

## THE NEWHAVEN EXPEDITION, 1562–1563

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**ABSTRACT.** *England's decision to opt for the reformed religion had major repercussions in her foreign relations. Continental and Scottish protestants now looked to their royal co-religionist for protection. An intervention in Scotland on behalf of the reformers was triumphantly successful. When the French protestants took arms in 1562 they turned to Elizabeth for aid. Cecil was hesitant; Robert Dudley, however, backed by Throckmorton, urged armed intervention. The queen agreed but drove a hard bargain. The Huguenots were to hand over Newhaven (Le Havre) to be held by the English until Calais was returned. She in turn loaned money to hire mercenaries. From the beginning the alliance faltered. Elizabeth refused succour to the Huguenots besieged in Rouen. Condé and Coligny opened negotiations with Catherine de Medici, in which English interests were disregarded. In due course the assassination of the duke of Guise, the catholic champion, opened the way for a settlement. The reunited French parties joined in an assault on Newhaven; a humiliating surrender followed. The ill success of this venture was decisive in shaping the future course of English relations with their continental co-religionists. At home it marked the emergence of Robert Dudley as a major player in high politics.*

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The abortive English intervention in the first French religious war in 1562–63 was, as to its declared purposes, a flat failure on all counts; it neither gave effective support to the French protestants nor recovered the march of Calais. It cost England heavily in lives and treasure although, thanks to circumstances in France, England was spared any retributive penalties. Nevertheless the experience of this enterprise had important consequences; the lessons learned at Newhaven decisively shaped the strategies of English foreign policy for two decades to come. They governed the responses of the queen and her ministers to the successive phases of the French civil wars and to the parallel problems presented by the Low Countries from the mid-1560s.

The passage of the Acts of Supremacy and of Uniformity in the spring of 1559 affected the course of English domestic history for generations to come. They were no less consequential for the course of England's relations with her neighbours, particularly over the next half century. By virtue of those acts England became the leading reformed polity in Europe. Other than the distant kings in Copenhagen and Stockholm, Elizabeth was the only sovereign ruler who adhered to the new religion. Her accession to the protestant camp came, moreover, at a critical moment in the history of the Reformation.

From its beginnings protestantism had injected a new and disturbing element into relations among European rulers. To the traditional rivalries, dynastic, territorial, merely personal, which dominated the dealings of these princes one with another, was now added the yeasty ingredient of religious

ideology. It was in the German empire that these effects were first felt; after a convulsive struggle in the early 1550s an equilibrium of sorts was established without the disturbance spreading to the other west European polities.

By 1558 much had changed. The spread of protestantism had altered the religious map of Europe as the reformed faith spread, taking root in the Spanish Hapsburg Low Countries and in Valois France. At first mere underground cells, the protestants had grown rapidly into organized bodies, regional and then national in character. The first synod of the French reformed church was held in 1559. The virus of religious division now infected those powers which lay within the orbit of England's foreign relations.

Within the continental monarchies the reform movement attracted powerful lay patrons, the Bourbons and the Chatillons in France, the Nassau princes in the Low Countries. Thus the thrust of the reformers to obtain freedom of worship was soon inextricably intertwined with the rivalries of the great magnate houses, manifest first in court conspiracy, quickly moving to open conflict. After the unexpected death of Henry II in 1559, the weakness of a throne occupied by boy rulers destabilized French politics to the point of open violence – to civil war. In the 1560s mob violence erupted in the Netherlands; from 1572 there was armed rebellion.

Relations among princes were now transformed in two ways. Each had now to look upon his (or her) neighbours not only in the terms set by historic rivalries but also in the light of their religious orientation. They were no longer adversaries competing merely for contested land or titles – or for dynastic reputation. They were enemies of the true faith, protestant or catholic, who aimed not merely at the humiliation of their neighbours but at their destruction. As a contemporary noted, in time past neighbours contested for ambition and superiority. Now the goal of each party is 'to exterminate all nations differing from them in religion'.<sup>1</sup> The wars to be fought were now the wars of truth.

Secondly the strategy of competition altered. It was no longer only a head-on confrontation of one prince's armies against another's. Now the individual's new commitment to the true faith contended with the ancient loyalties of the subject to one's liege lord. Was it not, for men of deep conviction, their bounden duty to refuse obedience to an ungodly prince? For those less conscientious religion might in any case serve as a convenient cloak for mere factional ambitions. Such pockets of malcontents offered the foreign ruler a golden opportunity to subvert his rival from within. The divisions of civil strife now criss-crossed those of foreign war. Patronizing one's neighbour's rebellious subject could paralyse or even destroy him more effectively than by waging open war.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A collection of state papers...left by William Cecil, Lord Burghley*, ed. Samuel Haynes (London, 1740), pp. 471–2. The writer, Throckmorton, adds, 'Now when the general design is to exterminate all nations dissenting with them in religion... what shall become of us, when the like professors with us shall be destroyed in Flanders and France?'

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Elizabeth*, ed. Joseph Stevenson et al. (26 vols., London, 1863–1950), iv, 87. See Throckmorton's comment that an English link with French protestants will be for the queen's profit.

In the brewing civil conflict in France in the 1560s the contenders, ranged under the banner of true religion, would show little hesitation in seeking help from their co-religionists abroad, the catholics from the king of Spain the protestants from the queen of England. Elizabeth found herself summoned to the role of a modern Deborah or Judith, the protectress of her fellow protestants against the Roman foe.

Without doubt the queen would have preferred to eschew any pretence of such a role. Her vision of right religious order, wholly national in character, left no place for ecumenical protestant sympathies. The maxim of the Empire, *cuius regio eius religio*, was one to which she could subscribe with enthusiasm. Moreover, Elizabeth was painfully conscious of her own vulnerability. Her own contingent of catholic subjects who, at the opening of the reign, were incalculable in number and unpredictable as to behaviour, might seek abroad the protection of a prince of their own faith.

There was, however, no escape for her. It was the passionate ideologues, not the cool-headed *politiques*, who called the tunes of late sixteenth-century international relations. For Elizabeth too much hung on the fate of the continental brethren to allow her to turn aside from their fate. A powerful, organized protestant movement already existed in France and would shortly emerge in the Low Countries, the two neighbours with whom England had the closest political – and most problematic – relations. Elizabeth could not evade the consequences of these developments.

Most urgent were relations with France, which were clouded with distrust and suspicion. England had only just emerged from a war which had ended with the humiliating loss of Calais. The French were still entrenched in Britain itself, in Scotland, where the regent queen mother was a daughter of the zealously catholic house of Guise. Her daughter, queen of Scotland and (from 1559) of France, was by the normal rules of succession next in line to the English throne and had boldly quartered the arms of England in public. In the new reign the Guises dominated the French court. Such a regime, driven by the twin engines of religious ardour and dynastic ambition, was an immediate danger to the security of Elizabeth. It would be hard to resist a plea in behalf of the persecuted faithful, when their enemy was the regent of Scotland or the duke of Guise himself, lording it in the court of Paris.

