

INTRODUCTION

This publication stems from a broad project to explore the activities of the French ambassadors in England during the 1560s, a period when French sources of English affairs have been relatively neglected, between the exceptionally well-preserved archives of the Noailles brothers in the 1550s and La Mothe Fénelon in the 1570s. Having published what remains of the despatches of the chevalier de Seure as ambassador to England in 1560–1561,¹ I turned to the question of his successor, Paul de Foix, and quickly became convinced that he was one of the most interesting figures to represent his country in England during the sixteenth century. De Lamar Jensen described him as ‘that indomitable dynamo of energy and talent’.² A highly respected scholar and religious liberal, he entered modern popular consciousness when played improbably as a typical swaggering French sword nobleman by the footballer turned actor Eric Cantona in Shekhar Kapur’s 1998 film *Elizabeth*. The portrait which is the frontispiece of this book underlines the difference.

Paul de Foix occupied the post of French ambassador in England during a period of upheaval and transition in both countries, from early 1562 until the spring of 1566, a period which saw civil war in France, a war between England and France, intense insecurity in England over the succession, a protracted period of rapprochement involving bizarre marriage negotiations between Elizabeth and the court of France and, finally, deep preoccupation both in England and France with manoeuvres in Scotland around the future of Mary Stuart.³ De Foix’s correspondence is preserved only in fragmentary form and yet, as it survives, provides important insights into the politics and culture of both countries. I have attempted to assemble all the surviving material on de Foix’s embassy and the special missions sent to England in his time from the dossiers of the

¹ D. Potter, *A Knight of Malta at the Court of Elizabeth I: The Correspondence of Michel de Seure, French Ambassador 1560–61*, Royal Historical Society, Camden Society, 5th ser., 45 (2014).

² De Lamar Jensen, ‘French diplomacy and the wars of Religion’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 5:2 (1974), 23–46, at 39.

³ Most recent explorations which consider Paul de Foix’s despatches include Estelle Paranque, *Elizabeth I of England through Valois Eyes, 1558–1588* (Basingstoke, 2019), ch. 2, and Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London and New York, 1996), ch. 4.

French secretaries of state charged with English affairs, and as much of his correspondence in other sources as possible.

The Early Life of Paul de Foix

Many ambassadors in the sixteenth century had no obvious ‘diplomatic’ training and some had unexpected backgrounds. Paul de Foix, like a number of other French envoys in this period, would not have been an obvious choice for a major diplomatic post when he was given his first ambassadorial job at the end of 1561. I have shown that his predecessor, the chevalier de Seure, had led a highly colourful and turbulent life until his appointment in England, taking part in French naval operations in Scotland and the Mediterranean, the siege of Tripoli, missions to the Sultan, and a spectacularly negative embassy to Portugal before becoming a trusted agent of Catherine de Medici.⁴ De Foix is equally unusual. In some ways a classic nobleman of the sword, yet at the same time he was a profoundly scholarly man trained in the law and the classics and ambiguous in his social position. It is true that he had the trust of the Queen Mother; on the other hand he was ‘tainted’ with heresy.

What little that is known about the background and training of Paul de Foix stems from two or three sources: the funeral oration in Latin by his friend Marc Antoine Muret, published in 1584,⁵ and the autobiography of his friend, J.A. de Thou, who was taught law by Cujas, Foix’s teacher, and knew him in Italy from 1573 onwards.⁶ These were to some extent panegyrics and, though useful, must be treated with some caution. Added to these are the enquiries made in 1574 in order to justify his appointment as ambassador in Rome against the opposition of Gregory XIII.⁷ De Foix’s family was unquestionably from the higher provincial nobility of the south-west, though the widely held assumption that he was a ‘cousin’ of Jeanne d’Albret, queen of Navarre, stretches the point; they shared little more than a distant cousinage related to the house of Foix.

⁴ Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony*, 3–13.

