The English Clerical Diplomats, 1327-1461

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THE ENGLISH CLERICAL DIPLOMATS, 1327-1461

by

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VITA

The author, Mary Smoley Blust, is the daughter of Albert and Corrine (Mathieu) Smoley. She was born on January 14, 1943 in Chicago, Illinois.

Her elementary education was obtained at Arthur E. Canty Grammar School, Chicago, Illinois, and secondary education at Charles P. Steinmetz High School, Chicago, Illinois, where she was graduated in 1961.

In January 1961, she entered the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and in August 1965, received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in social studies education. Each year while in attendance at the University of Illinois, she received college honors and graduated with honors in Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In September 1965, she was granted an assistantship at the University of Cincinnati. While in attendance, she was elected as a member of Phi Alpha Theta. In June 1967, she was awarded a Master of Arts in medieval history.

From September 1967 to January 1968, she taught seventh and eighth grade, first at South View Junior High School in Danville, Illinois, and then at McKinley Upper Grade Center in Chicago, Illinois. From January 1969 to
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In June 1972, she began a doctoral program in medieval history at Loyola University of Chicago. She received a teaching assistantship in September 1972 and 1973 and a Schmitt Dissertation Fellowship in September 1974.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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CPR, Edw. III

CPR, Ric. II

CPR, Hen. IV

CPR, Hen. V

CPR, Hen. VI

DNB

Du Cange

Foedera, Holmes

Foedera, R. C.

Mirot
Léon Mirot and Eugène Déprez, eds. "Les ambassades anglaises pendant la Guerre de Cent Ans." Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes 59 (1898):550-77; 60 (1899):177-214; 61 (1900):20-58. All accounts have been revised in light of the corrections made by Alfred Larson in "English Embassies during the Hundred Years War." English Historical Review 55 (July 1940):423-31.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In an 1887 article in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, Frantz Funck-Brentano brought attention to the religious character of medieval diplomacy. He said that throughout the middle ages, and especially during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, the medieval centuries par excellence, diplomacy was religious in character because religion was the sole thread which bound western society together.\(^1\) He defended his thesis by showing that diplomatic negotiations were frequently conducted under the auspices of the papacy or a church council, that they took place at religious locations and in religious buildings, that they were intertwined with religious ceremonies, and that they were conducted by clerics. Going into more detail, he said:

Bishops were placed at the head of embassies. When the deputation was of little importance, clerics were always found in the numbers of

\(^1\) Frantz Funck-Brentano, "Caractère religieux de la diplomatie du Moyen Âge," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 1 (1887): 115. Other historians have elaborated on Brentano's thesis. In his 1954 publication *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston, 1971), pp. 17-18, Garrett Mattingly states that medieval diplomacy was guided by a body of international law. This law was based on the belief that the West was united by a common religion, Christianity.

the ambassadors. Sometimes all the ambassadors were clerical."

The diplomats, who contributed to making medieval diplomacy religious in character, will be the subject treated in the following pages. However, the group of clerical diplomats under consideration will be only those who served England during the years from 1327 to 1461. These years coincide with the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI and with the complex diplomacy of the Hundred Years' War. The goals of the study are: to determine the degree of clerical influence in English diplomacy; to describe the general characteristics of the clerics who became career diplomats; and to examine individually the careers of the men who were most actively involved in English diplomacy during the Hundred Years' War. Before such a study can be undertaken, three preliminary problems must be solved: pertinent source material must be identified; basic terms must be defined; and the methods of analysis must be selected.

The source material pertinent to a study on the English clerical diplomats from 1327 to 1461 falls into two categories: that which identifies the English clerical diplomats and describes both generally and specifically the nature of their diplomatic service; and that which provides background material on the lives of English clerical diplomats. The sources which identify the English clerical diplomats and describe their role in diplomacy also fall into two groups: official documents and narrative sources. Because diplomacy inherently involves the relations between two or more entities, not only England but also the parties with whom that realm negotiated, produced such records. Of these sources, documentary and narrative, domestic and foreign, the official English documents yield the most information about the identity and role of clerics in English diplomacy. These documents originated in the English Chancery, Exchequer, and Privy Council.

The records of the English Chancery are more informative than those of the Exchequer and Privy Council. From

4 Before the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War, the Wardrobe frequently prepared the most secretive diplomatic documents and authenticated them with the privy seal. These letters prepared by the Wardrobe were not, as a rule, enrolled. During the Hundred Years' War, the privy seal became a more impersonal instrument. This seal was placed in the hands of a separate individual and his office became the third great office of state. The Office of the Privy Seal did not maintain its own records, and a warrant dated 1386 indicates that its records were kept by Chancery. Lucas, 1: 307; Guide to the Public Record Office, rev. to 1960, 3 vols. (London, 1963), 2:237-38.
1199, most of the documents resulting from English diplomacy were issued as letters from the Chancery at which they were enrolled. These letters deal with a variety of subjects relating to diplomacy, but several categories of letters can be delineated. Three of these categories are the littere de statu, littere recommendatorie, and the littere requisitorie. The littere de statu were issued solely to acquaint the addressee with the state of health of the sender and ask for similar information in return. The littere recommendatorie varied widely in contents. Many of them were issued on behalf of one of the king's friends or subjects, who was about to embark on a journey to or through a foreign country. Some of these letters asked the head of state for unspecified assistance or for a safe-conduct and passage through his dominions. Other littere recommendatorie were addressed to the king's relatives or to members of the court asking for good offices on a variety of subjects. Having a less friendly tone than the two previous types of letters, the littere requisitorie were issued to demand redress on behalf of an English subject whose goods had been unlawfully seized abroad or at sea. All of these types of diplomatic letters were sent closed and sealed with the great seal or sometimes with the privy or signet seal. Such letters were sealed close

because they were addressed to only one individual. 6

The previous letters are usually of only supplementary interest because they give only information which sets the background for specific diplomatic missions. Of more importance, are the chancery letters of credence and letters of procuration because they list the individual members of an embassy and state its purpose. Basically the letter of credence, which was sealed close, was sent to a foreign ruler asking him to believe the oral message which he was to hear from the king's envoys as if he had received it from the king's own mouth. In basic form, then, the letters of credence gave only the power to deliver a message, but not the power to negotiate, and therefore they are really of no interest to the study of diplomacy, the formal negotiating process. However, the rulers of Europe did not agree on the nature of the letter of credence, and some found that letters of credence conveyed sufficient power to carry on negotiations. 8 The English kings sometimes issued letters of credence as letters patent, with the seal attached to the bottom so that the letter could be opened by several individuals without damage to the seal. Such letters of credence gave individuals the power to deliver an oral message and the power to conduct negotiations, which were most frequently

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6 Ibid., pp. 30-31.
7 Ibid., p. 27.
8 Ibid., p. 39.
short-term negotiations.\textsuperscript{9} Also letters of credence were
given to envoys who did the preparatory work for a later
meeting of an embassy of men who had the power to conduct
long-term negotiations.\textsuperscript{10} Because the letters of credence
did, upon occasion, give the power to negotiate, they are im-
portant in identifying clerical diplomats and determining
the nature of their assignments.

Of most importance for determining the personnel and
purpose of diplomatic missions are letters of procuration
issued by Chancery which gave full power to negotiate. All
were in the form of letters patent made out in the king's
name and sealed with the great seal in natural wax, which was
appended normally on a tongue, or sometimes a tag. The con-
tents of the procurations varied from one mission to the
next; some were more general than others, but in one respect
all were alike. They all contained two essential clauses:
one named the envoys, set a quorum, and defined the type of
business which they were empowered to transact; in the other,
the clause \textit{de rato}, the king promised to ratify the agreement
concluded by his envoys. It was not unusual for the same en-
voys to receive a whole series of procurations, each of
them dealing with one particular aspect of the proposed nego-
tiations. Sometimes alternative procurations were given to
envoys in the hope that at least one of them might prove

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid., p. 29, Cuttino, \textit{English Diplomatic Adminis-
tration}, p. 41.

\textsuperscript{10}Chaplais, "English Diplomatic Documents," p. 41.
acceptable to the other side. In some cases, diplomats would be sent abroad with the double mission of delivering an oral message and negotiating an agreement. Then they would receive a separate letter of credence and one of procuration.

Associated with these instruments which commissioned individuals to deliver oral messages and to negotiate are letters of instruction. Having received letters of credence, messengers might also receive a copy of the message they were to deliver orally. The document thus drawn up was in fact a contract between the king and his envoys in which they promised to deliver the royal message without adding or omitting any detail of it. Once having received letters of procuration, diplomats might also be given a form of detailed memorandum defining the limits beyond which they were not allowed to go in bargaining with the foreign ruler's representatives. Also taking the form of a contract, the instructions ensured the king that his ambassadors would not agree to conditions which might prove unacceptable to him.

In addition to the foregoing chancery documents which give information on the preparation for specific diplomatic missions are the articles of agreement and letters of ratification which describe the results of specific negotiations.

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11Ibid., pp. 42-43.
12Ibid., p. 29.
13Ibid., pp. 35-37.
14Ibid., pp. 43-44.
Once an agreement had been reached by the diplomats, a joint text, known as the articles of agreement or indenture, was issued explaining the results of the negotiations. Either each delegation issued letters patent in the names of its members, gave them to the other side, and received in exchange similar documents; or duplicate sets of the same letters patent were issued in the joint names of both delegations. Once the indenture had been exchanged, the envoys returned home and requested its confirmation. If their principal approved of their work, he would ratify it in his own name by a letter patent. 15

Unlike the records of Chancery which take so many different forms, the exchequer records deal exclusively with the receipt and payment of royal funds. Payment of diplomatic officials came within the scope of the Exchequer through the Westminster Ordinance of 1324 which ordered all envoys of high rank and other persons sent on diplomatic missions to account to the Exchequer. 16 Consequently, the exchequer records provide detailed information about the payment of clerical diplomats. However, in entering these payments, exchequer clerks recorded a great deal of incidental information about the personnel and nature of specific diplomatic missions which fills in many gaps left by chancery records. The two most important sets of exchequer records for

15 Ibid., pp. 45-46.
16 Cuttino, English Diplomatic Administration, p. 166.
information about the activities of the clerical diplomats are the Foreign Accounts Various and the Foreign Accounts Enrolled of the Upper Exchequer. Complementing these rolls are the Issue Rolls, also known as the Pells of Issue, of the Exchequer of Receipt.

The Foreign Accounts Various are the particulars of the ambassadors' expenses. When ambassadors returned from missions, they brought to the Upper Exchequer rolls of particulars of their accounts, entitled particule compote, which, with all the supporting vouchers, were enclosed in leather bags. From this, the accounts themselves, the compote proper, were drawn up and examined by the auditors whose names appeared at the head of the accounts. After examination, entries were made on the Rolls of Foreign Account, on the lord treasurer's remembrancer side of the Exchequer. The Foreign Accounts Various are of more importance than the Foreign Accounts Enrolled because they include details about the dates of departure, arrival, itinerary, transportation costs, wages, and purpose of the ambassadors' missions. On the other hand, the Foreign Accounts Enrolled are only summaries of the details of the missions.

Of less importance than the Foreign Accounts Various and the Foreign Accounts Enrolled are the Issue Rolls of the Exchequer of Receipt. The Issue Rolls or Pells of Issue contain entries of all payments made out by the Exchequer of Receipt.

\[17\] Guide to the Public Record Office, 1:50.
Receipt. Before departing on missions, ambassadors went to the Upper Exchequer to obtain orders requesting the Exchequer of Receipt to prepay them for anticipated expenses and wages. Having secured a Writ of Liberate, Bill of Wardrobe, Mandate of Privy Seal, or Writ of the Great Seal, ambassadors presented their orders to pay to the barons and the treasurer of the Exchequer of Receipt. These officials paid out the demanded sums and recorded these prepayments on the Issue Rolls. Having returned from missions abroad, ambassadors once again received payments which were recorded on the Issue Rolls. After ambassadors had presented the particulars of their accounts to the Upper Exchequer, and these had been enrolled, the barons at the Exchequer of Account examined the ambassadors' accounts. The barons, then prepared writs ordering the Exchequer of Receipt to pay ambassadors the amounts owed to them. Finally ambassadors took their writs to the Exchequer of Receipt where they were paid, and records of these payments were made on the Issue Rolls. The entries in the Issue Rolls not only give information about payments but also some information about the details of ambassadorial missions.

The last set of English documentary sources to identify the clerical diplomats and provide information on their activities are those of the Privy Council. Though some

18Ibid., p. 98.
20Ibid., p. 331.
scattered records of the Privy Council do exist for the early years of the Hundred Years' War, the proceedings of the Privy Council were not recorded with any consistency until 1386.\textsuperscript{21} Within these records are instructions given to specifically named ambassadors as well as warrants for prepayment and final payment.\textsuperscript{22} As the Privy Council assumed a greater advisory role, it began to discuss foreign affairs. If its decisions had the consent of the king, then the council issued instructions to ambassadors in its own name, and these instructions were as binding as the previously mentioned instructions of the king.\textsuperscript{23}

As stated before, the official documents of the English government are the most valuable tools for identifying the clerical diplomats and describing their role in diplomacy. However, several other categories of sources do supplement the records of the Chancery, Exchequer, and Privy Council. The countries with which England's clerical diplomats negotiated had similar governmental institutions and similar records. Of particular value in this category is the correspondence of the papacy with the English monarchy. Narrative sources, both English and foreign, vary greatly in the amount of information they provide. The chronicles are of little value because they seldom mention diplomatic

\textsuperscript{21}James Baldwin, The King's Council in England during the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1913), p. 373.


\textsuperscript{23}Cuttino, English Diplomatic Administration, p. 147.
events and rarely give any details about the ones they do record. Of far greater use are the diplomatic journals and protocols that begin to appear in the reign of Edward III but exist in greater abundance for the reigns of the Lancastrian kings. These narrative sources describe the daily events of various embassies plus the specific roles that individual English ambassadors played in these embassies.24 These domestic and foreign, documentary and narrative sources identify the English clerical diplomats and describe both their general and specific roles in diplomacy.

The primary sources that provide background material on the lives of the English clerical diplomats are so varied that they can hardly be enumerated in such a summary. However, various guides are of particular use in discovering

these diversified primary sources. These are *The Dictionary of National Biography*, *The Biographical Register of the University of Oxford*, *The Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge*, *A Survey of Dominicans in England*, and the *Dictionnaire de biographie française*. Many county and diocesan histories also serve as valuable guides to biographical primary sources. From such guides, primary information can be found on the lives of the clerics who became career diplomats and those who were most active in diplomacy from 1327 to 1461.

Now that pertinent source material has been identified, the terms cleric and diplomat must be defined. Formal definition of these terms is necessary so that only those individuals who clearly fall within the definition of a diplomat and a cleric will be selected to form the total population of the study. A preliminary survey of how these terms can be defined indicates that medieval men used them in different ways at different times. Consequently after

French embassy's journal describing the July 1445 Anglo-French negotiations.

surveying the primary and secondary sources on this problem of definition, a personal judgment must be made as to which definition is most appropriate for the study.

In contemporary society, a diplomat is defined as one skilled in the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations for the attainment of mutually satisfactory terms. This definition comes into question when it is applied to the medieval diplomat in light of diplomatic practice during the middle ages. Firstly, nations, political units recognizing no superior, did not exist for all practical purposes in the middle ages. What did exist was a confused system of overlapping political, economic, religious, and social jurisdictions, and the rulers of each of these claimed the right to dispatch diplomatic envoys. Consequently before the term diplomat can be defined in the later medieval sense, diplomatic principals, those entitled to dispatch diplomats, must be determined. Secondly, many different types of diplomatic agents were associated with medieval diplomacy. It is necessary to decide which agents were directly engaged in diplomacy, the formal act of conducting negotiations.

In their fifteenth and sixteenth century writings, Bernard de Rosergio and Conrad Braun describe the confused theory and practice of diplomatic principals in the period from 1327 to 1461. Conrad Braun, writing in the sixteenth century, utilized the scholastic method to compose his *De Legationibus*. He marshalled a host of accepted early
medieval authorities on canon and civil law to prove that the ruler of any state could send out embassies. He went on to define a ruler as anyone who held public office, which meant that the mayor of a city, as well as a king, could send an embassy.

Bernard de Rosergio wrote his *Ambaxiator Brevilogus* one hundred years before Braun, but he held a more modern view on the subject of diplomatic principals. Instead of relying on antiquated authorities, he based his treatise on personal experience with the diplomatic practices of his day. Rosergio held many offices at the Roman curia, where diplomacy had reached its most advanced state. By the fifteenth century, the papacy generally recognized the embassies of only the greater princes, though the popes did make exceptions upon occasion. Rosergio reflected this position in his treatise, and he stated that only the greater princes had the right to exchange diplomatic agents.²⁶

During the time of the Hundred Years' War, men were moving away from Braun's conservative view towards Rosergio's more modern concepts on diplomacy. However, two centuries would elapse before the countries of northern Europe would adopt the purely modern concept that the rulers of sovereign states were the only principals that could legitimately engage in diplomacy.²⁷ For the purpose of this


study, the greater princes of Europe will be considered legitimate diplomatic principals, those entitled to dispatch diplomatic agents. Consequently only those clerics sent out to negotiate by the king of England will be included in the study, while clerics sent out by men like John of Gaunt will be excluded.

As a diplomatic principal, the king of England dispatched many different kinds of diplomatic agents. Which of these agents were directly involved in the negotiating process? Both Mary Hill and George Cuttino have tried to deal with this problem in their studies on English diplomatic practice in the middle ages, and both have come to somewhat different conclusions. In the King's Messengers, Mary Hill says that diplomatic agents fall into two very distinct categories: the nuncius sollemnis who was a negotiator, and the nuncius who was a messenger. As the title of her work indicates, she focuses on the nuncii who constituted a regular corps of messengers and were employed on a continuing basis. The king's household provided them with food, shelter, and clothing during their years of service and cared for them during periods of illness and in old age. Both the household and exchequer accounts indicate that they were paid for several missions at one time up to about 1300, and from that point on, they were paid a regular salary. In contrast, the nuncius sollemnis was employed on an ad hoc basis. As a result, the household and exchequer accounts show that he was paid by the mission, and that he received no long-range
payments or benefits.28

The diplomatic agents described in the sources do not easily fit into Hill's system of categorization. For example, Jean Froissart described the events surrounding Bishop Henry Burghersh of Lincoln's arrival at the French court in 1337:

And the bishop of Lincoln entered the chamber of the king, greeted him and bowed before him, all the other lords following. He delivered letters to the king of France, who received them and broke the small seal, that was around them. The letters were written on parchment and fixed with a great seal that hung from them. The king looked at them for a short time and then handed them to one of his clerks to be read . . . turned to the bishop and began to smile and said: "You have done well what you came here to do. There is no point in responding to these letters. You may leave when you wish," The bishop said: "Sir, many thanks."29

At first glance, one would assume that Henry Burghersh would fall into Hill's category of the simple message-carrying nuncius. But on second thought, would he be a man to receive


grants of clothing, food, and shelter from the king's household, or be employed on a salary basis? Can a man of episcopal rank be included in the corps of men who were originally stable-boys?

In his book *English Diplomatic Administration*, George Cuttino disagrees with Hill's view, and he says that the gradation between diplomatic agents was more elaborate and more vague. He identifies four categories of diplomatic agents: ambassador, nuncius, proctor, and messenger. The ambassador was identified in the sources by a variety of titles such as nuncius sollemnis, nuncius specialis, fidelis noster, legatus, and ambaxiator. He was empowered to negotiate by receiving the previously mentioned letters of procuration; in addition, he sometimes received letters of credence besides. These instruments gave him power to represent his employer, not merely to express his point of view and to execute his wishes, but also to personify his dignity.  

According to Cuttino, the nuncius was inferior to the ambassador: he never received the power to negotiate. A private individual, who did not have the right to send an ambassador to negotiate, or a ruler, that did have the right but did not care to use it, employed the nuncius. Most of the extant records mentioning a nuncius are royal records. They indicate that rulers, who had the right to send

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ambassadors, frequently sent nuncii on diplomatic missions when only a written or oral message had to be delivered. The nuncii were authorized to do so by a letter of credence.\textsuperscript{31} Cuttino used the previously cited description of the reception of Bishop Henry Burghersh at the French court to illustrate the nuncius in his frequent message-carrying capacity.\textsuperscript{32} Though Henry Burghersh was a bishop from a noble family, he was commissioned as a nuncius simply to deliver a message because it was one of extreme importance. Within the letter he delivered, his principal, Edward III, declared war against France which led ultimately to the Hundred Years' War.

In addition to the ambassador and the nuncius, was the proctor who was originally employed to transact legal business by individuals or corporate entities.\textsuperscript{33} Finally, associated with the above, were the men who performed the function of carrying messages: cokini (inferior servants or messengers), valleti and garciones (grooms and servant-boys) sumtarii (persons in charge of pack horses), cartarii (persons in charge of carts), sartores (tailors), and falconarii (falconers).\textsuperscript{34}

Cuttino illustrates how nebulous his own categorization is when he describes the letter of credence. He says

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., pp. 129, 156.
\textsuperscript{32}Supra, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{33}Cuttino, \textit{English Diplomatic Administration}, p. 159.
\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., p. 130.
that letters of credence were given to nuncii empowering them to deliver oral or written messages; to ambassadors for the same purpose in addition to letters of procuration; and to other individuals empowering them to conduct short-term negotiations. 35 As discussed earlier, Pierre Chaplais, in his study of English diplomatic documents, agrees that the letter of credence frequently gave vague or indirect negotiating power to the nuncius. 36 Cuttino never decides whether the diplomatic agent empowered to negotiate by a letter of credence falls within the category of the ambassador or the nuncius.

Hill's and Cuttino's systems aid in identifying the diplomatic agents who were directly involved in the negotiating process. Certainly the category of the nuncius solemnnis, as described by both Hill and Cuttino, is the diplomat par excellence, and those individuals who fall into this category will automatically be included in the study. However, the nuncius, as both Hill and Cuttino see him, cannot be dismissed from the category of diplomats. Whenever the sources do indicate that a man, even though he may be called a nuncius, was given a letter of credence to conduct any type of negotiations, he will be considered a diplomat and included in the study.

Having decided who could send out a diplomat, and which diplomatic agents were directly involved in the

35Ibid., p. 156.
36Supra, p. 5.
negotiating process, the contemporary definition of a diplomat must be modified in light of medieval diplomatic practice. A medieval diplomat was a person sent out by the greater princes like the king of England; he was given power to negotiate by letters of procuration, and/or letters of credence; in negotiations, he represented the king, not only by expressing his point of view and executing his wishes, but also by personifying his dignity; he could be employed for short or long-term negotiations, but he was always employed on an ad hoc basis.37

Defining the term cleric is a somewhat less complicated problem. To do so, one need only identify its original meaning, and then see how it changed by the time of the Hundred Years' War. From the early middle ages, men used the term clericus to refer to that broad grouping of individuals who received the first tonsure and had been admitted into the service of the church.38 This broad term

37 Behrens, "Treatises on the Ambassadors," p. 260 says that it was "axiomatic that all important negotiations be conducted on an ad hoc basis. The theory of the ambassador as a representative had less interest in its legal and abstract than its personal implications. The position of the ambassador scarcely concerned them so much as the necessity for any holder of the office to reflect in his personal status, in his equipment, and even in his dress, the importance or the reverse of his employer and his mission. Consequently business had to be transacted by different types and different numbers of men, and the nature of an ambassador's mission and dignity of his master and of the court to which he was accredited had to be indicated by his social position."

included men who had proceeded to minor orders as well as those who had gone on to take holy orders. Once having received orders, the cleric expected to be given a benefice. However, the simple cleric received nothing else from his position than the privilege of being judged for all offenses by members of his own order. Evidently many clerics found the sole privilege associated with the first tonsure sufficient enough that they did not care to take any orders.39

During the chaos of the early middle ages, the church became the preserve and transmitter of learning, and the clerical status was extended to all students. Hence the word clericus came to be associated with an educated person.40 Those clerics who completed the courses of studies at the medieval universities were addressed by the term master.41 Hastings Rashdall points out that, first at Oxford and then at Paris, the custom developed of using the title of master for those who had completed a course of study in arts and grammar, and calling those who had completed the curricula of the superior faculties doctor.42 However, both


40 DuCange, 2 (C-D):393. "Clerici: Qui in literis imbuti erant, viri literati ac docti, quod clericos potissimum literatura ac eruditio spectaret."

41 Ibid., 4 (L-O):183. "Magistratus: ad magistri seu doctoris gradum ascensus."

terms, master and doctor, indicated that a man thus designated was, because of his education, in all probability a cleric.

Because clerics had a monopoly on learning, medieval monarchs readily drew upon the ranks of the clergy to staff their households and departments of state. As a consequence, the term *clericus* came to also mean someone who devoted himself to the mechanical skills of copying, writing, and bookkeeping. By the high middle ages, therefore, the term *clericus* referred to a man, who had, at the very least, received the first tonsure, who was probably educated, and who could be employed in royal service. As a consequence, when the documents refer to a cleric employed by a king, this cleric was almost certainly a churchman and an educated man.

By the fourteenth century, social conditions had begun to change with the rise of the educated layman. In England, laymen obtained an education in the new schools for common lawyers in London. During the reign of Edward III, these educated laymen started to demand a share in government posts. Therefore by the fourteenth century, the term


44 Tout, "English Civil Service," pp. 194-95.
clericus did not always mean that a man had received the first tonsure. He might have been a layman who was employed in the repetitious work of the Chancery, Exchequer, or Wardrobe. However, the traditional pattern of recruitment died slowly, and the lay clerk did not come to dominate the government until the time of the Tudors.45

During the Hundred Years' War, then, the term clericus still generally meant a clergyman. Therefore for the purposes of this study on the English clerical diplomats from 1327 to 1461, clericus will be taken to mean a churchman. Moreover, only those diplomats, as previously defined, who are described by the sources as being clerics, will be included in the total population of the study.

Having defined basic terms, and having identified pertinent source material, an appropriate methodology must be chosen for analyzing the data found in the sources about the English clerical diplomats. Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used in the past to write collective biographies. The historians, who have utilized qualitative methods, back up their generalizations about the group of men under study with a few pieces of extant evidence or with selected pieces which are considered particularly illuminating. The historians, who have employed quantitative methods in writing collective biographies, use statistical

methods to evaluate every piece of evidence that is available on the individuals being studied. In effect, the quantitative method is only suitable for collective biographies when numerous pieces of evidence are extant and similar enough to be grouped.

The application of quantitative methodology in writing collective biographies was first popularized by Frederick Jackson Turner and his students about the turn of the century. However, the quantitative method fell into disrepute among historians about 1920. Many claimed that quantification dehumanized history by yielding personal judgment to the determination of numbers. By the mid-sixties with the development of the computer sciences, historians once again found that the application of quantitative methods in writing collective biographies was respectable. 46 Following this trend, Gerald Aylmer published The King's Servants in which he used quantitative methods to analyze the men who composed the English civil service during the reign of Charles I. Within his preface, Aylmer points out that historians have failed to study the personnel of English governmental institutions and have failed to utilize quantitative methods of doing so. 47

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According to contemporary historical thought, the quantitative method should be used in writing collective biographies whenever possible. Consequently in determining the influence of clerics on English diplomacy and the general characteristics of the clerical career diplomats, the quantitative method will be employed to analyze the pertinent data which exists in abundance. However, in examining the individual careers of the clerics most active in English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461, the qualitative method will be used because of the unique nature of the data.
CHAPTER II

CLERICAL INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH DIPLOMACY

Frantz Funck-Brentano's contention that clerics greatly influenced medieval embassies has been accepted by later historians who have considered the diplomatic personnel of medieval rulers. In his 1967 study, The Office of the Ambassador in the Middle Ages, Donald E. Queller agreed that the church provided medieval rulers with a plentiful supply of men for diplomatic service.¹ These rulers, with the advice of their councils, used clerics as ambassadors for several reasons. Clerics, as a group, were far better educated than any of the other elements of society. Because of their education, many served as administrators for both the church and state and thereby gained substantial experience in government. All clerics, even those who did not have a university education, knew Latin, which became the language of diplomatic intercourse. Moreover, clerics functioned much better than laymen in a diplomatic situation that was pervaded by religion; where diplomacy was intertwined with religious ceremonies, conducted in religious buildings, and overseen by papal and conciliar representatives. Also clerics could travel more easily due

to the special protection extended to men of their status. Lastly clerics could be rewarded for diplomatic service by promotion to ecclesiastical offices rather than by land grants from the royal domain. Once secular rulers had given benefices to clerics, they could make even greater demands of these churchmen by threatening to have them moved to poorer and more distant livings or by requiring residence. For these reasons, throughout the middle ages, the kings of England as well as the other rulers of Christendom regularly and frequently commissioned clerics to the embassies they dispatched. As a result, clerics played a very important role in medieval diplomacy.

The period from 1327 to 1461, which coincides with the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI and with the Hundred Years' War, comes at the end of the middle ages when the medieval synthesis was beginning to dissolve. With increasing frequency, laymen obtained the knowledge and skills which allowed them to compete with clerics for government offices. In view of changing educational patterns, did Edward, Richard, and the Lancastrian kings extensively employ clerics in the complex diplomacy of the Hundred Years' War? Did clerics continue to influence diplomacy to the degree that Funck-Brentano and Queller contend they did throughout the more general period of the middle ages?

During the years from 1327 to 1461, clerics
continued to influence English diplomacy by the numbers that they contributed to individual embassies. However, their impact goes beyond this numerical participation during the period under consideration. By serving on embassies to negotiate with both secular and ecclesiastical lords about a variety of matters, the clerical ambassadors influenced the whole range of English diplomacy. Within individual embassies, their influence was enhanced by the diplomatic skills they provided. These skills were initially obtained through their university studies and were enriched through the experience gained by repeated diplomatic service. The clerical diplomats further influenced the direction of events within individual embassies by the prestige they contributed due to their elevated ecclesiastical rank. Lastly their influence was further heightened by the leadership role that they assumed on so many embassies. Because of these factors, the influence of clerical diplomats goes far beyond the numbers that participated in individual embassies.

The degree to which clerics influenced English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461 by their numerical participation can be established by two methods: firstly by determining how many embassies had clerical participants, and secondly by determining the proportion of clerics within these embassies.² Between 1327 and 1461, the English kings dispatched 629 embassies to negotiate with the princes of

²All figures have been rounded off to the nearest decimal point.
Europe. At least one cleric participated in 491 or 78 percent of these embassies. Yet in only 29 percent of the 491 embassies to which any churchmen were commissioned did clerical membership exceed 50 percent. The clergy, then, played a role on many different embassies, but the proportion of clerics within any given embassy was small.

By breaking these statistics down according to reigns, changes in clerical participation during the period from 1327 to 1461 can be determined. Table 1 shows the percentage of embassies having clerical participants in the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI. This percentage varies only three points from Edward III's reign to Richard II's and from Richard II's to Henry IV's; it increases from Henry IV's reign to Henry V's and from Henry V's to Henry VI's.

Table 2 shows the percentage of embassies with a clerical membership exceeding 50 percent for the same reigns. This percentage decreases from Edward III's reign to Richard II's and from Richard II's to Henry IV's; but it too, increases from Henry IV's reign to Henry V's and from Henry V's to Henry VI's.

From the reign of Edward III to that of Richard II and to that of Henry IV, clerics consistently served on a wide range of embassies, but their proportional membership

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3 See Appendix A.

4 See Appendixes B and C.
### TABLE 1

**PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-61)</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2

**PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES WITH A CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP OF 51 PERCENT OR MORE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-61)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

5. Table 1 is based on data compiled in Appendix A.

6. Table 2 is based on the data compiled in Appendixes B and C.
in embassies declined. From the reign of Henry IV to that of Henry V and that of Henry VI, they served on far more embassies, and their proportional membership in embassies increased. The declining percentage of clerical membership in individual embassies from one reign to another from 1327 to 1413 can easily be attributed to the increasing availability of educated laymen for diplomatic service. This trend can also be attributed to the increasingly popular attitude that clerics should not hold secular offices. Such an attitude was not only propagated by reform-minded clerics like John Wyclif but also by laymen who wished to have a greater share in appointments to royal offices. These same attitudes resulted in the purge of clerics from secular offices in 1341 and 1371 and could not help but influence the composition of English embassies.

Not so easily explained is the increase in clerical participation in English embassies from reign to reign beginning in 1413 and continuing to 1461. This increase could possibly be attributed to an increase in the number of English embassies dispatched to treat with the papacy or to participate in the Councils of Pisa, Constance, Basel, and Florence-Ferrara. The English kings tended to employ clerics on such diplomatic assignments. Of the thirty-five embassies dispatched to the papacy or the various church councils, only one lacked a clerical member, and 71 percent of those having clerical participants had a clerical membership exceeding 50 percent (see Table 3).
### TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE OF CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP ON EMBASSIES TO THE PAPACY OR THE CHURCH COUNCILS, 1327-1461

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Clerics in Embassy</th>
<th>Number of Embassies</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-100</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix G.
If the Anglo-papal and Anglo-conciliar embassies are removed from consideration, of the 594 embassies remaining, 77 percent had at least one clerical member. Table 4 shows the percentage of non-papal and non-conciliar embassies having clerical participants in the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI. This percentage varies only three points from Edward III's reign to Richard II's and from Richard II's to Henry IV's; it increases from Henry VI's reign to Henry V's and from Henry V's to Henry VI's.

Table 5 shows the percentage of non-papal and non-conciliar embassies with a clerical membership exceeding 50 percent for the same reigns. This percentage also decreases from Edward III's reign to Richard II's and from Richard II's to Henry IV's; but it increases from Henry IV's reign to Henry V's and from Henry V's to Henry VI's. Both sets of statistics indicate that, when papal and conciliar embassies are removed from consideration, clerical participation in embassies still increases significantly from the reign of Henry IV to that of Henry V and to that of Henry VI. Consequently the increase in clerical ambassadorial service cannot be attributed to an increase in Anglo-papal and Anglo-conciliar diplomacy which traditionally called for the dispatch of embassies that were largely staffed with clerics.

The greater participation of clerics in English embassies during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI can be
### TABLE 4
PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS (EXCLUDING PAPAL AND CONCILIAR EMBASSIES)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-1461)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES WITH A CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP OF 51 PERCENT OR MORE (EXCLUDING PAPAL AND CONCILIAR EMBASSIES)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-61)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8 Table 4 is based on data compiled in Appendix D.

9 Table 5 is based on data compiled in Appendixes E and F.
attributed to two factors: the demand for English ambassadors who spoke Latin; and the reversion to medieval patterns of government. Throughout the period from 1327 to 1461, both French and English embassies had to have some members who could write in Latin and could draft diplomatic documents in Latin. However, most members did not have to know how to speak Latin because both sides could easily converse in French. By the fifteenth century, fewer and fewer English diplomats, both lay and clerical, could speak French. French had been very slowly losing ground as the spoken language of the English nobility until 1362. According to James Wylie, a 1362 act of Parliament accelerated this trend to such a degree that by the fifteenth century very few Englishmen spoke French. Due to this linguistic change, English diplomats could no longer converse with French ambassadors in their own language, and they had to rely on Latin as the commonly spoken language of diplomacy. In 1404, English diplomats first requested that Latin be used in negotiations with the French. The number of such requests grew during Henry V's reign, and diplomatic language became a matter of contention for several embassies.


which Henry VI dispatched to negotiate with the French.\textsuperscript{12}

As Latin became the spoken language in Anglo-French diplomacy, the need for Latin-speaking diplomats increased, and English clerics, as a group, had a far greater knowledge of Latin than laymen. Despite the growth in the number of educated laymen, most of them had been educated in grammar schools and at the Inns of Court which did not emphasize Latin as a spoken language. Consequently clerics provided a far better source of Latin-speaking ambassadors, and the new demand for their services partially accounts for the greater participation of clerics in English embassies during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI.

Also underlying the diplomacy of the first half of the fifteenth century is a reversal in the trend toward governmental centralization and departmentalization which reached its high point during the reign of Richard II. As the great lords of England vied for power and control over the monarchy, many of the most advanced departments of state like Chancery, Privy Seal, and the Exchequer declined, and the Signet Office even disappeared for a time.\textsuperscript{13} As these more progressive secular institutions declined, the Lancastrian kings turned to the more stable institution of the church to provide them with capable and loyal servants as it had for their forefathers. In diplomacy, this meant that

\textsuperscript{12}Infra, p. 417.

Henry IV, and to a greater degree, Henry V and Henry VI tended to rely on clerics more than laymen for their ambassadorial personnel.

