

## Introduction The contending kingdoms: France and England 1420-1700

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Take her, fair son, and from her blood raise up  
Issue to me; that the contending kingdoms  
Of France and England, whose very shores look pale  
With envy of each other's happiness,  
May cease their hatred, and this dear conjunction  
Plant neighbourhood and Christian-like accord  
In their sweet bosoms, that never war advance  
His bleeding sword 'twixt England and fair France.

*Henry V Act V sc ii*

## Chapter 1

# Introduction

## The Contending Kingdoms: France and England 1420–1700

*Glenn Richardson*

The 2003 Richard Dimbleby Lecture was delivered by Dominique de Villepin, then the French Foreign Minister. He observed that in the century since the signing of the Entente-Cordiale in 1904, the peoples of Britain and France 'have built a unique relationship, made up of a mixture of irritation and fascination'.<sup>1</sup> His words apply equally well to long periods before 1904, and to none better than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rather than being unremittingly hostile, as they are often popularly assumed to be, early-modern Anglo-French relations are perhaps better described as ambivalent in the true sense of the word. That is, they had both positive and negative strengths at different times and circumstances. From diplomacy and warfare, to trade, exploration and technological development and in the fields of literature, the fine arts, fashion and cuisine, each side did indeed find the other both endlessly irritating and fascinating.

The nine essays in this volume present some of the most recent research and reflections on relations during the late-medieval and early-modern periods. They were originally presented as papers at a conference convened by the Society for Court Studies in November 2004 to mark the centenary of the Entente-Cordiale and their diverse subjects reflect the wide range of research presented on that occasion.<sup>2</sup> The essays are of several kinds: those by Anne Curry, Charles Giry-Deloison, David Onnekink and Glenn Richardson use discrete periods or episodes to reflect on the nature of the Anglo-French relationship. The chapters by Robert Knecht and Cédric Michon offer comparative studies of the French and English nobilities and episcopates respectively. Susan Doran, Loïc Bienassis and Sonja Kmec examine personal relations and connections between a number of individuals prominent in the context of Anglo-French relations.

It may be useful to set an initial presentation of these essays in the context of the main diplomatic and cultural developments in Franco-English relations since 1420 and historiographical trends in the field. Beforehand, however, one important

1 2003 Dimbleby Lecture given by the French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, on BBC television, London, 19 October 2003.

2 The conference entitled 'A Tale of Two Crowns: The Courts of England and France 1066–1904' was held at the Institut Français du Royaume-Uni in Kensington, London. The editor would like to thank the Director of the Institut for kindly hosting the conference and M. Philippe Mogentale, Attaché Culturel at the French Embassy in 2004 for his assistance in organising the event.

distinction must be made. These essays are focused primarily on relations between the kingdom of France and the kingdom of England as such rather than with any other part of the Atlantic archipelago. Anglo-Scottish and Franco-Scottish relations in the early-modern period have been the subject of a number of recent studies, as have Anglo-Irish and Franco-Irish relations.<sup>3</sup> The terms 'Britain' and 'British' are, however, used in this book in order to recognise the existence of the 'Three Kingdoms' of which England was a part and the dynastic union of the crowns of England and Scotland from 1603 after which date it would be anachronistic to refer to the crown of England in isolation.

Anglo-French relations have been a natural and important part of the national and diplomatic histories of England, of Britain and of France written since at least the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The subject was given particular impetus in the early twentieth century following the cataloguing and publication of manuscript material gathered from royal, private and regional archives. For example, the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII* and the series of *State Papers* appeared in Britain as the *Catalogue des actes de François I<sup>er</sup>* was published in Paris. The vast corpus of material thus made available, together, perhaps, with the conclusion of the Entente-Cordiale and the experience of being allied in the First World War, prompted new interest in the history of past relations.<sup>5</sup>

Scholarly societies also played significant roles in promoting and supporting the study of French history in Britain. The foundation in 1885 of the Huguenot Society of London, subsequently the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland, led to the establishment of archives and the publication of scholarly accounts of the experiences of French Protestants in the Three Kingdoms.<sup>6</sup> In 1986, the Society for

3 Norman MacDougall, *An Antidote to the English: the Auld Alliance, 1295–1560* (East Linton, 2001); *James IV* (Edinburgh, 1989); David Dunlop, 'The politics of peace-keeping: Anglo-Scottish relations from 1503–1511', *Renaissance Studies*, 8 (1994): 138–61; Elizabeth Bonner, *The Politique of Henri II: De Facto French Rule in Scotland, 1550–1554* (Sydney, 1999); C. Patrick Hogle, *Thorns and Thistles: Diplomacy between Henry VIII and James V 1528–1542* (Lanham, NY, 1996); Marcus Merriman, *The Rough Wooing* (Edinburgh, 1993); William Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor foreign policy, 1485–1603* (Woodbridge, 1994); Mary Ann Lyons, *Franco-Irish Relations, 1500–1610: Politics, Migration and Trade* (Woodbridge, 2003).

4 Jules Michelet, *L'Histoire de France* (Paris, 1833–67); Montagu Burrows, *The History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain* (London, 1895); Albert Frederick Pollard, *Henry VIII* (London, 1902).

5 Louis Charlanne, *L'Influence française en Angleterre au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1906); Sidney Lee, *The French Renaissance in England. An Account of the Literary Relations of England and France in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, 1910); John Bennett Black, *Elizabeth and Henry IV: Being a short study in Anglo-French Relations, 1589–1603* (Oxford, 1914); Thomas Frederick Tout, *France and England: Their Relations in the Middle Ages and Now* (Manchester, 1922); Georges Ascoli, *La Grande-Bretagne devant l'opinion française: depuis la guerre de Cent ans jusqu'à la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1927); Dorothy Anne Bigby, *Anglo-French Relations, 1641–1649* (London, 1933); John Fraser Ramsey, *Anglo-French Relations, 1763–1770. A Study of Choiseul's Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, 1939).

6 Irene Scouloudi (ed.), *Huguenots in Britain and their French Background, 1550–1800: Contributions to the Historical Conference of the Huguenot Society of London, 24–25*

the Study of French History was founded. It created a new forum for historians from Britain, the United States of America and elsewhere to interact with their French colleagues. The Society continues to promote, support and publish research in French history from medieval to modern times. To commemorate the centenary of the Entente-Cordiale, the Centre for the Advanced Study of French History was established in 2004 at the University of Reading in England.<sup>7</sup>

Although the history of Anglo-French relations as such was not among the primary objects of these societies, their existence has, nevertheless, helped to stimulate research in this area. The Maison Française was established at Oxford after World War II and the last two decades of the twentieth century and the first decade of the present one have seen an increase in publications either specifically concerning Anglo-French relations or ones which make comparisons between the two nations at different periods.<sup>8</sup> Much of this has been broad brush work but more detailed studies of particular periods, themes and personalities in Anglo-French relations are also now being published on both sides of the Narrow Sea.<sup>9</sup> Studies of the British and French royal or imperial courts feature regularly in the seminars and in the journal of the Society for Court Studies, founded in 1996. The publication of this volume of the early-modern papers presented to the Society's 2004 conference is intended as a further contribution to this development.<sup>10</sup>

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Probably no other period in the history of Anglo-French relations before the reign of Napoleon has been as fully investigated as the Hundred Years War. Histories of the conflict written in the years to the end of the nineteenth century tended to present it in strongly partisan terms, as an integral aspect of nationalistic constructions of French or English history. As late as 1951 Edouard Perroy reflected on comparisons between France's experience of occupation by the Germans during the Second World War

September 1985 (London, 1987), pp. xxi–xxiii. Preface by Randolph Vigne, President of the Society. Almost a decade later, in 1894, the Franco-British Guild was established in Paris by Edith Williams. In 1969 it became the British Institute in Paris and is now the University of London Institute in Paris. It continues to promote and support research into the historical, literary and cultural relations of Britain and France.