It was indeed Guisan policy in Scotland which first evoked the question of English assistance to foreign protestants. There a party of armed rebels, self-styled Lords of the Congregation, acting partly in opposition to alien rule, partly as the leaders of religious reform, appealed to Elizabeth for help against the regent and her French garrison.

In the royal council the nettle was first firmly grasped by William Cecil.<sup>3</sup> Looking beyond the immediate crisis he laid out a long-term strategy for a revolution in Anglo-Scottish relations. He saw in the reformed faith a common

<sup>3</sup> See Jane F. A. Dawson, 'William Cecil and the British dominion of early Elizabethan foreign policy', *History*, LXXIV (1989), 196–216.

platform of interests on which could be built permanent cooperation between the two monarchies, to replace the centuries-old hostilities which had hitherto shaped their relations. He proposed to the queen a radical programme of strong support for the lords with the object of establishing a reformed Scottish polity and a regime which would look to London not as an occasional short-term ally but as a collaborator in sustaining and defending enduring common ideological purposes.

Cecil was essaying the role of mentor for his novice queen. Elizabeth was not a hopeful student. She repudiated altogether any scheme for patronizing a Scottish reformation and was led only with the greatest difficulty to consent to measures of assistance to the Scottish lords. Hesitating at every step, she reluctantly allowed herself to be drawn into successive commitments, of money, of ships in the Firth of Forth, and finally of an army. Armed intervention proved a failure when a fumbling assault on the fortress of Leith failed, but Cecil's diplomatic gamble ultimately paid off, when French inability to reinforce their army, domestic tumult, and the opportune death of the queen regent pushed them to a withdrawal.

This first essay in intervention in support of foreign protestants had been a stirring success; not only were the French expelled from the northern kingdom but the triumphant Scottish protestants had pushed through their parliament a complete abolition of the ancient religious order, in fact realizing the programme Cecil had set out for his sovereign at the beginning of the crisis. Two years later the next plea for aid from foreign protestants would come from France. This would prove to be a much more difficult case.

Elizabeth's relations with France had initially been shaped by her Scottish problem; England and France had fought a surrogate war in the northern kingdom which, but for bad weather and French domestic strife, might have escalated into the real thing. The English had won this round in the contest, expelling the intruder from the island; now it was in turn the French whose internal division made them vulnerable to external intervention.

At Paris the English queen was represented by Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, a man of passionately held views, articulated with impolitic frankness. Committed to the vision of a protestant internationale, he was unceasing in his urgent warnings that England must intervene in behalf of continental protestants, her only allies against impending catholic aggression.<sup>4</sup> With ambitions for high place, sadly frustrated by his exile from the centre of power, he did his utmost to shape English policy from Paris, pouring a steady stream of advice and exhortation on the queen and secretary Cecil. The didactic tone of his dispatches sometimes make it seem as though he were the principal and Cecil the agent. Nevertheless relations between the two men were harmonious and on most matters they were in agreement.

As early as August 1559 Sir Nicholas had, at the royal command, held a clandestine conference with the king of Navarre, the leader of the protestant

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 82–8.

party and of the Bourbon family interest,<sup>5</sup> urging cooperation in behalf of their common faith. This was just after the death of Henry II had placed Mary Stuart's adolescent husband, Francis II, on a throne overshadowed by the Guise princes, a regime altogether unfriendly to England. In the following spring when the protestant leaders hatched the ill-fated conspiracy of Amboise, the English government were certainly in the confidence of the conspirators<sup>6</sup> and timed their decisive intervention in Scotland to coincide with it.<sup>7</sup>

However, when in the summer overtures came from the French protestants, proposing an English intervention in their behalf and offering a port (possibly Brest) as a gage, Cecil was vehement in opposition. English intervention would rest on a 'devotion popular in religion' which the French king would deflect by concession. Cecil would have been willing, had the war with France continued, to annoy the French by flirting with the protestants, but he was wholly opposed to any long-term occupation of a port. It would be an endless waste of men and money. He cited the English experience at Boulogne a decade earlier, as a warning.<sup>8</sup>

The end of Francis's short reign in December in 1560 broke the Guisan monopoly of influence at court and led to jockeying for position among the four great family factions – the Guises, the Bourbons, the Chatillons, and the Montmorency – an altered situation which eased relations with England. As Throckmorton succinctly put it, England's 'safety is for neither party to overthrow the other'.<sup>9</sup> A court distracted by faction would pose no threat to its neighbours. When the earl of Bedford went to Paris on an embassy of condolence in February 1561, he had conversations with Navarre and Admiral Coligny<sup>10</sup> which led to an effort at cooperation over the vexed question of attendance at the Council of Trent. When the queen decided to reject the proposed visit of a papal nuncio, she communicated her decision to the protestant leaders in the hope they could persuade France to a similar rejection of the Council. Although this did not occur, in the autumn of that year the queen could write cheerfully that French relations were so quiet that she hardly needed an ambassador in Paris.<sup>11</sup>

This happy state of affairs faded in the winter of 1561–2 when events began to flow against the protestant faction. The January edict of toleration which they had won from the crown was nullified by catholic opposition. The Guisan princes, absent in Lorraine, returned to court and on their way, at Vassy, fired on a protestant gathering, killing some of its members. This episode triggered off open confrontation. By April Condé and Coligny were in arms although

<sup>5</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, I, 491–2. See N. M. Sutherland, 'The origins of Queen Elizabeth's relations with the Huguenots, 1559–62', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, xx (1958–64), 626–48.

<sup>6</sup> See J. Durang, 'La complicité de l'Angleterre dans le complot d'Amboise', *Revue de l'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vi (1904–5), 249–56.

<sup>7</sup> See Patrick Forbes, *A full view of the public transactions in the reign of Queen Elizabeth* (2 vols., London, 1740–1), I, 415–8.

<sup>8</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, III, 184, 185–6.

<sup>9</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, IV, 503–4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* III, 565–78.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* IV, 334–40.

the senior Bourbon prince, Navarre, had defected to become along with Guise and Montmorency the third member of a triumvirate which dominated the court. These events were quickly reported in England where Condé's friends sought to arouse English opinion by the translation and publication of his manifesto and the ensuing pamphlets.<sup>12</sup>

In March Throckmorton raised the alarm; the protestants were the weaker party and Spanish assistance to the catholics was promised. The queen must give her open approval to the protestant cause.<sup>13</sup> At the same time an agitated Cecil was writing to the English agent to the German protestant princes instructing him to write to the queen. 'Let her understand that if she do not now attempt the furtherance of the Gospel in France and the keeping asunder of France and Spain, her peril will be the most of any prince in Christendom.'<sup>14</sup> The queen did indeed write to express her approval of Condé's firmness while comparing Navarre's probable fate to that of the Protector Somerset when he joined his enemies in council. A few days later Condé dispatched an agent to London.<sup>15</sup>