The degree to which clerics influenced English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461 goes beyond their numerical participation in embassies. As has already been stated, clerics took part in 77 percent of the embassies dispatched to treat with parties other than the pope or the church councils. In other words, the range of their ambassadorial service extended far beyond missions to Rome, Avignon, Pisa, Constance, Basel, and Florence. As medieval kings, Edward, Richard, and the three Lancastrians saw nothing strange or objectionable about dispatching clerics to treat with secular princes. Clerics were the only substantial source of educated diplomats, and medieval diplomacy was religious in terms of procedure and ultimate goals. As indicated in Table 6, England's clerical diplomats were frequently commissioned to embassies dispatched to France, the Low Countries, Scotland, the principalities and towns of Germany, and the kingdoms of the Iberian peninsula, thereby playing a substantial role in the total spectrum of English diplomacy.

Clerics further influenced English diplomacy by the diplomatic talent they brought to individual embassies. The clerical diplomats were generally university educated and had accumulated diplomatic expertise through repeated ambassadorial service because they had studied law at one of the great medieval universities. Of the 289 clerics who
**TABLE 6**

RANGE OF CLERICAL AMBASSADORIAL ASSIGNMENTS, 1327-1461

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Percent of Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Countries</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principalities &amp; Towns of Germany</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papacy &amp; Councils</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 6 is based on the data compiled in Appendix G.
participated in English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461, the educational backgrounds of the seventy-one most active clerical diplomats were studied. Of these seventy-one clerical diplomats, sixty-two or 87 percent are known to have had some university training. Eighty-seven percent of the university educated clerical diplomats received all of their training in England, and most attended Oxford as shown in Table 7.

Like other English students during the Hundred Years' War, the clerics who became diplomats preferred to study at home in England. By 1300, Oxford had become a first-rate university, equal in quality to any of the older continental institutions. Furthermore in England, they could study in a peaceful atmosphere without fear of incurring the wrath of the French student nations.

Eighty-eight percent of the clerical diplomats studied law, either civil law, canon law, or both (see Table 8). Within the various curricula of the universities, 73 percent progressed all the way to the doctorate as shown in Table 9.

A university education, particularly in law, prepared clerics for diplomacy. Clerics learned how to debate in Latin and how to draft documents in proper legal Latin

15 See Appendix H for the names of these clerics. Two hundred eighty-nine individual clerics participated in English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461. The educational backgrounds of the seventy-one most active clerical diplomats have been studied.
### TABLE 7
**UNIVERSITIES ATTENDED BY THE CLERICAL DIPLOMATS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Diplomats</th>
<th>Percent of Clerical Diplomats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxford (only)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge (only)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford &amp; Cambridge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford &amp; Foreign</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 8
**UNIVERSITY CURRICULA FOLLOWED BY THE CLERICAL DIPLOMATS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Diplomats</th>
<th>Percent of Clerical Diplomats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canon Law.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Law.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon &amp; Civil Law.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 9
**DEGREE OBTAINED BY THE CLERICAL DIPLOMATS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Diplomats</th>
<th>Percent of Clerical Diplomats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License (Superior Faculty)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's (Superior Faculty)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
terminology. Of greater importance, training in civil and canon law introduced clerics to the conceptual framework upon which medieval international law was based.\textsuperscript{16} In total, such training enhanced the role that they could play on individual embassies and in diplomatic events in general.

The diplomatic skills that clerics brought to so many English embassies from 1327 to 1461 were not solely a product of their university education. Many of the clerical diplomats also contributed an expertise that could only be acquired through repeated ambassadorial assignment. Of the 289 clerics who received ambassadorial commissions from 1327 to 1461, 25 percent served on five or more embassies (see Table 10). Not only did clerics repeatedly serve as diplomats, but they were repeatedly dispatched to negotiate with the same party.\textsuperscript{17} Because they acquired substantial experience in dealing with a particular party, their opinions carried even more weight within any given embassy.

Those clerics who served on ten or more embassies were some of the most influential men in English diplomacy because they were career diplomats. This term, however, must be used with caution and with two definite qualifications in mind. Firstly the career diplomat was never a

\textsuperscript{16}According to Garrett Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy, p. 21, this uncodified law, which was accepted by the respublica Christiana, was based on Roman, canon, and customary law.

\textsuperscript{17}Lucas, "Machinery of Diplomatic Intercourse," p. 318.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Embassies</th>
<th>Number of Clerics</th>
<th>Percent of Clerics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- 4</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- 9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 is based on the data compiled in Appendix H.
resident ambassador during the period under consideration because all embassy assignments were made on an ad hoc basis. Secondly the career diplomat did not see a diplomatic commission as an end in itself. To him, ambassadorial service was a means of advancement to permanent offices, both royal and ecclesiastical. As long as ambassadorial commissions were issued on an ad hoc basis, they were viewed in this way by the career diplomat. Keeping in mind these two qualifications, the term career diplomat can be applied to at least thirty-three clerics who served in England's nascent foreign service from 1327 to 1461. During this period eight clerics, John Stokes, Walter Skirlaw, John Sheppey, John Kemp, John Gilbert, William Bateman, John Catryk, and John Offord, had diplomatic careers comprised of twenty or more embassies; twenty-five others had careers of ten to nineteen missions. These thirty-three clerics, who came to be career diplomats in England's foreign service, perfected their diplomatic skills with each additional mission. As their experience complemented and enhanced their university training, they more than any of the other clerical diplomats influenced English diplomacy from 1327 to 1461.

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19 See Appendix H for the names of these twenty-five clerics. These plus the eight already named comprise the total number of clerical career diplomats.

20 The clerical career diplomats were included in the study on education in Tables 8-10.
Clerics' potential for influencing events within the context of an individual embassy was not only determined by their educational preparation and diplomatic experience but also by the prestige that their ecclesiastical rank provided (see Table 11). Of the 964 ambassadorial commissions issued to clerics, 35 percent were given to churchmen who had been elevated to the episcopacy. Sixty-five percent of those clerics receiving ambassadorial assignments were not of episcopal rank but nonetheless were men of high ecclesiastical position. Many were canons in the very prestigious cathedral chapters of York, Lincoln, and Salisbury, and some even held important offices within these chapters such as dean, chancellor, treasurer, and archdeacon. Of the few monks and friars who participated in diplomacy, most were abbots or priors from such noted monasteries as St. Albans and Rievaulx. Of those clerical diplomats who were not designated as holding any particular benefice or being a member of any religious order, most were referred to as clerics who had obtained a university degree; very few were listed as simple clerics. Due to the importance of their ecclesiastical rank, the clerical diplomats had great influence within the individual embassies.

Though as a group, the clerics commissioned to English embassies were of a high ecclesiastical rank, the assumption should not be made that the king and his council always tried to place clerics of the highest ecclesiastical position on all embassies. Rather they tried to appoint
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Percent of Clerics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Officer</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monk, Friar</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor, Licentiate,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor, Master</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 Table II is based on the data compiled in Appendixes I and J.
clerics of a rank equivalent to those clerics whom they would confront in negotiations. According to medieval diplomatic protocol, the personnel of both embassies had to be of the same social order and rank within that order. If the clerics appointed to an English embassy were of a rank so superior to that of their counterparts, they would consider it a breach of protocol to begin negotiations with clerics so below their station. Consequently clerics of the highest ecclesiastical rank were not always the best churchmen for a particular embassy.

Lastly clerics' influence on diplomacy was further enhanced by the role of leadership that they frequently assumed on so many English embassies. Clerical diplomats led 48 percent of the 629 embassies dispatched between 1327 and 1461. Table 12 shows the percentage of embassies led by clerics in the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, and Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI. This percentage declines from Edward III's reign to Richard II's; but it increases from Richard II's reign to Henry IV's, Henry V's, and Henry VI's.

Clerical diplomats led 61 percent of the embassies that had clerics within their membership. Table 13 shows the percentage of embassies having clerical participants and

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22 The embassy leader was the individual who had responsibility for directing the action of the embassy; he may have served alone or with others under his command.

23 See Appendix K.

24 See Appendix L.
### TABLE 12

PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES WITH CLERICAL LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-61)</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS AND LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
<th>Percent of Embassies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III (1327-77)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard II (1377-99)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry IV (1399-1413)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry V (1413-22)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry VI (1422-61)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

25 Table 12 is based on the data compiled in Appendix K.

26 Table 13 is based on the data compiled in Appendix L.
clerical leaders in the aforementioned reigns. This percentage also decreases from Edward's reign to Richard's; and it too increases from Richard's reign to Henry IV's, Henry V's, and Henry VI's. In effect, clerical leadership follows essentially the same trend as clerical participation during the period from 1327 to 1461. However, it begins to increase from Richard II's reign to Henry IV's rather than from Henry IV's to Henry V's as clerical participation does.

The clerics who led English embassies were of a higher ecclesiastical rank that the clerics commissioned to ambassadorial service in general as shown in Table 14. Fifty-nine percent of the clerical embassy leaders were bishops, but only 14 percent were of archiepiscopal rank. The archbishops of Canterbury and York usually were commissioned to only the most important English embassies. Unlike the bishops, both their ecclesiastical and secular duties could not be delegated to others so easily. English opinion could tolerate the failure of clerical diplomat Bishop John Catryk to ever appear in his diocese of Coventry-Lichfield, but could not tolerate such an omission in archiepiscopal clerical diplomats like John Chichele and John Kemp.

Just as many clerics repeatedly served as ambassadors, some clerics also repeatedly assumed a role of leadership on various embassies (see Table 15). Of the 106 churchmen who were assigned as embassy leaders from 1327 to 1461, 14 percent led five or more missions. In comparing the names of the clerics who had the greatest number of
### TABLE 14
**ECCLESIASTICAL POSITIONS OF CLERICAL EMBASSY LEADERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Percent of Clerical Embassy Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Officer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monk, Friar</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor, Licentiate, Bachelor, Master</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 15
**CLERICAL DIPLOMATS ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Embassies</th>
<th>Number of Clerics</th>
<th>Percent of Clerics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or More.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

27 Table 14 is based on the data compiled in Appendix M.

28 Table 15 is based on the data compiled in Appendix N.
missions to the names of those who most frequently served as embassy leaders, it becomes apparent that the two lists do not coincide. Thos... who repeatedly served as embassy leaders. John Offord, John Sheppey, and John Catryk served on twenty or more embassies during their careers, but they rarely led any of the embassies on which they served. John Stratford, Thomas Langley, and Henry Chichele took part in less than twenty embassies but were appointed as the leaders of most of the embassies to which they were commissioned. However, clerics like William Bateman, John Gilbert, John Kemp, and John Stokes were not only the most active career diplomats, but they were also the foremost clerical embassy leaders. Because they were repeatedly appointed to English embassies and as heads of these same embassies, Bateman, Gilbert, Kemp, and Stokes were probably the most influential clerics in the diplomacy of the Hundred Years' War.

It may be concluded that clerics did continue to influence English diplomacy during the years from 1327 to 1461, the years that coincide with the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI and with the events of the Hundred Years' War. Though the medieval synthesis began to dissolve at the beginning of this period,

29See Appendixes H and N for the names of these clerics.
the aristocratic in-fighting of the first half of the fifteenth century retarded if not reversed this trend. Consequently the educated layman never replaced the cleric in diplomacy during the period under consideration, and in fact clerics recovered ground, displacing laymen on many embassies during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI. Among the clerics engaged in this diplomatic activity, those who may be termed career diplomats influenced English diplomacy to a greater degree than the others. Hence, these thirty-three churchmen will be the subject of further study.
CHAPTER III

CLERICAL CAREER DIPLOMATS

During the years from 1327 to 1461, thirty-three clerics were dispatched on ten or more English embassies, and these churchmen, in effect, made ambassadorial service a career.\(^1\) Because they played such an important role in the diplomacy of the period dominated by the Hundred Years' War, they deserve special consideration as a group.\(^2\) What were their geographical, social, and educational backgrounds? What ecclesiastical and royal offices did they hold before their enlistment into England's diplomatic corps? What was the nature of their diplomatic service? How did the monarchy reward them for their diplomatic labors? What effect did their diplomatic careers have on their clerical duties?

As already stated, the thirty-three clerical career diplomats who compose the total population of the following studies.

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\(^1\) See Appendix H for the names of the thirty-three clerical career diplomats who compose the total population of the following studies.

\(^2\) In 1947, George P. Cuttino surveyed the needs of English medieval history and called for a detailed investigation of the administrative personnel of English government. "We must know not only the offices they filled, but also what previous training they had, where they came from, their social position, and their actual influence on policy." George P. Cuttino, "English Medieval History: A Survey of Needs," Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research, 21 (1946-48):110.
diplomats were the churchmen who had the greatest influence on English diplomacy. Conversely they were also the clerics whose lives were most affected by English diplomacy. Many of these clerics were of humble birth and saw diplomatic service for the crown as a means of social advancement. They took those steps which placed them in a position where they might likely be drafted into ambassadorial service. They studied law at the universities; they obtained ecclesiastical offices that would bring them into contact with individuals who had political influence; and some secured positions as royal household clerks or departmental functionaries in order to obtain diplomatic commissions.

On their first ambassadorial assignment, they performed their jobs carefully, efficiently, and even brilliantly in order to maximize the probability that they would be commissioned again. Each successful mission enhanced the probability that they would receive further embassy assignments and that they would receive more permanent rewards such as elevation to the episcopacy, translation to a wealthier bishopric, or even provision to one of the two archiepiscopal sees. Outstanding service might also lead to an appointment as head of one of the great offices of state such as the Chancery or Exchequer. In turn such rewards enriched the prestige of these clerics and increased the probability of further diplomatic assignments, especially as embassy leaders, and even further ecclesiastical and royal rewards. In this manner, English diplomacy affected the
lives of thirty-three clerics.

Most of the clerical career diplomats were born in the lands held by the king of England (see Table 16). The king and his council preferred to use native-born clerics for diplomatic assignments rather than foreigners as other medieval princes frequently chose to do. This preference probably grew out of English parochialism and contempt for foreigners who held ecclesiastical benefices in England.

With the exception of the archdiocese of York and the diocese of Lincoln, no area supplied a preponderance of clerical diplomats (see Table 17). Difficulty arises in explaining why many Lincoln-born churchmen became career diplomats but not in determining why so many clerics from the diocese of York saw extensive diplomatic service. A high proportion of York clerics became career diplomats because the king tended to appoint those holding York benefices to embassies dispatched to Scotland. York clerics were very parochial and sought preferment to benefices in the diocese in which they were born. These native-born York churchmen composed the pool or clerics from which the king chose to draft ambassadors for his Scottish missions.

Although the birthplaces of the clerical career diplomats are easily ascertained, their social origins are not. In order to determine the class from which a clerical career diplomat came, information about his family must be extant. Noble and gentry families frequently left records,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guienne, Normandy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 17**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coventry-Lichfield</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hereford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath and Wells</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chichester</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Tables 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, are based on data compiled from the Dictionary of National Biography, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A. D. 1500, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to A. D. 1500, A Survey of Dominicans in England, Dictionnaire de biographie française, and various county and diocesan histories.
usually indicating landholding, while more humble families rarely left any records at all. No information is available on the families of 52 percent of the clerical career diplomats, which suggests the possibility that a large number of these churchmen came from the humbler classes (see Table 18). Together with those who were from burgher and gentry families, these clerics composed a group of men who wanted to advance in life. Part of this social advancement could be accomplished by entering the service of the church, which provided more social mobility than lay society. Of more importance, success within the ranks of the church could lead to royal service, more specifically diplomatic service, which would enhance the possibility of further social advancement. The king and his council found that clerical parvenus made excellent royal servants because English society provided them with few alternatives for social advancement. Noble churchmen, who already had social prestige, rarely became diplomats. They had little desire to endure the hardships associated with diplomacy when they had little to gain by doing so.

The clerics destined to become career diplomats realized that they could not easily advance within the hierarchy of the church, let alone move into royal service, without a university education. Lacking prestige and family contacts, they needed some obvious asset to demonstrate their desirability for ecclesiastical and secular service. Consequently 94 percent or 31 of the clerical career
TABLE 18
SOCIAL ORIGINS OF CLERICAL CAREER DIPLOMATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noble.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgher.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total.</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
diplomats had in the course of their education studied at one of the great medieval universities. They display the same educational tendencies as the larger group of clerical diplomats already studied: 94 percent of the university-educated clerical career diplomats received all of their training in England; 74 percent earned all their degrees at Oxford; 83 percent studied either civil law, canon law or both; and 71 percent progressed to the doctorate.

As university students, the thirty-three men who were to become clerical career diplomats had already assumed the status of a cleric and had technically entered the service of the church. Not until after they had completed their university studies did they attempt to proceed to minor orders or go on to take holy orders. Neither did they really commence their service to the church until after they had left the universities. Ninety-seven percent of them decided to seek their fortunes as secular clergymen, while only 3 percent joined one of the religious orders. By the time they were first drafted into ambassadorial service, all had risen above the position of a simple cleric and had been provided to one of the more substantial benefices. In addition, 27 percent had been elevated to the episcopacy (see Table 19).

Like many other clerics, they did not necessarily reside in the benefice to which they had been appointed, but nonetheless they did serve the church in other capacities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Officer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canon</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As indicated in Table 20, 55 percent served as diocesan administrators, as vicars-general, archdeacons, and deans. Approximately one-third of these diocesan functionaries were associated with the archiepiscopal court of Canterbury. At this prestigious court, many served as judicial officials holding such positions as dean of the Arches and auditor of causes. As diocesan administrators, they were in an excellent position to gain the patronage of their bishops, who were often confidants of the king and could recommend them for ambassadorial assignment. As already indicated, bishops were often commissioned as embassy leaders and were likely to request that their trusted diocesan officials be assigned to the embassies which they were to head.

While serving in such church offices, 52 percent of the clerics, who were to become career diplomats, were drafted into royal diplomacy. However, 48 percent had to secure positions as royal servants before they received their first ambassadorial commission (see Table 21).

Approximately half of the clerics who were to become career diplomats were enlisted into England's foreign service from positions as royal servants, while the other half were drafted into diplomacy from positions as ecclesiastical officers. They commenced their diplomatic careers with an ad hoc assignment to one individual embassy, not with a long-term appointment to serve as an ambassador for a fixed period of time nor for a definite number of missions. The
### TABLE 20

**ECCLESIASTICAL POSITION AT THE BEGINNING OF THEIR DIPLOMATIC CAREERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury Diocesan Administrators</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Diocesan Administrators</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papal Officials</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 21

**ROYAL POSITION AT THE BEGINNING OF THEIR DIPLOMATIC CAREERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor, Treasurer, Keeper of the Privy Seal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In this context, the term cleric refers to one who devotes himself to the mechanical skills of copying, writing and bookkeeping.*
quality of their service on the first mission resulted in commissioning to additional embassies and eventually to a diplomatic career of ten or more ambassadorial assignments.

For the clerical career diplomat, his first ad hoc embassy was to follow essentially the same pattern as all the others that he would receive over his lengthy career. In many respects, the experiences he encountered on this first ad hoc embassy, the preparation, journey, negotiations, and follow up, were basically the same as those encountered by his lay colleagues, but in some respects they differed.

After commissions had been issued to the members of the embassy, preparations were made for departure. Letters of safe-conduct, procuration, and credence were drawn up by the clerks of Chancery. Food, bedding, furniture, tents, horses, wagons, and servants were procured for the pending journey. In addition to these common preparations, the individual members of the embassy made arrangements for personal entourages to accompany them during their mission. The size of the personal familia depended on the rank of the ambassador and his position in the embassy. For example, when Bishop William Bateman was commissioned to lead an embassy of five to the papal court in October 1354, 4 he took fifteen well-educated clerics with him as

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part of his personal entourage. The other members of the embassy, like Bishop Michael Northburgh, were also entitled to bring personal aides with them, but all members of the embassy had to pay their familiae out of the wages they received. Clerical diplomats of archiepiscopal and episcopal rank required large familiae, but these tended to be substantially smaller than those of the great lay lords and the royal family.

As the equipment and personnel were being assembled, the members of the embassy also secured prepayment for their wages and the expenses that they were expected to incur on their mission. The last step that they took before their departure was to seek an audience with the king and his council. During this interview, the embassy received its credentials and written instructions, which were discussed and clarified. If the embassy had a particularly important mission that did not require secrecy, the ambassadors departed amid great pomp and ceremony.

All the dangers of medieval land and sea travel filled the journey from the English court to the place where negotiations were to be conducted. Leaving the king's court, the English ambassadors travelled overland to Dover or one of the other Channel ports, where they could hire a boat to take them across the Channel to Wissant or perhaps

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along the coast of France to Bayonne. Having reached the continent, the embassy had to travel overland to the site of the negotiations. In cases where the ambassadors had been commissioned to treat at one of the princely courts, they could not even be sure of their destination because of the peripatetic nature of medieval courts. The clerical diplomat was protected by both diplomatic and clerical immunities, but these immunities did not always insure his safety during his travels, as two clerical diplomats, Master John Sheppey and Brother John Uhtred, discovered in their 1374 journey to the papal court. As these two clerics travelled through Dauphîne on their way to Avignon, they were arrested by French officials. Only after Pope Gregory XI interceded on their behalf did the French agree to release both Sheppey and Uhtred.  

The termination of the embassy's journey depended on whether it was commissioned to treat at a princely court or at a site removed from court. If the negotiations were to be conducted at a point remote from the court, the English ambassadors would reside in a friendly town near the prearranged negotiation site, as would the other embassy. In the early part of the Hundred Years' War, the English

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embassies dispatched to France usually established themselves at Calais, from whence they journeyed to Lenlingham for the actual negotiations; the French did likewise at St. Omer or Boulogne-sur-Mer. On the first occasion that the English embassy actually did meet with the other embassy, its leader was expected to deliver a formal speech. John Kemp was aware of these expectations when he was commissioned to lead English embassies to the conferences of Arras and Oye. He prepared and delivered such fine speeches that the sources comment on his eloquent use of the Latin language.\(^7\)

The English embassies that journeyed to various royal courts were welcomed with great formality and ceremony. As the English ambassadors approached, a delegation of officials were sent to greet them and lead them to the royal presence. This solemn entry was usually accompanied by festivities and amid splendid decorations. When the English ambassadors were finally admitted to the royal presence, the leader of the embassy presented his credentials and was also required to deliver a formal speech. After this oration, the English embassy was entertained at a royal dinner and gifts were presented to its members. When clerical diplomat John Catryk visited the Burgundian court in 1412, he was entertained at a dinner of this nature during which Duke John the Fearless gave him six silver

\(^7\)Infra, pp. 394-95, 409.
If the English ambassadors had been dispatched simply to perform ceremonial duties such as confirming friendships or paying honor, their mission was essentially fulfilled at this point. If they had been commissioned to negotiate, their work had just begun.

When negotiations actually did commence, the English embassy had to review and evaluate the credentials of the other embassy as well as explain and defend their own. In some cases, negotiations stalemated on such preliminaries and did not progress to the real issues. If preliminaries could be completed, demands and counter-demands were presented. Sometimes during negotiating sessions, relations between both parties degenerated to the point where ambassadors feared for their personal safety. While negotiating at the papal court in 1344, clerical diplomat John Offord feared that he would be imprisoned by the papacy, who, according to medieval international law was responsible for enforcing diplomatic immunities. In the event that the English embassy concluded an agreement during negotiations, the clerical members like John Catryk, who were usually university trained in civil or canon law, drafted the documents in which the agreement was framed.

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10Hingeston-Randolph, *Royal and Historical Letters of*
Returning to England, the embassy leader reported to the king and his council on the results of their mission and sought a ratification of any agreement which had been concluded earlier.

Next, the English ambassadors had to account to the Exchequer for their expenses and, in most cases, seek further compensation. They presented the particulars of their embassy to the Exchequer of Account, which included statements of prepayments; expenses for transportation, the dispatch of messengers, legal instruments, notary services, gifts, and lost horses; and the total number of days consumed by the embassy. The barons of the Exchequer of Account computed ambassadorial wages on the basis of embassy days and an established per diem rate. 11

From 1327 to 1450, the per diem rate paid to clerical diplomats varied according to ecclesiastical rank. Archbishops were consistently paid 100s. per day, and bishops were paid 66s. 8d. The rate paid to clerics entitled as master varied between 40s. and 10s., but they were most frequently paid 20s. per day (see Table 22). Fifty percent of the payments to the regular clergy were at a rate of 20s. per day and 50 percent at 40s. The per diem rate paid to


11 Alfred Larson, "The Payment of Fourteenth Century English Envoys," English Historical Review 54 (July 1939): 404. This study is solely based on payments made from 1327-36.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Number of Payments</th>
<th>Percent of Payments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40s.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20s.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13s. 4d.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 22
PER DIEM RATE FOR MASTERS
simple clerics varied between 20s. and 6s. 8d. with 13s. 4d. being the most frequent rate of payment (see Table 23).

After the barons had reckoned the accounts, they issued writs to the former ambassadors ordering the Exchequer of Receipt to pay them what was owed. In some cases, they received assignments which they were to deliver to those in charge of tax collection, who were then to make payments directly to the former ambassadors.¹²

One hundred seventeen of the 289 clerical diplomats terminated their diplomatic service for the English crown with one such typical ad hoc embassy. Thirty-three clerics, though, demonstrated a definite talent for diplomacy in their first ad hoc ambassadorial assignment. During the ceremonial aspects of their embassies, they truly personified the dignity and prestige of their king. In negotiating sessions, they presented their demands and persistently labored to secure them. They emphasized the strengths of their position and de-emphasized their weaknesses. They correctly evaluated the position of the other side when its demands were presented. As negotiations continued, they knew when to compromise on certain points in order to obtain the greatest portion of their total program. Throughout, they demonstrated an ability to control their emotions, to understand the complexities of medieval international law, and to communicate easily in written and

¹²Ibid.
## TABLE 23
PER DIEM RATE FOR CLERICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Number of Payments</th>
<th>Percent of Payments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13s. 4d.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10s.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6s. 8d.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
oral forms.

Successful performances on the first embassy led to another ambassadorial commission and yet another. On each additional embassy, clerics gained more diplomatic experience and had additional opportunities to display their talents. Moreover, repeated diplomatic service brought definite ecclesiastical and royal rewards. Promotion to the episcopal bench or appointment to one of the great offices of state enhanced the prestige of the clerical diplomats which in itself increased the probability of further ambassadorial service. After receiving their first ad hoc commission, thirty-three clerics were drawn into this cycle and became career diplomats.

The king with the advice of his council rewarded the clerical career diplomats with royal offices which were directly under his control and with ecclesiastical offices over which he had only indirect control. During or after their diplomatic careers, 57 percent of the clerical career diplomats received a royal promotion as shown in Table 24. Most of these clerics were appointed to direct the great offices of state, the Chancery, Exchequer, and the Privy Seal.

In addition to rewarding their clerical diplomats with appointments that were directly within their power to bestow, the king tried to secure ecclesiastical promotion for the men who had loyally served him as ambassadors. In
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeper of the Privy Seal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor of Ireland, Guienne, Normandy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of the Council</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
order to secure these promotions, the king had to exert pressure on the papacy, the cathedral chapters, or whomever actually had the right to present a cleric to a particular benefice. The king of England preferred to reward his clerical diplomats with ecclesiastical benefices because such appointments cost him less than promotions to royal offices or land grants made from the royal domain. Fifty-four percent of the clerical career diplomats were rewarded by ecclesiastical promotions, and most of these were to the episcopal bench (see Table 25). Forty-six percent were not promoted to a church office above that which they held at the time they commenced their diplomatic careers. Several of the clerical diplomats, who fall into this group, were bishops and received translations to richer bishoprics as a result of their diplomatic service. Others of non-episcopal rank accumulated benefices that provided them with additional incomes if not the prestige of a promotion to the episcopacy.

Service as a career diplomat not only enhanced clerics' chances of ecclesiastical promotion through the agency of the English monarchy but also through the medium of the papacy. During the years from 1327 to 1461, the papacy gained greater control over provision to ecclesiastical livings. Clerics realized that they could advance in the hierarchy of church offices not only by winning the confidence of the king but also by winning the support of the pope. Diplomatic assignments to treat with the pope or his
### TABLE 25

**ECCLESIASTICAL PROMOTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archbishop</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathedral Chapter Officer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
representatives provided an excellent opportunity for clerics to win papal backing, and consequently clerical diplomats competed for commissions to papal embassies.

William Bateman, John Sheppey, and John Catryk are three clerical career diplomats who won commissions to papal embassies and then used these missions to secure ecclesiastical promotions. William Bateman, who began his diplomatic career as a papal nuncio, joined Edward III's corps of diplomats and secured commissions to several embassies to the papal court at Avignon. In these missions, Bateman worked both to end the conflict with France and to restore Christian unity, the end to which all the Avignon popes were dedicated. For his labors, Clement VI provided Bateman to the bishopric of Norwich though King Edward did not have any desire to elevate him to the episcopacy.\(^{13}\) Clerical career diplomat, John Sheppey, found himself in a somewhat similar position. After several years of extensive diplomatic service, Edward had done little to reward him. Consequently, Sheppey utilized an ambassadorial assignment to negotiate with the representatives of Gregory XI to "craftily procure" his provision to the deanery of Lincoln.\(^{14}\)

Though John Catryk had already been promoted to the English episcopacy,

\(^{13}\) CPL, 3 (1342-62):125, 10 Kal. Feb. 1344, papal provision.

he used his embassy to the Council of Constance to advance his career further. He played an instrumental role in expediting the election of Martin V and served as one of Martin's electors in the papal conclave. In return for this support, Martin translated him from the bishopric of Coventry-Lichfield to the more desirable see of Exeter.15

Clerics like Bateman, Sheppey, and Catryk, who used their papal embassies to advance their fortunes, were called "Rome-runners."16 John Wyclif attacked them for "winding to Rome to get a fatter benefice."17 These clerical diplomats, who were "running to Rome for dignities," were "dwelling not in our country, helping after Christ's forum."18 In effect, Wyclif was criticizing them for clerical non-residency. Their diplomatic assignments took them away from their ecclesiastical duties for long periods of time. Moreover, the vicars that they hired were not sufficiently qualified to perform the duties which were delegated to them, and their activities were not properly supervised by the clerical


18 Ibid., 2:167, "runnen to Rome for dignities," "dwelling not in o countre, helpinge after Christis forme."
diplomats.

The clerical career diplomats of episcopal rank like William Bateman, John Gilbert, and John Kemp appointed vicars-general to administer their dioceses during their absences and suffragan bishops to perform religious duties that only a consecrated bishop could perform. During his tenure as bishop of Norwich, William Bateman appointed temporary vicars-general to administer his diocese while he was engaged in diplomatic assignments. These temporary appointments increased the probability that the vicar-general's work would be subject to review. Another clerical diplomat Bishop John Gilbert also employed temporary vicars-general to administer his diocese of Hereford during his embassies. In evaluating the administration of Gilbert's vicars-general, Joseph Parry says:

The general discipline of his diocese did not suffer from the absence of its head, the visitations of the deaneries and monasteries seem to have been systematic, irregularities of the clergy... were punished by removal from their cures, absentees were sternly recalled to their duties, and in secular matters there is evidence of strict and minute control.19

As bishop of Coventry-Lichfield, John Catryk appointed a permanent vicar-general when he was first translated to this diocese. Any time the bishop was absent from his see, his vicar-general automatically assumed responsibility for the administration of the diocese.20 The work

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20 Coventry-Lichfield, Diocesan Registry, Register of
of a permanent vicar-general was not likely to be scrutinized as frequently as that of the more temporary vicar-general. However, he may have proved more efficient because of the regularity and longevity of his service. Bishop Catryk did not bother, though to supervise the work of his permanent vicar-general. After he appointed this official, he became so involved with the diplomacy of the Council of Constance, that he never visited his diocese. Although the absenteeism of the clerical diplomats usually resulted in badly administered church offices, as John Wyclif, contended, these problems could be avoided by the appointment of vicars who were qualified to perform the duties delegated to them, and who were closely supervised. In effect, the clerical diplomats, and especially those who made diplomacy a career, did not necessarily neglect their ecclesiastical duties.

In short, the clerical career diplomats, as a group, were definitely churchmen whose secular interests equalled if not surpassed their religious concerns. Generally they were English-born sons of the humbler classes who saw a university education and the clerical status as a means for social advancement. Once within the ranks of the clergy, they tried to increase their social mobility through service to the crown, first civil service and then diplomatic service. Their careers as ad hoc ambassadors led to church
promotions often to the episcopacy and royal promotions to the great offices of state. Because of their diplomatic careers, they indeed did advance to social positions far beyond those to which they were born. Though they were essentially motivated by secular goals and concerned primarily with secular affairs, they were not necessarily the contemptible churchmen that John Wyclif charged they were.

Now that the influence of the clerical diplomats has been studied in general terms and the clerical career diplomats have been studied as a group, the eight most active clerical diplomats will be given individual attention. John Stokes, Walter Skirlaw, John Sheppey, John Kemp, John Gilbert, William Bateman, John Catryk, and John Offord all had diplomatic careers of twenty missions or more which were spread over fourteen years at the very least. Though some of these clerics rarely led embassies, the diplomatic experience that they gained through repeated service made them far more valuable members of England's foreign service than the clerics of elevated status who led embassies but had little to contribute in the way of diplomatic expertise because they so infrequently received an ambassadorial commission.

John Offord and William Bateman were the most active clerical diplomats during the early years of Edward III's reign and the opening period of the Hundred Years' War. In the later years of Edward's reign and throughout Richard's,
John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw were the clerics most frequently assigned to English embassies as the Hundred Years' War resumed after its supposed resolution in the 1360 Treaty of Calais. John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp were the most active clerical diplomats during the rule of the Lancastrian kings. These clerics participated in the diplomacy that resulted in England's greatest victory during the Hundred Years' War and her ultimate defeat. Specific consideration will be given to the role that Offord, Bateman, Sheppey, Gilbert, Skirlaw, Catryk, Stokes, and Kemp played in these diplomatic events as well as to their backgrounds, education, method of entry into diplomacy, and rewards for diplomatic service.
CHAPTER IV

JOHN OFFORD AND WILLIAM BATEMAN

Introduction

The first thirty-three years of Edward III's reign coincide with the events which directly led to the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War and the first episode of this conflict. When Edward III was crowned king of England in 1327, he also assumed the role of vassal to the king of France for the territory known as Guienne. After considerable disagreement, Edward confirmed his vassalage to King Philip of France in 1331. Despite this confirmation, the various procedures, which had been devised to regulate relations between vassal and overlord, were abandoned by 1335, and friction between the two kings increased.

During these same years, Edward struggled to gain control over the nobles who opposed him, and by 1337, he thought that his position at home was secure enough to attempt to remove himself from the tutelage of King Philip. Edward thought that he could gain full sovereignty over Guienne by pressing his claim to the crown of France which he had first asserted in 1328 when Charles IV died without any male heirs. Edward argued that he was the rightful king of France through his mother, Isabella, who was Philip IV's daughter; and as a consequence, that Philip of Valois,
Philip IV's nephew, had illegally been crowned king of France. When Edward's ambassadors formally presented this claim to Philip of Valois in October 1337, the Hundred Years' War technically began.

During this first episode of the Hundred Year's War, which began with the declaration of war in 1337 and ended with the Treaty of Calais in 1360, England and France were not constantly engaged in combat. Instead, short campaigns were interspersed with long periods of armistice. Both sides were eager to negotiate short-term truces so that they could rebuild their armies in order to strike again. Moreover, the Avignon popes continually pressured England and France to negotiate truces so that a final peace could be concluded which would put a reunited Christendom at their service. Consequently the fighting, which actually began in 1340, was interrupted by periods of truce established by the 1340 Treaty of Esplechin, 1343 Treaty of Malestroit, the treaties signed at Calais in 1347, 1353, and 1354, and the treaty signed at Bordeaux in 1357. The truces imposed by these treaties were usually prolonged several times, but all expired without the conclusion of a general peace treaty. When both sides really wanted peace, they needed only a six-month armistice to conclude the Treaty of Calais. In this peace treaty of 1360, Edward achieved his primary goal and obtained full sovereignty over Guienne. However, he had to relinquish his claim to the throne of France, which was of lesser importance to him.
During the years from 1327 to 1360, English embassies were constantly being dispatched and clerical diplomats were needed to staff these embassies. The diplomatic documents indicate that William Ayermine, Adam Orleton, John Stratford, Henry Burghersh, John Thoresby, Richard Bury, John Offord, John Carleton, William Bateman, Michael Northburgh, Andrew Offord, and Thomas Hatfield fulfilled Edward's need for clerical diplomats. Each of these churchmen was commissioned to ten or more embassies during the period under consideration. Of these eleven clerics, none had such extensive diplomatic careers as John Offord and William Bateman, who served on twenty or more missions. Both clerics frequently participated in the same embassy, and their careers became so closely associated with one another that Bateman used his influence with the papacy to have Offord provided to the deanery of Lincoln.

Despite the close professional relationship between Offord and Bateman, their diplomatic careers differed greatly and as a consequence, it is difficult to decide which of the two clerics had the more successful career.