⁵ *Oratio in funere Pauli Foxii Archiepiscopi Tolosani oratoris ad Gregorium XIII. Pont. Max. Et ad sedem Apostolicam regij, habita Romae ... MDLXXXIII ...* Rome, 1584; published in a French translation by Auger de Mauléon, sr de Granier, in the *Lettres de messire Paul de Foix, ambassadeur pour le roi auprès du Pape Grégoire XIII écrites au Roy Henry III* (Paris: Charles Chappelain, 1728) and in Latin in the first volume of the *Œuvres* of Muret (Verona, 1727).

⁶ Jacques-Auguste de Thou, *La Vie de Jacques-Auguste de Thou (I. Aug. Thuani vita)*, ed. Anne Teissier-Ensminger (Paris, 2007).

⁷ N. Didier, ‘Paul de Foix et Grégoire XIII, 1572–1574: Une suite de la mercuriale de 1559’, in *Annales de l’Université de Grenoble*, NS, Lettres-Droit, XVII (1941).

The notion of his high origins is current by 1562 and was consolidated in the funeral oration by Muret in 1584,⁸ in which his lineage is described as ‘pour l’ancienneté de l’origine, soit pour l’avantage qui se tire des actions glorieuses’, incidentally allied not only to kings of France and Navarre but of Hungary and the Habsburgs.⁹ Montaigne, in his letter of 1571 addresses him in these terms: ‘au reng de la premiere maison de Guyenne recue de vos ancestres auez adiousté du vostre le premier reng encore en toute façon de suffisance’.¹⁰ His father’s comté, originally vicomté, of Carmain lay south-east of Toulouse towards Castelnau and included a score of major fiefs, passing in the seventeenth century to Adrien de Monluc.¹¹ Paul’s father, Jean de Foix, comte de Carmain, was actually legitimized at the age of 30, long after the marriage of his parents. He was an *homme d’armes* of the Lautrec company and *gentil-homme de la maison* of Henri d’Albret, king of Navarre. That certainly placed him in the orbit of the Foix-Albret dynasty. He also received the favour of Francis I in a lawsuit at the Parlement of Toulouse and, during service in the Picardy campaign of 1537 it was evoked to the Grand Conseil by the king ‘en faveur des bons et agreables services qu’il m’a cy devant faitz au fait de mes guerres et fait chacun jour en l’armee ou je suis presentement’.¹² In fact, Carmain was descended from a younger brother of Jean, comte de Foix (the ancestors of the kings of Navarre) born in the late fourteenth century and the name de Foix was adopted even though the descent passed in the female line. He seems to have been a turbulent character.¹³

Paul, the third son of the family, was born in 1528. De Thou wrote that ‘il demeura jeune avec peu de bien pour un homme de sa naissance, ce bien fort embarrassé de procez’.¹⁴ Muret, his contemporary and also a teacher of Montaigne, says he knew him in youth, young manhood and age. Muret, a brilliant scholar arrested several times for sodomy and heresy in the 1550s, extols his friend’s good looks and fine body. The original manuscript on which this story of Muret’s arrest is based actually goes further in accusing him not only of relations with the young scholar Fremiot ‘qui facile patiebatur muliebria’ but of ‘Lucianisme’ – a well known scholarly term from

⁸ Muret, who was from Limoges, served the king of Navarre in 1560 as orator before the Pope.

⁹ *Lettres de messire Paul de Foix*, intro, sig. e.

¹⁰ *Vers François de feu Estienne De la Boëtie* (1571), epistre.

¹¹ Véronique Garrigues, *Adrien de Monluc (1571–1646): D’encre et de sang* (Limoges, 2003).

¹² Francis I to Chancellor du Bourg, 4 May 1537, AN J965/6/24, orig.

¹³ *Catalogue des actes de François Ier*, ed. P. Marichal et al., 10 vols (Paris, 1887–1908), III, no. 8243.