7 See [www.frenchhistorysociety.ac.uk](http://www.frenchhistorysociety.ac.uk) and [www.rdg.ac.uk/CASFH](http://www.rdg.ac.uk/CASFH) respectively.

8 Robert Gibson, *Best of Enemies: Anglo-French Relations Since the Norman Conquest* (Exeter, 1995 and 2004); Robert and Isabelle Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy: The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (London, 2006).

9 Michael S. Kimmel, *Absolutism and its Discontents: State and Society in Seventeenth-Century France and England* (New Brunswick, 1988); John Miller, *Bourbon and Stuart: Kings and Kingship in France and England in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1988); David Grummitt (ed.), *The English Experience in France c.1450–1558: War, Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange* (Aldershot, 2002); For a useful summary and review of the historiography see Charles Giry-Deloison, 'Histoire de la politique étrangère et de la diplomatie anglaises, fin XV<sup>e</sup>-mi-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in Frédérique Lachaud, *L'Historiographie Britannique* (Paris, 2001), pp. 57–78.

10 See [www.courtstudies.org](http://www.courtstudies.org)

with that by the English during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>11</sup> During the later twentieth century, however, the causes and consequences of the Hundred Years War were studied with renewed and rather more detached interest on both sides of the Narrow Sea. A number of sources, such as the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* were published for the first time or were revised and republished.<sup>12</sup>

Since 1960 greater emphasis has been placed on studying the effects of the war on both kingdoms in tandem. Historians have also studied the conflict in much broader chronological, comparative and thematic contexts.<sup>13</sup> They have emphasised the close relationship between the demands of fighting and the growth and consolidation of royal power, particularly in France but in England as well after the domestic turmoil of Henry III's reign. There is now a greater appreciation of the significance of the conflict in the workings of papal diplomacy and of the complex network of dynastic and marriage alliances contracted by both sides that were to have far-reaching implications for British and French history down to the modern period.<sup>14</sup> At the start of the twenty-first century the emphasis has shifted again and scholars are now investigating more closely some of the evidence hitherto passed over in broader chronological narratives. It is to these more recent endeavours that Anne Curry makes a contribution in this volume.<sup>15</sup>

The treaty of Troyes, agreed in 1420 between Henry V and Charles VI, was supposed to create a 'dual monarchy' for Henry and theoretically settle the claims and counter-claims between the two kingdoms that dated back at least to the treaty of Paris of 1259. Yet, as Professor Curry shows, the circumstances of the treaty's negotiation and agreement were much more complicated than its provisions acknowledged. These were deliberately vague about the core issues in dispute between the kingdoms and avoided any explicit references to Henry's actual claim to the French throne, its origins or future or the precise nature of Henry's 'dual monarchy'. Professor Curry raises some interesting 'what if' possibilities based on the provisions as finally agreed. The most intriguing of these is surely that, had Henry outlived Charles VI and the treaty taken effect as its English negotiators

envisaged, the 'united kingdom' would have been, not England and Scotland, but rather England and France.

In fact, although crowned king of France as a child, Henry VI witnessed the loss of all English territory in France apart from Calais by 1453. England's defeat contributed to the collapse of its royal authority for a generation as its nobility immersed itself in civil conflict. Having effectively rid France of the English, French monarchs then oversaw the recovery of their kingdom. Its boundaries were extended under Louis XI who asserted royal power against the Valois dukes of Burgundy and under Charles VIII, France began to play a more prominent role in wider European affairs.<sup>16</sup> Dynastic claims in the Italian peninsula were pursued successfully by Charles VIII, Louis XII and Francis I, although all that had been won was again lost by 1524. For historians of this period in French history, relations with England, for so long a necessary part of the country's late-medieval history, began to recede into the background. By contrast French, Breton and Burgundian support for Lancastrian, Yorkist and Tudor claimants to the English crown became important aspects of the history of the Wars of the Roses.<sup>17</sup> So, too, did the continuation of the English claim to the French crown. Historians have shown a warranted scepticism about whether either Edward IV or Henry VII was genuinely interested in fighting in France, although during the past decade a case has been made that they were prepared to attack France when it suited their domestic agendas. Nevertheless, both kings saw the advantages of peace and used the threat of a renewal of armed conflict to obtain money and guarantees of non-intervention in English affairs from their French counterparts under the treaties of Picquigny in 1475 and of Etaples in 1492.<sup>18</sup>

As the political and economic recovery of France gathered pace in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, trade and cultural relations with England also began to improve. As Professor Charles Giry-Deloison points out in his chapter of this volume, commercial interaction has been a comparatively neglected aspect of

16 Robert J. Knecht, *The Valois: Kings of France, 1328–1589* (London, 2004); David Potter, *France in the Later Middle Age* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 155–81; *A History of France 1460–1560: The Emergence of a Nation State* (Cambridge, 1995); Peter Shervey Lewis (ed.), *Later Medieval France: The Polity* (London, 1968); *The Recovery of France in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971).

17 David Potter, 'Anglo-French Relations 1500: the aftermath of the Hundred Years War', *Journal of Franco-British Studies*, 28 (1999/2000): 41–66; Charles Giry-Deloison, 'Henry VII et la Bretagne: aspects politiques et diplomatiques' in Jean Kerhervé (ed.), *1491 La Bretagne, terre d'Europe* (Brest, 1992), pp. 227–39; Edward Meek, 'The Practice of English Diplomacy in France, 1461–71', in Grummitt, *The English Experience in France*, pp. 63–84. For an interesting alternative to the literary tradition of French support for Henry see Michael K. Jones, 'The Myth of 1485: did France really put Henry VII on the throne?', in the same volume at pp. 85–105; John Curren, 'England's International Relations 1485–1509', in Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (eds), *Tudor England and its Neighbours* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 14–43.

18 David Grummitt, 'Henry VII, Chamber Finance and the "New Monarchy": some new evidence', *Historical Journal*, 72 (1999): 229–43; John Curren, '"To Traffic with War"? Henry VII and the French campaign of 1492', in Grummitt, *The English Experience in France*, pp. 106–31.

11 Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple* (Paris, 1846), in which the great French historian cast the common people as the heroes of the creation of France whose spirit was embodied in Jeanne d'Arc's fight against the English; Anne Curry 'France and The Hundred Years' War, 1337–1453', in David Potter (ed.), *France in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 90–116, at pp. 93–7; Edouard Perroy, *The Hundred Years War*, trans. Warre Bradley Wells (London, 1951), xxvii.

12 *Gesta Henrici Quinti: The Deeds of Henry V* (eds), F. Taylor and J.S. Roskell (Oxford, 1975); Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Geoffrey Brereton (London, 1968).

13 Kenneth Fowler, *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The struggle for supremacy, 1328–1498* (London, 1967); Kenneth Fowler, (ed.), *The Hundred Years War* (London, 1971); Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War* (Cambridge, 1988).

14 Herbert James Hewitt, *The Organisation of War under Edward III* (Manchester, 1966); Philippe Contamine, *Guerre, état et société. Etude sur les armées des rois de France, 1337–1494* (Paris, 1972); Anne Curry and Michael Hughes, (eds), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge, 1994). Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years War* (two vols, London, 1990 and 1999).