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1William Ayermine's career extended from 1327-35, and he went on fourteen missions; Adam Orleton (1327-35), 14; John Stratford (1327-46), 11; Henry Burghersh (1327-40), 10; John Thoresby (1327-62), 10; Richard Bury (1330-43), 11; John Offord (1332-46), 20; John Carleton (1334-66), 14; William Bateman (1341-54), 23; Michael Northburgh (1345-55), 13; Andrew Offord (1345-55), 17; Thomas Hatfield (1350-74), 10.

Bateman served on more embassies and more frequently as an embassy leader, while Offord received far greater royal and ecclesiastical rewards for his diplomatic service. John Offord was drafted into English diplomacy from a position as a clerk in the king's household. He began his diplomatic career in 1332 and continued to serve Edward until 1346. During these fourteen years, he participated in twenty embassies but served as leader of only one of them. His ambassadorial service resulted in a royal appointment as keeper of the privy seal and chancellor. His greatest ecclesiastical reward for his diplomatic service did not come until several months before his death when he was chosen archbishop of Canterbury. He died as an archbishop-elect, never having an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of such an exalted clerical office.

William Bateman did not win King Edward's confidence to the degree that John Offord did. Edward enlisted Bateman into England's diplomatic corps while he was serving as a papal nuncio to the English court. Over a period of fourteen years from 1341 to 1354, he was commissioned to twenty-three embassies and as leader of thirteen of them. Despite all of his efforts in England's behalf, Edward did very little to reward him; instead all of his promotions, including his elevation to the English episcopacy, were instigated by the Avignon popes. At one point, Edward became so irritated with Bateman over an appeal to Avignon that he did not commission him to any embassies for three years.
If Edward had so little confidence in William Bateman, why then did he employ this cleric to the extent that he can be considered a career diplomat? In all probability, Edward felt that Bateman's association with the papacy was an overriding diplomatic asset. His experience at the Avignon court gave him the knowledge and the confidence to function as a skilled English diplomat with the papacy. Such experience was particularly useful during a period when the Avignon popes or their representatives frequently served as mediators in Anglo-French negotiations.

Both John Offord and William Bateman were useful to Edward but for different reasons: Offord, because he was so heavily dependent on the king, was completely trustworthy; and Bateman, because he was so intimate with Avignon, possessed the knowledge which enabled him to negotiate so successfully in England's behalf with the papacy. For these reasons, Offord and Bateman received twenty or more ambassadorial assignments and became the most influential clerical diplomats during the first stage of the Hundred Years' War.

Though John Offord's and William Bateman's professional relationship to Edward during their diplomatic careers differed greatly, their backgrounds were similar. Both men were born in the eastern part of England to wealthy families, and both were educated in law at English universities. The point at which this commonality of experience ends is when both men left the university to pursue their
ecclesiastical careers; one man remained in England, and the other sought his fortunes at the papal court in Avignon.

Information about John Offord's family and, as a consequence, the place in which he was born and the class from which he came is difficult to find. One piece of evidence indicates that Andrew Offord, who also had an active diplomatic career during the early years of Edward's reign, was his brother. Furthermore, a papal petition says that a Thomas Paxton, who was archdeacon of Huntingdon and from the diocese of Lincoln, was also his kinsman. The Patent Rolls include an appointment of John Offord as the custodian of the manor of Offord Daneys in Huntingdon county during the minority of its heir. Such a position might indicate that John Offord was related to John de Offord that held the Daneys estate in 1275. This meager evidence leads to the conclusion that John Offord was born into a landowning gentry family from Huntingdon county in the diocese of Lincoln, and that he was not related to the famous Offord family of Suffolk, who had baronial status.

Much more evidence is available about William

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4 Ibid., p. 36, petition granted 2 Id. Jan. 1344.


6 DNB, 14:901.
Bateman's early life. He was born in the city of Norwich, and his parents, Margery and William Bateman, were members of the burgher class. In addition to his urban economic interests, William Bateman, senior, owned a considerable amount of land in Norfolk and Suffolk, and he was lord of a free tenement or manor in Titshall. His prestige in Norwich enabled him to serve as town bailiff eleven times and to represent the town in Parliament in 1326 and 1327.

Being from the gentry or the burgher class did not insure John Offord and William Bateman careers in the English church or government. They had to obtain a university education if they wished to enter into and advance within the sophisticated machinery of the fourteenth-century church and state. John Offord left his Huntingdon home to study at Oxford, where he received his master of arts degree and bachelor of civil law degree by 1327. From Oxford, he migrated to Cambridge, where he received a doctor of civil law degree. Having received his early education at the cathedral school at Norwich, William Bateman chose to do all of his studies at Cambridge, where he obtained a doctorate.

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7William Bateman was referred to as William de Norwich until his consecration as bishop 1344.


in civil law by 1328. It is possible that John Offord and William Bateman met at Cambridge during 1327 when both were studying law there.

After John Offord and William Bateman had completed their education, they chose different paths toward advancement before they both turned to royal diplomatic service. By 1328, John Offord had secured a position as a clerk in the king's household. No evidence exists to indicate that John Offord had advanced beyond the position of a household clerk by the time he was drafted into diplomatic service in 1332. As a household clerk, Offord gained Edward's confidence, and the king did all he could to reward him with ecclesiastical sinecures. By 1332, Offord was a canon and prebendary of St. Chad's; canon and prebendary of St. Paul's London; canon of Salisbury and prebendary of Major Pars Altaris; and canon of Lincoln and prebendary of Liddington.

Another important ecclesiastical position that Offord held at the time he entered diplomatic service was that of dean of the Arches. St. Mary of the Arches was

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11 Blomefield, History of Norfolk, 2:359.
13 Ibid., 2 (1330-34):26, Dec. 10, 1330, revocation of a collation made to John Offord.
15 Thomas Walsingham, Gesta abbatium monasterii S. Albani, ed. H. T. Riley, Rolls Series, no. 28, part 4, 3
one of the deaneries of Canterbury which fell outside its geographical confines. Offord was responsible for the usual administrative functions associated with the diocesan office of dean in addition to certain archdiocesan responsibilities. In the case that neither the archbishop nor his vicar-general could preside over the archdiocesan court held at St. Mary's, the dean of the church had to take over their duties.\textsuperscript{16}

As soon as William Bateman received his degree, he was appointed archdeacon of Norwich.\textsuperscript{17} As in so many other cases, William Bateman did not reside with his chapter. Having obtained a recommendation from Bishop William Ayermine, Bateman travelled to Avignon to pursue his fortunes at the papal court.\textsuperscript{18} By 1330, he had become a papal chaplain, and by 1332, he had been appointed as a papal auditor/judge of the Rota.\textsuperscript{19} He was still a papal auditor in 1340 when he commenced his diplomatic career as a nuncio for the papacy.\textsuperscript{20} Benedict XII duly rewarded William

\textsuperscript{17}Jo le Neve, Fasti ecclesiae Anglicanae, from Earliest Times to 1715, ed. Thomas D. Hardy, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1854), 2:479, from the register of Bishop William Ayermine.
\textsuperscript{18}Blomefield, History of Norfolk, 2:359.
\textsuperscript{19}CPL, 2 (1305-42):323, 14 Kal. Aug. 1330, letter from John XXII to John Melbourn.
\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 525, 4 Kal. Aug. 1335, letter from
Bateman for his services by providing him to a canonry in Lincoln in 1335 and to the deanery of Lincoln in 1340. By the time that Edward drafted John Offord and William Bateman into England's foreign service, both men had acquired a university education and experience in secular or ecclesiastical government. When these assets were added to that of respectable social origins, William Bateman and John Offord proved to be excellent candidates for England's diplomatic corps.

**John Offord's Early Career, 1332-39**

Though John Offord and William Bateman frequently served on the same embassy, Offord commenced his diplomatic career in 1332, nine years before Bateman was first assigned to an English embassy. In the years from 1332 to 1337, the processes, the traditional institutions for settling disputes between the king of France and his vassal, the king of England, collapsed, and war broke out between their kingdoms. However, both kings were not prepared for war and needed time to procure troops, equipment, and money and to win allies who would aid them in acquiring all three. Consequently for two years after war had been declared in 1337, many English embassies were dispatched to secure allies and

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Ibid., p. 525, 4 Kal. Aug. 1335, letter from Benedict XII to William Bateman; p. 547, 3 Non. Aug. 1340,
to cover up England's bellicose preparations by claiming that actual combat could be avoided despite the declaration of war. As a novice diplomat, John Offord served on five embassies during the years from 1332 to 1338, and within the context of these ambassadorial assignments, he proved his capacity for diplomacy and reconfirmed his loyalty to Edward III.

He commenced his diplomatic career with two assignments in which he represented England at the process of Agen. Like the earlier processes of Montreuil and Perigueux, the process of Agen was a legal means for arbitrating the disputes which arose out of the terms of the Treaty of Paris. In this treaty signed in 1259, the king of England did liege homage for lands in southwestern France, the area known as Guienne. In regard to the process of Agen, the international commission had its origins in the homage which Edward III did for his French lands in 1329. This homage was neither liege nor unconditional, and Charles IV of France felt that he had the right to seize Agenais because his rights had been thwarted. When in 1331, Edward conceded that he owed liege homage to the French king, Charles agreed to return Agenais. The process of Agen was the legal device that was established in 1331 to facilitate the restoration of these lands.¹

¹Letter from Benedict XII to William Bateman.

On April 24, 1332, John Offord, along with seven others, was appointed to take part in the sessions of the process of Agen.² George Cuttino contends that Offord and the other commissioners of the process of Agen were constantly involved in arbitrating disputes until the end of 1333. After this date, though, the process seems to have lost its stability in that meetings were held less frequently, and commissioners were changed more often.³ However, John Offord was not one of the men to lose his position in the process, and on March 26, 1334, he and Bishop William Ayermine, another career diplomat, were among the eight men appointed to resume arbitration through the process of Agen.⁴ How long John Offord stayed in France and remained a member of the commission is questionable. A November 5, 1334, order, directing Offord and the others commissioned on March 26 to suspend the process until a fortnight after Michaelmas, indicates that they were conducting sessions until late 1334 and possibly resumed them

²Great Britain, Chancery, Diplomatic Documents, C47 30/2/12 and 13; Cuttino, "Process of Agen," p. 166 gives the impression that John Travers and John Hildesle were the only commissioners until March 1333. The two rolls of the proceedings of the process of Agen bear only their names as English commissioners. However, these documents do not record any proceedings after Apr. 11, 1332 so they cannot rule out the possibility of others being added to the commission after Apr. 11, 1332.


⁴Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 880, Mar. 26, 1334, commission, Eugène Déprez in Les préliminaires de la Querre de Cent Ans (Paris, 1902), p. 65 assumes that this commission was superceded by a Mar. 30, 1334 commission appointing John Stratford and three others to treat with the
in fall 1335.  

By the end of 1334, the process of Agen ceased to function, but John Offord's career as a diplomat did not end with the collapse of the process. Without an established bipartite commission to solve the many land disputes growing out of Edward's homage to Philip, relations between lord and vassal quickly degenerated. Irritated by Edward's failure to perform his feudal duties, Philip ordered the confiscation of Guienne on May 24, 1337. Though border skirmishes occurred, neither Edward nor Philip launched a full scale attack on each other. Ostensibly both monarchs hesitated because of Pope Benedict XII's mediation efforts. Benedict, like all the popes who resided at Avignon, realized that war between two of the greatest princes of the West would not serve the best interests of the papacy. Therefore, the pope utilized both papal nuncios and members of the local hierarchies in England and France to ward off a confrontation between the two realms. Benedict felt that he was successful when Philip and Edward agreed to a truce until Christmas 1337. However, both kings accepted


Benedict's peace overtures because neither had made sufficient financial or military preparations for war.  

By October 1337, Edward felt very sure of himself at home and decided how to respond diplomatically to Philip's order to confiscate his fief of Guienne. The king wanted to maintain a conciliatory facade, and so on October 3, 1337, he appointed John Offord along with seven others to an embassy, led by career diplomat Bishop Henry Burghersh, which was ordered to go to France to negotiate for a perpetual peace or at the least a temporary truce. Offord and the rest of the embassy received additional commissions so that they could handle a variety of issues if they arose. They were empowered to treat with the Scots; with the king's allies about establishing a wool staple; with Louis of Flanders about a marriage between his eldest son and the king's daughter Joan; with the count of Flanders and the commonalities of Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres, with the emperor Louis, and with anyone who wanted to make an alliance with England. Charged with the heavy responsibility of negotiating with so many different parties, John Offord's embassy set out from London on October 4, travelling from there to Sandwich, Antwerp, Dordrecht, and then to the French Benedict XII to the cardinals of St. Praxed's and St. Mary's Aquiro.


court at Paris. 11

As John Offord and the other plenipotentiaries were in transit, they received a letter which had been issued by the king in council on October 19, 1337. Soon after Offord's embassy had departed, Edward took the momentous step of entitling himself "King of England and France" in two letters patent, thereby claiming the throne of France. 12 Edward felt that Philip should be informed of his new title, and he delegated this awesome task to John Offord's embassy. On All Saints Day, Burghersh, Offord, and the others delivered a letter to Philip in which he was not addressed as king of France. He was told why he was not addressed as such: Edward, king of England, had a better claim to the throne on the basis of heredity. 13 Through the medium of this explanation, Offord's embassy negated Edward's vassalage to Philip and transformed a feudal dispute into a dynastic controversy. With these diplomatic maneuvers, the Hundred Years's War began.

John Offord did not return to England immediately


after he fulfilled his mission at the French court. In all probability, he did return to England at least by Easter of 1338, at which time his letters of attorney expired. Back home in England, he found Edward still claiming that he wished to avoid hostilities while, in reality, he was building up his war machine. Due to the efforts of the papal nuncios Peter, cardinal of St. Praxed's, and Bertrand, cardinal of St. Mary's in Aquiro, who had arrived in England five days before Christmas 1337, Edward promised not to invade France until March 1. Again yielding to the pressure of the papal nuncios, he agreed on February 24, 1338 to extend the truce until June 24, 1338. Yet at that date, Edward felt that he was ready to make his move, and he no longer had any intention of putting up with the demands of the papal nuncios. First he arranged for Peter of St. Praxed's and Bertrand of St. Mary's in Aquiro to leave England as quickly as possible, and then he announced that he no

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14 Richard Lescot, Chronique, ed. Jean Lemoine, Société de l'histoire de France, no. 278 (Paris, 1896), pp. 213-15, no. 5, Nov. 20, 1337, document says that John Offord was removed from a commission because he was still beyond the seas.


18 Ibid., p. 1033, May 1, 1338, order from Edward to William de Clynton.
longer intended to observe the truce because Philip had broken it so many times.\(^{19}\)

Shortly thereafter, Edward found himself in an embarrassing position: he had virtually declared war on France and then discovered that he did not have sufficient funds to launch his invasion.\(^{20}\) Hoping to prevent a French attack on England, Edward announced on June 21, 1338 that he was going to send an embassy to France to treat with "his cousin of France," "Philip king of France." John Offord, along with career diplomats Archbishop John Stratford and Bishop Richard Bury, was placed on this ten-man embassy.\(^{21}\)

Though John Offord received his commission in June, neither he nor his fellow ambassadors left for Philip's court until sometime after July 9.\(^{22}\) Philip and his court were sojourning in the area around Paris in June and July,\(^{23}\) and John Offord and his colleagues obtained an audience with Philip before Edward revoked all their powers to negotiate on July

\(^{19}\)Ibid., p. 1034, May 6, 1338, letter from Edward to William de Clynton.


\(^{22}\)Mirot, 59 (1898):565, nos. 80-81, these accounts state that Richard Bury left on July 9 and that John Stratford left on July 11; Geoffrey le Baker in Chronicon Angliae, ed. John A. Giles (London, 1847), p. 131, says that the embassy left on July 11; Adam Murimuth, Chronica p. 85 says that they left on July 16.

\(^{23}\)Déprez, Préliminaires, p. 185.
Since Edward had established his court at Antwerp by July 22, 1338, one would expect that John Offord and the embassy with which he was associated would go to Flanders once their powers had been revoked. However, the Chronicle of Lanercost says that Offord and his colleagues remained in Paris, where they suffered from famine.

While John Offord and the other envoys remained in France, Edward forced an alliance with Louis of Bavaria, the Holy Roman emperor, through which Edward received the title of vicar-general of all those parts of the empire on the left bank of the Rhine and beyond the Cologne. Benedict XII was furious at Edward for allying with Louis, whom the pope had declared a heretic and had excommunicated. No longer was the pope primarily concerned with restoring peace between England and France; now his main concern was breaking up the Anglo-imperial alliance. Consequently from September 1338 to December 1339, Benedict began to show some partiality toward France. His concern with the Anglo-imperial alliance and his pro-French bias were reflected in a letter of November 13, 1338, in which he attacked Edward for entering an alliance with the excommunicated emperor and


27 Jenkins, Papal Efforts for Peace, p. 41.
challenged Edward's claim that he was assisting Philip by granting tenths to the king of France. 28

While Benedict was now mainly concerned with the Anglo-imperial alliance, the papal nuncios, Peter of St. Praxed's and Bertrand of St. Mary's in Aquiro, were still laboring to prevent the outbreak of hostilities between England and France. Since John Offord and the other men in his embassy remained in France after July 22, they probably did have some informal contact with the papal nuncios, 29 but they did not receive formal powers to negotiate with them until November 15, 1338. At this time, Offord and the other envoys received power to treat with the cardinals of St. Praxed's and of St. Mary's in Aquiro about Edward's differences with Philip, and they also were commissioned to negotiate with Philip of Valois, "our cousin," "who styles himself as king of France." Yet, they were specifically forbidden to treat with Philip of Valois as "king of France." 30

The Chronicle of Lanercost says that the November negotiations took place at Arras, 31 but chronicler Henry Knighton says that the English embassy met with Philip at


29 Supra, pp. 96-97, note 14.

30 Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, pp. 1065-66, Nov. 15, 1338, commission; Bishop Henry Burghersh was added to the commission.

two different places, Arras and Compiègne. 32 The Compiègne session could possibly refer to a separate embassy that John Offord and the same ambassadors undertook in conformity with commissions issued on December 15, 1338. On this date, Offord and the others received powers to treat with the papal nuncios and with Philip of Valois, now entitled "king of France." 33 Both the Chronicle of Lanercost and Knighton do agree that the negotiations of November and December 1338 did nothing towards effecting peace between the two kingdoms. 34 Having dealt with the papal mediators and the French on both a formal and an informal basis since July, John Offord and his colleagues left the French court and travelled to Brabant to report the results of their negotiations to Edward III, who was then in Flanders. 35 With the conclusion of this mission, John Offord withdrew from English diplomatic service for almost two years.

John Offord's and William Bateman's Diplomatic Association, 1339-48

By 1340, John Offord had become an established member of Edward III's court through his diplomatic service in England's behalf. William Bateman, on the other hand, had had little, if any, contact with the English court by this

32 Knighton, Chronicon, 2:7.
Since 1330, he had been a member of the papal court at Avignon, serving first as a papal chaplain and then as papal auditor in the Rota. In 1339, he probably had some indirect contact with the English court through the person of John Offord, who served as Edward's proctor at Avignon during that year. Bateman's first direct encounter with the English court came in 1340, when Pope Benedict XII dispatched him as a papal nuncio to treat with Edward III. During this embassy, Bateman developed a relationship with the English court which was to lead to a fourteen-year diplomatic career in England's foreign service, and an association with John Offord that was to lead to several joint diplomatic missions in the cause of Anglo-French peace. Having been impressed with Bateman's diplomatic skills during his 1340 papal embassy, Edward gave him three diplomatic assignments in the winter of 1341-42. However, Bateman still considered himself a papal servant and continued to reside at the Avignon court until 1343. In this year, though, he left the papal curia and began his residence at the English court, seeking his fortunes as a royal diplomat just as John Offord had done in 1332.

Bateman and Offord were very prominent in English diplomacy from 1340 to 1347. It was in 1340 that England finally attacked France, but her first campaign was quickly terminated because of papal peace efforts. In September 1340, England and France agreed to the Treaty of Esplechin, which established a period of truce so that a final peace
treaty could be concluded. After several prolongations of the truce, however, hostilities resumed in the summer of 1342 but were terminated six months later in the January 1343 Treaty of Malestroit. Again a period of truce was established in order to work out the terms of a final peace treaty. Both John Offord and William Bateman played an important role in the various embassies that were dispatched to negotiate these truces, secure their prolongations, and conclude the final peace treaties for which they were originally devised. Even the efforts of two such skilled clerical diplomats failed to bring peace to Christendom, and in 1346, England attacked France with great success at Crécy and Calais. By 1346, Offord and Bateman were fairly well removed from English diplomacy, Offord because of the responsibilities that his rewards for diplomatic service brought him, and Bateman because of a disagreement with the royal abbey of Bury St. Edmund's.

Treaty of Esplechin, 1339-42

After five successive missions as an English diplomat, John Offord was appointed as Edward's proctor at the papal court. Offord received his appointment on January 12, 1339,¹ but he did not depart for the papal curia until May 28.² In his position as a proctor at Avignon, he was able


²Thomas F. Tout, Chapters in Mediaeval Administrative History, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1920-33), 5:17 quoting
to utilize both his legal and diplomatic experience because of the changing nature of the office. Basically a proctor was a legal agent who could transact business both for a king as well as for a private individual, but the proctor never personified the dignity of his principal. However, the duties of the papal proctor were constantly being expanded. By the period under consideration, he was not only expected to handle the king's legal business at the papal court but also diplomatic business that did not require an ambassador. Due to these changes in the role of papal proctor, John Offord spent his year in Avignon handling both legal and diplomatic matters for Edward.

Very possibly during this year as Edward's proctor at Avignon, John Offord came into contact with William Bateman, who was by then a papal auditor in the Rota. As a judge of the Rota, Bateman heard various cases placed before him by proctors such as John Offord. Bateman still held this position by 1340, and he and John Offord very

Great Britain, Wardrobe, Miscellaneous Books of the Exchequer, 203/121 which shows that from May 28, 1339 to May 27, 1340, at least, John Offord was "procurator regis in curia romana," receiving 50 marks for his service from the wardrobe.


4 Ibid., p. 643.

5 Tout, Chapters, 5:17.

6 Supra, p. 90, notes 18-19.
likely encountered one another in legal proceedings in the Rota.  

In the summer of 1340, John Offord and William Bateman definitely met one another, and this meeting took place in the diplomatic arena. In this encounter, Offord represented the king of England and William Bateman the pope. By the summer of 1340, the diplomatic scene in Europe had changed substantially. Edward had negotiated an alliance with the Flemish which finally gave him the confidence to attack the French. In June of the same year, Edward won a decisive battle at Sluys, and in July 1340, he began to lay siege to the town of Tournai. After three years of preparations and postponements, the fighting had actually begun.

Pope Benedict XII was distressed by the suffering at Tournai, but he still believed that he could restore peace. The pope recalled the unsuccessful nuncios, Peter of St. Praxed's and Bertrand of St. Mary's in Aquiro, and decided to dispatch two envoys of lesser rank, William Amicus and William Bateman, because they could travel more quickly and less expensively. So William Bateman of Norwich


9Jenkins, Papal Efforts for Peace, p. 61.

10CPL, 2 (1305-42):581, 7 Kal. Sept. 1340,
began his diplomatic career as an envoy for the papacy. Bateman was instructed on August 26, 1340 to tell Edward that he was willing to make peace with Philip despite the English victories; he should distrust his allies, the Flemings, the counts of Jülich and Guelders, and the Germans; he should not underestimate the strength of the French; and he should respect the censures issued against the heretic and excommunicant Louis of Bavaria. Lastly Bateman was to try to convince Edward of the pope's impartiality:

Also in case the king [Edward] hesitates to put himself in the hands of the pope, since the greater part of the cardinals assisting him are either themselves French, or have nephews beneficed and enjoying both the temporal and spiritual offices in that realm, it is to be joined that the pope has a particular goodwill to him and his realm, and that in matters which do not regard the Roman Church and its patrimony the pope does not consult with cardinals.

With these orders, Bateman departed for northern France to find John Offord so that he could obtain a safe-conduct to facilitate his mission.11

Neither William Bateman nor John Offord were to be directly responsible for lifting the siege of Tournai. Due to the efforts of Jeanne of Valois, mother of the count of Hainault and of the queen of England, sister of the king of France, and abbess of Fontenelles, the Truce of Esplechin was signed on September 24, 1340 providing for the

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instructions from Benedict XII to William Amicus.

11Ibid., pp. 581-83.
suspension of hostilities until June 24, 1341. The Treaty of Esplechin contained many of the elements that would be common to all the truces which were signed during the Hundred Years' War; enumeration of the parties to the truce; dates when the truce would begin in the lands of each party; descriptions of the cease-fire lines; provisions for the exchange of prisoners of war; enumeration of the rights of belligerents during the truce such as freedom of travel and trade; appointment of the keepers of the peace; arrangements for march days when representatives of both sides would meet on the marches to settle breaches of the truce; and provisions for future conferences to conclude a general peace treaty.

In a letter to Benedict XII dated November 18, 1340, Edward indicated that William Bateman did not meet with him until after the truce had been signed. Bateman presented the papal position in such a persuasive manner that the king decided to postpone until February 2, 1341 the peace conference which had been planned for November. Edward wished to do so in order that he might have time to correspond with the pope, formulate more detailed plans, and thereby further enhance the chances for a peace treaty. 13

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13CPL, 2 (1305-42):583, Nov. 18, 1340 letter from Edward III to Benedict XII.
Because William Bateman had demonstrated such diplomatic skills as a papal nuncio, King Edward decided to employ his talents in the name of the English crown. On three different occasions during the winter of 1340-41, the king commissioned Bateman to represent his interests on several matters; all of which resulted from his conflict with the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Stratford. In the autumn of 1340, Edward felt that he did not have sufficient funds to continue campaigning. The January to February 1340 Parliament had made a substantial grant in kind to Edward, and due to royal pressure, the July 1340 Parliament had agreed to sell part of the proceeds of the subsidy so that they could be remitted to Edward in coin. Archbishop John Stratford, as chancellor and head of the government while the king was abroad, was responsible for delivering the subsidy in coin. He had written to Edward telling him of the difficulty in collecting the subsidy, but he had recommended that Edward proceed with the attack on Tournai anyhow. During the siege, Stratford still found that he could not supply the necessary funds, and Edward was forced to sign the Truce of Esplechin due to insufficient finances.\textsuperscript{14}

In the following months, Edward's financial position continued to deteriorate, and he felt compelled to take steps to transform the truce into a general peace. Consequently he commissioned William Bateman, John Offord, and

John Thoresby, who were all to become career diplomats, to go to Avignon to treat for a peace. The king also ordered his ambassadors to request that the papacy aid in punishing Archbishop Stratford, the man who was responsible for putting him in such a desperate financial and military position. According to their instructions, the royal diplomats were to describe the course of Anglo-French relations from 1327 to 1340 during their first audience with the pope. In regard to charging the archbishop, Edward wanted his envoys to reiterate the following statement:

I believe that the archbishop wished me, by lack of money to be betrayed and killed. . . . The like another spoke to me of my wife, and apart to my wife of me, in order that, if he were listened to, he might provoke us both to such anger as to divide us forever.¹⁵

Then they were to ask the pope if he would serve as a mediator in peace negotiations that were to be conducted at the Avignon court. If the pope did agree to act as a mediator, he would have to treat the whole realm of France as Edward's by right of succession. Lastly Offord, Bateman, and Thoresby were to review the legalities involved with Edward's claim to the French throne.¹⁶ The three English envoys journeyed to Avignon and delivered the above message on December 12, 1340.¹⁷ In response to their requests,

¹⁵ CPL, 2 (1305-42): 583-88, Nov. 18, 1340, letter from Edward III to Benedict XII.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Benedict, who was growing infirm, wrote several letters to Edward and Philip in which he made such unrealistic proposals that they could hardly have aided in converting the truce into a permanent peace. The aging pope refused to deal with Archbishop Stratford and thereby returned the matter to Edward and Parliament for them to dispose of as they saw fit.  

Having completed their mission, John Offord and John Thoresby returned to England, but William Bateman remained at Avignon. Unlike Offord and Thoresby, who closely identified their interests with the English court, Bateman considered himself a papal servant and the Avignon court his permanent residence. Edward recognized Bateman's intimacy with the papal curia and wished to make use of it as his dispute with Stratford continued. One month after completing his first diplomatic assignment for Edward, Bateman received a second royal commission, and this time he was to deal with a matter concerning William Zouche, the treasurer of England, the archbishop-elect of York, and an ally of Archbishop Stratford's.

When Archbishop William Melton died on April 4, 1340, Edward took several steps to secure William Zouche's election to the archiepiscopal see: he gave Zouche custody of the archiepiscopal temporalities and sent him to York to preside over the cathedral chapter's election of Melton's

\[18\] Ibid., pp. 588-89, 15 Kal. Jan. 1340, letter from Benedict XII to Edward III.
successor. By April 14, Edward had decided that Zouche was too closely associated with Archbishop Stratford, who had already become a problem. Consequently he withdrew his support from Zouche, and he acted to secure William Kilsby's election: he removed the temporalities of York from Zouche's custody, and he obtained for Kilsby a prebend in the York chapter which he needed in order to be elected archbishop of York. Despite these royal efforts, Zouche was elected as archbishop of York by the cathedral chapter. Kilsby appealed to Avignon as did Zouche, and finally Zouche travelled to Avignon, where he remained until 1342, when the dispute was finally settled in his favor.19

As William Bateman was just settling into the routine of his former life at the papal curia, four English ambassadors arrived with a royal request that he lead them in prosecuting Edward's case against William Zouche. With Bateman as their leader, they were to claim that William Zouche had not obtained the customary royal consent to his election; that he had appealed his case to the papacy without royal consent; that he had abused his temporal office as treasurer by embezzling royal funds; and that a royal commission had found him guilty of murder.20

Two months later, in March 1341, John Wawayn and Thomas de Insula arrived at Avignon with another royal

19 Tout, Chapters, 3:116-18.
commission for William Bateman. 21 Again he was to try to use his influence with the pope to secure a papal condemnation of Archbishop Stratford. 22 Despite the three occasions upon which Bateman had been commissioned as a royal diplomat, he felt that his interests could be better served by remaining at the papal court. 23 However, his residence at the papal court did not ultimately mean the end of his royal diplomatic service.

While Bateman remained at the papal court, Edward again utilized John Offord's talents to further the goals of English diplomacy. Soon after Edward was reconciled with Archbishop Stratford in May 1341, the king had to turn his attention to foreign affairs. The Truce of Esplechin was due to expire on June 24, 1341, and neither side had taken any concrete steps to conclude a final peace treaty. Not wanting to resume hostilities, Edward was able to secure a prolongation of the armistice until August 29, 1341. One of the terms of the prolongation was that a peace conference must be held by August 1, 1341. 24


22 Ibid., p. 1118; the letter is dated Mar. 14, 1340, but it must be misdated because the quarrel with Zouche did not occur until after Archbishop Melton's death on April 4, 1340.

23 CPR, Edw. III, 5 (1340-43):158, Mar. 26, 1341, William Bateman, who was staying at the papal court, appointed an attorney in England for three years.

24 Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 116, June 18,
On July 14, 1341, Edward placed John Offord on a ten-man embassy which was to go to Antoigne in order to treat with the French about transforming the truce into a permanent peace.\textsuperscript{25} John Offord and two others on the embassy were especially delegated to go to Antoigne, as quickly as possible, to do the preparatory work for the negotiations.\textsuperscript{26} The actual sessions, however, did not begin until after August 1, 1341.\textsuperscript{27} Sometime between August 1 and September 2, 1341, John Offord and his colleagues agreed to a prolongation of the truce because they were unable to conclude a final peace.\textsuperscript{28} According to the terms of the accord that Offord was involved in negotiating, the truce was extended to June 24, 1342.\textsuperscript{29}

Chances were slight that the truce which John Offord helped to prolong would endure, let alone be converted into a permanent peace. The reason for this dismal prospect was England's growing confidence in her ability to defeat France. Though England had already lost her German

\textsuperscript{1341, letter from Edward III to the commonalities of Flanders.}

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., p. 1168, July 14, 1341, commission.

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., p. 1169, July 20, 1341, commission.

\textsuperscript{27}Mirot, 59 (1898):565, no. 84, William Clynton's account; as leader of the embassy, he did not leave England until Aug. 1, 1341.

\textsuperscript{28}Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1175, Sept. 2, 1341, letter from Edward to the commonality of Bayonne; Mirot, 59 (1898):565, no. 84, William Clynton's account; he returned to England on Aug. 25, 1341.

\textsuperscript{29}Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1177, Sept. 27,
ally and was fast losing her Flemish allies, her prospects of victory grew brighter because of the quarrel over succession which has broken out in Brittany in April 1341. One of the contestants, John de Montfort, came to England shortly after the Treaty of Esplechin had been extended. During his visit, de Montfort promised to recognize Edward as king of France if Edward would aid him in pursuing his claim to the duchy of Brittany. By backing de Montfort, Edward would gain a strong base for operations on Philip's western flank. Consequently during the spring of 1342, Edward prepared to launch another attack on France, but this time from Brittany rather than Flanders. As in the past, Edward tried to conceal his actual military plans by dispatching embassies to respond to the efforts which others made to effect a reconciliation.\(^{30}\) John Offord and William Bateman participated extensively in the diplomacy of 1342 with Offord representing Edward's interest and Bateman representing the interests of Avignon by acting as a papal nuncio.

In the spring of 1342, John Offord was attached to three embassies that were to go to France and project a very sincere desire to conclude a final peace treaty. On January 4, 1342, John Offord received the first of these three assignments. He, along with three others, was ordered to go to Antoigne to treat with a French embassy on the day after

\(^{30}\)Perroy, Hundred Years War, pp. 114-17.
the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin. No records exist to indicate the specific circumstances nor the results of the mission, but Offord and the others were directed to return to London and to report on the results of their sessions with the French.\footnote{Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1185, Jan. 4, 1342, commission.}

In April, John Offord received his second assignment to go to France, but this time his mission resulted from the peace efforts made by the king of Castile. Alfonso XI of Castile, like the pope, hoped for a reconciliation between Edward and Philip so he could draw upon their combined strength in fighting off the Moslem threat.\footnote{Jenkins, Papal Efforts for Peace, p. 69.} Therefore, King Alfonso sent an ambassador to Edward in March 1342, asking him to settle his differences with Philip of Valois.\footnote{Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1190, Mar. 28, 1342, letter of protection.} On March 28, 1342, Edward wrote to Alfonso stating that he was willing to negotiate for peace even though Philip constantly broke the existing truce, and that he was intending to send an embassy to Philip.\footnote{Ibid., Mar. 28, 1342, letter from Edward to Alfonso.} John Offord was added to this embassy which was to go to France to treat with Philip. All the ambassadors were directed to seek the advice of England's Flemish allies on all issues.
before any decisions were made.\textsuperscript{35}

Despite Spanish encouragement, Offord's second mission was not successful, nor was his third mission in May 1342. On May 24, Offord along with four others received a commission to treat with the French and then to go to Flanders and Brabant to treat with Edward's allies.\textsuperscript{36} Offord's three spring missions failed to dupe the French, who proved unwilling to extend the truce which was due to expire in June 1342.

Possibly the reason why Offord's three embassies failed was the absence of papal pressure that accompanied so many other missions to negotiate with the French. Due to the illness and death of Benedict XII and the election of Clement VI in the spring of 1342, the papacy did not take positive steps to implement its peace program. Once Clement VI had ascended the papal throne, he too adopted a policy of trying to settle the dispute between Edward and Philip. He took immediate action because the prolonged truce was due to expire on June 24, 1342.

In a commission dated June 4, 1342, Edward described Clement's first attempt to bring peace between the two quarreling monarchs. As soon as Clement learned that Edward had dispatched the aforementioned May 24 embassy to France, he ordered William Bateman to go to Flanders and

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., p. 1191, Apr. 5, 1342, commission; Mirot, 59 (1898):565, no. 85, William fitz Warin's account.

\textsuperscript{36}Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1196, May 24, 1342, commission.
there to intercept the English envoys. William Bateman who had been residing at the papal court since his January 1341 mission,\textsuperscript{37} journeyed north from Avignon and overtook Offord and his colleagues on the coast of the English Channel just before they were about to cross. The papal nuncio told them that he had two letters for Edward, one from the pope and the other from the college of cardinals. He requested that they wait in Flanders until he delivered them to Edward, and until the king had a chance to reconsider his attitude toward Philip. The embassy agreed, and William Bateman went to England.