Events were given a decisive impetus when Le Havre – Newhaven to the English – was seized by a lieutenant of Condé's, Jean de Ferrières, vidame de Chartres.<sup>16</sup> Throckmorton wrote immediately to the queen and Cecil, 'It may chance that in these garboils there will be some good occasion or opportunity offered that you may again be brought to the possession either of Calais or some place of consequence to the other side.'<sup>17</sup> In any case 'it standeth Your Majesty so upon for your own safety as to be well aware that the prince of Condé and his favourers be not in this realm overthrown'. To Cecil he wrote more frankly, 'our friends the protestants in this country must be handled and dandled' so that if Spain occupies any French place in support of the catholics, the protestants 'may be moved and induced to give the queen either the possession of Calais, Newhaven, or Dieppe, all of which three or any of the which I care not though we had'. However, the English must move cautiously, leaving it to the French protestants to take the initiative in such an offer.<sup>18</sup>

Even as Throckmorton was writing, the queen and Cecil were responding to the French crisis by a more oblique tactic.<sup>19</sup> She dispatched an envoy, Sir Henry Sidney, on a mission of mediation.<sup>20</sup> In addressing the king and the queen mother, he was to begin with the rather condescending observation that the French faced a common problem of royal minorities – faction among the councillors of the crown which escalates into violence (as in Edward VI's reign). As a remedy Elizabeth proposed that the queen mother send someone to Condé, a neutral who 'seems only addicted to the king and the quiet of the

<sup>12</sup> *A declaration made by my lord the prince of Condé* (London, 6 April 1562); *A treaty of association to maintain the honour of God, the quiet of the realm and the liberty of the king* (London, 16 April 1562); *The very truth of the conference between the queen mother and Condé* (London, 1562); *An answer made by Condé to the requests presented by the triumvirate to the French king* (London, 1562).

<sup>13</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 545–9, 553–4.

<sup>14</sup> P.R.O., SP70/35/139.

<sup>15</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 570, 600.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* v, 36–8.

<sup>17</sup> P.R.O., SP70/36/65.

<sup>18</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 608–10.

<sup>19</sup> P.R.O., SP70/36/139–44.

<sup>20</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 625, 636–7.

realm'. His cause and that of his adversaries should then be judged by an impartial group of wise men, appointed by the sovereign from each of the three estates. If the queen mother thought an English emissary might serve as intermediary, Throckmorton and Somers were authorized to act in that capacity.

Whatever else was intended by this ploy, one thing was clear – the queen's intention to stake out a place in the French imbroglio and to counter Spanish intervention in the Guises's behalf. While Sidney was instructed to be scrupulously neutral, the English assumption that Condé, as much as Guise, was acting in good faith revealed the partisanship of their position and implicitly asserted Elizabeth's role as his patroness. Sidney's proposals received a blandly courteous rebuff while at the same time a royal French envoy set off for London to defend the queen mother's anxious efforts to keep the peace.

In fact at the very moment of Sidney's departure Elizabeth was shifting ground.<sup>21</sup> Her favourite, Robert Dudley, had received a letter from Condé (not the first). The queen commanded him to write an answer which should be sent to Throckmorton for delivery to the French prince. 'The letter is wholly to show my [Dudley's] good will in wishing well to all good and godly attempts' but then in a tangle of tortured prose he refers to 'the Queen's Majesty my sovereign whose good inclination thereunto withal I leave not untouched as Her Majesty hath seen and liked so it should be'. Then, less obliquely, 'Her Majesty seems to be wareful in too much show toward them until she may hear more.' It piously added that 'thanks be to God, she doth not so much measure common policy as she doth weigh the prosperity of true religion as well to the world as for conscience's sake'. Dudley's entry on to the stage opened a new phase in Elizabethan high politics. Hitherto he had enjoyed a full measure of the royal favour, even the prospect of the queen's hand in marriage, but he had only dabbled on the fringes of public affairs. Henceforward he was to play a central role in the shaping of policy as a major counsellor of the crown. In November he would obtain official confirmation of his new status by appointment to the privy council, the inner circle of men through whom and with whom the queen governed England.

For Cecil it must have been a chastening moment as he saw his uniquely privileged position as the queen's most trusted councillor challenged by the newcomer; the event inaugurated a rivalry which would endure until Dudley's death nearly thirty years later. Moreover, that rivalry between the two men was not solely a personal one. Each would come to stand for a differing vision as to the direction English foreign relations should take.

Dudley would espouse the interventionist line of action, a vigorous support for fellow protestants overseas – a position which would harden into a nascent English expansionism; Cecil, more and more turning away from the adventurousness of his Scottish policy, would opt for a cautious defensive

<sup>21</sup> P.R.O., SP70/37/54.

stance, yielding only minimal assistance abroad and that only when English national interests were plainly at stake. A sure sign of Dudley's orientation was the alliance now struck between him and Throckmorton. The latter's outspoken opposition to Dudley as consort to the queen had made them enemies. Now a rapprochement was quickly negotiated; henceforth Throckmorton had a patron in high places who shared to the full the ambassador's prescriptions for the conduct of English policy.<sup>22</sup> In the longer run this new alliance would rend Throckmorton's ties with Cecil; for the present all three continued to cooperate, whatever reservation any of them may have felt.

Most immediately they had to respond to the frustrating fluctuations of French politics. Through May and June 1562 the queen mother was unremitting in her efforts to patch up a peace and at several moments it seemed within her grasp. At the end of June<sup>23</sup> Throckmorton could report an accord; within a fortnight he wrote of its breakdown.<sup>24</sup>

During these uncertainties the English could only hover in the wings. In June Armigal Waad, a clerk of the privy council, was sent to sound out the attitudes of the local commanders at Dieppe and Newhaven,<sup>25</sup> while Edward Horsey, a protégé of Robert Dudley's, reconnoitered the Norman scene. Waad found the captains – pursuant to Condé's orders – wholly unwilling to receive English aid, even volunteers, unless the catholics first called in foreign forces.

However, the protestant cause was in trouble; in late June Throckmorton warned of Condé's growing weakness in man power, a warning more urgently repeated in mid-July.<sup>26</sup> With an inferiority in numbers the protestant leaders had perforce to hire German mercenaries if they were to hold their own in the field. Before the end of June Condé had written to Throckmorton asking for a 100,000 crown (c. £30,000) loan, for which he offered the bonds of protestant leaders and churches as security.<sup>27</sup> The ambassador urged that rather than the bonds the queen insist on Newhaven as a gage.

By July then the queen mother's attempts at reconciliation had failed and fighting had broken out across France;<sup>28</sup> the English government and the protestant leaders were moving towards serious negotiation. In May Throckmorton had drawn special attention to the capture of Le Havre by the vidame of Chartres, a follower of Condé.<sup>29</sup> The latter was sent to England in July to seek assistance. Initially he failed. The English had first offered a loan of 140,000 crowns, half to pay the German mercenaries, the balance for use in Normandy. In return England would receive the custody of Newhaven, to be held until the loan was repaid and Calais restored to Elizabeth. A second proposal offered half as much money, but provided 6,000 English troops, 3,000 to be used at Rouen and Dieppe, the others at Newhaven.<sup>30</sup> The

<sup>22</sup> See P.R.O., SP70/37/56. <sup>23</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 137–9. <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* v, 158.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* v, 91–2, 98–9, 111–12, 129–30. <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* v, 126–7, 156–7.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* v, 115–17. <sup>28</sup> P.R.O., SP70/39/68. <sup>29</sup> P.R.O., SP70/37/103–4.