15 Anne Curry, *The Hundred Years War* (Basingstoke, 2003), esp. pp. 5–27.

early-modern Anglo-French relations. Nevertheless, between 1475 and 1513 (and for long periods thereafter) real efforts were made to encourage trade between England, Aquitaine, Normandy and Brittany and to ensure that it could be conducted safely and reasonably profitably. English cloth and tin found ready markets in France and French wine had been assiduously sought by the English since well before the Hundred Years War. The dominance of Flemish culture in and around the court of Henry VII has become axiomatic in the historiography of his reign, but it should not entirely obscure the importance of French influence.<sup>19</sup> One instance of this, and a market which saw unprecedented growth in England under Henry VII, was the demand for French illuminated manuscripts and religious books. As Professor Giry-Deloison shows, the king took great interest in the works of French printers such as Antoine Vérard. Printing and propaganda were closely linked in this period and the talents of royal printers like Richard Pynson and Wynken de Worde were used to produce polemical tracts and woodblock prints asserting English claims to the crown of France during the build-up to hostilities in 1492 and 1513. There were parallel French tracts disputing the claim. Yet all the rhetorical posturing seems finally to underscore the fact that England and France had ceased fighting after the battle of Castillon in 1453 and were at effective, if difficult, peace during the final quarter of the fifteenth century.

The sixteenth century witnessed a sudden and dramatic increase in the scale of competitive international relations in Europe. This was due largely to the accession within a decade of three young and ambitious men; Henry VIII of England, Francis I of France and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. Their youthful determination to emulate their respective ancestors was characterised by demonstrative royal extravagance, a heightened interest in concepts of princely chivalry and in the sheer scale and expense of warfare.<sup>20</sup>

For Henry VIII, emulating his ancestors meant nothing less than renewing the Hundred Years War. His claims to territories in the kingdom of France were proclaimed at his coronation. Yet, as his immediate predecessors had also discovered, the consolidation of French royal power in the late fifteenth century and developments in the technology and tactics of warfare meant that an English king could no longer invade France allied only to dissatisfied vassals of the French king such as the dukes of Brittany and Burgundy. Henry VIII's international status and ambitions were always subjected to wider European politics and to the sometimes quixotic ambitions of his father-in-law, Ferdinand of Aragon and the two Habsburg emperors, Maximilian I and Charles V. Initially lacking these allies, Henry was forced to spend the first four years of his reign at peace with France. It was not until June 1513, 60 years after the battle of Castillon, that an English army once more descended

19 Gordon Kipling, *The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance* (The Hague, 1977). For the importance of continuing native political culture in Lancastrian and early Tudor England see David Starkey, 'Henry VI's old blue gown: The English court under the Lancastrians and Yorkists', *The Court Historian*, 4/1 (1999): 1–28.

20 Glenn Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy: The Reigns of Henry VIII, Francis I and Charles V* (London, 2002), esp. pp. 36–92; Robert J. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I* (Cambridge, 1994).

on France and the ancient quarrels between England, France and the Burgundian Netherlands were renewed on a much larger stage.

Henry invaded France three times in the course of his reign in an effort to make his reputation internationally. He first used his inheritance, then the taxes of his subjects and finally the wealth of England's medieval ecclesiastical heritage and the value of its coinage to fund his wars against Louis XII and Francis I. He took the city of Tournai and the town of Théroutanne in 1513 and captured Boulogne in 1544. That he did not do more was due in part to his own limitations as commander and his unreliable allies whose agendas were always too big for him to control.<sup>21</sup>

Like his father before him, Henry VIII actually spent most of his reign at peace with France. In 1514, 1518, 1527 and 1532 the king of England made peace and alliance treaties by which he gained large sums of money from the kings of France. These were paid as a pension but were received by Henry as 'tribute' for 'his' crown of France. Peace was thereby made honourable and profitable for the king. It also allowed his subjects to engage in relatively undisturbed trade with France and the rest of continental Europe for most of his reign, from which he also profited. Henry's sense of personal competition with Francis I in every facet of kingship never diminished. Relations between them were conducted in the high-flown language of princely chivalry and in the good times they exchanged presents and their most trusted personal servants and friends were sent as ambassadors. In the not infrequent bad times, the two kings traded personal as well as political insults and found ways of snubbing or simply ignoring each other's representatives.<sup>22</sup>

Through warfare and the extensive diplomacy practised by Henry and Francis and their respective successors, more nobles and gentry had increased contact with their opposites on the other side of the Narrow Sea than had been the case for at least two generations. Comparisons were often made by ambassadors and travellers. Sixteenth-century English nobles and gentlemen tended quite readily to see themselves as equal or better than French nobles, at least those of middling rank. French ambassadors could be scathing about English common people and artisans and were often frustrated by the ceremonious privacy that usually surrounded the English monarch. Conversely, English ambassadors like the young William Fitzwilliam in 1521 and John Clerk five years later were sometimes disconcerted by the apparent informality of the French court where the king was on show to his nobles daily and where his status was honoured through means other than the deferential bowing and scraping that went on in England. Good command of the French language was becoming less common among English gentlemen and nobles. Nevertheless, the two national groups still spoke much the same metaphorical language of chivalric equality when occasion demanded.

21 Steven J. Gunn, 'The French Wars of Henry VIII' in Jeremy Black (ed.), *The Origins of War in Early-Modern Europe* (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 28–51.

22 Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*; see also Glenn Richardson, 'Anglo-French Political and Cultural Relations during the reign of Henry VIII', Unpublished University of London Ph.D. dissertation (1995); Charles Giry-Deloison, 'Une alliance contre nature? La paix franco-anglaise de 1525–1544', in his *François I<sup>er</sup> et Henri VIII: Deux princes de la Renaissance (1515–1547)* (Lille, 1996), pp. 53–62.

In this context, Professor Robert Knecht offers a comparative study of noble culture and the nobilities of France and England during the sixteenth century. As he demonstrates, whatever the rhetorical expressions of equality between them, the two 'political nations' were significantly different in size, structure, wealth, political influence and attitudes. England's peerage was much smaller than that of France and the members of its gentry, though extremely varied as individuals, were more narrowly defined as a group than the French nobility. They also had very different experiences of violence and warfare, especially that caused by religious dissension. Through force of personality and by directing their energies outward, Francis I commanded French noble hearts and minds in a way that his grandsons conspicuously did not. The vigour of the system of clientage among French nobles posed great problems for the Valois kings as they struggled to impose order and peace during the Wars of Religion.

Whatever the claims made for seventeenth-century absolute monarchy as a means of reducing noble power in France, in the sixteenth century the nobility remained determined in defence of its own interests, however ill-conceived at times. In France a career in the service and household of one of the *grands* remained an ambition for young men in a way that it was ceasing to be in England where lines of communication and patronage between the monarchy and gentry were deliberately straightened and shortened under Wolsey, Cromwell and later the Cecils. The Valois monarchy also lacked many of the coercive measures which the Tudor monarchs used to give them much tighter control over what was admittedly a smaller and less geographically scattered English nobility.<sup>23</sup>

Some of Knecht's observations are echoed by Cédric Michon's study of state prelates under Francis I and Henry VIII. The French prelates were almost universally drawn from the ranks of the nobility. With the possible exception of Cardinal Pole (who, though appointed during Henry's reign, never served the king) the English prelates were from non-gentry backgrounds. Michon proposes that the French ecclesiastics were also courtiers in a way quite different from their English counterparts who were more in the nature of bureaucrats. Whether Cardinal Wolsey would have been entirely comfortable with this characterisation may be debated. His own rather princely mode of life was certainly on display to the members of the French embassy that he received at Hampton Court in November 1527. For them he provided the kind of entertainment that they might more readily have expected from the archetypal courtier-prelate, Jean, Cardinal de Lorraine, as famous in England as he was in France for his wealth and extravagance.<sup>24</sup> In this, as in much else, however, Wolsey appears to be the exception.