The letters which Bateman brought from the pope are no longer extant, and even now, it is not clear how Bateman persuaded Edward to reconsider; but once again he had made a very definite impression on the English king. On June 4, 1342, Edward ordered John Offord to accompany Bateman to the French court in order to reopen negotiations under the guidance of two cardinals who were proceeding from Avignon to Paris at that moment.\textsuperscript{38} Offord was to attempt to secure a prolongation of the truce, but he was to remind the French that the terms of any agreement had to be found acceptable by the Flemish.

Whatever terms Bateman, Offord, and the cardinals

\textsuperscript{37} Supra, pp. 111-12, notes, 21,23.

\textsuperscript{38} Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1199, June 4, 1342, letter from Edward III to pope Clement VI.
proposed to the Flemings, they did not include absolution from the bans of excommunication that had been imposed on them when they revolted against the count of Flanders, and the Flemish would not agree to their proposed settlement. Because Offord and Bateman failed to satisfy the Flemish, the truce expired on June 24, and on October 5, 1342, Edward set sail for Brittany which he intended to use as a base for his attack.

**Treaty of Malestroit, 1343-48**

Whether John Offord or William Bateman could have arranged any settlement which would have warded off hostilities is questionable. Edward was ready to fight, and he believed he could defeat the French by engaging them in a decisive battle. As winter closed in, both the French and English armies entrenched themselves at Vannes, and very little fighting, let alone a decisive battle, ensued. In December, the weather was very harsh with supplies diminishing, horses dying, and discontent growing among the ranks. Because of this situation, Pope Clement VI thought that Edward would be anxious to reopen peace negotiations. In a December 1342 letter, he informed Edward that he was sending two papal mediators, Peter, bishop of Palestrina, and Anibaldus, bishop of Tusculum, to the

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French priory of Malestroit for this purpose.  

Edward proved receptive to Clement's offer and sent an English embassy to meet with the French and the papal nuncios at Malestroit. The composition of this embassy is uncertain because its commission is no longer extant. However, the chroniclers Walter Hemingburgh and Adam Murimuth both gave some details about its membership. Walter Hemingburgh indicates that the embassy was composed solely of laymen, and that Henry of Lancaster, earl of Derby, was its leader, but Adam Murimuth includes the clerk John Offord in the embassy's membership. Since Murimuth is generally more detailed in his account of the negotiations at Malestroit, it can safely be assumed that John Offord was a member of the embassy. The January treaty established a period of truce which was to last until Michaelmas 1343 and for three years after that date. In addition to the usual provisions of the truce, the Treaty of Malestroit provided that both kings would send embassies to Avignon before June 24, 1343, to try to transform the truce into a permanent peace by December 25, 1343. This provision of the treaty of Malestroit provided the

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41 *Foedera, R. C.*, vol. 2, part 2, p. 1216, Dec. 2, 1342, letter sent by Clement VI to Edward III.


44 Avesbury, *De gestis Edwardi tertii*, pp. 344, 348-51.
circumstances that brought William Bateman back into the diplomatic service of the king of England.

In the months that followed, neither England nor Philip did anything to prepare for the peace negotiations planned for June 1343. As the opening date approached, the papacy once again took the initiative, and Pope Clement wrote to Edward requesting that he immediately send ambassadors to Avignon to meet with a French embassy. Trying to indicate the moderate mood of the French, the pope added that Philip was willing to free Edward's Breton ally, John de Montfort, in return for certain securities. On May 20, 1343, Edward appointed William Bateman to a five-man embassy which was to go to Avignon to negotiate with the French ambassadors before the pope. In these negotiations, the pope was to act, not as a judge, but as a private person and common mediator. Accompanying William Bateman for the first time on a diplomatic mission was John Offord's brother, Andrew Offord, another clerical career diplomat. William Bateman, John Offord's brother, and the rest of the embassy departed on June 1 for Avignon and returned on June 20 having made little progress toward peace.

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46 Ibid., May 20, 1343, commission.

47 Mirot, 59 (1898):566, no. 90, Andrew Offord's account is the only extant account for a member of the embassy and says that he was on a mission June 1-20, 1343.
On July 6, 1343, King Edward decided to send a fourteen-man embassy to Avignon; and this time, he assigned John Offord as well as William Bateman to the embassy charging them with the responsibility of negotiating a final peace. Bateman, Offord, and their fellow ambassadors again failed to work out a final peace treaty, and their commission suggests why they did not succeed. According to their letter of procuration, the English envoys were to discourage Clement VI from lifting bans of excommunication that he had imposed on two areas in the Rhone Valley. These bans had been issued by Pope Benedict XII in 1340 when one of Edward's ambassadors, Nicholas Flisco, had been seized while sailing in a boat down the Rhone River. Flisco was on a mission to treat for peace under papal auspices and to hire Genoese war galleys. Since the bans had been imposed, King Philip had been requesting that they be lifted. Also Philip had been demanding that the papacy bring charges against Flisco, who was subsequently detained at Avignon. Perhaps because Edward's ambassadors demanded that the charges against Flisco be dropped and the excommunication bans maintained, Offord, Bateman, and their colleagues


found the French embassy reluctant to finalize any proposals for a peace treaty.

Once again on August 29, 1343, Bateman and Offord were appointed to a large embassy of thirteen men which was to negotiate with a French embassy before the pope, who, however, was to act as a private mediator. The negotiations which took place in September did not produce a peace treaty, and so the English envoys remained at Avignon in order to secure a peace treaty before Christmas, which was the goal set by the Treaty of Malestroit. During the autumn of 1343, relations between England and the papacy deteriorated due to another royal attack on the system of papal provisions. Andrew Offord, who was also a member of the August 29, 1343 commission, returned to England to tell Edward that negotiations had been suspended because Offord and Bateman and their colleagues did not have sufficient power to treat with the French. On November 29, 1343, Edward sent a letter to his embassy at Avignon giving them specific power to agree to continue negotiations for peace until Christmas 1344. In addition, Bateman and Offord were to inform the pope that Philip frequently broke the truce. Despite this new commission, Offord and Bateman were not successful in obtaining a peace and returned to England


52 Grandes chroniques, 2:430.

53 Murimuth, Chronica, pp. 147-49.
shortly after Christmas. In the years since 1332 when John Offord had commenced his diplomatic career, he had been repeatedly rewarded by Edward for his brilliant foreign service. Edward had come to trust Offord to the extent that he appointed him keeper of the privy seal on June 4, 1342, a position that Offord held until June 7, 1344. The position of keeper of the privy seal was indeed a fitting and valuable reward for a trusted clerical servant because it "opened up a straight career to talent or useful service, and surpassed even the older offices of state, the Chancery and Treasury, in giving great prelates to the church." As keeper of the privy seal, Offord accompanied Edward on his expedition to France from October 4, 1342 to March 2, 1343. In accordance with established custom, the keeper of the privy seal was given the great seal while he served the king abroad. Therefore in addition to serving as keeper of the privy seal, John Offord kept the great seal from October 4, 1342 to March 2, 1343. As keeper of both seals, John Offord was in effect the king's chief minister abroad, and as such, he oversaw the activities of the privy seal clerks

54 Foedera, R. C., vol. 2, part 2, p. 1239, Nov. 29, 1343, commission; letter from Edward III to Clement VI.
55 Tout, Chapters, 6:52.
and those chancery clerks who accompanied Edward abroad.  


Though William Bateman's English diplomatic career began nine years after John Offord's, he had participated in several of the missions that resulted in Offord's temporal and ecclesiastical advancement. During his years of diplomatic service, William Bateman was not able to win Edward's confidence and respect to the degree that his diplomatic colleague was able to do. The documents indicate that the only royal position he ever held was that of a clerk. If Edward had no interest in rewarding William Bateman for his diplomatic service, the papacy at Avignon was anxious to compensate the man who had done so much to promote the papal peace policy. When William Bateman was stripped of the prebend of Banbury in the diocese of Lincoln, which he had obtained only through extensive

58 Tout, Chapters, 5:18-19.


60 CPR, Edw. III, 6 (1343-45):29, May 10, 1343, pardon.
litigation in ecclesiastical courts, Pope Clement VI immediately reserved a prebend for him which was to become vacant at the time of Manuel de Flisco's consecration as bishop of Vercelli. 61

Yet, Clement wished to reward William Bateman with even greater honors. His opportunity came on December 19, 1343 when Bishop Anthony Beck of Norwich died. Having reserved the right of appointment to the bishopric of Norwich, the pope provided William Bateman to this wealthy see in which he had been born. 62 The cathedral chapter duly elected Bateman, 63 and in March, Edward restored the temporalities of the see to the bishop-elect. Bateman wished to be consecrated at the papal court where he was highly respected, and in the middle of March, he departed for Avignon, where he was consecrated on May 23, 1344. 64 Nevertheless, Edward did not allow him to leave without charging him with some royal business. Upon Bateman's consecration as bishop of Norwich, he had to vacate his deanery of Lincoln, and Edward saw this vacancy as an opportunity to


63 Blomefield, History of Norfolk, 2:360.

reward John Offord further for his diplomatic service.\textsuperscript{65} Edward petitioned Rome,\textsuperscript{66} and Adam Murimuth says that William Bateman had to use his influence with the papacy while he was at Avignon to secure Offord's provision. Ironically Bateman was ordered to secure the provision of another clerical diplomat to a lucrative benefice when Edward failed to reward him in any way for his ambassadorial service in England's behalf.\textsuperscript{67}

Though Edward charged William Bateman with the job of securing Offord's appointment to the deanery of Lincoln, he did not require that he handle any diplomatic matters during his visit to the court at Avignon. In the spring of 1344, Edward did not wish to involve the papacy in his diplomatic problems because he was quarreling with the pope over papal provisions.\textsuperscript{68} This dispute over ecclesiastical matters did not stop Clement VI, though, from trying to persuade Edward to negotiate once again with the French. The truce established by the Treaty of Malestroit was still operative and would not expire until Michaelmas 1346. The pope believed that this period of truce could still be used


\textsuperscript{66}\textit{CPP}, 1 (1342-1419):47, granted on 3 Id. Apr. 1344.

\textsuperscript{67}Murimuth, \textit{Chronica}, p. 157.

\textsuperscript{68}Déprez, "Conférence d'Avignon," pp. 303-4.
to conclude a final peace if he were allowed to serve as a mediator. Finally Edward yielded to papal pressure, and on August 4, 1344, he sent an embassy of six men to Avignon to treat with Philip's ambassadors. William Bateman was appointed leader, while John Offord, keeper of the privy seal, was designated second in command; and both were aided by Offord's brother Andrew. Unlike William Bateman's and John Offord's other embassies, their mission from August to November 1344 is very well documented. In addition to a journal which narrates the events of the various sessions, Bishop Bateman wrote three letters and Offord ten letters describing the negotiations in which they were involved.

William Bateman, John Offord, and the four other members of the embassy arrived at Avignon somewhere before September 13, 1344. As soon as they arrived, they went before the pope to give him their credentials and enumerate the three issues that Edward wanted them to discuss in subsequent sessions: attempts in Brittany against the Treaty of Malestroit, a final peace, and reservations and papal provisions. Much to the embassy's consternation, the French ambassadors had not arrived and would not until the

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71Ibid., pp. 202-5, no. 57, Sept. 13, 1344, letter from John Offord to Edward III.
middle of October. The first round of negotiations finally opened on October 22 and lasted until October 28. The pope opened the first session with a conciliatory speech, requesting that both sides develop new approaches towards their differences rather than reiterate the same tired positions. Immediately Bishop Bateman stated that the dynastic dispute between England and France had to be settled before any real agreement could be reached on the question of Guienne or on infractions of the truce in Brittany. Disappointed with England's position, the pope decided to put several cardinals in charge of the early sessions because he supposedly had to handle other pressing matters. John Offord realized how unpromising these sessions were, and he wrote to Edward describing his situation and asking that the king recall his embassy. Nevertheless, Edward did not recall Bateman and his colleagues.

The second set of sessions took place from November 7 to 13 under the direction of the cardinals, Peter, bishop of Palestrina, and Anibaldus, bishop of Tusculum. The cardinals proposed several plans, one of which they hoped

72 Ibid., p. 211, no. 57, Nov. 17, 1344, letter from Hugh de Neville to Edward III.
73 Ibid., pp. 235-37, no. 58, journal.
74 Ibid., p. 221, no. 57, (no date) letter from John Offord to Edward III.
75 Ibid., p. 240, no. 58, journal.
76 Ibid., p. 224, no. 57, (no date) letter from John Offord to Edward III.
Bateman, Offord, and the other English ambassadors would find acceptable. All of the plans were based on the assumption that they could not forge a permanent peace if the king of England remained in the position of a vassal to the king of France for Guienne. To eliminate this feudal tie, the cardinals proposed three alternatives; that Edward take the duchy of Guienne without doing homage for it; that Edward give up Guienne in return for church lands in England, money, or Scottish recognition of his overlordship; or that a marriage be arranged which would unite the French and English royal houses. Bateman and Offord immediately understood that all these proposals bypassed the issue with which they were most concerned, the dynastic question. Offord wrote back to England to explain how the negotiations had stalemated, and he stated that he and his fellow ambassadors were in grave danger:

I have been warned by a friendly person that a very influential cardinal had said in consistory yesterday 'if the nuncios of St. Siège [papacy] are badly received in England and if it happens that they are retained as prisoners we will make use of reprisals and will make the English plenipotentiaries undergo the same sort of thing when at Avignon.'

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77 Ibid., pp. 241-45, no. 58, journal.

78 Ibid., pp. 245-48.

79 Ibid., p. 228, no. 57, Nov, 12, 1344, letter from John Offord to the archbishop of Canterbury. "Vos modo conjecturare poteritis qualem exitum habebimus quatinus ad reformationem atemptatorum et pacis attinet per tractatum, in quo licet multa tractata sint. . . et per multos dies tractaverimus, nichil adhuc sensimus scribi dignum. Praemunitus sum etiam per unum dominum et amicum quod unus maximus homo debutit heri dixisse in consistorio haec verba. 'Si isti praelati qui mittuntur in Angliam in ambassiata,
The negotiations resumed on November 20 and were to last until November 29. The pope replaced the cardinals and presided over the sessions personally. In the midst of the sessions, two envoys, John Thoresby and Raoul Spigurnell, arrived from England with directions for William Bateman. Because the king realized that the dynastic question was being evaded, Edward directed Bateman to request that the period for establishing a permanent peace be extended until the middle of Lent 1345, and that the truce itself ought to be properly enforced in the interim. In addition, John Offord was specifically asked to secure papal dispensations for the marriage of the king's eldest son to the daughter of the duke of Brabant, and for the marriage of his eldest daughter Isabel and the duke's eldest son.  

Frustrated by the events at the end of November, Bateman again wrote to Edward requesting that his embassy be recalled. Even before he received an answer to his letter, the third group of sessions came to an end on November 29, 1344. As soon as the conference ended, William Bateman wrote to England:

non recipiantur et capiantur, faciemus illud idem de suis qui in curia hic existunt.' Istis consideratis videtur michi quod nec est nichici benevolus, nec amicus, qui erit illius sententiae quod, ingrune guerra inter sacerdotium et regnum, in romana curia debeam tantis subici periculis et inutiliter commorai."


81 Froissart, Oeuvres, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 18: 231-32, no. 57, Nov. 26, 1344, letter from William Bateman to Edward III.
asking that he be allowed to return to his diocese. However, both John Offord and William Bateman did not leave the papal court before January 20, 1345.

When William Bateman and John Offord returned to England is not clear. Because of Bateman's concern with diocesan affairs in Norwich, and Offord's demanding position as keeper of the privy seal, they probably returned to England in the late winter or early spring of 1345. Bishop William Bateman did not have an opportunity to go to his diocese for a lengthy period of time because he had to depart for Avignon on March 13, 1345 along with Andrew Offord, and he did not return until August 7, 1345. No records exist which indicate the purpose or results of the bishop's journey. While William Bateman was travelling to and from Avignon, John Offord, keeper of the privy seal, remained in England tending to domestic affairs. However, Offord was not to hold the office of keeper for very long. On October 26, 1345, Edward appointed his trusted servant John Offord to the position of chancellor of England, an

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82 Ibid., p. 234, no. 57, c. end of Nov. 1344, letter from William Bateman to the archbishop of Canterbury.

83 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 27, Jan. 20, 1345, letter from Edward to John Offord and William Bateman in which Edward asks his two ambassadors, still at Avignon to handle charges brought against Wolstan, bishop of Rochester, at the papal court.

84 Mirot, 59 (1898):568, no. 106, Andrew Offord's account indicates that he travelled to the papal court in the company of the bishop of Norwich.
office which he was to hold until his death in 1349.  

In the meantime, Clement continued to work for peace, and his efforts increased with the knowledge that Edward was once again massing troops for another invasion. In reply to papal inquiries, Edward said that he was willing to make peace, but how could he when Philip was constantly breaking the truce. Finally in November 1345, the pope sent the archbishop of Ravenna to England to try and arrange for peace negotiations under papal auspices. Edward, though, was not pleased with the renewed papal effort and refused to meet with the papal nuncio supposedly because he was "too much hindered by various difficult matters." Instead, he delegated the responsibility to a commission of seven led by Archbishop John Stratford and which included John Offord and William Bateman. The seven were to join his son Edward, the Prince of Wales, in negotiating sessions with the archbishop of Ravenna. Aided by Edward, the Prince of Wales, they were to attempt to convince the papal nuncio that Philip of France, not Edward, was responsible for perpetuating the

85CCR, Edw. III, 7 (1343-46):661, Oct. 24, 1345, memorandum that the great seal was to be given to John Offord; 563, Oct. 26, 1345, memorandum that the seal was delivered to John Offord.

86Longman, Edward the Third, 1:230-33.

87Lescot, Chronique, p. 65.

88CPR, Edw. III, 6 (1343-45):569, Nov. 8, 1345, commission.
From the time of his appointment as chancellor in 1345 to his death in 1349, Offord devoted most of his attention to domestic affairs. From July 1346 to October 1347, Edward was in France directing the siege of Calais. In the meantime, Lionel of Antwerp, a boy of eight, was appointed custos Angliae, but the real responsibility for governing in England was placed in the hands of the chancellor, John Offord, who remained in the country. Despite all the domestic responsibility that was placed in Offord's hands, he still served as a diplomat on several occasions. On July 11, 1346, he was appointed to aid Archbishop John Stratford in receiving envoys from Spain and Bohemia, and at some time in the year of 1346, he again journeyed to the papal court at Avignon as several payments in the Issue Rolls indicate. Lastly in April 1347 while Edward was besieging Calais, Clement VI requested that John Offord join the English embassy that was to meet a papal messenger in France and proceed to the court at Avignon. Neither Offord nor any of the others

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89 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, pp. 62-63, Nov. 11, 1345, letter from Edward III to Clement VI.


92 Great Britain, Exchequer, Issue Rolls, E403/336, 26, 27, 29, 32, 35.
fulfilled this request.\textsuperscript{93}

After his appointment as chancellor, John Offord withdrew from diplomacy because he was so heavily involved with domestic affairs. Bishop William Bateman, too, was conspicuously absent from English diplomacy after the November 1345 mission. He failed to receive any diplomatic commissions from 1345 to 1348 because he incurred the king's disfavor in a jurisdictional dispute with the abbot of Bury St. Edmund's. As a newly appointed bishop, William Bateman wanted to make a visitation of his diocese of Norwich in which the royal abbey of Bury is located. Bateman ordered the abbot to prepare for his arrival, but the abbot objected to the proposed visitation on the basis that Bury St. Edmund's was a royal abbey and therefore exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. Bishop Bateman cited the abbot in a local court and appealed the case to Avignon.

The opposing side chose to fight Bateman in the Court of King's Bench, where they could rely on Edward's help. The Court of King's Bench convicted Bishop Bateman on charges of praemunire, which resulted in the loss of his temporalities and the imposition of a thirty-talent fine.\textsuperscript{94} The bishop of Norwich refused to pay the fine, but Edward did not imprison him. Finally Edward allowed Bateman to

\textsuperscript{93}CPL, 3 (1342-62):32, 8 Id, Apr, 1347, letter from Clement to several English clerics.

\textsuperscript{94}Blomefield, History of Norfolk, 2:360-61.
present his case before a council of prelates which was held in London on September 25, 1347. In this meeting, the bishop submitted himself to the king, and as a result the king ordered the restitution of his temporalities. Later Edward even withdrew the thirty-talent fine levied on Bateman.

By 1348, William Bateman was once again on good terms with Edward, and the king quickly drew upon his diplomatic talents to deal with the renewed papal peace program. Nevertheless, this new royal confidence did not stop William Bateman from pursuing his case at the papal court in 1350. Finally in May 1351, an English ecclesiastical tribunal forced the bishop of Norwich to withdraw his case from all courts in which it was pending, and from pursuing the matter any further.

As William Bateman returned to the diplomatic service of his country, chances were very remote that he would again team up with John Offord on a diplomatic assignment. Not only were John Offord's domestic responsibilities great as chancellor of England, but in the autumn of 1348, he was elevated to the highest ecclesiastical office in the land.

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95 CCR, Edw. III, 8 (1346-49):338, Nov. 13, 1347, order from Edward III to the sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.


In addition, his health may have already begun to decline by this time. With the death of Archbishop Stratford on August 23, 1348, Edward had within his power the opportunity of rewarding John Offord for his royal diplomatic and domestic service with the archiepiscopacy of Canterbury. In the years from 1340 to 1348, Offord had been well within the graces of the king. However, he had not received promotion to high ecclesiastical office because few lucrative sees fell vacant during this period. Edward tried to obtain Offord's appointment by influencing the election of the conventual chapter at Canterbury. The chapter did not elect him possibly because he was too ill at the time, or because he tried to obtain his appointment by bribery. At the papal level, however, Edward was able to secure the provision of John Offord on September 24, 1348. On November 27, he received the temporalities of his office.

Perhaps because of Offord's illness, the pope

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99 Edward could have appointed John to Hereford in 1344, Durham in 1345, and St. David's in 1347. Of these sees, Durham was the only one that was considered desirable. M. D. Knowles, "The English Bishops, 1070-1532," in Medieval Studies Presented to Aubrey Gwynn, ed. J. A. Watt, J. B. Morrall, and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1961), p. 292.

100 Bruo, 3:1391.


allowed the archbishop-elect to be consecrated in England rather than at Avignon. However by March 1349, Offord had not been consecrated, probably because the plague was raging at the time, and any type of gathering was discouraged. Also Offord could hardly take any chances in his weakened condition. Despite these precautions, Adam Murimuth tells us that John Offord did contract the plague, and died at his house at Totenhall near London on May 20, 1349. John Offord died, then, as archbishop-elect of Canterbury and never had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of his reward for diplomatic and domestic service for Edward and for England. Unfortunately none of the sources indicate how William Bateman reacted to the death of his former diplomatic colleague. Bateman was in England at the time of John Offord's death, and one can


105 Ibid., p. 150, petition granted 2 Id. Mar. 1349.


107 John Offord was already ill at the time of his appointment in the fall of 1348 and not from the plague. The Black Death hit England in Aug. 1348, but three months passed before it reached London. Longman, Edward the Third, 1:302-3.

108 Murimuth, Chronica, p. 179.


110 Mirot, 59 (1898):570, no. 132, William Bateman's account.
only speculate as to the emotions of a man who had failed to receive any type of royal recognition for his diplomatic service, when he heard of the death of his colleague who had.

William Bateman's Later Career, 1348-55

During the years from 1340 to 1347 when William Bateman's and John Offord's careers were closely intertwined, Bateman failed to win King Edward's confidence to the degree that Offord did. As a consequence, the king did not reward Bateman with any secular or ecclesiastical offices, and he took the side of the abbey of Bury St. Edmund's in its dispute with Bishop Bateman. With relations between the king and his former diplomatic servant so strained since 1345, it remained to be seen in 1348, whether William Bateman would receive any additional diplomatic assignments. Apparently the king thought that the bishop's diplomatic talents far outweighed his questionable loyalty, and so he felt justified in employing him once again as a royal diplomat. From 1348 to 1354, Edward commissioned Bateman to thirteen embassies and designated him as leader of nine of them. The most distinguished part of Bateman's diplomatic career, then, came following the end of his association with John Offord and after England's victories at Crécy and Calais.

Since England had won spectacular military victories at Crécy and Calais in 1346 and 1347, France was more than anxious to sign a truce with England in order to negotiate
a final peace treaty. This truce was prolonged several times, but it expired before a peace treaty was concluded, as did the truce negotiated in February 1353. William Bateman played a prominent role in the diplomacy that resulted in the conclusion of these truces, their subsequent prolongation, and the peace talks which they initiated. He also helped to negotiate the March 1354 truce which allowed him to work with the French to conclude a final peace in the Treaty of Guînes. Unfortunately this treaty, that he labored so hard to arrange, was repudiated during his last diplomatic assignment in autumn 1354.

When William Bateman emerged from his three-year retirement from diplomacy, the first assignment that he received was to go to Avignon and work for a final peace with the aid of the pope. Having won a great victory at Crécy in the summer of 1346, King Edward went on to attack Calais in August of 1346, and the siege lasted until September 28, 1347. Upon the request of Clement VI, Edward agreed to lift the siege and, a period of truce was established in order to conclude a final peace settlement.¹ In the months that followed, neither Edward, Philip, nor Clement took any steps to negotiate for a permanent peace. As the campaigning season opened in the spring of 1348, Clement began to fear that Edward would launch another invasion, and he requested that England continue to support the

truce. As a consequence of this papal effort, Edward dispatched an embassy to France to secure a prolongation of the truce due to expire on July 8, 1348, and he placed Bishop William Bateman at the head of a four-man commission which was to go to Avignon to treat with the pope about a final peace. The truce was prolonged until the end of October, but Bateman's embassy was not responsible for this prolongation.

The truce did prevent the resumption of hostilities and set the stage for Bateman to attempt to arrange a final peace. On September 25, 1348, Bishop Bateman was commissioned to go to Calais, where he was to treat with a French embassy for peace though no papal representatives were to be present. Bateman and the four men under his direction departed on September 26, 1348, and the embassy took about three months. During this period, Bateman did not conclude a peace treaty but did arrange for an extension of the already existing truce until September 1, 1349.

While Bishop Bateman was dealing with the French at

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6 Mirot, 59 (1898):570, no. 129, William Bateman's account stated that he was on a mission Sept. 26-Dec. 16, 1348.
7 *Foedera*, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 177, Nov. 13, 1348, prolongation of the truce.
Calais, he received another commission directing him to go to Flanders as leader of an eight-man embassy which was to negotiate with the count and people of Flanders. Assisting him in this mission were the two other clerical career diplomats, Michael Northburgh, archdeacon of Suffolk, and Andrew Offord. With the added responsibility of going to Flanders, Bateman was on the continent longer than expected, and he and his men did not return to England until December, 16, 1348. His lengthy mission did produce a treaty in which Count Louis agreed to pardon his subjects who had rebelled against him and to confirm the alliances that his subjects had made with Edward.

In March 1349, Clement again wanted Philip's and Edward's representatives to meet and negotiate in the presence of papal mediators. The pope commissioned Bertram, bishop of Bologna, to act as mediator, but because of Bertram's illness, he was replaced by Pastor, archbishop of Embrun, and Bertrand, bishop of Senez. In response to these papal initiatives, Edward placed Bishop Bateman at the head of an embassy of seven members that was to go to Calais to treat with the French for either a final peace treaty or

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8 Ibid., p. 175, Oct. 11, 1348, commission.
9 Mirot, 59 (1898):570, no. 129, William Bateman's account.
a new truce.\textsuperscript{12} Bateman and his party left the court on March 14 and travelled to Calais.\textsuperscript{13} Apparently Bateman informed Edward that the negotiations were not going to produce the desired peace so Edward sent the bishop another letter of procuration giving him power to prorogue the already existing truce.\textsuperscript{14} With this additional commission, Bateman did obtain a prolongation of the truce until May 16, 1350.\textsuperscript{15} Returning to England on May 7, 1349, he presented this rather inconclusive settlement to his principal, Edward III.\textsuperscript{16}

A year passed without the initiation of any major military campaigns nor the conclusion of a peace treaty. This military and diplomatic inertia can be attributed to the disruptive effects of the Black Death. As the truce was about to expire, William Bateman led another embassy to France to seek an extension of the truce.\textsuperscript{17} Bateman obtained a prolongation until the coming August 1, 1351, in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12}Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 182, Mar. 10, 1349, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{13}Mirot, 59 (1898):570, no. 132, William Bateman's account.
\item \textsuperscript{14}Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 184, Apr. 13, 1349, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{15}Ibid., May 2, 1349, prorogation.
\item \textsuperscript{16}Mirot, 59 (1898):570, no. 132, William Bateman's account.
\item \textsuperscript{17}Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 196, May 15, 1350, commission.
\end{itemize}
a journey that took him away from England for less than a month. None of the English diplomatic records indicate that William Bateman was involved in further negotiations during 1350. However, the papal registers include a safe-conduct issued to William Bateman in September 1350. As head of an embassy of four, Bishop Bateman was expected in Avignon, where he was to work for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Edward and John II, who became King of France in 1350. The Chronographia regum Francorum says that the French also sent an embassy to Avignon at this time, which suggests that Bateman did go to Avignon in autumn 1350 even though no commission or exchequer accounts exist as evidence of the trip.

Despite the extension of the truce, John II launched a major attack on St. Jean d'Angely in spring 1351, which caused the ageing Clement VI to try once more to bring peace to Christendom. In June, the pope sent two cardinals, Giles of St. Clement's, and Nicholas of St. Vitalis, to preside over another round of Anglo-French negotiations. In these

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18 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 97, June 13, 1350, prorogation; Mirot, 59 (1898):571, no. 140, William Bateman's account indicating that he was on a mission May 22-June 21, 1350.

19 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 97, June 13, 1350, prorogation; Mirot, 59 (1898):571, no. 140, William Bateman's account indicating that he was on a mission May 22-June 21, 1350.


21 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 97, June 13, 1350, prorogation; Mirot, 59 (1898):571, no. 140, William Bateman's account indicating that he was on a mission May 22-June 21, 1350.
negotiations, the pope hoped that he would be able to use his influence to obtain the liberation of Charles of Blois, the French-supported contender for the duchy of Brittany, who had been Edward's prisoner since 1347. In response to Clement's request to make a final peace, Edward commissioned the bishop of Norwich to take three other envoys with him to Calais to negotiate for a final settlement. Bateman's embassy sailed for France on June 29 and returned to England on July 21 with no settlement.

By the time William Bateman returned, Edward realized that the truce would probably lapse on its date of expiration. Hoping to salvage what he could, Edward sent Bateman's embassy back to Calais on July 26, 1351, and this time Bateman not only had the power to treat for a final peace but also to prorogue a truce. While Bateman and his embassy were treating with the French in August, they must have received Joan of Penthièvre, the wife of Charles of Blois. Furthermore, they must have responded favorably to her pleas in her husband's behalf because she was granted a safe-conduct to see her husband, who was being held at

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24 Mirot, 59 (1898):572, no. 148, Bartholomew Burghersh's account.

Calais, and Michael Northburgh was commissioned to treat with her for Charles' ransom.\(^{26}\) In addition, Bateman obtained a prolongation of the lapsed truce until September 12, 1352.\(^{27}\)

Upon Bishop Bateman's return, his diplomatic career once again experienced a lull for he did not receive another diplomatic commission until summer 1353. A considerable amount of diplomatic activity took place between autumn 1351 and winter 1353, but William Bateman did not participate in it for some unknown reason. His conflict with Edward over the Bury St. Edmund's visitation had been finally settled in May 1351, and the sources do not indicate that he had again fallen into disfavor with Edward over any other matters.

During Bishop Bateman's year and a half absence from diplomacy, the truce, which he had negotiated, expired on September 12, 1352, and neither side took any measures to try and prolongue it. Nevertheless, hostilities did not commence with the expiration of the truce. Clement VI died on December 6, 1352, and his successor Innocent VI assumed the same policy as the other Avignon popes of trying to end the quarrel between England and France.\(^{28}\) Due to papal pressure, Edward sent William Bateman along with Archbishop

\(^{26}\) Ibid., p. 230, Sept. 4, 1351, safe-conduct for Joan; Sept. 4, 1351, commission for Michael Northburgh.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., p. 232, Sept. 11, 1351, prorogation.

Simon Islip, Michael Northburgh, and three others to Calais to negotiate with the French. Bishop Bateman and the rest of the embassy departed on February 16, 1353, and travelled to Calais.

During the sessions at Calais, the English embassy negotiated another truce with the French which was to extend to August 1, 1353. Unlike previous truces, John de Montfort did not appear on the list of English allies that were obliged to sign the truce. Barthélemy Pocquet du Haut-Jussé interprets this omission by the English ambassadors as a recognition of Edward's later abandonment of de Montfort. Friedrich Bock further substantiated this view with his discovery of the March 1, 1353 treaty between Edward III and Charles of Blois, which was being negotiated at Calais. With this new truce, Bateman and the embassy crossed over the Channel and arrived back in London on March 17, 1353. Upon their return, Bateman, and the other


30 Mirot, 59 (1898):573, no. 156, William Bateman's account.


32 Pocquet du Haut-Jussé, Papes et ducs de Bretagne, 1:266.


34 Mirot, 59 (1898):573, no. 156, William Bateman's account.
ambassadors received a letter from Innocent VI congratulating them on their success and requesting that they continue their labors in fostering peace.\textsuperscript{35}

When the truce was about to expire, Edward sent Bateman along with Michael Northburgh and four others to obtain a prorogation until November 11, 1353.\textsuperscript{36} Though Bateman obtained this extension on July 26, 1353,\textsuperscript{37} Edward felt that a further extension till November 26, 1353 was necessary, and Richard Cobham, captain of Calais, was able to obtain this desired prolongation.\textsuperscript{38} Finally, in November, an embassy with William Bateman and Michael Northburgh was dispatched to France with power to treat for a final peace rather than just an extension of the truce.\textsuperscript{39} On November 6, 1353, the bishop of Norwich left his manor in Essex and joined his colleagues en route to Calais.\textsuperscript{40}

In negotiating with the French, the English ambassadors had little chance of being taken seriously because they were instructed to demand so much. Edward told Parliament that he had ordered his embassy to demand restitution

\textsuperscript{35} CPL, 3 (1342-62):610, 4 Kal. May 1353, letter from Innocent VI to the members of the embassy.

\textsuperscript{36} Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, p. 260, July 10, 1353, commission.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 262, July 26, 1353, prorogation.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 266, Oct. 26, 1353, commission.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p. 268, Nov. 6, 1353, commission.

\textsuperscript{40} Mirot, 59 (1898):574, no. 161, William Bateman's account.
of the duchy of Guienne, just like it was when his ancestors had held it, the duchy of Normandy, the county of Ponthieu, and the lands which he had conquered in France, Brittany, and elsewhere; and the obedience of Flanders. In return for all this, they were to assure the French that Edward would give up his claims to the crown of their kingdom. Not only were the ambassadors unable to conclude a peace treaty, but they did not even bother to attempt to extend the truce when it expired on November 26, 1353. So when William Bateman and his party returned to London on December 15, 1353, many feared that the war would resume.

Though no truce existed between England and France neither country launched a major attack. Nevertheless, Innocent VI felt that a truce was needed to keep the two monarchs from attacking each other. Consequently Innocent sent two cardinals to Calais to encourage negotiations between Edward and John. To satisfy papal aspirations, Edward ordered William Bateman, Michael Northburgh, and two others to go to Calais to treat for a final peace or truce and for the renunciation of the king's claim to the French throne.

Bateman's embassy left London on March 18, 1354,

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42Mirot, 59 (1898):574, no. 161, William Bateman's account.

43Avesbury, De gestis Edwardi tertii, p. 421.

went to Dover, and set sail for Calais. At Calais, they met with the cardinal of Bologna, who was to act as the papal mediator, and a French embassy of ten. To the chroniclers of the period, Bateman's achievement at Calais was that of obtaining a truce which would last until April 1, 1355. Unknown to the chroniclers, Bateman concluded a more substantial treaty, which has recently been discovered by Friedrich Bock. According to the April 6, 1354 Treaty of Guînes, which was to be kept a secret until it was announced to the papacy:

1. John II would cede possession of the duchy of Guienne; the counties of Poitou, Touraine, Anjou, Maine, Ponthieu, and Limoges; Calais, March, Oye, Cologne, Sangate, and Guînes.
2. The boundaries of Aquitaine-Guienne would be determined by a commission or papal mediator.
3. Edward's two younger sons would marry two of John's daughters.
4. An alliance would be established between the two kings.
5. Both sides would repay each other for war damages.
6. Both parties would send embassies to the pope before October 1 to proclaim the treaty and the English embassy would proclaim Edward's renunciation of his dynastic claims to the throne of France.

