴⁷ On 8 September the English Treasurer issued James an extra £1000 for his marriage with Anna of Denmark. BL, Harley 6994 f.201. "Sir Tho. Heneage Vice Chamberlain to the Lord Treasurer," (8 September 1589). Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.27.

⁴⁸ David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.30. See also pp.28,32.

⁴⁹ For comments regarding James's voyage see: Robert Ashton, *James I by His Contemporaries: An Account of His Career and Character as Seen by Some of His Contemporaries* (London, 1969), p.86; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.28, 32. Elizabeth described the voyage as 'ivel-seasoned' in a letter written to him early in 1590. Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, pp.57-9 no.34.

⁵⁰ Calderwood, vol.5 p.67 [22 October 1589]. During the absence of James V in 1536-7 Scotland also remained peaceful, showing the confidence of the king was well placed, and emphasising to foreign powers the control of the king of Scots over his kingdom. Cameron, *James V*, p.133.

⁵¹ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.230. "William Asheby to Walsingham" (6 November 1588). The quote is from Emanuel Van Meteran, "The Invincible Armada," in *The Tudor Venturers*, ed. by John Hampden, trans. by Richard Hakluyt (London, 1970), pp.250-1. He also recorded a ship carrying the survivors was stopped at Yarmouth by the English, but the local Council took pity of the sailors' misfortunes and allowed the ship to proceed. Murdoch has argued that the

during 1589, had caused growing anxiety and fear of another Catholic invasion.⁵² Such fears increased after the discovery that several of the pro-Catholic Scottish nobles had been in contact with the Duke of Parma and had encouraged him to send another armada, this time to land in Scotland rather than England.⁵³ Although imprisoned, these men were quickly released, and within a few months they were again in collusion with the Catholic League, staging a rebellion at the Brig O'Dee in April 1589, which was only put down when James himself arrived on the battlefield.⁵⁴ Once again, their punishment was fleeting, and by June they had been released from prison, although not given a complete pardon. James's leniency towards the Catholic conspirators in his kingdom made both the Kirk and Elizabeth I nervous. They feared that the Catholics would strike again, having never been severely weakened or destroyed, whilst James was absent. These fears were both prevalent amongst all levels of Scottish society and valid due to the recent attempted invasions and coups.

The reason given for the delayed arrival of the new Queen of Scots was extremely stormy weather; the Danes were unwilling to risk their princess's safety.⁵⁵ The King of Scots' response was to arrange for another mission to be sent to Denmark-Norway from Scotland; ostensibly to do what the Danes seemed unable or unwilling to do – bring his bride to him.⁵⁶ James first commissioned Earl Bothwell for the job, but the Earl insisted on having royal funds to cover the costs of the mission. Maitland, looking for a chance to regain James's favour, offered to fund the mission himself, and to go and retrieve Scotland's new queen.

When the King had with many sighs read these long pitiful letters, the next day he determined in show to send the Earl Bothwell, as Admiral, with six ships to fetch her home, and to claim her as his wife from the Danish councillors; but in the afternoon, the Council sitting, and the Earl Bothwell presenting bills for the charges of the voyage, it could not be any way furnished. The Chancellor, seeing the King in a great perplexity, he stands up and

reason the ship was stopped at all was because Scots had recently been found carrying Spanish letters of marque, acting as privateers against English ships. Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, pp.120–1. See also: McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, p.53.

⁵² In the summer of 1589 over six hundred Spanish survivors arrived in Edinburgh where they were cared for until they could be shipped back to the Netherlands and Spain. A further one hundred arrived in November, just weeks after James's departure. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, p.53; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.230. "William Asheby to Walsingham" (6 November 1588); Van Meteran, "The Invincible Armada," pp.250–1. See also: Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588–1595.

⁵³ Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.101.

⁵⁴ Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland*, p.15; Calderwood, vol.5 pp.54–5 [1589, The Bridge of Dee]; Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair"; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541–1588*, p.252; Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, p.217; Robertson, "House of Huntly, 1603–90," p.35.

⁵⁵ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.79; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.26; Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.1 pp.264–5.

⁵⁶ *RPCS*, vol.4 p.421 [17 October 1589, Leith: Act in favour of new commissioners directed to the Queen [Anna] who is detained in Norway].

makes offer that, rather than the King's desire should be frustrate, he and his friends would fit out five or six ships well manned and furnished. He furnished himself a ship of 126 tons, and half another, Justice Clerk one, and the Provost of Lincluden, Carmichael, Barnbarrow, the Lord of Dingwall, Sir William Keith and divers others.⁵⁷

Stevenson has argued that the Chancellor had probably already received a promise from James when he made this offer that the king would be joining him on the voyage.⁵⁸ This would have been to ensure that Maitland's detractors did not gain the king's ear whilst the chancellor was away. Whilst it cannot be conclusively proven, James's actions, especially in making such a point of taking full responsibility for his decision to leave, may have been over-compensation for the rumours against Maitland.⁵⁹ It may also have been that he was simply continuing to assert his independence from various factions, relying on the sanctity of royal authority to rally support. The king was defending his choice of councillor as much as the councillor himself; however, from his activities it is clear that James knew he would face opposition and criticism for his decision.

It is not clear exactly when James made the decision to go to Denmark-Norway, but it was made rather quickly. James was informed of Anna's delay on 10 October 1589.⁶⁰ He ordered a second mission to be led by Bothwell on 17 October, and that afternoon Bothwell refused and Maitland offered to take his place.⁶¹ Two days later the first instructions for James's absentee government were written, showing that James had decided within two days to join Maitland on the voyage.⁶²

In the days leading up to the mission's departure James did his utmost to keep his role a secret, but rumours soon began to spread about the lavish food and furnishings being sent on the mission.⁶³ James knew that many within the noble estate, the merchant class and the Kirk (or indeed Elizabeth) would not be pleased that he was leaving his kingdom, particularly given that he had no living heir.⁶⁴ The contemporary dangers in Scotland have caused so many, both then and since,

⁵⁷ Hatfield House, CP 18/55. "Thomas Fowler to Lord Burghley," (20 October 1589).

⁵⁸ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.28. Maurice Lee disagrees, and argues that Maitland simply needed to regain his credit with James and dispel the rumours that he was against the Danish match. Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.201-2.

⁵⁹ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.427-9 [22 October 1589, Discourse of James VI on taking his voyage]. Also printed in *Spottiswood*, vol.2 pp.402-4.

⁶⁰ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.79.

⁶¹ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.134. "Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage" (20 October 1589).

⁶² *RPCS*, vol.4 p.422 [19 October 1589, Leith - James's instructions for his council during his absence].

⁶³ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.29.

⁶⁴ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, James had only just suppressed a rebellion at the Brig O'Dee (suppressed on 17 April 1589) of his nobility and of his merchants at Edinburgh, and the after-effects of the *Gran Armada* were still being felt throughout his kingdom, see: Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair." The merchants of Edinburgh rioted on 28 May against Chancellor Maitland's policies, see: Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.197. Hundreds of Spanish survivors were in Scotland between 1588 and 1590, and fear of Catholic plots continued., see: McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589-1597*, p.53.

to call his decision foolish and blame the throes of young love and passion. However, it is possible that at least part of James's motivation for making this journey was to show his kingdom and the rest of Europe that he could control his realm from a distance, and that he was strong enough and secure enough in his power to leave his kingdom virtually unattended for just over six months.⁶⁵ This period also offered an answer to any Scottish fears of how the kingdom might be run should James ever succeed in his claim to the English throne.

James prepared for his absentee government by setting up a temporary pair of councils as well as issuing decrees to his people at large.⁶⁶ His government would consist of the current Privy Council, which was to meet regularly in Edinburgh under the leadership of James's nearest relative, the Duke of Lennox. The Admiral of Scotland, the Earl of Bothwell, would support him in this role. Bothwell was the only one of the rebelling lords to hold a position in this absentee government, although it might have been James's way of keeping him distracted and under close observation.⁶⁷ This council would also be attended by rotating groups of the Scottish nobility, who would each serve for fifteen-day periods until James returned. The Edinburgh council was responsible for all of Scotland, except for the Borders, which would be governed by a separate council of local nobility led by Lord Hamilton.⁶⁸ On 19 October 1589, James commissioned the forging of a new seal and signet, since Maitland would have James's set with them in Denmark-Norway, as well as arranging for the management of the treasury.⁶⁹ These instructions were read out at the Privy Council meeting on 23 October, the day after James had sailed.⁷⁰

On the same day that he commissioned the new seal and signet for domestic governance during his absence, James also dealt with pressing foreign matters. He wrote to Philip II informing him that he was sending Scottish captains to the

⁶⁵ At the time Francis Walsingham noted the dangers that Scotland and Europe faced by James's absence. TNA, SP 52/72 ff.339-41. Francis Walsingham, "Touching the Scots King's Departure to Denmark" (October 1589).

⁶⁶ James banned his subjects from gathering for events such as 'law days' whilst he was away, knowing that these often quickly led to quarrels which were followed by blood feuds. BL, Add MS 23241 f.29. "James VI to the Lord Chancellor [John Maitland of Thirlestane]," (19 October 1589). James V, the last monarch to form a temporary absentee government, created six vice-regents to rule the kingdom, with a minimum of three required to agree before any action was taken. Cameron, *James V*, p.133.

⁶⁷ James ordered Bothwell specifically to halt his feuding with other nobles and behave peaceably whilst the king was abroad. *RPCS*, vol.4 p.423 [19 October 1589, Leith: Charge to the Earl Bothwell and Lord Hume to keep the Peace to each other during the King's absence]. The Earl seems to have made an effort to do this, as well as his duties in the absentee government. Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.210.

⁶⁸ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.32; *Spottiswood*, vol.2 pp.399-400; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.429-30 [22 October 1589, Edinburgh: King's Farewell letter to the Privy Council, regulating procedures in the Council during his absence]; Anna Groundwater, *The Scottish Middle March, 1573-1625: Power, Kinship, Allegiance* (London, 2010), pp.175-6.

⁶⁹ *RPCS*, vol.4 p.422 [19 October 1589, Leith: "Act concerning the Treasury during the King's intended absence from Scotland' and "Warrant for making of a Great Seal and Great Signet to be used during his Majesty's absence from the country"].

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol.4 pp.429-30 and n.1 [22 October 1589, Edinburgh] – King's farewell letter to the Privy Council, regulating procedures in the Council during his absence].

Netherlands with survivors from the *Gran Armada* the previous year.⁷¹ This was only three days before he sailed for Denmark-Norway and serves as a reminder that although James was pursuing improved relations with Protestant kingdoms he was also continuing his friendship with Spain. Indeed, given that one of the reasons that he had chosen the Danish match over the Navarre proposal had been the avoidance of open opposition to Spain and the protection of Scoto-Spanish trade, this policy of conciliation with the Habsburg ruler should not be viewed as particularly surprising.⁷²

Moreover, by ensuring that Philip was on good terms with James during his absence, the king improved his chances of maintaining peace with Spain whilst his kingdom was left largely unguarded. The English ambassador, Asheby, upon hearing rumours of James's joining in the expedition to Denmark, wrote to the king on 21 October urging him against it.⁷³ James responded the following day, informing him that he would not have dared to take such a voyage without Elizabeth's blessing, but since she had, since the beginning, approved of the match, he was sure she would support his decision.⁷⁴ Asheby immediately wrote to Elizabeth to inform her of James's actions, and to await further instructions, for he had been due to leave Scotland just after Anna's arrival.⁷⁵ After receiving the news, Walsingham composed a memorandum outlining possible dangers if the king should leave.⁷⁶

Once all of the business was concluded and instructions had been left for the governance of his kingdom, James VI boarded his ship at Leith and sailed at nine o'clock in the evening on 22 October 1589.⁷⁷ The following day the instructions he had left were read to the Privy Council along with a letter, written his own hand to his people. These were read publicly at the market cross in Edinburgh, explaining his reasons for taking such a seemingly dangerous voyage.⁷⁸

⁷¹ AGS, E 839.36. "James VI to Philip II" (19 October 1589).

⁷² EN-SC_11. For more information on Scoto-Spanish trade see McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730."

⁷³ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.129. "William Asheby to James VI," (21 October 1589).

⁷⁴ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.132. "James VI to Asheby" (22 October 1589).

⁷⁵ TNA, SP 52/44 f.88. William Asheby, "William Asheby to Queen Elizabeth," (23 October 1589); BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.85. William Cecil, "Burghley to William Asheby," (22 September 1589).

⁷⁶ TNA, SP 52/72 ff.339-41. Francis Walsingham, "Touching the Scots King's Departure to Denmark" (October 1589). More on Elizabeth's reaction to James's departure can be found in: Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588-1595.

⁷⁷ In the king's party were the following men: John Maitland of Thirlestane, Chancellor; Alexander Lindsay, Lord Spynie; Sir William Keith; Sir Lewis Bellenden, Justice-Clerk; Sir Patrick Vaus of Barnbarroch, Sir John Carmichael, Mr John Skene, and John Murray, First Earl of Annandale and Provost of Lincluden, along with three-hundred other barons, gentlemen and servants. SC-DN_06.; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.429-30 [22 October 1589, Edinburgh].

⁷⁸ The Privy Council were also read James's instructions for the governing of the kingdom in his absence, which had been written between 19 and 22 October 1589. BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.443. "James VI to his council, left on his going to Norway" (22 October 1589). BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.134. "Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage" (20 October 1589). Printed in: G. P. V Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI&I* (Berkeley, 1984), pp.97-101 no.36; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.427-9 [20 October 1589, Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage]; TNA, SP 52/44 f.87. James VI, "Proclamation made in Edinburgh" (22 October 1589).

As to the causes [for my marriage], I doubt not it is manifestly known to all, how farr I was generally fownd falt with by all men for the delaying so long of my mariage. The reasons were, that I was alone, without father or mother, brother or sister, king of this realme and aire apparrant of England. This my nakednesse made me to be weak and my enimies stronge; one man was as no man, and the want of hope of succession breades disdain; yea, my long delay bread in the breastes of mony a great jolousie of inhabilitie as if I were a barron stock.⁷⁹

James was aware that he was without heir or close kin, and that this made him seem weak. He also knew that there were rumours that he was impotent, as he had not had the usual mistresses or dalliances associated with royal youth. It was to ensure that both King of Scots and as heir of England he provided his people with a line of succession, alongside quashing such rumours that James had agreed to marry in the first place. James continued on, after explaining the reasons for his marriage in general, saying:

And as for my part, what moved me [to make the journey] ye may judge by that which I have already said, besides the shortnes of the waie, the suretie of the passage, being cleane of all sandes, farlandes or such like dangers, the harbours in these partes so sure, and no forraine flectes resorting upon these seas. ... It is my pleasure then that no man grudge or murmur at these my proceedings, but let everie man live a peacable and quiet life without offending of anie, and that all men confirme himself to the directions in my proclamacion which may [sic: quhill my] returne, which I promise, so God willing, within the space of twenty dayes, winde and weather serving. Let all men assure themselves that whosoever contraries my directions in my absence I will thinke it a sufficient prooffe that he beares no love towardes me in his hart; and by the contra[ry], these will I onelie have respect to at my returne that reverences my commandement and will in my absence.⁸⁰

This letter, although revealing, must be viewed within its proper context, and it should be seen not only as an honest and intimate letter between a king and his people, but also as a piece of propaganda and political grandstanding. His strong assertions that the decision was his and his alone held a twofold purpose. First, it abjured any responsibility which might be placed on his highly unpopular

⁷⁹ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.427–9 [20 October 1589, Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage]. Also printed in James Thomson Gibson Craig, *Papers Relative to the Marriage of King James the Sixth of Scotland, with the Princess Anna of Denmark: A.D. MDLXXXIX, and the Form and Manner of Her Majesty's Coronation at Holyroodhouse, A.D. MDXC.* (Edinburgh, 1828), pp.12–6.

⁸⁰ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.427–9 [20 October 1589, Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage].

chancellor, Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane; and secondly, it emphasised that he, as King of Scots, was in a position to make such decisions of his own accord, and that these decisions should be respected and not questioned.⁸¹ The reasons James lists for his going are also revealing. James claimed, and Stevenson agrees, that because of the rumours that were being spread about his dis-interest in marriage and his impotency, it was politically expedient for James to make at least a show of effort to retrieve his bride that autumn. The king's going himself was not necessarily required; however it was not unprecedented. James V had travelled to France to retrieve his bride, and his own mother had ruled from abroad during her marriage to François II.⁸² Indeed, James V had initially attempted to travel to France in July 1536 but was turned back by foul weather and did not actually leave Scotland until September. If James had succeeded in leaving in July then his mission to France, like his grandson's mission to Denmark-Norway, would have been unofficial.⁸³ Indeed, Stevenson despite his misgivings about the mission allows that James could have been asserting his role in European politics by ensuring that he was seen to be directly involved. His journey, like his marriage, might have been seen by contemporaries as a rite of passage, a sign that he was neither a client of England nor a slave to noble factions, but a fully grown, fully independent king of Scots. Moreover, the personal contact he had during his time in Europe would be exceptionally useful in facilitating his plans for a Protestant League that put James and Scotland at the centre of a European religious alliance.⁸⁴

This analysis holds up when we consider the mission as part of James's foreign policy, rather than as a unique incident. James was eager to assert his independent authority both at home and abroad during his personal rule, and this voyage gave him a chance to show off.⁸⁵ Charles Beem and Carol Levin have examined the reasons why Elizabeth I never left her kingdom, and one of the most significant reasons, besides being unable to lead her armies in battle on the continent, was that she had no one to whom she could devolve power without risking losing her position whilst abroad.⁸⁶ Perhaps James was aware of this, and he was showing Elizabeth, and the rest of Europe, that he could command his kingdom as an absentee monarch quite successfully.

⁸¹ 'The place where I resolved this in was Cragmillar, not one of the whole Counsell being present their. And as I take this resolution onelie of my self, as I am a trew prince, so advised with my self onelie what way to follow fourth the same.' *Ibid.*, vol.4 p.428 [20 October 1589, *Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage*].

⁸² Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.29. This practice continued with Prince Charles traveling to Spain in 1623 in a failed attempt to secure the Spanish Match. Historiography has also called his voyage 'foolish', however this might be at least partially due to his leaving before the marriage treaty was completed. For more on Charles's voyage see: Alexander Samson, ed., *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* (Aldershot, 2006).

⁸³ Bingham, *James V: King of Scots*, pp.116, 118. For more on James V's mission to France see: Cameron, *James V*, pp.131–60.

⁸⁴ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.32–3.

⁸⁵ See: Chapter One: Establishing Policies, 1584–1587.

⁸⁶ Charles Beem and Carole Levin, "Why Elizabeth Never Left England," in *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I*, ed. by Charles Beem (New York, 2011), pp.3–26.

After slipping away from his kingdom by night James had a relatively smooth journey, landing at the island of Flekkerøy in Norway on 3 November 1589.⁸⁷ He then slowly made his way to Oslo, where his new bride and the Scottish embassy were staying. The Danish records show the Scandinavians' surprise at James's arrival, nevertheless it politely avoids the subject of whether or not they were pleased to receive their guest. It is likely at least that they were displeased with the bill for entertaining him, as subtle comments about the short notice of the wedding limiting the feasts and festivities hint.⁸⁸ He arrived there on 19 November, and went 'immediately at his coming, past quietlie with buites and all to hir hienes'.⁸⁹ The king ratified his marriage contract on 21 November 1589 and the following day he married Anna again, in person, at the Bishop's Palace in Oslo.⁹⁰ In the following days James honoured his ambassadors who had arrived several months earlier to conclude the treaty and pardoned a Scottish exile named David Cunningham of Robertland.⁹¹ Cunningham had the support of the new Queen, Anna, her ladies-in-waiting, and even the Queen Regent Sophia, and after his pardon promptly joined Anna's household.⁹²

On 30 November 1589, James sent some of his party back to Scotland, most likely because he could not afford to keep such a large retinue with him. They reported that James was only concerned with his new queen, and he was not minded to return to Scotland before the coming spring.⁹³ On 3 December, at least two more of James's party followed, including James Scrymgeour and Colonel Stewart.⁹⁴ With them was a letter from James to Lord Hamilton, informing him of his safe arrival and welcome in Denmark-Norway.⁹⁵ On 10 December, James received Korfit Wiffert and Jørgen Brahe, who carried letters from Queen Sophia and Christian IV, inviting the King of Scots and his bride to come to Elsinore for

⁸⁷ Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," in *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark*, by David Stevenson, trans. by Peter Graves (Edinburgh, 1997), pp.90–1.

⁸⁸ Munch, "Samtidig Beretning om Prindsesse Annas, Christian 4des Systers, Giftermaal med Kong Jakob den 6te af Skotland og paafølgende Kroning," pp.466–71; Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.34–5; Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.88.

⁸⁹ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.80.

⁹⁰ SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. "James VI and Princess Anna's Marriage Charter," (1589); Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.36–7.

⁹¹ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.438–41 [25 November 1589, Oslo]. Other members of the embassy, such as Alexander Lindsay, were rewarded after their return to Scotland. Lindsay was promoted to the Lordship of Spynie in November 1590 for his services to James during his time in Denmark-Norway in 1589-1590. Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.102–3 no.38 [February? 1590, James VI to Alexander Lindsay]. The infefments given to Young, Vans and Keith in reward for their service were ratified in 1592 by parliament. "RPS," sec.1592/4/70, 71. Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.36–7. This David Cunningham is not to be confused with David Cunningham, bishop of Aberdeen. Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.2 p.58.

⁹² Huntington Library, HM 22297. "James I of England [sic] to Queen Sophia of Denmark" (14 December 1589); Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.37.

⁹³ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.81.

⁹⁴ Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.95.

⁹⁵ Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.101–2 no.37 [1 December 1589, James VI to Lord John Hamilton].

a visit.⁹⁶ James agreed, and his party set off from Oslo on 22 December.⁹⁷ Prior to this, however, James gave gifts to honour the Danish servants who had helped to conclude the marriage treaty and accompanied his bride in Norway by giving them items from the set of gilt plate that Elizabeth had given James for his wedding.⁹⁸

As part of the journey, James and Anna chose to travel through Sweden, a kingdom with which Denmark-Norway was currently at war, although it had long had peaceful relations with Scotland.⁹⁹ The Danish account says very little about the delay at Bohus or the reasons for it, although it does record that the party left on 7 January 1590, in 'great disarray' and 'even though her majesty was quite weak'.¹⁰⁰ It also includes a copy of the letter written to the Danes from King Johan III demanding that James ask permission to come into Sweden, and declaring that unless this was done the party would be met with force.¹⁰¹ Spottiswood recorded the events rather differently, saying only that a Captain William Murray was employed to bring the safe-conduct from Stockholm to Bohus. He recorded that when the party left Bohus on 8 January, it 'was met by a captain of Sweden upon the river then frozen, with four hundred horsemen, and by the space of two Dutch miles conveyed unto the land of Denmark'.¹⁰² Calderwood also recorded a version more sympathetic to James, saying:

The King of Sweden [Johan III]'s brother convoyed our king and queen through a part of Sweden, accompanied with foure hundreth hors weill appoointed at the commandment of the King of Sweden, howbeit there was warre betuixt Denmark and Sweden in the meante tyme.

⁹⁶ Korfit Wiffert may also be spelt Korfitz Viffert. Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.95; Craig, *Papers Relative to the Marriage of King James the Sixth of Scotland, with the Princess Anna of Denmark*, pp.19–21 [Sophia Queen Dowager of Denmark-Norway to James VI, Frederiksberg, 26 November 1589]; Calderwood, *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.70; K. Erslev, ed., *Aktstykker og Oplysninger til Rigsraadets og Staendermødernes Historie i Kristian IV's Tid, udg. ved*, vol. 1 (Kjøbenhavn, 1883), pp.36–8. See also Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p.38.

⁹⁷ His entourage had set off several days earlier, on 15 December 1589. Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," pp.95–6.

⁹⁸ *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.444–5 [15 December 1589, Oslo– "Act empowering Chancellor Maitland to make certian presents of plate out of his Majesty's "copburde" to two Danis moble men for their services in the matter of the King's marriage, retaining the rest of the pieces in the cupboard for himself].

⁹⁹ Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569–1654*. In this period and in later years there were a significant number of Scottish soldiers serving in Sweden with James's permission. Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.33–9.

¹⁰⁰ Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.97.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.98. A letter repeating this sentiment was also sent to the governor of Älvsborg. Riksarkivet av Sverige, Hertig Karls registratur, vol.12, ff.104–5. "Duke Karl of Sudermannia to Jöran Eriksson" (24 December 1589).

¹⁰² SC-SW_01.; *Spottiswood*, vol.2 p.405. Spottiswood is the only one who records the departure date at 8 January, all other record it as occurring on 7 January.

They went through Newluds, which is esteemed the second towne of Sweden.¹⁰³

According to Stevenson, James initially failed to ask for permission from King Johan III, and this is what caused a humiliating six-day delay at Bohus.¹⁰⁴ It is possible to interpret these events somewhat differently, and suggest that due to long-standing but unofficial relations between Sweden and Scotland, James was making a political point by insisting on travelling through Sweden with a Danish bride, and that the Swedes showed him every courtesy.¹⁰⁵ It is unclear whether or not the Captain Murray referred to was in Swedish service or part of James's entourage, but the use of a Scot for such an endeavour, and the honour shown to James by being escorted by the brother of the King of Sweden, suggests that James was making a political statement, rather than a diplomatic blunder on this occasion.

After returning to Danish soil James and Anna travelled for another few weeks, reaching Elsinore without incident. Once there they were formally received before going to their own lodging at Kronborg castle.

Upon the 21st of Januar the king crossed the Sound before Elsinure [Elsinore], and landed at the Castell called Tmaberrie; being mett by the king, the queene, the queene mother, the Duke of Holster, upon the bridge; the King's brother [the Duke of Holster], Elizabeth, the king's eldest sister, the foure regents and the rest of the counsell. After salutatioun they marched, everie one in their owne rankes, into the castell; the king of Scotland, the King of Denmarke, the Queen of Scotland, the Queen of Denmark, the Duke of Holster going before them bare-headed, the princesse Elizabeth following the two queens, and the counsell according to their owne rankes. The cannons were shott continuallie for halfe an hour.¹⁰⁶

During James's time abroad he not only met with the Danish royal family, but also leading theologians and academics. On 7 March 1590, James was in Copenhagen to listen to lectures by Dr Hans Slangstrup, theologian, Dr Anders

¹⁰³ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.70. Newluds, or Nya Lödöse was a town that was later subsumed into what is now Gothenburg (along with Älvsborg) when Gothenburg was founded c.1621 (thanks to Prof Murdoch for this reference). Calderwood is the only one who records the presence of Duke Karl, the king's brother, in the Swedish escort for James and Anna. Additionally, records from the Duke's residence in Nyköping indicate that the duke was there, and not at Nya Lödöse on 7 January (many thanks to Iko Per for bringing this to my attention).

¹⁰⁴ Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp.42–3.

¹⁰⁵ Such an interpretation is supported by Alexia Grosjean, "Scots and the Swedish State: Diplomacy, Military Service and Ennoblement 1611-1660" (PhD Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1998), p.31; Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*, p.20; Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.97.

¹⁰⁶ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.72 [21 January 1590, The King James received by Christian IV].

Christensen, physician, and Dr [Mathias] Povel, bishop of Zealand.¹⁰⁷ He also met with Niels Hemmingsen, with whom the king discussed the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, and Tyge [Tycho] Brahe, the mathematician.¹⁰⁸ In addition to this, the King of Scots met with many of the German princes, including the dukes of Holstein, Mecklenburg and Brunswick.¹⁰⁹ These meetings had a great diplomatic significance, for whilst James was abroad one of the most important issues of business for him was the creation of a Protestant League, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

An Exercise in Absentee Government

Whilst James was absent Scottish government continued to function, and the councils that the king had set up managed their duties well.¹¹⁰ Despite fears of a Catholic plot to overthrow the kingdom in James's absence, all remained at peace, causing men like Calderwood to record the unusual tranquillity that befell Scotland.¹¹¹ Bothwell issued a bond for the good behaviour of the people of Liddesdale until at least fifteen days after the king's return, and in December an act against armed gathering in Edinburgh was passed to avoid the potential for feuds or disputes to become violent.¹¹² At the end of March 1590, James wrote to Robert Bowes in response to the English ambassador's complaint regarding Scottish raiders crossing the Borders.¹¹³ Lord Hamilton and his council were responsible for this whilst James was abroad. James wrote to Bowes again in April, promising to answer his complaints upon his imminent return, and repeating his request to the ambassador to 'stir excitement' in Edinburgh and ensure that the people of Scotland were prepared to receive their king.¹¹⁴

Both James and Chancellor Maitland also wrote frequently to Robert Bruce, the minister watchdog James had put in place during his absence.¹¹⁵ In February James wrote Bruce just as he would do to Bowes in April, encouraging the minister to ready the people of Edinburgh for their king's return, using the parable of the virgins and the lamps that were not prepared for the bridegroom's

¹⁰⁷ For more information on the cultural links between Denmark-Norway and Scotland see: Thorkild Lyby Christensen, "Scots in Denmark in the Sixteenth Century," *SHR* 49, no.148 (October 1970), pp.125–45; Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.1 pp.121–30; Elizabeth Tapscott, "Propaganda and Persuasion in the Early Scottish Reformation, c.1527-1557" (PhD, University of St Andrews, 2013), pp.42–4.

¹⁰⁸ Unknown, "The Danish Account of the Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark," p.99.

¹⁰⁹ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.85 [February 1590].

¹¹⁰ Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.290. Although the councils met regularly during James's absence, Parliament did not, meeting in July 1588 and not again until June 1590. "RPS," sec.A1588/4/1, A1590/6/1.

¹¹¹ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.67 [22 October 1588]; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.211; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.467–8n [1589–1590]; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.54; Peter D Anderson, *Robert Stewart: Earl of Orkney, Lord of Shetland 1533–1593* (Edinburgh, 1982), p.123.

¹¹² *RPCS*, vol.431–78 passim, specifically mentioned acts on pp.432, 448.

¹¹³ TNA, SP 52/45 f.11. "James VI to Robert Bowes" (31 March 1590). See also: Groundwater, *The Scottish Middle March*, pp.175–6.

¹¹⁴ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.91 [4 April 1590, James VI to Robert Bruce].

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol.5 pp.83–6.

sudden arrival.¹¹⁶ The metaphor, aside from being fitting in a literal sense, was intended both to ensure the people of Scotland's continued good behaviour, and their persistent efforts to refurbish the royal residences in preparation for their new queen.¹¹⁷ In addition to dealing with diplomacy first-hand and the more serious issues arising in his kingdom, the King of Scots also dealt with the issues of his subjects residing abroad. He attempted to assist Andrew Mowat, a Shetlander residing in Norway who had been the victim of English pirates, and who was a subject of both Denmark-Norway and Scotland.¹¹⁸ James also dealt with trade issues which did not involve Denmark-Norway whilst abroad, such as issuing a commission for George Hakket, who was the Scottish conservator at Campvere.¹¹⁹

James was not the only monarch to communicate with his government in Scotland, since Elizabeth (amongst others) has left a corpus of letters. Her residential ambassador, Robert Bowes, who was in post from December 1589 onwards, kept the queen well informed of the domestic events in Scotland. Elizabeth wrote to Bothwell in February 1590, instructing him to preform his duties well and to care for James's kingdom.¹²⁰ On the same day she wrote to the Duke of Lennox to thank him for keeping the Anglo-Scottish peace.¹²¹ Elizabeth was as anxious as James was to see that the kingdom remained at peace, although she had less confidence in the Scots than James did. Her worry for what would happen without the king's personal presence caused her to write to her cousin, urging him home from his 'ivel-seasoned journey'.¹²² James was in no hurry to return to Scotland. In addition to enjoying his honeymoon the king was also personally lobbying for the formation of a Protestant League to defend against Catholicism and support his candidacy to the English succession, and such political persuasion took time.

The Proposal for a Protestant League

The idea of a Protestant League did not originate with James VI. Since the mid sixteenth century such an organisation had been contemplated, although none had been successful.¹²³ England and Denmark had tried to form one only a few years

¹¹⁶ Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.103–5.

¹¹⁷ Calderwood, vol.5 pp.81–3 [19 February 1590, James VI to Robert Bruce]. Also printed in Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.103–5.

¹¹⁸ SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. James VI, "Concerning Andrew Mowat," (1 March 1590); SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. James VI, "Concerning Andrew Mowat," (2 March 1590). See also: SSNE 3837.

¹¹⁹ SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. James VI, "Regarding George Hakket," (2 March 1590). See also: SSNE 1527.

¹²⁰ TNA, SP 52/45 f.4. "Queen Elizabeth to the Earl Bothwell," (10 February 1590).

¹²¹ TNA, SP 52/45 f.5. "Queen Elizabeth to the Duke of Lennox," (10 February 1590).

¹²² Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, pp.57–9 no.34; Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.207.

¹²³ The first such alliance was the Schmalkaldic League of 1531, however this collapsed by 1546 with the onslaught of the Schmalkaldic Wars. Theodore Hoyer, "The Rise and Fall of the Schmalkaldic League: The Treaty of Passau, 1552," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 23, no.6 (June 1952), pp.401–17. Henri of Navarre attempted to form a League between England,

earlier; however Denmark's refusal to openly oppose Spain effectively shelved the issue once more.¹²⁴ The marriage of James and Anna had been presented to Elizabeth as beneficial for her, in the sense that a united Scotland and Denmark-Norway would be in strong position to persuade Philip II to make peace with Elizabeth.

Mr Jhone Colwille is to be send hyther vyth expeditione to persuade hir majeste that the mariage of Dennemark is best and most profitable for hir weill; and the resson of his, argument is to [be] takin upon this grownd that Colonell Stewarde wrote of onto me at Eastir laste, whiche he did affirm did proceade from the Chancellor of Dannemark to him at his being thayr, to witt, that the realmes of Scotland and Dannemark beand joynd to this crowne is able to yeald suche resson to the Kinge of Spayn as may induce him to tak peace wythe hir majeste.¹²⁵

James's proposal was for Denmark-Norway and Scotland to mediate between England and Spain, both being neutral to their war and desirous to improve their international standing as peacemakers. If mediation did not work, however, this Protestant League would become a defensive alliance, using force against Spain if necessary to protect any member from Catholic aggression.¹²⁶ James had instructed Earl Marischal to discuss the plan with the Danes after the marriage treaty was negotiated, and once the king himself arrived these conversations continued.¹²⁷ James was excited at the possibility of being at the head of an important part of European diplomacy for a moment, as well as gaining valuable allies and supporters for his claim to the English throne in future.¹²⁸ Colonel Stewart received updates on the League discussions from Denmark-Norway, and passed them on to the English ambassador, Robert Bowes,

Scotland, Denmark and the German princes, but this too failed. His ambassador, Monsieur de Ségur, baron of Pardaillan, was in London in the spring of 1584 attempting to negotiate this League but had to travel directly to Germany rather than stop first in Scotland as originally intended. Navarre promised to send another ambassador, which turned out to be Monsieur du Bartas in 1587 to discuss the potential marriage of James and Navarre's sister. FR-SC_04.; FR-SC_05.; *Relations Politiques*, vol.3 pp.331–2 [10 May 1585, Henri of Navarre to James VI], pp.333–6 [8 July 1585, M. de Ségur to James VI], p.337 [July 1585, M. de Ségur to the Scottish Nobles and Gentlemen in London].

¹²⁴ Kirchner, "England and Denmark, 1558-1588," pp.11–2; *Spottiswood*, vol.2 p.327 [1585]; Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause*, pp.119–24.

¹²⁵ TNA, SP 52/44 f.69. "Mr Archibald Douglas to Walsingham," (19 August 1589).

¹²⁶ Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.208–9; Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause*, pp.134–8.

¹²⁷ TNA, SP 52/44 f.44. James VI, "Instructions to the Commissioners for Denmark," (June 1589).