23 For a wider European discussion of these themes see Ronald G. Asch, *Nobilities in Transition 1550–1700: Courtiers and Rebels in Britain and Europe* (London, 2003), esp. pp. 9–54; For a French perspective on the rise of the English gentry see Frédérique Lachaud, 'La "formation de la gentry", XI<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: un nouveau concept historiographique?', in Lachaud et al., *Histoires d'outre-Manche*, pp. 13–36.

24 George Cavendish, *Two Early Tudor Lives. The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey* (eds) Richard S. Sylvester and Davis P. Harding (Yale, 1962), pp. 71–3. On the French cardinal see Cédric Michon, 'Les richesses de la faveur à la Renaissance', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 50/3 (2003): 34–61.

The majority of the prelates in the service of the English king were outsiders at court and were not part of networks of kinship within royal service in the way of their French counterparts. They therefore constructed networks of support and dependence among fellow university men. Cédric Michon traces connections between a number of senior prelates who were educated together at Cambridge and who supported each other in entering royal service. They then acted as patrons to younger clerics in the 1530s, many of whom played active parts in building and implementing the royal supremacy. Overall, the services that prelates offered to Henry and Francis were broadly similar and perhaps represented the last flourish of the great ecclesiastical statesmen familiar in England and France since at least the days of John, Cardinal Morton and Georges, Cardinal d'Amboise. By the later sixteenth century a trend was established in both realms to use ecclesiastics less and less as state functionaries. The tendency continued into the following century albeit with some notable exceptions. Although neither was a great churchman, the two most famous royal ministers in French history were of course the cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin.

Anglo-French relations after the fall of England's last great cardinal-minister in 1529 are the subject of my own chapter in this volume. Henry VIII's break with Rome in the 1530s is usually discussed as a wholly and distinctly English phenomenon but surely this view overlooks important contextual evidence in Henry's relations with Francis I. The chapter examines the close relationship between the framing of the initial legislation against the Church in England and the agreement to an often-overlooked Anglo-French treaty of alliance signed in 1532. Henry's expectation of support from Francis against the pope and Charles V, which the French king did his best to encourage for his own purposes, emboldened the otherwise cautious Henry to take radical action to solve his matrimonial and succession dilemmas through recourse to the English parliament. During the early 1530s there were also genuine hopes in certain French and English evangelical circles that Henry and Francis might be instrumental in healing and settling the widening gap between Catholics and Protestants in Germany and elsewhere. The failure of trust between the two monarchs in 1533 certainly ended these hopes and goes some way to explaining the bitterness and petty bickering which characterised relations from the mid-1530s. It eventually led to a third and final war between Henry and Francis from 1543 to 1546.

Notwithstanding the effects of this and earlier wars, the developments in Anglo-French trade and commerce identified by Charles Giry-Deloison in the 1470s and 1480s continued into the next century. Under Henry VIII there was an increase in the number of French merchants trading in London. Although they were outnumbered by Flemish, Dutch, German and Italian traders, they were still conspicuous among those foreigners targeted by angry apprentices in the 'Evil May Day' riot of 1517.<sup>25</sup> A significant number of French artisans and merchants also supplied luxury goods and services to the English royal court and noble households during the 1530s and 1540s. The king's substantial architectural patronage in the final decade of his life

25 Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and Yorke*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1809), p. 589; Hugh Tait, 'London Huguenot Silver', in Scouloudi, pp. 89–112; see also John A. Knowles, 'Disputes between English and Foreign Glass-Painters', *Antiquaries Journal*, 5 (1925): 148–57.



was afforded by the proceeds of the dissolution of the monasteries and prompted in substantial measure by the efforts of Francis I at his châteaux of Chambord, Fontainebleau and Madrid, of which Henry was kept well informed by his ambassadors.<sup>26</sup>

French elite culture was arguably at its most influential upon the English court during Henry's reign. As early as 1512 Thomas More satirised English gentlemen who aped French fashion and spoke French affectedly and badly. Edward Hall criticised several of Henry VIII's young companions who returned from the French court in 1519:

all French, in eating, drinking and apparel,  
yea, and in French vices and brags ...  
so that nothing by them was praised, but if it were after the French turn.<sup>27</sup>

To the long tradition of Englishmen attending French universities was added the practice of sending sons to France with ambassadors or to live in noble households as part of their education. Henry VIII's bastard son Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, spent time at the French court in 1533 with Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Sir Nicholas Carew's son Charles was educated for a short time in Paris at the expense of the king of France.<sup>28</sup> Daughters went too; Lord Lisle's daughters spent time in French noble households near Calais in the 1530s.<sup>29</sup> Anne Boleyn's sophisticated French, her dress, manners and outlook, all products of her time in the 'finishing school' of the Flemish and French courts, appealed very much to the king of England in the 1520s. Their early courtship was often conducted in French.<sup>30</sup>

This interaction at elite levels did little, however, to challenge long-held English stereotypes of the French which were of two broad kinds. The first was articulated by Sir John Fortescue in his book *The Governance of England* (c.1470). He described the French as poor, starving and pathetic creatures, oppressed by avaricious kings, of whom they were too exhausted, or stupid, to rid themselves.<sup>31</sup> The other stereotype

26 Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior*, esp. pp. 398–47; Richardson, *Renaissance Monarchy*, pp. 172–92. On those who traded at Henry's court see Richardson, 'Anglo-French relations', pp. 243–5; Janet Cox-Rearick, *The Collection of Francis I: Royal Treasures* (New York, 1996).

27 Hall, p. 597.

28 William A. Sessions, *Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey* (Boston, 1986), pp. 5–6. On Charles Carew see Richardson, 'Anglo-French relations', p. 205; On Nicholas Carew's relations with Francis I, see Robert J. Knecht, 'Sir Nicholas Carew's journey through France in 1529', in Grummitt, *The English Experience in France*, pp. 160–99.

29 David Potter, 'The Private Face of Anglo-French relations in the Sixteenth Century: the Lisles and their French friends', in Grummitt, *The English Experience in France*, pp. 199–222. For Lisle's relations and correspondence with the governor of Boulogne see David Potter, *Un homme de guerre au temps de la Renaissance: La vie et les lettres d'Oudart du Biez, Marchéchal de France, et Gouverneur de Picardie et de Boulogne (vers 1475–1553)* (Arras, 2001), pp. 121–54.

30 Eric Ives, *Anne Boleyn* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 63–92.

31 *The Governance of England* by Sir John Fortescue, (ed.), C. Plummer (Oxford, 1885), pp. 114–15.

was that of the over-refined fop, often specifically a French courtier, whose expensive fashions betrayed intellectual and moral vacuity. Sixteenth and early seventeenth-century comedies present a number of such characters but English francophobia was largely dormant from the middle of the century when Habsburg Spain was seen as the real enemy.