<sup>30</sup> P.R.O., SP12/24/38.



discussions hung fire until in mid-August the vidame, accompanied by De La Haye, another agent of Condé, returned with full commission to act.<sup>31</sup>

The arrival followed a decision by the protestant high command at Orleans. They would have preferred an English loan, guaranteed by their own bonds, but now the threat to Rouen, the Norman capital, and their own shortage of native troops dictated concession to the queen. They still hoped to satisfy her with one of the lesser ports, Fécamp or Dieppe, but if she insisted, she was to have Le Havre. A major port, newly founded by Francis I, it controlled the traffic of the Seine. They conditioned this agreement by the clear understanding that English occupation of the town was in no way opposed to the interests of the crown of France and was indeed intended to protect the royal powers threatened by the Guises's usurpation of them.<sup>32</sup>

If the protestant leaders were to concede Newhaven, they set their sights as to a *quid pro quo* high; they asked for 10,000 troops and a loan of some 400,000 crowns. Cecil was dismayed by the demand for troops; he doubted the queen's willingness to send them and would have preferred money only.<sup>33</sup> Negotiations moved with speed; within a fortnight a bargain had been struck. By 25 August Cecil could write, 'I think the prince shall have the help of the queen of England. I think the queen will have Newhaven.'<sup>34</sup> It was a decision to which the whole Council acceded.<sup>35</sup> The same day De la Haye wrote his master, Condé, in code, that the aunt was willing to help the nephew although she was giving only six out of the ten 'pieces' asked for and a third of the money demanded.<sup>36</sup>

In plain English this meant the dispatch of 6,000 troops (instead of the 10,000 the French hoped for). Of these 3,000 would garrison Newhaven; the other half would be available for Dieppe or Rouen – if they were needed. There was a loan of 140,000 crowns (about £42,000) of which 100,000 was to be paid to Condé; the remainder could be spent to help the protestant forces at Rouen if no troops were sent there.<sup>37</sup> The formal treaty was signed at Hampton Court on 20 September.<sup>38</sup> The new ambassador-designate, Sir Thomas Smith, had at the beginning of the month been given instructions, which while declaring the queen's wish for peace, warned that other means would be used if negotiations failed. The ambassador was told to seek two goals – religion and the staying of Guise's power.<sup>39</sup>

Preparations for the enterprise were already in hand for some weeks past<sup>40</sup> – a loan of £20,000 at Strasburg, the procuring of victuals, musters in the counties – but it was not until 4 October that the vanguard finally landed in Normandy.<sup>41</sup> Their dispatch was accompanied by a flurry of justifications of

<sup>31</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/158.

<sup>32</sup> Theodore, Beza, *Histoire ecclésiastique* (3 vols., Paris, 1884), II, 863–4.

<sup>33</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/158.

<sup>34</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/219.

<sup>35</sup> *Queen Elizabeth and her times*, ed. Thomas Wright (2 vols., London, 1838), I, 96.

<sup>36</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/242. <sup>37</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 268, 269; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 35–6.

<sup>38</sup> For copies of the treaty see Forbes, *A full view*, II, 48–51, which prints B. L. Cotton, Caligula E5, *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 307; also P.R.O., SP70/42/2–3; 41/147–50.

<sup>39</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 275–6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, v, 141, 167.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, v, 343.

the queen's action. A royal proclamation of 24 September, directed to her own subjects, announcing the departure of the troops to Newhaven, denied any intention of war against France. She sought only to preserve the Norman ports against such as had acted against the authority of the French king. Nothing was said of religion and Calais was merely hinted at, 'saving to the crown of England... that which of late times being evicted from ought to be restored'.<sup>42</sup>

A less formal but more expansive declaration, issued at the same time,<sup>43</sup> rehearsed the sins of the Guises since 1559, first in Scotland and now in France, where they persecuted those professing the Gospel while holding the boy king in their power. Their goals were nothing less than stirring up war against true religion through Christendom. For these reasons and in response to cries for help, she had occupied the Norman ports, meaning to hold them until the Guises retired from the public scene. Calais is mentioned, but only to assert that the Guises, against the king's will, have deprived Elizabeth of her rights there under the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. A further proclamation, in French, reiterated that it was the plight of those constrained to abandon their religion by the Guises and the helplessness of the French king to relieve them which led her to act in their defence.<sup>44</sup>

These somewhat disingenuous efforts sought to present Elizabeth as the protector of the persecuted and the oppressed, particularly but not exclusively the protestants. The main thrust of her arguments stressed the Guisan menace – to the French crown, which they held in thrall, to the liberties of Frenchmen, and to the peace of Christendom. The recovery of Calais was mentioned only obliquely.

The signature of the treaty with the protestant leaders at Hampton Court on 20 September 1563 concluded a long period of uncertainty in which the English government gradually evolved its response to the crisis in France. How did it compare with the similar process two years earlier during the Scottish intervention? Then the move to involvement was halting and slow as Cecil shepherded his mistress to action, but throughout it was the secretary who was the driving force, both in his carefully articulated programme and in its successful, indeed triumphant, execution.

When the French protestant cause fell into difficulties in the spring of 1562 Cecil sought to stir the queen to a realization of her danger.<sup>45</sup> In July he chilled the queen's blood – and his own – with a worst case scenario. The Guises, in order to promote their niece to the throne of England, would marry her to the infante of Spain, transfer Ireland to Spanish hands, persuade the council at Trent to offer the English throne to any orthodox prince who would invade the heretic kingdom and finally evoke an English catholic uprising to coincide with the invasion of Ireland.<sup>46</sup> No appeasement of the Guises would quench

<sup>42</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 60–1; *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, V, 321–2; *Tudor proclamations*, eds. P. L. Hughes and J. Franklin (3 vols., New Haven, 1969), II, 206–7.

<sup>43</sup> *The Harleian Miscellany*, eds. W. Oldys and T. Park (4 vols., London, 1808–13), I, 374–79; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 69–74.

<sup>44</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 79–80.

<sup>45</sup> P.R.O., SP70/35/139.

<sup>46</sup> P.R.O., SP70/39/106.

their ambition to rule the whole British island or the Pope's to have his authority re-established.

But even if Cecil was as concerned about the menace of a Guisan victory as he had been in 1559–60 there is no record of anything like the self-confident prescriptions which he had pressed in the previous crisis. While Throckmorton was dangling the lure of a recovered Calais to draw the queen into active intervention in France, Cecil was urging a less assertive course of action – possible co-operation with the German princes and a mediatory role for the queen in France, expressing the hope she could bring about a favourable settlement without resort to arms.<sup>47</sup> The secretary, remembering the ill success of English arms in Scotland in 1560, was wary of committing armed forces to the enterprise. When the protestants made their demand for 10,000 men, Cecil wistfully wrote, 'I wish it [aid] might be in money.'<sup>48</sup>

By now the growing urgency of Huguenot needs, linked to the alluring possibility of regaining Calais, was driving the English towards a hard decision – whether to give the French protestants open and armed assistance. Throckmorton, backed by Dudley, urged both the necessity of action and the opportunities it offered. Dudley's place in the counsels of the queen was now fully apparent in many ways. Henry Killigrew could write from Normandy jointly to both secretary and favourite 'for in these causes he takes them to be one'.<sup>49</sup> Even more to the point was the cluster of Dudley dependents who figured in the run-up to the enterprise – his brother-in-law, Sidney, Killigrew, Horsey, Leighton<sup>50</sup> – and, of course, the commander of the expedition, his brother, Warwick.