¹⁴ J.-A. de Thou, *Mémoires de la vie de Jacques-Auguste de Thou* (Rotterdam, 1740), 14.

the 1540s that implied atheism or at least the satire of both Catholic and Protestant theology and indeed implies a censure of de Foix's friend Rabelais.¹⁵ De Thou also praised Foix's fine physique and 'un son de voix agréable; mais grave, sans bassesse & sans flatterie'.¹⁶ All accounts describe him as a brilliant scholar. He studied humanities first at Paris, perhaps in the mid 1540s and had been taught Hebrew by Vatable and Greek by Toussaint. He then studied law at the local university of Toulouse under Cujas but this must have been from 1547–1548 when Cujas began to teach there.¹⁷ The traditional story of his appointment as *conseiller* of the Parlement in 1546 is improbable.¹⁸ After Toulouse, he moved again to Paris and the court. He was said, on no reliable evidence, to be *aumônier* to Catherine de Medici in 1552¹⁹ though the evidence that he was 'nourri' in her household is secure.²⁰ He then became *conseiller-clerc* (clerical counselor) in the Parlement of Paris in 1555 and then *maître des requêtes*.²¹ At that stage he was not in full holy orders, though, as he might have had to revert to lay status had his elder brother failed to produce heirs. An enquiry of 1574 suggests that Catherine called him to court to help in the administration of her private affairs and a report of nuncio Dandino in 1579 said his relations with her went back thirty years.²² He seems to have had a special regard for Catherine's daughter Élisabeth, later queen of Spain, and was also close to Marguerite de France duchess of Savoy.²³ Muret dwells on his acquisition of all the skills and knowledge needed for an ambassador in the 1550s but also that he sought no such post until 'il n'eut premierement demeuré quelque temps dans la cour de Parlement, à fin que la cognoissance des grandes affaires que s'y traitent ordinairement affermist et consolidast les bons fondemens'.²⁴ De Thou dwells on his links with

¹⁵ Muret in *Lettres de messire Paul de Foix*, sig. Eijjr. AM Toulouse, BB 274, fo. 161.

¹⁶ De Thou, *Mémoires*, 15.

¹⁷ On the chronological difficulties of all this see Jacques Berriat-Saint-Prix, *Histoire du droit romain: Suivie de L'Histoire de Cujas* (Paris, 1821), 476–478.

¹⁸ François Blanchard, *Les Présidents au mortier du Parlement de Paris: Leurs emplois, charges, qualités, armes, blasons & genealogies: Depuis l'an 1331 iusques à present: Ensemble un catalogue de tous les conseillers* (Paris, 1647), 70.

¹⁹ His name does not appear on the list in BnF fr.7856, pp. 1148–1150, though he is commonly described as such, e.g. Didier, 'Paul de Foix et Grégoire XIII', 98; Loris Petris, *La Plume et la tribune: Michel de L'Hospital et ses discours (1559–1562), suivi de l'édition du 'De initiatione Sermo' (1559) et des 'Discours de Michel de L'Hospital' (1560–1562)*, Travaux d'humanisme et Renaissance (Geneva, 2002), 489.

²⁰ See Letters **Nos 1 and 80** (numbers of letters in this volume are given in bold).

²¹ Evidence of Faye in 1574, Didier, 'Paul de Foix et Grégoire XIII', 413 n. 1.

²² Didier, 'Paul de Foix et Grégoire XIII', 'Diende rebus suis omnibus atque negotiis impostorum et interesse et praecesse velle significat', 108 and 413.

²³ See **No. 80**; De Thou, *Mémoires*, 17.

²⁴ *Lettres de messire Paul de Foix*, i v^o-i ijr.