Feelings of cultural superiority and xenophobia did not run in one direction only. From the Hundred Years War onwards popular French stereotypes of the English imputed to them a boorish aggression. The fourteenth century writers Eustache Deschamps and Olivier Basselin castigated English commoners as fat, blundering, generally lazy morons whose habitual outbursts of violence were fuelled by excess beer, roast meat and punctuated by profanities – not unlike the 'football hooligan' of our own time.<sup>32</sup> The English writer Andrew Boorde recognised and played with this stereotype in his *Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (c.1542) when he introduced his readers to the regions of France and had a stock-character Breton complain:

Of all nations I hate free Englishmen  
When they be angry, like bees they do swarm  
I be-shromp them, they have done me much harm<sup>33</sup>

Henry VIII's two immediate successors were conscious of England's ancestral claims in France but neither Edward VI nor Mary I were truly masters of their relations with Henry II of France who succeeded Francis I in 1547 and who was a monarch very much in his father's mould. He renewed the conflict with Charles V and the 'auld alliance' with Scotland. In sharp contrast, Edward VI had little opportunity to emulate his father, Henry VIII having seriously depleted his realm's resources. Protector Somerset's attempts to control Scotland, partly through establishing English garrisons there, only provoked French aggression in Scotland. It became more or less a French puppet state during the 1550s. Following war with France in 1549, Edward's regime was also forced to surrender Boulogne, albeit on the comparatively generous terms negotiated by the earl of Warwick.<sup>34</sup>

The marriage of Prince Philip of Spain to Mary Tudor in 1554 may have been intended to renew an alliance that England had used at the outset of the century to curb the power of France, but Mary's regime lacked the resources, experience and bombast of those of her father and grandfather. Careful though she was to ensure that Philip, as king-consort, had no power within her realm, Mary could not prevent England being drawn into the second generation of the Valois-Habsburg family feud.

32 Gibson, pp. 27–31.

33 Andrew Boorde, *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, (ed.), F.J. Furnival, *Early English Text Society, Extra Series*, 10 (1870), p. 208.

34 David Potter, 'Documents Concerning the Negotiation of the Anglo-French Treaty of March 1550', *Camden Miscellany*, Fourth Series, 29 (1984): 56–180. C. Skidmore, *Edward VI: The Lost King of England* (London, 2007), pp. 202–4; J. Loach, *Edward VI* (New Haven & London, 1999), pp. 135–58; S. Doran, *England and Europe 1485–1603* (London, 1996), pp. 53–7. See also D. Hoak, 'Rehabilitating the Duke of Northumberland', in J. Loach and R. Tittler (eds), *The Mid-Tudor Polity c.1540–1560* (London, 1980), pp. 74–93.

The consequence was the loss of Calais in 1558 – England's first, last and most emblematic prize of the Hundred Years War.<sup>35</sup>

Elizabeth I did formally assert her dynastic rights in France, particularly to Calais, but the growing power of Spain and the strife into which France descended after the death of Henry II in 1559 made pursuing them actively very complicated. Historians have been much occupied with the question of Elizabeth's support for Protestants in France and in the Netherlands. As far as France is concerned, most of them characterise the queen as *politique*, instinctively reluctant to support rebels against another sovereign but at the same time lured on by the prospect, remote as it may have been, of Calais's return to English rule if the Huguenots could force the royal regime to its terms.<sup>36</sup> Her first instincts, expressed in the treaty of Hampton Court of September 1562, were to support the Huguenots with troops and money on the strength of their promise of Le Havre or Dieppe as a pledge for the return of Calais. Securing Calais or a 'surety' sea port in its stead, became a staple in Elizabeth's dealings with the French royal regime (and its domestic opponents) as far into her reign as 1594.

Elizabeth's dealings with France were yet further complicated by the outbreak of the revolt against Philip II in the Netherlands. To some extent relations with France in this period have also played second fiddle to questions about the inevitability, or otherwise, of war against Spain and to what extent, if at all, Elizabeth's regime turned its back on Europe and began forging an English foreign policy and identity focused on its maritime interests.<sup>37</sup> Having contributed to these debates elsewhere, in this volume Susan Doran turns her attention to the more particular question of Elizabeth's relations with Catherine de' Medici.

Doran argues that Elizabeth and Catherine found ways of working together in the interests of an Anglo-French peace which both of them thought best served the interests of each realm. This capacity sprang not from their gender per se, but from a mutual concern about the damaging effects of disharmony within the kingdoms for

35 David Potter, 'Mid-Tudor Foreign Policy and the Diplomacy: 1547–1563', in Doran and Richardson, pp. 106–38.

36 Richard Bruce Wernham, *Before the Armada: The Growth of English Foreign Policy, 1485–1588* (London, 1966). See also Wernham, *After the Armada: Elizabethan England and the Struggle for Western Europe 1588–9* (Oxford, 1984); Wallace T. McCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588–1603* (Princeton, NJ, 1981); Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Policy, 1558–1603* (London, 2000); Paul Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars: War, Government and Society in Tudor England, 1544–1604* (Basingstoke, 2003); Simon Adams, 'Elizabeth I and the Sovereignty of the Netherlands, 1576–1585', *TRHS Sixth Series*, 14 (2004): 309–19; Pauline Croft, '"State of the World is Marvellously Changed": England, Spain and Europe, 1558–1604', in Doran and Richardson, pp. 178–202. For an alternative view see David J.B. Trimm, 'Seeking a Protestant Alliance and Liberty of Conscience on the Continent, 1558–85', in the same volume at pp. 139–77.

37 Simon Adams, 'England and the World under the Tudors, 1485–1603', in John Morrill (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 397–415. See also his Introduction to the remainder of the essays from the 'Elizabeth I and the Expansion of England' conference held at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich in September 2003, *TRHS Sixth Series*, 14 (2004): 119–22.

which they each took responsibility and the potential threat posed to both regimes by growing Spanish power. Treaty negotiations, gift exchanges and marriage proposals assisted the process of outward friendship. Frequent ambassadorial exchanges facilitated good relations, but also allowed them to express more negative feelings. The cordial relations Elizabeth first essayed through peace treaties signed with Catherine de' Medici and the various marriage negotiations of the 1570s enabled the two regimes to remain friendly, despite the shock felt in England at the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew in 1572 and the exodus to England of Huguenot refugees.<sup>38</sup>

During these years the foundations were laid for yet more peaceful relations with Henry IV after 1589. Elizabeth's interventions in Normandy in support of Henry and against Spain and the Catholic League were genuinely appreciated and he sent skilful and high ranking ambassadors to England during the years up to Elizabeth's death in 1603. Yet his apparent gratitude did not lead him to repay the loans Elizabeth made him, nor even to use carefully the troops she sent to him. Theirs remains a largely unstudied relationship but such evidence as has been presented indicates that Elizabeth was often frustrated by Henry and correctly assumed that he generally took her support for granted; but she was also grateful to him for bringing France once more securely under royal control and directing its military aggression against Spain until 1598.<sup>39</sup>

Whatever the particular difficulties occasioned by religious and strategic differences, the political nations of England and France in the second half of the sixteenth century still shared a broadly similar culture and rhetorical language and deployed this language readily in dealing with each other. Culturally, the *rapprochement* of the later sixteenth century was marked by an increased interest in the land and people on the other side of the water not just among the political and educational elites of the two nations but from a wider reading public. In England there was a sharp rise in demand for news of current events in France and in the appetite for polemical tracts about the wars of religion and the state of France and its monarchy more generally.<sup>40</sup>

A parallel interest in the political and religious situation in England has been detected in France, together with increased availability of geographical and topographical information on England. Both regimes also sought to use manuscript and printed material to explain, or at least to justify, decisions they took which might

38 Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford, 1986).

39 J.-P. Babelon, *Henri IV* (Paris, 1982); D. Buisseret, *Henry IV King of France* (London, 1992); P. Hammer, *Elizabeth's Wars* (Basingstoke, 2003).