The record of deliberations through the summer months leading up to the Hampton Court treaty is slim, but there is enough to suggest that the queen was as reluctant as she had been two years earlier. There had been concern about her warmth of feeling towards the Huguenot leaders.<sup>51</sup> Cecil had cautioned Throckmorton that the queen's lukewarm attitude towards them might be turned to dislike.<sup>52</sup> Sidney on his return to court in June had written, 'I find so little will to practice for anything in France as we shall have cause to thank God only for good luck if any happen unaware.'<sup>53</sup> The royal attention was focused on the proposed meeting with Mary Stuart and it was not until mid-July that she was persuaded to abandon it.<sup>54</sup> In October Cecil would write retrospectively of these troubled weeks when the affairs of France 'which have so turned both ourselves and our counsels into so many shapes from time to time as I could never until this present make any certain account what I might write to yourself'.<sup>55</sup> In another letter written at the moment of decision in August, the secretary told Throckmorton, 'England [Elizabeth] sticketh at the matter, one part desire to gain, on the other loath to

<sup>47</sup> P.R.O., SP70/36/117.

<sup>49</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 213–4.

<sup>51</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, iv, 187; v, 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Miscellaneous State Papers from 1501 to 1726*, ed. Philip Yorke, 2nd earl of Hardwicke (2 vols., London, 1778), 1, 172.

<sup>54</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 93, 103, 164.

<sup>48</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/158.

<sup>50</sup> Haynes, p. 444.

<sup>53</sup> P.R.O., SP70/38/67.

<sup>55</sup> Wright, *Queen Elizabeth*, 1, 95–100.

adventure.’ And then, dismissively, ‘in such cases servants’ counsels are themselves dangerous’. He had not hesitated to press his counsels in 1560. When the die was cast, he wrote resignedly, ‘Thus you see a beginning but what the ending shall be God only knoweth.’<sup>56</sup>

Pretty clearly Elizabeth had agonized over this decision as in the Scottish case. Initially she had balked at sending men.<sup>57</sup> Even after the army had landed, Dudley was nervously apprehensive that the fall of Rouen would lead her ‘rather to blame her advisors than to proceed further’.<sup>58</sup> The difference between this occasion and 1559 was that she had not only to overcome her own indecision but to choose between counsels. Once again she had been brought to ‘adventure’ but this time tempted by a more glittering prize and urged on by the favourite.

As for Cecil’s views – they are summed up in the October letter cited above. ‘True it is I have used all the advice I could to procure some quiet end in these French matters because I have seen from the beginning the process of them one ways ended would be a beginning of our troubles.’ But, after long consultation and disappointed hopes, the queen had taken necessary action, with two goals in view – to stay the duke of Guise’s domination of French policy and to procure restitution of Calais. All this suggests that Cecil had profound reservations as to the wisdom of sending an army to Newhaven and only reluctantly accepted the necessity of the venture. It is worth noting that he says nothing at all about the preservation of the reformed faith. What is missing is the certainty of purpose and of strategy he had displayed in 1559–60. Nor did he share the triumphal view of Throckmorton who had trumpeted his faith that the queen ‘shall be able through Christendom to be both arbiter and umpire as he [Philip] doth challenge to belong to him of right’.<sup>59</sup>

With the arrival of the English army at Newhaven (4 October), the hopes of the interventionists seemed at last about to be realized in an active collaboration with their co-religionists across the Channel. In fact at the very moment of embarkation there was an awkward incident which augured poorly for future relations.<sup>60</sup> Condé sent a last minute order to the acting commander at Newhaven that the town was not to be surrendered in his name.<sup>61</sup> The matter was papered over somehow – in Cecil’s bland words, ‘by other means we obtained a probability to receive us if we would enter’.<sup>62</sup>

Hardly had the English set foot in the town before another revealing – and embarrassing – episode occurred. The protestant defenders of besieged Rouen were desperate and immediately appealed to Poynings, the acting English commander, to send reinforcements to their aid.<sup>63</sup> This was an assistance which the English captain was by his instructions explicitly forbidden to grant. He was persuaded by his ardent colleague, Vaughan, to override instructions

<sup>56</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/158.

<sup>57</sup> P.R.O., SP70/40/158.

<sup>58</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 28; Forbes, *A full view*, ii, 155–6.

<sup>59</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, pp. 15–16; *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 211–12. <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 68–9.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 68–9. <sup>62</sup> Wright, *Queen Elizabeth*, i, 95–100. <sup>63</sup> P.R.O., SP70/42/93.

and send a token 200 men to the besieged Norman capital.<sup>64</sup> Vaughan argued that to refuse would signify that ‘the queen meaneth but an appearance of aid thereby to obtain into her own hands such things as may be most profitable to her’, an argument reproachfully echoed by the vidame of Chartres.<sup>65</sup> The English, he declared, were entirely self-serving in their purposes and quite regardless of their fellow protestants. Poyning’s men arrived at Rouen just in time to join in the gallant but futile resistance to the final assault and to fall prisoners to the Guisan army. The news of Rouen’s fall (26 October) hit Cecil so hard that he fell prey to a fit of the ague<sup>66</sup> while Dudley, nervous that the queen would react by renegeing on her commitment, was relieved by her willingness to soldier on.<sup>67</sup>

Just at this moment of crisis a new wrinkle appeared in Anglo-French relations. Elizabeth had decided to appoint a new ambassador. Throckmorton, long anxious to return to the centre of affairs and now *persona non grata* at the French court, was replaced by Sir Thomas Smith. The new ambassador’s once promising career had begun as secretary under the protector Somerset but had suffered shipwreck on his patron’s fall.<sup>68</sup> His new appointment gave him a second chance. Inexperienced, anxious to please and uncertain as to his mission, he stood in sharp contrast to his assertive and self-confident predecessor. Moreover, it was Cecil rather than Throckmorton who was his sponsor. The new appointment may well have reflected the rivalries within the English privy council. Throckmorton had become the spokesman of Dudley and his policy. Now the Paris embassy was occupied by an incumbent more responsive to the secretary, on whose favour his career depended. In sharp contrast to Throckmorton’s optimism, Smith’s first dispatches emphasized the weakness of the protestant forces and urged haste in reaching a settlement.<sup>69</sup>

Smith, whose mission was at best a difficult one, had hardly arrived before it was made even more awkward by a new mishap when Throckmorton, en route home, stumbled into an affray between the contending French parties and ended up – by chance or by design – taking refuge in the camp of the protestant leaders at Orleans. There was now a novice ambassador, friendless in a hostile court, bereft of contacts; his discredited predecessor, refused a safe conduct by the queen mother, immobilized at Orleans; and the English army, at Newhaven, isolated in a Guisan-held countryside, unable to move outside the town except in force,<sup>70</sup> wholly dependent on imported food – all in highly uncertain communication with one another and with the home government.