In observance of the requirement that England and France send embassies to Avignon by October 1, 1354, William Bateman was appointed head of a six-man embassy on August 28, 1354, which included Henry, duke of Lancaster, and

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45Mirot, 59 (1898):574, no. 165, William Bateman's account.
46Poedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 1, pp. 781-84, Apr. 6, 1354, truce; Avesbury, De gestis Edwardi tertii, p. 421; Murimuth, Chronica, p. 183; Anonimalle Chronicle, p. 31.
Richard, earl of Arundel, and career diplomat Bishop Michael Northburgh. This embassy was directed to go to Avignon to treat with the French ambassadors before the pope for a final peace, for the renunciation of the king's claims, and for the submission of the king's dominions in France to the jurisdiction of the pope. Under this commission, Bateman and his colleagues departed for the papal court on October 4.

En route to Avignon, Bateman's embassy received another commission dated October 30, which superseded the August 28 commission. According to the terms of this letter of procuration, the powers of the English embassy were thenceforth limited to treating with the pope concerning the king's castles and lands in Europe. Four noblemen from Guienne were added to the embassy, while the duke of Lancaster and the earl of Arundel were removed. Bock thinks that Arundel and Lancaster were removed from the official embassy because they were given secret orders directing them to refuse to relinquish Edward's claim to the French throne. By doing so they would force the French into rejecting the Treaty of Guines. Due to the second


49 Mirot, 59 (1898):575, no. 168, William Bateman's account.


51 Bock, "New Documents of the Hundred Years War," pp. 75-77.
commission, William Bateman played only a small role in the negotiations at the papal court that extended from November 1354 to January 1355. Though he was a relatively insignificant figure in these diplomatic events, his death on January 6, 1355, brought the Anglo-French negotiations to a close and forced the English embassy to return home. 52

Perhaps appropriately, William Bateman died at the papal court rather than in England. It was at Avignon that his career had begun; most of his English diplomatic assignments had been to negotiate with the papacy or with papal representatives; and the Avignon popes were the men who rewarded his efforts on behalf of their cherished policy of peace. It seems strange, then, that in this friendly atmosphere of the papal curia William Bateman could have died of poisoning as the chronicler Robert of Boston relates. 53 In all probability, the bishop had been ill for some time because a January 1354 papal petition describes him as being infirm at that date. 54 Whatever the cause of his death, William Bateman was buried with great honor corresponding to the regard which the papacy had for him. He was interred before the high alter of the cathedral at Avignon, with the patriarch of Jerusalem officiating and

52 Avesbury, De gestis Edwardi tertii, p. 421; Anonimale Chronicle, p. 31.


the whole body of cardinals attending.55

The clerical ambassadors, John Offord and William Bateman, dutifully served England's diplomatic needs during the first period of the Hundred Years' War. Due to their diplomatic talents and those of the other clerical career diplomats, Andrew Offord, William Ayermine, John Carleton, Michael Northburgh, Richard Bury, Adam Orleton, John Stratford, Henry Burghersh, Thomas Hatfield, and John Thoresby, England obtained the many truces which gave her time to rebuild her strength for such major campaigns as Tournai, Crécy, and Calais. Offord, Bateman, Offord's brother, Ayermine, Northburgh, Bury, and Orleton, Stratford, and Burghersh all had died by 1350 and were never to see England undertake the campaigns which led to the diplomatic victory at Calais in 1360. However, they and the other clerical career diplomats laid the groundwork that enabled England to win such substantial concessions in the 1360 Treaty of Calais.

CHAPTER V

JOHN SHEPPEY, JOHN GILBERT, AND WALTER SKIRLAW

Introduction

The Treaty of Calais brought peace to England, France, and their allies for only nine years. Under Charles V, France rebuilt its military power and, in 1369, repudiated the treaty of 1360. Charles had rebuilt his country's power to the extent that the realm of France could resume the war with England but not to the point that she could impose a crushing defeat on her enemy. Hostilities continued for such a long time that both countries exhausted themselves and could not sustain their war efforts. Consequently both England and France wanted peace. This desire was first manifested in the 1375 Treaty of Bruges, which created a three-year period of truce but failed to bring about the conclusion of a final peace. With the expiration of this truce, hostilities between the French and the English resumed, only to reveal further the inability of the belligerents to wage war, let alone defeat one another. By 1384, England and France clearly understood this situation, and once again they negotiated an armistice. After a year and a half of trying to convert the truce into a permanent peace settlement, these two kingdoms wearily resumed the war only to find themselves again negotiating
for peace three years later. These negotiations produced another truce known as the Treaty of Lenlington. This truce, like the others, was to be used to construct a final peace. Year after year, the truce was extended, but no final accord was reached. By 1395, both sides agreed to settle for a twenty-eight-year truce in the place of a final peace treaty. During the diplomatic events that covered the last years of Edward III's reign and all of his grandson Richard II's reign, the clerical diplomats Thomas Hatfield, Simon Sudbury, John Waltham, Adam Newerk, and Richard Rouhale were very influential. By far, the most prominent clerical ambassadors of this period from 1369 to 1401 were John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw.

The clerics who participated in diplomacy during the early years of the Hundred Year's War served during a period of internal stability. Consequently they looked to only one source for diplomatic assignments and rewards for such service. However, the clerics who wished to have diplomatic careers in the latter years of Edward III's and in Richard's reigns were faced with domestic instability. During various periods in their reigns, both Edward and Richard lost control of government to the barons, who considered themselves the natural councillors of the king. With their authority checked, the kings tried to reassert their independence by building up court parties who owed their positions directly to the favor of the king. Once Edward and Richard had a sufficiently strong following, they tried to act
independently. Having removed himself from the control of the barons, Richard not only acted independently but also tyrannically, which resulted in his deposition and the establishment of the Lancastrian dynasty. In such uncertain times, any cleric who wanted to have a diplomatic career and its rewards had first to establish himself with those in control in order to receive individual assignments. Men like Thomas Hatfield, Simon Sudbury, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, John Waltham, Walter Skirlaw, Alan Newerk, and Richard Rouhale had not only to be talented in diplomacy to be career diplomats,¹ but they had also to be skillful politicians.

As power passed from the kings to the barons, and from one dynasty to another, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw were the most successful of the clerical diplomats at adjusting to the political changes and at ingratiating themselves with those who were in control. Of the three, Walter Skirlaw had the most successful diplomatic career. His career, which began in 1377 and ended in 1401, spanned two reigns and a dynastic revolution. During these years, he went on twenty-eight missions and led ten of them. For his ambassadorial service, he was rewarded by promotion to the episcopal bench followed by two advantageous translations. In addition, he received public recognition for

¹Thomas Hatfield's career extended from 1356 to 1374, and he went on ten missions; Simon Sudbury (1364-76), 10; John Sheppey (1369-98), 27; John Gilbert (1373-96), 24; Walter Skirlaw (1377-1401), 28; John Waltham (1377-84), 11; Alan Newerk (1378-1411), 18; Richard Rouhale (1382-94), 18.
his service by appointment to the office of keeper of the privy seal. His political maneuverability, which enabled him to sustain himself through the various political changes of the period, failed him in 1386 and 1394 when he was punished for his identification with the baronial faction.

John Gilbert follows Walter Skirlaw in the degree of personal success he achieved through diplomacy. Beginning his career in 1373 during the reign of Edward III, he continued to serve Edward's grandson till 1396. Gilbert participated in twenty-four missions, and he functioned as leader of fourteen of these. Unlike Skirlaw, Gilbert received no ecclesiastical promotions for his diplomatic service; he entered diplomacy as a bishop and left it in the same capacity. Though he was translated twice, neither of these translations were to substantially richer sees. However for his diplomatic efforts, Gilbert was promoted to the very important office of treasurer of England which led to his participation in the continual councils of 1386 and 1388. His strong identification with the Lords Appellant injured his career when Richard came to power.

John Sheppey had the least impressive diplomatic career of the three. He entered England's diplomatic corps in 1369 and served both Edward and Richard. He retired from diplomatic service in 1387 after twenty-five missions, but ten years later, he was called out of retirement to conduct two more missions. Sheppey was designated as the leader of only one of the twenty-seven embassies in which he served.
His most prestigious ecclesiastical appointment was to the deanery of Lincoln, but he was never promoted to the episcopacy. His failure to become a bishop explains why he generally did not assume leadership responsibilities on his many missions. In addition to receiving few ecclesiastical rewards, Sheppey did not receive promotion to any of the important ministerial or household offices. Though John Sheppey had the political flexibility to receive diplomatic assignments throughout this period of domestic turmoil, he was never strongly associated with one side nor important enough a figure to suffer in one of the political purges. His failure to commit himself to any of the various political factions negated the possibility that he would be substantially rewarded when one of them came to power. Sheppey took fewer chances than Skirlaw and Gilbert, and as a consequence, he had a much less erratic but also a much less distinguished career than either of his two diplomatic colleagues.

The backgrounds of John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw, the three clerics who dominated English diplomacy from 1369 to 1401, varied greatly. They were born in different parts of the Plantagenet lands, and they came from different social classes. All three clerics attended Oxford but followed different curricula. Upon completing their university studies, they entered the service of the church, two as secular clerics, and one as a Dominican friar.
Lastly they did not all serve the crown in other functions before they entered diplomacy. Despite their divergent backgrounds, Sheppey, Gilbert, and Skirlaw all ended up seeking their fortunes in the diplomatic service of England.

John Sheppey, the first of the three to commence a diplomatic career, was born into a burgher family from the city of Coventry. His father Jordan, grandfather Lawrence, and greatgrandfather Robert had all been residents of that city. Sheppey's burgher ancestors must have had substantial wealth because his grandfather Lawrence founded a chantry at St. Michael's Church, Coventry, and endowed it with a messuage and two shops. John Sheppey used some of his own wealth to further enrich this chantry when in 1383 he endowed it with two messuages and in 1390 with another. John Sheppey's father maintained the family wealth to the extent that he was able to lend the king two hundred pounds in 1340.

Information about John Gilbert's family is more

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5CPR, Edw. III, 16 (1374-77):504, Feb. 18, 1340, acknowledgement for loan.
sparse but does point to the probability of non-English birth. However, this evidence gives no hint as to the family's class. An episcopal license dated October 17, 1380 states that John Gilbert's sister, Margaret, received permission to have masses said in her oratory in the diocese of Hereford. Margaret Gilbert's residence in Hereford in 1380 suggests that John was born in that English diocese. An October 11, 1366 papal petition calls Gilbert a "forinatus" meaning foreigner and indicating the possibility that he was born abroad rather than in England. His foreign birth and English residence would be easy to reconcile because, as a Dominican friar, he had a great deal of geographic mobility. Considering both documents together, it is likely that Gilbert was born in the French territories held by England and moved his sister to England once he had been translated to Hereford.

Walter Skirlaw, who was the last of the three to enter diplomacy, was born to an English family of peasant status. His family resided in the village of South Skirlaugh, Yorkshire, and they took their name from that village. According to antiquarian Roger Dodsworth, Walter Skirlaw's father was a sieve maker. His sister's will

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7CPP, 1 (1342-1419):536, 5 Id. Oct. 1366, grant of a petition.

relates that she was a prioress of the convent of Swine, a position that was usually held only by women of noble birth or of wealth. These three facts point to the probability that Walter Skirlaw came from a peasant family who had achieved some degree of wealth through specializing in a craft, but to no degree could Skirlaw's family be included in the wealthy burgher class which existed only in the towns.

From these obscure beginnings, Sheppey, Gilbert, and Skirlaw took the measures that would guarantee their advancement in life: they sought a university education. All three started their collegiate training at Oxford, but unlike Sheppey and Skirlaw, who stayed at Oxford to train in law, John Gilbert studied theology and crossed the Channel to complete his theological studies at the University of Paris.

At Oxford, John Sheppey studied civil law, obtaining his license in 1363. Once he received his license, he obtained provision to a canonry at Wells with the expectation of a prebend and a canonry at Lichfield; a year later he proceeded to the position of chancellor of the chapter of Lichfield. Sheppey had no intention of residing at Wells

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or at Lichfield because he wished to further his education. Consequently he applied to the papacy for dispensations from his residiency requirements as a canon of Wells and chancellor of the Lichfield chapter. Petitioning the papacy, he obtained permission to study and lecture in civil law for four more years so that he could obtain his doctorate. 12 During his years of teaching at Oxford, he achieved recognition for his lectures on civil law, and notes on twelve of his lectures are still extant. 13 By 1367, Sheppey had received his degree, and as a member of the faculty of law, he was elected to deliver the news of William Courtenay's election as chancellor of Oxford to John Buckingham, bishop of Lincoln. When Sheppey delivered the message, the bishop of Lincoln retorted that it was customary for a newly elected chancellor to announce his election personally. Displaying the talents that made him such a successful diplomat, Sheppey was able to convince Buckingham that he should withdraw his objection. 14

John Gilbert proved to be a far more notorious figure during his student days at Oxford. He irritated the university authorities by appealing to the Roman curia on behalf of the Dominican convent at Oxford. As a result of this


13 BRUO, 3: 1684.

conflict, the university authorities prevented him from completing his theological studies at Oxford. Therefore in 1366, John Gilbert petitioned the pope requesting that he be allowed to study at the Dominican school in Paris so that he could finish his bachelor's degree and then go on to incept the next year in the faculty of theology at the University of Paris.\(^{15}\) He did receive this license\(^{16}\) and completed his doctorate in theology in 1378, probably at Paris.\(^{17}\)

Like Sheppey and Gilbert, Walter Skirlaw saw a university education as a means to social advancement, but apparently his humble Yorkshire family objected to his educational plans. Roger Dodsworth says that Walter Skirlaw resented these objections and ran away from South Skirlaugh to go to Oxford. Moreover, he did not resume relations with his family until he became bishop of Durham.\(^{18}\) Pursuing his fortunes by studying law, Skirlaw obtained his bachelor of civil law degree in 1358, and he continued on at Oxford to receive his doctorate in canon law by 1373.\(^{19}\)

Once having obtained a university education, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw went into the

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\(^{15}\)CPP, 1 (1342-1419):536, 5 Id. Oct, 1366, grant of a petition.


\(^{17}\)BRUO, 2:765.

\(^{18}\)Wood, Colleges of Oxford, p. 64.

\(^{19}\)BRUO, 3:1708.
service of the church, acquiring benefices as they served. From their ecclesiastical offices, Sheppey and Gilbert were recruited into diplomatic service for the crown, while Skirlaw had to serve additional years in Chancery before he was drafted into diplomacy.

Immediately upon leaving Oxford in the spring of 1367, John Sheppey took the first of the degrees of holy orders because of the pressure that had been exerted on him since he had received his second license to study at Oxford. Therefore, he travelled to Lichfield where he received the first tonsure on October 8, 1367. Hoping to make use of his legal training, Sheppey applied for and received a dispensation to practice as an advocate at the Court of the Arches. From October 1367 to October 1368, he served both as an advocate and a judge at this Canterbury tribunal. Perhaps it was at the Court of the Arches that he came to the notice of the powerful bishop of Winchester, William Wykeham, who was also chancellor at that time. When Bishop Wykeham offered him an opportunity to work in

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20 CPL, 4 (1362-1404):59, 7 Id. Sept. 1361, license.


diocesan administration, he accepted, and he continued to serve Wykeham and the diocese of Winchester until 1379. On February 25, 1368, Sheppey was appointed chancellor of Winchester, and after this date, he continued to receive temporary diocesan appointments. In all probability, Sheppey's relationship with Bishop Wykeham and his service in diocesan administration and in archiepiscopal courts led to his recruitment into diplomacy in 1369.

John Gilbert moved into diplomacy by a much simpler process. His whereabouts after completing his studies at the University of Paris are not clear. By 1372, he appeared in Guienne, where he served as a confessor to the Black Prince who was campaigning in France. The Black Prince probably prevailed on the pope at Avignon to have his confessor rewarded by promotion to the episcopacy. On March 17, 1372, Pope Gregory XI provided John Gilbert to the remote Welsh see of Bangor, and the pope consecrated Gilbert at his palace at Avignon. One year after his elevation to the episcopal bench, Edward recruited John Gilbert to lead a very important embassy to the papal court at Avignon.

Walter Skirlaw was not as fortunate as John Gilbert was in having a patron in the royal family. He spent many years in diocesan administration before he became a clerk in the king's Chancery. Before receiving his license in

24 Wykeham's Register, 2:24, 83-86, 191, 301.
25 Tout, Chapters, 3:315.
26 Eubel, Hierarchia catholica, 1:130.
civil law, Skirlaw proceeded through the minor orders and became a deacon on September 22, 1358. In the years that followed, he slowly accumulated preferments as rector of Bisset, archdeacon of East Riding, canon of York, canon of Beverly, and dean of St. Martin-le-Grand's. Though he drew his livings from the lands attached to these ecclesiastical benefices, Walter Skirlaw was actually serving the church as secretary to John Thoresby, archbishop of York, and as an official of the court of York for Thoresby's successor, Alexander Neville. However, Walter Skirlaw was probably introduced into royal circles during the archiepiscopacy of John Thoresby, who unlike his successor, was very active at court serving as chancellor of England from 1349 to 1356. From administration at York, Walter Skirlaw travelled south to the department of the Chancery at London, where he was serving as a clerk in March 1377 when he was first commissioned to an embassy along with the already experienced clerics, John Sheppey and John Gilbert.

27 BRUO, 1:1709, quoting Registrum Thoresby, York XI.
31 CPR, Edw. III, 16 (1374-77):438, Mar. 6, 1377, grant.
Though Sheppey, Gilbert, and Skirlaw followed different paths to England's diplomatic corps, they were successful in obtaining entry into a fluid organization that offered the opportunity for men to display their talents and to move into the upper echelons of the English church and state.

**John Sheppey and John Gilbert Serve Edward III, 1369-77**

Of the three clerics who dominated English diplomacy during the period from 1369 to 1401, John Sheppey was the first to commence his diplomatic career when in 1369 he accepted his first ambassadorial assignment. John Gilbert followed him into diplomacy only four years later when he was ordered to join Sheppey in an embassy to Avignon in 1373. Both men began their careers during Edward III's declining years, when his power was checked on two occasions. In the Parliament of February and March 1371, the lay party, led by John of Gaunt, forced the king to dismiss many of his officers who were clerics. Then in the Good Parliament of July 1376, the clerical party forced Edward to drive its enemies from court and then established a continual council to oversee Edward's actions.¹ Both John Sheppey and John Gilbert were astute enough to avoid the fury of both parties and served as diplomats throughout the period from 1369 to 1377.

As Sheppey and Gilbert began their diplomatic careers, England once again went to war with France. After war had been declared, England directed her diplomatic efforts toward concluding and maintaining a commercial treaty with Flanders and also toward negotiating a settlement with the papacy on ecclesiastical matters. Then as England tired of war, she dispatched many embassies to conclude and prolong a truce which would give her time to negotiate a final peace settlement with France and her allies. Both Sheppey and Gilbert were commissioned to many of the embassies which were dispatched to deal with these three issues. During their missions from 1369 to 1377, both clerics laid the foundation for their notable diplomatic careers.

Anglo-Flemish Commercial Alliance, 1369-72

John Sheppey began his diplomatic career just as the war between England and France began anew in 1369. The points of contention between the two countries which had brought them to war in 1337 had supposedly been resolved in the Treaty of Calais. According to the terms of this treaty England gave up her claims to the French throne, and France gave up any claim to sovereignty over Guienne. France accepted these terms only because of her crushing defeats at Crécy, Calais, and Poitiers, and consequently the treaty could endure only as long as France was in a weakened condition. Under the leadership of a new king, Charles V, France started to recover in 1364, and by 1368, she was plotting to renew her efforts to take Guienne.
Among her other preparations for war, France procured the allegiance of various nobles in the English-held provinces of France, and this relationship most directly led to a declaration of war. When the Black Prince who was administering Guienne, levied a hearth-tax on the peasantry, the nobility of Guienne appealed to Charles V over the Black Prince, who according to the terms of the Treaty of Calais, was sovereign in Guienne. Though Charles recognized this appeal and cited the Black Prince, England did not declare war because her fortunes were sinking as France's were rising. However, she did make preparations for war in case she could not work out a diplomatic settlement. 2 France finally took the initiative, and on April 29, 1369, a "varlet" arrived in London to deliver a letter from Charles declaring war. 3

Though England had made some military preparations for war, she had not made any diplomatic plans. Once war was a reality, England, as in 1338, tried to bring Flanders into her circle of allies. Two weeks after the French messenger arrived in London, Edward composed a three-man embassy and gave it orders to go to Flanders to treat with the count of Flanders and the commonalities of the towns of Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres and to insure that they would live

2 Longmans, Edward the Third, 2:141-48.

up to the terms of the Treaty of Calais. In assembling men for this embassy, the king sought advice from his chancellor, William Wykeman, who recommended John Sheppey for diplomatic service because he had proved to be such a capable diocesan administrator. Thus, on the basis of Wykeham's recommendation, Edward gave Sheppey his first ambassadorial assignment. He and his two diplomatic colleagues sailed for Flanders on June 13 and returned to London on July 13, 1369. During their absence, Sheppey and the others failed to obtain the desired confirmation. In the months that followed, the count and the towns remained neutral, and another embassy negotiated a formal commercial treaty on August 4, 1370, in which the Flemings agreed to refrain from engaging in commerce with France and Spain in return for freedom of trade with England. After reporting the results of his mission to his principal, Sheppey presented the results of his mission to the Upper Exchequer but did not receive actual payment for his first ambassadorial assignment until May 15, 1370.

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5 Supra, p. 164.
Throughout the desultory fighting of 1370, Flanders remained England's commercial ally. In the spring of 1371, England feared that Flanders would desert her for France, which had become more powerful than England by securing an alliance with Navarre. In order to prevent the Flemish from deserting, John Sheppey made two trips to the continent in 1371. His journey, which lasted from February 6 to March 30, 1371, resulted in a confirmation of the commercial treaty with the Flemings. Although Sheppey was closely associated with Bishop William Wykeham, the chancellor, he did not suffer from the attack on the Caesarean clergy that took place in the Parliament of February-March 1371. Though his sponsor Wykeham lost his position as chancellor in this clerical purge, Sheppey was allowed to pursue his diplomatic career. On August 10, 1371, he, along with six others, was chosen to go to Calais to treat with a Flemish delegation that would be arriving shortly thereafter.

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10 Mirot, 60 (1899):187, no. 299, John Sheppey's account.


14 Foedera, R. C., vol. 3, part 2, p. 921, Aug. 10,
Whether Sheppey's mission of August 1371 obtained further assurance that the Flemings would observe the obligations to the commercial alliance cannot be proved. Certainly England was in need of maintaining good relations with the county of Flanders as the year 1372 opened, for she was planning a major invasion of France. Much to England's dismay, an incident occurred which threatened to destroy the harmony existing between the two commercial allies. Jean Froissart describes a naval confrontation between the Flemings and the English, which took place in late 1371 or early 1372. According to this chronicler, English sailors attacked Flemish ships which were carrying salt, and the English succeeded in capturing twenty-five such Flemish vessels.\(^{15}\) Edward hoped that he could prevent this incident from destroying England's commercial alliance with Flanders, and he appointed a four-man embassy, with John Sheppey among its members, to go to Calais and treat with the envoys of Flanders about restoring "peace."\(^{16}\) Four days later, the king removed Sheppey from the original embassy and substituted Roger de Freton, dean of Chichester.\(^{17}\) Edward must have reconsidered this substitution, for John Sheppey

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\(^{15}\) Froissart, Chroniques, ed. Buchon, 1:632.

\(^{16}\) Foedera, R. C., Vol. 3, part 2, p. 932, Feb. 6, 1372, commission.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., p. 933, Feb. 10, 1377, commission.
departed with the rest of the embassy on February 22, 1372. At Flanders, the English delegation found the Flemish conciliatory, and they concluded an accord based on the terms of the 1370 Anglo-Flemish treaty. Once the commercial alliance between England and Flanders had been renegotiated, John Sheppey and the other three ambassadors sailed for England arriving in London on April 2, 1372.

Upon his return to England, John Sheppey found that the preparations to invade France by way of La Rochelle had been proceeding at a rapid rate. On June 10, 1372 when the fleet set sail for La Rochelle, Edward once again chose John Sheppey to go to Calais to insure Flemish allegiance during the forthcoming campaign. Setting out from London on June 17, 1372, Sheppey and four other ambassadors met a seventeen-man Flemish delegation at Calais and requested that they confirm their allegiance to England. The Flemings agreed to remain loyal, but before Sheppey returned to London on July 16, 1372 to announce the success of his

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18 Mirot, 60 (1899):188, no. 307, John Sheppey's account.


20 Mirot, 60 (1899):188, no. 307, John Sheppey's account.


22 Mirot, 60 (1899):188, no. 311, John Sheppey's account.

mission, the English fleet had already been defeated at La Rochelle. 24

Anglo-Papal Settlement and the Treaty of Bruges, 1372-75

In John Sheppey's five missions to Flanders, he had displayed his abilities as a diplomat. During these formative years in his career, relations between England and the pope at Avignon had been deteriorating, and in 1373, Sheppey's talents were redirected toward the Anglo-papal conflict. At this point, John Gilbert, the bishop of Bangor, was recruited into diplomacy to handle these problems.

The Anglo-papal conflict of 1373 was not a new one, but a conflict that grew out of tensions that had existed between the English and papal courts since the beginning of the fourteenth century. The Avignon popes wished to extend the power of their centralized government into every corner of Europe, and the English monarchs, also trying to centralize their power, wished to exclude any foreign influence, whether it be temporal or spiritual. Both the crown and Parliament had tried to use their power to curb local ecclesiastical abuses, papal provisions, papal control over English judges in ecclesiastical courts, and the drain of gold to the papal curia. 25

24 Mirot, 60 (1899):188, no. 311, John Sheppey's account.

25 Workman, John Wyclif, 1:221.
Because the crown and Parliament competed with the church for tax revenues, they resented the imposition of a clerical subsidy such as that levied in 1372. In the beginning of this year, Gregory XI dispatched Guillaume de la Strange, bishop of Carpentras, to England, and there Gregory's nuncio pressured the English prelates into agreeing to pay a subsidy of 100,000 florins, the first half before Easter 1372 and the second half by September 29, 1372. Because he was in a particularly bad financial position in 1372 due to the war effort, Edward III ordered the clergy not to pay the subsidy, and he also stopped the publication of papal bulls, prevented clerics from travelling to the papal curia, and also prevented cardinals from enjoying the proceeds from their benefices. Then Edward decided to send ambassadors to Avignon to obtain additional concessions from Gregory XI.26 First Edward sent a messenger named Regnaut Neuport to Avignon on March 21, 1373, in order to postpone certain citations until a solemn embassy could arrive to handle the basic contentions between the two courts.27 The pope agreed to Edward's request to postpone action although he was concerned that "clerical rebellion against papal disposition of benefices and collection of papal subsidies was growing at an alarming

27 Mirot, 60 (1899):189, no. 31, Regnaut Neuport's accounts.
Sometime after Neuport's return to London, King Edward appointed a four-man commission which was given orders to go to Avignon to treat with the pope. John Gilbert was chosen to lead this commission which included the experienced diplomat John Sheppey in addition to Brother John Uhtred and Sir William Burton. These envoys left London between July 20 and 28, meeting somewhere en route before they crossed the Channel. Instead of taking the most direct route through France, Bishop Gilbert led his embassy through the Low Countries and the empire because of the hostility resulting from the recent raid conducted by the duke of Lancaster. Even with these precautions, the French captured John Sheppey as well as John Uhtred and William Burton in Dauphine, and they imprisoned these English ambassadors at Chambéry. Evidently the Valois officials did not take John Gilbert into custody, and the concerned bishop must have gotten a message through to the pope requesting that he intercede on behalf of his colleagues. In response to this plea, Pope Gregory wrote to

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28 CPL, 4 (1362-1404):123-24, 3 Id. May 1373, letter to Edward III.

29 Alfred Larson, "English Embassies during the Hundred Years War," English Historical Review 55 (July 1940): 431, no. 2, John Gilbert's account stating that he left on July 20; Mirot 60 (1899):190, no. 324, John Sheppey's account stating that he left on July 25.

30 Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 32.

31 Anonimalle Chronicle, pp. 75, 179.
King Charles of France, Cardinal John Sancti Quattuor Coronati of Paris, Nicholas de Veris, and Governor Charles Bouville of Dauphiné, asking them to expedite the release of 32 Sheppey, Uhtred, and Burton.

Once Sheppey, Uhtred, and Burton were freed, they joined their leader, John Gilbert, and the reunited English embassy proceeded on to Avignon, arriving sometime after September 25, 1373.33 From early October until mid-December, Gilbert, Sheppey, and the others conducted lengthy discussions on six issues: the presentation to prebends and other benefices pertaining to bishoprics and abbeys and other religious houses which became void while the temporalities of such were in the king's hands; the presentations of benefices which the crown held by virtue of the royal prerogative; appeals to the papal curia of suits terminated in the king's court respecting such benefices; citations which on account of the wars could not be obeyed; reservations and provisions which prejudiced the rights of patrons; and postponement of the recently imposed subsidy.34


33 Ibid., p. 126, 7 Kal. Oct. 1373, letter from Gregory to the bishop of Arezzo directing him to secure safe-conducts for William Burton and John Sheppey if they requested them. No further evidence exists indicating that further difficulties arose preventing the embassy from reaching its destination.

The English envoys stated Edward's position on these issues, and Gregory, who desperately needed the subsidy, succumbed to their demands. Consequently Gilbert, Sheppey, and the others obtained the following concessions from Gregory: that all causes which resulted from benefices becoming void in regalia, and which had been appealed to the papal curia or the royal courts, were to be suspended until June 24, 1374; that those who held benefices by papal provision would be allowed to keep them; that the king would not designate candidates to benefices which fell under his right of regalia but which had been reserved by the pope; that the pope would suspend citations for a year; and that the papal subsidy would not be collected until Easter 1374.35

Gilbert, Sheppey, and the others did not have the power to bind Edward to this accord, so they arranged with Gregory for another meeting to work out a final settlement. King Edward was to choose the meeting place, and within four months of December 21, 1373, he was to inform the pope by letter of his decision.36 Having concluded this tentative settlement, the English embassy requested that the pope provide the nobleman Thomas Arundel to the episcopal see of Ely, and Gregory concurred with their request.37


36 Ibid.

Having finished their work, John Gilbert, John Sheppey, and the others journeyed back to England arriving in London on February 20, 1374.38 Sheppey, though, may not have returned directly to England as did the rest of his embassy. One exchequer account lists him as returning to London at the same time as Gilbert, Uhtred, and Burton. Another account exists which indicates that he was already in London in January, and on the twenty-third of that month, he departed for Bruges to conduct negotiations for the king with Bishop Guillaume de la Strange and the archbishop of Ravenna, Pileus de Prata, who had been sent there by the pope.39 Gregory XI maintained the long established policy of the Avignon papacy and labored diligently for peace. In pursuance of this policy, his two nuncios had been travelling through England, France, and the Low Countries since 1371, and in January 1374, they were at Bruges preparing for the duke of Lancaster's forthcoming spring mission.40 Possibly Sheppey met with them in order to make preparations for the duke's prestigious embassy.

Because Bishop John Gilbert had worked out such a favorable accord at Avignon on his first diplomatic assignment, he was a logical choice to head the delegation


39 Mirot, 60 (1899):190, no. 328, John Sheppey's account.

appointed on July 26, 1374, to go to Bruges to conclude a final settlement. Among the six men commissioned to assist him was John Wyclif, the man who later in his career would severely attack the practices of clerical service to the crown of which Gilbert, Sheppey, and all the clerical diplomats were so guilty. With the other six men in the delegation, the bishop of Bangor set out for Bruges on July 27, 1374. At what date John Gilbert opened negotiations with the papal envoys is not certain. By August 17, 1374, the pope learned that his nuncios needed more time so he gave them the right to prorogue papal suits until Easter 1375.

By mid-December, negotiations had broken down, and John Wyclif returned to England. H. B. Workman, Wyclif's biographer, is glad to see that Wyclif extricated himself from the negotiations. At the same time that part of Gilbert's delegation returned to England, Giles Sancti Munitionis departed for Avignon to report on the Bruges negotiations. Gregory still thought he could salvage the

42 Mirot, 60 (1899):191, no. 331, John Gilbert's account.
45 Workman, John Wyclif, 1:245.
conference, and he wrote to Edward on October 21, 1374, informing him that Giles would shortly return to Bruges so that the discord between England and the papacy could be terminated.\textsuperscript{46} In addition, he wrote to John Gilbert, who remained at Bruges, urging him to continue his labors in behalf of the affairs concerning the whole English church, himself, and the other ecclesiastics of the realm.\textsuperscript{47}

As soon as Giles Sancti Munionis returned from Avignon, the negotiations began anew. Unfortunately no records exist describing the course of the negotiations in which Bishop Gilbert was so extensively involved. They did come to an end, though, by early January 1375 for John Gilbert arrived in London on January 10, 1375.\textsuperscript{48} Edouard Perroy thinks that during this period John Gilbert offered to allow the pope to collect the subsidy in return for certain concessions. He bases his argument on the fact that on December 31, 1374, Gregory XI issued orders to collect the subsidy, but he does not feel that John Gilbert had worked out a final agreement at this date.\textsuperscript{49}

Despite the failure of papal efforts to secure peace in 1374, the new year opened with hopes running high for a

\textsuperscript{46}\textsuperscript{CPL, 4 (1362-1404):134, 12 Kal. Nov. 1374, letter to Edward III.}
\textsuperscript{47}\textsuperscript{Ibid., p. 135, 12 Kal. Nov. 1374, letter to John Gilbert.}
\textsuperscript{48}\textsuperscript{Mirot, 60 (1899):191, no. 331, John Gilbert's account.}
\textsuperscript{49}\textsuperscript{Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 37.}
reconciliation between France and England. John Sheppey was appointed on January 8, 1375 to a three-man embassy which was ordered to go to Bruges to treat with the French for peace under the direction of papal mediators.\textsuperscript{50} Sheppey and his colleagues left London on January 23, 1375,\textsuperscript{51} and they found the French envoys and the papal nuncios, Guillaume de la Strange, now the archbishop of Rouen, and the archbishop of Ravenna, waiting. During these negotiations, Sheppey secured a limited truce which extended just to April 22, 1375 and applied to only Picardy and Artois.\textsuperscript{52}

Dissatisfied with the results of the January embassy, Edward, on February 20, 1375, commissioned another group to go to Flanders and to treat with the French. The king placed his son, John of Gaunt, at the head of the embassy and designated Bishop Simon Sudbury, another career diplomat, as second in command. The king gave the duke of Lancaster and his seven men power to conclude a treaty either of armistice or of peace.\textsuperscript{53} Eight days later on February 28, 1375, Edward dispatched another embassy to go to Flanders with power to redress injuries against the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50}Foedera, R.C., vol. 3, part 2, p. 1021, Jan. 8, 1375, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{51}Mirot, 60 (1899):191, no. 337, John Sheppey's account.
\item \textsuperscript{52}Foedera, R.C., vol. 3, part 2, p. 1022, Feb. 11, 1375, truce.
\item \textsuperscript{53}Ibid., p. 1024, Feb. 20-21, 1375, commissions.
\end{itemize}
John Gilbert and John Sheppey, with the addition of two others, were chosen to fulfill this rather nebulous commission. Though the two embassies had separate and distinct orders, the *Anonimalle Chronicle* and the exchequer accounts indicate that John Gilbert and John Sheppey worked with John of Gaunt in the hope of concluding some type of treaty between the two belligerents. Gilbert and Sheppey set out with the duke of Lancaster on February 28, 1375, and the combined parties travelled to Ghent, where they were entertained at several tournaments and dinners given by the head of the French delegation, the duke of Burgundy.

From Ghent, the English envoys proceeded on to Bruges, where the papal mediators were waiting for their arrival. The archbishops of Rouen and Ravenna opened the negotiations, and they were soon aided in their efforts by the bishops of Pampeluna and Sinigaglia and Giles Sancti Munionis. Under the direction of these papal nuncios, the

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54 Ibid., p. 1026, Feb. 28, 1375, commission.

55 *Anonimalle Chronicle*, p. 181 includes John Gilbert in the same negotiations as John of Gaunt; Mirot, 60 (1899): 192, no. 343, John Sheppey's account stating that he was "envoyé avec le duc de Lancastre 'ad tractandum cum adversario Francie.'"