40 David Potter, *Foreign Intelligence and Information in Elizabethan England: Two English Treatises on the State of France, 1580–1584*, Camden Society, Fifth Series, 25 (2004); see also David Potter and Peter Roberts, 'An Englishman's view of the court of Henri III, 1584–5: Richard Cook's "Description of the Court of France"', *French History*, 2/3 (1988): 312–44; Lisa Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce: French anti-League propaganda in late Elizabethan England* (Rochester, New York, 1996); David Womersley, 'France in Shakespeare's Henry V', *Renaissance Studies*, 9/4 (1995): 442–59 for an interesting account of the play's implicit critique of Henry IV of France.



otherwise be misinterpreted by the other side. These included the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in 1587 and the war against Spain thereafter.<sup>41</sup>

From his accession as King of England in 1603, James VI and I provided a single focus for the hitherto separate aims in France's dealings with the two largest of the Three Kingdoms; namely, dynastic conflict with England and the 'auld alliance' with Scotland. The Stuarts maintained pacific, and sometimes rather passive, relations with France. James's attempts to play the role of peacemaker sprang from an idealism about Christian princely peace and a reluctance to involve himself in European religious conflict. The bellicose attitude of Henry IV of France towards the Habsburgs unsettled James but after the assassination of the French king in May 1610 he worked effectively with Marie de Médicis while also allying himself to the Protestant Union. The marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to Frederick V of the Palatinate in 1613 seemed to place James at the centre of a network of familial connections across Europe but after Frederick's acceptance of the Bohemian crown in 1619, it only threatened to draw him into a costly war.<sup>42</sup> James therefore also sought connections with Catholic powers. Having been rebuffed in Madrid in 1623, his overtures for a marriage alliance turned, almost inevitably, to France where they were accepted rather coolly by Louis XIII and Richelieu in December 1624.

As heir to James and then as king from March 1625, Charles I sought French cooperation against the Habsburgs, principally in order to secure the return of the Palatinate to his brother-in-law. His marriage by proxy to Henrietta Maria in May 1625 provided an occasion for suggesting joint action but these hopes were disappointed by Richelieu's refusal to do anything on the international stage until Huguenot resistance at home, centred on La Rochelle, had been defeated. The two disastrous English expeditions in support of the Protestants at La Rochelle in July 1627 and September 1628 were intended to break Richelieu's blockade and to undermine his policies. Their failure resulted only in the final surrender of the port city to royal forces in October 1628. England's involvement in Continental wars under the Stuarts thus ended on a rather farcical note. Hostilities between England and France were formally concluded under the treaty of Susa in April 1629.

Charles I's meagre resources following his decision to rule without Parliament from 1629 meant that he was sidelined in European affairs, although he was probably more willing than his father had been to support his co-religionists abroad. His limited capacities to lead stood in sharp contrast to the resourcefulness and determination of King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden who vigorously opposed Habsburg domination of the Baltic and the north German states. Charles's offers of alliance were turned down by the Swedish king as insubstantial, as in fact they were. Not so those of Richelieu, who, alarmed by Swedish aggression and initial successes, offered Gustavus financial support and aligned France with Sweden – though more by perceived necessity than natural inclination.<sup>43</sup>

Surveying what is still a largely unexplored period in France's relations with England, Loïc Bienassis considers the cardinal's attitude to Charles I after the death of Gustavus Adolphus until the outbreak of the Civil War in the Three Kingdoms. Aware from the mid-1630s of Charles's military and financial weakness and of the growing religious and political dissent within England, Richelieu was persuaded that there was no need to ally with Charles but that he should try to prevent the king forming an alliance with Spain. By 1637 hopes of Anglo-French cooperation were once again being entertained, at least in Henrietta Maria's circle, as France was finally drawn into direct conflict with the Habsburgs. By then however, despite Charles's continuing desire for the restoration of the Palatinate to Frederick and the curbing of Habsburg power, he faced the urgent problem of militant opposition to his religious reforms in Scotland. As Bienassis explains, whether or not the French actively supported troublemakers in Scotland (and the evidence remains inconclusive), they certainly benefited from Charles's incapacity to levy military and naval power in Europe.

Whatever difficulties they may have experienced in dealing with France from time to time, the first two Stuart kings maintained the existing tradition of close cultural relations with the French elite. Their family ties with the Bourbons, together with continued Huguenot immigration, resulted in further direct French influences in Britain during the seventeenth century.<sup>44</sup> Numbers of English (and Scots) travellers in France increased beyond the ranks of soldiers, diplomats and scholars. Travelling as an education in itself was not unknown among members of the social and political elite in the sixteenth century but it first became fashionable during the early seventeenth century. Thomas Wentworth, the first earl of Strafford, spent much of 1612 making a tour of French provinces. John Evelyn's famous diary includes impressions of his tour through France in 1643–44 on his way to Italy and his stay in Paris in the early 1650s. In 1652 he published an essay on the state of France written in 1647.<sup>45</sup>

As they had done for centuries beforehand, French princesses and noblewomen also came to England in the seventeenth century to live as the spouses of English kings and noblemen. The court of Henrietta Maria has been the focus of a number of studies in its own right. Its cultural importance and her personal influence on the policies and style of her husband Charles I have been examined by historians, as has

and the Huguenots, 1610 to 1629', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, 22 (1975): 414–29; David J. Sturdy, *Richelieu and Mazarin: a Study in Statesmanship* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 38–46; Robert J. Knecht, *Richelieu* (London, 1991), pp. 64–118.

44 R. Malcolm Smuts (ed.), *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture* (Cambridge, 1996); see also his article 'The Structure of the Court and the role of the artist and poet under Charles I', *The Court Historian*, 9/2 (2004): 103–17; Elisabeth Labrousse, 'Great Britain as Envisaged by the Huguenots of the Seventeenth Century', in Scouloudi, *Huguenots in Britain*, pp. 143–57.

45 *The Diary of John Evelyn* ed. E.S. De Beer (Oxford, 1959); John Lough, *France Observed in the Seventeenth Century by British Travellers* (Stocksfield, 1985), pp. 1–4. On seventeenth-century travel more generally see John W. Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad 1604–1667: Their Influence in English Society and Politics* (New Haven 1989).

41 Charles Giry-Deloison, 'France and Elizabethan England', *TRHS*, 14 (2004): 223–42.

42 Roger Lockyer, *James VI and I* (London, 1998), pp. 138–58; William Patterson, *King James VI and I and the reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997).

43 Roger Lockyer, *The Early Stuarts: A Political History of England, 1603–1642* (London, 1989), pp. 12–34; Simon Adams, 'The Road to La Rochelle: English Foreign Policy

her own difficult transition to life in England.<sup>46</sup> Another French spouse in England was Charlotte de La Trémoille who was married to James Stanley, the future earl of Derby in 1626. Like the queen and other noblewomen at different times in the history of Anglo-French relations, Charlotte overcame her initial isolation through networks of personal relations based on religious affiliation and kinship. As Sonia Kmec shows in her chapter in this volume, Charlotte was initially something of an 'outsider' at the royal court perhaps because her family in France did not support the Huguenot rebellion centred on La Rochelle which Charles was expensively and unsuccessfully trying to assist. Her relative isolation continued into the years of the Civil War but by the time of the Restoration, Charlotte had built up an effective network of her own which she then tried to use to assist those who had helped her during the difficult years before the end of the war.<sup>47</sup>