In the ensuing weeks the English could do little but stand by, impotent bystanders watching the unfolding civil war. A sharp turn of fortune came in the death of the King of Navarre, Condé’s elder brother, during the siege of Rouen, an event which broke up the governing triumvirate of which Guise

<sup>64</sup> P.R.O., SP70/42/66, 193.

<sup>65</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 346.

<sup>66</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 175–6; *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 439.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 155–6; *Ibid.* v, 408–9.

<sup>68</sup> See Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith* (London, 1964) for details of his career.

<sup>69</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 457, 489–90.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* v, 495–6.

and Montmorency were the other members. The queen mother seized the opportunity to reopen negotiations among the contending rivals. The English were unpleasantly surprised when it began to look as though a settlement might be worked out which totally ignored their interests.<sup>71</sup> Warning Warwick to prepare for a possible siege, the English government havered uncertainly while its two representatives in France anxiously sought direction from home. Smith complained that Cecil's letters were darker than Apollo's oracles.<sup>72</sup>

It may have been declining trust in Condé's good faith which moved the English to shift their ground. They now baldly demanded the return of Calais on the grounds that the French had violated Cateau-Cambrésis by their intervention in Scotland, thereby forfeiting their rights to the captured town.<sup>73</sup> In the event the peace negotiations between the French parties fell through just when they seemed about to succeed<sup>74</sup> and within less than a week the two armies met near Dreux, west of Paris (19 December). The protestants lost the battle and their commander, Condé, who fell prisoner to the Guises. Yet their forces were by no means annihilated, and the loss of their leader was offset by the capture of the constable Montmorency. The catholics also netted another prisoner Nicholas Throckmorton.

In the wake of this disaster the captive prince and the admiral moved in different directions. Condé listened hopefully to the queen mother's proposals for an accord.<sup>75</sup> Coligny on the other hand wrote immediately after the battle to Elizabeth, declaring his resolve to continue fighting.<sup>76</sup> Hard pressed, short of men and money, he followed with another appeal to the queen for help; addressing her as one appointed by God 'to succour those unjustly oppressed, to defend religion, and to oppose them who would abolish His true and pure service'.<sup>77</sup> He asked for money to pay his mercenaries and also for soldiers. In her response, while refusing the despatch of English soldiers, the queen agreed to pay immediately the 100,000 crowns promised in the Hampton Court treaty and hinted at further financial assistance.<sup>78</sup> Elizabeth's uncertain state of mind is revealed in a letter to Smith.<sup>79</sup> The queen, while insisting on her determination to hold Newhaven until she received Calais, went on to speculate as to whether 'some indirect and politic means' might be found to secure toleration, 'in some sort, of religion', Calais for the English, repayment of her loan and a settled peace with the French. Smith could compromise 'somewhat in the sums' so long as he got Calais. The queen, querulously complaining about her growing expenses, wanted to have her cake and eat it. This was backed by a second instruction of the same tenor to an agent sent to the admiral<sup>80</sup> but with the significant addendum that if such terms were not

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. v, 485, 489-90, 493-4, 495, 515-16; P.R.O., SP70/46/36.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. v, 477-8, 500-01, 502, 518-19. <sup>73</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 236-40.

<sup>74</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 535.

<sup>75</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 270-2, 287-90, 293-6.

<sup>76</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, v, 581-2.

<sup>77</sup> Quoted in A. W. Whitehead, *Gaspard de Coligny* (London, 1904), 147.

<sup>78</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 35-6, 52, 54; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 290-1.

<sup>79</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 74-5; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 309-12.

<sup>80</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 94.

to be had, Elizabeth would provide her bonds for a credit of 100,000 crowns for his use.

Significantly the Privy Council told the Huguenot agent that the ‘incommodity’ of sending men overseas meant that English aid would be limited to money. In February the queen secretly instructed Warwick to cap the size of the garrison, limiting it to 5,000, including 1,000 pioneers then on their way to work on the fortifications. These were signals of a changed policy – no more military aid to the French while tightening English control of their one solid asset in France as the alliance with the Huguenots faded.

Throckmorton, recently released from captivity, was now to return to the admiral, bearing the promised money along with instructions which reiterated the queen’s previous directions but with important additions.<sup>81</sup> He was to quiz Coligny as to his plans and his resources. If the latter indicated he could not continue without more English aid, he was to be flatly told that no more would be forthcoming. Sir Nicholas was to urge a settlement with the queen mother, which yielded all but the barest minimum, one which ‘might not ruin or subvert the cause of religion but keep it in life, hereafter to increase and grow’. Beyond that the admiral should seek only the liberty of Condé and guarantees for the persons and properties of the protestant leaders. It would be better to negotiate now before his weakness became more apparent. The queen, however, still wanted her pound of flesh, the return of Calais and repayment of her loan.

There were further instructions still, to come into force if Coligny failed to obtain his scaled down settlement – and the English were forced to fight for Calais. If the admiral then entered ‘into the matter you know of Normandy’, Throckmorton should say the queen would publish her title to Normandy and avow the admiral her lieutenant ‘and all his company to enjoy that duchy under her freely for their livelihood’. There was a hasty addendum; all costs of such an enterprise must be borne in Normandy.

At the same time Cecil, in a less excitable but grimmer, mood was jotting down notes in a memorandum headed, ‘Newhaven to be kept until Calais’,<sup>82</sup> in which he sketched a tentative strategy. There were to be preparations on land and sea, an embargo on French trade, privateering raids on French shipping, the raising of money, the dispatch of more troops to Newhaven and finally the mustering of an army within England for possible service. There was a final jotting – ‘Calais must be had for the honor of the realm, surety of the seas and trade of merchandise’.

The queen found herself trapped in a web of unpalatable choices from which there was no painless issue. She was determined to have Calais but equally determined not to sacrifice any more of her resources in warfare. Against all rational calculations she hoped that – if her French allies reduced their demands to the barest minimum – the queen mother would yield to English demands. Reluctantly admitting that if that failed, she might have to

<sup>81</sup> P.R.O., SP70/50/142.

<sup>82</sup> P.R.O., SP70/50/8.

fight, Elizabeth conjured up an even more unreal scenario, an appeal by the protestants that she reclaim her ancestral rights in Henry V's conquest – at their charge. It was one of those moments when Elizabeth stubbornly refused to face unpleasant realities. Her secretary, on the other hand, resolutely acknowledged them and drew up contingency plans accordingly.