Aristotelian scholars – Nyphus and later Pomponazzi – in this period and also his regard for the Venetian Daniele Barbaro.²⁵ Indeed, de Thou later wrote that de Foix had not thought about taking the post of an ambassador until 1561. By that year, he was referred to as papal protonotary; this papal sinecure, widely conceded, is likely to have been acquired before his reputation was called into question in 1559, perhaps in the mid 1550s.²⁶

As for de Foix's religious beliefs, we must underline the very significant upheavals that he underwent between 1559 and 1562. The Mercuriales of the Parlement of Paris between April and June 1559 were called to flush out heresy in the ranks of the *conseillers*. There is no doubt, even though evidence is largely based on favourable witnesses called at Rome in 1574, that he then advanced the proposition that mandatory death sentences for heresy (as specified in the 1557 Edict of Compiègne) were contrary to equity. He argued that a distinction should be made between levels of seriousness, especially between the cases of those who differed simply over the form of the sacraments rather than its essence. The consequence for him, though not as drastic as for Anne du Bourg, was extremely serious: arrest and imprisonment in the Bastille until early 1560 and a condemnation on 8 January 1560 which demanded his full recantation and suspension from office for one year. Only with the death of Francis II in December 1560 was he able to begin the process for rehabilitation. The year 1561 saw further changes in his fortunes: acquittal in February 1561, resumption of office, and work as an advisor to the Queen Mother.

In 1560–1561, there was talk that de Foix was indeed a religious reformer, reflected in his inclusion in the standard biographical dictionary, *La France Protestante* (V, 125) where he is described as 'Nicodémite' who never made open profession of his faith and returned to Catholicism loaded with preferment at court. Nicholas Throckmorton, mentioning his possible appointment as ambassador as early as March 1561, noted 'that he was in trouble for religion at the tyme of du Bourg's prosecution'.²⁷ Thomas Randolph observing him in Scotland in December 1561, noted that his behaviour 'well

²⁵ De Thou, quoted D. Secousse, 'Mémoire historique et critique, pour servir à l'histoire de Messire Paul de Foix, conseiller d'Etat, et Archevêque de Toulouse', in *Mémoires de littérature tirés des registres de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*, 17 (Paris, 1751), 621–623.

²⁶ References to de Foix as protonotary: Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 14 November 1561, *CSPF* IV, no. 659; Somers to Throckmorton, 23 November 1561, *ibid.* no. 678; La Quadra to Chantonnay, 23 November 1561, *ADE*, III, 143.

²⁷ Throckmorton to Elizabeth I, 18 March 1561, TNA, SP 70/24, fos 47ff.

agrethe unto all those that professethe Chryste, for whose cawse your honour knowethe what he hathe indured'.²⁸ In March 1562, Coligny, in trying to convince Throckmorton that not all was lost for the cause at court, insisted that de Foix 'is a verie honest man, and well geven tadvaunce religion: and is suche a one as the Quene mother dothe lyke verie well and repose greate truste in'.²⁹ In all these observations, we have to take account of de Foix's suppleness in telling his interlocutors what they might wish to hear.

De Foix voiced his ideas on religious concord in his contribution to the assembly of the wider royal council called to discuss a new edict of religion in June–July 1561. The text makes a clear argument both against full toleration and repression, calling instead for a national council.³⁰ These ideas were developed by him after the Colloquy of Poissy, later in 1561, in a memorandum written for Catherine de Medici.³¹ Sylvie Daubresse has suggested that the context was rather the Assembly of Saint-Germain in January 1562, in which case he must have been writing it around the time of his mission to Scotland.³² The argument is both pragmatic and principled. The Church's attitude to toleration has changed according to its degree of dominance at any one time. In practice, religious repression is impossible: 'De les bannir et exterminer, pour le grand et excessif nombre, est tres difficile, et peut estre impossible'.³³ Religious liberty has intrinsic merit and it is unthinkable for a Church which has no moral authority to compel obedience. He preferred to use the term 'liberté de religion' rather than 'tolérance' but aimed for concord. This was a view reflected by others who we can broadly label non-Calvinist reformists in the 1560s such as François Baudouin. It was a view he was to continue to voice in the royal council during the 1570s, as for instance at Lyons in 1575 when he advised Henri III to ensure peace with the Protestants.³⁴

De Foix's interaction with the strange underworld of religious unorthodoxy is illustrated by his connections in London with the Dutch theologian Justus Velsius, the essence of whose ideas

²⁸ Randolph to Cecil, 10 December 1561, TNA, SP 52/6, fo. 180.