¹²⁸ Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," pp.270–1; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.125; James VI&I and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, *Negotiations between King James VI and I and Ferdinand I Grand Duke of Tuscany*, pp.xxi–xxii; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.208–9.

who in turn informed Elizabeth.¹²⁹ William Asheby was also still receiving information, and reported on 4 December that:

No word is come of the King. The council and ministry have written to him and to the Chancellor by a merchant lately gone to Denmark, to advertise him of the dangerous state his absence is like to breed here. "It is now muttered in hugges mugges that his end in enterprising this dangerous voyage was not only to bring home his Quene," but to enter into confederation with the princes of Germany, as the Duke of Brunswick, who, it is said, shall marry the King of Denmark's other daughter, and others, to strengthen himself against all occasions. Such a combination were honourable and Christian, for the maintenance of the cause of religion against the common enemies, as was set down in the Earl Marishal's first instructions for Denmark. Yet I cannot see how her majesty, being defender of the faith, could be pretermitted in the striking of such a league, unless some other design be intended.¹³⁰

In December 1589, Elizabeth instructed Robert Bowes to respond to the proposals of Colonel Stewart regarding the Protestant League, and expressing her belief that the success of the mediation would be unlikely.¹³¹ Early in January 1590, James sent his Justice-Clerk, Sir Lewis Bellenden, to England from Denmark-Norway with a copy of the proposed League, rather than asking for her advice or assistance.¹³² In February 1590, Elizabeth gave her reserved consent, assuming, of course, that Philip was interested in peace.¹³³ This activity made the Habsburgs nervous, and it was reported that although Spain had sent a generous gift to James to congratulate him on his marriage, his discussions with the German princes had caused agents to be sent to monitor him.¹³⁴ Despite Spain's fears, Elizabeth's terms for Anglo-Spanish peace meant all knew it was unlikely to come to fruition. Indeed, it was exactly this knowledge that undermined James's efforts to pursue the League further. If mediation failed, each party would be drawn into open war with Spain, aside from England and Navarrian France that is, who were already at war. The risk of debt and destruction were too great for anyone to agree to such a scheme, and it was rightly assumed that James's real motivation in his proposal

¹²⁹ TNA, SP 52/45 f.43. "Bowes to Burghley" (9 May 1590); *CSP Scotland*, vol.10 pp.843–4 Appendix 6 [7 February 1590, Bowes to Walsingham].

¹³⁰ BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.201. "William Asheby to Walsingham," (4 December 1589). Quote taken from *CSP Scotland*, vol.10 pp.211–2 no.309.

¹³¹ TNA, SP 52/44 f.101. "Answer to Be Delivered by Mr. Robert Bowes to Colonel Stewart's Propositions," (December 1589).

¹³² SC-EN_09.

¹³³ Hatfield House, CP 133/88. "The Queen [Elizabeth] to the King of Scotland [James VI]," (25 February 1590).

¹³⁴ Lambeth Palace Library, MS 3200, f.37. Unknown, "A 'Humble Friend' to the Earl of Shrewsbury" (4 February 1590).

was to gain military support for his claim to the English succession against a Catholic opponent.¹³⁵ About the only other real supporter of the League was Henri IV, recently crowned King of France, although still fighting to secure his title in much of his kingdom.¹³⁶ Henri wrote to James regarding this proposal on 15 January 1590, expressing his interest and support.¹³⁷

Shortly after James's return to Scotland, in June 1590, Colonel Stewart and John Skene were sent on a mission to Denmark-Norway and the courts of the German princes to pursue the Protestant League negotiations.¹³⁸ The mission failed due to the unlikely chances of successful mediation and the high probability of foreign powers being drawn into a costly and open war with Spain. This was in addition to the lack of support from Elizabeth, who did not want James leading international policy in Europe.¹³⁹ Nevertheless, discussions for a pan-European Protestant League did not end at this point, and throughout the 1590s the scheme cropped up in negotiations. However, just as in 1589-1590, the League never materialised.¹⁴⁰

Despite a formal League being postponed for decades, Scotland was now associated with the Protestant cause. James allowed the German Princes and Sweden to levy Scots for Protestant interests, indirect links that nonetheless ensured a certain rapport between James and northern Europe.¹⁴¹ Moreover, the

¹³⁵ Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, pp.124–31; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.208–9.

¹³⁶ Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, p.29; Cay Dollerup, "Spenser's Concord and the Danish Princess Anna," *Notes & Queries* 32, no.1 (March 1985), p.25; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133–41 no.45 [9 June 1590, Instructions for Colonel Stewart and John Skene]; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.208–9; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.5; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, pp.126–9; Richard Bruce Wernham, *After the Armada* (Oxford, 1984), p.150.

¹³⁷ Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, vol.3 p.119 [15 January 1590, Henri IV to James VI]. Henri also mentioned the League to Elizabeth in August 1590, when his ambassador Beauvoir was in England requesting further support for his cause. Wernham, *After the Armada*, p.150.

¹³⁸ SC-BRA_01.; SC-DN_07.; SC-HA_01.; SC-HE_01.; SC-ME_01.; SC-PL_01.; SC-PO_01.; SC-SA_01.; NLS, Ms 2912. John Skene, "Ane account of ane Embassie performed by William Steuart, Comendator of Pittenweim and Mr John Skeen to England, Denmark and Princess at ...," (1590); Lockhart, *Frederik II*, pp.305–6, 311. Nicholaus Kass in Denmark-Norway wrote to James concerning this mission. *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.142–4 [Nicholaus Kaas to James VI, 30 July 1590]. For the Danish mission that returned with James and Anna see: DN-SC_03.

¹³⁹ Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.5.

¹⁴⁰ Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, pp.126–9.

¹⁴¹ Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*, p.22; *CSP Venice*, vol.9 p.237 no.367 [19 September 1595, Tomaso Contarini, Cenetian Ambassador in Germany, to the Doge and Senate]; Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.32; Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.1 p.269; Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.33–9. For more on the connections with northern Europe see: Steve Murdoch and Alexia Grosjean, "The Scottish Community in Seventeenth-Century Gothenburg," in *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Alexia Grosjean and Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2005), pp.191–223; Nina Østby Pedersen, "Scottish Immigration to Bergen in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Alexia Grosjean and Steve Murdoch (Leiden, 2005), pp.135–68.

king was intent on maintaining his Protestant image, and so, for example in 1593, after the discovery of a Spanish Blanks, the king sent an ambassador to the States General of the United Provinces to inform them of the situation (and his response to it) in a way that would be best for his Protestant image.¹⁴² Throughout the baptismal celebrations of Prince Henry in 1594 the formation of a Protestant League against Spain was one of the major topics of discussion, and again it was only a lack of any one power being the first to commit which kept it from materialising.¹⁴³ Despite his connections with Catholic powers and the rumours and hopes of his conversion, James VI remained throughout his reign an influential member of the Protestant community. Whilst his dream of a League failed at this juncture, the King of Scots' role as a Protestant prince succeeded in taking root in this period and strengthened his position in European politics thereafter.¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

James VI's hunt for a wife was long and torturous but ultimately successful. The bride had to be someone acceptable not only to James, but also to his Scottish subjects and to those of his potential future kingdom of England. The union needed to benefit Scotland in the short-term, by providing the desperately needed funds of a large dowry and long-term prospects in stable alliances, beneficial trading rights and military support for James's English succession claim. In addition, the match had to be one that fitted within James's wider ambitions to be an influential player in European politics, including his dreams for creating a more united Christendom. Ultimately the match with the Princess Catherine de Bourbon of Navarre failed to secure these things, due not least to the prospect of likely involvement in a long and costly war abroad. Conversely, the Danish match, whilst fraught with difficulties regarding the status of the Northern Isles, did hold the promised aid that James and his people needed: it brought a dowry, renewed an older military alliance and maintained the Orkney and Shetland Islands for Scotland, at least during the lifetime of James VI.¹⁴⁵ After negotiations that spanned a four years period, Denmark-Norway and Scotland were once again joined in the marital union of James VI and Anna of Denmark. As a result Scotland now had a queen and the promise of a line of succession was tangible. In addition, an alliance between Scotland and the important power of Denmark-Norway had been renewed and strengthened. This relationship would continue to

¹⁴² Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.142–8 [April–July 1593, Extracts from the embassy of Colonel William Stewart, Ambassador of James VI to the States General]; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.215 no.71 [7 July 1593, The States General to James VI].

¹⁴³ Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.157, 160–1 [November 1594, Report on the embassy of Walraven, Lord of Brederode, and Mr Jacob Valcke, Treasurer-General of Zealand on account of Prince Henry's Baptism].

¹⁴⁴ James latter used this image as king of Great Britain. See Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*.

¹⁴⁵ Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause*, p.144.

grow during James's rule in Scotland, and influenced the tenor of Danish-British relations for years to come.¹⁴⁶

Like the marriage negotiations, James's honeymoon adventure to retrieve his bride had diplomatic implications that have often been overlooked. The personal nature of early modern diplomacy ensured that a face-to-face meeting between James VI and the young Christian IV, the princes of Europe and the ambassadors at the Danish court would only improve James's standing in European affairs. This was because James could be more honest and foster more intimate relationships in person than he could through letters or ambassadors.¹⁴⁷ This came from James's ability to leave his kingdom for a prolonged period and yet remain in control. The personal contacts developed during this trip were maintained: Christian IV visited James and Anna twice, in 1604 and 1614, and his willingness to leave his kingdom, as well as his close relations with his sister and brother-in-law may well have been influenced by his impression of James's voyage of 1589-1590.¹⁴⁸ The King of Scots' attempts to initiate a Protestant League whilst abroad are also indicative of the political nature of this voyage – it was James's opportunity to be his own ambassador. The fact that he was able to leave his kingdom at all, especially given the domestic events of 1588 and the spring of 1589 showed a monarch with considerable confidence and power, and the fact that his kingdom remained at peace and loyal to his instructions confirmed that this young king was in greater command of his realm than he has hitherto been credited with. Moreover, it emphasised that Scotland was perfectly capable of thriving, even with an absentee monarch.

¹⁴⁶ For more see: Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway*.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.24.

¹⁴⁸ Calvin Senning, "The Visit of Christian IV To England In 1614," *The Historian* 31, no.4 (August 1969), pp.555-72; Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway*, pp.24-5, 43. See also: Chapter Four: New Friends & Old Allies, 1596-1603.

CHAPTER THREE: FEARS, HOPES & REALITY, 1588-1595

*In times of straits true friends are best tried. ... I desire ... that I with honour and all my good subjects with a fervent good will may embrace this your godly and honest cause, whereby your adversaries may have ado, not with England but with the whole isle of Britain.*¹

British historiography of the 1580s and 1590s is dominated by the discussion surrounding the threat and defeat of the *Gran Armada* and its subsequent consequences on the balance of power in Europe. Research has focused on the two key players in these events, England and Spain, to the detriment of understanding the broader situation, players and factors. Through a re-evaluation of these well-known events from a Scottish perspective, it is possible to glean a number of hitherto overlooked insights into wider events. Philip II's actions provided James VI not only with a convenient distraction from the death of his mother, but also an opportunity to shine as the protector and supporter of the kingdom he hoped to one day call his own. Nevertheless, the king's hope of being named heir, like the *Gran Armada*, was crushed. As a result James was forced to change foreign policies, not only towards England, but also towards Catholic Europe. In a bid to remind Elizabeth of his power and usefulness, and to strengthen his influence on European events, James increased his diplomatic attentions towards Spain and Catholic Europe, all the while continuing to build up his Protestant allies outside of England. This chapter argues that during this 'armada period' James VI took advantage of foreign events to reveal the true value of Scotland as a 'middling power' to the major powers of Europe, all the while improving his candidacy for the English throne.²

The mid-1580s saw dozens of rumours and reports of an impending Spanish invasion of England circulate throughout Europe. In April 1587, Sir Francis Drake led an assault on Cadiz in a bid to hinder Spanish expansion and weaken their fight against the United Provinces.³ The culmination of these early events came in the spring of 1588, when the Pope gave his blessing to Philip II's armada.⁴ That summer the king launched his largest assault force to date, and sent it straight for England's shores. However, until the last minute, it was unclear to both English and Spanish intelligence whether Scotland would be included in the invasion, either as a landing point, or as a target for invasion. As noted in chapter

¹ Hatfield House, CP 133/85. James VI, "The King of Scotland to the Queen [Elizabeth]" (4 August 1588).

² Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, p.9.

³ Drake's raid on Cadiz took place between 29 April and 1 May 1587.

⁴ Elliott, *Europe Divided 1559-1598*, p.320.

one, after the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in February 1587 James VI distanced himself from England, sending ambassadors and agents to foreign powers in an apparent bid to gain military support to avenge his mother's death. Whilst these missions eventually came to nothing, they meant that in the early months of 1588, Stuart policy regarding the prospective Catholic invasion remained undecided, and Catholics and Protestants alike sought to secure James's support for their cause. These events illustrate how the so called middling powers of Europe could become crucial to wider events, and how James used a diverse set of Europe-wide factors such as religion, dynastic association, politics and war to pursue his own agendas.

England's Northern Neighbour Stays True

Whilst James flirted with the possibility of joining England's enemies, Elizabeth was concerned with repairing the damage done to Anglo-Scottish relations after Mary's execution in an effort to secure her northern Border.⁵ Diplomatic relations officially resumed in May 1588. A month later the newly arrived residential ambassador, William Asheby, reported at length on the pro-Spanish faction's attempts to sway James towards a Habsburg alliance.⁶ Asheby urged Elizabeth to take action to prevent this for, as Wallace MacCaffrey has eloquently described:

Scotland could too easily become that postern gate by which the enemy might break into her own realm. Like Ireland it could become to England what the Low Countries were to Spain. Therefore, it was imperative to be assured of the active cooperation of the Scottish crown in quashing any threat to the island's security, either by invasion or by conspiracy. This meant having the assured goodwill of James.⁷

Asheby's fears eventually led him to promise James a larger pension to fund a personal guard, a dukedom that James had previously asserted a right to and official recognition of his claim to the English throne; all James had to do was keep to the Treaty of Berwick.⁸ It seems that James was holding out for just such an offer, for only hours after hearing Asheby's offer, he wrote to Elizabeth, saying:

In times of straits true friends are best tried. Now merits
he thanks of you and your country who kythes himself a

⁵ Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics: 1588-1603* (Princeton, 1992), pp.304-5.

⁶ Robert Carey was sent north in May to repair relations between the two kingdoms. Asheby (also spelt Ashby) served as the English residential ambassador in Scotland until January 1590. EN-SC_07.; EN-SC_11.

⁷ MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, p.305.

⁸ James wanted the dukedom as part of legal defence for his English succession claim. According to English law foreigners could not hold land in England, nor could they become its king. If James were granted land it would be the legal equivalent of granting him English citizenship. Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.38; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.239. "William Asheby to Walsingham" (10 August 1588); NLS, Adv MS 33.1.7 vol.21 f.21. "Offers Made to James by Asheby [Copy]" (4 August 1588); Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.207.

friend to your country and estate, and so this time must move me to utter my zeal to the religion and how near a kinsman and neighbour I find myself to you and your country. For this effect then have I sent you this present hereby to offer unto you my forces, my person and all that I may command to be employed against yon strangers in whatsoever fashion and by whatsoever means as may best serve for the defence of your country. Wherein I promise to behave myself not as a stranger and foreign prince but as your natural son and compatriot of your country in all respects. ... I desire ... that I with honour and all my good subjects with a fervent good will may embrace this your godly and honest cause, whereby your adversaries may have ado, not with England but with the whole isle of Britain.⁹

Despite James's declared excitement at Asheby's promise, his letter to Elizabeth was not the first indication that Scotland would stand with England, or at least defend itself against a foreign invasion. In May 1588, James had called for a *wappenshaw* throughout his kingdom, partially because of the activities of Maxwell and Semple, and in preparation for the expected invasion.¹⁰ The order was repeated on 5 August, the day after Asheby's offer, which could be interpreted as highlighting the king's continuing commitment to Elizabeth.¹¹ Regardless of the strain on Anglo-Scottish relations following Mary's execution the threat of an invasion force caused James to improve his relations with Elizabeth, achieving their closest comradery since the Treaty of Berwick was signed.¹² The reason for James's apparent commitment to Elizabeth at this time can be easily understood due to the most serious threat that England had come under in recent years and the effect this would have on what he believed was his rightful inheritance. Because of James's dealings with foreign powers, Elizabeth was not entirely sure she could rely on her godson to abide by the treaty. James, however, encouraged by Asheby's promise, showed his fervour for Elizabeth and Protestant England during the summer months of 1588, hoping that at long last his place in the

⁹ Hatfield House, CP 133/85. James VI, "The King of Scotland to the Queen [Elizabeth]" (4 August 1588). Quote taken from *Salisbury*, vol.13 p.380. Also in Lambeth Palace Library, MS 647, f.224. "James VI to Elizabeth I," (August 1587).

¹⁰ Elder, *Spanish Influences*, p.151; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.277 [7 May 1588, Holyrood House, Proclamation to all the lieges to be in readiness to resist any invasion from abroad]; TNA, SP 84/25 f.25. "William Russell to the [English] Privy Council," (6 July 1588); TNA, SP 84/25 f.51. "Count Maurice to the [English] Privy Council," (10 July 1588). See also: Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.19–23.

¹¹ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.70 [5 August 1588].

¹² Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.207. This closeness did not mean that all disputes between the two kingdoms were ended. Indeed, throughout the 1580s several cases of English piracy against Scottish vessels were noted and the complaints passed on to Elizabeth. In the spring of 1588, possibly as part of her attempts to garner James's support, Elizabeth instructed her admiralty court to hear the Scottish cases and make restitution where appropriate. Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, pp.117–9.

succession would be made secure.¹³ By 10 August 1588, the *Gran Armada* had been defeated, but it took several weeks for the news and confirmation to reach Scotland.¹⁴ James had acted as the loyal heir as far as Elizabeth was concerned, and yet managed to maintain at least a veneer of peace with Philip, who never explicitly sailed against Scotland. Through one of the most important battles in the Anglo-Spanish war Scotland remained neutral, nominally taking sides only at the last minute and when it best suited James, and doing so in a way that did not burn bridges with England's enemy. Arguably this was not solely luck, but reflects both clever diplomatic skill and a degree of deception by the king, which allowed James to succeed in his plan. He did not know what way the wind would blow in 1588, but it is certain that James was doing all he could to prepare for any and every eventuality.

Unfulfilled Promises & their Consequences

It is impossible to imagine Elizabeth's response to James's "promise to behave [himself] not as a stranger and foreign prince but as [her] natural son and compatriot of [her] country in all respects" but judging from the events which followed, Asheby's fears of James's allegiances and the promises he had made to secure them were to cause yet another diplomatic incident in Anglo-Scottish relations.¹⁵

James had requested that Elizabeth send a special ambassador to finalise the terms that Asheby had presented to her, and thus willingly gave safe conduct to Sir Robert Sidney when it was requested.¹⁶ Sidney had been instructed to thank James for his assurances of support but also to inform him that Asheby's promises would not be honoured. In addition, Sidney was to inform James of rumours that the Spanish fleet was seeking shelter in the Northern Isles, and to remind the king that the Catholics, both within his kingdom and abroad, were working towards his destruction.¹⁷ Despite a lack of confirmation, James had taken Asheby at his word, and hired three hundred soldiers as his personal guard, expecting that Sidney would bring the money to pay them as was promised.¹⁸ Sidney, however, was not bringing any money, and had not received specific instructions on how to

¹³ Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.87–9 [4 August 1588, James VI to Elizabeth I]; Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, p.159 no.85 [8 October 1588, Elizabeth to James VI].

¹⁴ James reissued orders to hold a *wappenshaw* on 10 August, suggesting that the news of the defeat, or at least his confidence in its veracity, had not yet occurred. *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.314, 316n [10 and 20 August, 1588].

¹⁵ Hatfield House, CP 133/85. James VI, "The King of Scotland to the Queen [Elizabeth]" (4 August 1588).

¹⁶ EN-SC_12.; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.340. James VI, "Safe Conduct in Favour of Sir Robert Sidney" (25 August 1588).

¹⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII f.190. Elizabeth I, "Instructions for Sir Robert Sidney," (August 1588).

¹⁸ For more on James's desire for a personal guard and other offers to fund it see: Chapter One: Establishing Policies, 1584-1587.

deal with the issue.¹⁹ His urgent letters to Walsingham for direction reveal the delicate nature of the situation and the chaos within Tudor diplomacy:

The King hath so reposed him self upon the assurance of the sayd money that, as if hee fall from the hope of it, it can not but neerly touch him: and I know that both hee and his counsel doe covet now [from] mee not only that money but also answer to his other demands.²⁰

Sidney met with James on 31 August 1588 and attempted to rectify any misunderstandings Asheby's promises had caused. James reminded Sidney that he had received many fair offers of assistance from Spain and the Pope, which he had ignored due to his alliance with England; 'hee had not caried him self as a neutral, ... but as an open ennimy to the Spaniards'.²¹ James was reminding Elizabeth of the dangers he could pose if she did not ensure his allegiance, hoping that his scaremongering tactic would force her to recognise his claim. Elizabeth was not so easily ruffled, however, and Walsingham believed that it would be foolish for James to follow through on his threats,

Hee is ill counsayled yf any cause drawe [him] out with England, for yf hee should lose the possibility that hee pretendeth to have to this crowne after her majesties decease by serving Spaine or Fraunce his tourne by growing to [a] pike with us, there is neither of them both that either can or will bestowe the like kingdom u[pon] him.²²

Sidney claimed that Asheby had overstepped his commission when he made his promises, and that Sidney himself had received no instructions regarding Asheby's promises.²³ James did not believe this, and felt that Elizabeth was backtracking on her word, now that the threat of the Armada was past.²⁴ It is impossible to know for certain, however it seems that Asheby's commission did not authorise him to make the concessions he did.²⁵ It was not unusual for ambassadors to take a wide purview of their commission, and as instructions to their queries were often slow to arrive, it was necessary for ambassadors to make

¹⁹ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.260. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (28 August 1588).

²⁰ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.259. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (30 August 1588).

²¹ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.263. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (1 September 1588).

²² BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.333. "Walsingham to Sir Robert Sidney," (7 September 1588).
Quote taken from *CSP Scotland*, vol.9 p.611 no.513.

²³ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.243. "Robert Bowes to Walsingham" (10 September 1588); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.26. "Sidney to Walsingham," (2 September 1588); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.333. "Walsingham to Sir Robert Sidney," (7 September 1588); TNA, SP 59/26 f.129. "Robert Bowes to Burghley" (10 September 1588); TNA, SP 52/42 f.113. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (11 September 1588).

²⁴ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," pp.40–1; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.174; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.263. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (1 September 1588).

²⁵ Asheby's original instructions and commission do not survive, but they are implied in his first report to Walsingham. BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.344. "William Asheby to Walsingham" (25 July 1588).

executive decision on the spot.²⁶ Sidney did what he could to appease the king, but he was soon called away due to the death of his uncle. Elizabeth ultimately paid James £3,000 Sterling, but the full cost of unfulfilled promises was much more significant than financial compensation alone.²⁷

The decision not to honour Asheby's promises had repercussions and made a notable difference in James's foreign policy. In the early years of James's personal rule, England had played a very central role in his diplomacy. It had not been the only alliance, and after the incident with Asheby James moved away from England and closer to his other allies. Throughout the king's reign he had maintained active relationships with the French, both the Guise and the Navarre factions, as well as the Spanish.²⁸ The apparent reversal of promises in addition to a lingering tension after the death of Mary Queen of Scots caused James to begin to give the pro-Spanish and Catholic factions of his court more consideration, and increased their influence in his foreign policy making.²⁹ Verbal scaremongering had failed to achieve his goal, so James took his policies further and began to use threatening actions in his efforts to remind Elizabeth of Scotland's importance to maintaining the balance of power in Europe.

Although James had declared himself an 'open enemy' of Spain his actions after August 1588 suggest otherwise.³⁰ Indeed, Spain never recognised Scotland as an enemy, but always as a neutral country with whom they had no desire to instigate a war.³¹ When their ships arrived in the Northern Isles they paid well for fish from the Orcadians, but they plundered the English fishing vessels they encountered on the way.³² When a Spanish ship arrived at Anstruther in late 1588, the Spanish Admiral, Gomez de Medina, sought assistance from the local populace, which was given in reciprocation for the generous treatment Medina had given to Scots who were being persecuted in Spain during the Inquisition.³³ Many Scots also served as pilots for the Spanish ships, guiding them safely through the northern waters.³⁴

²⁶ Allen, *Post and Courier Service in the Diplomacy of Early Modern Europe*, p.137. Sir Robert Sidney, in contrast to Asheby, wrote that he would keep to the bounds of his instructions, but he also begged that if the situation changed, his instructions should be enlarged to allow him to deal with matters as they arose. BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.261. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (27 August 1588).

²⁷ Wernham, *Before the Armada*, p.399.

²⁸ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.27.

²⁹ Lee, Jr, *Great Britain's Solomon*, p.99.

³⁰ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.263. "Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham" (1 September 1588).

³¹ Orkney Library and Archive, D111. Peter Anderson, "The Armada and the Northern Isles: Typescript of a Lecture Delivered as Part of the Orkney Folk Festival, in the Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, on 29 May 1988." (29 May 1988), p.2; M.J Rodriguez-Salgado, "Pilots, Navigation and Strategy in the Gran Armada," in *England, Spain and the Gran Armada 1585-1604: Essays from the Anglo-Spanish Conferences, London and Madrid 1988*, ed. by Simon Adams and M. J Rodriguez-Salgado (Edinburgh, 1991), p.159. For more on piracy and privateering during this period see: Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, pp.120-7.

³² *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.434 no.435 [24 September 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II].

³³ *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville*, ed. by Robert Pitcairn (Edinburgh, 1842), p.264.

³⁴ Anderson, *Robert Stewart*, p.122; *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.434 no.435 [24 September 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II]; Van Meteran, "The Invincible Armada," p.249; BL,

One of the ways in which Scoto-Spanish neutrality was most apparent was in the Scottish treatment of the *Gran Armada* survivors. Reportedly, over one thousand Spaniards were in Scotland between 1588 and 1590, and most of them were well treated.³⁵ In September 1588, there were Spanish reports that some Armada ships had been supplied in both the Moray Firth and around the Northern Isles, but this was never proven.³⁶ Many survivors made their way to Edinburgh, where they were fed and clothed by the city at the ‘liberality of the King and the merchants’, and then shipped back to Spain.³⁷ According to the burgh records of Edinburgh twenty shillings were paid ‘for mending ane Spayngyarts heid’ whilst he resided in the city.³⁸ In summer the following year, over six hundred survivors arrived in Edinburgh before being sent back to Flanders; a further one hundred arrived in November.³⁹ In October 1589, James wrote to Philip asking him to look after the Scottish sailors who were conveying his men to Flanders and to cover any debts they may have accrued on the voyage.⁴⁰

Cotton Caligula D/I f.292. “William Asheby to Walsingham,” (8 September 1588); TNA, SP 52/46 f.34. “Robert Bowes to Burghley,” (25 August 1590). Such kind treatment was not always the case; in 1590, after Spanish pirates arrived at the port of Anstruther with English prizes and executed the English in front of the Scots. The reaction in this circumstance was to attack the Spanish, not help them. The behaviour of the townsfolk was personal and decisions based on circumstance rather than a public policy; however, James did nothing against the town in either case, suggesting he had no strong disagreement with their actions. Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, p.122.

³⁵ McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, p.53; Orkney Library and Archive, D111. Peter Anderson, “The Armada and the Northern Isles: Typescript of a Lecture Delivered as Part of the Orkney Folk Festival, in the Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, on 29 May 1988.” (29 May 1988), p.5; TNA, SP 52/42 f.125. “Roger Aston to Walsingham,” (13 December 1588); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.226. “William Asheby to Walsingham” (13 October 1588); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.230. “William Asheby to Walsingham” (6 November 1588); TNA, SP 52/42 f.125. “Roger Aston to Walsingham,” (13 December 1588); TNA, SP 52/43 f.10. “Thomas Fowler to Walsingham,” (20 February 1589); TNA, SP 52/44 f.57. “William Asheby to Walsingham,” (14 July 1589); BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.161. “William Asheby to Burghley and Walsingham,” (18 November 1589); TNA, SP 84/29 f.34. “Sir Thomas Morgan to Walsingham” (10 December 1588).

³⁶ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.415 no.419 [4 September 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King], p.434 no.435 [24 September 1588, Bernardino de Mendoza to Philip II]; Lambeth Palace Library, MS 605, p.133. “Gilbert Lord Talbot to Sir George Carew” Letter, (21 August 1588).

³⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.230. “William Asheby to Walsingham” (6 November 1588). The quote is from Van Meteran, “The Invincible Armada,” pp.250–1. He also recorded a ship carrying the survivors was stopped at Yarmouth by the English, but the local Council took pity of the sailors’ misfortunes and allowed the ship to proceed. Murdoch has argued that the reason the ship was stopped at all was because Scots had recently been found carrying Spanish letters of marque, acting as privateers against English ships. See: Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, pp.120–1.

³⁸ Marwick, Wood, and Armet, *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh*, vol.4 p.546. Other records of the town paying for the Armada survivors include: *Ibid.*, vol.4 pp.531–2, 542; vol.6 pp.7,10, 16, 48, 133.

³⁹ TNA, SP 52/44 f.57. “William Asheby to Walsingham,” (14 July 1589); BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.161. “William Asheby to Burghley and Walsingham,” (18 November 1589).

⁴⁰ AGS, E 839.36. “James VI to Philip II” (19 October 1589). These and many of the other survivors originally came from Ireland to Scotland before returning to the continent.

Whilst officially James had declared that no succour be given to the Spanish he never prosecuted those who aided the survivors, and appears to have even been directly responsible for some of their relief.⁴¹ The fact that they were coming through Edinburgh, which was not a stronghold of the Catholic Earls, but very much under the control of the king and the Kirk, indicates more royal involvement that has been previously suggested by historians. Moreover, it appears to have been more political and calculated than simple Christian charity – especially considering that James had declared himself an enemy of Spain prior to the Armada’s defeat and the retraction of Asheby’s promises. For example, Peter Anderson has argued that the good treatment of the Spanish in Scotland was ‘a bit of a political pickle’, and that ‘this was less a domestic alarm and more political embarrassment’.⁴² It seems likely, however, that rather than being an embarrassment, James was using the survivors as a diplomatic tool to remind Elizabeth of his value, and to advertise the same sentiment to Spain. In November of 1588, the English reported that James had received letters from Parma, indicating that:

The Spaniards now see their error that they made not sure Scotland for a [place] of retreat, which had been this summer past safeguard of their navy if they had retired [to] the havens of Scotland: which they durst not attempt, understanding the King [James] was against them.⁴³

In the summer and early autumn of 1588, Spain had forced Scotland decidedly into the pro-English camp, partially as a result of Philip’s desire to keep Scotland and the Guise faction out of the planning phase of the invasion.⁴⁴ But by November, thanks to Elizabeth’s refusal to name James as her heir, James had moved away from England. Scotland’s treatment of the survivors reached Spain, and this behaviour spoke louder than any proclamations. James was allowing for a potentially stronger relationship with Spain and as long as Philip did not alienate him there were growing opportunities for mutual assistance.⁴⁵ It was now considered possible to open direct communication with James and to encourage friendship, which, as Parma admitted, was vital to Spain’s hope of success.

Not only was James at the very least tacitly agreeing to the assistance given to the Armada survivors, he was in no hurry to expel them from his kingdom. The on going presence of soldiers and mariners in Scotland served to advertise his potential benefit to both England and Spain as well as to try and shift the foreign policies of England and Spain back to his favour. He had reacted to Elizabeth’s decision not to honour Asheby’s promise, and now he was waiting to see how

⁴¹ Van Meteran, “The Invincible Armada,” p.249. One Spaniard wrote in January 1590 of the kind treatment the Spanish were receiving in Scotland. NRS, RH9/5/39/1-2. “Letters (2) from the Marquis of Urralbo(?) at La Coruña, acknowledging kind treatment of Spaniards in Scotland,” (8 January 1590).

⁴² Anderson, *Robert Stewart*, p.124.

⁴³ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.228. “William Asheby to Walsingham,” (26 November 1588).

⁴⁴ *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.xl–xliii. See also: Chapter One: Establishing Policies, 1584–1587.

⁴⁵ BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.263. “Sir Robert Sidney to Walsingham” (1 September 1588); BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.228. “William Asheby to Walsingham,” (26 November 1588).

Elizabeth would respond. The support of the survivors, like the many pro-Spanish Catholics in Scotland, were very real examples of James's diplomatic independence, and the importance he had placed on his relationship with Spain. James never pushed England to an extreme for fear of losing Elizabeth's support and pension, but his emphasis towards Spain in this period was nevertheless palpable and clearly calculated.

The Parma Letters & the Spanish Blanks

After the failure of the *Gran Armada* Philip was forced to reconsider the role he was willing to offer James VI, just as James necessarily had to re-evaluate his policy towards Spain after his disappointment with Elizabeth's disregarding promises made, as James saw it, on her behalf. Whilst James's interaction with Spain was neither open nor direct in this period, that of some of his nobility most definitely was. In February 1589, the English Privy Council forwarded letters that they had discovered to James; letters from the Catholic Earls to the Duke of Parma.⁴⁶ They showed the empathy that the Catholic Earls felt with the Spanish at the loss of the Armada, and also of their hope that Philip would launch another attack, this time through Scotland.⁴⁷ The Parma letters also included a promise to deliver James to Philip II if he should refuse to convert to Catholicism or Spanish assistance. The Pope condemned this proposal and refused to excommunicate him, 'till the bishop of Dumblane saw if he could win him by fair means, as a thing proper for his own preservation and of the ecclesiastic estate'.⁴⁸ When James saw the Parma letters he initially disbelieved their content, or at least feigned to, especially as one of the letters was supposedly written by his favourite, the Earl of Huntly. After a few hours of coaxing by the English ambassador, James eventually examined the documents, and sent for Huntly to be warded in Edinburgh.⁴⁹ When writing to Huntly regarding the matter, James spoke as a friend who had been betrayed, suggesting he knew nothing of the particulars of this incident.⁵⁰

It is clear though that the king was aware of the attitudes of his nobility, and that some were in communication with Spain, and although there is no evidence to suggest he either knew of, or approved, the Parma letters his subsequent actions do not seem to be those of a man betrayed by his friends.⁵¹ Indeed, James was

⁴⁶ *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.27-9 [24 January 1589]; TNA, SP 52/43 f.11. "English Privy Council to the English Ambassador in Scotland," (20 February 1589); BL, Cotton Caligula B/IV f.223. "The State of Scotland," (22 December 1588).

⁴⁷ Robertson, "House of Huntly, 1603-90," p.30.

⁴⁸ TNA, SP 52/43 f.14. "William Asheby to Burghley," (27 February 1589).

⁴⁹ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.72; TNA, SP 52/43 f.15. "James VI to the Earl of Huntly," (1589); Hatfield House, CP 165/148. "Robert Carvyle to Archibald Douglas," (1 March 1589).

⁵⁰ Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.89-91.

⁵¹ Brown has argued that the Catholic Earls believed James would either join or at least condone their actions. Brown also suggests that the rest of the nobility supported James in his treatment of the Catholic Earls and his foreign policies. The fact that Huntly remained captain of the King's guard until 1589, after the Brig O'Dee, suggests a strong trust and connection between James and his Catholic Lords. Keith Brown, "The Nobility of Jacobean Scotland 1567-1625," in *Scotland Revisited*, ed. by Jenny Wormald (London, 1991), p.62; Brown, *Bloodfeud in Scotland*, pp.118,133,241-2; Sizer, "DNB, George Gordon." See Also: Croft, *King James*,

lenient with the conspirators, and privately maintained his belief in Huntly's innocence.⁵² James even dined with Huntly during the Earl's brief imprisonment and upon his release the Earl was allowed to return to his powerbase in Strathbogie.⁵³ James's continued lenience with his Catholic nobility was a constant concern for Elizabeth, and a continual beacon of hope for the expatriated Scottish and English Catholics who prayed for James's conversion.⁵⁴ James used the actions of the Earls to try and obtain more money from Elizabeth, whilst at the same time highlighting his sympathy and loyalty to his Catholic relations abroad.⁵⁵ It was not until domestic pressures forced James to act decidedly against Huntly and the others that he did so, and even then, they were soon forgiven.⁵⁶

Shortly thereafter the Catholic Earls rebelled, culminating at a standoff at the Brig O'Dee in April 1589.⁵⁷ The rising ended when James arrived; despite their promises to Philip, the Catholic Earls were unwilling to openly fight their king on the battlefield.⁵⁸ They were convicted of treason, but within four months Huntly had been restored to full royal favour, and the others were likewise quickly forgiven.⁵⁹ James's actions in this case were not what Elizabeth or the Scottish Kirk had wanted, but they bolstered the king's credence with both the Scottish and international Catholic community helping to improve Scoto-Spanish relations.⁶⁰

In November of 1589, James travelled to Denmark-Norway to bring his new bride to Scotland, the second daughter of Frederik II, Princess Anna.⁶¹ During his absence, James's Privy Council – which included both pro-English and pro-Spanish members – had control of the country. Elizabeth was worried that the

pp.30–3; Julian Goodare, "The Nobility and the Absolutist State in Scotland, 1584-1638," *History* 78, no.253 (1993), pp.161–82; Julian Goodare, *State and Society in Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1999), pp.75–8; Jenny Wormald, "Taming the Magnates?," in *Essays on the Nobility of Medieval Scotland*, ed. by K. J. Stringer (Edinburgh, 1985), pp.270–80.

⁵² Calderwood, vol.5 p.36 [1589].

⁵³ Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," pp.101–6.

⁵⁴ Brown, "Scottish Politics 1567-1625," p.27; Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.612; Brown, "Nobility of Jacobean Scotland," p.62; Croft, *King James*, p.33; Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.211; Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.103; Law, *Collected Essays*, pp.264–5; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, p.174.