If there is one period in the history of early-modern Anglo-French relations that is even less studied than the 1630s and which still awaits satisfactory and comprehensive treatment, it is that of the Protectorate. Such studies as are available demonstrate that, counter-intuitively perhaps, and despite initial hostility abroad, neither the regicide of 1649 nor the attempted establishment of a fervently evangelical public culture in England in the mid-1650s ultimately rendered the country an international pariah. Nor did they presage an insular or reactionary foreign policy. On the contrary, Cromwell's regime made England a force to be reckoned with in continental politics once more.<sup>48</sup> While Cromwell's anti-Spanish policies in the West Indies have received most attention from historians, the series of alliances which he agreed with Cardinal Mazarin show that his attitude to France was neither doctrinaire nor bigotedly anti-Catholic.<sup>49</sup> Charles Korr characterised Cromwell's approach as attempting 'to avoid making a clear-cut distinction between pragmatic considerations and ideas rather than sacrificing either of them'. He enthused about Cromwell's tactful delays and capacity to play off offers of French support off against Spanish ones during the mid-1650s to increase his importance to both. For Korr, Cromwell more resembled Henry VII than any other English ruler before him.<sup>50</sup>

The most recent study, by Timothy Venning, has argued that this interpretation is wide of the mark. The Protectorate's foreign policy was finally less about the Lord Protector's elegant diplomacy than the power of the army and Cromwell's need to occupy and finance it and, as Barry Coward has also noted, the sheer range of

46 Caroline Hibbard, 'Translating Royalty: Henrietta Maria and the Transition from Princess to Queen', *The Court Historian*, 5/1 (2000): 15–28; Robert Malcolm Smutts, 'The Puritan followers of Henrietta-Maria in the 1630s', *English Historical Review* 93/366 (1978): 26–41; Robert Malcolm Smutts with Melinda J. Gough, 'Queens and the International Transmission of Political Culture', *The Court Historian*, 10/1 (2005): 1–15.

47 Olwen Hufton, 'Reflections on the role of women in the early-modern court', *The Court Historian*, 5/1 (2000): 1–14, for the wider European context.

48 Michael Roberts, 'Cromwell and the Baltic', in his *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967), pp. 138–94; Mena Prestwich, 'Diplomacy and Trade in the Protectorate', *Journal of Modern History*, 22/2 (1950): 103–21.

49 Sturdy, *Richelieu and Mazarin*, pp. 127–35.

50 Charles P. Korr, *Cromwell and the New Model Foreign Policy: England's Policy towards France, 1649–1658* (Berkeley and London, 1975), pp. 207–11.

interests and threats with which his regime had to deal. The decidedly un-pragmatic 'Western Design' ultimately made Spain an unreliable ally and having, for a range of motives, antagonised and fought with his co-religionists in the Dutch Republic, it was finally, and almost inevitably, to France that Cromwell turned in 1657.<sup>51</sup> Venning has himself been criticised for 'seriously exaggerating English preoccupation in the 1650s with France', and underestimating the importance of the turbulent relations with the Dutch.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, his study confirms what Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, also knew – that France certainly had to take England under Cromwell seriously again as a military power in a way that it had not done for at least a quarter of a century.

In 1660 Charles II inherited the country's enhanced international status and strategic potential built up by Cromwell but neither he nor his brother James, in turn, proved capable of maintaining this handsome bequest. Like his father before him, Charles II pursued an initially frenetic and confused foreign policy. His regime first fought the Dutch, then allied with them against France, then allied with France against the Dutch. In the aftermath of the secret treaty of Dover agreed with Louis XIV in 1670, the king lapsed into what *Yes Minister's* Sir Humphrey Appleby might have praised as 'masterly inactivity'. The controversies of religion and the succession which prompted him to rule without Parliament laid him open to manipulation by Louis, for whose subsidies he was prepared to barter English neutrality. His brother James commanded bravely, if not very effectively, in the second Anglo-Dutch War and showed every indication before his accession of favouring Anglo-French cooperation. During his short time as ruler in England, however, he was not particularly francophile and was so preoccupied with domestic concerns and security that he made no significant decisions concerning his realm's international interests. As a consequence, and as Paul Seaward has noted, by 1678 the realm and the monarchy were as enfeebled as they had been before the Civil War.<sup>53</sup>

Louis XIV's trade policies caused alarm in England in the 1670s but John Spurr has cautioned against taking the expression of such anxieties at face value. Although Charles's realm did face increased competition in trade, and trade with France dropped in the mid-1670s, within a decade it had grown by 136 per cent on what it had been in 1675–76. The pattern of the cloth trade in particular changed, but overall volumes increased.<sup>54</sup> Louis XIV in fact made a great and unwitting contribution to the British economy with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. In and around that year some 40,000 Huguenots left France for Britain, among them skilled artisans and artists who settled mainly in London and other port cities. They founded new industries, especially silk-making and tapestry, and developed glass and paper

51 Timothy Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (London, 1995), pp. 113–52; 251–3; Barry Coward, *Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1991), pp. 168–74.

52 Jonathan Israel, 'England, the Dutch Republic and Europe in the Seventeenth Century', *HJ*, 40/4 (1997): 1117–21; James R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch wars of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1996).

53 J.D. Davies, 'International Relations, War and the Armed Forces', in Lionel K. Glassey (ed.), *The Reigns of Charles II and James VII and II* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp. 211–34; Paul Seaward, *The Restoration, 1660–1688* (Basingstoke, 1991), esp. pp. 70–100.

54 John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: 'This Masquerading Age'* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 132–3.

manufacturing. In 1700 London's population overtook that of Paris and its roles as a European entrepôt and a centre of mechanical, scientific and financial expertise had eclipsed any on the near Continent, including Paris.<sup>55</sup>

Charles II was also well aware of the example the French king set in projecting the royal *gloire*; where Louis called upon Jules Hardouin-Mansart and Charles Le Brun, Charles used the expertise of Christopher Wren, Grinling Gibbons and Antonio Verrio. Where Louis patronised Lully and Molière, Charles called upon the talents of Purcell and presided over the revival of satirical theatre in the comedies of, among many others, William Wycherley and George Etherege, both of whom had French connections.<sup>56</sup> English men and women also continued to travel in France during the first decade of Louis XIV's reign. They returned again after his first war against the Dutch, recording daily life in France and impressions of the court. The most detailed accounts are those contained in John Locke's *Journals* for the years 1675–79 and in the writing of Gilbert Burnet, the future bishop of Salisbury, who travelled in the Netherlands and France in the 1660s and early 1680s.<sup>57</sup> During the later seventeenth century, French fashions continued to influence clothing, interior design, theatre and entertainment in the British capital.<sup>58</sup>

The abdication of James II and the 'revolution' that brought William of Orange to power in England in 1688–89 also brought a sudden change in Anglo-French relations. In response to Louis's declaration of war against the United Provinces in November 1688, William drew England out of its isolation into what became the Nine Years' War against France. William's motives and the precise implications of entry to this war have been vigorously debated during the past decade. He has traditionally been cast by historians of the period as emphatically anti-French and obsessed with curbing the power of Louis XIV. More recently, however, it has been asserted that although William may well have wished to see Louis personally humbled, he still wanted France itself to remain a bulwark against Habsburg power. Thus it was that by 1697, in circumstances where William thought more might be gained by peace than war, he opened negotiations with Louis. Under the consequent peace of Ryswick, Louis returned most of his war gains and formally recognised William as king of England – even as he continued to shelter and support James.<sup>59</sup>

55 François-Joseph Ruggiu, 'The urban gentry in England, 1660–1780: a French approach', *Historical Research*, 74/185 (2001): 249–70; Irene Scouloudi, 'The Stranger Community in the Metropolis, 1558–1640', in her *Huguenots in Britain and their French Background, 1550–1800*, pp. 42–55.

56 Simon Thurley, *Hampton Court: Social and Architectural History* (New Haven and London, 2003); Peter Holman, *Henry Purcell* (Oxford, 1994); Robert Thompson, 'Henry Purcell, 1659–1695; Composer at the English Court', *The Court Historian*, 4/1 (1999): 41–7; Gibson, pp. 57–60.