²⁹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth I, 8 March 1562, TNA, SP 70/35, fo. 79r.

³⁰ D. Secousse ed., *Mémoires de Condé*, 6 vols (London and The Hague, 1743) II, 409–423 – commentary by Malcolm Smith, *Montaigne and Religious Freedom* (Geneva, 1991), 193–194.

³¹ BnF fr.4746, fos 24–33.

³² S. Daubresse, *Le Parlement de Paris ou la voix de la raison (1559–89)*, Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance (Geneva, 2005), 92.

³³ Malcolm Smith, 'Paul de Foix and freedom of conscience', *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance*, 55:2 (1993), 301–315, at 314.

³⁴ *Mémoires de M. Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne*, Coll. Universelle des mémoires, Vol. 49 (Paris, 1788), 374–375.

concentrated on spiritual regeneration and who probably rejected both justification by faith and predestination. Velsius saw himself as a visionary, much influenced by the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius. Velsius in his 1563 *Lectio in Hierarchiam* was highly complimentary about de Foix, saying that he was charged to do as Paul the apostle and found the same in Paul de Foix: ‘Paul Fuxeo referat, et ipsum vas electionis ex Deo constituens’.³⁵ It seems probable that Karel Utenhove was instrumental in this contact, as a member of de Foix’s staff and the nephew of one of the leaders of the Flemish church embroiled with Velsius. Nicolas des Gallars, minister of the French church in London, actually wrote to Calvin that de Foix considered Velsius to be learned in the commentary of Dionysius.³⁶ Yet, when it came to the exorcism – if that was what it was – of one of de Foix’s servants, Cosmus, in March 1563, the situation became highly embarrassing to the French ambassador. Velsius claimed in a cheeky letter to Elizabeth that his advice to the man to fast for five days while reading Dionysius the Areopagite showed his capacity as a visionary: ‘vocationem meum confirmant’. Bishop Grindal noted in the margin of Velsius’s letter to de Foix that the patient had been consigned to Bedlam. De Foix had attempted to debate with Velsius, observed by the Flemish envoy d’Assonleville, who hinted to him that his willingness to tolerate such heretics was dangerous.³⁷ Nor was he loath to press the cases of French religious exiles in London when they came into conflict with the law.³⁸ De Foix plainly had a certain reputation among the foreign Protestants in London, though this did not prevent him from producing witnesses, for the enquiries of 1574 at Rome into his orthodoxy, that he had made his private chapel a refuge for Catholics in England.³⁹ So when, in December 1564, Karel Utenhove approached the French church in Threadneedle Street with a suggestion that both foreign churches should petition de Foix before his departure to make them a gift to be used for poor

³⁵ P. Denis, ‘L’Envoyé de l’esprit et les hommes d’église: Justus Velsius à Francfort et Londres (1556–1563), *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire du Protestantisme français*, Special issue on *Divers aspects de la Réforme* (1975), 181–237, at 187. Text of the *Lectio*: J.H. Hessels, *Ecclesiae Londino-Bataviae Archivum* (Cambridge, 1897), III, i, 23.

³⁶ Des Gallars to Calvin, 7 March 1563, in *Lettres à Jean Calvin de la collection Sarrau* (Paris, 1972).

³⁷ **No. 84.** Denis, ‘L’Envoyé de l’esprit’, 208–209; Grindal to Cecil, TNA, SP 12/28, fos 18–19, Edmund Grindal, *Remains*, ed. W. Nicholson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1843), 254; J. Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (Oxford, 1824), I, ii, 13; Velsius to Elizabeth, TNA, SP 12/28, fo. 36; Denis, ‘L’Envoyé de l’esprit’, 21–27.