⁵⁵ McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541-1588*, p.252; Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, p.217; Wernham, *After the Armada*, p.456.

⁵⁶ Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, p.221; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.299–300 [2 October 1596, James VI to Huntly]; Maureen Meikle and Helen Payne, "From Lutheranism to Catholicism: The Faith of Anna of Denmark (1574–1619)," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64, no.1 (2013), p.53; Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.147–8 no.62 [April? 1597, James VI to George Gordon, Earl of Huntly].

⁵⁷ Calderwood, vol.5 pp.54–5 [April 1589]; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.825 – [1589: Causes of the failures of the King's service in the North and remedies proposed]; Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, p.217; Hatfield House, CP 16/95. "James Melville to Archibald Douglas," (27 April 1588).

⁵⁸ Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.74; Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.94; Lee, Jr, *Great Britain's Solomon*, p.244.

⁵⁹ Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.94.

⁶⁰ McCoog, *The Society of Jesus 1541-1588*, p.252.

⁶¹ For more on this voyage, see: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584-1595.

pro-Spanish faction would take advantage of the situation to turn Scotland pro-Spanish.⁶² There were rumours of plots forming while James was absent – Elizabeth’s fears were not entirely unfounded – but no proof of their being acted upon could be found.⁶³ Whilst James was in Denmark, Elizabeth urged James not only to return with haste, but also that he ‘hasten the departure out of his kingdom of the five hundred Spanish now remaining there’.⁶⁴ On 16 March 1589, Elizabeth wrote:

I marvall at the store you make of the Spanyards being the spoyles of my wracke. ... I am sorry to see how small regard you haue of so greate a cause, I may clayme by treaty that such should not be but I hope [you will] ryd your Relme of them with speede, which I doo expect for your owan sake, not the lest for myne.⁶⁵

Despite the questions many have posed about the rationale behind James’s voyage, the reality is that the king himself was confident enough in his authority to leave his kingdom, and secure enough in his neutrality to not fear that his kingdom would be invaded whilst he was abroad. There was no evidence to suggest another imminent Spanish invasion, and whilst there were hundreds of Spanish soldiers and mariners in his kingdom, the king obviously did not feel that they were a threat.⁶⁶ Due to the numerous coups and plots by various Scottish factions that plagued his minority, the king had developed a well-noted sense of paranoia in regards to his personal and royal authority. That his departure occurred so soon

⁶² Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.54; Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, pp.57–8.

⁶³ In January 1590 a Spanish ship arrived in Leith when several pro-Spanish nobles were staying in Edinburgh, raising Elizabeth’s suspicions of another Spanish plot and prompting her to encourage his return. Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.54. In February 1590 a ship landed at Galway with 60 Spaniards. Lodge, *Illustrations of British History*, vol.2 pp.390–1 no.241 [4 February 1590, Unknown to the Earl of Shrewsbury]. There were also rumours that a Spanish ambassador had arrived in Scotland to congratulate James on his marriage. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 3200, f.37. Unknown, “A ‘Humble Friend’ to the Earl of Shrewsbury” (4 February 1590). In March 1590 Bothwell sent another invasion plan to Parma, further worrying Elizabeth. BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.188. Francis Stewart, “Bothwell to the Duke of Parma,” (17 March 1590).

⁶⁴ TNA, SP 12/222 f.114a. “John Wolley, (Latin Secretary) to Walsyngham,” (18 February 1589). The Spanish remained in Scottish waters throughout the Armada period. In 1590 they captured six English ships in the Kirkwall Road (the sea route through Orkney) but were never aggressive towards the Scottish ships, which they were trading with as neutrals. The Spanish afterwards went to Anstruther, where they were treated as pirates for murdering Englishmen in their capture. TNA, SP 52/46 f.31. “Robert Bowes to Burghley,” (14 August 1590); Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, p.122.

⁶⁵ Hatfield House, CP 133/82. “Elizabeth to James VI,” (16 March 1589). Published in: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.103–4 no.38.

⁶⁶ In her letter to James to hurry him home Elizabeth rebukes him for giving his enemies an opportunity to overthrow him, both by being lenient to the Catholic Earls and by leaving his kingdom. Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, pp.57–8. David Stevenson has remarked that for James to leave, at the onset of winter and when his kingdom had so recently been threatened, was seen ‘as folly, dangerous ... [and] irresponsible’. Stevenson, *Scotland’s Last Royal Wedding*, p.28. See also: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584–1595.

after the Brig O'Dee Rebellion and the discovery of the Parma letters suggests that even in this midst of these troubles the king felt incredibly secure in his position and the loyalty and obedience of his subjects.⁶⁷ Likewise the covert correspondence the king had with Spain apparently made him feel safe, whether or not that feeling was justified.⁶⁸

James and Anna returned to Scotland in April 1590, and although relations with England had been rather stable whilst James was abroad, they quickly deteriorated upon his return.⁶⁹ James's rapport with the pro-Spanish and Catholic factions was in contrast rather stable; in December Huntly was pardoned for his part in the Parma letters affair and James continued to allow Spanish survivors sanctuary in Scotland before helping them to return to the continent.⁷⁰

Patrick Gray tried to convince James of 'the truth of the King of Spain and his design against this whole isle' in February 1591.⁷¹ Gray was a Scottish diplomat who had only recently returned from exile, thanks to the intervention of Sir Francis Walsingham, suggesting that he was at least pro-English if not an English agent.⁷² Gray's discourse argued that Philip would not be able to stop at invading England. He concluded that because James held a serious claim to the English throne he would always threaten Philip in England. He argued that Spain could not be friends with Scotland, and would instead desire to conquer it.⁷³

So that be this discourse, all men may evidentlie sie the only dissigne of the King of Spaine for conservation of his monarchie and estaite, to the conquest of England, and consequentlie of Scotland, as plainly appeiris be his not dealing with his Maiesties self, nor craving his ovin benevolence and concurrence, bot steiring up a sorte of his Maiseties factious subjectis to serve for the tyme his intent...⁷⁴

It is interesting that Gray blamed Philip for the activities of the Catholic Lords, not James, suggesting that their actions were not in keeping with James's policy, or at least not controlled by it. However, Gray could hardly have accused James of directing Spanish collusion, given the political repercussions it would have caused,

⁶⁷ Brown, "Nobility of Jacobean Scotland," p.62; MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, pp.306–9.

⁶⁸ AGS, E 839.36. "James VI to Philip II" (19 October 1589). James also wrote to Philip in 1591 regarding the treatment of Scottish merchants trading in Spain, asking for Philip to protect their interests. AGS, E 839.44. "James VI to Philip II" (4 June 1591).

⁶⁹ Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.207.

⁷⁰ TNA, SP 52/46 f.73. "Robert Bowes to Burghley" (18 December 1590). In December 1591 more Spaniards came from Ireland to Scotland before returning to the continent. TNA, SP 52/47. "James Hudson to Burghley," (16 December 1591).

⁷¹ Gray, *L&P*, pp.169–82 [26 February 1591, A Short discourse wherein is set down the very truth of the King of Spain his design against this whole isle, by Patrick Master of Gray].

⁷² G. R. Hewitt, "Gray, Patrick, Sixth Lord Gray (c.1558–1611), Nobleman and Courtier," in *DNB*. For more information on the nature of agents in this period see: Noldus, "Loyalty and Betrayal"; Murdoch, "Oxenstierna's Spies."

⁷³ Gray, *Letters & Papers*, p.178 [26 February 1591, A Short discourse wherein is set down the very truth of the King of Spain his design against this whole isle, by Patrick Master of Gray].

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.p.181.

even if such a statement had been true. It is more likely that Gray's argument was meant to stir up fear against the Spanish and encourage James to assert his opposition to the pro-Spanish faction than to accurately portray the situation. Gray did, nevertheless, raise valid issues concerning Scoto-Spanish relations, ones that likely prevented James from fully relying on Spain as an ally. Unfortunately for Gray, he was closely associated with Bothwell - the pro-English courtier who had fallen foul of James in 1589 - and joined in the failed raid which targeted the king at Holyrood in December 1591. Thus, James and the Privy Council ignored his arguments.⁷⁵

Another Spanish plot was discovered in February 1592, when David Graham gave testimony that some of the Scottish Lords had been colluding with Spain to bring an invasion force into England via Scotland, and that a portion of the soldiers would remain in Scotland to enable its conversion to Catholicism.⁷⁶ In the same month Huntly murdered the Earl of Moray, a pro-English courtier associated with Bothwell who had been feuding with Huntly.⁷⁷ James refused to allow Huntly to be excommunicated by the Presbytery for his religious sentiments, but the king did prosecute Huntly for his crimes against the crown by murdering Moray.⁷⁸ In April James finally acted with the approval of Elizabeth and the Kirk, by issuing an order that his subjects should repel the Spanish ships expected to come to the northern isles with 'with fyre and swerd, and all uther kynd of violence and extremitie be sey and land'.⁷⁹

Early the following year the English ambassadors brought James news of a further conspiracy against Scotland and England by the Catholic Lords. What they had were letters and blank sheets of paper that bore only the signature and seal of the Catholic Earls. They were sent to Philip II, carried by George Kerr, who was captured en route.⁸⁰ These documents, which were termed the 'Spanish

⁷⁵ Hewitt, "DNB, Patrick 6th Lord Gray." Bothwell had attempted to assist the Brig O'Dee Affair by raising men from the Borders, initiating a fall from royal favour that he, unlike Huntly, never recovered from. See: Rob Macpherson, "Stewart, Francis, First Earl of Bothwell (1562–1612), Courtier and Politician," in *DNB*; Sizer, "DNB, George Gordon."

⁷⁶ Thomson, *Historie*, p.267.

⁷⁷ Sizer, "DNB, George Gordon."

⁷⁸ This suggests that James delineated between the Kirk's attempts to convict his nobles, and a noble's disregard for royal edicts regarding the bloodfeud. Regardless of his friendship with the Earl, James would not tolerate disrespect to his person. *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.148 [7 March 1592]; Bruce, *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI*, p.77 no.45 [24 November 1592, Elizabeth to James VI].

⁷⁹ *RPCS*, vol.4 p.739 [April 1592, Proclamation anent the expected arrival of Spaniards in Orkney, Shetland, and the Northern Isles]; Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, p.124. Murdoch recognises the significance of the order as a move to appease England after James's previous leniency; however, he has mistakenly dated this 'July 1595' (a date which appears on the page of the register, but refers to a deletion of the previous act, not a contemporary date).

⁸⁰ *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.226–8 [June 1592]; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.168 no.57 [3 January 1592, Instructions to the Scottish Ambassador to the English Court]; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.72, 99–100; John Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland from the Year 1558 to August 1637* (Edinburgh, 1842), pp.145–9; Thomson, *Historie*, pp.257–9; *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.588–92 no.608 [1591, Document headed "the present state of the Catholic religion in Scotland"]. Reports from what was happening in Scotland in 1591–1592 were given to Philip II in 1593. AGS, E 839.61. Unknown, "Relacion de Escocia," (1 July 1593).

Blanks', constituted a much more serious threat to Elizabeth than the Parma letters had been, as these were much more overt in their petitioning for Spanish aid to invade England and to restore Scotland to Catholicism.⁸¹ Although the Spanish Blanks have received much attention, what has not been analysed is the other document found on Kerr. This was a memorandum, written by James VI, and titled, 'Certain reasons which may be used to prove it meet, or unmeet, the executing of this enterprise this summer or not 1592'.⁸² The enterprise that James was considering was the result of Spain's decision that England would only be converted to Catholicism through force. According to Thomas Law, Philip saw James as 'a possible ally, or at the worst a feeble obstructive to measures which were intended for his own aggrandisement'.⁸³ The King of Spain believed that James was at least sympathetic enough to the Holy See, if not a secret convert already, to allow liberty of conscience or wholesale conversion in his current and future realms.

It appears from James's memorandum that Philip had chosen to treat him as an ally, and that James was made aware of the proposed invasion.⁸⁴ Perhaps after what happened in 1588, Philip was willing to try using Scotland rather than ignoring it. The Scottish king was careful in his analysis to not show overt support for the invasion, but rather to offer an 'unbiased' analysis of its potential success. James concluded that,

This enterprise cannot be well executed this summer for my unreadiness, for the Queen of England's suspecting of it and for over many strange princes dealing into it. Wherefore my opinion is that it die down, as I said before. In the mean time, I will deal with the Queen of England fair and pleasantly for my title to the crown of England after her decease, which thing if she grant to (as it is not impossible howbeit unlikely) we have then attained our design without the stroke of sword. If by the contrary, then delay makes me to settle my country in the mean time, and when I like hereafter I may in a month or two

⁸¹ Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy, 1558-1603*, p.211.

⁸² Hatfield House, CP 133/100. James VI, "Spain and Scotland," (June 1592); Law, *Collected Essays*, pp.268-71. Michael Yellowlees attributed the text to John Ogilvy of Purie, however he is the only one to do this. See: *So Strange a Monster*, p.124. McElwee notes that the document was in James's hand and that it 'took some explaining away' (although he doesn't say how this was done, but moves swiftly on, only saying that this was in keeping with James's general policy of maintaining Catholic support for his claim on England. McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom*, pp.77-8.

⁸³ This aggrandisement was the returning of the British Isles to Catholicism. Law, *Collected Essays*, p.247.

⁸⁴ The editors of the *CSP Spain* believed that this report was evidence of James's knowledge of and involvement in Spain's plans. *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.603-6 no.617 [17 July 1593, Document headed Statement of what happened in Scotland in the month of December last year, 1592, in consequence of the embassy which the Catholic lords of that country wished to send to his Majesty.].

(forewarning of the King of Spain) attain to our purpose, she not suspecting such thing, as she now does.⁸⁵

In the endorsement of the document found among Sir Robert Cecil's papers, a note reads:

Copy of the Scotch King's instructions to Spain which should have been sent by Powry Oge [James Ogilvy], but thereafter were concredit to Mr. George Ker, and withdrawn at his taking for safety of his Majesty's [James's] honour.⁸⁶

There is no explanation as to why this discovery was not published, nor why Elizabeth did not immediately break the League of Amity she had with James. Its existence does however suggest an explanation for the more severe reaction to the Spanish Blanks that Elizabeth had than to the Parma letters of 1589.⁸⁷ James had not been implicated in the Parma letters; nevertheless there was clear evidence that he was now communicating with Spain against her. It is true that James advised Philip to wait and see if a peaceful solution would occur through his being made Elizabeth's heir, but James appears to agree to an invasion in 1592 should his plan fail.⁸⁸ After the Spanish Blanks, Elizabeth returned to the diplomatic policy she had followed with Scotland prior to the League of Amity: to attempt to influence Scottish politics through direct communication with pro-English Scottish courtiers.⁸⁹ James was anxious to show how useful his kingdom was, both to Spain and to England, and from the money and attention each monarch gave him, it would seem that he was successful.⁹⁰ James also wanted to ensure that he was in a strong standing for the English title. His manoeuvres with Catholics and Protestants always sought to balance powers beneath him and neutralise the threats of the other.⁹¹

⁸⁵ Hatfield House, CP 133/100. James VI, "Spain and Scotland," (June 1592).

⁸⁶ The Catholic Earls had sent George Kerr to James in December 1592, and it is likely that this is when he received both the Spanish Blanks and James's memorandum. *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.603–6 no.617 [17 July 1593, Document headed Statement of what happened in Scotland in the month of December last year, 1592, in consequence of the embassy which the Catholic lords of that country wished to send to his Majesty.]; Hatfield House, CP 133/100. James VI, "Spain and Scotland," (June 1592).

⁸⁷ Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.211. Doran does not mention the memorandum, and blames the shift to the level of the threat offered by the Catholic Earls; however the presence of James's memorandum was most likely also a factor. Mr John Davidson, wrote that 'it was not thought expedient to publish it [James's knowledge and approval of the Scoto-Spanish trafficking]', but he does not explain to whom or for what reason. *Calderwood*, vol.5 p. 251 – [26 May 1593 – 'The King Privie to the Traffiquing].

⁸⁸ Hatfield House, CP 133/70. "The King of Scotland," (14 August 1586).

⁸⁹ Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.212. Henry VIII also employed this tactic. David Head, "Henry VIII's Scottish Policy: A Reassessment," *Scottish Historical Review* 61, no.171 (April 1982), p.2.

⁹⁰ Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.208; Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p.8.

⁹¹ Brown, "Scottish Politics 1567-1625," p.27; Grant, "The Brig o'Dee Affair," p.107; Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," p.268; Robertson, "House of Huntly, 1603-90," pp.37–8; Yellowlees, *So Strange a Monster*, p.131.

In Scotland the Spanish Blanks were publicly denounced, yet the culprits were treated with the traditional leniency of previous episodes.⁹² The Privy Council issued a proclamation against traffickers with Spain on 5 January 1593, but several Englishmen still believed that James was 'a son to Spain'.⁹³ In June charges of treason were issued, but in November James countered these with an Act of Abolition, which declared that if the Catholic Earls would submit to the Kirk then the charges would be dismissed.⁹⁴ James reported these events to Elizabeth just weeks before reports of another Armada began to come forth.⁹⁵ The English queen was not impressed with James and his actions, calling him a 'fool' and a 'seduced king', revealing the troubled relationship between the two kingdoms at this point.⁹⁶

Scoto-Spanish relations were, by contrast, doing rather well despite plots to kidnap James and deliver him to the King of Spain should he refuse to convert. In August of 1593, a Spanish ship carrying men and gold reportedly arrived in Orkney and was allowed to remain unmolested. At the beginning of 1594, ambassadors were expected from Spain and France, where King Henri IV (of Navarre) had recently converted to Catholicism.⁹⁷ In January, Parliament declared the Catholic Earls guilty of treason, by reason that they had failed to submit to the Kirk as dictated by the Act of Abolition, but they remained at liberty due to James's influence.⁹⁸ The years following the failed *Gran Armada* caused Philip to reconsider the importance of Scotland, and of James. Neither monarch trusted each other, but each was willing to use the other for the own ends. This, along with the absence of any significant reason for tension, allowed Scoto-Spanish relations to remain strong throughout the early 1590s.⁹⁹

⁹² Despite immediate public outcry the Catholic Earls were not disinherited, excommunicated or sent into exile until 1595. TNA, SP 52/51 f.77. "Robert Bowes to Burghley," (26 December 1593).

⁹³ *RPCS*, vol.5 pp.33–4 [5 January 1593, Holyrood]; TNA, SP 12/244 f.39. "H. Saint Main to Fitzherbert," (18 January 1593).

⁹⁴ "RPS," pp.1593/4/5, A1593/11/4. See also: Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp.15–6.

⁹⁵ Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, p.95; TNA, SP 52/51 f.59. "Robert Bowes to Burghley," (8 November 1593); TNA, SP 52/51 f.74. "Robert Bowes to Burghley," (22 December 1592); TNA, SP 12/246 f.45. "Walter Orme to Lord Burghley," (15 December 1593).

⁹⁶ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.221 no.72 [January 1594, Elizabeth to James VI]. Elizabeth's harbouring of the Earl of Bothwell following his attempted raid on James in the summer of 1592 also did not endear the Queen to James, and he threatened to break the League of Amity with her unless the Earl were returned. 'I can no loonger keepe amitie with her but by the contrair vill be enforcid to joyne in freindschipp with her greattest ennemies for my ouin safetie.' *Ibid.*, vol.2 pp.190–1 [c. 23 March 1593, Answers from James VI to Lord Burgh concerning Bothwell].

⁹⁷ TNA, SP 52/54 f.118. Unknown, "State of Scotland," (August 1593); TNA, SP 52/53 f.31. "Robert Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil," (13 April 1594); TNA, SP 52/58 f.65. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (18 April 1596).

⁹⁸ *RPS*, sec.A1594/1/17/4 [18 January 1594 Holyrood Convention].

⁹⁹ An example of the strong relations between Scotland and Spain can be seen in their mercantile activities, as explained in McLoughlin, "Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581–1730," pp.59–89.

Royal Conversions to Catholicism

James's leniency with the Earls, along with further rumours of the strength and growth of Catholicism in Scotland, gave hope to many that the king might one day follow the example of the French king, Henri IV - convert and return his kingdom to the Holy See. One of the rumours that fuelled these dreams was the conversion of his wife, Anna of Denmark. Queen Anna's conversion cannot be precisely dated, but the first whispers of her sympathies date from as early as 1593, and it possible she converted around this time.¹⁰⁰ Father Robert Abercromby, a Scottish Jesuit who had previously served as Anna's priest, later claimed that her conversion took place 'about the year 1600', and credited the queen's initial sympathies towards Catholicism to a childhood acquaintance.¹⁰¹

It recurred to her how, being in Germany while she was very young, and resident for her education in the house of a certain great princess who was a Catholic, she had seen a priest who daily celebrated Mass.¹⁰²

It seems more likely, however, that Henrietta Stuart, the Countess of Huntly, first introduced the queen to the Roman religion.¹⁰³ Stuart, who was the daughter of Esmé Stuart and a Catholic, offered her attendance to the queen in 1590, and although she was never officially accepted as one of the Queen's ladies, her relationship with Anna was significant.¹⁰⁴ Anna's conversion to Catholicism changed how the Catholic world viewed James, and gave a renewed hope for the King of Scots' conversion.¹⁰⁵ Although unconfirmed, the rumours grew in strength, and by 1596 Elizabeth was confident enough of them to confront the Queen of Scots on the subject, asking her to answer the charges in her own hand, saying: 'Sister, I beseech you let a few of your own lines satisfy me in some one point that is boasted of against you, which this bearer shall tell you'.¹⁰⁶ Anna never complied with the request, and this, along with her rumoured religious sympathies

¹⁰⁰ David Edwards, "Securing the Jacobean Succession: The Secret Career of James Fullerton of Trinity College, Dublin," in *The World of the Galloglass: Kings, Warlords and Warriors in Ireland and Scotland, 1200-1600*, ed. by Seán Duffy (Dublin, 2007), p.192. For more on Anna's role in James's Catholic diplomacy see Cynthia Fry, "Perceptions of Influence: The Catholic Diplomacy of Queen Anna and Her Ladies, 1601-1604," in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden, 2013), pp.267-85.

¹⁰¹ G. Martin Murphy, "Abercromby [Abercrombie], Robert (1536-1613), Jesuit," in *DNB*.

¹⁰² Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," p.304; Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, pp.263-5 [c. 1600, Letter from Robert Abercromby to John Stuart, Prior of the Monastery at Raitsbon].

¹⁰³ Meikle and Payne, "From Lutheranism to Catholicism," p.48.

¹⁰⁴ In February 1591 Henrietta's sister, Mary Stuart, was made one of Anna's ladies. Amy Juhala, "The Household and Court of King James VI of Scotland, 1567-1603" (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2000), p.329; TNA, SP 52/46 f.73. "Robert Bowes to Burghley" (18 December 1590); TNA, SP 52/47 f.112. "Robert Bowes to Burghley" (21 November 1591); Fry, "Perceptions of Influence," pp.271-3.

¹⁰⁵ Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, p.166. For more information on Anna's role in Catholic diplomacy see: Fry, "Perceptions of Influence."

¹⁰⁶ TNA, SP 52/58 f.15. "Queen Elizabeth to the Queen of Scotland" Letter, (September 1593).

served to strengthen the belief of many Catholic powers that James would be their champion for the Catholic succession. As the 1590s progressed, hopes grew that Anna would convert her husband, yet whilst James tolerated his wife's beliefs, he urged her to be discreet about them.¹⁰⁷

The timing of Henri IV's conversion also encouraged Catholics to hope for James's reconciliation with their Church. After years of leading the Huguenot cause in France this Protestant Prince had decided that 'Paris was worth a mass' and, after meeting with Catholic priests, allowed himself to be convinced of the error of his ways. Henri IV ceremonially abjured on 25 July 1593 and the Pope rescinded his excommunication in September 1595.¹⁰⁸ Henri's acceptance ended the religious war that had torn France nearly in two, for whilst the king became a Catholic, he ensured that his former religion would be tolerated by passing the Edict of Nantes in 1598.¹⁰⁹ Spain was also weakened by the papacy's acceptance of Henri IV's conversion to Catholicism and the renewed Franco-Roman friendship.¹¹⁰ Despite Henri IV's conversion, his relations with England, Scotland and the United Provinces did not end, although Elizabeth was hurt by Henri's decision.¹¹¹ Franco-Scottish relations were not damaged, as will be seen; Henri and James remained close throughout the latter 1590s.

These elements all contributed to European attitudes of religion and religious conversions and in particular fed into the debate around James's religious inclinations. The fact that James's consort and his cousin changed religion in the early 1590s, in addition to his own treatment of Catholics and his relations with Catholic powers, made the King of Scots' conversion a genuine possibility - a hope for Catholics and a fear for Protestants. Ultimately, this hope was used as a diplomatic tool, providing leverage with Catholic powers when intelligently used by James.

The Birth of an Heir

Henry Frederik, Prince of Scotland, was born on 19 February 1594; an event which dramatically improved James's standing not only in Scotland but also as a

¹⁰⁷ Forbes-Leith and Fleming, *Narratives of Scottish Catholics*, p.265 [c. 1600, Letter from Robert Abercromby to John Stuart, Prior of the Monastery at Raitsbon].

¹⁰⁸ Buisseret, *Henry IV*, pp.44–54.

¹⁰⁹ The Edict did not end debate of France's religious future, but it did ensure that it would not be the cause of civil war and the further weakening of the kingdom. Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability* (London, 1984), p.84.

¹¹⁰ Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603," p.492.

¹¹¹ In July Elizabeth wrote to Henri expressing anguish at his conversion, however she did not threaten to end their relationship. Hatfield House, CP 133/102. "The Queen [Elizabeth] to the King of France [Henri IV]," (July 1593); Hatfield House, CP 133/101_2. "The Queen [Elizabeth] to the King of France [Henri IV]," (July 1593). See also: Pearson, *Henry of Navarre*, pp.170–1; Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, p.182; J. B. Black, *Elizabeth & Henry IV: Being a Short Study in Anglo-French Relations, 1589–1603* (Oxford, 1914), pp.65–8. According to Maurice Lee Jr. James VI took Henri's conversion to be a sign of weakness, although this does not seem to be supported by either their correspondence or later events, such as the baptism of Prince Henry. Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.10.

candidate to the English throne.¹¹² The birth of a healthy male heir gave James something that no other candidate had - a line of succession. Now James VI, a young, healthy king with a young, healthy bride had safely produced the first of what was hoped would be many male heirs, and it seemed likely that he would survive until the children grew old enough to safely inherit from him without the need for regents.

The young prince also signified the possibility of an end to the uncertainty that England had felt since the death of Edward VI and his lack of a male heir, or in Elizabeth's case, any heir at all.¹¹³ This is clear from the names selected for the prince. According to the Dutch ambassadors' report, a committee of the ambassadors present for the baptism and King James chose the name of the prince to signify specific meaning. Frederik was chosen for Queen Anna's father, Frederik II, whilst Henry was the name of Elizabeth's father - Henry VIII and the kings of France - Henri III and Henri IV.¹¹⁴ The Dutch wrote that James had suggested 'Charles James'. However, the king did not push for either of these names, feeling that to name his son after himself might be unlucky, and that the name Charles had been tainted by Charles IX at the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572).

After the birth of his son James sent ambassadors to France, Denmark, The Low Countries, England and Germany, inviting the royals to the baptism of the new prince.¹¹⁵ He also ordered that the Chapel Royal at Stirling Castle be torn down and replaced with a larger, grander design after being granted £100,000 Scots to fund the baptism.¹¹⁶ Because he needed the Scottish nobility to help fund the event, and because this was a chance for James to strengthen his position

¹¹² One of the primary reasons for James's marrying was to provide a line of succession for Scotland and as 'aire apparrant of England'. BL, Egerton MS 2598 f.134. "Discourse of James VI on taking his Voyage" (20 October 1589); Rick Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie of Baptism at Stirling 1594," *Renaissance and Reformation* 29, no.4 (2005), p.19; Richard Hillman, "God-Fathering Prince Henry," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.313-4.

¹¹³ Wormald, "Taming the Magnates?," p.271.

¹¹⁴ Interestingly the Dutch report described all of the ambassadors as 'godfathers' to the prince, an idea that has not been found in any other source. Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.163-4 [November 1594, Report of the Dutch ambassadors to the baptism of Prince Henry]; Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.18; Hillman, "God-Fathering Prince Henry," pp.232, 319. Although it is often forgotten, the prince's grandfather, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley was titled 'King Henry', thus giving a royal Scottish tradition to the name in addition to its foreign pedigree. See: Cynthia Fry, "Henry, King of Scots: An Analysis of Royal Authority and Diplomatic Influence - Evidence from the National Archives of Denmark," *Northern Studies* 43 (2012), pp.51-71.

¹¹⁵ *CSP Venice*, vol.9 p.213 no.303 [8 September 1594, Tomaso Contarini, Venetian Ambassador in Germany, to the Doge and Senate]. He also invited the Scottish nobility to the ceremony. BL, RP 7218. "James VI to Sir Duncan Campbell," (31 July 1594).

¹¹⁶ William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry; by the Grace of God, Prince of Scotland, Solemnized the 30 Day of August 1594*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2v.

within his kingdom as well as outwith it, he invited several of his nobles to join the foreign ambassadors at the festivities.¹¹⁷

James knew how important the ceremony was; his own had been one of the grandest political achievements of Mary Queen of Scots' reign.¹¹⁸ Peter Young was sent to Denmark-Norway before moving on to the Dukes of Mecklenburg and Brunswick.¹¹⁹ He received a 'fair' chain from each ruler as a token of his appreciation at being invited.¹²⁰ Sir William Keith and William Murray were sent to the United Provinces although, according to James Melville, Keith was most unsuited to the task as he could not speak 'Latin, French nor Flemings'.¹²¹ James Colville of Easter Wemyss and Edward Bruce were sent to England in April 1594, where Bruce remained behind to hear Elizabeth's answer, whilst Colville went on to France, to invite Henri IV and to renew the Franco-Scottish alliance.¹²² Bruce reportedly had an audience with Elizabeth on 17 May, by which point Colville had already departed England for France.¹²³ All those invited responded positively, and almost everyone sent a representative to the ceremonies.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ BL, RP 7218. "James VI to Sir Duncan Campbell," (31 July 1594). At this point in time James was desperate for funds, so much so that he asked the Catholic Earls for 10,000 crowns from the money they had received from Spain and the papacy, but they 'politely refused'. Goodare, *State and Society*, p.102. It is possible that the money (and guns) were brought to Huntly and Errol by a Spanish ship, the Santa Catharina, which was coming from the Spanish Netherlands and sunk in 1594 off the coast of Aberdeenshire. "Canmore" Database, *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland* (2014), St Catherine: Saint Catherine's Dub, Collieston, North Sea.

¹¹⁸ Michael Lynch, "Queen Mary's Triumph: The Baptismal Celebrations at Stirling in December 1566," *SHR* 69, no.187 (April 1990), pp.1-21.

¹¹⁹ SC-BRU_01.; SC-ME_02.; SC-DN_08.

¹²⁰ Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.367.

¹²¹ As Melville's account of the baptism is not entirely correct (see below) it is also possible that his assessment of Keith is biased or untrue. SC-UP_03. *Ibid.*, pp.366-7. In addition to sending ambassadors James also personally wrote to the United Provinces asking them to send representatives, and renewed his alliance with them in order to strengthen Scottish-Dutch relations prior to the baptism. NA, 3.01.14/2153. Adriaan Damman, "Missive van Adriaan Damman, Agent van de Republiek in Schotland, Aan Johan van Oldenbarnevelt van 29 Juli 1594, Betreffende de Ontvangst van Buitenlandse Gezanten Voor de Doopplechtigheid van Karel I, Prins van Schotland, Het Verzoek Aan de Republiek Om Grotere Cadeaus En de Spanningen Tussen Hem En Kolonel William Murray.," (1594); NA, 3.01.04.03/58.2. James VI and States General, "Akte van alliantie tussen de Staten-Generaal en koning James I van Schotland," (26 July 1594). According to M. Chasteaumartin, a representative was also sent to Spain to inform Philip II of the birth of the prince and to strengthen relations between the two kingdoms. There is no other record of this mission, so it is not clear if it occurred or was simply a rumour. Hatfield House, CP 171/1. "M. Chasteaumartin to Lord Burghley" (31 June 1594).

¹²² SC-EN_13.; SC-FR_07.; TNA, SP 52/53 f.31. "Robert Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil," (13 April 1594); Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.367; Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.6-7 [13 April 1594, James VI to Elizabeth I].

¹²³ TNA, SP 52/53 f.61. "Robert Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil," (30 May 1594).

¹²⁴ Henri IV gave the prince a company of soldiers, Elizabeth gave a beautifully wrought cupboard and the United Provinces gave him a gold cup and a life pension of 5,000 guilders per annum. Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 p.154n [[November 1594, Report on the embassy of Walraven, Lord of Brederode, and Mr Jacob Valcke, Treasurer-General of Zealand on account of Prince Henry's Baptism]; Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.369; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119;

In addition to asking Elizabeth to send an ambassador to the baptism, James asked her to be his son's godmother, just as she was his. James wanted to use the ceremony to highlight his relation to England in front of the world, and possibly to obtain Elizabeth's blessing on his claim.¹²⁵ In addition, James wanted to improve his relations with England, which had been somewhat strained since the discovery of the Spanish Blanks in 1592.¹²⁶ Elizabeth sent Bruce back with a positive answer, and instructed the Earl of Cumberland to attend the baptism. Cumberland became ill, however, and Robert Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex was instructed to replace him.¹²⁷ This change caused a delay in the arrival of the English ambassador, and as a result James moved back the baptismal ceremony to accommodate Elizabeth's representative.¹²⁸

Colville left England for France near the end of May, arriving at Henri's court shortly thereafter. He remained there until at least November, working to renew the 'Auld Alliance' and strengthen Franco-Scottish relations.¹²⁹ According to James Melville, Henri IV was so insulted at not being sent his own ambassador expressly, rather than having Colville deliver his invitation first to Elizabeth, that he refused to send a representative to the ceremony.¹³⁰

This was, however, incorrect. In July Henri wrote to James promising to send a representative, and informing James that as the prince was the grandson of a queen of France (Mary Queen of Scots) he would be given a company in the French royal army, which James would hold in trust.¹³¹ The civil war in France prohibited Henri from keeping his promise, and he later wrote to James apologising for France's absence at the baptism, claiming that he could not spare

Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, vol.4 pp.218–21 [Near the end of September 1594, Henri IV a Roy d'Écosse].

¹²⁵ Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.9.

¹²⁶ In 1592 after the Spanish Blanks the pro-English Earl of Bothwell rebelled. He fled to England, and Elizabeth, who was using him and other pro-English nobles to weaken James's authority, gave Bothwell refuge. James demanded Elizabeth return him, and in 1593 threatened that if it were not done he would 'no loonger keepe amitie with her but by the contrair vill be enforcid to joyne in freindschipp with her greattest ennemys for my ouin safetie.' *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.190–1 [c. 23 March 1593, Answers from James VI to Lord Burgh concerning Bothwell]; Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.212.

¹²⁷ Fowler, *A True Reportarie*, f.3r. James Melville incorrectly recorded that Elizabeth refused to send an ambassador until she heard that France was not sending on, at which point 'then very late she sent the Earl of Sussex, to let us see that she would ever be a ready friend, when France would refuse and lie back. ...'. Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.367.

¹²⁸ Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.215; TNA, SP 52/53 f.65. "Robert Bowes to [Burghley]," (20 June 1594).

¹²⁹ *CSP Scotland*, vol.11 p.481 no.410 [c. November 1594, Propositions submitted by James Colville, Laird of Wemyss to Henry IV]. Henri IV confirmed the rights of Scots residing and trading in France in September 1594. TNA, SP 52/54 f.49. Henri IV, "Confirmation to the Scots of their rights, etc., in France," (16 September 1594).

¹³⁰ Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville*, p.337.

¹³¹ TNA, SP 52/53 f.82ii. "Henri IV King of France to King James" (11 July 1594); Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, vol.4 pp.218–21 [Near the end of September 1594, Henri IV a Roy d'Écosse].

anyone of sufficient rank to serve as his proxy.¹³² At the baptismal ceremony France was given an empty chair directly to the right of James, the seat of highest honour, being placed even above England or Denmark-Norway.¹³³ This was likely because Henri IV was intended to be the prince's godfather, and thus his proxy would have had the seat of honour, if he had arrived.¹³⁴ Charles IX of France had been James's own godfather, and Elizabeth his godmother, and it seems that the king intended the same for his son.¹³⁵

Hillman has argued that, in addition to his annoyance over the ambassador, it was Henri's newfound religion that kept him from sending a proxy.¹³⁶ This seems unlikely, however, as James himself had a Catholic godfather and Protestant godmother, who both sent proxies to the festivities. In his case the English proxy, the Earl of Bedford, did not participate in the Catholic baptismal service but attended the secular celebrations both before and after it.¹³⁷ Whilst it is possible that Henri IV was not yet confident in his new faith to do what Elizabeth had done it is more likely that an inability to spare a nobleman of sufficient standing, or the money to fund his lavish voyage was the cause for the absence of the French ambassador.