56 Mirot, 60 (1899):192, no. 343, John Sheppey's account; no. 345, Gilbert's account.


58 CPL, 4 (1362-1404):146, Mar. 27, 1375, papal commendation.
duke of Lancaster, John Gilbert, and John Sheppey presented their demands: the restitution of all the lands that the French had taken from the English as well as a money payment that was due to England according to the terms of the Treaty of Calais. Then the French enumerated their own demands: the destruction of the castle of Calais and the repayment of money which had already been sent to England under the treaty. 59

The lengthy negotiations that followed did nothing to erode their positions and finally on June 27, 1375, both sides settled for a one-year truce, known as the Treaty of Bruges, which contained the usual terms of an armistice and an expiration date of June 1376. Several of the chronicles criticize the negotiations because of the "horrible and incredible expense" in addition to their meager results. 60

As the negotiations went into their second month, John Gilbert returned to England, arriving there on May 9, 1375, so that he was not involved in the conclusion of the one-year truce. 61 Like his fellow clerical colleagues, John Sheppey left in the midst of the negotiations, arriving in London on April 14, but he departed again for Bruges on


61Mirot, 60 (1899):192, no. 345, John Gilbert's account.
April 25, 1375.\(^{62}\) No records are extant to explain Sheppey's brief trip to England, but he did return to Bruges in sufficient time to be instrumental in concluding the armistice of June 27, 1375.

While both John Gilbert and John Sheppey were still at Bruges, they tried to deal with the five representatives of the papacy on the issues which they had handled in their June 1373 to February 1374 mission.\(^{63}\) On September 1, 1375, six papal bulls were issued to reflect the work that was done by Gilbert and Sheppey in April and was carried on by Sheppey from April 27 to July 17. Perroy believes that these six bulls are a final agreement reached by Sheppey and the papal nuncios in July 1375.\(^{64}\) According to the terms, the pope would confirm all the king's presentations to benefices; he would decide the suits of ten English clerics against the cardinals and others in favor of the former; he would annul the reservations of benefices in England; he would not cite any Englishmen to appear in Rome for a period of three years; he would ask the archbishops and bishops of

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\(^{63}\)Mirot, 60 (1899): 192, no 345, John Gilbert's account says that he treated "cum ambassatoribus dom. pape ibidem existentibus de quibusdam articulis tangentibus dom. regem et regnum Anglie"; no. 348, John Sheppey's account says that he was sent to Bruges "pro expedicione quocumdam negociorum inter dom. papem et dom. regem pendentium."

\(^{64}\)Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 39.
England to order agents of Roman cardinals who had benefices in England to repair churches that needed it. In return for these concessions, Gregory was allowed to send collectors to levy the clerical subsidy.

H. B. Workman believes that these six bulls were only a tentative settlement and that it was concluded by an embassy dispatched in August 1375 under the leadership of Adam Houghton which did not include John Gilbert or John Sheppey. Workman thinks that the final accord was reached in late 1376 on the basis of the six bulls and was promulgated on February 15, 1377. An entry in the Close Rolls dated December 8, 1377 supports Perroy's position and John Sheppey's involvement in the negotiations that led to the final agreement on September 1, 1375. According to this enrollment, John Sheppey used his influence with the papacy while negotiating a treaty on papal reservations to obtain his promotion to the office of dean of Lincoln. No records, however, are extant to indicate that John Sheppey negotiated with papal representatives in Flanders concerning ecclesiastical matters after 1375. John Sheppey's and John Gilbert's first joint effort in diplomacy had worked to the

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66 *Perroy, L'Angleterre*, p. 40


benefit of the monarchy. After 1375 they would again work as members of the same embassy, but their talents would be directed toward concluding a general Anglo-French peace treaty.

The Prolongation of the Treaty of Bruges, 1375-77

The September 1375 accord cooled the hostility between the English and the papacy, at least for the moment. But neither John Sheppey nor John Gilbert retired from diplomatic service with the conclusion of the Anglo-papal negotiations. Instead, their diplomatic talents were applied to the problem of transforming the truce which they concluded at Bruges in 1375 into a permanent peace. From June 1376 to June 1377, they participated in four missions concerning the Treaty of Bruges, and in their last mission of March 1377, they were aided by Dean Walter Skirlaw, who was just beginning his diplomatic career.

The efforts of Gregory XI's nuncios, the archbishops of Ravenna and Rouen, in the autumn of 1375 failed to produce a final peace treaty but did result in the extension of the Treaty of Bruges until March 1377.69 Continually hoping for peace, Gregory XI pressured Edward into sending an embassy to treat with the French under the aegis of his nuncios. The June 12, 1976 commission states:

We know that for the honor of God and of the holy church and for the reverence of our holy father

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the pope, who writes to us and prays us by his letters and solemn messages, that he has made and sent often to us, that we wish to assent to have a peace with out adversary of France.70

This document designates John Gilbert, now bishop of Hereford, as head of a three-men peace commission which included John Sheppey.71 In the previous negotiations with the French, the duke of Lancaster had been appointed as head of the embassy. The Chronique des quatres premiers Valois says Lancaster had used the peace program and negotiations to advance his own interests rather than those of England.72 Furthermore, embassies led by Lancaster always cost a great deal of money because of the pomp associated with a man of his prestige.73 An embassy with men of somewhat lesser prestige like Bishop Gilbert and John Sheppey could probably accomplish the same ends at less cost. For these reasons, the above embassy was commissioned to go to Bruges to treat with the French.

On July 7 and July 8 respectively, Gilbert and Sheppey departed for Bruges where they met with the French delegation throughout the latter part of July and the whole

70Foedera, R.C., vol. 4, p. 1053, June 12, 1376, commission.

71Eubel, Hierarchia catholica, l:285. John Gilbert had been translated from Bangor to Hereford on September 12, 1375.


73Delachenal, Charles V, 5:3
In the opening meetings, the ambassadors agreed to publish the extended Treaty of Bruges, and they set August 16, 1376 and December 29, 1376, as march days where breaches of the truce could be settled. Turning to the long-term issues, the ambassadors rejected the idea of a lengthy truce and tried to devise a final peace treaty based on a three-fold partition of Guienne. The three parts created by this division were to be held by Charles V, Edward III, and Edward's grandson, Richard of Bordeaux. Sovereignty would rest with the old and ailing King Edward for the rest of his life. After his death, sovereign rights over Gascony would revert to the French, but would be strictly limited to a few well defined matters, in order to prevent constant encroachments on ducal rights by the French. The ambassadors were to return to their own countries to see how their principals reacted to these proposals and were to return to Bruges on November 1, to report on their king's responses. In addition to treating for peace at Bruges, Gilbert and Sheppey did transact some financial business for Edward, and they received forty thousand francs from the king of France. The French paid the sum to them because the

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74 Mirot, 60 (1899): 195, no. 370, John Gilbert's account stating that he left on July 7; no. 372, John Sheppey's account stating he left on July 8.

75 Perroy, Negotiations, pp. 44-45, no. 45.

76 Ibid., pp. 48-49, no. 45.

77 Ibid., p. 48, no. 45.
English had lifted the siege of St. Savoir, which was a condition of the Treaty of Bruges. Having performed this duty, the English ambassadors sailed from Bruges, and they arrived in London on September 13, 1376.

In autumn of 1376, John Gilbert and John Sheppey again joined forces to negotiate with the French. Although no direct commission exists to prove it, an embassy with Gilbert and Sheppey among its members probably returned to Bruges in early October. An October 20, 1376 commission does exist which substitutes John Montague for Henry Scrope in a previously designated embassy which was headed by John Gilbert. According to the exchequer accounts, John Cobham was sent to Flanders with the bishop of Hereford on October 31, 1376. The same accounts indicate that John Sheppey left to join Gilbert during November 1376. Further substantiating their autumn embassy, the French documents record payments to ambassadors on February 6, 1377, for a trip which had been made to Bruges, where negotiations had been conducted with the English.


79 *Mirot, 60 (1899):195, no. 370, John Gilbert's account; no. 372, John Sheppey's account.*


81 *Mirot, 60 (1899):196, no. 378, John Cobham's account.*

82 *Ibid., p. 379, John Sheppey's account.*

83 *Leopold Delisle, ed., Mandements et actes divers de*
Once the French and the English had assembled at Bruges, they again decided not to negotiate directly. Instead, "the two bishop ambassadors [papal nuncios] went between the parties treating for peace." Moreover, they "spoke of a marriage to be had between the young prince of England and my lady, Mary, daughter of the French king." Still considering the idea of a three-fold partition, the papal nuncio wrote directly to Charles V offering him substantial territorial concessions for his loss of sovereignty. He could buy Richard's portion, which could be substantially enlarged by subtracting several districts from Edward's portion. According to the plan, two-thirds of Guienne would be directly under his control. In reaction to this letter, Charles sent John le Fèvre, a monk of St. Vaast, who was a legal expert and a member of his council, to go to Bruges to explain to the English ambassadors why Charles could not legally agree to give up sovereignty over any French land. On January 14, 1377, the ambassadors concluded that they would respect the existing truce, that they would return to their kingdoms telling their lords about the proposals


Perroy, Negotiations, pp. 53-54, no. 54.

Ibid., pp. 56-60, no. 57.
discussed, and lastly that they would return to Bruges on March 1, 1377. 87 With these arrangements in hand, John Gilbert and John Sheppey, and their party left for London - and arrived there on January 27, 1377. 88

A month after their return to England, Gilbert and Sheppey were again included in an embassy which was ordered to treat again with the French. 89 On March 11, 1377, they also received power to treat with the count and commonalities of Flanders. 90 Where they went to meet with the French and the Flemish is not recorded. In early February, the papal nuncios, who had been overseeing all the peace negotiations, travelled from Bruges to France to prepare the way for new negotiations. 91 The bishop of Hereford and John Sheppey probably met with the nuncios somewhere in France. The meeting did not last for a long period of time, and during Lent, the ambassadors decided to extend the truce until May 1 and return to England. 92

With the pressure of a rapidly expiring truce, England commissioned a large and prestigious group of men to go

87 Ibid., no. 63.
88 Mirot, 60 (1899):196, no. 379, John Sheppey's account.
90 Ibid., p. 1074, Mar. 11, 1377, commission.
91 Perroy, Negotiations, p. vi.
92 Ibid., p. 68, no. 66.
to France to treat for peace. Both Gilbert and Sheppey were passed by when it came to selecting a leader for this important embassy, and Bishop Adam Houghton, the chancellor of England, was chosen to lead the nine-man team. However, they were included in the delegation along with Walter Skirlaw, the dean of St. Martin's-le-Grand, who was commencing his diplomatic career with this assignment.93 The embassy left at the earliest on April 30, 1377.94 When they arrived in France, the English ambassadors established themselves at Calais, while the French, headed by their chancellor, resided at Boulogne. The archbishops of Ravenna and Rouen assumed the responsibility of mediating between the two delegations and travelled continually between Calais and Boulogne in order to effect this end.

One of the first accomplishments of the May and June negotiations was to secure a prolongation of the truce to June 29, 1377.95 As to the much more important matter of the peace treaty, the English delegation found the French wanted direct answers to all that they proposed. The French

94Mirot, 60 (1899):198, no. 396, Robert Assheton's account indicates the earliest date of departure; CPR, Edw. III, 16 (1374-77):494-95, Apr. 30, 1377, letter in which Walter Skirlaw and John Sheppey were relieved of their commissions to examine and determine an appeal of Robert de Knolles because they "must be occupied about more arduous matters with which the king has charged them."
ambassadors had been instructed to offer to pay all installments on King John's ransom that were in arrears and to give back all of Charles' conquests except Ponthieu, Poitou, Saintonge, Angoumois, Limousin, Perigord, and possibly Rouergue. The English dominions would be regrouped south of the Dordogne River with the restitution of Agenais, Quercy, Bazadais, and Bigorre. On the north bank of the new frontier river, Charles would give up the half dozen fortresses which formed the outer defenses of Bordeaux. In the case that the English would not consent to the evacuation of Calais, Charles would take back Quercy and the Dordogne fortresses. However, Charles did not instruct the French ambassadors to budge on the key issue of sovereignty.

According to Charles V's biographer, Roland Delachenal, Charles had conceived of a marriage between young Richard and one of his daughters as early as 1376, when the Black Prince died. But he says that Charles did not take any affirmative action in the October 1376 to January 1377 negotiations but waited until the May 1377 conference.

Bishop Adam Houghton and his clerical colleagues, Gilbert, Sheppey, and Skirlaw did not give a direct answer to the provisions set forth by the French, but they said that they would report them to their king when they returned to England. Furthermore, they promised to come to Bruges by

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96 Perroy, Negotiations, pp. 80-85, appendix.
97 Delachenal, Charles V, 5:9-10.
early or mid-August in order to report their principal's reaction to these proposals. The English embassy sailed for home toward the end of the month of June.99

The truce that had been established by the Treaty of Bruges and that had been subsequently prolonged several times was allowed to expire. Furthermore, neither an English nor a French embassy was sent to Bruges in August. Consequently, the war between England and France began anew in summer 1377, at the moment when the crown of England was passing from Edward III to his young grandson, Richard. John Sheppey and John Gilbert had taken part in many of the embassies which Edward had dispatched to secure the commercial allegiance of the Flemings, to settle the Anglo-papal dispute, and to arrange for a peace settlement with France. Neither of these two established clerical ambassadors nor the noted clerical diplomat Walter Skirlaw would be certain that those who would govern during the minority of Edward's grandson would employ them to implement their foreign policies.

John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw Serve the Minority and Baronial Councils, 1377-89

The Minority Councils, 1377-89

Through the political instability of the last years of Edward III's reign, John Sheppey and John Gilbert displayed the political wisdom which allowed them to continuously receive ambassadorial commissions. Walter Skirlaw had

99Jean II et Charles V, 2:181.
received only one diplomatic assignment, and it remained to be seen whether he had the ability to sustain a diplomatic career during a period of domestic turmoil. Despite the longevity of their diplomatic service, even Sheppey and Gilbert questioned whether they would be called upon to serve the new king, Richard, as diplomats and would be able to obtain further rewards through diplomacy.

Richard II was only ten years of age when he was crowned king of England in June 1377. Since he could not rule personally, decision-making power was placed in the hands of three consecutive minority councils. The first council of twelve governed from July to October 1377, the second council of nine from October 1377 to October 1378, and the third council of eight from November 1378 to December 1379.1 Because power rested in the hands of these various councils, Sheppey, Gilbert, and Skirlaw had to look to them for further diplomatic assignments.

The minority councils hoped to resume the war with France and gain popularity by reversing the losses of the previous reign. Though the councils decided to utilize force to accomplish their goals, they nonetheless kept diplomatic channels open to delude France while making preparations for war. Also the minority councils realized that England would have difficulty waging war because of financial limitations.

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Consequently they continued to negotiate with the French so that they might conclude an advantageous peace treaty if all else failed. Moreover, the papacy wished to take advantage of England's willingness to negotiate, and Gregory XI dispatched the archbishops of Ravenna and Rouen to Bruges in November 1377 to preside over any possible conferences between England and France.  

In pursuance of the aforementioned policy, Walter Skirlaw and two others were commissioned to go to Bruges to treat with the French for a truce and for a marriage between Richard II and Catherine, daughter of Charles V. Skirlaw left London with his party on January 22, 1378 and arrived in Bruges in February. Here the French ambassadors told the three English envoys that Charles was willing to cede all of Guienne south of the Dordogne River, to arrange a marriage between his daughter Catherine and Richard II, and to give up the county of Angoulême as her dowry. The negotiations at Bruges continued on into April, at which time, the English ambassadors decided that they had to discuss these proposals with France's ally, Flanders, before any settlement could be reached. On April 5, 1378, a letter of

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2Jean II et Charles V, 2:272.
4Mirot, 60 (1899):198, no. 404, Walter Skirlaw's account.
5Jean II et Charles V, 2:283.
6Perroy, Hundred Years War, p. 173.
procuration was issued empowering them to do so.\(^7\) Nevertheless, negotiations broke down in May, and on the thirty-first day of that month, Skirlaw's embassy returned to England.\(^8\)

Shortly after Walter Skirlaw's return to England from Bruges, he was again sent to Flanders but this time supposedly to discuss commercial disputes between England and Flanders. In reality, this commission was only a guise for a more important assignment to Rome. On June 26, 1378, Walter Skirlaw and Thomas Wetewang set off in secret for Rome with orders to declare England’s intention of supporting the Roman pontiff, Urban VI.\(^9\) By September 1378, the Great Schism had developed, but England remained loyal to Pope Urban. As the other countries of Europe lined up behind either Urban VI or Clement VII, the peace policy of the Avignon popes was eventually abandoned. By 1380, both Urban and Clement had adopted a policy of encouraging war because they believed that they could use the military strength of their supporters to defeat their papal rival.\(^10\) On account of this development, England could no longer rely on the papacy to encourage Anglo-French negotiations nor to mediate those that did take place.

\(^7\) **Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 34, Apr. 5, 1378, commission.**

\(^8\) **Mirot, 60 (1899):198, no. 404, John Sheppey’s account.**

\(^9\) **Issue Rolls, E 403/468, 8.**

\(^10\) **Steel, Richard II, pp. 48-50.**
While Walter Skirlaw was busy with continental affairs, the second minority council gave Bishop John Gilbert his first diplomatic assignment since the coronation of the new king. This was the first of several assignments that Gilbert was to receive which ordered him to negotiate with the Scots. Unlike the French, the Scottish government still considered itself bound by the terms of the Treaty of Bruges, and wished to reconfirm the truce. England was especially anxious to maintain the Anglo-Scottish truce because she did not want the Scots to attack in the north while she was attacking the French on the continent.

Unfortunately the Scottish government could not control its own people, and several border incidents occurred which threatened the truce. In the latter part of 1377, the Scots burned the town of Roxburgh after a quarrel had broken out between the English and Scottish trading at the Roxburgh fair. In retaliation, the earl of Northumberland led an army into the lands of the earl of Dunbar and ravaged the countryside. Moreover, a Scottish naval adventurer named Mercer, who had amassed a navy of Scottish, French, and Spanish privateers, harassed English shipping in the Channel. The Close and Patent Rolls list numerous

11 CCR, Ric. II, 1 (1377-81):203, July 30, 1378, letter to the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.


13 Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 1:340.
incidents where English goods were seized at sea, and where Scottish ships and goods were taken in reprisal.\textsuperscript{14} When the Scots requested that a march day be held, the English agreed, and in the latter part of May, Edmund Mortimer and Bishop Gilbert were sent north to meet with a Scottish embassy on the Anglo-Scottish border.\textsuperscript{15}

Walsingham says that the English commissioners did confirm the truce for a short time.\textsuperscript{16} One of the entries in the Close Rolls gives more specific information:

\textit{From Monday last[Monday before July 30, 1378] to 1 December next ships of Scotland or England whatsoever shall not be arrested nor detained or hindered for any robbery, disturbance, manslaughter, fault, forfeit or attempt contrary to the truce touching the marches or elsewhere, and to cause this to be observed, according to the concord made on 20 June last between John bishop of Hereford and other commissioners in the king's part and certain commissioners of Robert his cousin of Scotland, and that the same should be proclaimed in the ports of either realm.}\textsuperscript{17}

Having reached this settlement, Gilbert's embassy went on to deal with the specific infractions of the truce on the


\textsuperscript{15} Mirot, 60 (1899): 199, no. 407, Edmund Mortimer's account stating that he left on May 29; no. 408, John Appelby's account stating he left on May 28.

\textsuperscript{16} Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 1:373.

\textsuperscript{17} CCR, Ric. II, 1 (1377-81): 203, July 30, 1378, letter to the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
June 20 march day and returned to London a month later.\textsuperscript{18}

At the end of October, the specific concord of June had only one more month to run before expiring. Also the question remained as to whether the truce with the Scots could be converted into a final peace. On October 22, 1378, the third minority council chose John Gilbert to lead a five-man embassy, including career diplomat Canon John Waltham, to Scotland to treat with King Robert.\textsuperscript{19} Apparently Gilbert was not successful in his efforts because a month later, on November 30, the Scots took Berwick castle and thereby opened a period of warfare during which the earl of Northumberland retook the castle.\textsuperscript{20} The Scottish chronicler Andrew Wyntoun says that because of these events

\begin{quote}
The truce then near ended was
That was taken for fourteen years.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

In order to redress injuries that were made against the truce and to treat again for peace, John Gilbert travelled

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{18}Mirot, 60 (1899):199, no. 407, Edmund Mortimer's account stating that he arrived on July 21; no. 408, John Appelby's account stating he arrived on July 22.
\textsuperscript{19}Foedera. R. C., vol. 4, p. 51, Oct. 22, 1378, commission.
"The trewys than nere endyt were
That war takyn for fourtene yhere."
\end{quote}
to Scotland between February 11 and April 1, 1379. 22

While Bishop Gilbert was busy in Scotland, John Sheppey received his first diplomatic assignment during the minority of Richard II. According to his orders, he was to travel to Milan to arrange a marriage between Richard and a Milanese bride; and then he was to proceed to Rome to seek a confirmation of the ecclesiastical settlement reached by Edward III in 1375. This commission coincides with William Wykeham's membership on the minority council and the culmination of John Sheppey's rewards for diplomatic service.

During the years that Sheppey had served as a diplomat, he was slow to receive ecclesiastical rewards for his work. Finally in the autumn of 1376, the king rewarded his efforts by granting him a yearly allotment of fifty pounds until an ecclesiastical benefice of the same value and without a cure could be provided for him. Two months after this grant was made, a canonry at York and a prebendary at Stillington fell vacant, and Edward provided Sheppey to these vacant benefices. 24

Perhaps because Sheppey was disappointed that he had not been appropriately rewarded for his diplomatic service in Edward's behalf, he took matters into his own hands and sought ecclesiastical preferment from the papacy. According

22 Mirot, 60 (1899):200, no. 418, John Gilbert's account.


24 Le Neve, Fasti, ed. Hardy, 3:213.
to charges brought against him in the Parliament of October through December 1377, he used his mission to "craftily procure" his appointment to the deanery of Lincoln. Supposedly the papal nuncios communicated Sheppey's wishes to Pope Gregory XI, and he provided Sheppey to the deanery. In the meantime, Richard de Ravenser, archdeacon of Lincoln, and the keeper of the great seal from May till June 22, 1377, had already been elected to this position by the cathedral chapter. Despite the objection of Parliament to this provision and to the 1375 concordat which Sheppey had concluded, and the king's favor for Richard Ravenser, Edward finally conceded to papal demands and accepted Sheppey's provision.

Having secured his provision to the deanery of Lincoln, Sheppey received by 1382 a prebend at Nassington, but despite years of further diplomatic service, he received no additional ecclesiastical rewards. As a member of the cathedral chapter of Lincoln, John Sheppey was bound to enter a four-year period as a greater residentiary, which meant that he had to be present at the cathedral for thirty-four weeks a year, and as a dean of the cathedral chapter,

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25CCR, Ric. II, 1 (1377-81):35, Dec. 8, 1377, order to the royal officials to prevent John Sheppey from taking possession of the deanery of Lincoln; DNB, 16:761-62 shows that Ravenser was closely associated with Edward and Richard.

26CPR, Ric. II, 1 (1377-81):156, Mar. 18, 1378, revocation of the above prohibition.

he had to be resident thirty-nine weeks per year. However, John Sheppey does not seem to have obeyed this regulation because his diplomatic missions during the years after 1378 took him away from his chapter for periods longer than those allotted to him.

On March 18, 1379, John Sheppey, now dean of Lincoln, along with Michael de la Pole and John Burley, was ordered to contract a marriage between Richard and Barnabò Visconti's daughter, Katherine. But this embassy was also expected to go to the papal court at Rome to obtain confirmation of the 1375 concordat. Hoping to take advantage of Sheppey's trip to Rome, his sponsor, Bishop William Wykeham, appointed him as proctor so he could represent him in paying the bishop's triennial visit to Rome.

Sheppey and his fellow ambassadors wished to avoid the hazards of travelling through Valois lands, and so they sailed toward Flanders, proceeding south to Milan from there. When the English envoys arrived in Lombardy, they

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29 *Foedera*, R. C., vol. 4, p. 60, Mar. 18, 1379, commission.

30 Perroy, *L'Angleterre*, p. 273; Mirot, 60 (1899):200, no. 422, Richard Hereford's account for a trip to Flanders to obtain safe conducts for the embassy going "versus curiam Romanam."

31 Wykeham's Register, p. 301, Mar. 26, 1379, appointment.

32 Mirot, 60 (1899):200, no. 422, account of Richard
found, as they had expected, that the Barnabò Visconti was anxious to have his daughter marry the king of England. With this aspect of their mission successfully completed, the English embassy journeyed on to Rome where they found a less agreeable host. Firstly Urban VI, a notoriously difficult person, indicated that he did not intend to accept the concordat, which came as no surprise because of previous papal correspondence. However, Sheppey, Burley, and de la Pole were somewhat shocked by Urban's negative reaction to the proposed marriage between Richard and Katherine Visconti.

Not only did Urban VI react negatively to the Anglo-Milanese marriage, but he also proposed that Richard contract a marriage with Anne of Bohemia, sister of Wenceslaus, the Holy Roman emperor. The reason for Urban's reaction was that he had been convinced by Pileus de Prata, archbishop of Ravenna, that such a marriage would ally the two great houses which had sworn allegiance to the Urbanist cause, and that their combined military force could then be thrust against France, which supported the Avignonese pope, Clement VII. Once Sheppey, de la Pole, and Burley learned of Urban's reaction to their two proposals, they found that nothing remained to be done at the papal court. Sheppey returned to England on October 29, 1379 and informed his government of the events which had taken place in Italy. Meanwhile his colleagues travelled to Germany to investigate Hereford who was sent to Flanders to obtain a safe-conduct for Sheppey and his embassy.
further the possibility of an Anglo-imperial marriage.33

In the summer of 1379, Walter Skirlaw received two assignments which clearly illustrate how England used diplomacy to advance her military plans and to keep open the possibility of a negotiated peace. Supposedly the question over Breton succession, which had arisen during the early years of the Hundred Years' War, had been settled by the 1365 Treaty of Guérande.34 According to the terms of this treaty, John IV, who had been raised at the English court, was recognized as duke of Brittany; in return for this recognition, he had to do homage to Charles V for his duchy. In the midst of the struggle over succession, Breton nationalism had been born, and Duke John IV fostered this independence movement by giving aid to the English army fighting in France. For this support, he was declared a contumacious vassal on December 18, 1378.35 John, thereupon, fled to England where he sought support from his former English allies.

Richard was still a minor when Duke John arrived in England, and so a three-man embassy, including Dean Walter Skirlaw, was appointed on July 22, 1379 to treat with him.36

Hoping to employ the Bretons in weakening France on her

33 Perroy, L'Angleterre, pp. 139-41.
34 Supra, pp. 144-46.
35 Perroy, Hundred Years War, pp. 151-52, 171-72.
36 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 67, July 22, 1379, commission.
western flank, Skirlaw and his colleagues concluded a treaty in which England promised to supply the duke with four thousand men in return for Breton military support against the Valois. 37 On July 14, the day after the treaty had been concluded, the duke departed for Brittany, and Walter Skirlaw travelled along with him for the purpose of obtaining a confirmation of the treaty. 38 The Breton historian, Hyacinthe Morice, states that the estates of Brittany were not happy with the treaty, and Walter Skirlaw was sent to persuade them to accept the agreement. 39 Whether he did or not is questionable because the promised military aid did not appear by the time that he returned to London on September 20, 1379. 40

Nine days after his return to England, Dean Skirlaw, received another commission ordering him to go to Bruges and treat with the French this time. 41 Walter Skirlaw and the five other men appointed to the embassy tried to arrange a marriage between Richard II and the daughter of the king of

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38 Mirot, 60 (1899):201, no. 426, Walter Skirlaw's account.


40 Mirot, 60 (1899):201. no. 426, Walter Skirlaw's account.

41 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 70, Sept. 29, 1379, commission.
France. In a letter to Richard II dated November 8, 1379, the papal nuncio, the archbishop of Rouen, said that both sides approached the negotiations in a conciliatory spirit. Despite the continuation of this amicable attitude throughout the negotiations, neither a truce, let alone a peace treaty, was concluded.

The archbishop, however, did not give up hope for a peace treaty, and asked the English to send another delegation as soon as possible. Knowing that the English had just signed an agreement to give military aid to the Bretons, one does question the archbishop's evaluation of the negotiations. Walter Skirlaw, who was involved in both sets of negotiations, could not help but comprehend the duplicity involved in what he was doing. Having completed their mission, Skirlaw and his companions returned to London on November 12, 1379. In compliance with the archbishop of Rouen's request, Walter Skirlaw and two others set out for Calais on December 6, 1379, but again the negotiations proved futile so Skirlaw returned to London on January 18, 1380.

Skirlaw, like Gilbert and Sheppey and their

42 Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 142.
43 Froissart, Oeuvres, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 18: 552-54, no. 128, letter of the archbishop of Rouen to Richard II.
44 Mirot, 60 (1899):201, no. 429, Walter Skirlaw's account.
45 Ibid., no. 430, Walter Skirlaw's account.
diplomatic colleagues, was successful at perpetuating the impression that the minority councils wanted to negotiate a truce or better yet a final peace with France. All the time, though, that Skirlaw and his fellow ambassadors were laboring to portray this impression, the minority councils were making plans to launch a major offensive. These plans were never clearly formulated by any of the three minority councils, but the baronial council that succeeded them was able to devise three carefully formulated designs for conquest.

The Baronial Councils, 1379-89

In December 1379, the powers of Richard's third minority council came to an end, and technically the king was now free to govern as he pleased. Still only twelve years old, Richard fell subject to the control of the baronial council. As the king grew older, he wished to rule in his own right, and by 1383, he had attracted a coterie of personal followers which became the court party. Slowly Richard, with the aid of his court party, gained enough strength to challenge the barons in 1386, but he lost in his first bid for power. As a result, another commission like that of 1376 was created by the Wonderful Parliament of October-November 1386 for the purpose of checking the actions of the king. Again in 1387, Richard tried to destroy the power of his baronial overseers, and the Lords Appellant, in the Merciless Parliament of February-June 1388, not only placed Richard under the control of another
commission, but also ordered the execution of several of his followers. In effect, then, from 1380 until 1389, the barons controlled England's government except for those brief periods in 1386 and 1387 when Richard made his unsuccessful bids for power. By 1389, Richard was twenty-one years old, and he had accumulated enough of a following to make his next attempt to gain independence a successful one. In this very fluid situation, clerical diplomat John Sheppey served each side with no detrimental effect to his career. His diplomatic colleagues John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw placed their talents at the service of the barons and the king respectively, but both eventually identified themselves with one group so strongly that they suffered when the opposing side came to power.

The barons who directed diplomacy during most of the period from 1380 to 1389 adopted the minority councils' aggressive foreign policy. During the first few months that they were in power, they continued to give the impression that England wanted to conclude a general peace. Soon though, they adopted a bellicose plan known as the Grand League of the Urbanists, which was later replaced by the "way of Flanders" and the "way of Portugal." Due to the failure of these plans for conquest, the barons decided that a truce should be arranged which led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Lenlingham. John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw played a prominent role in the embassies

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46 Tout, Chapters, 3:385-438.
dispatched to implement these plans and to conclude the Treaty of Lenlingham.

Peace Negotiations and Preparations for War, 1379-80

As the barons prepared for war, they continued to negotiate with France as well as both Scotland and Brittany but for different reasons. They intended to fulfil the commitments which the last minority council had made to the Bretons in order to maintain their allegiance against the French in future campaigns. Consequently they commissioned John Arundel to sail for Brittany with the promised troops.\(^47\) The vessels on which Arundel and his men sailed were destroyed in a Channel storm, and they never reached the Breton coast.\(^48\)

Because of these events, the duke of Brittany sent an embassy to England in January to plead again for aid.\(^49\) This time John Sheppey was among the four men appointed to treat with the representatives of Brittany in London.\(^50\) Since Sheppey and the others did not receive their commission until February 20, 1380, negotiations could not have begun until the end of February. However, by March, the

\(^{47}\) Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 71, Nov. 26, 1379, order to secure vessels for passage of the king's army into France.


\(^{49}\) Morice, Mémoires, 2:235-36, Jan. 9, 1379, commission.

Breton and English plenipotentiaries concluded a treaty in which each party promised aid in offensive and defensive circumstances, but the treaty did not include a specific commitment of English troops. 51

Moreover, the barons intended to continue to negotiate with the French in order to conceal their true intentions and to keep diplomatic channels open. By the spring of 1380, Charles V was anxious to negotiate for a peace treaty with England. Because his health was deteriorating so rapidly, Charles felt that death was close at hand, and he did not want to pass on the burden of waging war with England to his son. When the French king made his intentions known to the barons, 52 they responded positively by dispatching a six-man commission, which included Walter Skirlaw, to meet with a French embassy headed by the archbishop of Rouen. 53

On May 20, 1380, the embassies first met with each other at Lenlingham, near Calais. Here Charles' ambassadors offered the English delegates the lands of Quercy, Périgord, Rouergue, and Saintonge to the Charente River; the hand of his daughter Catherine in marriage to Richard II; and an indemnity of 1,200,000 francs for lands which had been given

51 Morice, Mémoires, 2:236-42, Mar. 1, 1380, treaty.
53 Poedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 483, Apr. 1, 1380, commission; Mirot, 60 (1899):202, no. 433, Walter Skirlaw's account stating that he departed on Mar. 31, 1380.
to the French in the Treaty of Calais and which Charles intended to keep. Skirlaw and the rest of the delegation found these terms unacceptable because they had no real intention of making peace with the French. The barons were just using the conference to stall the French while the duke of Buckingham was dispatching troops to France which composed the advance guard of a larger expedition that he was to lead in June. Skirlaw's mission ended on June 6, 1380, and this was to be his last attempt to conclude a peace on the basis of a marriage between Catherine and Richard, for in the fall of 1380 England began to press forward with her military plans by trying to set up a new system of alliances.

Three months after Dean Skirlaw returned from France, the barons dispatched him to Scotland to prevent the outbreak of a war on the Anglo-Scottish border while England was preparing for a major offensive on the continent. In July 1380, the Scots made a raid into Westmoreland and Cumberland and threatened to destroy the Anglo-Scottish truce. Due to these attacks, the duke of Lancaster and several others received a commission to treat with the Scots for violations of the truce, but Walter Skirlaw is not

55 Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 1:434.
56 Mirot, 60 (1899):202, no. 433, Walter Skirlaw's account.
mentioned in this commission. The exchequer accounts show that Walter Skirlaw was paid to accompany the duke of Lancaster on a mission to Scotland from September 19 to November 10, 1380. Consequently one can assume that Skirlaw was in the party headed by the duke of Lancaster. These ambassadors received specific instructions to demand the payment of a monetary obligation dating from the time of David Bruce and the return of lands recently occupied by the Scots. They worked out an agreement which provided for security on the marches until St. Andrew's Day 1381. Apparently Skirlaw and his fellow negotiators were being duped by the Scots for the chronicler Thomas Walsingham bitterly condemns the Scots, for their insincerity and their deception in dealing with the English on the October 1, 1380 march day. Walter Skirlaw returned from Scotland with the duke of Lancaster on November 10, 1380.

The Grand League of the Urbanists, 1380-83

By 1380, the proposal made by Urban VI to John Sheppey in the summer of 1379 had been consolidated into a

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57 *Foedera, R. C.*, vol. 4, p. 96, Sept. 6, 1380, commission.

58 Mirot, 60 (1899):202, no. 438, Walter Skirlaw's account.


60 Ibid., Nov. 1, 1380, indenture of the truce.

61 Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 1:446.
carefully designed plan known as the Grand League of the Urbanists which fitted in well with the goals of the barons. According to this plan, England, the Rhine princes, the Holy Roman Empire, Portugal, and Naples would ally under the leadership of Richard II. The English king would then lead this combined force against those countries, principally France, that supported and protected the Avignon pope, Clement VII. From spring 1380 to spring 1381, the barons were firmly committed to the league and actively tried to implement it on a diplomatic level. This commitment slowly deteriorated after the French indicated they were anxious to conclude a peace treaty on the basis of very conciliatory terms. Accordingly in spring 1381, the barons dispatched embassies to negotiate with the French and others to further the Grand League. This diplomatic duplicity produced none of the desired results, and as a consequence, the Grand League of the Urbanists was abandoned not for a peace treaty with France but for a new offensive strategy.

When the barons first committed themselves to the Grand League, they realized that one of the key elements in binding the members together was a royal marriage between Richard II of England and Anne of Bohemia. As early as June 1380, an embassy was commissioned to treat for the royal marriage with Anne's brother, Wenceslaus. Finding that

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63 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 90, June 12, 1380, commission. This document states that these men were to
Wenceslaus was receptive to this idea, arrangements were made for the final negotiations to commence in Flanders on January 1, 1381. Bishop John Gilbert and Dean Walter Skirlaw were included in the embassy which was to go to Bruges to conclude the marriage agreements. Gilbert, Skirlaw, and five others received power to negotiate a treaty of friendship between the king of England and the king of the Romans, but only Thomas of Kent, Hugh Segrave, and Simon Burley received power to treat for the all-important marriage. The ambassadors did not depart for Flanders together; instead they crossed the Channel in small groups, with Gilbert and Skirlaw departing on December 31, 1380.