³⁸ **No. 18.**

³⁹ Didier, ‘Paul de Foix et Grégoire XIII’, *passim*.

members, it was declared that ‘il est enemy de Dieu et de l’eglise et qu’il regnie Dieu et se donne au diable quant il joue’.⁴⁰

De Foix’s appointment to London may perhaps be understood in the context of the eirenic stance plainly expressed to the Queen Mother at the end of 1561. His first known diplomatic appointment was as special envoy to Scotland in November 1561, travelling via Elizabeth’s court with a message for her and then on by land to Edinburgh by the start of December and returning to France by early January 1562. Foix told Nicholas Throckmorton then that ‘he liked so well in his talke to me the forme of Religion used in your realme’ and showed him a book (possibly the Prayer Book or Thirty-Nine Articles) translated into French which he had brought to show the Queen Mother, Navarre and the Chancellor, ‘wishing that this realme might be reduced by ordre and autoritie to use the same formuler of religion’. The moderate reformer François Baudouin accompanied de Foix in the meeting with Utenhove, in which de Foix invited Utenhove to join him in his embassy, and stayed in Paris during de Foix’s mission hoping to negotiate with the king of Navarre. Baudouin wrote to his like-minded moderate colleague Georg Cassander of ‘Fuxius noster’ in December 1561 that he was crucial to this negotiation.⁴¹ Baudouin had also rapidly written an ‘Apologie of the said ordre of Religion in Englande, which rough hewen as it is’ he wished to be sent to Cecil.⁴² What happened to this is unclear. Shortly after his return, Throckmorton reported of de Foix that ‘He used also good words of the Quene of Scotland but did not so moche allowe of the realme nor the people [preferring the establishment in England].’⁴³ Thomas Randolph observed him in the days following his arrival in Edinburgh in a despatch which reflects remarkably on the visible demeanour of princes as the key to their inner thoughts:

We talked again of religion. I was not uncourtess as to tell hym that he had byne at the Masse, thoughe for hys reputation yt had byne worthe hym a thowsande crownes not to have byne. He repented hym self afterwarde, beinge

⁴⁰ E. Johnstone, *Actes du Consistoire de l’Eglise française de Threadneedle St. Londres*, Pub. of the Huguenot Society of London, 38 (1937), I, 93. The theme of gambling in de Foix’s household crops up again shortly afterwards with one Jehan de Seram, Parisian bookseller, imprisoned on letters of another Frenchman ‘à cause qu’il avoit joué quelque argent à la maison de l’ambassadeur de France’, *ibid.* 96.

⁴¹ Michael Erbe, ‘François Baudouin und Georg Cassander: Dokumente einer humanistischen Freundschaft’, *Humanisme et Renaissance*, 40:iii (1978), 551.

⁴² Throckmorton to Elizabeth I, 8 January 1562, TNA, SP 70/34, fo. 30v.

⁴³ *Ibid.* SP 70/34, fos 30v–31r (26v–37r).

admoneshed by some frende, and came not unto the *Diredge* nor Masse upon Frydaye and Saterdaye laste, to the great myslykynge of the Queen.⁴⁴

De Foix's ambiguous attitude towards Queen Mary was thus established from the start. His religious ambiguity is revealed in March–April 1565, when he was proposed by Catherine de Medici as archbishop of Bourges. The health of the holders of all positions in the French church was a subject of constant speculation on the part of clients and patrons. In this case, the current prelate, Jacques Leroy, was ill. Catherine moved quickly to get de Foix appointed. This elicited from him one of the more peculiar thank-you letters to the king which began conventionally enough with protestations of the unworthiness of his services. But he then went to protest that:

Bien confesseray je, sire, et sans hypocrisie que ce nom d'archevesque m'a donnee quelque horreur, considerant que c'est ung nom de charge qui desire tres-grande doiture, exemplaire probité de vie et soing vigilente et dilligence tres-grande que le nom mesme d'evesque tesmoigne; et congnoissant le default qui est en moy de toutes ces choses, j'ay eu comme je diz craincte du seul nom.⁴⁵