The Danish ambassadors were the first to arrive in Scotland; Steen Bille and Christian Barnekow disembarked at Leith on 1 August 1594.¹³⁸ The following

¹³² Proxies, unlike ambassadors, tended to always be of the highest rank of nobility, as they served as the embodiment of their monarch, whereas ambassadors were representatives who spoke with the monarch's authority. TNA, SP 52/53 f.82ii. "Henri IV King of France to King James" (11 July 1594); BL, Cotton Caligula E/IX/1 f.272. "Henri IV to James VI" (September 1594); BL, Cotton Caligula E/IX/1 f.274. "Henri IV to James VI" (7 November 1594); TNA, SP 52/54 f.88. "Henri IV to James VI," (17 November 1594). Although Henri III had been assassinated in 1589, Henri IV had not been able to consolidate his power. He had converted to Catholicism in 1593, but it was not until February 1594 that Henri IV was crowned king of France, and not until 1595 that Clement VIII recognised him as such and lifted his excommunication. Despite his difficulties at home, Henri IV had been in communication with James throughout the late 1580s and early 1590s, attempting until 1589 to broker a marriage alliance between James and his sister, Catherine. See: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584-1595.

¹³³ Fowler, *A True Reportarie*, f.6r. According to the Dutch ambassadors, James believed that France was sending an ambassador, and even delayed the ceremony to 25 August on their account (the English ambassador's delay later caused this to be moved further back). Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 p.158 [November 1594, Report of the Dutch Ambassadors on their embassy to the baptism of Prince Henry].

¹³⁴ Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.13.

¹³⁵ The word 'godfather' is never used in the letters between James and Henri, however this invitation would have likely been a verbal request made by Colville, and thus its absence is not unusual. Likewise, the gift of a company of soldiers, aside from being a convenient choice for a cash-strapped monarch, shows the intended close relations between Henri and the prince.

¹³⁶ Hillman, "God-Fathering Prince Henry," p.324.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.232-4; Lynch, "Queen Mary's Triumph," p.10; Thomas Thomson, *A Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents That Have Passed within the Country of Scotland since the Death of King James the Fourth till the Year M.D.LXXV from a Manuscript of the Sixteenth Century, in the Possession of Sir John Maxwell of Pollock, Baronet* (Edinburgh, 1833), pp.102-5.

¹³⁸ Bille is also spelt Stephen Beal (by Robert Bowes) and Sten Bille. DN-SC_05. TNA, SP 52/58 f.105. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley" (21 June 1596); Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.1 pp.125, 127-8, 264-5, 271.

day Adam Krause, ambassador from the Duke of Brunswick, and Joachim von Bassewitz, ambassador for the Duke of Mecklenburg arrived.¹³⁹ Next came Jacob Fulk, Treasurer and his companion Walraven, Barron of Branderod, ambassadors of Holland and Zeeland.¹⁴⁰ These men were entertained in Edinburgh (at James's expense) whilst the King of Scots awaited the arrival of the guest of honour, the English ambassador. During this time specific items such as trade agreements and treaties were discussed in addition to broad issues such as James's candidacy for the English succession, his proposed Protestant League, the advances of Spain and the growing power of Philip II.¹⁴¹ The delay in the ceremony gave James ample time to gather first-hand information from the continent as well as to push his foreign agenda.¹⁴² The Dutch representatives for example used this time with James to renew previous treaties between Scotland and the United Provinces regarding trading and fishing rights.¹⁴³

Despite the fears of the German and Danish representatives that the delay would inhibit their return journey, James waited patiently for both Henri's and Elizabeth's representatives to appear.¹⁴⁴ Eventually James agreed to wait only for

¹³⁹ BRU-SC_01. and ME-SC_01.

¹⁴⁰ UP-SC_04.; Fowler, *A True Reportarie*, f.2v. Jacob Fulk may also be spelt Valck.

¹⁴¹ Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.157, 158–9, 165 [November 1594, Report of the Dutch ambassadors on their embassy to the baptism of Prince Henry]. This account, which runs from pp.154–174, is a published translation of NA, 1.01.02/8305. Walraven van Brederode and Jacob Valcke, "Verbaal van de Gedeputeerden Walraven van Brederode En Jacob Valcke Wegens Hun Zending Naar Schotland in Verband Met Onderhandelingen over Vernieuwing van de Verdragen Met de Republiek," (October 1594).

¹⁴² *CSP Venice*, vol.9 p.213 no.303 [8 September 1594, Tomaso Contarini, Venetian ambassador in Germany, to the Doge and Senate].

¹⁴³ NA, 1.01.02/8305. "Verbaal van de Gedeputeerden Walraven van Brederode En Jacob Valcke Wegens Hun Zending Naar Schotland in Verband Met Onderhandelingen over Vernieuwing van de Verdragen Met de Republiek," (October 1594); NA, 3.01.14/2155. "Declaratie van de Onkosten van Walraven, Heer van Brederode, En Jacob Valcke, Ontvanger-Generaal van Zeeland, Gemaakt Tijdens Het Gezantschap Naar Schotland," (November 1594); NA, 1.01.02/8305. "Akte van Ratificatie Te Edingburgh Uitgevaardigd Door de Koning van Schotland van Alle Vroegere Tractaten, Gesloten Tussen de Koningen van Schotland En de Overheden van Het Grondgebied van de Republiek, Met Uitzondering van Het Traktaat Te Binche Op 15 December 1550 Gesloten En Op 1 Mei 1551 Geratificeerd," (14 September 1594); NA, 3.01.04.03/58.1. "Verklaring van Koning James I van Schotland Dat Hij Het Bestaande Verdrag, Gesloten Tussen Karel V En Zijn Moeder Mary, Zal Blijven Observeren," (14 September 1594); NA, 3.01.04.03/58.2. "Akte van alliantie tussen de Staten-Generaal en koning James I van Schotland," (26 July 1594); NA, 3.01.14/2154. "Akte Waarbij de Staten-Generaal Op 13 December 1594 de in 1550 Te Binche Met Schotland Gesloten Alliantie Opnieuw Bekrachtigen, 1594; Authentiek Afschrift (eind 16e Eeuw)," (13 December 1594); Thomas Wemyss Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea: An Historical Account of the Claims of England to the Dominion of the British Seas, and of the Evolution of the Territorial Waters, with Special Reference to the Rights of Fishing and the Naval Salute* (Edinburgh, 1911), pp.79, 80–1. According to an eighteenth century source the Dutch also sought permission to levy Scottish soldiers, and when they returned from the baptismal celebrations 'a great many Scotch gentlemen went over to Prince Maurice's army'. James Cunningham, *Strictures on Military Discipline, in a Series of Letters, with a Military Discourse: In Which Is Interspersed Some Account of the Scotch Brigade* (London, 1774), p.71.

¹⁴⁴ Fowler, *A True Reportarie*, f.3r–3v; Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.4.

the English ambassador, as he had received no word as to when a French ambassador would arrive. As soon as the Earl of Sussex and Robert Bowes arrived, the celebration and baptism were ordered, and the whole party went to Stirling for the festivities.¹⁴⁵ These were ostentatious events, full of pomp, riches and novelty, designed to impress James's foreign guests and generate rumours of his wealth and power. The baptism itself highlighted the Stuarts as the leaders of Protestantism, and manifested the future James hoped for when Elizabeth's proxy held the heir to the Scottish throne and cared for him during parts of the service, acting as both godmother and godfather in the ceremony.¹⁴⁶ During the banquet afterwards, James showed that he could entertain as well as any European monarch, hosting such exotic spectacles as a live lion on display and an eighteen-foot, thirty-six gun ship that sailed into the banquet hall at Stirling Castle to serve a variety of what appeared to be seafood, but was actually made out of sugar.¹⁴⁷

After the baptism, James authorised a report of the events to be printed in English, and published both in London and in Edinburgh.¹⁴⁸ The pamphlet, *A true reportarie of the most triumphant, and royal accomplishment of the baptisme of the most excellent, right high, and mightie prince, Frederik Henry; by the grace of God, Prince of Scotland* was a piece of propaganda as powerful as the actual baptism, aimed at spreading James's image as a powerful leader far and wide, and at converting the minds of the English that he was their best candidate for king.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, 'through the *Reportarie* of that baptism, King James alerted all Europe to the fact that political power held promise for all of Britain'.¹⁵⁰ It is not possible to ascertain how many copies of *Reportarie* were printed, or if it travelled to Europe, although the ambassadors present would have described these events to their home courts upon their return, ensuring at least a verbal propaganda in Europe.¹⁵¹ The pamphlet was at least read in England, and even Shakespeare appears to have borrowed inspiration from the Scottish king's pageantry. It has been argued that the reference to the fright a lion on stage might cause in *A*

¹⁴⁵ EN-SC_20.

¹⁴⁶ It was traditionally the godfather who carried the infant during the service, but as the French ambassador never arrived, it was left to the English ambassador to preform the task. It is assumed by the placing of the empty chair for the French ambassador that it was expected that Henri IV would send a proxy and act as godfather, although religious conflict (Henri IV being Catholic) could have ultimately contributed to his inability to send a representative. Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," pp.11-4; Hillman, "God-Fathering Prince Henry," pp.323-4.

¹⁴⁷ Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," pp.15-6; Fowler, *A True Reportarie*, f.12r-13v.

¹⁴⁸ *Reportarie* was printed by Peter Short for the Widdow Butter in London (EEBO, STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.7), and Robert Waldegrave in Edinburgh (EEBO, STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6). The fact that the text was printed in English suggests another tactic of James to present himself as a 'British' monarch. Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.6.

¹⁴⁹ Fowler, *A True Reportarie*.

¹⁵⁰ Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.4, 19 (Quote from p.19).

¹⁵¹ I wish to thank Professor Andrew Pettegree and Dr Graeme Kemp of the *Universal Short Title Catalogue* for their assistance in trying to answer this query.

Midsummer Night's Dream was taken from *Reportarie*, as was the cannon fire to accompany toasts of good health in *Hamlet*.¹⁵²

Reportarie was not the only piece of propaganda published regarding Prince Henry's birth. In 1594 Andrew Melville wrote a poem on *the birth of the Prince of the Scoto-Britons*, expounding on the natural birth right of the prince to rule over both Scotland and 'Great Britain' after his father.¹⁵³ James did not commission the poem nor did it feature in the baptism celebrations; however it was republished in 1603 after James's succession, showing that it was a popular piece, aimed at both Scottish and English subjects. The language is filled with hope for the future and praise for the prince and his father, noting that:

With his father's genius the child is destined for the
ancestral throne: from birth, with the highest right he is
destined to be king to both the celebrated Britons and the
ancient Caledonians ... Thrice happy is the king, and more,
he is dear to heaven and his citizens, who delights in
causing those souls haughty with the power of empire to
turn to god.¹⁵⁴

The baptism of Prince Henry greatly strengthened James's Protestant relations, but in addition to this the King of Scots also sought out alliances with the Italian states and France, who were wary of the growing power of Philip's empire.¹⁵⁵ Philip II controlled parts of the Netherlands, Naples and Portugal in addition to his Spanish kingdom. He also dominated the lucrative trades in Asia, and the Americas, not least through his control of the Portuguese commercial empire.¹⁵⁶ Such aggrandisement did not go unnoticed, and as early as the 1570s there were tensions between Philip II and the other Catholic powers, particularly in Italy.¹⁵⁷ Whilst some popes had been partial to Philip II, not all were. Pope

¹⁵² Hillman, "God-Fathering Prince Henry," pp.315–6; Bowers, "James VI, Prince Henry, and A True Reportarie," p.15.

¹⁵³ The Pamphlet was reprinted in 1603 after the Union of the Crowns. Andrew Melville, *Principis Scoti-Britannorum Natalia*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 17807 (Edinburgh, 1603).

¹⁵⁴ This English translation of the poem is taken from: Andrew Melville, "Principis Scoti-Britannorum Natalia (On the Birth of the Prince of the Scoto-Britons) 1594," *Bridging the Continental Divide*, (2012–2015).

¹⁵⁵ In 1596 Sir William Keith was sent to the Doge to find out whom Venice would support for the English throne. Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers During the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.8–12 no.6 [4 February 1596, Sir William Keith to James VI]. See also: Doran, "Loving Cousins?," p.215; TNA, SP 52/53 f.31. "Robert Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil," (13 April 1594); Thomson, *Historie*, pp.333–5. There had been a great amount of jealousy for Philip's expanding empire throughout the final decades of the sixteenth century. For example: *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.41 no.42 [18 March 1587, "Considerations why it is desirable to carry through the Enterprize of England before discussing the succession to the Throne of that country, claimed by his Majesty" delivered by Melino to Count de Olivares]; Levin, *Agents of Empire*, p.111.

¹⁵⁶ Gray, *Letters & Papers*, p.176 [1589 – A Short discourse wherein is set down the very truth of the King of Spain his design against this whole isle, by Patrick Master of Gray].

¹⁵⁷ Levin, *Agents of Empire*, pp.67–120. In April 1596, Scotland received word that Spain had just taken Calais. Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.126.

Clement VIII, elected in 1592, disliked Philip II and was not interested in following Spain's lead in the re-Catholicisation of Europe. He was anxious to reclaim Scotland (and other Protestant states) without military assistance from Spain, and James used this desire to separate himself from Spain and her intrigues in the latter half of the 1590s.

'The chief and principal stay'

In 1595 an unknown councillor encouraged the King of Scots to side with the Papacy and become its choice for the English succession. This was at a time when the Pope feared any further growth in the Habsburg hegemony.¹⁵⁸ The memorandum urged, '... that his Majesty get what he can from Spain but make not that his chief and principal stay'.¹⁵⁹ In the second half of the 1590s, it seems that James followed this report's advice, due in part to declining relations with Philip II. A serious blow to Scoto-Spanish relations came in 1595, when Robert Parsons published *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of England*.¹⁶⁰

Parsons was an English Jesuit who had been involved with some of the Catholic Lords; however, by this date he was disenchanted with Scotland and wrote supporting the claim of the Spanish Infanta Isabella above all other claimants to the English throne.¹⁶¹ The authorship of *A Conference* is a subject of some debate, and whilst most historians believe that Parsons alone authored the work, others, such as Thomas McCoog, believe it to be a collaborative piece.¹⁶² The text, originally published in English, was translated into Latin the following year, in order that the Pope might review it.¹⁶³ The Venetian ambassador in Paris reported that James was 'disgusted with the King of Spain', both for allowing this book to be published, and also for 'the protection he gives to the rebel Scots'.¹⁶⁴ In March 1595, Huntly and Errol went into exile after refusing to submit to the Kirk,

¹⁵⁸ Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.385.

¹⁵⁹ BL, Add MS 32092 f.143. "Reasons for James VI Joining with the Pope," (May 1596). Quote taken from printed transcription in *CSP Scotland*, vol.12 p.230 no.193.

¹⁶⁰ This was published under the pseudonym R. Doleman. Parsons, *A Conference*.

¹⁶¹ Victor Houlston, "Persons [Parsons], Robert (1546–1610), Jesuit," in *DNB*. In 1597 a Scots Jesuit, William Crichton, wrote to Parsons and kept him informed of the current Scottish Politics. SCA, SM1/3/1. "William Crichton to Robert Persons," (1597); SCA, SM1/3/2. "William Crichton, Brussels to Robert Parsons, Rome" Letter, (1 August 1597).

¹⁶² Peter Holmes, "The Authorship and Early Reception of a Conference about the Next Succession to the Crown of England," *Historical Journal* 23, no.2 (June 1980), pp.415–429; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589–1597*, pp.254–60.

¹⁶³ *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.633–4 no.650 [2 September 1596, Father Robert Persons to Juan de Idiaquez]; ASV, Fondo Borghese Serie IV.103. Unknown, "De regiae successionis apud Anglos nire libri duo ./. Es donoru' niriconsultoru' disputatio ne excepti, et per R. Dolma' nam anglice primum editi, nuc' vero latime redditi sunt, alter nitegre, alter summa tim ut post niterpretis epistolam videre est.," (1596).

¹⁶⁴ *CSP Venice*, vol.9 p.259 no.414 [23 March 1596, Piero Duodo, Venetian Ambassador in France, to the Doge and Senate]. Bowes also reported James's displeasure at the text. TNA, SP 52/58 f.23. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (24 February 1596).

and it was made clear they were not to return until they were ready to do so.¹⁶⁵ This harsh treatment of the Earls was most likely based both on their disruption of the domestic peace as it was on their traditional pro-Spanish stance and the state of that relationship after *A Conference* placed Spain above Scotland in the hierarchy of claimants to the English throne.¹⁶⁶ The fear of another attempt of a Spanish invasion also continued, and whilst it was likely exaggerated by the Kirk, it did influence Scoto-Spanish policy.¹⁶⁷ In November 1595 Colville reported:

Within this tow dayis, letters from Pater (Dunipace), Crichton, and one Maxwell, ar intercepted cumming from Flanderis to the Lord Hereis, which be keped secret till the 24 forsaid. I hear the said Crichton wold persuad the Lord Hereis to deall with his Majestie tymuslie to inter in frendschip with Spane, because this Spring such power is to cum from thence as nether he, England, nor all the Protestantis elswher can resist, but with Goddis help: *parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.*¹⁶⁸

In spite of the criticisms against the Stuart line made in *A Conference* and the threat that James felt after its publication, his claim to the English throne remained strong. Whilst Isabella might have the support of Parsons, she was a twenty-nine year old princess who was as yet unmarried, with limited time remaining to produce an heir.¹⁶⁹ James, by contrast, had a living male heir and a young wife, as well as the support of the Protestant rulers of Europe and geography on his side. However, the king was not confident enough to rely solely on his progeny to secure his succession, and in the moment Person's book only served to strengthen Spain. Therefore, James had to look elsewhere to balance his authority against this new Habsburg power.

Just as Elizabeth's failure to honour Asheby's promises to James in 1588 initiated his shifting diplomatic emphasis away from England, the publication of Parsons's book signalled a shift away from Spain. Instead of Philip II, the King of Scots improved his relations with Henri IV, and actively sought out alliances with

¹⁶⁵ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.299–300 [2 October 1596, James VI to Huntly]; John Stuart, ed., *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1570-1625* (Edinburgh, 1871), pp.107–8 [14 March 1595].

¹⁶⁶ The fear of another coming invasion caused James to act harshly against those who supported Spain in an attempt to reassure the Kirk and his subjects. That being said, they were only banished for a little over a year, and when they returned they were given back many of their honours and titles. TNA, SP 52/57 f.67. "George Nicolson to Robert Bowes," (27 November 1595); *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.310–5 [1595]; Meikle and Payne, "From Lutheranism to Catholicism," p.53.

¹⁶⁷ *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.310–5 [1595]; TNA, SP 52/57 f.81. "John Colville to Robert Bowes," (7 December 1595); Pauline Croft, "'The State of the World Is Marvellously Changes': England, Spain and Europe 1558-1604," in *Tudor England and Its Neighbours*, ed. by Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (Basingstoke, 2004), pp.192–3; Wernham, *After the Armada*, p.514.

¹⁶⁸ Colville, *Letters*, p.182 [16 November 1595, John Colville to Robert Bowes].

¹⁶⁹ Isabella would not marry until 1598, to the Archduke Albert. She remained childless.

the Italian states, which were wary of the growing power of Philip's empire.¹⁷⁰ Philip's aggrandisement, for example through his gaining of the Portuguese crown, had not gone unnoticed, and as early as the 1570s there was tension between Philip II and the other Catholic powers, particularly within the Italian Peninsula.¹⁷¹

In July 1594, the Scottish Jesuit James Gordon, Huntly's uncle, arrived in Aberdeen with an envoy from the Pope, three English priests and three Spaniards who were possibly priests. They were carrying a pension of 40,000 ducats along with letters inviting James to become Catholic, for which the Pope would pay him 10,000 ducats annually.¹⁷² It is not clear whether or not Philip had personal knowledge or approved of the Pope's pension; however it is likely that Spanish Jesuits were involved. The envoy was arrested on arrival, but Huntly and others of the pro-Spanish faction blockaded the town, freed the prisoners and took the pension for themselves.¹⁷³ James intervened at this point to spare the town, but it was not until October, after the Catholic Earls defeated the Earl of Argyll at the battle of Glenlivet, that James finally brought them to heel and subdued the pro-Catholic forces.¹⁷⁴ James might have been sympathetic towards the Catholic cause, but he had no tolerance for nobles who rebelled against his self-proclaimed divine right and or his authority.

¹⁷⁰ TNA, SP 52/53 f.31. "Robert Bowes to Sir Robert Cecil," (13 April 1594); Doran, "Loving Cousins," p.215; Thomson, *Historie*, pp.333–5; Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.37; Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, p.165. There had been a great amount of jealousy for Philip's expanding empire throughout the final decades of the sixteenth century. For example: *CSP Spain*, vol.17 p.41 no.42 [18 March 1587, "Considerations why it is desirable to carry through the Enterprise of England before discussing the succession to the Throne of that country, claimed by his Majesty" delivered by Melino to Count de Olivares]; Levin, *Agents of Empire*, p.111.

¹⁷¹ Levin, *Agents of Empire*, pp.67–120. In April 1596, Scotland received word that Spain had just taken Calais. Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.126. This is be further addressed in: Chapter Four: New Friends & Old Allies, 1596–1603.

¹⁷² *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.588–92 no.608 [1591, Document headed "the present state of the Catholic religion in Scotland"]. The calendar dates this document as '1591', however it appears to be discussing the arrival of Gordon at Aberdeen in 1594 and the capture of Kerr in 1592/3. Also, Clement VIII wasn't elected to the papacy until 1592, the document, which refers to the Pope by name, cannot have been from 1591. The only fact that supports the date of 1591 is the age of James VI, as he would have been 25 in that year.

¹⁷³ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.340–1 [16 July 1594]; Thomson, *Historie*, p.331; Stuart, *Aberdeen Council Register*, pp.92–3 [19 July 1594]; 101–2 [20 October 1594]. At least some of the money went to the Scottish Catholics, according to Father Gordon's own report. Alphons Bellesheim, *History of the Catholic Church of Scotland: From the Introduction of Christianity to the Present Day*, trans. by D. Oswald Hunter Blair (Edinburgh, 1887), vol.3 pp.449–50.

¹⁷⁴ Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.118–20; Thomson, *Historie*, p.332; TNA, SP 52/53 f.85. "Robert Bowes to Burghley," (23 July 1594); TNA, SP 52/54 f.91. "News from Scotland," (26 November 1594); Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.19–24 passim.

Conclusion

The years between 1588 and 1595 saw James VI's foreign policies shifting and the importance and nature of relationships changing, often in response to external events. Whilst the King of Scots was not initiating many of the diplomatic events of the early 1590s, his responses to them in conjunction with his independent foreign policies influenced these events in significant ways. Because James knew that Elizabeth needed his support he used this to his own advantage, and when that failed to yield results he turned to Philip, who was equally desirous of his support. As a 'middling power' Scotland played a unique role in the power struggle between England and Spain.

Relations with England had long been difficult, and although peace continued between them throughout this period, James was the first of his family to consider England an opportunity, rather than a threat.¹⁷⁵ Elizabeth, meanwhile, had in many ways continued the foreign policy of her father towards Scotland, but now realised that would not necessarily work, due to the shifting balance of power on the continent.¹⁷⁶ The arrival of the *Gran Armada* gave James VI an excuse to mend his relations with Elizabeth, and although his support, or at least neutrality, was courted by Spain, at the time of battle Scotland stood by England. This was due in large part to the promises of the English ambassador, which granted James security for his future in the form of recognition of his title.

After the danger was past, however, Elizabeth refused to honour the words of her ambassador, and James's hopes seemed dashed. His response was one of escalating threat, first verbally reminding Elizabeth of his potential to side with Spain in the future, and then in his actions, through the sanctioned support and shipment home of hundreds of Spanish survivors. Their presence in Scotland for over a year caused Elizabeth much grief and worry, but ultimately these did nothing more than to sour relations, rather than force an English capitulation. The threat of Spanish interference peaked in 1589 and 1592, but never were enough to force Elizabeth's hand. James wanted Elizabeth's assurance that his claim to the throne would be recognised; for James, an advance in his personal welfare was an advance for the welfare of Scotland, and so by extension improving his own chances of becoming the next king of England meant improving Scotland's place in the world as well.¹⁷⁷ By 1594 James had tired of the Spanish, particularly after the publication of *A Conference*, and he sought new relations with other Catholic powers hostile to Philip II and the ever-expanding Habsburg Empire. James renewed his relations with Henri IV of France and began communications with the Papacy and other Italian states.

¹⁷⁵ MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, p.304.

¹⁷⁶ Head, "Henry VIII's Scottish Policy," pp.1-3; Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.612.

¹⁷⁷ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," pp.27, 37; Peter Lake, "The King (the Queen) and the Jesuit: James Stuart's True Law of Free Monarchies in Context/s," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004), p.248; Lee, *Maitland of Thirlestane*, pp.65, 89; Stafford, *James VI and the Throne of England*, pp.16-7, 124.

The birth of Prince Henry was possibly the single greatest factor that changed James's foreign relations in this period, and the event had long-reaching consequences. Although *A Conference* had rejected James's claim in favour of the Infanta Isabella's, the King of Scots had one thing the Spanish princess did not, a male heir. The baptism of the Scottish prince was perhaps the greatest feat of James's diplomacy during his personal rule in Scotland; he wooed and impressed foreign dignitaries, and used the event as a propaganda tool to advance his standing in the minds of the English public and to Europe as a whole. His conversations with the Dutch during their visit, and the renewed discussion of a Protestant League with the Danes, Dutch and Germans all continued to advance James's standing in European politics and his prestige with these foreign powers. By the mid 1590s, James had accomplished all of the rights of passage for the early modern king: he had married, he had produced an heir and had commanded an army, albeit only against his own rebelling nobles. He was now perceived across Europe, in France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and England, not only as a serious contender for Elizabeth's throne, but also as an influential player on the European stage, and a useful ally for the future.

CHAPTER FOUR: NEW FRIENDS & OLD ALLIES, 1596-1603

*...I said inkece your maiestie var troublit in your avin
contra, or after the Quein of Inglands dissece, be any
domestik or forrene nacion in seiking of your richt, quhat
vald be thair pairt, and quhow vald thay think of it?¹*

Throughout the second half of the 1590s, as Elizabeth's age advanced and her health declined, her friends and allies became more nervous about what would happen upon her death. Too often, this period is examined from the English or Spanish perspective, only focusing on these kingdoms' attempts to solve the crisis and asserting that it was their actions that were the primary cause in James's eventual succession to the crown of England.² This chapter provides an alternative perspective on the latter 1590s by reassessing events from James VI's viewpoint. James himself was far from confident he would manage to succeed Elizabeth and attempted to secure his position. For example, throughout this period James sought to divide the Catholic powers politically, focusing significant efforts on befriending various Italian rulers as well as the Pope – anxious for them to see him as the means by which the growing power of the Habsburg Empire could be checked. In addition, this chapter ties in James's attempts to secure the English throne with his wider diplomatic ambitions to increase his influence over European politics. These policies manifested themselves in a renewal of the Auld Alliance with France and continued attempts to form a Protestant League. Such activities show that whilst the issue of the English succession was increasingly on James's mind and was a strong influence on his foreign policies, his diplomacy was also motivated by his broader ambitions for Christendom and his standing within it.³

Gauging Support & Establishing Ambitions

Throughout the 1590s, James VI made significant attempts to improve relations with his northern allies, specifically Denmark-Norway and the Protestant German Princes, through the discussions of a Protestant League.⁴ James used the language

¹ Anderson, *Letters and State Papers of James VI*, p.10 no.6 [4 February 1596, Sir William Keith to James VI].

² Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p.8; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.8; Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603," p.513; Albert Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy: The Religious Issue in Anglo-Spanish Relations, 1603-1605," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 53, no.6, New Series (January 1963), p.9.

³ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," p.27; Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.612.

⁴ See: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584-1595.

of a Protestant League to try and form a group of allies upon which he could depend for political and military support should his claim to the English throne require such assistance. James's accession would benefit his allies, he argued, by re-balancing the power in Europe and putting him in a strong position to moderate peace between kingdoms that were presently at war. This claim was important to James as it would not only increase his personal power and prestige, but by extension would also improve the standing of Scotland within a global context.

Frederick II, King of Denmark-Norway, died in April 1588 and his son, the then eleven-year-old Prince Christian, became king. Due to the king's age a regency government had been set up until his majority, and it was not until 17 August 1596 that the nineteen-year-old was crowned. Discussions concerning James's Protestant League re-commenced immediately after the coronation of Christian IV in 1596, to which the Scottish monarch and his wife were invited.⁵ Since Anna was heavily pregnant with her second child and James was distracted with domestic affairs they sent their apologies for not attending in person.⁶ There was also a financial dimension to the royal couple's inability to attend. In 1589, the king had struggled to raise enough funds to cover the cost of the ships and retinue needed for a monarch to travel abroad and in 1596 the finances certainly were not there.⁷ Chancellor Maitland of Thirlestane, who had paid in large part for the wedding voyage, was very ill, and no other noble was willing or able to cover the king's costs.⁸

In lieu of personal attendance, the king sent James, fifth Lord Ogilvy and Mr Peter Young as their representatives.⁹ Young was an experienced diplomat who had already served on several missions to Denmark-Norway and had personal connections with scholars and courtiers in the kingdom.¹⁰ Ogilvy, by contrast had little experience but was a favoured royal servant, having presided over Prince

⁵ Christian sent Steen Bille in June to invite his sister and brother-in-law to the coronation. DN-SC_06.; TNA, SP 52/58 f.105. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley" (21 June 1596); TNA, SP 52/58 f.110. "Dr MacCartney to [Unknown]" (27 June 1596). For more on Bille see: Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.2 p.282. Bille had been present at Prince Henry's baptism and was well known to James, Anna and their ambassadors. DN-SC_05.

⁶ Anna's second child, born on 19 August, was Elizabeth (1596-1662), later Queen of Bohemia. The princess was named after the Queen of England.

⁷ For more on Stuart finances in the late sixteenth century see: R. S. Brydon, "The Finances of James VI, 1567-1603" (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1925); Julian Goodare, "The Debts of James VI of Scotland," *The Economic History Review* 62, no.4 (2009), pp.926-52; Goodare, "Scottish Politics in the Reign of James VI," pp.42-3; Maureen Meikle, "Hold Her at the Oeconomicke Rule of the House: Anna of Denmark and Scottish Court Finances, 1589-1603," in *Women in Scotland, C.1100-C.1750*, ed. by Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen Meikle (East Linton, 1999), pp.105-11.

⁸ Maitland died in October 1595. Maurice Lee, Jr, "Maitland, John, First Lord Maitland of Thirlestane (1543-95), Lord Chancellor of Scotland," in *DNB*.

⁹ SC-DN_09.; SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2. "James VI to Christian IV," (14 June 1596). James, fifth Lord Ogilvy is not to be confused with John Pourie Ogilvy the Scottish-Catholic agent, who was also on a mission in 1596, however his was in southern Europe.

¹⁰ Thomas Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot: Scottish-Danish Relations, C. 1450-1707* (Odense, 1988), vol.1 pp.121-30; Davie Horsburgh, "Young, Sir Peter (1544-1628), Royal Tutor and Diplomat," in *DNB*. See appendix II for previous missions Young had been part of.

Henry's baptism, and although he had never been to Denmark-Norway he was well received.¹¹ The Scottish ambassadors travelled with Bille to Denmark-Norway in late June and returned to Scotland in September with reports of their successful mission, having been richly rewarded by the Danish court.¹² In addition to attending the coronation, and attempting to push forward the plans for a Protestant League, the ambassadors were also instructed to ask for three ships to help subdue the Scottish Islesmen who were assisting the rebels in Ireland at the time. The actions of these men were an increasing source of tension between James and Elizabeth and therefore the king was keen to suppress them.¹³

James hoped to use his brother-in-law's resources to supplement his own, and to use Christian IV's influence in Europe to further the progress of the League's formation. Specifically, James wanted Christian's assistance in providing trading sanctions against the King of Scots' enemies in addition to providing finances and soldiers to defend his right to the English throne. Christian was capable of this since Denmark-Norway was a major power in Europe, capable of cutting off Baltic trade to any kingdom it chose through the closure of the Sound, as well as accruing significant wealth from the Sound Toll that could fund a large navy.¹⁴ Despite the mission, James never succeeded in securing from Christian enthusiasm for the League; however he did have his brother-in-law's immediate verbal support for his succession claim and the promise of military aid to defend it after Elizabeth's death. It seems likely that Christian's behaviour was primarily due to his reticence to fully commit to such a broad and open-ended strategy as the League so early in his reign.¹⁵

Whilst James was expending significant energy on his proposal for a Protestant League he did not forget the importance of Catholic support for his cause or the need to ensure his reputation as a Catholic sympathiser continued. In addition to promoting a pro-Catholic image on the continent through various unofficial agents and ambassadors to the Italian States and France, James ensured that his domestic activities supported the rumours being spread abroad. His treatment of the Catholic Earls is the most notable case of this behaviour. The Earls had been exiled in 1595 for their rebellion, but by May 1596 the political tensions had lightened so much that Huntly and Errol requested permission to

¹¹ NRS, GD16/25/10. "Copies of papers relating to the mission sent for Christian IV's coronation," (5 September 1596). These papers include copies of the letters of introduction both ambassadors had to Christian IV, Queen Sophia, the Dukes of Mecklenburg and Holstein, and the ambassadors' instructions.

¹² TNA, SP 52/59 f.54. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley" (4 October 1596); *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.50 no.7 pt.8 [Extract of declaration made to Christian IV by Lord Ogilvy and Peter Young].

¹³ "RPS," sec.A1596/9/4 [29 September 1596, Dunfermline, Convention – Procedure: Report of Lord Ogilvy's Proceedings in Denmark]; *RPCS*, vol.5 p.318 [c. 29 September 1596, Approbation of proceedings of the Envoys to Denmark]; Murdoch, *The Terror of the Seas*, pp.135–6. No further mention is made of the ships and it is unclear if they were given or not.

¹⁴ Bellamy, *Christian IV and His Navy*, pp.9–14; Lockhart, *Denmark, 1513–1660*, pp.107–11.

¹⁵ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.362–4 [3 August 1598, Reply of Christian IV to Mr David Cunningham, Bishop of Aberdeen, and Mr Peter Young, Great Almoner of Scotland, ambassadors of James VI, King of Scots].

return from exile, promising to submit themselves to the Kirk.¹⁶ Whilst in exile the Earls had been travelling in Europe - Huntly in Denmark, Poland and Italy and Errol in the Spanish Netherlands.¹⁷ The Earl of Errol made his return trip via the United Provinces, where the Scottish conservator at Campvere arrested him.¹⁸

The Dutch wrote to James asking what he wanted done with the prisoner, and James sent the Dutch agent at his court, Adrian Damman, to retrieve him.¹⁹ Damman arrived too late, however, for Errol escaped from his prison and arrived in secret back in Scotland before seeking reconciliation with the King.²⁰ James then pressured the Kirk to accept the Earls, and this royal pressure facilitated Huntly and Errol's total reconciliation.²¹ They were restored to full favour by June, and Huntly served in his traditional role as sword-bearer at the opening of Parliament in November.²² James's leniency towards his Catholic subjects had not altered despite the exiling of the Earls - which had been a result of their rebellion rather than their religion. This was proven by the changes the king made to his administration early in 1596.

In January of that year Anna presented James with a purse of gold, a sign of the monetary benefit he could hope to gain by employing her financial advisors, the men who became the Octavians. These men controlled Scotland through the purse strings; they were also predominately pro-Catholic.²³ The brother of the secretary, John Lindsay of Menmure, known by the pseudonym Don Balthasar, was in frequent communication with Philip II and his priests.²⁴ The Octavians were far from popular in Scotland, especially with the Kirk. It was claimed that they were causing James to strengthen his Catholic sympathies. However, in reality it was the Octavians' cuts in spending and increased efficiency in collecting

¹⁶ TNA, SP 52/58 f.86. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (18 May 1596).

¹⁷ Colville, *Letters*, pp.150-1 [25 March 1595, Colville to Bowes].

¹⁸ Anderson, *Letters and State Papers of James VI*, pp.16-8 [1 July 1596, The Earl of Errol to James VI]. The Scottish staple had been at Campvere since 1541. Davidson and Gray, *The Scottish Staple at Veere*, pp.142-166 passim.

¹⁹ Anderson, *Letters and State Papers of James VI*, pp.18-9 [August 1596, James VI to the Nobles of Zeeland, United Provinces].

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.23-5 [4 December 1596, Adrian Damman de Bysterveldt to James VI].

²¹ *Spottiswood*, vol.2 p.438 [1596, James VI to the Earl of Huntly]; *Calderwood*, p.5 pp.439-41 [September 1596]; Brown, "Scottish Politics 1567-1625," p.28.

