

societal disinterest in the lives of disempowered, dispensable women. This work is thus both a useful historical intervention, and a vital social one. It is welcome.

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DAVID POTTER. *The Letters of Paul de Foix, French Ambassador at the Court of Elizabeth I, 1562–66*. Royal Historical Society, Camden Fifth Series 58. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. 300. \$80.00 (cloth).
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This edition of the diplomatic correspondence of Paul de Foix, by David Potter, the doyen of the history of sixteenth-century Franco-British relations, is an admirable companion to his volume of the correspondence of de Foix's immediate predecessor, Michel de Suere, published by the Society in 2014.

De Foix himself is introduced as a rather atypical ambassador from an ambiguous social background, whose early humanist education was completed with studies in law begun during the last year of the reign of François Ier. The young lawyer secured the favor of Catherine de' Medici who brought him to court as a secretary and legal advisor. Irenic in outlook, de Foix was for a time suspected of heresy but secured formal acquittal in 1561. He resumed his work for Catherine who was decisive in his appointment in January 1562 as Charles IX's ambassador to England. As Potter notes, the appointment coincided with the high point of Catherine's policy of toleration towards the Huguenots and hopes of reconciliation of the faiths. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the English ambassador in France at the time, opined that "his good disposition" towards England and his understanding of those "of the religion," i.e., evangelicals or protestants, made de Foix a useful envoy for maintaining the peace to which both sides were apparently then committed.

This edition presents 167 items of correspondence, as well as supporting documents, and supersedes Teulet's 1862 edition of de Foix's letters. Much of de Foix's correspondence deals with comparatively routine matters such as shipping and cargo disputes, allegations of privateering, legal cases in courts at Westminster or Paris, requests for safe-conducts, passports, and the like. The bulk of the ambassador's letters were addressed to Catherine de' Medici, often enclosed with a short, polite, but fairly perfunctory letter to Charles IX who was only 16 years of age by the end of de Foix's mission. The ambassador wrote at times to other prominent figures in France including Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre, to various royal councilors and secretaries, not least Claude de LAubespine from whose archives much of this collection originally comes, as well as to fellow ambassadors like Jean Ebrard de Saint-Sulpice, his contemporary in Spain. The collection also includes copies of memoranda, formal responses and addresses to the English privy council, and detailed reports of audiences with the queen of England.

Potter elucidates the main diplomatic themes covered in the correspondence over the four years of de Foix's embassy. The most important of these was the outbreak of the French civil wars during his first year. The rivalry of Condé and Guise was central to that conflict, and de Foix was called upon to finesse awareness of it in England, especially at the outbreak of war with the massacre at Vassy in March 1562. There were a number of what might be called collateral disputes that year, including the seizure of French ships, the continuing detention of Antoine Duprat, seigneur de Nantouillet, and the presence in England of Huguenot agents involved in negotiating the Treaty of Hampton Court in the summer of 1562. English

intervention in the war in the autumn with the expedition to Le Havre and the subsequent attempt to use the city as a bargaining chip for Calais were at the forefront of de Foix's concerns into the following year.

Elizabeth I's relations with her cousin Mary Queen of Scots and her own marriage negotiations with France and the Habsburgs also occupied a good deal of his time in 1564–6. Items of this correspondence have been noted before, most recently by Estelle Paranque in her study of Elizabeth's relations with the Valois (*Elizabeth I of England Through Valois Eyes: Power, Representation and Diplomacy in the Reign of the Queen, 1558–1588* [2019]), and by Susan Doran in her studies of Elizabeth's relations with Catherine de' Medici and of the English queen's marriage negotiations (see 'Elizabeth I and Catherine de' Medici', in *The Contending Kingdoms: France and England 1420–1700*, ed. Glenn Richardson [2008], 117–32). Yet, as Potter notes, read together in the full sequence presented here for 1565, they indicate that the general view of these proposals as a distraction to the concurrent ones with the Habsburgs may be misplaced. Judging by the detailed instructions sent to de Foix and his frequent responses to them, the French at least were serious about the prospects of a marriage treaty—or at least serious about being seen to be serious about them. The material from 1565 is the fullest of any one year during de Foix's embassy, comprising very detailed reports of frequent, complex and, one imagines, wearying encounters with Elizabeth, with Cecil and/or the council. De Foix was confronted with a seemingly endless array of conversational gambits, queries, qualifications, obfuscations, requests for clarification, genuine offers, and disingenuous requests or accusations. These meetings often lasted for hours at a time, sometimes into the night, and on at least one occasion, Cecil called on the ambassador as early as 8.00am when Elizabeth demanded an answer to some point in the discussions. De Foix himself may have had little time for saints, but he must frequently have needed the patience of one. The tone of his many letters to Cecil is usually friendly and what we might today call cordially “professional” amidst the array of events with which both men had to deal. Each evidently had a high regard for the other as the representative of his sovereign. De Foix usually signed himself in letters to Cecil as “votre bon,” or “votre Meilleur” and “plus affectioné amy.”

The letters and memoranda also contain a wealth of incidental information about prominent, although not always leading, members of the regimes of England, France, and Scotland. De Foix was observant but judicious in his remarks, and the correspondence gives a good sense of the varied roles and personal qualities required of a successful sixteenth-century ambassador. His subsequent career in royal service was grounded on the experience of this mission. This volume's Introduction, helpful references, and Appendices all help to make it another important contribution by David Potter to making available French primary sources. It is one made to the same high standards of historical and editorial expertise for which he has long rightly been renowned.

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BRYNLEY F. ROBERTS. *Edward Llwyd c.1660–1709, Naturalist, Antiquary, Philologist*. Scientists of Wales Series. Cardiff: University Press of Wales, 2022. Pp. 304. \$21.00 (paper). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.194

Brynley F. Roberts's *Edward Llwyd* exemplifies what a career-long fascination with an historical subject can accomplish. Roberts, emeritus professor of Welsh at Swansea University and