Leroy seems to have pulled through on this occasion and de Foix missed out when he died in 1572, whether from his extravagant protestations of unworthiness is not clear, and had to wait until the eve of his death for a promotion to Toulouse that had been planned as early as 1574 but was opposed by the Pope until 1582. His main church preferments before this were minor: prieur of Lihons in Picardy⁴⁶ and abbé commendataire of the Benedictine house of Aurillac in 1570, pretty systematically destroyed by Protestants in 1569. According to an English observer of the French scene in the 1580s, he was an instrument for diverting those of the Religion: a creature of the Queen Mother's, professing to love the public peace and an enemy of the cardinal of Lorraine, who had ensured he could never be made a cardinal.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Randolph to Cecil, 7 December 1561, J. Bain et al., *Calendar of State Papers Relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots*, 12 vols (Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1898–1952), 573 (BL Calig B X, fos 201v–203r).

⁴⁵ **No. 102** (1 April 1565).

⁴⁶ Presence at the redaction of customs for Péronne, Charles Bourdot de Richebourg, *Nouveau coutumier général* (Paris, 1724), II, 645 – unlisted among the prieurs of Lihons between Philippe de la Chambre et Nicolas Pellevé.

⁴⁷ D. Potter, *Foreign Intelligence and Information in Elizabethan England: Two English Treatises on the State of France, 1579–84* Camden Society, 5th ser., 25 (Cambridge, 2004), 42.

Appointment as Ambassador

De Foix was first mentioned as a successor to de Seure in March 1561, relatively soon after his exoneration.⁴⁸ His first foreign mission, as has been seen, was to Scotland, reported in the middle of November of that year and generally thought to be concerned with the sending of the Savoyard envoy, Moretta, to Scotland. Throckmorton and the Spanish ambassador in England, Álvaro de la Quadra, bishop of Aquila, both thought he had been instructed to find out what Moretta's mission was about. La Quadra added that he had also received instructions from the king of Navarre and that Coligny's agent in planning American voyages, Laudonnière, was in London at the same time.⁴⁹ Throckmorton thought that Navarre and his friends were hoping that Elizabeth would make some special gesture of friendship towards de Foix as to one who had suffered for this religion.⁵⁰ He got to London on 17 November and to Moretta the next day. He had audience with Elizabeth, his first encounter with her, on the 19th and had left for Edinburgh by the 23rd.⁵¹ Randolph's report of his conversation with de Foix has already been mentioned; Mary was very animated in her discussions with him and the question of the duke of Nemours was at least brought up. The duke had recently been implicated in a plot to take the duke of Orléans, Catherine's second son, into the territory of Savoy. This had made a stir at the French court at the time and opinion was jittery. Any missions from Savoy to Scotland were bound to be regarded with caution in France. In general, the purpose of this mission remains shrouded in mystery in the absence of direct evidence. The usually suspicious La Quadra was convinced that de Foix had taken letters to Mary from the king and queen of Navarre and already suspected Navarre of negotiating with Elizabeth in his own interests; he even suggested that de Foix had been talking to Knox and the Scottish heretics in Navarre's name about 'algun modo de alianza y buena inteligencia'.⁵² On balance, it seems that de Foix did not make a favourable impression on

⁴⁸ Throckmorton to Elizabeth I, 18 March 1561, *CSPF*, IV, no. 49.

⁴⁹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth I, 14 November 1561, *CSPF* IV, no. 659; La Quadra to Chantonnay, 23 November 1561, *ADE*, III, 143.

⁵⁰ Throckmorton to Cecil, 26 November 1561, *CSPF*, IV, no. 684.

⁵¹ Somers to Throckmorton, 23 November 1561, *CSPF*, IV, no. 678.

⁵² La Quadra to Margaret of Parma, 27 December 1561, 3 January 1562, *Relations politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre sous le règne de Philippe II*, ed. J.M.B.C. Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, 11 vols (Brussels, 1882–1900), II, 654, 658.