²² Sizer, "DNB, George Gordon." Huntly and Errol were officially absolved on 31 May 1597. TNA, SP 52/60 f.80. "Robert Bowes and Sir William Bowes to Lord Burghley," (31 May 1597).

²³ Julian Goodare, "The Attempted Scottish Coup of 1596," in *Sixteenth-Century Scotland: Essays in Honour of Michael Lynch*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Alasdair MacDonald (Leiden, 2008), p.314; *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville*, p.330; Maurice Lee, Jr, "James VI and the Revival of Episcopacy in Scotland: 1596-1600," *Church History* 43, no.1 (March 1974), p.52; Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.377.

²⁴ Julian Goodare, "The Attempted Scottish Coup of 1596," in *Sixteenth-Century Scotland: Essays in Honour of Michael Lynch*, ed. by Julian Goodare and Alasdair MacDonald (Leiden, 2008), p.314; *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville*, p.330; Maurice Lee, Jr, "James VI and the Revival of Episcopacy in Scotland: 1596-1600," *Church History* 43, no.1 (March 1974), p.52; Goodare, "DNB, Octavians." This is the same Lindsay who dissuaded James from the Jessé mission.

taxes that the nobles despised. In September, Andrew Melville famously reminded the king that he was but 'God's sillie vassall' and a mere member of the Kirk.²⁵

This was followed in October by a derogatory sermon given in Edinburgh by David Black – insulting James, Anna, Mary and even Elizabeth.²⁶ Unlike 1586, the Kirk supported their minister rather than their king, and James's relationship with the Kirk quickly deteriorated. The situation was made worse by the fact that Elizabeth had been insulted in Black's sermon, so James was also receiving foreign pressure to control the Kirk.²⁷ James's domestic difficulties culminated in a riot that broke out in Edinburgh on 16 December 1596. The Kirk led the riot against the Octavians, whom they called 'papist advisors', and blamed for leading the King astray.²⁸ James used the riot to gain control over the Kirk by showing how dangerous it could be, when given too much power.²⁹ He drove the rebelling clerics out of Edinburgh, and when they took refuge in England James argued that they had abandoned their flocks and acted against the commonweal. This propaganda campaign allowed the king to reassert his authority at home without destroying the Protestant faction.³⁰ He only weakened the Kirk, as he had done to the Catholic faction two years earlier during the rebellion of Huntly and Errol.

The return of Huntly and Errol in late 1596 helped to sustain hope amongst the Catholics that James would, if he gained the English throne, grant toleration to the English and Scottish Catholics, if not return both kingdoms to the Roman fold. James's leniency towards his Catholic subjects continued to win him support from the Catholic quarters; especially those who also sought to weaken Spain. James was well aware that there was a growing division between France, the Italian States and the Papacy on the one side and the Habsburgs on the other.³¹ These powers were wary of Philip II and later Philip III's growing empire, and did not necessarily want to see the King of Spain, or any of his relations, on the English throne after Elizabeth.³²

²⁵ Goodare, "Coup of 1596," pp.314-5. Andrew Melville's quote from: *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville*, p.370. See also: *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.439-41 [September 1596].

²⁶ *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.453 [October 1596]; Lee, Jr, "James VI and the Revival of Episcopacy in Scotland," p.53.

²⁷ Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.127-9.

²⁸ Thomson, *Historie*, pp.373-4; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.129-33; Goodare, "Coup of 1596," p.323.

²⁹ Gordon Donaldson, "The Scottish Church 1567-1625," in *The Reign of James VI and I*, ed. by Alan Smith (London, 1973), p.51.

³⁰ Lee, Jr, "James VI and the Revival of Episcopacy in Scotland," p.55; Donaldson, "The Scottish Church 1567-1625," p.51; Goodare, "Coup of 1596"; Melville, *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr. James Melville*, pp.374-83.

³¹ In 1594 the ambassadors from Holland and Zeeland who attended Prince Henry's baptism were informed that James had been in communication with the Dukes of Florence and Mantua as well as the Doge in Venice and that they had assured James of their willingness to support him against Philip for the English succession. This was done in part because the Italians saw Philip's growing empire as a threat to their stability, as well as because they believed that James would at the very least be tolerant of Catholicism. Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 pp.157 [November 1594, Report on the embassy of Walraven, Lord of Brederode, and Mr Jacob Valcke, Treasurer-General of Zealand on account of Prince Henry's Baptism].

³² Philip II controlled parts of the Netherlands, Naples and Portugal in excess to his Spanish kingdom. He also controlled large tracts of the Americas and dominated the lucrative trades in Asia, Portugal and the Americas. Such aggrandisement did not go unnoticed, and as early as

Throughout the latter 1590s, James actively sought out stronger alliances with the Italian states and France in an effort to put himself forward as the counter-weight they sought. One of the king's unofficial agents was John 'Pourie' Ogilvy, who operated in the Spanish Netherlands, Venice, Florence and Spain in the latter 1590s.³³ James sent Ogilvy to Rome between 1595 and 1596 to gauge the attitudes of the Pope towards himself.³⁴ In May 1596, Ogilvy presented to the Pope a petition, allegedly written by James, seeking to re-establish Catholicism in Scotland.³⁵ Ogilvy claimed to hold a royal commission during his diplomatic encounters, but James denied this in August of 1596, likely to maintain relations with his Protestant allies.³⁶

James had several unofficial agents operating in the Italian Peninsula in addition to Ogilvy. In 1596, the king sent Sir William Keith to Venice in order that he would learn 'the language and other verteus, as the fasson of straingers vas'.³⁷ Keith reported his findings directly to James, showing that the king was aware of and likely supported his mission, unofficial though it was. In his report, Keith informed the king that he had discovered it unwise to speak directly about the King of Spain, but instead had asked the Doge whom he would support in regards to the English succession, and if he would offer any assistance to any

the 1570s there was tension between Philip II and the other Catholic powers, particularly in Italy. Levin, *Agents of Empire*, pp.67–120. In the middle of this was James, who attempted to play all the sides to build a coalition of support from across Europe. Missions to Savoy and Florence in this period show that James was still courting the favour of the Italians in the hopes of dividing Catholic support. SC-FL_03.; SC-FL_04.; SC-SY_01. James also had an agent, James Lindsay, at the Papal court at this time, promoting the king's cause and reporting on the attitudes of other powers towards it. See: PC-SC_02.;PC-SC_03. For more on the Protestant League see: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584–1595.

³³ SC-PC_01. It is unclear if John 'Pourie' Ogilvy was related to James fifth Lord Ogilvy (SC-DN_09.) or not.

³⁴ Ward, "James VI and the Papacy," p.250; Arnold Oskar Meyer, *Clemens VIII und Jakob I von England* (Rome, 1904), pp.6–8. Ogilvy had initially been intended to carry the Spanish Blanks to Philip II in 1592, however ultimately George Kerr was the one caught with the letters on his person. Law, *Collected Essays*, p.267.

³⁵ TNA, SP 46/20 f.122. "Petition to the Pope, Alleged to Have Been Written by the King of Scots, [presented by John Ogilvy], Requesting Papal Aid towards the Re-Establishment of Roman Catholicism in Scotland, with a Further Paper of Considerations Thereon," (17 May 1596). There also exists a memorandum intended for James written by an unknown author, laying out several reasons for James to submit to the Papacy, including the use of this alliance to combat the growing Habsburg opposition to James's succession and the empire's threat to destabilise the balance of power in Europe. BL, Add MS 32092 f.143. "Reasons for James VI Joining with the Pope," (May 1596).

³⁶ Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.378. In April 1596 James had 'frankly' and 'very confidently' professed to Bowes that he would always side with Protestantism and England. TNA, SP 52/58 f.65. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (18 April 1596). James knew Ogilvy, and had written to him in 1593 regarding domestic issues. NRS, GD205/1/18. "James VI to Sir John Ogilvy," (10 February 1593).

³⁷ SC-VE_01.; James Maidment, Sir James Balfour, and Andrew Dickson White, eds., *Letters and State Papers During the Reign of King James the Sixth* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.16–8 [1 July 1596, Earl of Errol to James VI]. No direct evidence has been found to suggest whether or not Keith's mission was successful, however in 1601/1602 when Anthony Sherley arrived in Venice claiming to be James's agent he found strong support for the Scottish king. Mackie, "Secret Diplomacy," p.277.

candidate, namely, the King of Scots? The Doge had given a diplomatic and non-committal answer. In reality there was not much they could do, but their support, however minimal, might have become important, and it certainly would not have hurt. Several other Scots were in the Italian states as the sixteenth century ended, such as Maitland of Lethington, showing that the king 'laid considerable stress on this portion of his foreign policy'.³⁸

In a similar vein to Keith's mission, James sent Patrick, Master of Gray, to Italy at some point after 1597 - ostensibly for the good of his health.³⁹ Gray travelled with letters of credit addressed to the Duke of Parma and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany. When Gray returned to Scotland in 1600 he carried letters and reports from Ferdinand with him.⁴⁰ In a more formal mission, James also sent Sir Michael Balfour, Baron of Burley as his ambassador to Ferdinand in 1599, the first of three missions Burley undertook to Florence whilst James was King of Scots.⁴¹ According to both Gray and Burley, Ferdinand was incredibly supportive of James - not only in his claim to the English throne, which he recognised as the nearest and strongest one of all, but also for James's desires to unite Christendom.⁴² Whilst Ferdinand wanted James to convert to Catholicism, he, and other Italian rulers, preferred the King of Scots to the Habsburg Empire regardless of religion. James's close relations with Ferdinand and the other Italian rulers is evident by the fact that during this period discussion began for a match between Prince Henry and either the houses of Savoy or Florence.⁴³ In an English report from 1602, Cecil was told that Burley had spent the previous two years in Florence negotiating a marriage whilst Robert Semple was simultaneously in Savoy discussing a possible match with that house. The agent had also been told that the alliance with Florence was:

neither so rich, so honourable, nor so strong, for the Duke of Florence is covetous and will not bestow all he may with his daughter. The Duke of Savoy has less treasure but more willing to bestow. The daughter of Florence is but of the house of Parma and Lorraine, which alliance we have already. The daughter of Savoy is of the house of France and Austria, niece to the great Infanta of Spain. The

³⁸ Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.385; Marks, "The Scots in the Italian Peninsula," pp.327–30.

³⁹ SC-FL_01.

⁴⁰ James VI&I and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, *Negotiations between King James VI and I and Ferdinand I Grand Duke of Tuscany*, pp.14–5 no.9 [3 May 1600, Florence, Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, to James VI, carried by Patrick, Master of Gray]; Hatfield House, CP 195/50. "The Master of Gray to the King of Scots," (29 September 1600); Hatfield House, CP 90/91. "The Master of Gray to the King of Scots," (9 December 1600).

⁴¹ SC-FL_02. See also: SC-FL_03.; SC-FL_04.

⁴² Hatfield House, CP 195/50. "The Master of Gray to the King of Scots," (29 September 1600); James VI&I and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, *Negotiations between King James VI and I and Ferdinand I Grand Duke of Tuscany*, pp.7–11 no.6 [1599, Reply of Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany to James VI, sent by Burley].

⁴³ *Papiers D'état*, vol.3 pp.713–7 [10 August 1602, Leith, M. de Maupas au Roi Henri IV]; TNA, SP 52/67 f.289. "Thomas Douglas to Sir Robert Cecil" (18 October 1601); TNA, SP 52/69 f.9. "Thomas Douglas to Sir Robert Cecil" (27 September 1602).

alliance with Florence is not so strong for it is farther from us than Savoy...⁴⁴

In addition to James's concurrent engagement with the Italian Peninsula and Denmark-Norway the King of Scots also sent agents to France. Amongst the formal missions that James sent to France in the latter sixteenth century there was also a less formal embassy planned in August 1596. James wrote to his secretary, John Lindsay, informing him that a Frenchman was soon to arrive in Scotland and to be used as a Scottish agent. The purpose of this agent, Monsieur de la Jessé, was to travel between various European courts, although primarily France, to improve James's reputation and gain favour with the foreign courts for his candidacy to the English throne.⁴⁵ Jessé, a poet and socialite, was meant to present James as the Catholics' alternative ally to Spain. Lindsay did not trust this new agent and convinced James to reduce the mission from its original grand scale to almost nothing.⁴⁶ Regardless of its size and failure, Jessé's mission shows James's willingness to use a wide-range of tactics to ally himself with Spain's enemies. This allowed him to remain independent in his foreign policy and reducing the importance of Scoto-Spanish relations to Scotland after 1595. Considering the increasing tensions with Spain brought about by the rivalry for the English throne that existed between the Infanta and James this was necessary and inevitable. James was seeking alliances with not only the Protestant, but also the Catholic powers, in his attempts to balance Spanish power in Europe.⁴⁷ These attempts became particularly important after Henri IV made peace with Spain, shifting the balance of power in Europe towards the Habsburgs once more. This European shift of power was of great importance within England and Scotland, having implications not just for the succession but also for their own individual foreign policies. Growing Habsburg power allowed James to pursue his policies of division within the Catholic kingdoms – urging the Italian Dukes as well as Henri IV to use him as a counterweight to Philip II and later Philip III.

Keeping Friends Close & Enemies Closer

In the summer of 1598, James gained a further opportunity to push forward his desire to create a Protestant League. He and Anna received a royal visit from Queen Anna's younger brother, Ulric, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein.⁴⁸ It was quite unexpected, as James's voyage to Denmark-Norway had been in 1589. The duke arrived in Edinburgh on 14 March and made himself known to David

⁴⁴ SC-SY_01.; SC-FL_03. TNA, SP 52/69 f.9. "Thomas Douglas to Sir Robert Cecil" (27 September 1602). Quote taken from *CSP Scotland*, vol.13 pt.2 p.1051 no.9.

⁴⁵ SC-FR_08.

⁴⁶ Mackie, "Secret Agent," pp.376, 379–83.

⁴⁷ For example, in 1597 James authorised Andrew Keith, Lord Dingwall, to levy troops to fight for the Catholic Polish monarch, Sigismund III. However, these were specifically to be used to fight the Turks, not other Christians. However this commission failed due to a lack of funding. Keith died sometime after 1597 and before 1600. SSNE 1534; Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance*, p.22.

⁴⁸ DN-SC_07.

Cunningham of Robertland, who had been exiled to Denmark but was allowed to return to Scotland in 1590 and was part of Anna's household.⁴⁹ James performed the role of a good host, taking his relative on a small tour of Scotland and honouring him with several banquets.⁵⁰ Ulric's visit was quite short, and he returned to Denmark-Norway in early June 1598. Nevertheless, the visit presented James with an opportunity to show off his hospitality and discuss politics in person, which the king used to its full advantage. When Ulric returned home he took two Scottish ambassadors with him, who were instructed to undertake an extensive mission on behalf of their king:

... to see to the preserving of his title and honour; for which cause he would send ambassadors to England, France, Denmark, the Low Countries and Spain, craving their concurrency and support by a taxation which was presently and frankly granted him of 200,000 marks Scots, upon the King's promise that it should be employed only about such honourable purpose and for which they would have given and will give three times more, so glad were they to see the King stand for himself.⁵¹

This money, which arrived in June 1598, coincided with Ulric's return home and thereby provided formal and free transportation for the Scottish ambassadors in addition to their liberal budget. The Scottish ambassadors - David Cunningham, Archbishop of Aberdeen, and Peter Young, Master Almoner - were selected to travel with Ulric as he returned to Denmark-Norway and were instructed to move for the advancement of the Protestant cause in general and James's succession in particular.⁵² They were to visit Denmark-Norway and the Princes of Hesse, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Brandenburg, Schleswig and Saxony.⁵³ Their instructions were to ask the Protestant princes of Europe to petition Elizabeth to formally elect James as her heir, and to provide military support should he have to fight for his 'birth right'.

The mission was ambitious in terms of scale and in the aspiring objectives laid out by James; yet whilst the ambassadors were well received, none of the powers concerned were willing to commit anything more than good wishes and

⁴⁹ TNA, SP 52/62 f.9. "George Nicolson to Lord Burghley" (15 March 1598).

⁵⁰ Patrick Master of Gray hosted James and Ulric during their tour, at his own expense of course. BL, Egerton MS.1819 f.120. "King James VI to [Patrick] Lord Gray," (22 March 1598); SAR, TKUA 75-1/75-2, nf. "Anna of Denmark to Christian IV," (22 March 1598); SAR, TKUA, Speciel del, Skotland 75-1, nf. "James VI to Christian IV," (31 May 1598); Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.137; Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.2 p.296.

⁵¹ TNA, SP 52/61 f.65. "George Nicolson to Sir Robert Cecil," (23 December 1597).

⁵² Colonel William Stewart was sent separately to gather intelligence in Denmark-Norway that would assist the official mission of Young and Cunningham. SC-DN_11.; NRAS217, Box 14/545. "James VI to Queen Sophia, Dowager Queen of Denmark (Copy)," (31 May 1598); NRAS217, Box 14/528. "James VI to the Duke of Meklinburgh (Copy)," (31 May 1598); NRAS217, Box 14/524. "James VI to the King of Denmark (Copy)," (31 May 1598).

⁵³ SC-BRA_02.; SC-BRU_02.; SC-DN_10.; SC-HE_02.; SC-ME_03.; SC-SA_02.; SC-SE_01.

vague assurances of support.⁵⁴ None, including Christian, wanted to provoke Elizabeth by discussing the delicate subject of the succession. Whilst they all apparently agreed that James was the rightful heir, it was not seen as an issue to which they could afford to commit resources. Thus, it appeared that James's largest diplomatic mission seemed to yield few results. However, it is possible that although James had hoped for grand commitments he did not expect them, and was instead content with keeping the issue of the succession and his desirability as a candidate in the forefront of the minds of his allies. If any were willing to give him assistance he would take it, but he was in reality offering very little in specific terms for their commitment, and so it is unsurprising that the mission concluded as it did.⁵⁵

The discussions of a Protestant League, whilst important in reminding his allies of his dedication to religion, also had another purpose. The mission focused as much on the common threat to Christendom posed by the Ottomans as it did on anti-Habsburg rhetoric. This is suggestive of the fact that James dreamt of eventually re-uniting Christendom rather than merely defending against the Catholics.⁵⁶ Whilst this represented an ideal outcome rather than a realistic goal, it shows James's desire for more than simply geographic acquisitions – he wanted to be remembered as a great ruler who influenced all of Europe, not simply one who ruled one (or more) of its kingdoms. Moreover, by asking foreign courts to encourage Elizabeth to name him as her successor the King of Scots was

⁵⁴ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.358–61 [August 1598, Mandate of James VI for his ambassadors and delivered by them to the King of Denmark at Copenhagen; p.362 [August 1598, Instructions in Latin to David Bishop of Aberdeen and Sir Peter Young]; pp.362–4 [3 August 1598, Reply of Christian IV to Mr David Cunningham, Bishop of Aberdeen, and Mr Peter Young, Great Almoner of Scotland, ambassadors of James VI, King of Scots]; p.364 [4 August 1598, Christian IV to James VI]; p.364 [6 August 1598, Christian Frisius, Chancellor of Denmark, to James VI]; pp.364–5 [8 August 1598, Christopher Walkendorf, Master of the Household of the King of the Danes, to James VI]; p.365 [12 August 1598, Sophia, Queen Dowager of Denmark, to James VI]; p.365 [8 August 1598, Henry Ramel, Counsellor of Denmark, to James VI]; p.366 [20 August 1598, Ulrick, Duke of Mecklenburg, to James VI]; pp.366–8 [20 August 1598, Reply of the Duke of Mecklenburg to James VI, delivered to his ambassadors, Mr David Cunningham, Bishop of Aberdeen, and Mr Peter Young]; p.368 [20 August 1598, Jacob Bordings, Chancellor of Mecklenburg, to James VI]; pp.368–9 [1 September 1598, Summary of the resolution of the Elector Joachim Frederick, Margrave of Brandenburg, delivered to the Scots ambassadors]; pp.369–71 [9 September 1598, Frederick William, Duke of Saxony to James VI]; pp.371–2 [25 September 1598, Maurice, Landgrave of Hesse, to James VI]; pp.374–6 [1 October 1598, Henry Julius Bishop of Postulate of Halberstadt, Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg, to James VI]; pp.377–8 [7 October 1598, Johan Adolph, Bishop Elect of Lübeck, Duke of Schleswig, Holstein, etc., to James VI]; pp.378–9 [8 October 1598, Joachim Bassewitz, Captain of Dobbertini and Counsellor of the Duke of Mecklenburg, to James VI]; pp.379–80 [27 October 1598, Christian IV to James VI].

⁵⁵ In addition to this formal mission, a long-term campaign of influence began when James inserted Robert Anstruther into the Danish court as a page in 1598. He would later rise to become one of James's most trusted ambassadors as well as serving Christian IV. SSNE 1472; Steve Murdoch, "Anstruther, Sir Robert (1578–1644/5?), Diplomat and Politician," in *DNB*; Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, vol.2 p.53. Another Scot who became close to a foreign power and may have offered James informal lines of communication and influence was Andrew Stuart, who was a gentleman of the chamber to Karl IX of Sweden from 1598. SSNE 1647.

⁵⁶ Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp.1–30.

effectively doing what no other Protestant candidate could do – communicate as equals with foreign princes. Arabella Stuart and the other Protestant candidates did not have the capability or the standing to seek European assistance for their claim; they could only work within the English court. James, as a king in his own right, was different. He could and did prepare the groundwork with missions such as the one in 1598, educating his neighbours about his claim and posturing for their support. That no commitments came because of the mission does not make it a failure, for James lost nothing from this exercise except some specially raised funds. Despite this, James had significantly improved his position through general interaction with Europe and increased his standing through the mere presence of his ambassadors in foreign courts.

James's other negotiations during this period included those with Robert Cecil and the English courtiers. These interactions ultimately ensured that it was James, and none other, that was named Elizabeth's heir, albeit only after her death. James's initial foray into forming unofficial allies within the English political milieu was with Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex. Essex was a soldier and politician who was close to Elizabeth, and strongly opposed to the succession claim of the Infanta. Thus, the Earl fell naturally into a support for James, whilst the king used Essex's status and intelligence network to strengthen his own position. The two men had attempted to communicate in 1589, but this attempt failed and it was not until 1593 that the two parties joined. In that year Essex appointed Anthony Bacon as his chief intelligence officer, and Bacon quickly gained contacts amongst the Scots, including the royal envoy David Foulis.⁵⁷

James used the ambassadors he sent to England in 1594 to invite Elizabeth for the baptism of Prince Henry as an opportunity to increase communications with the Earl, although this relationship remained a secret from the queen.⁵⁸ James's friendship with Essex in the early 1590s seemed sensible, for at that point the Earl was still in favour at court.⁵⁹ Due to the rivalry between Essex and Cecil, however, James was given misleading information regarding the Queen of England's chief minister, and this had repercussions later.⁶⁰ Once Essex began to

⁵⁷ Janet Dickinson, *Court Politics and the Earl of Essex, 1589–1601* (London, 2012), p.73; Paul Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, 1585–1597* (Cambridge, 1999), pp.164–72; Paul Hammer, "Essex and Europe: Evidence from Confidential Instructions by the Earl of Essex, 1595–6," *EHR* 111, no.441 (April 1996), pp.372–3; Paul Hammer, "The Use of Scholarship: The Secretariat of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, c. 1585–1601," *EHR* 109, no.430 (February 1994), pp.26–51.

⁵⁸ Anderson, *Letters and State Papers of James VI*, pp.7–8 [13 April 1594, James VI to the Earl of Essex]. Essex may have been responding to this when he wrote to John Maitland of Thirlestane in 1595. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 651, f.260. Robert Devereux, "Essex to John Maitland of Thirlestane," (July 1595). In 1599 James's agent, Bartholomew Kello carried books dedicated to the Earl of Essex in addition to a book to be presented to Queen Elizabeth, further indicating the close and covert nature of the king and the Earl's relationship. Tricia Bracher, "Esther Inglis and the English Succession Crisis of 1599," in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450–1700*, ed. by James Daybell (Aldershot, 2004), pp.132–46.

⁵⁹ MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, p.491.

⁶⁰ Dickinson, *Court Politics*, pp.79–98; Edwards, "Securing the Jacobean Succession: The Secret Career of James Fullerton of Trinity College, Dublin," pp.207–12; MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, pp.535–6; Mayer, "Introduction," p.10.

lose favour with Elizabeth, particularly after his failed rebellion in 1601 that was supposedly in support of a Jacobean succession, James found himself in an awkward position but not an impossible one.⁶¹ Fortunately, although James considered supporting Essex he had wisely decided against it, thus saving himself from a diplomatic scandal he could ill afford.⁶²

With the fall of Essex and his network, James lost his closest ally in the English court. The king did not trust Cecil due to Essex's representations of him and it took time before the king warmed to the secretary.⁶³ Cecil's skill and knowledge of English politics did much to secure the peaceful transfer of power from Elizabeth to James, and for the Anglo-Habsburg peace negotiations that followed.⁶⁴ However, it was also James's skill, in maintaining peace with Catholics and Protestants alike, and in ensuring that no side would have serious opposition to him as a monarch that ultimately guaranteed that Cecil had a candidate for the English throne whom he could support.⁶⁵ This is the true success of James's continental diplomacy and ultimately, its legacy.

James's relationship with Essex had not been the only issue causing tension between Elizabeth and James in the twilight of the sixteenth century. The English war in Ireland was dragging on, and with no end in sight in the 1590s, rumours began to circulate that James would assist the Earl of Tyrone in his rebellion.⁶⁶ James denied these and promised Elizabeth that he was willing 'to be employed in

⁶¹ Dickinson, *Court Politics*, pp.43–64; *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.94–5 [1601].

⁶² MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I*, pp.534–6; Richard Bruce Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas* (Oxford, 1994), pp.350–2; James VI, *Correspondence of King James VI of Scotland with Sir Robert Cecil and Others in England During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth: With an Appendix Containing Papers Illustrative of Transactions Between King James and Robert, Earl of Essex*, ed. by John Bruce, 78 (London, 1861), pp.85–9 [1600, Henry Cuff to the English Privy Council].

⁶³ Within a few months of his accession James had adopted the pet name of 'little beagle' for his old adversary. Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.178–80 [May? 1601, James VI to Robert Cecil]; Hatfield House, CP 135/71. "James VI to Robert Cecil," (1602 1601); Hatfield House, CP 134/59. "James VI&I to Robert Cecil, Viscount Cranborne," (1604). See Akrigg's comments for more on the relationship between James and Cecil. Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, p.178. After 1603, it was Cecil who orchestrated and sat in on the peace negotiations; James was not present. Pauline Croft, "Rex Pacificus, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain," in *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*, ed. by Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence (Houndmills, 2006), p.147; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, pp.18–27; Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy," p.29; Albert Loomie, "Sir Robert Cecil and the Spanish Embassy," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 42, no.105 (1969), p.31.

⁶⁴ In 1602 James, fearful that an end to the Anglo-Spanish war would hurt his candidacy for the succession urged the English secretary to continue the war until he had acceded. Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, pp.200–2 no.89 [December 1603, James VI to Sir Robert Cecil].

⁶⁵ For more on Cecil's role in the succession and peace negotiations see K. R. Andrews, "Caribbean Rivalry and the Anglo-Spanish Peace of 1604," *History* 59, no.196 (1974), pp.1–17; Croft, "Rex Pacificus, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain," p.151; Gajda, "Debating War and Peace in Late Elizabethan England"; John Duncan Mackie, "James VI. and I. and the Peace with Spain, 1604," *SHR* 23, no.92 (July 1, 1926), pp.241–249; Andrew Thrush, "The Parliamentary Opposition to Peace with Spain in 1604: A Speech of Sir Edward Hoby.," *Parliamentary History* 23, no.3 (November 2004), pp.301–15.

⁶⁶ Palmer, *The Problem of Ireland in Tudor Foreign Policy, 1485–1603*, p.129; *Carew MS*, vol.3 p.128 [1595, Tyrone's Rebellion].

any action for the benefit and maintenance of religion'.⁶⁷ It was recognised in England that James could prove a valuable asset against the Irish rebellion. There was even an English proposal that they should employ 3,000 Scots to help suppress Tyrone's rebellion. Despite this, the proposal initially also stipulated that the officers must be English, for Scots could not be trusted. As it transpired, Scottish officers did join the expedition including the very influential Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy.⁶⁸ The reversal of the 'English only' officer corps indicated the still uneasy, if somewhat more amiable, Anglo-Scottish relationship in the late 1590s.⁶⁹

Regardless of these developments, the most significant cause of tension between James and Elizabeth in the late sixteenth century remained the issue of the succession. After 1595, the number of tracts discussing who would follow Elizabeth as monarch of England multiplied, and James grew more and more nervous about his position.⁷⁰ As has already been shown, one of the ways the king tried to counter this was in Europe, but he also spent a significant amount of time working to manipulate Elizabeth, her courtiers, and the English people in general.⁷¹ Throughout this debate several tracts were published, in support of the

⁶⁷ Lambeth Palace Library, MS 632, f.106a. Unknown, "A Discourse for Ireland," (1594); *The Problem of Ireland in Tudor Foreign Policy, 1485-1603*, p.125. Quote from: TNA, SP 52/58 f.78. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (12 May 1596). For more information on Tyrone's rebellion and its relation to English foreign policy see: Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars*, pp.182-9. In 1598, one of the requests of the Scottish ambassadors to Christian IV was for ships to stop the flow of Scottish mercenaries going to Ireland. *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.50 [Extract of declaration made to Christian IV by Lord Ogilvy and Peter Young].

⁶⁸ Lambeth Palace Library, MS632, f.146. William Russell, "A Declaration by the Lord Deputy [Baron William Russell] and Council," (1596). Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.25-6.

⁶⁹ This was progress from October 1595, when the Scottish Chancellor John Maitland of Thirlestane, a strong pro-English courtier, died. A pro-Catholic faction, which upset the balance in James's court, replaced Maitland's power and strained relations with Elizabeth. Lee, Jr, "James VI and the Revival of Episcopacy in Scotland," p.52.

⁷⁰ Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.612; Doran, "Loving Cousins," pp.217-8; Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," pp.26-7; Michele Vignaux, "The Succession and Related Issues through the Correspondence of Elizabeth, James, and Robert Cecil," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.65-90.

⁷¹ Recently much work has been done on the subject of the English succession and the succession tracts, therefore it will not be repeated in detail here; however, a few instances will be examined. For example: Susan Doran, "Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.91-117; Margaret Jones-Davies, "Beyond Political Opportunism: John Mair (1467-1550) and Shakespeare's Involvement in the Succession Debate," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.327-52; Howard Nenner, *The Right to Be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714* (London, 1995); Jean-Cristophe Mayer, "Late Elizabethan Theatre and the Succession," in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, 2004), pp.371-94; Vignaux, "The Succession and Related Issues through the Correspondence of Elizabeth, James, and Robert Cecil"; Adams, "The Succession and Foreign Policy"; Myers, "The Gossip of History: The Question of the Succession in the State Papers (Domestic and Foreign)"; Paulina

various candidates.⁷² Those in favour of James's claim were often written by Scots who, whether with the king's direct blessing or not, supported their monarch's claim over all others.⁷³ James also personally participated in this literary and propaganda battle, and published *The True Law of Free Monarchies* in 1598, highlighting the divine right of kings.⁷⁴ Whilst James's treatise does not directly address the English succession – indeed it could not if he hoped to maintain any peace with Elizabeth – it did serve as a notice of how the Scottish king thought of the role of a monarch and how he would rule if he were to gain a new kingdom.

Possibly more dangerous to James than the succession pamphlet wars was the plot of Valentine Thomas, who in 1598 was captured whilst plotting to assassinate Elizabeth. He claimed that this was on the orders of James VI, although this could never be proven and there is no evidence that the king acted foolishly by supporting such a plot. Elizabeth's response was largely dismissive, but James was outraged at the accusations and extremely worried that people, whether in England or in Europe, would believe them. He instructed his ambassador to have these charges denounced at once, and gathered detailed accounts of the investigation and trial.⁷⁵ That James took this so much to heart is easily understood – he had been patiently professing the divine right of monarchs for years. The rash actions of an individual beyond his control could jeopardise years of careful diplomatic endeavour. James sought contemporary assurances from Elizabeth that she did not believe that he was involved, which she gave.⁷⁶ Notwithstanding these threats to his claim, many and serious though they may have been, the King of Scots foreign relations had been created and nurtured to confirm that he was on good and peaceful terms with as many powers as possible.

Kews and Susan Doran, eds., *Doubtful and Dangerous: The Question of Succession in Late Elizabethan England* (Manchester, 2014).

⁷² See for example: Mayer, *Breaking the Silence*.

⁷³ Thomas Craig, *The Right of Succession to the Kingdom of England, in Two Books (De Jure Successionis Regni Angliae, Libri Duo)*, trans. by James Gatherer, Eighteenth Century Collections Online ESTC Number: N005252 (London, 1703); Mayer, *Breaking the Silence*, pp.107–222; Doran, “Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts,” p.92.

⁷⁴ James VI, *The True Law of Free Monarchy, or The Reciprocall and Mutuall Duty Betwixt a Free King and His Naturall Subjects*; Doran, “Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts,” p.99.

⁷⁵ NRAS217, Box 14/462. “James VI's to Mr David Foulis (Copy),” (27 November 1598); NRAS217, Box 14/509. “Elizabeth I to Mr David Foulis (Copy),” (20 December 1598); NRAS217, Box 14/505. “Collection of the Principall Poynts on Valentyne Thomas His Confession Concerning the Practises against Her Ma[ties] Person Suscrybed by Himselfe the 20 of December 1598,” (20 December 1598); NRAS217, Box 14/501. “Regarding Valentine” (October 1598); TNA, SP 52/64 f.76. “Answers of King James VI to the Propositions Submitted to Him by Sir William Bowes” (31 May 1599); Doran, “Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?,” p.612n; Doran, “Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts,” pp.99, 107; Jacqueline Vaughan, “Secretaries, Statesmen and Spies: The Clerks of the Tudor Privy Council, C. 1540–C.1603” (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2007), p.96.

⁷⁶ James showed his concern by enacting a bond for his nobles swearing them to support his claim and fight for his cause should it be required, asserting that he was the true and rightful heir. This band specifically stated that no military action was to be taken prior to Elizabeth's death. TNA, SP 52/65 f.133. “General Band for the Preservation of King James VI and His Title to England and Ireland,” (November 1599); Doran, “Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts,” p.115.

Moreover, James had ensured that they were aware of and receptive to the idea of his succeeding Elizabeth, and that despite all the disagreements and differences of religion, opinion and policy, they would not oppose his claim; at least, not on their own.

Particularly concerning to James was the King of France, who had started his relationship with James as a Protestant but later converted as a matter of political expediency.⁷⁷ In 1593, Henri IV converted to Catholicism and in the following year was crowned King of France, despite the continued opposition of the Catholic League. Two years later, in 1596, Henri declared war on Spain in reprisal for the aid they were providing to the Catholic League in France. Pope Clement VIII rescinded Henri's ex-communication in July 1595 but this did not stop the Catholic League or Spain from their opposition and both the civil and international wars continued.⁷⁸ By October 1596, Henri had joined forces with Elizabeth and the United Provinces, who were already at war with Spain, and formed a 'triple alliance'.⁷⁹ Despite the differences of religion between France and her new Protestant allies, this treaty gave Henri aid from Elizabeth in exchange for fighting their mutual enemy, Spain. Elizabeth herself, although disappointed with Henri's conversion, realised she needed France to counterbalance the military power of Spain.⁸⁰

The formation of the League also influenced France's relations with Scotland, for Henri was trying to simultaneously please the Papacy and retain the support from England. Thus when James invited Henri to be godfather to his first-born the King of France had to proceed very carefully to avoid offence to any of the parties concerned.⁸¹ Indeed, the civil wars offered a real and convenient excuse for his absence from the ceremony. During this French mission in 1594, James Colville, the Scottish ambassador, was also asked to renew the Auld Alliance. However, Henri only reaffirmed the amity between the two kingdoms. It was not until 1599 that Colville returned to France and, alongside the Scottish resident ambassador there, negotiated a full renewal of the Auld Alliance, minus only the clause relating to mutual military aid, as Elizabeth could have seen this as hostility from both Scotland and France.⁸² James Lindsay, the King of Scots' secretary, was initially selected for this mission, which was to be combined with his voyage to receive surgery in Paris but his ill health prevented him from leaving

⁷⁷ For more on Henri IV's conversion see: Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588-1595.

⁷⁸ Buisseret, *Henry IV*, pp.54-74; Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, pp.77-83; Pitts, *Henri IV of France*, pp.176-203.

⁷⁹ Archives des Affaires étrangères, CP Angleterre vol.22 ff.491-517. "Treaty between Henri IV and Elizabeth I against Spain," (14 May 1596); Archives des Affaires étrangères, CP Angleterre vol.22 ff.518-535. "Treaty between Henri IV and the United Provinces against Spain. Ratified by Henri IV on 31 December 1596" (31 October 1596).