The English ambassadors had plenty of time to spare when they reached Bruges because the imperial ambassadors did not arrive until late February. This imperial embassy was slow in coming because Anne and her mother, the Empress Elizabeth, did not appoint commissioners until January 23, 1381, and Wenceslaus did not confirm them until January 28, negotiate for a marriage with "Catherine" daughter of the late emperor. Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 144, takes the position that this is just an error and that "Anne" is the correct name.

64 Issue Rolls, E 403/481, 17.
67 Mirot, 60 (1899):202-3, no. 440, John Gilbert's account; no. 442, Walter Skirlaw's account.
1381. While waiting for the German delegation to arrive, Gilbert, Skirlaw, and the others held discussions with the count of Flanders and the burgomasters. Once the Germans had arrived in the beginning of March, the negotiations went so well that the delegates moved to Calais and then finally to London. On March 28, 1381, Gilbert and Skirlaw returned to London in the company of Pileus de Prata, the archbishop of Ravenna, and several Germans; and the final agreements were signed on May 2, 1381.

If Richard II was going to lead a crusade against France, the archenemy of Urban VI, the barons certainly wanted to preserve the Anglo-Scottish truce. Consequently on May 1, 1381, they commissioned Bishop John Gilbert to aid the duke of Lancaster in bringing about the fulfillment of the terms of the November 1380 accord which Walter Skirlaw had helped to arrange.

They departed on May 14 for Scotland which gave them ample time to arrive for the June 12 march day.

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68 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, pp. 105-6, Jan. 23-30, 1381, commission.

69 Issue Rolls, E 403/481, 20.

70 Murimuth, Chronica, pp. 242-43.

71 Mirot, 60 (1899):203, no. 440, John Gilbert's account; no. 442 Walter Skirlaw's account.

72 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 111, May 2, 1381, treaty.

73 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 110, May 1, 1381, commission.

74 Mirot, 60 (1899):203-4, no. 449, Robert Rous' account.
the session opened, the Scots told of numerous incidents where the liberty of trade, guaranteed by England in the truce, had been broken. Then they requested that such breaches be handled by a jury composed of an equal number of Scottish and English members. Lancaster and Gilbert rejected this idea and proposed that these cases be subjected to the arbitration of a foreign prince, but the Scots refused to accept this proposal.75

As the negotiations continued, messengers arrived from London relating the events surrounding the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. Due to these domestic problems, the English tried to settle their differences with the Scots as quickly as possible. The English and Scots agreed to extend the truce to September 29, 1381, and then to February 22, 1384.76 The Scottish ambassadors heard about England's domestic difficulties soon after concluding this extension of the truce, and they tried to withdraw from the treaty by threatening the English. Lancaster and Gilbert did not succumb to their threats, so in the end the truce was confirmed. The English ambassadors at least obtained a written agreement that the Scots would not take advantage of England's vulnerability during her domestic troubles.77 Whether the Scots would keep their word after Lancaster and

75Ridpath, Border History, p. 351.
77Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 2:42-43.
Gilbert arrived back in London on June 24, 1381 was another matter. 78 For John Gilbert, the spring 1381 mission to Scotland was the last he was to undertake to the north country for nine years.

While Bishop Gilbert turned his attention to Scottish affairs, Walter Skirlaw continued to work to transform the Grand League of Urbanists into a reality. The pope was not entirely happy with the May 2 marriage treaty between England and the empire. 79 The treaty provided for a perpetual alliance between the two countries, but the offensive elements of the treaty were rather negligible. The English agreed to enter into a league with Wenceslaus against the schismatics and against all who opposed the legitimate pope. Nevertheless, the English could not disregard their financial problems nor recent French peace feelers. As a result, they insisted that a provision be inserted in the treaty reserving to them the liberty to sign truces and to conclude peace with their adversaries even if they were schismatics. 80 Because of this clause, England was only committing herself to a mild application of pressure on the Valois rather than to a crusade to destroy the supporters of the antipope. 81

78 Mirot, 60 (1899): 203-4, no. 449, Robert Rous' account.
79 Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 151.
80 Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, pp. 111-13, May 2, 1381, treaty.
81 Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 151.
With the hope of maintaining this fairly loose alliance, Walter Skirlaw was given a series of commissions that would take him away from England from May 20, 1381 to August 5, 1382. On May 5, 1381, Dean Skirlaw, along with John Hawkewood, who was already in Italy, and Nicholas Dagworth were appointed to treat with the pope about confirming the already existing alliance in addition to considering more aggressive measures against the schismatics who supported the Avignon popes. Five days later this commission was superceded by three others ordering Walter Skirlaw, Simon Burley, Robert Braybrook, and Bernard Van Sedles to go to Germany. These men were added to the embassy because of their experience in negotiating with the Holy Roman Empire. Basically they were to ratify the marriage contract and the treaty of May 2, 1381 and to work out several minor issues still in dispute. In addition, Skirlaw's group was given the power to treat with the German princes in order to bring them into the Grand League of the Urbanists. After Skirlaw's mission to Italy had been reconsidered, he and his original two associates received additional power to treat with the lords and commonalities of Italy with the purpose of bringing them into the

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82 Mirot, 60 (1899):204, no. 450, Walter Skirlaw's account.


84 Ibid., pp. 117-18, May 10, 1381, commission.
Urbanist League. 85

Skirlaw departed from London on May 20, 1381. 86 A letter written by Richard II to John, duke of Luxembourg and Brabant, requesting safe-conducts for Skirlaw and his colleagues through his lands indicates that they sailed from England to Flanders. From there, they made their way to the Palatinate, Maintz, and Frankfurt, arriving in Prague not before August 6, 1381. 87 After a few discrepancies had been taken care of, the treaty and the marriage contract of May 2 were ratified by Wenceslaus. 88 With these matters settled, Skirlaw and Dagworth left Burley, Braybrook, and Van Sedles and proceeded toward Italy in order to join John Hawkwood. 89

According to Skirlaw's May 5, 1381 commission, he was to go to Italy to arrange to proceed against the schismatics. At the same time though, England saw that an advantageous settlement might be worked out with France through

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85 Ibid., p. 119, May 16, 1381, commission.
86 Mirot, 60 (1899): 204, no. 450, Walter Skirlaw's account.
87 Edouard Perroy, ed., Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II, Camden Third Series, no. 68 (London, 1933), pp. 16-17, no. 27, ca. May 1381, letter from Richard II to John duke of Luxembourg and Brabant.
89 Mirot, 60 (1899): 203-4, no. 447, Robert Braybrook's account shows that he returned to England on Sept. 30, 1381, while nos. 446, 450, Nicholas Dagworth's and Walter Skirlaw's account, show that they were on one continuous mission from May 2, 1381 to Aug. 5, 1382.
negotiations. In the spring of 1381, France wanted to resume peace negotiations with England because she had lost a valuable ally with the desertion of the empire. John Sheppey, Skirlaw's former diplomatic colleague, was one of the six men delegated to go to Calais to treat with a French embassy. The leader of the French embassy Nicholas de Bosc, bishop of Bayeux, left a rare day-by-day account of these negotiations, and he included many official documents from the negotiations in his narrative. On April 29 and again on May 2, the French ambassadors received instructions to discuss the following points: a marriage between Richard and Catherine of France; homage, sovereignty, and resort; and territorial concessions.\footnote{Martène, 
\textit{Voyage de deux religieux bénédictins}, 2:308-12.} To the displeasure of the French, the English embassy was not at Calais when they arrived in Picardy on May 1. On this date, Sheppey and his colleagues had not even been commissioned, and they did not depart for Calais until June 3, 1381.\footnote{Mirot, 60 (1899):204, no. 454, John Sheppey's account.}

Negotiations did begin at Lenlington as soon as they arrived, and in the bishop's account, we can see John Sheppey, an inferior member of the embassy, functioning as a diplomat. In the July 23 session, he presented the English response to the French demand for territorial concessions made earlier that day. Sheppey said that England had no intention of giving up any of the lands that she held...
in France, but he recognized that these lands were held from Charles. On July 25, Sheppey again spoke for the total embassy and withdrew his previous offer to recognize French sovereignty over English-held lands in France. Also he raised the possibility of a truce and suggested that the negotiations adjourn so that each embassy could return to its lord to explain what had been discussed. 92 Apparently the ambassadors accepted this suggestion, for they met only once more on July 27, 93 and Sheppey arrived back in London on August 3, 1381. 94

Six months later, Dean Sheppey joined forces with Bishop Gilbert to investigate further the possibility of a negotiated Anglo-French peace. 95 Along with four others, they left for Picardy on December 28, 1381. Since an Anglo-French marriage was beyond consideration due to the well publicized Anglo-imperial marriage treaty, Bishop Gilbert led his embassy in negotiations over the issues of sovereignty and territorial concessions. The discussions produced no substantial results, and Gilbert, Sheppey, and the others returned to England on February 27, 1382. 96

92 Martène, Voyage de deux religieux bénédictins, 2:324-25.
93 Ibid., pp. 326-27.
94 Mirot, 60 (1899):204, no. 454, John Sheppey's account.
96 Mirot, 60 (1899):205, nos. 457, 458, John Gilbert's accounts.
still hoping to come to terms with the French, John Gilbert twice more journeyed to France from May 26 to June 29, 1382 and July 6 to August 4, 1382. 97

Because England had reopened negotiations with France while Walter Skirlaw was proceeding on his rather indirect journey to Rome, he found himself in a more difficult position to deal with the pope when he arrived at the papal court. He had to downplay England's peace efforts with France while furthering the arrangements for the assault by the Grand League of the Urbanists. Skirlaw and his companion Dagworth arrived at the Roman court toward the end of 1381. At this time, Skirlaw requested that the 1375 treaty between England and the papacy be confirmed; that English priories, subject to the jurisdiction of French superior houses, be set free; that all alliances made before the schism be declared null and void; and that only pro-Urbanists and pro-English clerics be appointed to church offices in French lands held by the English and in Ireland. In return for these concessions, Skirlaw stated that England would continue to make war on France, Spain, and Scotland. 98 Urban accepted most of Skirlaw's proposals but hesitated to go so far as to invalidate all pre-schism alliances. He finally agreed to do so but in milder terms

97 Ibid., nos. 459, 464, John Gilbert's account.

98 Perroy, L'Angleterre, pp. 392-95, no. 3, Walter Skirlaw's demands, ca. end of 1381.
than Skirlaw would have liked.\(^9\) Due to the hesitancy of the papacy and the duplicity of English diplomacy, Skirlaw did not place the Grand League of the Urbanists on a solid foundation while in Rome.

Skirlaw now turned his attention to Naples, and on April 15, 1382, a commission was issued to him to treat for an alliance with Charles of Durazzo, king of Naples.\(^{10}\) In Naples, a contest ensued between Louis of Anjou, regent for Charles VI of France, and Charles of Durazzo. Queen Joan of Naples had recognized Louis of Anjou as her heir, thereby disinheriting her nephew Charles of Durazzo. Fearing French expansion, however, Urban supported Charles of Durazzo's claim and made every effort possible to obtain support for Charles. Therefore he tried to get English backing for Charles from Skirlaw and Dagworth while they were still at the papal court. These clerical diplomats agreed to communicate Urban's wishes to their principal, and thereby received the aforementioned commission.

In May, Skirlaw and Dagworth concluded a treaty with Charles of Durazzo. The treaty was very vague simply committing England to an alliance with Naples in order to preserve the position of Urban VI against the forces of the schismatics. However, no specific commitments of troops, materials, or money were included, nor the conditions under

\(^{9}\) Ibid., pp. 402-3, no. 6, Walter Skirlaw's demands in spring 1382.

\(^{10}\) Foedera, R. C. vol. 4, p, 144, Apr. 15, 1382, commission.
which they would be given.\textsuperscript{101} In working out such an agreement, Skirlaw and Dagworth continued to represent a policy which lessened England's commitment to the Urbanist cause while allowing her to continue to negotiate for peace with France. Skirlaw returned to England with this treaty on August 5, 1382,\textsuperscript{102} but no records exist indicating that the barons ratified it. Moreover, no overt action was taken in the succeeding years to aid Charles who eventually did secure the Neapolitan throne in September 1384.

"Way of Flanders," 1383

Though John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw were associated with the Grand League of the Urbanists, their diplomatic careers did not suffer when this plan was abandoned. Between summer 1382 and the early months of 1383, England dropped the Grand League of the Urbanists as a method of defeating France and adopted a new strategy called the "way of Flanders." According to the terms of this plan, England would ally herself with the Flemish towns which had been in revolt against the count of Flanders since 1379; and with Flemish aid, England would attack France from the northeast.

In the Parliament of February to March 1383, the frugal Commons decided that the king should not lead an army

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{101}Perroy, L'Angleterre, pp. 404-6, no. 7, May 1382, treaty.\textsuperscript{102}Mirot, 60 (1899):204, no. 450, Walter Skirlaw's account.}
to the continent. Instead, they forced the acceptance of Henry Despenser, the bishop of Norwich's offer, to lead the Flemish expedition against France. This campaign was to be promoted as a religious crusade against the followers of the antipope Clement VII. In return for a year's service on the continent with two thousand men-at-arms and twenty-five hundred archers, Henry Despenser was to receive the lay fifteenth granted by the February sessions of Parliament. 103

In order for Bishop Despenser to conduct his crusade, certain preparatory steps had to be taken. Firstly England had to secure the allegiance of Flanders, which would provide a base for attack and additional military strength. Secondly England had to secure a prolongation of the Scottish truce because the Scots, as in the past, might attack England while she was engaged in battle elsewhere. John Sheppey received commissions to take part in the embassies that sought to achieve these objectives, but it is difficult to see how Sheppey could have fulfilled both of them.

On May 7, 1383, John Sheppey and six others were appointed to an embassy that was to go to the marches of Scotland to treat for a prolongation of the 1381 Anglo-Scottish truce and to hold a march day in order to redress violations against it. 104 Though Sheppey and his fellow ambassadors received their commissions on May 7, they did not depart for

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103 Tout, Chapters, 3:388-89.

Scotland until June 20 and did not meet the Scottish embassy until July 1. In these sessions from July 1 to 12, they settled claims that the truce had been violated, such as the Scottish charge that Englishmen had raided the castle of Wark. Here Sheppey's embassy and the Scottish deputies appointed six noblemen who were to estimate the cost of repairing the castle. Moreover, they designated the earl of Carrick as the person responsible for collecting this sum and paying it to English officials at Roxburgh. Turning toward more general issues, it was decided that the truce would be prolonged until February 2, 1384. Before August 8, the king of Scotland had to state whether or not he wished to conclude a treaty of peace, and if he did, negotiations for that peace treaty had to begin before November 11, 1383. Concluding their meetings by July 12, 1383, Sheppey and the English embassy arrived back in England by August 1.

During the time between the date of Sheppey's commission to treat with the Scots (May 7) and the date at which his embassy departed (June 20) and the date negotiations opened with the Scots (July 1), he received two other commissions.

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105 Mirot, 60 (1899):206, no. 468, John Waltham's account is the only one existing for a member of the embassy.

106 Foedera, Holmes, 7:403, July 12, 1383, indenture of the agreement between John of Lancaster and John earl of Carrick. On July 1 the embassies met at Lyliot-Cross, and then from July 2 to July 12, they met at Morehauslawe.

107 Mirot, 60 (1899):206, no. 468, John Waltham's account.
On June 1, 1383, he was appointed to an embassy which was to be led by Bishop Henry Despenser and which was to treat for an alliance with the count and commonalities of Flanders. Then on June 20, another letter of procuration was issued granting the embassy power to receive homage and fealty from the count and people of Flanders. No exchequer accounts exist to indicate if or when Sheppey left England to fulfill this commission. Possibly Sheppey departed about May 17 when Henry Despenser and his flotilla sailed for Flanders. Then, he like Despenser, received the commissions sometime after the capitulation of Dunkirk in late May and before the siege of Ypres in early June when powers were needed to treat for an alliance with Ghent. Ghent's allegiance was necessary to gain hegemony over all of Flanders and to force the various political entities of Flanders to recognize England as their suzerain. By the time that possibly the first commission and definitely the second commission reached Sheppey, he would not have had enough time to fulfill them and return to England in order to arrive in Scotland for July 1 let alone depart for Scotland on June 20.

"Way of Portugal," 1383-86

Bishop Henry Despenser's Flemish crusade ended in a

108Foedera, R. C., vol. 4, p. 172, June 1 and June 20, 1383, commission.


110Perroy, L'Angleterre, p. 190.
military disaster, and England adopted another plan called the "way of Portugal." According to this Lancastrian-inspired scheme, France could best be handled by lulling her into inactivity by a series of truces. Then England would strike down France's allies, Scotland and Castile, which would give her a better chance for a military victory over France or a favorable negotiated peace. From autumn 1383 to the early months of 1386, the barons followed the guidelines of this strategy in order to defeat France.

In November 1383, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw directed their combined diplomatic talents toward implementing the duke of Lancaster's "way of Portugal." Royal commissions gave Sheppey, Gilbert, and Skirlaw, and nine others power to conclude a truce with France and Flanders, who had recently become allies. The English embassy departed for Calais on November 11, 1383 and reached the spot of the peace conference sometime before the feast of the Nativity. Here magnificent tents had been set up for the negotiations. The chronicles differ as to the attitudes of the French ambassadors with whom Gilbert, Sheppey, and Skirlaw had to deal. According to the Chronique

\[\text{Steel, Richard II, pp. 198-99.}\]
\[\text{Foedera, Holmes, 7:412-14, Nov. 4, 1383, commission.}\]
\[\text{Mirot, 60 (1899):206, no. 469, Walter Skirlaw's account.}\]
\[\text{Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 2:110.}\]
du religieux de Saint-Denys, the French were hostile to the English because they felt they were secretly negotiating with the Duke of Brittany. The Monk of Westminster reports that the French were very hopeful about concluding a peace treaty because they felt that the English had recently displayed a more temperate attitude. On the other hand, Froissart says that the French diplomats were hindered from the beginning because the count of Flanders would not accept any treaty to which England's ally Ghent was a party. Despite these complications, the ambassadors concluded a treaty establishing a period of truce from January to October 1, 1384. The armistice had the usual provisions and applied to the major belligerents and all of their allies. Having successfully concluded this short-term truce, Sheppey, Skirlaw, and Gilbert arrived back in England on February 3, 1384.

As the military preparations for the "way of Portugal" began, England continued to pursue the diplomatic aspects of the plan which meant that the January 1384 truce had to be extended beyond October 1. Commissions were

118 Poedera, Holmes, 7:412-14, Jan. 6, 1384, truce.
119 Mirot, 60 (1899):206, no. 469, Walter Skirlaw's account.
issued on May 27, 1384, giving power to treat with France and Flanders. As a diplomat, Walter Skirlaw was in an awkward position at this time. He had invested in a cargo of goods which had been seized by the men of Dieppe. In reprisal for this action, the king ordered that two Dieppe barges be seized. If the French envoys knew that he was involved in litigation over a breach of the truce, they may not have cared to deal with him. Regardless of this situation, Skirlaw's embassy secured an extension of the truce until May 1, 1385.

England continued to pursue all elements of the "way of Portugal" into 1385, and in March of that year, John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw went on another mission to France to further this program. With orders to extend the truce and to conclude a final peace, Bishop Gilbert and Dean Skirlaw set out for Calais on March 23, 1385. The French

120 Foedera, Holmes, 7:426-28, May 27, 1384, commissions.
121 Mirot, 60(1899):206, no. 473, Walter Skirlaw's account; Foreign Accounts Enrolled, E 364/12.
123 Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 2:115.
124 Foedera, Holmes, 7:466, Mar. 23, 1385, commission.
125 Mirot, 60 (1899):207, no. 478, John Gilbert's
and English ambassadors met at Lenlingham, and formal negotiations began on Wednesday, April 19, 1385. The bishop of Bayeux left a detailed account of these negotiations too, in which he says that the inclusion of Ghent in any agreement was the main issue of dispute between the English and French ambassadors. Gilbert and Skirlaw wanted a temporary extension of the truce to June 1 and a more general truce that would last until February 2, 1386. The French agreed to extend the truce till June, but they insisted that Ghent be excluded from the terms of the prolongation. They also responded favorably to the idea of a longer truce. However, they requested that it be arranged for a period long enough to conclude a general peace treaty, perhaps four to eleven years, and that Portugal as well as Ghent be excluded from its terms. On April 27, the embassies agreed to an indenture providing for a short-term truce which would apply to Ghent as well as England. Wanting to seek advice in England, Gilbert, Skirlaw and their party left Lenlingham immediately after this indenture had been signed, and they arrived in London on April 30.

Having decided to conduct the rest of the negotiations by letter, the English wrote to the French saying that they would accept a short-term truce to June 1 which

account; no. 479, Walter Skirlaw's account.

126 Martène, Voyage de deux religieux bénédictins, 2: 343-47.

127 Mirot, 60 (1899):207, no. 478, John Gilbert's account; no. 479, Walter Skirlaw's account.
included Ghent, and that they would like to conclude a longer truce which also embraced Portugal and Ghent. On May 27, the truce was prolonged in France. The chronicler Thomas Walsingham comments on how utterly useless this extension was seeing that by the time it was published only six days remained until it expired. With the expiration of the truce, the barons felt that they could not proceed with military aspects of the "way of Portugal." Before the Lancastrian expedition could depart for Portugal, they felt that they had to resume negotiations with the French who had been encouraged to so do by the King of Armenia.

King Leo of Armenia arrived at Charles VI's court soon after the expiration of the 1384 truce. When the French king and his councillors began formulating plans to attack England, he asked that he be allowed to go to England to try his hand at settling the differences between the two warring kingdoms. At Richard's court, he revealed his true motives for playing the benevolent mediator:

By reason of the war between these two realms, which have endured so long, the Saracens, Jews and Turks are waxed proud, for there is none that maketh them any war, and by occasion thereof I have lost my land and realm, and am not like to recover it again without there firm peace in all Christendom.

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128 Martène, Voyage de deux religieux bénédictins, 2: 343-47.
129 Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 2: 348.
130 Steel, Richard II, p. 106.
131 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 1: 419-40.
In response to King Leo's offer to serve as mediator between the French and English, the barons appointed a seven-man commission on January 26, 1386 which was to be headed by Walter Skirlaw, now bishop of Coventry-Lichfield, and which included the clerical diplomat Richard Rouhale. Bishop Skirlaw was to lead his men to Picardy, where they were to treat for a truce with France or with France and her allies. Skirlaw left London on February 10 and went to Lenlingham where he was involved in negotiations for six weeks. The French chronicler, Juvenal des Ursins, says of Walter Skirlaw and his embassy:

It was marvellous to see the pride of the English and their arrogance, and they demanded much more than they were willing to do. And by their manners it appeared evident that they had no desire to conclude a treaty or do anything.

The French said that they wanted a final peace but again claimed that a lengthy truce would have to be negotiated before such a final settlement could be concluded. The English agitated for a short-term truce that would not commit any of their allies. The king of Armenia tried to

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134 *Mirot*, 60 (1899):208, no. 484, Walter Skirlaw's account.

mediate between these two positions suggesting a peace plan which would set the periods of the truce at six years and require that all allies be party to the truce. The disputes continued on past March 15, and the chronicler of Saint-Denys claims that Skirlaw intentionally prolonged the negotiations. Finally on March 28, 1386, Walter Skirlaw's embassy returned to London without King Leo's treaty of peace.

Indeed, the chronicler of Saint-Denys was correct in charging that Skirlaw purposely prolonged the negotiations. He was directed to do so in order to conceal the military activities of the barons. The barons were not using the January through March negotiations to push forward the "way of Portugal," because by January 1386, they had essentially disassociated the English government from this Lancastrian program. They had done so because the Commons had refused to provide substantial funding for the duke of Lancaster's expedition to Portugal. The Commons claimed that the "way of Portugal" furthered the interests of the duke more than those of England, and that his expedition should therefore not be heavily financed by the government. However, instead of using the negotiations to cover the Lancastrian expedition, the barons actually were using them to


137 *Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 1:429.

138 Mirot, 60 (1899): 208, no. 484, Walter Skirlaw's account.
draw attention away from the English fleet that was sailing across the Channel to raid the French coast.¹³⁹

**Treaty of Lenlington, 1386-89**

Clerical diplomats John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw had used their talents to further the aggressive policies of the barons as they had manifested themselves in the Grand League of the Urbanists, the "way of Flanders," and the "way of Portugal." Eventually both John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw became closely associated with the baronial faction, but John Sheppey, however, was never tagged as a supporter of the barons. Because of their strong identification with the baronial cause, Gilbert's and Skirlaw's careers were definitely altered as power shifted back and forth from the barons to Richard during the period from 1386 to 1389. Sheppey, though, was not affected by the vicissitudes of domestic politics during this three-year period because he failed to associate himself with either Richard or the barons. Despite Richard's attempts to govern in his own right, the barons essentially controlled foreign policy from 1386 to 1389. By 1387, they finally abandoned any hope of defeating France and decided to settle their differences with France through negotiations. Bishop Skirlaw and Dean Sheppey participated in these negotiations, but Bishop Gilbert was conspicuously absent.

Though Walter Skirlaw had served on many embassies

¹³⁹ *Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 1:429.
dispatched by the barons since they assumed power in 1379, he did not move into the baronial camp until 1386. Due to his diplomatic work, the barons bestowed upon him the office of keeper of the privy seal, which he held from August 9, 1382 to October 24, 1386.\textsuperscript{140} During his tenure, the office of keeper of the privy seal became the third most important ministerial office along with that of the chancellor and treasurer. In the Parliament of October 1385, Skirlaw defended two of Richard's appointments and was marked as one of the king's men and a member of the court faction. For Skirlaw's loyalty and service, Richard prevailed on the pope to have Skirlaw provided to the bishopric of Coventry-Lichfield, and Urban concurred, issuing the provision on October 27, 1385.\textsuperscript{142} On January 6, 1386, Skirlaw received his temporalities,\textsuperscript{143} and on January 14, he was consecrated at Westminster in a magnificent ceremony that befitted a favorite of the king.\textsuperscript{144}

To Walter Skirlaw's good fortune, he was to lose the king's favor shortly before the barons wrested power from the hands of the young king during the Wonderful Parliament

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnotesize \textsuperscript{140} CCR, Ric. II, 2 (1381-84):215, memorandum; Tout, Chapters, 6:53.
\item \footnotescript{141} Tout, Chapters, 5:49.
\item \footnotescript{142} Eubel, Hierarchia catholica, 1:216.
\item \footnotescript{143} CPR, Ric. II, 3 (1385-89):96, Jan. 6, 1386, mandate to John Breggeford.
\item \footnotescript{144} William Stubbs, Registrum sacrum Anglicanum (Oxford, 1897), p. 81.
\end{itemize}
of October 1386. Skirlaw fell from Richard's good graces when Urban VI translated him to the richer see of Bath and Wells on August 18, 1386. Before receiving the news of Skirlaw's translation, the cathedral chapter elected another royal favorite, Richard Medford. Though Walter Skirlaw had served England and Richard well both as a diplomat and as keeper of the privy seal, Richard chose to support Richard Medford. Having had his episcopal ambitions crushed by Richard, and realizing that the barons were preparing to strike, Skirlaw switched his allegiance to the baronial party. Though he was removed as keeper of the privy seal by the barons, they recognized his translation to Bath and Wells, and he received the temporalities of his see on November 3, 1386. Skirlaw continued to serve England as a diplomat during these years, and the barons secured his appointment to the 1388 council created to oversee Richard's activities and his translation from Bath and Wells to Durham on July 13, 1388.

Before 1386, John Gilbert was not identified with either the court or the baronial party. Due to his

145 Le Neve, Fasti, ed. Hardy, 1:139.
146 Tout, Chapters, 6:53.
extensive diplomatic efforts in the cause of the baron's aggressive foreign policy, John Gilbert was rewarded by the Wonderful Parliament with appointments to the treasurership of England and to membership on the continual council of 1386. Because of these appointments, Bishop Gilbert was readily identified with the barons, and because of the immense responsibilities associated with both positions, he had no time for diplomatic assignments. When the Merciless Parliament met in February 1388, he maintained his position as treasurer and remained on the council which was to check Richard's activities.

Seeing that Bishop Gilbert was so strongly identified with the baronial cause, he was bound to be affected when Richard seized power from the hands of the barons. Firstly he was translated from the bishopric of Hereford to St. David's, and secondly he was removed as treasurer of England. Gilbert's translation from Hereford was only indirectly due to Richard's influence and was more of a promotion than a demotion. The king attempted to assert his independence by elevating Richard Medford to the episcopal bench. When Bishop Adam Houghton of St. David's died in February 1389, Richard tried to have him appointed to this position.  

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151 Ibid., p. 244, Nov. 19, 1386, commission.

Welsh see. On February 27, 1389, Richard issued a *congé d'élire* to the cathedral chapter of St. David's besides a writ allowing the cathedral chapter to administer the temporalities during the vacancy of the see.\(^{153}\) The chapter dutifully elected the king's candidate, but from this point, Richard's plans went astray. Irritated over the recent re-enactment of the Statute of Provisors by the 1388 Parliament at Cambridge, Urban VI disregarded Richard's wishes, and on May 7, 1389, he translated John Gilbert to St. David's replacing him at Hereford with John Trefnant, a papal auditor.\(^{154}\) According to Tout, John Gilbert's translation to St. David's cannot be interpreted as a demotion because St. David's, although a Welsh diocese, was a wealthier see than Hereford.\(^{155}\)

Though Richard hardly wished to see a bishop so closely allied with the baronial party receive an ecclesiastical promotion, his actions indirectly led to this result. However when it came to Gilbert's position in government, Richard was more successful, being directly responsible for removing him as treasurer of England on May 4, 1389.\(^{156}\)

\(^{153}\) *CPR, Ric. II, 4* (1389-92):14, Feb. 27, 1389, license to the chapter of St. David's; 23, Mar. 8, 1389, confirmation.

\(^{154}\) *Foedera, Holmes, 7:*617, May 7, 1388, papal bull.

\(^{155}\) *Tout, Chapters, 3:*460.

\(^{156}\) *CPR, Ric. II, 4* (1389-92):31, May 4, 1389, mandate to John Gilbert.
in Walter Skirlaw's case, Richard was very lenient in his treatment of Gilbert. On August 20, 1389, the king re-appointed John Gilbert as treasurer,\footnote{Ibid., p. 95, Aug. 20, 1389, appointment.} and he maintained this office until May 2, 1391.\footnote{Ibid., p. 402, May 2, 1391, mandate of John Gilbert.} Bishop Gilbert's dismissal and reappointment seem to be part of a more general policy of making the officers of state aware that their tenure depended on the will of the king.

Unlike John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw who were so tremendously affected by the internal events of 1386-89, John Sheppey was left untouched. As Gilbert and Skirlaw became more involved in diplomacy and associated with the barons, John Sheppey received fewer and fewer assignments. Then in 1387, Dean Sheppey's diplomatic career, as well as his involvement in other public affairs, came to an abrupt halt. This interruption of Sheppey's career does not seem to be related to his allegiance to Richard or the barons, but it can be explained by the fact that in 1389 Sheppey started to fulfil his obligation of greater residency at Lincoln. From the beginning of 1389 until the end of 1396, he was listed among the greater residentiaries of Lincoln cathedral.\footnote{Edwards, Secular Cathedrals, pp. 255-56.} Why Sheppey began this probationary period of greater residency eleven years after the king had agreed to his provision is unclear. Two sources state that he was not
"installed" as dean until 1388, but many other sources, which date from 1378 to 1388, refer to him as dean of Lincoln. At any rate, Sheppey's period of greater residency coincides with his absence from diplomacy.

In the years from 1389 to 1397, many capitular problems arose which consumed a great deal of John Sheppey's time. Several of these problems were the outcome of Archbishop William Courtenay's visitation of his archiepiscopal see during Sheppey's first year of greater residency. On October 7, 1389, the archbishop and his entourage arrived at Lincoln cathedral, and in the following days, they found many abuses. One abuse of particular interest to Sheppey as dean was the flagrant non-residency among the canons of the cathedral chapter. Dean Sheppey took the archbishop's remonstrances to heart and single-handedly tried to direct chapter affairs from that date which led to a lengthy conflict between Sheppey and his chapter.

Since the time when career diplomat William Bateman had been dean of Lincoln, the cathedral had had a history of disputes between the chapter and dean. So when Sheppey


decided to exercise a firm hand over the chapter, the canons immediately struck back and appealed to the king.\(^ {163}\) The battle continued for years, but after 1395 Sheppey was not required to pay so much attention to chapter affairs because he received a dispensation from the heavy residentiary responsibilities of a dean and was only required to spend one month per year at Lincoln.\(^ {164}\) Despite his long years of retirement from diplomacy, he was once more available for diplomatic service by 1396.

Because John Gilbert was so busy with domestic matters, only John Sheppey and Walter Skirlaw were employed by the barons in the diplomacy from 1386 to 1389. The baronial party continued to support an active war policy. In accordance with this policy, they charged Richard II with disloyalty for responding favorably to French offers of peace. However, the barons realized how exhausted their country was from so many years of war, and they came to the conclusion that a negotiated peace was the best policy.

In the spring of 1387, they sent John Sheppey and Walter Skirlaw to Scotland to maintain the armistice which had been signed with the Scots on June 27, 1386. This treaty established a period of truce lasting until May 31, \(^ {163}\)CPR, Ric. II, 5 (1392-96):410-11, May 13, 1394, pardon. \(^ {164}\)CPL, 4 (1362-1404):526, 14 Kal. June 1395, indulgence.
1387 and required that a meeting be held between representatives of the two countries on March 14, 1387, for the purpose of concluding a final peace or a long-term truce between England and Scotland and her ally France. On March 20, 1387, Walter Skirlaw was commissioned to lead a seven-man embassy including John Sheppey to the marches of Scotland to negotiate for a final peace or long-term truce. Apparently Skirlaw and Sheppey and the others were not successful, and Sheppey was ordered to return for the same purpose on May 22, 1387. Sheppey failed in his mission and was not even able to secure a prolongation of the one-year truce which duly expired on May 31, resulting in numerous Scottish raids in the western marches.

Although England allowed the truce with Scotland to lapse, she proved receptive to French peace proposals made in December 1387. At that time, Philip, duke of Burgundy, wrote to one of the barons, Thomas, duke of Gloucester, asking him to conclude a truce during which time a peace treaty could be arranged. He suggested that England as well as France be parties to this truce but also all the allies of both kingdoms. Gloucester wrote back on July 12 praising the peace proposal, but he said that his government was too busy with other problems to conduct negotiations at that time. In June, a delegation from Flanders arrived in

165 *Foedera*, Holmes, 7:526, June 27, 1386, treaty.
167 Ibid., May 22, 1387, commission.
England and appeared before Parliament asking that arrangements be made for a peace conference to be held at Calais.\textsuperscript{168}

By November 26, 1388, the barons commissioned Bishop Walter Skirlaw of Durham to lead a six-man embassy to treat for a truce and a final peace with France but only to treat for a truce with Flanders. Among the members of the embassy was the clerical diplomat Richard Rouhale.\textsuperscript{169} At Lenlington, Skirlaw once again faced a French negotiating team headed by the bishop of Bayeux. The negotiations carried on into the winter and into the spring of 1389 because the French wanted a long-term truce and the Scots did not want to be included in the terms of any treaty. When the Scots learned that they had, they protested and tried very hard to interrupt the negotiations.\textsuperscript{170} Therefore due to these problems, the conference was adjourned until May.

In order to resume negotiations, Walter Skirlaw had to obtain new commissions for himself and his embassy.\textsuperscript{171} For by spring 1389, the barons were no longer in control, and Bishop Skirlaw would not be certain that Richard would

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{168} CPR, Ric. II, 3 (1385-89): 502-3, July 12, 1388, indemnity to Thomas duke of Gloucester.
\item \textsuperscript{169} Foedera, Holmes, 7: 610-12, Nov. 26, 1388, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{170} Higden, Polychronicon, 9: 202; Walsingham, Historia Anglicana, 2: 179-80.
\item \textsuperscript{171} Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 65, no. 99, ante, June 1389, Richard II to Wenceslaus, king of the Romans.
\end{itemize}
renew his commissions. Yet the king, unlike the barons, had always wanted a peace settlement, and he immediately issued new letters of procuration allowing the baronial partisan, Walter Skirlaw, to continue his work in France.

Once the diplomats resumed discussions, they realized that they still had an additional problem in that the ambassadors from Flanders had not arrived. Despite these difficulties, Walter Skirlaw did conclude a three-year truce commencing on August 15, 1389 and lasting till August 16, 1392, and all of England's and France's allies signed this Truce of Lenlingham. Because of Scotland's reluctance to follow the direction of her French ally, a specific statement was included in the treaty that all terms of the truce were binding between England and Scotland as between England and France. To ensure that Scotland would adhere to the truce, Walter Skirlaw was designated as one of the conservators of the truce on the Scottish marches. In all probability, he was appointed to this position because he was bishop of the diocese of Durham and as such one of the wardens of the Scottish marches. Once the treaty had been signed, most of the English embassy returned home, but

172 Foedera, Holmes, 7:636-38, Aug. 16, 1389, confirmation.

173 CCR, Ric. II, 3 (1385-89):673, May 5, 1384, letter to mayor and sheriff of London indicates that the Flemish ambassadors had not arrived as of that date and that they had safe-conducts good until Aug, 1, 1389.