These considerations suddenly became irrelevant when a stroke of fate swept one piece off the board and reshuffled the rest. On 18 February the duke of Guise was shot; on the 29th he died. Guise had been the heart and soul of the catholic party, dominating his ally, Montmorency, and blocking all compromise with Condé. With the duke gone, Catherine had a new freedom to manoeuvre. She found the prince and the constable more than willing to come to an agreement. Events then moved with unprecedented speed. Throckmorton could write of negotiations between the two magnates within days of Guise's death.<sup>83</sup> Preliminaries were drawn up by 10 March and on the 19th the edict of Orleans sealed the peace between the contending religious parties.<sup>84</sup>

From this point onward the ill-woven strands of the Anglo-Huguenot alliance, already badly frayed, quickly unravelled. At the end of the month Coligny sent an agent to England to explain their position.<sup>85</sup> A few days earlier the English had ordered reinforcements to Newhaven.<sup>86</sup> The Huguenot agents' message was simple; Calais could not be yielded before the date specified at Cateau-Cambrésis. If the queen held on, she would show her intervention for religion to be no more than a sham.<sup>87</sup> When pressed by Smith, the protestant magnates merely replied that they had no power to yield the king's towns. Within a few weeks Condé would deny he had signed the Hampton Court treaty.<sup>88</sup>

The diplomatic bickering continued. The English repeated the argument that Calais was rightfully theirs because the French actions in Scotland had violated the terms of Cateau-Cambrésis.<sup>89</sup> The French brushed this aside, taking their stand on the 1559 document, and offering a few crumbs of comfort by proposing a solemn reaffirmation of its terms and more prestigious hostages as sureties.<sup>90</sup> At the same time on 30 April they pressed the case of Newhaven, formally demanding its return.<sup>91</sup>

By May the English began a diplomatic retreat. The queen instructed Smith to throw out hints that she might be willing to discuss some alternative to the immediate surrender of Calais.<sup>92</sup> Late in the month two French envoys set out for London, one accredited by the court, the other by Condé.<sup>93</sup> They offered nothing except a repeat of the offer to upgrade the hostages provided for by Cateau-Cambrésis. The queen countered by suggesting that commissioners be appointed by both sides; on their determination of the rights of the case she would yield Newhaven. The French court refused this.

<sup>83</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 160–1.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 197, 216.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 240.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 235.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* v, 244–6.

<sup>88</sup> P.R.O., SP70/54/34.

<sup>89</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 250–5.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 265–690.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 309.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* vi, 326–8; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 411.

<sup>93</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 365–6; 369–70.



The next move the English made was to send off a special envoy, a relative of Cecil's, named Dannet. Ostensibly he was to make a formal demand for Calais in return for Newhaven; secretly he and Smith were to sound out Condé and the admiral with another proposal.<sup>94</sup> The queen would consider restoring Newhaven after a face-saving joint commission, if iron-clad conditions for the ultimate return of Calais were met, guaranteed by foreign princes and cities – plus recompense for her expenses to the tune of £50,000 to £70,000.<sup>95</sup> The object of this exercise was made plain by Cecil in a letter to Smith. First it was to gain time in order to decide whether – if they were strong enough – to hold out for Calais now or secondly to try for a face-saving settlement.<sup>96</sup> In late May Cecil had already drawn up a list of nobles and gentlemen to be summoned to court to give advice on French matters – 'whether it would be best to terminate them by war or by treaty'.<sup>97</sup>

Hence while Dannet set off to Paris, the queen told Poulet, the treasurer at Newhaven, that she intended to go through with the defence of the town.<sup>98</sup> On 8 May Cecil drew up a long memorandum, headed 'to keep Newhaven and not deliver on promise to have Calais' and listing necessary measures. Money was to be raised by selling crown land; levies – some 6,000 men – would be summoned in sixteen counties and 2,400 were immediately dispatched.<sup>99</sup> It was very late in the day to consider the alternative. Clashes with the besieging French troops had already begun.<sup>100</sup> During the eight months the English had occupied Newhaven the garrison had been much neglected. The raw recruits from the southern English counties had idled away the weeks. Complaints about the shortage of food (all of which had to be brought from England) and the irregular and uncertain arrival of money formed the substance of the correspondence between the local commanders and the home government.<sup>101</sup> There had been talk of strengthening the fortifications (not designed for a landward attack) and occasional detachments of 'pioneers' (workmen) had been sent but little had actually been accomplished.<sup>102</sup> But from early June on a string of orders went out levying soldiers and pioneers for the port.<sup>103</sup> The privy councillor, Sir Francis Knollys, was sent out to inspect Newhaven, to assess the situation, and to oversee the dispatch of men and supplies.<sup>104</sup> By the end of the month the town was completely environed by enemy forces on the landward side.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, a worse enemy than the French, against which there was no defence, now assailed the garrison. In early June the first cases

<sup>94</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 436–7; P.R.O., SP70/58/143–4, 105–7.

<sup>95</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 400, 404–5, 406–8.

<sup>96</sup> P.R.O., SP70/58/30–5; BL, Lansdowne 102, fo. 36.

<sup>97</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 367, BL, Harleian 398, 444. <sup>98</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 386.

<sup>99</sup> P.R.O., SP70/58/56; 59/84. See also P.R.O., SP70/59/16–7 for even more extensive preparation.

<sup>100</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 361.

<sup>101</sup> See especially P.R.O., SP70/57/28–9; also *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 307–8; Forbes, *A full view*, II 402–3.

<sup>102</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 307–8.

<sup>103</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 377, 401–2, 419, 432–4, 437–8, 422–3; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Elizabeth*, eds. R. Lemon and M. A. E. Green (12 vols. and addenda, London, 1856–72), XXIX, 2, 3, 4, 5, 25, 36; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 437–40, 444–9 lists levies totalling 4,200 men.

<sup>104</sup> Forbes, *A full view*, II, 437–40.

<sup>105</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, VI, 431–2.

of plague were reported. By the end of the month the death toll had reached 500 in a week.<sup>106</sup>

On the diplomatic front Dannet's mission had been fruitless. Now in early July the same proposals were renewed even more urgently; Smith was authorized to approach Constable Montmorency, the leading voice in the royal council.<sup>107</sup> Acting on his own, Smith offered the surrender of Newhaven, provided there were solemn guarantees for the return of Calais in 1567. However, lacking power to conclude such a pact, he needed authority from home. The queen, on 19 July, issued a commission to Smith and Throckmorton (who was to return to Paris).<sup>108</sup> They were to ascertain if Newhaven could be held; if so, they were to continue to demand Calais; if not, they were to accede to the terms which Smith had offered the French court.

It was, in fact, too late. When Throckmorton arrived at Rouen,<sup>109</sup> Poulet was already writing of the necessity for an evacuation.<sup>110</sup> On 28 July the terms of surrender were agreed and within a few days the decimated survivors had left for England, carrying with them an infection which would soon spread widely through the kingdom.

What followed was farce. The French court declared Throckmorton *persona non grata* and confined him along with Smith. The queen mother declined to continue negotiations. Moreover, the French now argued the English had, by their seizure of Newhaven, forfeited all rights in Calais under the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. Months of wrangling ensued, with the English ambassadors in detention in France, and the French hostages in London. In the end the English had no alternative but to give way, making a meaningless reservation of their rights in Calais while accepting a miserable 120,000 crowns payment (roughly what Elizabeth had loaned Condé).<sup>111</sup> (Her own expenses at Newhaven amounted to about £50,000.) Peace was concluded at Troyes on 11 April 1564.