⁸⁰ Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas*, pp.70-8.

⁸¹ See: Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588-1595.

⁸² SC-FR_10.; TNA, SP 52/54 f.49. Henri IV, "Confirmation to the Scots of their rights, etc., in France," (16 September 1594); Bonner, "French Naturalization of the Scots in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," p.1089; Talbot, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560-1713*, pp.119-20.

in 1597 or 1598, and eventually Colville took his place and departed in 1599.⁸³ This mission was largely focused on renewing trading privileges between the auld allies, but it also was intended to show that despite Henri IV's conversion, James still counted France amongst his closest allies. Scotland's foreign policies towards France had not really changed.⁸⁴

The 1599 mission was also helped by the fact that the triple alliance that had tied Henri to Elizabeth had ended, giving the French king more autonomy in his diplomacy. The Treaty of Vervins (1598) ended the Franco-Spanish war with the triple alliance of England, France and the United Provinces and shook the balance of power within Europe. Although Henri IV had promised not to treat with Spain without the United Provinces and England, he reneged on his previous commitments and sued for peace. Elizabeth and the States General were invited to the negotiations, but could not agree on the terms and thus continued their war with Spain.⁸⁵ From a Scottish perspective it is important to note that despite not being part of the war or any of the alliances, Scotland is mentioned in the peace treaty, as a friend of both Spain and of France, with particular emphasis given to the Auld Alliance.⁸⁶ Firstly, this shows that James was considered important enough to be included in this treaty and secondly it illustrates that in contrast to the diplomacy James was conducting across the protestant North at this time, he was also close to two of the major Catholic powers of Western Europe. Equally intriguing is that this does not seem to have had any negative repercussions for James's claim in England, and Elizabeth seems to have simply ignored the matter. After the Treaty of Vervins Elizabeth renegotiated her alliance with the United Provinces. She knew that she could not afford to let the United Provinces fall; however the queen used the changing alliances to force the Dutch to pay more of the immediate costs.⁸⁷ Indeed, it seems likely that this is what Henri IV was counting on since both Elizabeth and Henri needed Spain to

⁸³ Lindsay died in September 1598 from prolonged ill health. "RPS," sec.1597/3/6 [4 March 1597 Perth Convention – Annexation of certain customs and imposts to the crown]; NRAS217, Box 14/482. "Aligation from James VI in favour of Mr John Lindsay of Balcarres appointed ambassador to France," (c 1597); NRAS217, Box 14/471. "Order from James VI to Mr John Lindsay of Balcarres," (21 April 1597); Alan Macdonald, "Lindsay, John of Balcarres, Lord Menmuir (1552-1598), Administrator," ed. by H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, *DNB* (Oxford, 2004); NRAS217, Box 14/477. "James VI to the King and Constable of France, to be sent with James Colville, Laird of Easte Wemyss" (3 September 1597); NRAS217, Box 14/476. "James VI to the King of France in Favour of James Colville, Laird of Easter Wemyss and Scottish Ambassador to France," (28 October 1597); *RPCS*, vol.6 p.19 [1 August 1599, Falkland, Henri IV to James VI in favour of James Colville, Scottish ambassador to France].

⁸⁴ Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, vol.5 pp.119–20 [23 May 1599, Fontainebleau, Henri IV a Roy d'Écosse]; TNA, SP 52/64 f.54. "Letters Patent of Henry IV of France to the Scots residing in his kingdom," (21 March 1599); Bonner, "French Naturalization of the Scots in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," p.1089; Talbott, *Conflict, Commerce and Franco-Scottish Relations, 1560–1713*, pp.15–33 passim.

⁸⁵ Croft, "Rex Pacificus, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain," pp.141–3.

⁸⁶ Claudine Vidal, Frédérique Pilleboue, and Robert Oresko, eds., *La paix de Vervins: 1598* (Laon, 1998), pp.25–6.

⁸⁷ Francis Gardiner Davenport, *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies* (Washington D. C., 1917), vol.1 pp.239–42 no.25 [16 August 1598, Treaty between England and the United Netherlands, concluded at Westminster, Ratification].

focus its attention on the Low Countries, rather than at either of them. The difference was that Elizabeth was still funding this war in men and wages, whilst Henri was not, or at least not officially.⁸⁸

Taking the Diplomatic Offensive

The Protestant League, which had first been discussed by James in 1589, was a vehicle that was used to highlight various ideals to various parties. In its initial expression, the vast majority of time invested in the League was spent attempting to convince the Danes and Germans that they ought to join with England and France against the Habsburgs.⁸⁹ In later renditions, this took on a more nuanced tone, arguing for a united Christendom against the Ottoman Turks.⁹⁰ In this guise, the King of Scots saw an opportunity to attempt an alliance with anyone who was an enemy of the Ottomans. In 1601, James wrote a commission for Sir Anthony Shirley, an English agent who simultaneously worked for England, Scotland and Shāh Abbas I of Persia.⁹¹ The Shāh was attempting to garner European support against the Turks, and to create trade links with Christendom that did not go through Turkish lands. Shirley's mission ended in Rome in May 1601, so it is likely that the letter was written prior to then; however it is not known if the Shāh ever received James's glowing commendation or not.⁹² Even if it did not reach its intended target, the letter is interesting, for James writes it not only as the King of Scotland, but also as the future king of England and Ireland.⁹³ He claims that he, unlike the current English administration (who did not approve of Shirley), supported the agent and would advance trade between Britain

⁸⁸ After the Treaty of Vervins Elizabeth renegotiated her position with the Dutch and in August 1598 they signed the York House Treaty which caused the Dutch to take over both the day-to-day command and pay of the English soldiers in their service. Trim, "Fighting 'Jacob's Warres'," p.177. In 1603 during the Anglo-Spanish peace negotiations Henri urges James VI&I not to abandon the Dutch, and both kingdoms agree to covertly continue to support them against Spain. Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy," p.10. Throughout the war the English (and later British) ambassador is a member of the States General – a unique position that ends with the death of James VI&I. Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War," p.66.

⁸⁹ See: Chapter Two: The Hunt for a Wife, 1584–1595

⁹⁰ *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.362 [August 1598, Instructions in Latin to David Bishop of Aberdeen and Sir Peter Young].

⁹¹ SC-PE_01. Sir Anthony Shirley (also spelt Sherley) was first sent to Persia in 1598. He returned as an agent of Shāh Abbās to Europe in early 1600. R. W. Ferrier, "The European Diplomacy of Shāh Abbās I and the First Persian Embassy to England," *Iran (Journal of Persian Studies)* 11 (January 1973), pp.75–6. James wrote in favour of Anthony's brother, Thomas in 1605. E. Denison Ross, "A Letter from James I to the Sultan Aḥmad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 7, no.2 (January 1934), pp.299–306. Shāh Abbas was relatively tolerant of Christianity and therefore it was prudent for James to attempt to garner his support as part of his broader plans for a united Christendom. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp.196–219.

⁹² Ferrier, "The European Diplomacy of Shāh Abbās I and the First Persian Embassy to England," p.76; Ross, "A Letter from James I to the Sultan Aḥmad," p.299; Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart, eds., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Online Edition, Cambridge Histories Online (Cambridge, 2008), vol.6 pp.386–8.

⁹³ NLS, Adv MS 33.1.7 vol.21 f.43. James VI, "Commission for Anthony Sherieius" (1601).

and Persia once he ascended the throne. It is this presentation, as the *de facto* ruler of England when dealing with far away countries that is most significant. Shirley remained in Italy after leaving the Persian embassy and worked as an agent for James, presenting the king as friendly to Catholics and gaining support for his candidacy to the English throne.⁹⁴

The final years of the sixteenth century saw a flurry of diplomatic activity between James and the Papacy in an effort to garner Clement VIII's support for James's succession claim as well as his plans for a united Christian League to fight the Ottomans.⁹⁵ In 1599, under the pretence of asking for a bishop's hat for a Scottish cardinal, James wrote Clement. In his letter the king expressed admiration for the Holy See.⁹⁶ This letter, carried by Edward Drummond, was received with some scepticism, and the Pope sent his response back with Drummond.⁹⁷ Clement wanted more assurance of James's willingness to convert to Catholicism, and remained vague regarding the requested bishop's hat. James, however, was unable to reply this time as the English had discovered his previous letter to the Pope. Elizabeth directed her ambassador to question James regarding his correspondence as well as the rumours that James was going to have his son educated as a Catholic.⁹⁸ James denied any underhanded dealings with the Papacy, informing the English ambassador:

I wish you to be that far acquainted with my disposition that I never harboured such base thoughts as for any respects that can be imagined to sell the smallest part of my country, much less my son, to any pope or prince in the world. No, I never thought so basely as that either myself, [or my son's] person or education, should be in the reverence of any pope, king or queen living. For, although I thank God I be in friendship with all the Christian princes in E[urope], yet my dealing with any of them shall, with God's grace, be so honourable as I shall never need to be ashamed thereof.⁹⁹

Whilst James convinced Elizabeth that there was no danger of his conversion, the discovery of his communications with the Pope made the king nervous, and both he and his secretary, James Lord Elphinstone, claimed the

⁹⁴ Robert Cecil, *The Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James VI King of Scotland: Now First Published* (London, 1766), pp.155-6 [c. 1602, Lord Henry Howard to Mr. E Bruce].

⁹⁵ Clement had been elected to the Papacy in January 1592.

⁹⁶ NRAS217, Box 14/498. James VI, "James VI to the Pope (Copy)," (24 September 1599); *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.742-3 [24 September 1599, James VI to Pope Clement VIII].

⁹⁷ ASV, Arm.XLIV vol.44 ff.91-95. "Pope Clement VIII to James VI" (13 April 1600).

⁹⁸ According to the Earl of Bothwell it was a second letter, carried by Patrick Stewart and written in 1600 that was discovered by English agents and caused Elizabeth concern. The second letter has not been discovered, so it is possible that either Stewart carried the letter instead of Drummond, Bothwell was mistaken as to the carrier or the second letter was lost. *CSP Spain*, vol.17 pp.667-8 no.689 [August 1600, Advices from Scotland given by the Earl of Bothwell].

⁹⁹ Hatfield House, CP 133/185. "James VI to Elizabeth I," (September 1600).

letter had been forged.¹⁰⁰ It is likely that this was untrue; however it solved the political problem.¹⁰¹ Because of the difficulties posed by the 1599 letter, when James received the Pope's response in 1600 the king instructed his wife, the Catholic Queen Anna, to answer on his behalf. Anna used her position as Queen to employ the royal 'we' with great effect, making it possible to simultaneously interpret the letter as being from both her and the king or from her alone.¹⁰² Anna apologised on her husband's behalf, but informed the Pope that as the king was awaiting confirmation of his succession to the English throne he could not afford to alienate anyone.¹⁰³ The Pope was much more receptive to this letter, and replied to both Anna and James in 1602.¹⁰⁴ In this response, Clement urged Anna to convert her husband to Catholicism, and whilst he was not blinded by James's posturing, Clement was not entirely cynical either.¹⁰⁵

The impetus for James's diplomatic missions in the Italian Peninsula was to benefit from the pro-Catholic, but anti-Spanish, sentiments of the potentates there.¹⁰⁶ Clement was not partial to Philip II, nor was he interested in blindly following Spain's lead. The Pope was anxious to reclaim Scotland for the church without military assistance from Spain, and James used this desire to separate himself from Spain in the latter half of the 1590s.¹⁰⁷ As head of the Catholic faith, the Pope was, in the name of the church, able to control Philip and keep him from attempting to overrun Scotland. The Pope also promised to support James's claim to the English throne above Spain's if James would only convert to Catholicism.¹⁰⁸ Clement had his own ideas about the English succession, and

¹⁰⁰ Gray, *Letters & Papers*, p.210n. In 1609 James's 1599 letter to the Pope resurfaced to public outcry, and on this occasion Elphinstone claimed to have tricked James into signing it. *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.740-2 [September 1599, Letters in the King's name to the court of Rome]; Spottiswood, *Spottiswood*, vol.3 p.197 [1608].

¹⁰¹ The secretary was initially sentenced to death, however Queen Anna and one of her ladies in waiting, Jane Drummond, a possible relation of Edward Drummond (the man who carried the letters to the Pope) and a definite relation of James Elphinstone entreated James to be lenient with his secretary. Ultimately he was exiled and allowed to return to his lands within two years. *CSP Venice*, vol.11 p.278 no.503 [14 May 1609, Marc' Antonio Correr, Venetian Ambassador in England, to the Doge and Senate]; Elizabeth Ewan, *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women: From Earliest Times to 2004*, Reprint (Edinburgh, 2007), p.103; Helen Margaret Payne, "Aristocratic Women, Power, Patronage and Family Networks at the Jacobean Court, 1603-1625," in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700*, ed. by James Daybell (Aldershot, 2004), p.176. For more see: Fry, "Perceptions of Influence," pp.274-5.

¹⁰² Warner, "James VI and Rome," pp.126-7 [August 1601, Letter from Anna to Pope Clement VIII]; Ward, "James VI and the Papacy," pp.249-52; Fry, "Perceptions of Influence," pp.275-6.

¹⁰³ Fry, "Perceptions of Influence," p.276.

¹⁰⁴ ASV, Arm.XLIV vol.46 f.215. "Pope Clement VIII to Anna, Queen of Scotland," (16 July 1602); ASV, Arm.XLIV vol.46 f.232. "Pope Clement VIII to Anna, Queen of Scotland," (9 August 1602); ASV, Arm.XLIV vol.46 ff.231v-232r. "Pope Clement VIII to James VI," (9 August 1602).

¹⁰⁵ Christian Schneider, "A Kingdom for a Catholic? Pope Clement VIII, King James VI/I and the English Succession in International Diplomacy (1592-1605)," *International History Review* Online Publication (January 10, 2014), pp.2, 10, 15.

¹⁰⁶ SC-FL_03.; SC-FL_04.; SC-SY_01.; SC-PC_02.; SC-VE_01.

¹⁰⁷ Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.385.

¹⁰⁸ BL, Add MS 32092 f.143. "Reasons for James VI Joining with the Pope," (May 1596). In 1596 it was reported that the Pope had sent money to the Scottish Catholics, to be used for the

whilst he did not want a heretic installed, he was not keen on a Spanish puppet either.¹⁰⁹

James, despite being an ally of Spain according to the text of the Peace of Vervins, was an active supporter of the United Provinces. The Scots-Dutch brigade was a central and significant part of the conflict and vital to the strength of the rebellion.¹¹⁰ He continued to allow levies to be filled within his kingdom and although in 1601 he expressly forbade the levy commissioners from 'striking the drums' to announce their levy or taking their commission out of the kingdom in an attempt to downplay the levies.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the soldiers continued to arrive in the Low Countries in considerable numbers. The Dutch in return were very conscious of Scottish support, and maintained an agent, Adrian Damman, at the Scottish court to continually encourage James to support the Scots-Dutch brigade with more troops and subsidies.¹¹²

Despite the support, James had received from both Catholics and Protestants, other claimants to the English throne continued to threaten James's plans. One major rival was the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia. After 1595, support grew for the Infanta's claim to the English throne and whilst James had been listed in the Treaty of Vervins as a friend to Spain, he did not fully trust Philip II and took steps to address the new diplomatic situation.¹¹³ In 1598, the marriage of the Infanta to the Archduke Albert went ahead and the couple were given full control over the Spanish Netherlands as a wedding present.¹¹⁴ This concession was intended to allay the fears of Catholic powers that Spain was becoming too powerful but few European powers were convinced. Just months later the King of Spain died, leaving his son and namesake, Philip III, to inherit

conversion of the kingdom. TNA, SP 52/58 f.23. "Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley," (24 February 1596). In 1600, the Pope was persuaded to build the Scots College in Rome on the argument that Scotland's political importance would only increase once James became king of England, and thus it was important to strengthen Papal-Scottish relations. McNally, "Scottish Catholics Abroad, 1603-88: Evidence Derived from the Archives of the Scots Colleges," p.262.

¹⁰⁹ Clement made significant attempts to encourage Philip III and Henri IV to nominate an alternative candidate to the Infanta or James, although he preferred one related to him. Schneider, "A Kingdom for a Catholic?"

¹¹⁰ See for example Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*; Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.30-1. See also: Chapter Three: Fears, Hopes & Reality, 1588-1595.

¹¹¹ There was with a fine of £1000 Scots to be imposed if the recruiters broke these terms. *RPCS*, vol.6 p.721 [25 March 1602, Brechin].

¹¹² For more on Damman's mission to Scotland see UP-SC_03. Damman was also sent by James to the United Provinces in 1596 to retrieve the Earl of Errol, who had been temporarily captured there whilst trying to return to Scotland from exile; for this mission see SC-UP_05.

¹¹³ Doran, "Three Late-Elizabethan Succession Tracts," p.95; Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, p.165; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.6; Myers, "The Gossip of History: The Question of the Succession in the State Papers (Domestic and Foreign)," p.61.

¹¹⁴ Davenport, *European Treaties*, vol.1 pp.235-8 no.24 [6 May 1598, Madrid, Cession of the Netherlands by Philip II of Spain to his daughter, Isabella-Clara-Eugenia]; Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica*, p.18; Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, pp.52-6. Albert had been acting as governor of the Spanish Netherlands since 1595. Edward Tenace, "A Strategy of Reaction: The Armadas of 1596 and 1597 and the Spanish Struggle for European Hegemony," *EHR* 118, no.478 (2003), p.857.

the throne. James saw in this an opportunity for a new diplomatic avenue to be pursued. Entirely separate relations with the Archduke could be conducted as opposed to those with Spain and he wrote to the ducal couple to congratulate them on their marriage and wish them success.¹¹⁵ This was a start to closer relations between James and the Archdukes, which would ultimately influence Catholic opinion and ensure that the Habsburgs did not oppose the Scot's eventual succession to the English throne.¹¹⁶ Indeed, as argued earlier in this thesis, James used the diplomatic assets available to him extremely effectively and secured the support of the archdukes, at least in part, through continually holding up the possibility of his Catholic conversion to them. James must have been at least partially convincing, for the Infanta expressed her belief in James's potential for conversion to the Duke of Lerma in 1603 based on her relationship with him.¹¹⁷

The Archdukes were also aware of the benefit of strengthening their ties with James, given his close relations with the United Provinces and the presence of the Scots-Dutch brigades in the Low Countries.¹¹⁸ In February 1603 they sent an agent, Nicholas Scorza, whose sole mission was to strengthen the friendship between the monarchs and to prevent Scotland from further levying soldiers for the United Provinces.¹¹⁹ Scorza received his first audience with James on 20 March. Knowing of Elizabeth's failing health he went so far as to promise that the Archdukes would support James's claim to the throne, and even provide money and men if he had to fight for his claim.¹²⁰ Only six days later James was informed

¹¹⁵ James sent an envoy to the Archdukes in 1600. Albert replied in writing to James in March 1601, to which James replied in November. Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, pp.166, 166n.

¹¹⁶ The Archdukes pursued an independent foreign policy to Spain. They were not interested in pursuing Isabella's claim, and were quick to write to James to formally congratulate him on the succession in 1603. By the time the Spanish ambassador heard of this, it was too late for Philip to even consider mounting an opposition in favour of his sister. Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603," p.513; Goldman, "The Political Culture of Empire: The Spanish Council of State and Foreign Policy under Philip III, 1598-1621," pp.78-9; Croft, "Rex Pacificus, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain," p.148; Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Hapsburgs, 1598-1625*, p.13.

¹¹⁷ The Infanta was probably not fooled by James, but rather hoped that, given the right external conditions, James's apparent sympathies would be moved to conversion. Antonio Rodríguez Villa, *Correspondencia de la Infanta Archiduquesa Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria con el Duque de Lerma y otros Personajes* (Madrid, 1906), pp.82-4 no.58 [16 April 1603, Archduchess Isabella to the Duke of Lerma].

¹¹⁸ In addition to the Scots-Dutch brigades, if James were successful in his claim for the English throne he would also gain control over the Anglo-Dutch brigades, which at that point comprised approximately 20% of the Dutch army. Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War," p.64; Trim, "Fighting 'Jacob's Warres'," p.185.

¹¹⁹ SN-SC_01.

¹²⁰ Henri Lonchay and Joseph Cuvelier, eds., *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVIIe siècle* (Brussels, 1923), vol.1 pp.141-2 [26 April 1603, Report of Nicholas Scorza, the Archduke's agent in Scotland].

that Elizabeth had died and he had been announced as her heir, making Scorza's assurances comforting, but redundant.¹²¹

In addition to befriending the Archdukes, James also took steps to endear himself the new king of Spain, Philip III. In 1598 James wrote to Philip informing him that he was sending Colonel William Semple to act as his agent regarding Scoto-Spanish relations.¹²² Semple, who had also worked as a Spanish agent, was instructed to find out what Philip III thought of James and how he intended to continue regarding Isabella's succession claim in addition to trade issues.¹²³ Semple reported to James in October 1600, and encouraged the king to convert and embrace Catholicism.¹²⁴ James ignored this advice, but benefited from the fact that Philip III was still establishing his own authority within his kingdom and managing a war on multiple fronts. Therefore, for the moment Philip did not pose a serious threat to Scotland, despite his reluctance to support the Stuart succession in England.¹²⁵

The Habsburgs were not the only rulers who wanted someone other than James to succeed Elizabeth – the problem was that no one could agree on whom that should be. As has already been mentioned, the Papacy and the Italian potentates did not want a Spanish puppet to rule England for fear that this would further strengthen the Habsburg hegemony. Clement VIII wanted France and Spain to agree on an alternative successor for England, but through 1601, the Auld Alliance held firm. In that year Henri IV wrote to the Pope declaring that he could not support another candidate for the English throne and that he believed James VI to be the true heir and likely to convert once he had succeeded.¹²⁶ Henri had good reason for supporting James in 1601, as he had at that time received an embassy led by Ludovick Stuart, second Duke of Lennox.¹²⁷ This mission was sent to strengthen the Auld Alliance in addition to discussing issues of trade. The Commission of Royal Burghs paid for the mission in order to

¹²¹ Robert Carey arrived on 26 March with the news of Elizabeth's death; EN-SC_26. The promises of friendship were not empty; after James accession the two monarchs exchanged gifts and letters as old acquaintances. Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, pp.167–9.

¹²² AGS, E 839.177. "James VI to Philip III," (April 1598).

¹²³ SC-SP_07.; SC-SP_06.; SCA, CA4/1/14. "Instructions given by King James VI to William Semple, his ambassador extraordinary to Philip III," (1599); TNA, SP 12/271 f.11. "Henry Lock to Secretary Cecil" (10 June 1599). Semple's allegiances are difficult to determine and although he was very active in the diplomacy of the period whom he was working for and whether it was official or rouge is difficult to determine. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica*, p.14; Loomie, "Sir William Semple and Bristol's Andalucian Trade"; McNally, "Scottish Catholics Abroad, 1603-88: Evidence Derived from the Archives of the Scots Colleges," p.263; Redworth, "Between Four Kingdoms"; SCA, CA4/9/10. "Semple to Philip III, Reasons why Scotland would welcome the King of Spain," (No Date); Worthington, "Alternative Diplomacy? Scottish Exiles at the Courts of the Habsburgs and Their Allies, 1618-1648," pp.56–8.

¹²⁴ NLS, Adv MS 33.1.10 f.7. "Robert Semple to James VI" (12 October 1600).

¹²⁵ Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603," p.514.

¹²⁶ Robert Cecil, *The Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James VI King of Scotland: Now First Published* (London, 1766), pp.155–6 [c. 1602, Lord Henry Howard to Mr. E Bruce]; Mackie, "Secret Agent," p.384.

¹²⁷ SC-FR_12.; Murdoch, "Diplomacy in Transition: Stuart-British Diplomacy in Northern Europe, 1603-1618," p.102.

ensure that their petitions were given the highest priority.¹²⁸ They also sent a commissioner with the embassy to ensure their case was dealt with.¹²⁹ James made use of the burghs' needs to push his cause with Henri and attempt to convince the King of France that it would be beneficial to him if James were to succeed Elizabeth.

These events illustrate the effectiveness of James's policies. The King of Scots pursued his agenda through a series of unofficial missions conducted by informal agents whom he could deny if their actions provoked negative responses from his Protestant allies, such as England. He did so in combination with some well-placed ambassadorial missions. Through this combination he successfully secured the support of both France and the Infanta - who was in theory his chief rival. According to some scholars, James's accomplishments faded slightly in 1602, when Henri began to fear that a united Scotland and England would make James too powerful. This was in addition to Henri's growing fears of alienating the Pope, who had his own choice of succession candidate - a member of his extended family whom Clement could control.¹³⁰ However, by this point Philip III had decided to proceed with his plans for the succession alone, and failed to believe that Henri was sincere in his claims of supporting the Habsburg candidate.¹³¹ Ultimately the succession came about so quickly and effectively that neither had the ability to plan nor time to respond. The lack of a European alliance to oppose James proved to be a significant success, and one that is all too often taken for granted. James's other negotiations with Robert Cecil and the English courtiers ensured that it was he alone who was named Elizabeth's heir.

Conclusion

Whilst James presented himself as a Protestant prince to his Danish and German allies, the King of Scots showed a very different face to his Catholic friends. To the Italian States and France James presented himself as a convert-in-waiting, a tolerant monarch and an alternative to the over-mighty Habsburg hegemony. This tightrope between religious and political powers was one that only a skilled diplomat could successfully walk, but James proved capable of the task. As will be

¹²⁸ A previous example of this was seen in: Chapter One: Establishing Policies, 1584-1587

¹²⁹ Marwick, *Records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland*, vol.2 pp.104-5 [7 July 1601, Ayr, Commission of Customes in France], p.115 115 [10 July 1601, Edinburgh Commission of Customes in France], p.147 147 [7 July 1602, Ayr, Impost called to pay for the mission of Lennox and Forrett to France in 1601].

¹³⁰ Schneider, "A Kingdom for a Catholic?," p.10; Francis Edwards, *The Succession, Bye and Main Plots of 1601-1603* (Dublin, 2006), p.74; Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603," p.510; Mackie, "James VI. and I. and the Peace with Spain, 1604," p.243. The Venetian secretary in England reported just before Elizabeth's death that James anxious that Henri did not support him, a sentiment the secretary believed was supported by the conversations he had held with the French ambassador. *CSP Venice*, vol.9 pp.559-60 no.1163 [27 March 1603, Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli, Venetian Secretary in England to the Doge and Senate].

¹³¹ Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica*, pp.59, 74, 104-9; Goldman, "The Political Culture of Empire: The Spanish Council of State and Foreign Policy under Philip III, 1598-1621," pp.74-5, 78-80; Loomie, "Philip III and the Stuart Succession in England, 1600-1603."

seen below, this policy extended to his dealings with the Habsburg Empire. His friendship with the Archdukes may have been motivated by James's desire to minimise the Infanta's opposition to his succession claim, but it came at the cost of threatening his open and strong relations with the United Provinces. As this illustrates, this contrasting policy is perhaps best seen in the Low Countries, where agents from opposing sides of a war both petitioned Scotland to assist them.¹³² That the king was communicating that he had little sympathy for the United Provinces to the Archdukes, whilst at the same time allowing levies of hundreds of Scots to serve in the Scots-Dutch brigade, shows the dangerous and difficult path that the king had taken. That no one seriously challenged him on this, and that both sides remained on peaceful and friendly terms, shows that his policy was successful in this sphere. Elsewhere, he scored some additional notable successes.

In 1598, James wrote to Christian IV of Denmark-Norway, his brother-in-law, as well as some of the German princes who were related to Queen Anna, asking for their support should James be required to enforce his claim to the English throne with arms.¹³³ He hoped that familial ties would induce them to assist him. As the sixteenth century drew to a close, and right up until Elizabeth's death, James effectively did all he could to ensure that he had as many supporters as possible, in as many locations as possible. Obviously, James's best supporter would have been Elizabeth and throughout his reign he ensured that his dealings with Catholic powers or his other diplomatic activities never pushed Elizabeth so far as to publicly denounce him. Since for her own reasons she stubbornly refused to answer the succession issue herself, James was forced to canvas for other supporters in England.¹³⁴ He had always hoped that his known kindness towards Catholics would persuade the English Catholics to support him, but James also needed ministers and those with influence at court to take up his cause. In the end, James made bridges with Robert Cecil who eventually did the most to secure English acceptance of James as successor. English acceptance was not the single deciding factor; rather, it was James's foreign relations with Europe that ultimately did the most to ensure his peaceful succession.

From Scandinavia to Persia James communicated with rulers and forged relationships. He straddled religious and political divides, remained officially neutral through wars between friends and ensured that throughout Europe there was no one who would oppose him. James neutralised Philip by befriending Isabella and continued to promote the Auld Alliance despite Henri's conversion to Catholicism in an attempt to minimise oppositions to his diplomatic influence. He also allowed pro-Catholic factions within his kingdom to survive despite the

¹³² Indeed, Scotland was already supporting both sides through the provision of soldiers. The Scots-Dutch brigades fought for the United Provinces but some had gone over to serve the Prince of Parma in the Spanish Netherlands. Ferguson, *Scots Brigade*, vol.1 p.46n.

¹³³ Doran, "James VI and the English Succession."

¹³⁴ Doran, "Revenge Her Foul and Most Unnatural Murder?," p.612; Mueller, "To My Very Good Brother the King of Scots"; Jenny Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community: Scotland, 1470-1625* (Edinburgh, 1991), p.150; Grant, "The Making of the Anglo-Scottish Alliance of 1586," p.211.

Kirk's disapproval and remained in communication with the Pope in order to ensure that Catholics would have no strong opposition to him as a candidate. In addition to this the king pursued an image of being a Protestant Prince with his northern allies, allowing levies to the United Provinces, offering plans for a League against both the Turkish barbarians and the Roman heretics, and strengthening Scotland's ties with the naval power and military might of Denmark-Norway and the German Protestant Princes. It was these policies, just as much as his successful negotiating with Elizabeth's councillors, that guaranteed that the king would gain new kingdoms by peace, as well as bring peace to those new dominions.

CONCLUSION: THE IMPACT OF EXPERIENCE & AMBITION

*Let not this news make you proud or insolent, for a king's son
and heir was ye before, and no more are ye yet.*¹

In April 1603, shortly before James left Scotland for London, he wrote to his son and heir, Prince Henry, to remind him that he was already a king's son and that the increased size of his future realm did not affect this. It is possible to surmise from this and James's other writings and actions that he did not consider the Union of the Crowns as the ultimate aim or the limits of his ambition, either for himself or for his dynasty. James's experience as King of Scots, as well as his ambition for his family had a significant effect on the course of both British and European early modern history. Moreover, as this thesis has shown, James's foreign relations also had a meaningful impact on the history of Scotland in the late sixteenth century and both its, and the Stuarts', role in early modern European diplomacy.

When James succeeded Elizabeth I he gained two additional kingdoms as well as a war. Within a year, a peace treaty had been concluded and a new phase of British diplomacy had been implemented. Whilst the Anglo-Habsburg peace of 1604 did not rely solely on James's arrival - as he claimed in his speech to parliament - his ability to be seen to remain at peace with everyone despite the numerous conflicts that occurred in Europe in the latter sixteenth century was a true accomplishment.² That James was able to maintain alliances and avoid irrevocable religious decisions as well as to evade becoming a puppet of any of the larger, often more powerful rulers of his day is remarkable. Through twenty years of personal rule in Scotland James developed his diplomatic skills and built up his foreign relations - connections that, along with peace, he brought with him to England. James's Scottish foreign relations had a significant influence on his

¹ Akrigg, *Letters of King James VI&I*, p.211 no.95 [April 1603, James VI to Prince Henry]. The tone of caution and advice in the letter is understandable considering that James sent with this letter a copy of *Basilikon Doron*, his book of kingly advice for his son which was first printed for the public in March 1603. James Doelman, "A King of Thine Own Heart': The English Reception of King James VI and I's *Basilikon Doron*," *Seventeenth Century* 9, no.1 (1994), pp.1-9.

² 'I haue euer, I praise God, yet kept Peace and amitie with all, which hath bene so farre tyed to my person, as at my comming here you are witnesses I found the State embarqued in a great and tedious warre, and onely by mine arriuall here, and by the Peace in my Person, is now amitie kept, where warre was before ...' James VI&I, *The Kings Maiesties Speech as It Was Deliuered by Him in the Vpper House of the Parliament to the Lords Spirituall and Temporall, and to the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses There Assembled on Munday the 19 Day of March 1603 Being the First Day of This Present Parliament and the First Parliament of His Majesties Raigne.*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 14390.7 (Edinburgh, 1604), f.A3v-r.

'British' diplomacy after 1603.³ For example, it was James's pre-existing relationship with the Archdukes that prompted their immediate recognition of his succession. This action ultimately ended any plans Philip III might have still harboured of a Spanish candidate succeeding Elizabeth.

Throughout the reign of James VI, Scotland was well known and often considered as a meaningful player in European politics. Furthermore, James regularly considered European powers as he made political decisions. Scotland's strategic position in relation to England, France and Spain also had implications for its place in the international table. However, without the diplomatic skill of Scotland's king, the kingdom would not have been the 'middling power' that it was.⁴ James had the ability to use vague promises, plausible deniability and power dynamics to improve his own, and his kingdom's, position. The king reinforced this by the strategic deployment and support of troops in foreign armies, as well as by continually renewing and re-negotiating trade agreements. This is not to say that every one of his plans or missions succeeded, nor did each mission return with the promises and alliances James had hoped for. Indeed, the Scottish king was not the only monarch capable of vague promises or who sent mixed messages which could be interpreted in a number of ways by contemporaries and historians alike. These missions, which did not yield obvious or immediate results should be seen in the light of James VI's wider diplomatic strategy. Additionally, diplomatic history is filled with missions that were planned but never happened, treaties that were discussed but never signed, and wars that were feared but never came. Their lack of success or incomplete nature does not make them any less valuable to the study of diplomatic history, nor does their 'failure' imply that they were either insignificant or useless.

James's Foreign Policy: The Length and Breadth of Europe

This thesis has shown that James VI maintained and developed several key relationships with foreign powers which have throughout the thesis been considered in chronological sections. This has, on occasion, created artificial divisions which make it difficult to recognise the continually shifting nature of individual relationships throughout the entirety of James's personal rule in Scotland. The conclusion provides an opportunity to review the ebb and flow of James's diplomatic policies geographically over the whole temporal scope of this thesis. This allows for some more nuanced conclusions to be made alongside

³ Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community*, p.150; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.5; Murdoch, "Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart," p.14. In particular James had several Scots who were well placed in foreign courts without being official ambassadors prior to 1603, and these individuals quickly became integral to the Stuart-British diplomatic office. Kalinowska, "Pardon Me My Lord, That I Wrytte to Your Honor in Scottish..." - William Bruce as the First Stuart Diplomatic Agent in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth"; Murdoch, "Diplomacy in Transition: Stuart-British Diplomacy in Northern Europe, 1603-1618"; Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*; Murdoch, "Scottish Ambassadors and British Diplomacy 1618-1635."

⁴ Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety*, p.9.

emphasising factors that, whilst present in the individual chapters, were not as obvious as they become in this brief summary of James's foreign relationships.

Despite some early diplomatic disputes between Scotland and Denmark-Norway, namely the ownership of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, James maintained strong trading relations with the Danes. James allowed them to levy Scottish soldiers on several occasions. When the king began to look for a bride, the Protestant daughters of Frederik II were strong contenders, and the younger daughter, Anna, would eventually become Scotland's queen. This personal relationship was strengthened by marriage and James's visit to the kingdom to retrieve his bride in 1589-1590, making Denmark-Norway a close ally to Scotland throughout the 1590s. Although it has often been overlooked, Denmark-Norway was a consistent and close ally to Scotland and acted as a springboard to Scottish relations with other powers, such as the German Protestant princes and served to prohibit the development of full diplomatic relations with Sweden, as the kingdom was at war with his brother-in-law throughout the period.⁵

James's strong ties with Denmark-Norway through his marriage and trade agreements had a significant impact not only on England and on Ireland's forthcoming relations with that kingdom, but also with Stuart foreign policy as rulers of 'Great Britain' throughout the early seventeenth century. Indeed, British involvement in the Thirty Years' War was partially based on the Stuart-Oldenburg alliance, and even events such as the Wars of the Three Kingdoms were affected by the alliance that came from James VI's diplomatic activities as King of Scots.⁶ James's, and indeed Scotland's close ties with France through the Auld Alliance also influenced later British policies, and this and his other foreign relationships continued to affect how the Stuarts were perceived in Europe and what influence they had over foreign politics.