57 Lough, pp. 5–8.

58 Charles Bastide, *The Anglo-French Entente in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1914).

59 Wouter Troost, *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography* (Aldershot, 2005), trans. J.C. Grayson; Jeremy Black, *The Rise of the European Powers, 1679–1793* (London, 1990), esp. pp. 3–54.

In the final chapter of this volume David Onnekink calls for a re-evaluation of Anglo-French negotiations for the Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1700. The anxiety over the imminent succession of the Bourbon family to the Spanish crown had prompted their negotiation in an effort to avert a Europe-wide war. Contrary to these agreements, Louis accepted the provisions of the will of Carlos II of Spain which bequeathed his realm to Louis's grandson, Philip of Anjou. This provoked the formation of the Grand Alliance against France in September 1701. Onnekink argues strongly against the view that the period between the peace of Rymsick and the outbreak of the war of the Spanish Succession should be seen as merely a hiatus in hostilities otherwise driven on either by long-term nationalist ambitions or bitter and personal misunderstandings at the start of a 'second Hundred Years War'. Rather, he suggests, the evidence of the treaty negotiations indicates that both William and Louis were prepared in principle to work together for peace but, echoing perhaps Richelieu's view of England in the 1630s, real peace between them required each side to be strong and to have confidence in the other's strength. By 1699 Louis's ministers knew that William was militarily weak. Due to opposition in Parliament, William was forced to retrench his armed forces at exactly the time the earl of Portland was negotiating with the French ministers.<sup>60</sup> It became clear that William could not provide Louis with support against the Emperor should it be needed, and more damningly perhaps, that William could not actively oppose Louis's acceptance of the Spanish succession should it be offered, as Louis probably intended that it should be. Thus it was 'parliamentary insularity, rather than royal antagonism towards France, that played the greater part in the failure of the Partition Treaties to avert another European war.

This volume of essays begins with a consideration of the treaty of Troyes, a treaty signed in the aftermath of the battle of Agincourt, still the most emblematic of the three major English victories in the Hundred Years War. It concludes with the prelude to the war of the Spanish Succession in which the newly created Great Britain first tested itself in bloody encounters with the armies of France and set itself on the path to empire. Virtually everywhere it explored, Britain sooner or later encountered France. More battles followed on land and sea in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. The impression might easily be given that Anglo-French relations in the early-modern period consisted of one war after another until, exhausted, the two countries finally reached the 1904 Entente-Cordiale.

Yet the findings of this volume, and of other recent surveys, suggest that 'entente' (if not always 'cordiale') is at least as important a paradigm for early-modern Anglo-French relations as conflict and warfare. In fact, for most of the time between 1420 and 1700 France and the Three Kingdoms were at peace. The primary reasons for the long periods of peace in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were perhaps not that dissimilar to those which brought about the famous agreement of 1904. In these centuries the rise of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, the ever-changing

60 G.C. Gibbs, 'The Revolution in Foreign Policy' in Geoffrey S. Holmes (ed.), *Britain after the Glorious Revolution, 1689–1714* (London, 1969), pp. 59–79 for a discussion of William's personal interest in the treaties and his deteriorating relations with parliament and the extent of public discourse on foreign policy during the late 1690s.

politics of the Italian peninsula, the dominance of the Habsburg dynasty under the emperor Charles V and Philip II of Spain and, above all, profound religious change and disharmony, provided a new and more complicated context for Anglo-French dealings. The power of the Habsburgs tended to overshadow the feudal and dynastic competitiveness which had characterised those dealings since the twelfth century and created new opportunities and problems for both English and French rulers. It also forced the two regimes to understand each other's needs and priorities and even to cooperate in circumstances when war between them might have proved disastrous for either one of them. Put simply, the rulers of England and France discovered that they sometimes needed each other and might well profit from setting aside historical differences – at least for a while.

The evidence of this kind of cooperation under Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and Charles II also challenges a natural assumption that each side always and necessarily wanted to weaken and undermine the other. Compete they certainly did and both sides feared any situation in which the other might ally with a third party (or more) against it. Trying to outdo each other's efforts in trade and exploration was axiomatic in the years of commercial and colonial rivalry from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. Nevertheless, it is also striking that sometimes each side actually needed the other to be strong if its own interests were to be advanced.

The 'eternal peace' between Henry VIII and Francis I was predicated upon on the idea of mutual strength and dependability in the face of Charles V's hostility which threatened the interests of both kings. Even when they were not actively cooperating, the strength of one regime and its ambitions was at least a dependable strategic factor in the calculations of the other. Catherine de' Medici, her sons and Henry IV all needed Elizabeth I's regime to be, if not dominant, then at least able to take care of itself and act as a balance to Spain. For her part, Elizabeth was always anxious that a weakened France would allow complete Habsburg domination of Western Europe. Conversely, England's perceived lack of resources after 1629 reduced its potential as an ally to France. In one way of course, this suited Richelieu but his subsequent alliance with Sweden ultimately dragged France into a war with the Habsburgs that Richelieu would have preferred to avoid. Similarly, Louis XIV's awareness of William III's weakness (temporary though it proved to be) was a key factor in his decision to contravene the Partition Treaties. This proved something of a miscalculation, provoking as it did the formation of the Grand Alliance and the Spanish Succession war which proved costly in lives and resources for France. That conflict, and others that followed, signalled Britain's new and powerful engagement with Europe and the world beyond through aggressive rivalry with France.

Culturally, England and France drew closer again after the end of the Hundred Years War. Revived trade and commerce between the kingdoms, the wealth of the English monarchy under Henry VII and Henry VIII and the exceptional artistic patronage of Francis I meant that England's engagement with the Continental Renaissance during the first half of the sixteenth century was very largely mediated through France. Travel and education in France became more common among English gentry and noblemen in the seventeenth century and France was almost always the first and last stop on the 'grand tour' of the eighteenth century when the two nations' interest in each other reached its highpoint. Despite his many political difficulties,

Charles I was an important artistic patron and one of few British monarchs for whom genuine connoisseurship can be claimed. His court was dignified and demonstrated a sophisticated awareness of trends in dress, the fine arts and architecture, both in France and beyond. His eldest son's court was characterised by a rather different sophistication. Charles II's early adulthood had been spent in and around the French court and he personally favoured French dress and social fashions. Nevertheless, his own court adapted traditional English arrangements and etiquette in the light of French practice rather than simply and uncritically adopting the contemporary French model.

Broadly speaking, this approach characterised cultural relations in all periods. French influence was important but did not exercise a monopoly in the minds of the educated and the social elite in England. In the years beyond 1700, English or British influence on France began to increase in the fields of political thought and science.<sup>61</sup> Among other leading lights of the French Enlightenment, Voltaire visited London and was well received in gentry and noble circles. A number of the *philosophes* wrote enthusiastically about Britain's scientific and technological expertise and its constitutional arrangements.

Having begun with the French foreign minister, it may be as well to leave the last word in this preliminary overview of early-modern cross-Channel relations to the sovereign who has reigned for over half the length of the longest period of Franco-British peace since the fourteenth century. On May 6 1994 after opening the Channel Tunnel jointly with President Mitterrand of France, Her Majesty the Queen observed that Britain and France, 'for all their ages long rivalry, complement each other well, perhaps better than we realise'. It is an observation that most rulers of the two nations between 1420 and 1700 would at least have understood and one to which most would probably have assented.

<sup>61</sup> R. and I. Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy*, pp. 55–110 for a useful and entertaining account of eighteenth-century cultural relations.