What are we to make of this tragi-comedy? The origins of this second experiment in an interventionist foreign policy lay in the English councillors' enduring fear of the house of Guise, a fear diminished but not exorcized by the Scottish success of 1560. Indeed both Throckmorton and the Huguenot leaders cited that enterprise as a model for further action. In fact the situations were fundamentally different. In Scotland cooperation with the rebel lords aimed at displacing the existing regime and substituting one favourable to English interests. In France there was little or no prospect of such a revolution. For the present the best the English could hope for was continuing factional rivalry which assured that the Guises's power to make mischief would be restrained by their protestant, pro-English enemies, the Bourbons and the Chatillons.

It was the success of the Guise-led triumvirate and the threat to the very

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. vi, 393, 431–2; Forbes, *A full view*, II, 447–51. <sup>107</sup> P.R.O., SP70/60/25–6.

<sup>108</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vi, 458, 464–5. <sup>109</sup> Ibid. vi, 477. <sup>110</sup> Ibid. vi, 475.

<sup>111</sup> *Cal. St. Pap. For.*, vii, 100, 101–2; for English costs see C. F. Dietz, *English public finance, 1558–1641* (New York, 1932), pp. 11–12.

survival of the protestant party which forced the English government to action. As it happened, the collapse of the balance of power within the French court coincided with a lesser, although not insignificant, shift within the English court circle. The virtual monopoly of influence enjoyed by secretary Cecil was now challenged by the favourite, Robert Dudley. His recruitment of Throckmorton's services signalled that the newcomer had become the promoter of a policy which would not only check Guisan ambitions but also recover the lost dominion of Calais for the English crown, repairing England's diminished reputation and restoring the ancient bridgehead into France. This linked two disparate policy goals, one dictated by the new *Realpolitik* of reformation Europe, the other a late survival of the age of Plantagenet–Valois rivalry. To accomplish these ends the English were to dispatch 6,000 troops to Normandy, to hold Newhaven and to assist the embattled Huguenot forces.

Both Cecil and the queen were initially wary about sending soldiers; they would have preferred a loan; so would the French protestants, who were reluctant to hand over the port to alien forces. Sheer necessity forced their hand and the queen was finally lured by the glitter of Calais into sending her soldiers.

The operation was heralded by a flurry of high-flown rhetoric which spoke eloquently of the queen's intent to protect the victims of Guisan tyranny, particularly those who were forced to deny their faith, until the crown could be loosened from the duke's grasp. Little or nothing was said about the English designs on Calais. Once the army was landed the time was come when actions would test promises.

A clue to Elizabeth's true intentions was soon forthcoming when the commander at Rouen urgently sought reinforcements from the newly landed English captain. What he got was a beggarly couple of hundred of men and they were sent in direct violation of royal orders against participation in the French struggle. The queen had shown her hand; she hoped to evade any commitment of her forces to assist the protestant armies even though this contradicted the proclaimed programme of her intervention. The English in their turn were soon to be disillusioned by the conduct of their French associates. The captive Condé was drawn into discussions with the catholic party and was soon exploring a settlement which wholly excluded English interests. The latter rapidly discovered how little leverage they had with their allies.

The failure of the adversaries to patch up an accord and the battle of Dreux temporarily revived the alliance but Coligny's weakness drove the queen frantic, unwilling to abandon her claim to Calais and equally unwilling to commit any more resources to keep the war alive. Then the death of Guise cleared the way for a speedy settlement between the French parties which protected protestant rights but ignored the English claim to Calais. The French protestants quoted the queen's declaration of September 1562; the grievances which had led the protestants to seek her protection were remedied. They gave her their hearty thanks and politely invited her to go home.

The self-interest of both parties now stood nakedly revealed. For the French

protestants the English, no longer useful, were transformed from brethren defending a common faith to trespassers on the national soil. The English could no longer veil their goals in the rhetoric of religious solidarity. They were in France to undo the consequences of their defeat in 1558 and they could justify clinging to Newhaven only by resort to a specious diplomatic legalism.

When they found the French would offer not so much as a fig leaf to conceal England's humiliation, there was nothing to do but make a stand. Although they had realized the possibility of a siege as early as December 1562, little had been done to prepare for it. The garrison had been badly fed, poorly equipped, sporadically paid; only at the last moment were efforts made to throw together an adequate defence. The visitation of the plague only hastened an outcome which was inevitable.

The operation had been conceived as a repetition of the Scottish success. There the situation had a black and white simplicity, patriot against alien, reformer against reactionary. In France the English were themselves the intruders while the political spectrum presented a fluctuating array of volatile groupings forever in motion one with another. In Scotland the lords were wholly dependent on English assistance. In France the protestants regarded the English as allies of convenience, to be discarded when their services were no longer useful.

For the English government the episode was a costly humiliation, but – apart from the plague – England escaped lightly. The French were in no condition to contemplate retaliation and ironically the same event which ruptured the alliance with the Huguenots – the assassination of Guise – ultimately served to re-establish an Anglo-French *modus vivendi*. Fear of Guise's ambitions had led English councillors along the path of intervention. Now that he was gone the ultra-catholic party lacked effective leadership and French politics relapsed into the volatile instability in which neither party could overthrow the other, an optimum outcome from the English point of view.

When Elizabeth came to the throne she inherited a kingdom enfeebled by defeat and painfully vulnerable to the aggressive instincts of its powerful neighbours. The choice of the protestant option heightened these dangers but also offered a new strategy of defence, one particularly tailored to the needs of a state too weak to risk the dangers of open warfare. Collaboration with protestant dissidents within their neighbours' ranks enabled the English to cripple their opponents by internal subversion with a minimal commitment of resources.

The first experiment in these novelties had been highly successful – too successful in some ways since it encouraged the English to rush too hastily into an ill thought out repetition. Elizabeth and her councillors had discovered the unreliability of foreign factions whose actions were largely beyond English control as well as the limitations of their own capacity to mount a foreign campaign.

The response to future pleas for aid from the French protestants and later the Dutch rebels would be heavily conditioned by the experience of 1562–3.

The queen had burned her fingers badly and it would be more than two decades before she again agreed to send forces to the continent. There was one other effect; the retreat from Newhaven laid the last ghostly presence of the Hundred Years War – the itch to recover Calais. The queen would not again be distracted by the phantoms of past glories from the harsh realities of the present.

Nevertheless the failure of the second experiment did not destroy the usefulness of the strategy of intervention. The English would continue to exploit the internal divisions of their neighbours by supporting continental protestant communities, but with a much keener understanding of the limits of English power and a far more prudent use of the means at their disposal. Occasional loans, the use of English ports, the recruitment of volunteers, a more sophisticated diplomacy – all replaced the more structured intervention of the early 1560s. The lessons learned in 1562–3 would shape Elizabethan foreign policy for two decades to come.