Scotland's closest geographic neighbour was also James's most complicated foreign relationship, and Anglo-Scottish relations were, until this thesis, the only aspect of James's diplomacy to have received significant scholarly attention. Until 1586, Scotland and England were not at war, but neither were they tied to any form of peace, and traditionally had been enemies more often than friends. James was kidnapped by a group of pro-English Scottish nobles in the early 1580s, and once he escaped his animosity towards England was palpable. However, knowing of his claim to Elizabeth's throne, James was loath to do anything too serious to offend his southern neighbour. Elizabeth likewise knew that she needed Scotland as an ally, and this need grew as the threat of a Spanish invasion increased. In 1586, the League of Amity between England and Scotland was signed, and it was tested the following year with the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. In 1588, the *Gran Armada* allowed James to use his strategic position in an attempt to persuade Elizabeth to name him as her successor. The threat of invasion was not enough to sway her opinion, and in the early 1590s James moved away from Elizabeth and

⁵ For more on Scoto-Swedish relations see: Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance, Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*.

⁶ Kirchner, "England and Denmark, 1558-1588"; Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway*, pp.1, 44-63, 104; Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War," pp.117-35, 179.

sought to strengthen his other relations, namely with France, Spain and Denmark-Norway.

The birth of James's son, Henry Frederik, caused an improvement in Anglo-Scottish relations. There were several recurring issues between Scotland and England, mainly problems along the Borders, Scottish Highlanders being involved in the Irish revolt, and the irregularity and varying amount of James's English pension. The latter 1590s were dominated by a series of tracts discussing the English succession and this strained James's relations with Elizabeth. James strengthened his connections with individual English courtiers in this period, notably the Earl of Essex and Robert Cecil. These connections, in conjunction with his diplomatic activities in Europe created the circumstances whereby in 1603 James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth I. The succession was not the only diplomatic issue between Scotland and England, but it increasingly became the dominant issue in Anglo-Scottish relations as time progressed.

James VI closely followed events in the Netherlands, and the importance of Scottish soldiers and trade to the Low Countries ensured that they remained interested in Scottish affairs as well. The close relationship is reflected in the States General's invitation to Prince Henry's baptism, and their gift of an annual pension shows the importance they placed upon their connection with James. Levies, such as the one attempted in the late 1580s, in addition to the Scotto-Dutch brigades already present in the fighting and very influential in current and future conflicts, ensured that Scoto-Dutch relations would remain central to Jacobean foreign policy.⁷ Whilst James VI, like Elizabeth, might have been uncomfortable with the idea of a people rebelling against their divinely appointed monarch, he recognised the value of an independent States General and a weakened Habsburg Empire.

When James succeeded to the English throne the Dutch were one of the first to congratulate the new king, anxious to ensure that James would continue the support that Elizabeth had given them over the previous twenty years. James accession changed the nature of both Scottish and English relations with the United Provinces. Based in part on Scotland's previous support of the United Provinces, the Dutch ambassador hoped and urged the king to continue not only the Anglo-Dutch brigades, but also the Scottish units after his accession and then again after the Anglo-Habsburg peace of 1604.⁸ When James succeeded Elizabeth the English Privy Council recognised that the king had been at peace with Spain and the Spanish Netherlands and this might influence his English foreign policies:

... We dare not presume in any other sort to make levies; because we know not upon what terms your Majesty meaneth to stand with those princes, ... your Majesty hath in right of your crown of Scotland amity with Spain and

⁷ See for example: James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1899).

⁸ Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica*, pp.108-9; Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.24. For more on the English relations with the United Provinces see Trim, "Fighting 'Jacob's Warres'"; Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War."

the Archduke; but in the succession to the throne of England a desent cast upon you of confederacy with these provinces ...⁹

James's foreign relations changed due to the addition of England and Ireland to his dominions; however this quote shows that the accession of a new king also changed the pre-existing nature of English foreign relations. This is not to say that the policies themselves always changed but rather that many of those policies assumed a particularly Stuart dimension.¹⁰

The German princes first became important to James during his visit to Denmark-Norway to retrieve his bride in 1589-1590. He met with them personally to try to convince them to form a Protestant League. Despite the failure to create the League, Scottish relations with the Protestant German Princes remained strong throughout the 1590s. In 1594 they were invited to Prince Henry's baptism and four years later James sent a further mission, this time asking for their support for his claim to the English throne and for them to encourage Elizabeth to name him as her heir. As in the case of Denmark-Norway he received lukewarm answers regarding this latter mission, but this does not seem to have damaged James's limited relations with the various German princes, whom he was aware of and friendly towards throughout his personal rule.¹¹

James's policy of making alliances with as many rulers as possible meant that as well as presenting himself as a Protestant Prince to his German, Danish and English associates; he also sought to build up his image as a king who was sympathetic towards Catholicism. To this end, James pursued relations with France, several Italian Dukes and the Papacy in addition to his politically calculated treatment of Catholics in Scotland.

Scotland's relationship with France in the late sixteenth century was one of continued friendship, although this association remained largely commercial with limited military assets.¹² During the minority of Mary Queen of Scots France had come to the aid of Scotland against the English, and James and his nobility would have known this and hoped for something similar as James reached his minority. Indeed, the presence of Esmé Stuart, Duke of Lennox in the early 1580s and his pro-French policies marked a significant shift from the pro-English attitudes of James's previous regent advisor. The Ruthven Raid to kidnap James and drive Lennox out of Scotland was condoned and assisted by Elizabeth, and thus it was tradition as much as familial bonds which caused James to turn first to France as

⁹ Hatfield House, CP 134/32. "Lords of the English Privy Council to King James," (18 April 1603).

¹⁰ For more on the peace negotiations see Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Hapsburgs, 1598-1625*, p.13; Croft, "Rex Pacificus, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain"; Croft, "State of the World"; Fry, "Perceptions of Influence"; Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy"; Mackie, "James VI. and I. and the Peace with Spain, 1604"; Patrick Lincoln Williams, "The Court and Councils of Philip III of Spain" (PhD Thesis, University College London, 1973), p.290.

¹¹ For information regarding Scoto-German trade, which strengthened and influenced diplomacy, see: Zickermann, *Across the German Sea*.

¹² The Scots who served in the French regiments are one example of the material aspects to this relationship. Murdoch and Grosjean, *Alexander Leslie and the Scottish Generals of the Thirty Years' War*, pp.28-9.

he began his personal rule. Sadly for James, Henri III was not at liberty to help Scotland as Henri II had – for he was fighting, and at that point in time losing a civil and religious war in his own kingdom. As France descended into civil war James sought out contact with the Protestant and Catholic leaders, simultaneously dealing with Henri of Navarre and Henri III. After Navarre became heir and then king, James continued to work with France, renewing the ‘Auld Alliance’, continuing to allow Scottish soldiers to be levied for French service and dealing with trade issues.¹³ However, in terms of concrete support for his ambitions regarding England, James’s talks with France were less successful.

Throughout James’s personal rule Spain was a difficult friend to keep, but an essential one not to lose. Their relationship was never entirely honest and was often based on the potential of short term benefits. Additionally, both sides saw that by retaining amicable relations and hedged promises of assistance that never materialised a limit was placed on the damage each could inflict on the other. For Spain, Scotland was one of many kingdoms it sought to bring under Habsburg control; and it was rare since it managed to remain independent. In James’s view, Spain was a counterbalance to Elizabeth, a silent threat that ensured England would never make an enemy of Scotland, for to do so would be to open their back door to their worst enemy.

James first corresponded with Philip II soon after his escape from the Ruthven Raiders, where he sought to use Catholic powers to counter English influence at his court. Philip was wary of James’s protestations of potential future conversion, but he saw the value of having Scotland for rather than against him. Although Scotland was not directly involved in the 1588 *Gran Armada* it was discussed and after the fleet’s defeat many Spaniards took refuge in Scotland. Throughout the 1580s and 1590s James used Spain as a threat against Elizabeth taking advantage or ignoring him, and Scoto-Spanish relations did continually remind England of the danger of losing Scotland as an ally. After 1595 and the publication of the pro-Infanta tract by Robert Parsons (under the pseudonym of Doleman) on the succession, James began to move away from Spain. He feared that Philip II and later Philip III would oppose his claim to the throne, and whilst he remained friendly with Spain he did not trust them to allow him to succeed. In 1598, the Archduke Albert and Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia were given control of the Spanish Netherlands, and James took this opportunity to forge a friendship with one of his most dangerous rivals in the succession claim. The tactic worked, and the Archdukes’ rapid response of congratulations at the news of James’s succession in March 1603 finally put to rest any dreams Philip III had of pursuing his sister’s claim and taking England for the Habsburgs.¹⁴

The Papacy and several of the Italian states, including Tuscany and Venice all had intermittent relationships with James as circumstances dictated. His contacts with Ferdinand the Grand Duke of Tuscany were used as a base to further his image as a monarch capable of conversion, or at least, liberty of conscience. This image was part of an attempt to improve his relations not only

¹³ For more on Franco-Scottish trade see: Talbott, “An Alliance Ended.”

¹⁴ Scoto-Spanish relations were also strengthened by trade; for more on this see: McLoughlin, “Scottish Commercial Relations with Iberia, 1581-1730.”

with the secular Italian states but also with the Papacy. In addition to sending ambassadors (often unofficially), James wrote to the Grand Duke and even considered a marriage with Florence or Savoy to further his goals. The King of Scots also communicated with the Papacy through members of his nobility and particularly his wife, Queen Anna of Denmark, who converted to Catholicism in the mid-1590s. Pope Clement VIII was particularly interested in cultivating relations with James, as he hoped not only to regain Scotland for the church through the king's conversion but also to use James as a counterbalance to growing Habsburg power. Other Italian States, such as Venice, also feared the growing influence of Spain, and so were willing to countenance relations with James. Although these relationships were relatively minor compared to Denmark-Norway or Spain, James's interactions with the Papacy and the Italian States did affect and influence his foreign policies and enriched his diplomatic presence in Europe.

From the earliest examples of James's independent rule there is evidence of his skill in balancing enemies against each other for his own benefit. If he could not beat his enemies directly, he could at least weaken them by assisting their foes. James sought out the Pope, France and Spain when he needed to weaken Elizabeth's hold over his court; and likewise, when he needed to strengthen his ties with Protestant Europe he pursued marriage alliances and leagues of amity that would detract from his Catholic relations. Moreover, James's willingness to ally with Catholic France and his correspondence with the Papacy combined with his treatment of Catholics within his realm ensuring that Rome would not oppose the Scottish heretic's claim once he had taken the English crown.¹⁵ It is true that without the support of the English nobles and councillors the succession would not have been as smooth and peaceful as it was; however, despite historians' comments, the peaceful transfer of power also could not have happened without James's diplomatic efforts (overt and covert) in the years leading up to 1603.¹⁶

After the *Gran Armada* it was clear to both England and Spain that Scotland was key to their success, and this only served to improve James's position with both. Throughout the 1590s, the King of Scots pursued both Protestant and Catholic powers in an attempt to make himself the most desirable candidate to all parties as well as to weaken the case of his opponents. His befriending of the Archdukes and continued alliance with Henri IV despite the latter's conversion reveals James's awareness of what they could do for the king. That both supported his claim despite his religion suggests that James's policies came to fruition.

As was typical of the age, James VI used diplomacy and deception to improve himself and his kingdom during his personal rule. Perhaps this is disingenuous, for diplomacy in the early modern period at least, included a certain inherent deception, for no ruler could be completely honest with friend or foe.

¹⁵ If they had opposed his succession they could have influenced Catholic rulers to mount an offensive against James, formally excommunicated the king and/or instructed Catholics in England, Scotland and Ireland to rebel against him and try to assassinate him as the Papacy had done with Elizabeth.

¹⁶ Lee Jr. argues that James's contributions to his succession were 'negligible'. Lee, Jr, *James I and Henri IV*, p.8.

Instead, all rulers used half-truths and vague promises to motivate others to do or give them what they wanted, without boxing themselves into a corner or committing too far to any one policy. James, like his peers, maintained multiple and opposing relationships in an attempt to ensure that whatever the outcome, he was in the best position possible. In this sense, James's foreign policies were an overall success. Despite specific missions or plans falling short of their goal when all the cards were laid bare, James ultimately increased his power and improved his position.

James VI of Scotland emerged from twenty years of tumultuous politics, wars, religious disputes and factional coups which had ravaged Europe as a confident, competent monarch, able in 1603 to add two more kingdoms to his dominion. This was not an accident, nor was it predestined; it was, most significantly, down to James's ability to manage his foreign relations. When James VI succeeded to the English throne, he was ecstatic, for his hard work had paid off. However, James saw this not as his crowning glory, but as merely an addition to his prestige. Other additions to his crown followed including colonies in the Americas and the widening of his influence through his children's marriages.¹⁷ This thesis has shown that by examining events from the perspective of powers previously believed to be insignificant, a more nuanced and accurate understanding of history is revealed. Specifically in the case of James VI, it has shown that the king's experiences, especially in the foreign relations he developed as King of Scots, were the foundations on which his later foreign policy was grounded. In addition, James's ambitions, not only to succeed Elizabeth but also to increase his influence over European politics, had a significant impact on the course of late sixteenth and early seventeenth century European history, and must be included in the grand narrative of these events.

¹⁷ James strategically used his children to ally his family with powerful European courts, although this did not always work out as planned. See: Marks, "England, the English, and the Thirty Year's War"; Murdoch, "Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart"; Murdoch, "James VI and the Formation of a Scottish-British Military Identity"; Paul Dukes, Graeme P. Herd, and Jarmo Kotilaine, *Stuarts and Romanovs: The Rise and Fall of a Special Relationship* (Dundee, 2009), pp.25–53.

APPENDIX I: AMBASSADORS TO SCOTLAND, 1584-1603¹

Ambassadors from Brunswick (BRU)

BRU-SC_01.

Adam Krause, Ambassador.

c.2/8/1594–c.10/9/1594

MISSION: To attend Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Attended the baptism of Prince Henry at Stirling on 6 September. Because they had not been informed directly, Krause refused to travel with the Danish ambassador from Leith and had to be conveyed separately to Edinburgh. His report on the event does not survive but the German accounts note that he was given 900 guilders for expenses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.126; William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry ...*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2r; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.342-6; Staatsarchiv Wolfenbüttel, signature 17 III Alt Nr. 64 a, f.139; Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv Hannover, Cal. Br. 24 Nr. 7388.

Ambassadors from Denmark-Norway (DN)

DN-SC_01.

Manderup Parsberg, Special Ambassador.

Nicholaus Theophilus (Doctor), Special Ambassador.

Henrik Below, Special Ambassador.

12/6/1585–12/8/1585

MISSION: To treat for custody of the Orkney and Shetland Islands and propose a marriage alliance.

¹ For an explanation on the conventions used in this appendix see the Stylistic Conventions.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.53; Melville, James. *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*. Edited by A. Francis Steuart. (London, 1929) p.295; Melville, *Sir James. Memoirs of His Own Life*. Edited by T. Thomson. (Edinburgh, 1827), pp.335-6.

DN-SC_02.

? ?, Agent.

27/5/1589-

MISSION: To discover if the Scots were still interested in marriage alliance.

NOTES: Arrived at Leith on or just before 27 May. There is no record of his name or when he departed. The Earl Marishal's mission to Denmark-Norway to conclude negotiations were confirms soon after this ambassador's arrival.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/44 f.34; University of St Andrews Special Collections, ms30447.

DN-SC_03.

Hendrik Gyldenstierne, Ambassador.

Breide Rantzau, Ambassador.

Steen Brahe (Chancellor of Denmark), Ambassador.

Peter Munk (Admiral of Denmark-Norway), Ambassador.

Stephen Bua (Captain of Elsinore), Ambassador.

Bochastle (Captain), Ambassador.

Nicholus Theophilus (Doctor of Law), Ambassador.

William Vandervant, Ambassador.

1/5/1590-26/5/1590

MISSION: To serve as part of the Danish wedding party.

NOTES: The named ambassadors plus 40 others were adorned in gold chains. In total 223 people accompanied James and Anna to Scotland; ambassadors were banqueted each day at 1200 *merks* per diem. The Danish ambassadors inspected Anna's lordships in second week of their stay. 17 May was the coronation and the ambassadors were seated to Annals left Pageantry into Edinburgh on 19th. They left with 13-14,000 crowns worth of gold and jewels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.83, 158; *RPCS* vol.4 pp.479-80, 484, 634-6, 678; Melville, James. *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*. Edited by A. Francis Steuart. (London, 1929), p.331; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp.57-62, 100-22.

DN-SC_04.

? Craik (Doctor), Ambassador.

Steen Billie, Ambassador.

c.28/4/1593- <7/1593

MISSION: To ensure Anna was receiving her dowry.

NOTES: Investigation of Queen Anna's rights to certain lands under marriage settlement. Thirlestane and others with contrary claims were forced to yield.

SELECTED REFERENCES: David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.65; Melville, Sir James. *Memoirs of His Own Life*. Edited by T. Thomson. (Edinburg, 1827) pp.413-4; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.102,162.

DN-SC_05.

Steen Bille, Ambassador.

Christian Barnekow, Ambassador.

c.1/8/1594-10/9/1594

MISSION: To attend Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Attended the baptism of Prince Henry at Stirling on 6 September to represent Denmark-Norway. Steen Bille was the uncle to the famous Tycho Brahe.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.126; William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry ...*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2r; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.342-6.

DN-SC_06.

Steen Bille, Ambassador.

13/6/1596-c. 22/6/1596

MISSION: To invite James to the coronation of Christian IV.

NOTES: The English ambassador, Robert Bowes, spelt his name Steven Beale in his correspondence.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/58 f.105; SP 52/58 f.110; RA TKUA Skotland 75-1/75-2.

DN-SC_07.

Ulrick Oldenburg (Duke of Holstein, Prince-Bishop of Schwerin), Royal visit.

14/3/1598-c. 11/6/1598

MISSION: Royal visit to his sister Anna and brother-in-law James.

NOTES: When he returns home Colonel Stewart and another gentleman accompany him. They return to Scotland c. 25 July.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/62 f.9; Thomas Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot: Scottish-Danish Relations, C. 1450-1707*, 2 vol. (Odense, 1988), vol.2 p.296; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.137; RA TKUA Skotland A/I/2 Anne to Christian IV, 22-3-1598 and James VI to Christian IV, 31/5/1598.

Ambassadors from England (EN)

EN-SC_01.

William Davison [Davidson], Special Ambassador.

24/4/1584-16/9/1584

MISSION: To help Hudson with the fallout from the failure of the Ruthven Regime and repair Anglo-Scottish relations.

NOTES: Davison's instructions are dated 30 April 1584. His audience with James was on 5 June 1584.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.247; TNA, SP 52/34 ff.39, 43-4, 58-9, 81, 85; TNA, SP 52/35 f.6; TNA, SP 52/36 ff.58, 61; BL, Cotton Caligula C:VII ff.20, 76, 127, 139; BL, Harley 286 f.48; Patrick Gray, *Letters and Papers Relating to Patrick Master of Gray: Afterwards Seventh Lord Gray*, ed. by Thomas Thomson (Edinburgh, 1835), pp.4-5; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.287.

EN-SC_02.

Henry Carey (Lord/Baron Hudson), Agent.

c. 6/1584-c. 2/1585

MISSION: To discuss an Anglo-Scottish friendship and the kind treatment of the Ruthven Regime leaders.

NOTES: Sent to treat with the new Scottish favourite, James Hamilton, third Earl of Arran regarding friendship. He was also supposed to demand the return home of the Ruthven Raiders and relay Elizabeth's terms to repair the diplomatic damage done by James since his disbanding of the Ruthven regime. Hudson was the Lord Governor of Berwick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: G. P. V Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI & I* (Berkeley, 1984), pp.57-8; *Calderwood*, vol.4, p.176; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.52; TNA, SP 52/34 f.22, 52/35 f.60i; BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII f.94; TNA, SP 52/35 f.58, 52/35 f.60; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.294.

EN-SC_03.

Edward Wotton (first Baron Wotton of Marley), Special Ambassador.

11/5/1585-12/10/1585

MISSION: To treat for an Anglo-Scottish peace, the Treaty of Berwick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.247; Bain, Joseph, ed. *The Hamilton Papers...* 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1890) vol.2 p.661; *Calderwood*, vol.4 pp.380-1; TNA, SP 52-37 f. 32; *CSP Spain* vol.16 pp.542-3, 545-6.

EN-SC_04.

Nicholas Dawtrey (Captain), Envoy.

8/6/1585-1/9/1585

MISSION: To discuss trade disputes and piracy complaints from Ireland.

NOTES: Came from Ireland following letter from James VI to Lord Perrot on 25 April 1585. He was also to try and stop James from sending Scots to Northern Ireland.

SELECTED REFERENCES: John Prendergast, "Calendar of the Irish Council Book, 1581-1586." Edited by David Quinn. *Analecta Hibernica* no.24 (January 1967), p.164.

EN-SC_05.

William Knollys (first Earl of Banbury), Special Ambassador.

22/11/1585-c. 12/1585

MISSION: To discuss the banished lords.

NOTES: His first audience was on 23 November.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.247; TNA, SP 52/38 ff.99, 101

EN-SC_06.

Thomas Randolph, Special Ambassador.

28/1/1586-15/8/1586

MISSION: To negotiate for an Anglo-Scottish League, primarily in Berwick.

NOTES: Meant to counter the influence of the French ambassador (FR-SC_03).

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.248; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.57; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), pp.314-5; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.501n.

EN-SC_07.

Robert Carey (Baron Carey of Leppington, first Earl Monmoth), Special Ambassador.

10/2/1587-

MISSION: To explain the execution Mary Queen of Scots.

NOTES: Refused entry into Scotland, stopped at Berwick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.248; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.59-61; Hatfield House CP 15/99; TNA SP 52/42 f.34.

EN-SC_08.

Thomas Fowler, Ambassador.

1588-1589

MISSION: To report on Scottish-Danish match developments.

SELECTED REFERENCES: David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp.16,29.

EN-SC_09.

Robert Bowes

15/3/1588-1588

MISSION: Unknown.

NOTES: George Newsoun, Bowes's servitor, is recorded in a legal action, which indicates that Bowes was ambassador to Scotland at the time of the incident. There is no other record to indicate when he arrived or departed or his mission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 p.260.

EN-SC_10.

Robert Carey (Baron Carey of Leppington, first Earl Monmoth), Special Ambassador.

12/5/1588- </7/1588

MISSION: To renew diplomatic relations after Mary's execution.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.248; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.253; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.344; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.320; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.156.

EN-SC_11.

William Asheby [Ashby], Resident Ambassador.

26/6/1588-21/1/1590

MISSION: To maintain diplomatic ties.

NOTES: Arrived on 18 July 1588. In August 1588 he requested 10,000 Scots to fight against the Armada.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.248; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.69,72; BL, Cotton Caligula D/1 ff.245, 257, 275, 305, 321, 341; BL, Egerton MS 2592 f.132; ; BL, Egerton MS 2598 passim.; TNA, SP 52/43 ff.14, 28, 42.

EN-SC_12.

Robert Sidney (Sir, Viscount Lisle, first Earl Leicester), Special Ambassador.

19/8/1588-16/9/1588

MISSION: To report the defeat of the Gran Armada and inform James that Asheby's promises would not be honoured.

NOTES: Audience with the Chancellor on 31 August. Had 16 horse train according to Moysie. James wanted Asheby hanged for exceeding his commission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.248; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.70,156, 162; BL, Cotton Caligula D/1 ff.259-61, 340, B/VIII f.190.

EN-SC_13.

Robert Bowes, Resident Ambassador.

1/12/1589-15/11/1597

MISSION: To maintain diplomatic ties and send intelligence.

NOTES: Arrived in Scotland around 17 December 1589. He had no safe conduct and so was put under house arrest by Scottish Council ruling in James's absence but he was released after one day. Bowes was sent intelligence from Elizabeth that certain Scottish nobles were conspiring with Jesuits. Bowes and his wife were guests at Queen Anna's coronation on 17 May 1590. During this mission Bowes made frequent return trips to England.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.249; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.81, David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.104.

EN-SC_14.

Edward Somerset (fourth Earl of Worcester), Special Ambassador.

20/5/1590-29/6/1590

MISSION: To welcome the new Queen of Scots.

NOTES: He arrived in Edinburgh on 13 June. The party contained 30-40 horses in its train, carrying presents for the new queen of Scotland.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.249; TNA, SP 52/45 f.65; TNA, SP 52/45 f.67; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84.

EN-SC_15.

(Lord Compton), Ambassador.

7/6/1590-c.17/6/1590

MISSION: To welcome the new Queen of Scots.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84.

EN-SC_16.

Robert Bowes, Resident Ambassador.

3/1591-

MISSION: To request the extradition of Brian O'Rourke.

NOTES: 15 March petitioned James for apprehension/extradition of Brian O'Rourke in Ireland; James Melville and the Justice-Clerk were against handing him over to the English but the pro-English faction prevailed.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.597-8; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.366; Hiram Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion: The Outbreak of the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland*. (London, 1993) p.71.

EN-SC_17.

Thomas Burgh (fifth Baron Burgh), Special Ambassador.

9/2/1593-13/4/1593

MISSION: To join with Bowes for a short time in Edinburgh; seek Scotland to declare war on Spain.

NOTES: Calderwood refers to him as 'Baronburgh', he met with James on 18 March 1593. He wanted Scotland to declare war on Spain.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.249; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.239-40; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.101.

EN-SC_18.

Edward, la Zouche (eleventh Baron Zouche of Haringworth), Extra-ordinary Ambassador.

18/12/1593-13/4/1594

MISSION: To treat with general business between Scotland and England.

NOTES: Calderwood refers to him as 'Lord Sough' and describes his commission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.249; *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.291; SP 52/51 f.73.

EN-SC_19.

Edward, la Zouche (eleventh Baron Zouche of Harringworth), Ambassador.

1/1594-6/4/1594

MISSION: To discuss James's treatment of Catholic Lords.

NOTES: Went to Stirling but did not meet with James until he was in Edinburgh in February. He wanted him to pursue the Catholic Lords, James said he would if Elizabeth would control Bothwell.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.113-4, 116.

EN-SC_20.

Robert Bowes, Ordinary Ambassador.

Robert Radcliffe (fifth Earl of Sussex), Extra Ordinary Ambassador.

1/9/1594-12/9/1594

MISSION: To attend Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Baptism of the prince due on 1 September but delayed until 6 September because of English ambassadors delay as Suffolk replaced the Earl of Cumberland who was unwell.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.126; William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry ...*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2r; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.342-6.

EN-SC_21.

Robert Bowes, Resident Ambassador.

2/2/1596-

MISSION: To treat on daily business between England and Scotland.

NOTES: Attended Princess Elizabeth's baptism on 28 November 1596; complained about Black's sermons which were derogatory towards Elizabeth.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.126.

EN-SC_22.

William Bowes (Knight), Special Ambassador.

1/4/1597-7/1597

MISSION: To discuss problems on the Borders.

NOTES: Joined with the residential ambassador, Robert Bowes, his uncle.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.250; TNA, SP 52/52 f.167; TNA, SP 59/34 f.19; BL, Cotton Caligula D/II f.238; BL, Cotton Caligula D/II f.306; Hatfield House, CP 53/17; CP 51/58.

EN-SC_23.

William Bowes (Knight), Special Ambassador.

9/1597-8/2/1598

MISSION: To discuss Border issues.

NOTES: Regarding raiding along the Borders. Bowes was one of the English Border commissioners.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.250; Hatfield House, CP 133/184; TNA, SP52-61 f.28; TNA, SP59/35 f.178; TNA, SP 52/61 f.43.

EN-SC_24.

George Nicholson, Resident Agent.

15/11/1597-23/3/1603

MISSION: To assist Robert Bowes in general diplomatic business.

NOTES: He acted as *charge d'affaires* during Robert Bowes's numerous absences prior to 1597.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.250; TNA, SP 52/52 f.239; TNA, SP 52/61 f.65; TNA, SP 52/62 f.32.

EN-SC_25.

Henry Brounckner (Knight), Special Ambassador.

21/8/1600-25/9/1600

MISSION: To congratulate James on escaping the Gowrie affair.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.250; Hatfield House, CP 133/185; TNA, SP 52/66 ff.68, 72, 76.

EN-SC_26.

Robert Carey (Sir, Baron Carey of Leppington, first Earl of Monmouth), Special Ambassador.

24/3/1603-4/1603

MISSION: To inform James of Elizabeth's death and his succession.

NOTES: Carey arrived to tell James of his succession on 26 March. Carey returned when James came south in April 1603.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Gary Bell, *A Handlist of British Diplomatic Representatives, 1509-1688* (London, 1990), p.251; TNA, SP 14/1 ff.15-6; Hatfield House, CP 92/54, 58; Hatfield House, CP 99/84, 152.

Ambassadors from France (FR)

FR-SC_01.

Mayneville (Seigneur), Ambassador.

28/1/1583-1/5/1584

MISSION: To gain James's release from Ruthven Raiders and encourage him to join the Guise faction.

NOTES: Carried instructions from Henri III and the Duke of Guise. Sent in October 1582 but didn't arrive until January 1583. He returned after failing to form a pro-Guise group in Scotland or to secure James's release from the Ruthven regime.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.193; Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power During the Wars of Religion: The Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998), p.190; Moyise, *Memoirs*, p.44.

FR-SC_02.

? Gosseron, Resident Ambassador?.

13/1/1586-

MISSION: Unknown.

NOTES: Arrived at Leith, aged 24; 'Was to stay long in Scotland'.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.56.

FR-SC_03.

d'Esneval (Baron), Ambassador.

29/1/1586-7/8/1586

Monsieur Courcelles, Secretary, then Ambassador.

29/1/1586-4/1/1588

MISSION: To dissuade Scotland from joining with England in the League of Amity and push for the freedom/revenge of Mary Queen of Scots.

NOTES: Courcelles served under French Ambassador to England, Mauvissière, but was sent away after being suspected of plotting on Mary Queen of Scots behalf. He was sent to Scotland under the name Camile de Preau and worked under the ambassador there, d'Esneval. Courcelles remained in Scotland as the ambassador when d'Esneval returned to France. D'Esneval's exact date of departure not known, but we have correspondence from Scotland until at least 18 September 1587. According to the introduction of Teulet, *Papiers D'état*, Courcelles was in Scotland acting as an agent until at least 4 January 1588. On 3 November 1586 Henri III wrote to James recommending Courcelles as ambassador. Both were in contact with Mary Queen of Scots.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/41 ff.7, 30, 34; 78/15 f.20, 78/13 f.18, 53/19 f.48, 52/41 f.66; *Relations Politiques*, vol.4 pp.1-60; *Papiers D'état* vol.2 pp.727-88, vol.3 p.xxii; BL, Cotton Caligula C/VIII f.556; Cotton Caligula D/I f.213; Monsieur de Courcelles, *Extract From the Despatches of M. Courcelles, French Ambassador At the Court of Scotland, 1586-1587*, trans. by Robert Bell (Edinburgh, 1828); Hatfield House, CP 133/67.

FR-SC_04.

Guillaume Salluste (Seigneur du Bartas), Special Ambassador.

7/6/1587-22/9/1587

MISSION: Sent by Navarre to James VI to discuss the king's possible marriage to Navarre's sister.

NOTES: Du Bartas was in England in May, and was reported as being at James's court by June. He was a well known poet and part of James's intellectual circle in addition to serving as an ambassador.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House, CP 165/47, 165/105; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.54-5 no.8; Samuel F Will, "An Unpublished Letter of Du Bartas." *Modern Language Notes* 49, no.3 (March 1934).

FR-SC_05.

Guillaume Salluste (Seigneur du Bartas), Special Ambassador.

1588-1589

MISSION: Sent by Navarre to James VI to discuss the king's possible marriage to Navarre's sister.

NOTES: A Huguenot poet/soldier with a secret commission to offer James VI the hand of Henri of Navarre's sister, during the same time that the Danish embassy was negotiating for a marriage alliance. This was the second such mission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), pp.321-2, David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.11.

FR-SC_06.

Guillaume Salluste (Seigneur du Bartas), Messenger.

3/1589-

MISSION: Sent by Henri Navarre to request the levying of 3,000 waged Scots.

NOTES: The packet-bearer is unknown but possibly Seigneur du Bartas, message to acquire 3,000 waged Scots to fight for the king of Navarre. James Colville, Laird of Easter Wemyss was sent to England to get money for levies and made general.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.73.

FR-SC_07.

Philippe de Béthune (Comte de Selles, Conseiller d'Etat), Special Ambassador.

7/1599-9/1599

MISSION: Secret mission, possibly to renew the Auld Alliance.

NOTES: Audience with James at Falkland. According to Moysie he was the brother of the French treasurer, Duc de Sully. Arrived with a party of 18-20. James sent horses and hounds back with him for Henri IV. He also had a priest in his household who said mass and greatly upset the Kirk.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.165; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.739-40, vol.6 p.27; *Papiers D'état*, vol.3.

FR-SC_08.

Charles Cauchon de Maupas (Baron du Tours), Residential Ambassador.

6/8/1602-12/5/1603

MISSION: To strengthen Franco-Scottish relations in light of the ageing Elizabeth heath and James's likely succession.

NOTES: He had a Catholic priest as part of his household who said mass, and this greatly upset the Kirk. The ambassador met Lord Hume in Newcastle in July 1602 as the ambassador was coming to Scotland and Hume was on his way to France. Maupas arrived in Leith on 6 August 1602. He had travelled south to London after James's succession but, as there was already a French ambassador in London, Maupas was recalled in a letter dated 12 May 1603.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Calderwood*, vol.6 pp.158, 174, 210; *Papiers D'état*, vol.3 pp.xxv-xxvii, 713-46; *Relations Politiques*, vol.4 pp.323-87; Charles Harding Firth, and Sophia Crawford Lomas, *Notes on the Diplomatic Relations of England and France 1603-1688*; *Lists of Ambassadors from England to France and from France to England*. (Oxford, 1906), p.28.

Ambassadors from Mecklenburg (ME)

ME-SC_01.

Joachim von Bassewitz, Ambassador.

c.2/8/1594-c.10/9/1594

MISSION: To attend Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Attended the baptism of Prince Henry at Stirling on 6 September. Because they had not been informed directly he refused to travel with the Danish ambassador from Leith and had to be conveyed separately to Edinburgh.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.126; William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry ...*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2r; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.342-6; Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin 2.11-2/1 Auswärtige Beziehungen (acta externa), Nr. 5083.

Ambassadors from the Papal Court (PC)

PC-SC_01.

William Chisholm (Bishop of Dumblane), Ambassador.

4/1588-c/6/1588

MISSION: Sent from the Papacy, mission unknown.

NOTES: He was refused an audience with James and so his commission from the Pope was never revealed. He eventually left Scotland.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.235; TNA, SP 59/25 f.229, SP 59/26 f.13.

PC-SC_02.

?? (Laird of Bonyton), Agent.

Henry Constable, Agent.

1/3/1599-9/1599

MISSION: To encourage James to convert to Catholicism and support toleration in return for Papal support for his succession claim.

NOTES: Constable's accounts of the mission state that he saw it as a failure, however he wanted to return in 1600 for another attempt. Constable spoke with Anna although James initially refused to see him and the Laird of Bonyton.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/65 f.32, 12/273 f.92, 52/64 ff.35-8; *Sullivan, Ceri. "Constable, Henry (1562-1613), Polemicist and Poet."* Edited by B. Harrison and H. C. G. Matthew. DNB. (Oxford, 2004); Hatfield House, 61/68, 175/3, 18/55, 70/3.

PC-SC_03.

James Lindsay (Knight), Agent.

1602-c.26/3/1603

MISSION: To encourage James to convert to Catholicism and to send his son to Rome to be raised as a Catholic.

NOTES: Meyers book also contains the letters that Lindsay carried to James and Anna (pp.38-40) in additions to Lindsay's instructions (p.41). This mission was in response to the letters sent to the Pope by Anna in 1601. Lindsay returned to the Pope in the service of James in 1603 with the King of Scots response to this mission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Arnold Oskar Meyer, *Clemens VIII und Jakob I von England* (Rome, 1904), p.41; Hatfield House, CP 184/2.

Ambassadors from Spain (SP)

SP-SC_01.

William Semple (Captain), Envoy?.

19/8/1588-

MISSION: To encourage James to side with Spain.

NOTES: Semple (Sempill/Sempil) arrived in April but did not meet with James until August, just a few days after he had heard that the armada was destroyed. He was arrested twice and escaped twice. He claimed to be from Parma but had no commission. Is said to have arrived with John, eighth Lord Maxwell, who was also returning from Spain after being in exile. Maxwell chose to return because he believed the armada would succeed, but he did not have permission and was refused entry. Semple was arrested on 20 August. William was likely the illegitimate son of Robert, third Lord Semple and thus a half-brother of Robert, fourth Lord Semple.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 p.316; Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.235; *Calderwood*, vol.4 pp.680-1; *Spottiswood*, pp.386-7.

Ambassadors from the Spanish Netherlands (SN)

SN-SC_01.

Nicholas Scorza, Agent.

5/3/1603-c.4/1603

MISSION: To try and stop levies to United Provinces; create friendship between the Archdukes and James.

NOTES: Had his first audience with James on 20 March. He promised James the Archduke's support for his succession as well as men and money should James have to fight. He left shortly after James had been declared king of England and Ireland, promising friendship between the Spanish Netherlands and Scotland.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Lonchay, Henri, and Joseph Cuvelier, eds. *Correspondence de la cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVIIe siècle*. 5 vols. (Brussels, 1923-35) vol.1 pp.132-3, 139-40, 141-2.

Ambassadors from the United Provinces (UP)

UP-SC_01.

Leonard Van der Vocht, Ambassador.

c.10/1588-c.1/1589

MISSION: To discuss the pay disputes of Colonel William Stewart.

NOTES: The ambassador travels via London where he is stopped and never makes it to Scotland. He communicated with the Scottish ambassador to England, Archibald Douglas, but Elizabeth insists on handling the matter through her, and confiscates letters at Berwick. This mission was in response to the one Colonel Stewart made in August 1588 on his way back from Denmark-Norway.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.120-31.

UP-SC_02.

Leonard Van der Vocht, Ambassador.

Jan De Warck, Ambassador.

13/5/1589-c. 19/6/1589

MISSION: To discuss the Scots-Dutch brigade.

NOTES: Also sent regarding Colonel William Stewart's pay disputes.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.132-41.

UP-SC_03.

Adrian Damman (de Bysteryeldt), Agent.

3/1/1594-

MISSION: To encourage Scotland to continue to support the United Provinces.

NOTES: He was appointed to the Scottish court and as a Latin teacher from Ghent who served as Professor of Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. His secret instructions indicate that he was to promote the Scots-Dutch brigade to James. James used Damman in missions back to the United Provinces in 1596.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.23-5n; James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.148-9.

UP-SC_04.

Walraven Brederode (Barron of Branderod), Ambassador.

Jacob Fulk/Valcke (Treasurer-General of Holland and Zeeland), Ambassador.

c.3/8/1594-16/9/1594

MISSION: To attend Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: According to Melville they brought the richest gifts, worth £12,400 with 5,000 *livres* annual pension for the prince.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.119; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.126; William Fowler, *A True Reportarie of the Most Triumphant, and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptisme of the Most Excellent, Right High, and Mightie Prince, Frederik Henry ...*, EEBO STC (2nd ed.) / 11214.6 (Edinburgh, 1594), f.2r; *Calderwood*, vol.5 pp.342-6; James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.154-74.

APPENDIX II: AMBASSADORS FROM SCOTLAND, 1584-1603¹

Ambassadors to Brandenburg (BRA)

SC-BRA_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

SC-BRA_02.

David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.
Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. Returned to Scotland around November 1598; received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.368-9.

¹ For an explanation on the conventions used in this appendix see the Stylistic Conventions.

Ambassadors to Brunswick (BRU)

SC-BRU_01.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Ambassador.

c.5/1594-1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Left Scotland in May; went first to Denmark and then to Mecklenburg before going to Brunswick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Melville, *Sir James. Memoirs of His Own Life*. Edited by T. Thomson. (Edinburgh, 1827), p.367; *RPS* 1594/4/96.

SC-BRU_02.

David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. Returned to Scotland around November 1598; received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.368-9.

Ambassadors to Denmark-Norway (DN)

SC-DN_01.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Ambassador.

26/7/1586->4/10/1586

MISSION: To discuss the Danish-Scottish match.

NOTES: This was the first of several missions to discuss a possible marriage. They arrived on 26 July 1586 at Elsinore. Courcelles reports that he is already back at court in Scotland by 4 October 1586.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/40 f.103; Monsieur de Courcelles, *Extract From the Despatches of M. Courcelles, French Ambassador At the Court of Scotland, 1586-1587*, trans. by Robert Bell (Edinburgh, 1828), p.9.

SC-DN_02.

William Stewart (Colonel), Agent.

4/6/1587-26/11/1588

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Ambassador.

Patrick Vaus (of Barnbarroch, knight, Comptroller), Ambassador.

4/6/1587-1/8/1587

MISSION: To discuss the Danish-Scottish match.

NOTES: Young and Vaus were nominated c. 28 March 1586. Stewart was already going to Denmark-Norway on personal business. They all met with Frederick on 29 July 1587 and asked for Princess Elizabeth's hand in marriage.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.229; Hatfield House, CP 163/133; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.65; RPS 1587/7/118; RPS 1587/7/117; Melville, *Sir James. Memoirs of His Own Life*. Edited by T. Thomson. (Edinburgh, 1827), p.312; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp.8-10; SSNE 1597.

SC-DN_03.

William Stewart (Colonel), Agent.

c.1/1588-24/2/1588

MISSION: To discuss the Danish-Scottish match.

NOTES: Saw Frederick II just before his death and told that Princess Anna was still available.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA SP 52/42 f.92; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), p.14.

SC-DN_04.

William Stewart (Colonel), Agent.

c. 20/8/1588-c.15/11/1588

MISSION: To discuss the Danish-Scottish match.

NOTES: Establish links with the Regents and Christian IV. Asheby records him returning from his mission sometime before 26 November 1588. He returns via the United Provinces where he discusses pay disputes.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.70; BL, Cotton Caligula D/I f.228; James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*, 3 vol. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.115-20.

SC-DN_05.

James Scrymgeour (Constable of Dundee), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

18/6/1589-3/12/1589

George Young (Archdeacon of St Andrews & Secretary), Ambassador.
John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
Andrew Keith (Lord Dingwall), Ambassador.
William Fowler (Poet & Parson of Hawick), Ambassador.

18/6/1589-15/12/1589

George Keith (Earl Marischal), Ambassador.

18/6/1589-1/5/1590

MISSION: To discuss the Danish-Scottish match.

NOTES: The ambassadors were appointed 2 June 1589. Asked for dowry of £1,000,000; they got £150,000. The question of ownership of Orkney was omitted. The ambassadors left Denmark and varying times.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.47-8, 73, 78-9, 81; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.389-91, 396n, 410n, 411n, 423n, 823-4; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), pp.324-31; David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp.17-56, 79-99; *SSNE* 1534.

SC-DN_06.

Patrick Vaus (of Barnbarroch, Knight, Comptroller), Envoy.

22/10/1589-15/12/1589

MISSION: To serve as a member of the marriage party.

NOTES: Left with James to retrieve Anna, returned with Lord Dingwall and forty-eight other Scots after James's marriage.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.81; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.399-400.

SC-DN_07.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Denmark-Norway, Saxony, Bavaria, Holstein, Mecklenburg, Hesse, Pomerania, Hamburg, Brandenburg and Poland-Lithuania.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

SC-DN_08.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Ambassador.

c.5/1594-1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Carried the invitation first to Denmark, and then went to the Dukes of Mecklenburg and Brunswick. Received three fair chains, likely one from each.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.117; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.367; *RPS* 1594/4/96.

SC-DN_09.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

James Ogilvy (fifth Lord Ogilvy), Envoy.

<22/6/1596->29/9/1596

MISSION: To represent James at Christian IV's coronation.

NOTES: Also sent to try and gain support for James's claim to the English throne and to continue discussions of a Protestant League.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA SP 52/58 f.105, 52/59 f.54; *RPS*, A1596/9/4.

SC-DN_10.

David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. Returned to Scotland c. November 1598 Received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.358-65, 379-80; NRAS, 217/Box 14/461.

SC-DN_11.

William Stewart (Colonel), Envoy.

c.11/6/1598-

MISSION: To treat with Denmark-Norway.

NOTES: He accompanied Duke Ulric back to Denmark in 1598 where Stewart had a secret mission regarding 1) the English succession and 2) which German princes would possibly lend James VI their support as to the English succession.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *SSNE* 1597.

Ambassadors to England (EN)

SC-EN_01.

Patrick Gray (Master, seventh Lord Gray), Ambassador.

14/10/1584->24/1/1585

MISSION: Sent to satisfy Elizabeth after Arran-Hudson controversy.

NOTES: Proposed an alliance that eventually became Treaty of Berwick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: G. P. V Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI & I* (Berkeley, 1984), pp.58-60 no.12; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 p.529 no.385; Patrick Gray, *Letters and Papers Relating to Patrick Master of Gray: Afterwards Seventh Lord Gray*, ed. by Thomas Thomson (Edinburgh, 1835), pp.9-10; TNA, SP 52/36.

SC-EN_02.

Lewis Bellenden (of Auchknowle, Justice Clerk, Knight), Ambassador.

1/5/1585-29/5/1585

MISSION: To encourage Elizabeth to rescind the asylum she had granted to the banished Lords involved in the Ruthven regime and return them to Scotland for prosecution.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.52; *RPCS*, pp.745n, 748n; *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.352.

SC-EN_03.

James Hume (Knight, of Cowdenknowes), Representative.

Francis Stewart (fifth Earl of Bothwell), Representative.

Robert Boyd (fifth Lord Boyd), Representative.

5/7/1586-5/7/1586

MISSION: Sent to Berwick to sign Treaty of Berwick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 p.86n.

SC-EN_04.

Archibald Douglas, Ambassador.

9/1586-12/1586

MISSION: To serve as James's agent for all matters in England.

NOTES: He was sent in September and was replaced as ambassador by James Melville in late November/early December 1586, because Melville believed that Douglas had betrayed Mary Queen of Scots.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol. 4 p. 130n; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), pp.315-7.

SC-EN_05.

William Keith, Ambassador.

1/11/1586-6/2/1587

MISSION: To sue for the release of Mary Queen of Scots.

NOTES: He replaced the Earl of Bothwell after Elizabeth refused the earl a passport.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.58-60; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.130n.

SC-EN_06.

Robert Melville (Knight, of Murdecairny), Ambassador.

Patrick Gray (Master, seventh Lord Gray), Ambassador.

15/12/1586-6/2/1587

MISSION: To plead for the stay of execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

NOTES: William Keith, who arrived at a different time, returned with Melville and Gray.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.58-60; *RPCS*, vol.4 p.144n.

SC-EN_07.

Archibald Douglas, Ambassador.

1588-1588

MISSION: To conduct general business on all Scottish affairs.

NOTES: Ambassador at the time of the armada.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.317.

SC-EN_08.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

c.3/1589-

MISSION: To receive promises made by Asheby in 1588.

NOTES: His mission failed; James described him as a 'my trusty and familiar servant'.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House, CP 133/83; 16/88.

SC-EN_09.

Lewis Bellenden (of Auchknowle, Justice Clerk. Knight), Ambassador.

c.3/1590-26/April/1590

MISSION: To inform Elizabeth of the completion of the Danish match.

NOTES: Sent by James from Denmark, left March/April 1590 and returned to Scotland 26 April.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.82.

SC-EN_10.

John Carmichael (of that Ilk), Ambassador.

c.7/1590-

MISSION: Unknown.

NOTES: Left Scotland in mid-July.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84.

SC-EN_11.

William Stewart (Colonel), Envoy.

1592-

NOTES: Mentioned in SSNE article 1597.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *SSNE* 1597.

SC-EN_12.

Robert Melville, Ambassador.

7/6/1593-

MISSION: To answer the English ambassador, Lord Burgh's, commission and to receive James's annuity.

NOTES: Gave a full answer to Lord Burgh's mission asking Scotland to declare war on Spain. Left Scotland on 9 June.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Calderwood*, vol.5 p.252-3; Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.101-2.

SC-EN_13.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

29/4/1594-<11/1594

Edward Bruce (Commendator of Kinloss), Ambassador.

29/4/1594-1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: To invite Elizabeth and deal with issues that affected both countries. To continue on to France with invitation. Edward Bruce travelled with Colville as far as London, and waited to take Elizabeth's answer back to Scotland whilst Colville moved on. Colville remained in France to negotiate renewal of 'Auld Alliance'.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.117; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Stuart (London, 1929), pp.366-7; TNA SP 52/53 ff. 31, 61; Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, ed. by Jules Berger de Xivrey and J. Guadet (Paris, 1843), vol.4 pp.218-21, 255-6; Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.6-7.

SC-EN_14.

Edward Bruce (Abbott of Kinloss), Ambassador.

3/1598-5/1598

MISSION: To deal with the English succession and Border issues.

NOTES: In November 1597 James was granted 200,000 *merks* for embassies to England, France and other places. Sent to make excuses for James's comments in Parliament about being made second person in England, and to discuss proposals about Borders. Returned with news of Treaty of Vervins and Franco-Spanish peace in which it was hoped England and the United Provinces would join.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Stuart (London, 1929), pp.136-7, 367; Hatfield House, CP 133/184.

SC-EN_15.

John Erskine (Earl of Mar), Ambassador.

Edward Bruce (Abbott of Kinloss), Ambassador.

18/2/1601-30/5/1601

MISSION: See that Parliament does nothing prejudicial to James's succession claim and to appease Elizabeth after the execution of Essex.

NOTES: Met with the Russian ambassadors in London on 7 May.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Calderwood*, vol.6 pp.102, 130; *Spottiswood*, vol.3 p.94-5; N. E. Evans, 'The meeting of Russian and Scottish Ambassadors in London in 1601', *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol.55 (1977), pp.518-28; Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln* (Edinburgh, 1838), p.37; Robert Cecil, *The Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James VI King of Scotland: ...* (London, 1766), pp.1-21; Hatfield House, CP 83/99_2.

SC-EN_16.

Ludovick Stuart (2nd Duke of Lennox), Ambassador.

11/1601-12/1601

MISSION: To continue amity with England (on return trip from France).

NOTES: As part of his return trip from France (July-November 1601) Lennox stopped in London and was feasted for three weeks by Elizabeth in perfect amity.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol. 3 p. 100-1.

Ambassadors to France (FR)

SC-FR_01.

George Seaton (Lord Seaton, Commendator of Pluscaedine), Ambassador.

29/12/1583-1/6/1584

MISSION: To improve relations with the Valois and Guise factions in France, to speak to the Duke of Guise and to seek assistance for James's mother's release and his succession to England.

NOTES: George Seaton's (also spelt Seton, Setton) son Alexander joined him on this mission. Seaton's appointment as ambassador is noted in RPCS vol.3 pp.604, 612 and his arrival in France is documented by CP 162/138. His mission was ostensibly to restart the Scottish Guard. He was also employed by the burghs of Dundee and Aberdeen to discuss customs issues, and they paid for his journey. It is unclear when he left France, at least after June 1584. He was in Scotland and captured at Sterling in November 1585 when Arran fell from power.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.2; *CSP Spain*, vol.16 pp.517-8, 530-1; *RPCS*, vol.3 pp.604, 612; TNA SP 12/173/1 f.17, SP 78/11 f.110; BL Cotton Caligula C/VII f.6; Hatfield House CP 163/56, CP 162/138, CP 163/14; *Relations Politique*, vol.3 pp.261-82 passim; James Marwick, *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1866-90), vol.2 p.511.

SC-FR_02.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

9/12/1586->1589

MISSION: To treat on general business with Henri of Navarre and others.

NOTES: Sent to Henri of Navarre in France and other places beyond, "for doing of certane his Hienes awne effearis and busynes, and that with sic diligence as convenientlie may be ..." [RPCS 4:127]. No indication of when he returned to Scotland, but he was sent from Scotland to England in 1589, so it must have been before then.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 p.127; *The Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.46, 54-5; Helen Georgia Stafford, *James VI of Scotland and the Throne of England*. (New York, 1940), p.18; NRAS, 217/Box 14/481.

SC-FR_03.

James Beaton (Archbishop of Glasgow), Resident Ambassador.

3/1587-<1/1603

MISSION: To serve as James's resident in Paris; to treat on all manner of official and covert business.

NOTES: Had been Mary Queen of Scots representative prior to her execution and his honorary commission was made in March 158 and his commission was brought by William Chisholm, the Bishop of Dumblane. In January 1598 Beaton's lands were restored and he was formally authorised as James's ambassador to France and he died in post there in 1603.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, pp.61-2; SCA, SM1/2/7; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.56-68 no.10.

SC-FR_04.

William Stewart (Knight), Ambassador.

31/5/1587-

MISSION: To seek more intimate relations with France.

NOTES: Commissioned on 26 March 1587 and supposed to sail on 31 May but delayed by interference from Patrick Master of Gray. It is unclear if he ever left.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *RPCS*, vol.4 p.164n, vol.4 p.182n; *Calderwood*, vol.4 p.615.

SC-FR_05.

Robert Melville (Lord Tunland), Ambassador.

1589-1589

MISSION: To negotiate a marriage between Henri of Navarre's sister and James.

NOTES: Discuss the offer of the Princess of Navarre's marriage to James, returned to Scotland with the princess's portrait and good reports of her rare qualities. Melville's brother James described him as 'being a good scholar, who could perfectly speak the High Dutch, the Latin and Fleming languages, with the French tongue'.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.322.

SC-FR_06.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

c.1/1590-

MISSION: To renew the Auld Alliance.

NOTES: Henri IV writes to James VI on 15 January 1590 saying that Colville is in France at James's behest and he is listening to him.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Henri IV, *Recueil des lettres missives de Henri IV*, ed. by Jules Berger de Xivrey and J. Guadet (Paris, 1843), vol.3 pp.119-20.

SC-FR_07.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

c.5/1594- >9/1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Morgan has incorrectly noted this person as Edward Bruce, Laird of Easter Wemyss.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.117; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.367.

SC-FR_08.

Jessé (Monsieur), Agent.

8/1596-

MISSION: To promote James's name in European courts.

NOTES: The mission may not have ever taken place, but was planned and is aptly described by Mackie.

SELECTED REFERENCES: John Duncan Mackie, "A Secret Agent of James VI." *SHR* 9, no.36 (1912) pp.376-86.

SC-FR_09.

Robert Crichton (Lord of Sanquhar), Agent.

9/1597-9/1597

MISSION: To carry letters to Henri IV and French nobles.

NOTES: He was travelling on personal business but acted as an agent to carry letters into France. Crichton carried a letter for the Duke of Lorraine as well. He planned to continue to Italy but would not send reports as James could obtain more accurate and current information via England and the Essex intelligence network.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln.* (Edinburgh, 1838) pp.35-6; BL, RP 533/4.

SC-FR_10.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss), Ambassador.

c.2/1598->11/1599

MISSION: To negotiate customs rates paid by Scottish Merchants.

NOTES: According to Colville's DNB article this mission never took place, but archival sources suggest it did happen. John Lindsay of Balcarres was originally supposed to go but did not because of ill health (Lindsay's commission is found in RPS 1597/3/6). Robert Bowes reports that Colville is going on the mission and that he is travelling through England, for which he asks Elizabeth's leave. His mission was delayed for several months although it appears he was in France by February 1598 (SP 52/62 f.4). Colville's return is not documented, although he makes another trip in November 1599 so he must have returned prior to this (SP 52/65 f.126).

SELECTED REFERENCES: NRAS 217/Box 14/467, 470, 471, 472, 476, 477, 478; TNA SP 52/60 f.44; SP 52/61 ff.16, 27, 58, 65i, 65; TNA SP 52/62 f.4.

SC-FR_11.

James Colville (Laird of Easter Wemyss)

11/1599-

NOTES: Requests a passport for himself, his servants and horses to travel via England.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA SP 52/65 f.126; NRAS 217/Box 14/472, 476-7.

SC-FR_12.

Ludovick Stuart (2nd Duke of Lennox), Ambassador.

Thomas Erskine (Knight), Ambassador.

William Livingston (Knight, of Kilsyth), Ambassador.

John Spottiswood (Parson of Calder), Agent.

James Forrett (Forett/Forret, Commissioner from Glasgow), Agent.

10/7/1601-11/1601

MISSION: To renew Auld Alliance and deal with trade issues and customs rates.

NOTES: The Convention of Royal Burghs asked James to nominate an ambassador to send to discuss customs charges and they would pay for the mission. The mission returned via London, where they arrived in November 1601 and had an audience with Elizabeth. See: SC-EN_16.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Marwick, James, Marguerite Wood, and Helen Armet, eds. *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh*. 14 vols. (Edinburgh, 1869), vol.6 p.296; James Marwick, ed., *Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1866-90), vol.2 pp.90, 97-8, 104-5, 115, 147; *Calderwood*, vol.6 p.136; *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.100-1.

SC-FR_13.

Alexander Home (first Earl, sixth Lord Home), Special Ambassador.

16/7/1602-c. 15/10/1602

MISSION: To congratulate Henri VI on surviving an attempted assassination.

NOTES: Sent as relations were warming between the kingdoms to congratulate Henri IV on surviving the assassination attempted by the Duke of Biron.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 p.390-1; TNA SP 59/41 f.70, SP 59/41 f.146; *Papiers d'Etat*, vol.3 pp.654, 714-5, 721-2; Ralph Winwood, *Memorials of Affairs of State ...*, (London, 1725), vol.1 p.435.

Ambassadors to Florence (FL)

SC-FL_01.

Patrick Gray (Master of Gray), Agent.

<01/1597- >29/09/1600

MISSION: To further relations with the Italian States and to ensure the rulers' support for James. Possibly also to discuss the possible marriage between Prince Henry and the Duke's sister.

NOTES: Gray asked leave to go to Italy for 'his health' and James wrote him letters of credit addressed to the Duke of Florence and the Duke of Parma. Gray returned with reports and letters from the Duke of Florence.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House, CP 195/50, CP90/91; John Duncan Mackie, "The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI in Italy prior to His Accession to the English Throne." *SHR* 21, no.84 (July 1924) pp.267-82; James VI&I, and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany. *Negotiations between King James VI. and I. and Ferdinand I. Grand Duke of Tuscany: A Selection of Documents Transcribed from the Denmilne Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and from a Manuscript in the Staats-Bibliothek at Munich.* Edited by J. D. Mackie. (London, 1927) pp.14-5.

SC-FL_02.

Michael Balfour (Knight, Baron of Burley/Burleigh), Ambassador.

05/1598- c.07/1599

MISSION: To gauge the attitude of various dukes in the Italian Peninsula towards James and encourage them to support James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Burley returned to Scotland with a positive response from Ferdinand I., Grand Duke of Tuscany.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James VI&I, and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany. *Negotiations between King James VI. and I. and Ferdinand I. Grand Duke of Tuscany: A Selection of Documents Transcribed from the Denmilne Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and from a Manuscript in the Staats-Bibliothek at Munich.* Edited by J. D. Mackie. (London, 1927) pp.viii, 2-11.

SC-FL_03.

Michael Balfour (Knight, Baron of Burley/Burleigh), Ambassador.

04/1601- 01/1602

MISSION: To strengthen relations between James and the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James VI&I, and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany. *Negotiations between King James VI. and I. and Ferdinand I. Grand Duke of Tuscany: A Selection of Documents Transcribed from the Denmilne Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and from a Manuscript in the Staats-Bibliothek at Munich.* Edited by J. D. Mackie. (London, 1927) pp.viii, 18-45 passim.

SC-FL_04.

Michael Balfour (Knight, Baron of Burley/Burleigh), Ambassador.

06/1602- 06/1603

MISSION: To strengthen relations between James and the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

NOTES: Possible that he returned to Scotland briefly in September 1602.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James VI&I, and Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany. *Negotiations between King James VI. and I. and Ferdinand I. Grand Duke of Tuscany: A Selection of Documents Transcribed from the Denmilne Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland and from a Manuscript in the Staats-Bibliothek at Munich.* Edited by J. D. Mackie. (London, 1927) pp.viii, 45-56 passim.

Ambassadors to Hamburg (HA)

SC-HA_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholas Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when he was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism.* (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

Ambassadors to Hesse (HE)

SC-HE_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholas Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when he was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

SC-HE_02.

David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.
Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598 and to Scotland c. November 1598. Received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.371-3.

Ambassadors to Mecklenburg (ME)

SC-ME_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

SC-ME_02.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Ambassador.

c.5/1594-1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Left Scotland in May; went first to Denmark and then to Mecklenburg before going to Brunswick.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.367; *RPS* 1594/4/96.

SC-ME_03.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.
David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. Returned to Scotland c. November 1598. Received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.366-8, 378-9.

Ambassadors to the Papal Court (PC)

SC-PC_01.

John / Pourie Ogilvy, Unofficial Agent.

1595-<1596

MISSION: To collude with Catholic powers to gain favour for James.

NOTES: Ogilvy was tasked with gauging Papal attitude towards James and increasing the idea that he would be willing to convert to Catholicism. It is also possible that during this mission Ogilvy went to Venice and Florence.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/59 ff.19-20; *CSP Scotland* vol.12 pp.320-2 no.265; Hatfield House, CP 46/60.

SC-PC_02.

James Lindsay (Knight), Unofficial Agent.

c.1599-<26/3/1603

MISSION: To covertly collude with the Catholic powers in the Italian States and Spain to gain support for James; to attempt to convert James to Catholicism.

NOTES: One of his instructions was dated 26 March 1603, which was to inform the Pope that James could not at that time send his son to Rome to be educated or to convert to Catholicism. This was in response to a long-term negotiation in which Lindsay travelled back and forth between the Papacy and Scotland. He returned to Scotland at least in 1602 on a mission from the Pope in response to letters sent by Anna of Denmark in 1601. Lindsay met with the Spanish ambassador Tassis in the spring of 1603 so must have been in London at that time as well.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House CP 134/27_2, 95/12; TNA SP 52/65 f.32, 52/64 f.76, 63/197 f.25; Albert Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy: The Religious Issues in Anglo-Spanish Relations, 1603-1605." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 53, no.6. New Series (January 1963): p.24; A. W. Ward, "James VI and the Papacy." *SHR* 2, no.7 (1905): p.251; Arnold Oskar Meyer, *Clemens VIII und Jakob I von England*. (Rome, 1904) p.41.

Ambassadors to Persia (PE)

SC-PE_01.

Anthony Shirley (Knight), Agent.

1601-

MISSION: To improve relations between Persia and Europe.

NOTES: Shirley was an English ambassador sent to Shāh Abbas of Persia in 1598. He remained there six months and then returned as an ambassador from the Shāh, to promote relations with Europe. He was sent back in 1601, and James, who writes him a commission as the future king of England and Ireland, supports this mission.

SELECTED REFERENCES: NLS, Adv. MS 33.1.7 vol.21 f.43.

Ambassadors to Poland-Lithuania (PL)

SC-PL_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.

William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels. Whilst it seems possible that Skene and Stewart intended to go to Poland-Lithuania they do not appear to have ever made it, and the mention in the journal seems to refer to this destination only as a possibility.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

Ambassadors to Pomerania (PO)

SC-PO_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

Ambassadors to Saxony (SA)

SC-SA_01.

John Skene (Advocate), Ambassador.
William Stewart (Colonel), Ambassador.

9/6/1590-c.11/1590

MISSION: To attempt to complete negotiations for a Protestant League between Scotland, Denmark-Norway and the German princes.

NOTES: Nicholus Kass wrote to James regarding the mission when it was in Denmark-Norway. The ambassadors were in Hamburg on 7 July and visited several places including Brandenburg, Denmark-Norway, Hamburg, Hesse, Saxony, Mecklenburg, Pomerania and Poland-Lithuania. Skene's journal, held in the NLS, details their travels.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.133-44; NLS, Ms 2912; TNA, SP 52/46 f.21; Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.84; *RPCS*, vol.4 pp.488-9; David Scott Gehring, *Anglo-German Relations and the Protestant Cause: Elizabethan Foreign Policy and Pan-Protestantism*. (London, 2013) pp.134-8.

SC-SA_02.

Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.
David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. They returned to Scotland c. November 1598 having received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *Spottiswood*, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.369-71.

Ambassadors to Savoy (SY)

SC-SY_01.

Robert Semple (fourth Lord Semple), Ambassador.

>27/09/1602-

MISSION: To discuss the possibility of a match between the Scottish Prince Henry and a relation of Charles Emanuel I, Duke of Savoy.

NOTES: Name also spelt Sempill/Sempel. It is possible that he was the half-brother of William Semple, the likely illegitimate son of Robert, third Lord Semple. During the same time it appears James was also considering a match with Florence for prince Henry (TNA, SP 52/67 f.289). It is not known how long Semple was in Savoy or when he returned.

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 52/69 f.9.

Ambassadors to Schleswig (SE)

SC-SE_01.

David Cunningham (Bishop of Aberdeen), Envoy.
Peter Young (Master Almoner to the King), Envoy.

6/1598-c.11/1598

MISSION: To gain support for James's claim to the English throne.

NOTES: Sent to Denmark-Norway, and the German Princes. In Denmark in August 1598 and the German Princes in September-October 1598, returned to Denmark in late October 1598. Returned to Scotland c. November 1598. Received non-committal responses.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Spottiswood, vol.3 pp.75-6; *Warrender Papers*, vol.2 pp.377-8.

Ambassadors to Spain (SP)

SC-SP_01.

John Seaton (Knight), Agent.

24/6/1583-5/4/1584

MISSION: To tell Philip II that James's subjects were holding him hostage, and to request Philip's aid and council.

NOTES: Seaton (Seton, Setton) was ordered to depart for his mission to Spain in June 1583. Waad reports to Walsingham that Seaton is in Bordeaux, recently come from Spain and on his way to Scotland, in February 1584. Seaton is recorded as being in Dumbarton on 5 April 1584 and awaiting a meeting with the king.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House CP 138/167; BL Cotton Caligula C/VII f.6-7; TNA SP 78/11 f.17; BL, Cotton Caligula C/VII f.251; *Relations Politique*, vol.3 pp.261-5.

SC-SP_02.

John Seaton (Knight), Ambassador.

c.28/3/1586-

MISSION: To treat with Philip II on behalf of James for support if his mother was executed.

NOTES: It was reported that Seaton (Seton, Setton) was nominated for the mission around this date, at the same time that Patrick Vaus of Barnbarroch was nominated to go to Denmark-Norway. It is not known if or when he left, or when he returned, although Philip did receive a letter from James dated 31 August 1586, so perhaps Seaton carried the letter, although according to Sir James Melville, the mission never took place.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Hatfield House, CP 163/133; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.319.

SC-SP_03.

John Maxwell (Lord Maxwell, Earl of Morton), Agent.

24/6/1587-4/1588

MISSION: To gain assistance in seeking revenge for the death of Mary Queen of Scots.

NOTES: He was sent without a commission. He had an audience with Philip II c. 12 July and tried to convince him to dock his invasion force in Scotland and to ally with James. He failed to convince Philip and was sent to Paris with Colonel William Semple in December 1587, from whence both left after deciding to try and convince James to convert. They returned to Scotland in April 1588.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *CSP Venice*, vol.8 pp.289-90, 290-1, 294, 299-300, 305-6, 307, 320-3; Keith Brown, "The Making of a 'Politique': The Counter Reformation and the Regional Politics of John, Eighth Lord Maxwell." *SHR* 66, no.2 (1987) pp.163-4; *CSP Spain*, vol.17, pp.201-2, 255-6; Thomas Thomson, ed., *The Historie and Life of King James the Sext* (Edinburgh, 1825), p.235.

SC-SP_04.

Archibald Lamb, Agent.

14/7/1587-

MISSION: Commissioned to carry letters to Philip II.

NOTES: James signed his commission to carry letters to Philip on 14 July 1587. It is not known when he departed Scotland, arrived in Spain or returned home.

SELECTED REFERENCES: NAS, GD/103/1/73.

SC-SP_05.

?? (?), Agent.

c. 4/6/1588-

MISSION: Secret/Unknown Mission.

NOTES: The Venetian ambassador to Spain, Hieronimo Lippomano, wrote that an agent of James VI's had been with Philip II for the past few days with a secret mission, and that this agent returned to Scotland carrying letters from James VI.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *CSP Venice*, vol.8 p.361.

SC-SP_06.

Robert Semple (fourth Lord Semple), Agent.

1596- <1600

MISSION: To report on Spanish invasion plans and attempt to improve Scoto-Spanish relations.

NOTES: Name also spelt Sempill/Sempel. It is possible that he was the half-brother of William Semple, the likely illegitimate son of Robert, third Lord Semple. It is possible that Semple returned to Scotland for a short time during this mission, although due to spotty references it is unclear when and if this happened (i.e. Robert Bowes indicated that a Scot returning from Spain in 1597 carried a letter for 'Lord Sempill' in Scotland. TNA, SP 52/60 f.64).

SELECTED REFERENCES: TNA, SP 12/270 f.52, SP 12/271 f.11; SP 52/64 f.70; SP 52/60 f.64, SP 52/69 f.9, SP 52/65 f.44, SP 52/62 f.8, SP 52/67 f.149, SP 52/58 f.84, SP 52/66 f.18, SP 12/277; BL Cotton Caligula D/II f.398; Hatfield House, CP 67/14, 66/73, CP 204/27; AGS, E 839.177; NLS, Adv MS 33.1.10 ff.7, 13.

SC-SP_07.

William Semple (Colonel), Ambassador /Agent.

c.3/1599-

MISSION: To deal with issues of trade, general relations and succession claims.

NOTES: Was given instructions by James VI and Philip III was informed that Semple would be coming, although in reality the man was a double agent. Name also spelt Sempill/Sempel. William was likely the illegitimate son of Robert, third Lord Semple and thus a half-brother of Robert, fourth Lord Semple.

SELECTED REFERENCES: SCA, CA4/1/14; AGS, E 839.177; TNA, SP 12/271 f.11; NLS, Adv MS 33.2.20 f.7.

Ambassadors to Sweden (SW)

SC-SW_01.

William Murray (Captain), Envoy.

c.1/1590-1590

MISSION: To obtain letters of safe passage from the King of Sweden for James VI and to return to Denmark-Norway with these.

NOTES: Sent from Norway to Stockholm to get safe passage for James's wedding party to travel through Sweden to Denmark.

SELECTED REFERENCES: RPCS vol.4 p.469.

Ambassadors to the United Provinces (UP)

SC-UP_01.

William Stewart (Colonel), Agent.

c.8/1588-c.11/1588

MISSION: To deal with personal issues regarding pay in addition to state business.

NOTES: He carried a letter from James making this official rather than personal business. This was done on the return from his trip to Denmark-Norway and discussed what he believed was an arrears in pay from his service in the Scots-Dutch brigade.

SELECTED REFERENCES: James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*. 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.115-21.

SC-UP_02.

William Stewart (Colonel), Envoy.

c.4/1593- /c.7/1593

NOTES: Went to collect his stipend from his military service and shared political news. Also made further attempts to form a Protestant League.

SELECTED REFERENCES: *SSNE* 1597; James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*. 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 pp.142-8.

SC-UP_03.

William Murray (Knight), Ambassador.

William Keith (Knight), Ambassador.

c.5/1594-1594

MISSION: To carry invitations to Prince Henry's baptism.

NOTES: Went first to the United Provinces but likely continued on to the Holy Roman Empire; left Scotland in early May.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Moysie, *Memoirs*, p.117; James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535-1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), p.367; James Ferguson, *Papers Illustrating the History of the Scots Brigade in the Service of the United Netherlands, 1572-1582*. 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1899), vol.1 p.149-54.

SC-UP_04.

William Stewart (Colonel), Envoy.

1595-

NOTES: Sent political news to Christian Barnekow in Denmark (10 February 1595).

SELECTED REFERENCES: *SSNE* 1597.

SC-UP_05.

Adrian Damman (de Bysteryeldt), Agent.

12/1596-<10/1/1597

MISSION: To retrieve the Earl of Errol who had been captured.

NOTES: Errol had already escaped from Campvere [Veere] by the time Damman arrived. He reported on the news from the area and what had happened with Errol. He also met with the Earl of Nassau, younger brother to Prince William of Orange.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln.* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.23-8, 32.

SC-UP_06.

Robert Deniston (Lord Conservator for Scotland), Envoy.

<25/1/1602-

MISSION: To deal with trade issues regarding fishing and salt.

NOTES: The United Provinces respond to the mission on 29 January in writing.

SELECTED REFERENCES: NA, 3.01.14/2156.

Ambassadors to Venice (VE)

SC-VE_01.

William Keith (Knight, of Ludquharin), Agent.

8/12/1595-<11/1596

MISSION: To discover whom Venice would support for the English succession.

NOTES: Wrote from Venice in February 1596 to inform James that he had asked the Doge whom he would support, Spain or someone else, for the English Succession. The Doge responded that they needed more direct contact with James before they would consider supporting him. James did so in November.

SELECTED REFERENCES: Adam Anderson, ed., *Letters and State Papers during the Reign of King James the Sixth, Chiefly from the Manuscript Collections of Sir James Balfour of Denmyln.* (Edinburgh, 1838), pp.8-12, 20-3.

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Cotton MS Caligula C/VI: Records and papers (originals and copies) concerning England and Scotland, (1580-1581).

Cotton MS Caligula C/VII: Records and papers (originals and copies) concerning England and Scotland, (1582-1584).

Cotton MS Caligula C/VIII: Records and papers (originals and copies) concerning England and Scotland, (1584-1586).

Cotton MS Caligula D/I: Records and papers concerning England and Scotland, (1587-1589).

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