174 Foedera, Holmes, 7:626-29, June 18, 1389, treaty.
Walter Skirlaw, who was in charge, had to remain in France where he was busy until July 30 sending messengers to publish the truce in Guienne, Portugal, and Guelders.  

Walter Skirlaw's work in concluding the Truce of Lenlivingham was not quite finished when he returned to London. On November 5, 1389, a commission was issued to Skirlaw and ten others including Rouhale instructing them to try and pressure the Flemish into a treaty of peace. 

The Monk of Westminster says that all attempts to conclude a peace with Flanders were ruined because the king of France "ordered them [Flemish] not to treat with the English for peace in any manner without his authority and license if they wished to live in quiet and peace in the future." Though he failed to secure a peace treaty, Skirlaw did find that the Flemish still accepted the Truce of Lenlivingham.

The Treaty of Lenlivingham brought a three-year truce to England after a twelve-year period of intermittent warfare. Although the minority and baronial councils had dispatched many embassies to negotiate for peace with the French, they had no real desire for peace until 1387. With a moderate king in control by 1389, prospects looked good that the truce would be converted into a final peace treaty.

175Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 211-12.
176Foedera, Holmes, 7:218-29, Nov. 5, 1389, commission.
177Higden, Polychronicon, 9:218. "mandavit eis ne aliquo modo cum Anglicis de pace tractarent abseque ejus auctoritate et licentia si in quiete in posterum vellent vivere aut in pace."
and that career diplomats Bishops Walter Skirlaw and John Gilbert would be employed to implement this conversion.

John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw Serve
Richard II, 1389-99

When Richard established his independence from the barons, he did not drive their followers from court or from the established offices of government. Instead, he followed a general policy of appeasement and employed many baronial sympathizers as long as they remained loyal to him. Because of this moderate policy, Richard intended to utilize the talents of career diplomats like the two bishops, Walter Skirlaw and John Gilbert, despite their previous association with the barons. After the death of his wife Anne in 1394, Richard slowly abandoned his policy of appeasement, which resulted in Walter Skirlaw's premature retirement from public life and John Sheppey's momentary recall into diplomatic service.

In foreign affairs as well as in domestic matters, Richard followed a policy of appeasement and directed the efforts of his career diplomats like Skirlaw and Gilbert toward the transformation of the Lenlington truce into a general treaty of peace.¹ Despite the prolongation of this truce in May 1392, April 1393, and June 1394, Richard's ambassadors could not conclude a final peace settlement because they could not come to terms with the French on the

¹Steel, Richard II, p. 147.
issues of homage for Guienne and territorial concessions. Though they did conclude a provisional peace treaty in June 1393, it was never confirmed. After five years of negotiations, Richard was not only despondent about diplomatic problems but also about the death of his wife Anne. Nevertheless, he was able to see how her death might be used to advance his peace program. He directed his ambassadors to arrange a marriage between himself and Charles VI's daughter Isabelle in return for a twenty-eight-year extension of the Lenningham truce. At the time he was deposed by Henry of Lancaster, England was at peace with France and her allies through the device of a long-term truce, and Walter Skirlaw labored to secure its confirmation during the early years of Henry IV's reign.

Conversion of the Lenningham Truce into a Peace Treaty, 1389-94

In April 1390, Walter Skirlaw was chosen to lead the first embassy dispatched to deal with the problem of converting the Lenningham truce into a general peace. His thirteen-man embassy, which included the clerical diplomat Richard Rouhale, received letters of procuration empowering them to treat for a final peace between France and her allies and England and her allies or between England and France alone. This same group also received power to treat separately with the count and commonalities of Flanders.2

2Foedera, Holmes, 7:667-69, Apr. 8, 1390, commission.
The Privy Council discussed Skirlaw's pending mission on April 13 and again on April 23 and issued two sets of instructions touching basically on the all important matters of homage and territorial concessions. They directed Skirlaw to agree that Richard would do simple homage for Guienne through a representative, but this simple homage was to have no obligations like attendance at court. He was to demand the retention of the fortresses at Calais and in Picardy as well as Ponthieu. He must require that all France's allies be a party to such a peace, especially Scotland and Spain, and in the case that the French wished to extend the truce, he was to agree. ³

With this set of instructions, Skirlaw and his party sailed for Calais, and they opened discussions with the French embassy at Lenlingham on July 4, 1390. Jean le Mercier led the French embassy; unfortunately he was so ill that he had to be carried to Lenlingham in a litter. ⁴ The French demanded that the English king do liege homage for the lands that he held in France. Skirlaw dismissed this issue of homage and wanted to move on to a discussion of territorial concessions. The negotiations stalemated at this point, but Skirlaw agreed to attend another conference

³APC, 1:19-24, Apr. 1390, minutes.

on October 1, 1390. Bishop Skirlaw and his embassy returned to England in the middle of July but the English did not keep their promise to return by October.

In summer 1390, Richard brought John Gilbert, now bishop of St. David's and still treasurer of England, back into diplomatic service when he sent him on a mission to Scotland. According to the terms of the Truce of Lenlington, a three-year truce was established between Scotland and England as well as between France and England. The Scots, however, did not abide by the terms of the treaty and attacked, looted, and ravaged lay and ecclesiastical property. The English also breached the truce by harassing Scottish students attending English universities and preventing the export of armor, wheat, malt, and victuals to Scotland. To hear complaints of those affected by these breaches, John Gilbert and ten laymen were appointed as conservators of the truce. They were to hold court on the border between the Scottish and English marches


6 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 223.


8 Ibid., p. 204, Feb. 26, 1390, safe-conduct.


10 Rotuli Scotiae, 2:107, June 28, 1390, commission.
in order to redress breaches of the truce. On June 29, John Gilbert travelled north to fulfil his commission, and he returned to London on August 12, 1390.

Thirteen months passed, and no one made any further efforts to negotiate a general peace treaty. England and France, however, became very concerned by 1392 when they realized that all hope of peace might be destroyed because the three-year truce established by the Treaty of Lenlivingham was scheduled to expire in August 1392. Because of the gravity of the situation, both kings decided to negotiate the peace treaty in person with the aid of the royal uncles and career diplomats like Bishop Walter Skirlaw. On February 25, 1392, John of Gaunt and Walter Skirlaw, along with five others, set off for Dover in the company of the king. When the royal party arrived at Dover, the king's council, which included Walter Skirlaw, convinced the king that he should stay there.

The duke of Lancaster and Bishop Skirlaw sailed across the Channel reaching Calais on March 5, where they were provided with horses and supplies by the French.

11Ridpath, Border History, p. 19.
12Mirot, 60 (1899):210, no. 508, Richard Le Scrop's account.
14Froissart, Chronicles, trans. Bourchier, 6:34.
French king had ordained, that after the Englishmen came out of Calais, both going, abiding, and returning, all their costs and charges were born of the French king's charge, as meat, drink, lodging and horse fodder."\(^{16}\) Before discussions began between the more notable personages of the embassy, two representatives from both sides met to lay the groundwork for the conference to be held at Amiens. The French envoys were disappointed that Richard had no intention of coming to France, and that they could secure only the personage of the duke of Lancaster to treat with the king.\(^{17}\) Nonetheless, they agreed to let the negotiations proceed, so the duke and Skirlaw and the rest of his party rode on to Amiens probably arriving there on March 25, 1392.\(^{18}\)

When the English ambassadors arrived at Amiens, they found that Charles VI had sent ambassadors to take his place in the negotiations that lasted for fifteen days. The French opened the negotiations by demanding that Calais be razed to the ground.\(^{19}\) Skirlaw and his English compatriots demanded that they keep Guienne, including Poitou and Calais but agreed to concede Ponthieu. The French countered with an offer to cede certain lands, to include Scotland and

\(^{16}\)Froissart, Chronicles, trans. Bourchier, 6:35.

\(^{17}\)Moranville, "Conférences," pp. 370-71, no. 2

\(^{18}\)Chronographia, 3:103.

\(^{19}\)Froissart, Chronicles, trans. Bourchier, 6:37.
Castile in the peace treaty, and to pay 1,200,000 francs in return for liege homage and the renunciation of Cherbourg. They felt that any further concessions would have to be discussed in a forthcoming meeting between the two kings to be held on July 1, 1392. Though Jean Froissart mentions the issue of Calais as being a great obstacle in the negotiations, he seems to think that the duke of Lancaster and Skirlaw were afraid to conclude a peace because of pressures from the people in England. He says:

many were of the opinion that the commonalities of England rather inclined to war than to peace: . . . For many such as were no gentlemen of birth, by reason of their hardiness and valiant adventures, won and conquered so much gold and silver that they became noble, and rose to great honor.

Even though they could not arrange a peace settlement, the Amiens negotiators did agree to an extension of the truce until September 29, 1393. According to the chronicler Henry Knighton, Skirlaw's party returned to England near the feast of Easter, which fell on April 14 in 1392.

Bishop John Gilbert of St. David's was chosen to lead the embassy and was empowered to follow up on the peace negotiations begun by the duke of Lancaster and Bishop Skirlaw. On June 20, 1392, Richard decided not go to

22 Foedera, Holmes, 7:714, May 5, 1392, treaty.
23 Knighton, Chronicon, 2:321.
France himself but instead commissioned John Gilbert to lead a five-man delegation to France to treat for peace with the bishop of Bayeux. As on several other missions, Richard Rouhale was attached to Gilbert's embassy of June 1392. 

King Richard wrote to Charles VI on June 24 informing the French king that Gilbert's delegation would soon arrive in France and that discussions should commence during the octave of St. John the Baptist's day. Four days later on June 28, 1392, Charles wrote to Richard asking him to postpone the planned meeting until July 24. One cannot determine when the negotiations started in Picardy or how long they lasted. However, two documents indicate that the meetings were over by August 22, 1392.


25. 1. d 9 1 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 99, no. 147, June 24, 1392, letter from Richard II to Charles VI.


27. Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 102, no. 151, Aug. 22, 1392, letter from Richard to Charles which
According to their instructions, the French ambassadors were to demand that negotiations be conducted in accordance with the guidelines they set forth. These included that negotiations open on the basis of the French reply to the demand set forth by the duke of Lancaster in spring; that the English be required to perform liege homage; that a long truce should be arranged if the subject was mentioned; that the English should promise not to encourage revolts against the French king; and that all accords had to have the consent of the council.

John Gilbert responded unfavorably to the French embassy when they put these demands before him and his colleagues. He refused to start the discussions on the basis of the French reply, saying that this was not the way to a solution. After disagreeing on many more specific items, the English and French decided that peace could be obtained only by a personal interview between the two kings, and they promised to do all that they could to bring about this conference. Also they agreed to observe the previous extension of the truce to September 29, 1393.28

The French ambassadors had to consult their king's council before they could bind their government to any agreement. Because of these stipulations, John Gilbert and his embassy left Picardy with the French ambassadors and discusses the negotiations in the past tense; Moranville, "Conférences," pp. 375-76, no. 3, Aug. 22, 1392 instructions to the French ambassadors which mention past negotiations.

went to Le Mans where the French king and his council were residing. While at Le Mans, Charles was seized by a fit of madness. According to the chronicler of Saint-Denys, John Gilbert and his embassy were allowed to see the ailing king. He says:

Their [English embassy's] presence excited the anger of the people of the court, in particular the duke of Burgundy. He [Burgundy] said that it [Charles's illness] was an occasion of joy for the king of England and the enemies of France.

Sir Bureau de la Rivière interrupted the duke of Burgundy and prevented him from making any more accusations, thereby allowing the English embassy to leave the French court without further embarrassment.

Until recently, most historians have accepted the theory that Gilbert's efforts during the summer of 1392 were the last real hope of achieving peace. From this time on, England and France were at a stalemate on the issues of homage for Guienne and the extent of territorial concessions to be made to England. However, the recent discovery of a provisional treaty signed on June 16, 1393 shows how probable peace was during Bishop Walter Skirlaw's diplomatic mission in 1393. On February 26, 1393, Richard commissioned

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29Ibid.

30Régieux de Saint-Denys, 2:23. "Leur présence exita la colère de tous les gens de la cour, et particulièrement du duc de Bourgogne. Il disait que c'était une occasion de joie pour le roi d'Angleterre et pour les ennemis de la France."

31Ibid.

32John J. Palmer, "The Anglo-French Peace Negotia-
the dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester, Walter Skirlaw, Richard Rouhale, and three others to treat for peace with the French. 33 The English envoys travelled to Lenlington where the duke of Burgundy had set up his headquarters in a luxurious tent which

had enough space to hold three thousand men, and around the interior had rooms and chambers, which held diverse tapestries of wool with scenes of battles all embroidered in gold, and others with the passion of our Savior Jesus Christ, which were beautiful and rich. 34

Apparently this display disturbed the English diplomats because they had not made arrangements to be lodged in a similar fashion.

The French had been directed to start the negotiations on the basis of their offer at the end of the Amiens conference. 35 The chronicler Juvenal des Ursins says that they never got to the point of discussing this offer because of new orders which the English received subsequent to the opening of the conference. 36 Even though peace terms were

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34Juvenal des Ursins, Charles VI, p. 179. "y a vount assez d'espace pour retraire trois milles hommes, et entour par dedans y avoit salles et chambres, oü estoient tendues diverses tapisseries, les unes de laine, à batailles diverses, toutes battues en or, et es autres estoit signee la Passion de nostre Saveur Jesus-Christ, estoient tenuës moult belles, et moult riches."


36Juvenal des Ursins, Charles VI, 2:392-93.
not discussed in the first session, Walter Skirlaw did obtain an extension of the Lenlingham truce for another year, until September 29, 1394, before he and his embassy withdrew to Calais.\footnote{Foedera, Holmes, 7:748, Apr. 28, 1393, prolongation of the truce.} When they returned to Lenlingham in May, they demanded that the question of peace be the first item on the agenda. Then one of the Clementine cardinals arrived hoping to discuss methods of healing the Great Schism, which threatened to interfere with their plans. Skirlaw and his companions complained that they had not been granted power to deal with such matters, and they told the cardinal to go to England with his cause, which he refused to do.\footnote{Juvenal des Ursins, Charles VI, 2:393.}

After this disturbance had been dealt with, the embassies finally discussed peace terms and signed a provisional treaty on June 16, 1393. The French agreed to territorial concessions that would have created a Guienne larger than that demarcated in the 1259 Treaty of Paris and in the 1360 Treaty of Calais. Furthermore, the English agreed not only to do homage for their French lands but also conceded to do liege homage. They, in addition, set up a timetable for the final stages of the negotiations: in mid-August, legal experts were to work out the proposed restrictions on the exercise of French sovereignty and resort; on September 29, the royal uncles would return to Lenlingham to make
arrangements for the interview of the two kings; the final interview was to take place on February 9, 1394. With this concrete hope for peace, Skirlaw and the others returned to England on June 20.

In pursuance of the rigid timetable set in June, Walter Skirlaw left England for France on August 11, 1393, and he did not return until October 12, 1393. In all probability, he was sent to work out the complicated questions relating to homage and sovereignty because of his extensive legal training. He apparently accomplished this aspect of the timetable because on September 12, 1393 the dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester set out to join him. It was at this point that the negotiations broke down due to the illness of Charles VI. In a letter to João I, the king of Portugal, dated October 19, 1393, Richard said that his ambassadors returned home because of the "disability of our adversary of France." While Walter Skirlaw was busy in France, Bishop Gilbert applied his talents to encouraging France's allies, the Scots, to become parties to a final peace settlement. On April 28, 1393, the truce had been extended to September

40 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 243.
41 Mirot, 60 (1899):187, no. 515, Walter Skirlaw's account.
42 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 143.
but the Scottish and English kings wanted to transform the truce between their two countries into a lasting peace. Richard II and Robert III exchanged letters in the spring of 1393, trying to arrange a meeting for July 1, 1393, in order to treat for peace. They finally agreed to hold such a meeting, and on August 22, Richard selected Bishop Gilbert to lead an eight-man delegation going to Scotland. Among these eight were Canon Alan Newerk, another career diplomat. Besides arranging for a final peace treaty, the delegation was to redress breaches of the truce. John Gilbert proved no more successful in this mission than his diplomatic colleague Walter Skirlaw was in his. Though the truce endured, both sides continued to violate its terms, and as a result, Gilbert and Newerk were again appointed to hold court on the marches in a February 9, 1394 commission.

Long-Term Truce, 1394-99

On June 7, 1394, Richard's beloved wife Anne died, and her death eliminated a very vital force for moderation

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43 Foedera, Holmes, 7:748, Apr. 28, 1393, prolongation.
44 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 126, no. 179, Apr. 7, 1393, letter, Richard II to Robert III.
45 Rotuli Scotiae, 2:121, Aug. 22, 1393, commission.
46 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 240-41. Perroy argues that the meeting took place in autumn 1393 on the basis of the commission and safe-conduct given to Janin Monstret, messenger of the king of France, who was going to Scotland, in Rotuli Scotiae, 2:121, Aug. 9, 1393.
47 Foedera, Holmes, 7:765, Feb. 9, 1394, commission.
in Richard's life. Richard's biographer Anthony Steel says that he "was so violently moved that he ordered at least the partial destruction of the manor house in which Anne lived. He became progressively more unbalanced, reckless and impatient after her death than he had ever been before it; and his neurosis took hold." Richard's compulsion manifested itself in an even stronger desire for peace abroad so that at home he could have his revenge on those who had humiliated him in the period from 1386 to 1388.48 The king dispatched Walter Skirlaw, the former baronial sympathizer, on only one more mission after Anne's death, but he continued to commission John Gilbert who had had the same political leanings. Also he brought John Sheppey out of retirement, probably because he had never been stigmatized as a baronial supporter.

Despite Richard's grief over Anne's death, he quickly realized that his marital eligibility could be used to further his diplomatic goals. As early as April 1394, Richard had been corresponding with Scotland about the possibility of a marriage between the Scottish and English royal houses.49 On August 27, 1394, Richard placed Bishop Walter Skirlaw at the head of a twelve-man commission which was to go to Scotland and treat for a marriage between the

48 Steel, Richard II, p. 203.

49 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 147, no. 202, ca. Apr. 1394, Letter from Richard to Robert III.
royal houses. By the time that he ordered Bishop Skirlaw to go to Scotland to arrange for such a royal marriage, he was also thinking of himself as being one of the partners in the union. In writing to Richard in 1395, Queen Anna-bella of Scotland indicated that Skirlaw had failed to conclude any marriage treaty.51

With the conclusion of this Scottish mission, Walter Skirlaw's diplomatic career seemingly came to an end. A 1397 entry in the Patent Rolls possibly explains why Walter Skirlaw withdrew from diplomatic service. This entry grants him exemption for life, in consideration alike of his great labours for the king's service both within the seas and beyond the seas, and of his great age, [of Walter, bishop of Durham], from attendance, after the next Parliament to be held at Shrewsbury, at any Parliaments or Councils of the king or of his heirs, against his will, and license for him to appear therein by proctors, empowered by him to consent to what is done as if he were present in person.52

With seventeen years of diplomatic service behind him, Skirlaw took up residence in his diocese of Durham from which he had been absent so frequently since his translation to that see in 1388. As subsequent events were to prove, his retirement from ambassadorial service was only a

50 *Foedera*, Holmes, 7:786-87, Aug. 27, 1394, commission.
51 Perroy, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, p. 161, no. 220, ca. June 1395, letter from Richard II to Robert III.
52 CPR, Ric. II, 6 (1396-99):211, Oct. 8, 1397, exemption.
temporary one, and with the accession of Henry IV, Bishop Skirlaw resumed his diplomatic career.

Since Skirlaw did not secure a Scottish bride for the king, Richard was still free to use his marital eligibility to promote a general peace. Possibly as early as February 1395, Richard decided that his marriage to one of Charles VI's daughters could bring peace. However, he did not immediately send an embassy to France to arrange such a marriage alliance. Instead, he dispatched Bishop John Gilbert and William Elmham to arrange for a marriage with a daughter of the king of Aragon. Possibly Richard calculated that the threat of an Anglo-Aragonese alliance would encourage Charles to negotiate for peace on the basis of an Anglo-French marriage treaty.

John Gilbert and William Elmham left London on March 5, 1395, reached Paris well before the beginning of April, but did not proceed any further for another month. Finally on May 2, Elmham left Paris for Aragon, but John Gilbert returned to London. The official explanation given for Gilbert's recall was that he had become too ill to proceed any further. This explanation does not convince historian John Palmer. He contends that the bishop was recalled because Richard had decided to accept recent French proposals that he take a French bride. Apparently the king had accomplished what he had hoped to by dispatching an embassy to conclude an Anglo-Aragonese marriage alliance. When Charles learned that Richard was trying to bring the
king of Aragon into his circle of allies, he immediately sent ambassadors to the English court to try to change Richard's mind by offering him his daughter Isabelle's hand in marriage. Bishop Gilbert was ordered to return to England so he could aid in negotiating the Anglo-French marriage treaty, while Elmham had to proceed to Aragon and diplomatically withdraw Richard's earlier proposals.\(^{53}\)

Shortly after Richard received Charles VI's offer, he wrote to the French king saying that he wanted a French bride, and adding that such a marriage would help to heal the Great Schism in the church.\(^{54}\) To conduct the negotiations for this marriage, Richard created a six-man delegation on July 8, 1395, which Archbishop Robert Waldby was to lead and which included Bishop John Gilbert plus the king's cousins.\(^{55}\) To facilitate the journey of the delegation, John Pritwell was sent to Paris to obtain safeconducts.\(^{56}\) The instructions which Gilbert and his colleagues received directed them to demand a dowry of two million gold francs on the first day; if refused, to demand one and a half million francs for three days; if refused

\(^{53}\) Palmer, "Background to Richard II's Marriage," pp. 3-17.

\(^{54}\) M. D. Legge, Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions (Oxford, 1941), pp. 158-60, no. 109, 1395, letter from Richard II to Charles VI.

\(^{55}\) Foedera, Holmes, 7:802, July 8, 1395, commission.

\(^{56}\) Mirot, 60 (1899):212, no. 520, John Pritwell's account.
still, to make a final offer of one million francs, with 400,000 francs to be paid by the coming Christmas and the rest over a three-year period; also to demand that the bride and her entourage come to Calais at the expense of the French king; to demand further that the French king provide a surety of three million francs in the case that his daughter should default; to propose an annual rent of ten thousand marks if Charles demanded an enfeoffment of land; to demand that, if the queen should die, Richard would have the right to marry the princess closest to her in blood; and to arrange for a marriage between the earl of Rutland and one of Isabelle's sisters. 57

Soon after receiving these instructions, John Gilbert and his party departed for France with a huge entourage. 58 They made their way to Paris via Calais, Amiens, and Clermont, arriving at the French court where elaborate preparations had been made for their arrival. Here the king commanded that two hundred crowns should be delivered to the English ambassadors for their expenses and for the upkeep of their five hundred horses. The French opened the negotiations with several sumptuous dinners where they presented the English with lavish gifts. 59 Bishop Gilbert and the other English ambassadors requested an interview with the

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57 Foedera, Holmes, 7:804, July 8, 1395, instructions.
58 Mirot, 60 (1899):212, no. 522, John Beaumont's account.
59 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:329.
young princess Isabelle. The French agreed, but they warned the English not to expect great wisdom and prudence in a child that was only eight years old. During the interview Isabelle said to the English envoys:

It please God and my lord my father that I shall be queen of England, I shall be glad thereof, for it is shown me that I shall be then a great lady.60

By the end of October, the English embassy had worked out a tentative agreement for the marriage between Richard and Isabelle.61 According to the terms,

1. Charles would provide a dowry of 800,000 francs, 300,000 would be paid at the time of the marriage, 100,000 at the end of the year of the marriage, and 100,000 each year until the total dowry had been paid.

2. In the case that Richard died after the marriage ceremony, the dowry would be returned to Isabelle.

3. In the case of Isabelle's death, Richard would give up one half of the dowry.

4. At the age of twelve, Isabelle and her descendants were to renounce any claim to the French throne as was Richard.

5. Isabelle was to receive annual rent of twenty thousand nobles of England.

6. If the marriage was not concluded because of Isabelle, the dowry would be returned in total.

7. If Richard died, Isabelle was free to return to France with all her personal belongings.

8. Charles had to bear the cost of clothing Isabelle and her travel expenses to Calais.

Gilbert and his colleagues were unable to use the

61Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:329.
marriage negotiations to conclude a general peace which was of far greater concern to Richard than his marriage to Isabelle. The English ambassadors did, however, arrange for a twenty-eight year prolongation of the Leningham truce beyond September 29, 1398, the date to which it had already been extended. Though these above agreements had been worked out in some detail, the French felt they could not proceed any further until they had broken Isabelle's engagement to the duke of Alençon. However, they said that they would notify the English by Lent as to whether this impediment to the marriage had been removed. With their tentative marriage contract and long-term truce, John Gilbert and the rest of the English embassy returned to England in late October.

According to the chronicler of Saint-Denys, Bishop John Gilbert and the other English ambassadors were in France continuously from July until the end of October. Several English documents suggest that John Gilbert and the others returned to England on September 6. On September

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62 Ibid., pp. 343-55, 365-87.
63 Froissart, Chronicles, trans. Bourchier, 6:159. Froissart erroneously says that Isabelle was affianced to the duke of Brittany. Instead she was affianced to the duke of Alençon, while Jeanne, her sister was engaged to the son of the duke of Brittany. Eugène Déprez and Joseph Glotz L'Europe occidentale de la fin du XV siècle aux guerres d'Italie, 2 vols. (Paris, 1937-39), 1:259, 262.
64 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:329.
65 Mirot, 60 (1899):212, no. 522, John Beaumont's account.
30, 1395, Richard wrote to Charles asking for safe-conducts for the Archbishop of Dublin, the bishop of St. David's, and the royal cousins whom he wished to "resend" to France to treat for the marriage. Also the Foreign Accounts Enrolled show that Gilbert and Waldby were absent from October 15 and 17 until December 30 and January 10 respectively, and they were in France negotiating with the French between these dates. Assuming that the negotiations took place in two sessions, it is probable that the action described by the chronicler of Saint-Denys and Froissart took place during the second trip when the more spectacular events, the signing of the tentative agreement, occurred.

Richard was content with the work of his ambassadors, and he issued instructions to Edward, earl of Rutland, Thomas, earl of Nottingham, and William le Scrope, the chamberlain, about how they should respond to the tentative marriage contract and the twenty-eight-year truce. The names of Bishop John Gilbert and Archbishop Robert Waldby were not listed on these instructions. Consequently one would conclude that these two clerics did not partake in the final stages of the negotiations with France. However, several pieces of evidence exist to prove that Bishop John Gilbert and Archbishop Waldby were in Paris at the time of the last stages of the negotiations. First, the

\[66\] Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 165-66, no. 223, Sept. 30, 1395, letter from Richard II to Charles VI.

\[67\] Ibid., p. 252.
Chronographia regum Francorum lists both men as part of the embassy sent by Richard II. Second the Foreign Accounts Enrolled include an entry recording the departure of John Pritwell for France on December 14 for the purpose of obtaining safe-conducts for them. Third the Foreign Accounts Enrolled reveal that John Gilbert was paid for going to France with the royal cousins.

The English ambassadors arrived in Paris at the beginning of February. Richard had generally given his ambassadors instructions to accept the proposals drawn up in the previous round of negotiations so they did not have a difficult task before them when they reached Paris.

Gilbert and his party announced that Richard had accepted the conditions of the truce: that having been shown a portrait of his eldest daughter, Isabelle, he wished to take her as his wife, and that he had charged his ambassadors to perform the ceremony of affiancing in his name.

Charles received this announcement with great pleasure and treated the ambassadors with great consideration giving them

68 Chronographia, 3:129.
69 Perroy, Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 252.
70 Foreign Accounts Enrolled, E 364/29.
71 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:413.
72 Foedera, Holmes, 7:811-12, Jan. 1, 1396, commission
73 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:413-14. "avait accepté les conditions de la trêve, qu'il désirait prendre pour épouse madame Isabelle, sa fille ainée, dont ils lui avaient montré le portrait, et qu'il avait chargés d'accomplir en son nom la cérémonie de fiançailles."
many presents.\textsuperscript{74} On March 11, 1396, Charles ratified the treaty of marriage and the twenty-eight-year general truce.\textsuperscript{75} Three days after the ratification on March 12, 1396, the ambassadors attended the ceremony in St. Chapelle. Following the affiancing, the ambassadors attended a great feast at the palace, and soon thereafter, they took their leave of the French court.\textsuperscript{76}

Having worked so diligently to conclude the marriage treaty which brought Richard peace through the device of a twenty-eight-year truce, John Gilbert retired from diplomatic life as Bishop Walter Skirlaw, his colleague in so many embassies, had done just two years before. Bishop Gilbert's retirement does not appear to be the result of the king's new policy of revenge. Instead, Gilbert probably failed to receive any further diplomatic assignments because of old age, for on July 28, 1397, only a year after his last mission, he died in London.\textsuperscript{77}

With John Gilbert's death and Walter Skirlaw's retirement, Richard turned to John Sheppey, the dean of Lincoln, when he needed someone to send on an embassy to preserve peace on the Anglo-Scottish border. From 1389 to

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75}Foedera, Holmes, 7:813-20, Mar. 11, 1396, ratification.
\textsuperscript{76}Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:414-15.
\textsuperscript{77}Edward Yardley, Menevia sacra, ed. Francis Green, Cambrian Archaeological Association, Supplementary volume for 1927 to Archaeologia cambrensis.
1397, capitular affairs had consumed most of John Sheppey's time. But in 1395, he received a dispensation from the heavy residiency requirements of a dean which permitted him to be absent from his chapter for eleven months a year.78 Therefore when the king needed his diplomatic services, he was available.

On August 4, 1397, Dean Sheppey and William Elmham were ordered to go to Scotland to arrange for a march day sometime between the feasts of St. Hilary and Easter, to confirm the truce, and to redress violations against the truce.79 On August 27, Sheppey and Elmham started north,80 and they presented their credentials to the Scottish envoys on September 30, 1397 at Dunfermline.81 By October 2, 1397, Sheppey and Elmham had reached an agreement with the Scots to hold a march day on March 11, 1398, and to maintain peace until forty days after the march day. In preparation, complaints were to be filed with the wardens of the marches who would summon the accused to be present at the forthcoming march day. In addition, they tried to work out a system of bailing prisoners until the march day.82 Because

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80 Mirot, 60 (1899):213-14, no. 524, Sheppey's account.


82 Foedera, Holmes, 8:17, Oct. 2, 1397, indenture
Sheppey went on to handle specific cases where the truce had been violated, he did not return to London until October 31, 1397.  

John Sheppey was one of the six men appointed to go to Scotland for the March 11, 1398 march day. On February 28, he took the road to Haudenstank where the Scottish embassy was waiting. During the days that followed, the English and the Scottish envoys arrived at an agreement which included articles extending the truce until September 29, 1398 and then to September 1399; delegating specific disputes to the conservators of the truce; and freeing prisoners. Sheppey and his colleagues delivered the indenture of this agreement to their principal when they returned to London on April 8, 1397, but the king did not ratify it until October 26, 1398, seven months after he received it.

John Sheppey's missions to Scotland in 1398 did not lead to a further diplomatic career. With twenty-seven missions behind him, he retired completely from governmental

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83 Mirot, 60 (1899):213-14, John Sheppey's account.
84 Foedera, Holmes, 8:32, Feb. 5, 1398, commission.
85 Mirot, 60 (1899):213-14, John Sheppey's account.
86 Foedera, Holmes, 8:35, Mar. 16, 1398, commission.
87 Mirot, 60 (1899):213-14, John Sheppey's account.
88 Foedera, Holmes, 8:54, Oct. 26, 1398, ratification.
affairs after 1398, and from this time until his death, he was solely concerned with ecclesiastical affairs. In January 1399, he went to Oxford to participate in a council of clerics called to discuss the Great Schism. 89 Back in the cathedral town of Lincoln, Sheppey still had to solve the jurisdictional dispute with his chapter so he appealed to both the king and the pope. 90 In 1400, the papacy imposed a solution in favor of the chapter, but this solution was reversed in 1405. 91 Apparently the chapter accepted this solution, and Sheppey spent the remaining years of his life in obscurity at Lincoln. He died in 1412 outliving both John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw, the two clerics with whom he had shared so many missions. 92

John Gilbert and Walter Skirlaw had participated extensively in Richard's diplomatic program to transform the Lenlingham truce into a general peace treaty. Although their efforts failed to produce the desired treaty, peace was brought to England through the twenty-eight-year prolongation of the Lenlingham truce. Even John Sheppey momentarily came out of retirement to preserve the peace on

89CCR, Ric. II, 6 (1396-99): 367-68, Jan. 2, 1399, summons to a very select group of clergy which omitted most of the bishops.

90CPR, Ric. II, 6 (1396-99): 69, Feb. 12, 1397, commission; CPL, 5 (1396-1404): 460, 8 Id. Dec. 1400, statute and ordinance.


92Peck, Desiderata curiosa, 2:135.
the Anglo-Scottish border. None of these three clerical career diplomats who had served Richard's peace program so well were to suffer when he was deposed by Henry of Lancaster in 1399. Either because of death or retirement from diplomacy, neither Gilbert, Skirlaw, nor Sheppey was tagged as a member of the court clique which supported Richard during the tyranny of his last years as king of England, and none of them was an object of Lancastrian retribution.

Walter Skirlaw Serves Henry IV, 1399-1401

Bishop Walter Skirlaw was still alive when Henry of Lancaster both forced Richard II to abdicate and established a new dynasty. Moreover, he lived till 1406 and was active in both diplomatic and ecclesiastical affairs from 1399 until his death. His twelve years of life beyond his August 1394 diplomatic assignment suggests that he was not that old when he retired. Instead, his retirement came in the formative years of Richard's tyranny. His departure to the obscurity of his diocese of Durham was due to Richard's desire to punish Skirlaw for his baronial association years earlier. Very possibly Richard disliked Skirlaw even more than Gilbert, because he had once been one of his favorites, but he had switched sides when he saw the barons gaining power. To Richard, Skirlaw was far more of an opportunist than Gilbert.

Whatever the reason for Bishop Skirlaw's diplomatic retirement, it saved him from being stigmatized as one of
Richard's courtier bishops. Because he was not associated with Richard and had vast diplomatic experience, Walter Skirlaw was a logical choice to help implement Henry IV's foreign policy which he explained soon after he had seized the throne. Henry IV announced that he would live up to the terms of the prolonged Lenlington truce; but unlike Richard, he had no long-range desire for peace. The new king intended to confirm the truce only as long as he felt he was incapable of waging war because of domestic opposition. As soon as he was secure at home, he planned to resume the war with France.  

The new king called Walter Skirlaw out of retirement in October 1399 and commissioned him to go to France to announce his accession to the English throne. The bishop of Durham was en route to the continent when a delegation from France arrived at the English court, and Skirlaw was recalled to London. The French embassy, headed by the bishop of Meaux, had come to Henry to inquire about the condition of Isabelle, wife of the deposed king, and to secure her return to France with all her jewels and paraphernalia, according to the terms of the 1395-96 marriage treaty. Henry did not wish to send either Isabelle

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93 Perroy, Hundred Years War, pp. 213-14.
95 APC, 1:82-83. Nicolas dates MS 4596, art. 145 as a September 29, 1399 letter from the lieutenant of Calais to the Countil.
96 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:731.
or her dowry back to France. However, a refusal to do so would lead to war, and he was not ready to undertake such a venture so soon after seizing power in England.

In order to obviate hostilities with France and at the same time keep Isabelle and her dowry, the king called on the diplomatic talents of Walter Skirlaw. Hoping to marry Isabelle to another member of the royal family, Henry gave Skirlaw power to arrange various marital combinations. Also he gave Skirlaw power to confirm the Lenlington truce and to treat for a new alliance with France. 97 Skirlaw had difficulty in negotiating with the French, and he sent a messenger, William Faryngton, to the Privy Council to explain his problems. First the French delayed in sending safe-conducts to the English. Then when the French ambassadors did arrive, they had orders not to recognize Henry as king of England in any treaty that they might conclude with the English. 98 In addition, the French continued to give aid to the Scots who were now actively harassing the northern marches. 99 Despite these problems, Skirlaw secured a confirmation of the truce on January 24, 1400, which was to last until Pentecost. 100 He was not successful in obtaining a marriage alliance between the Prince of Wales and Isabelle

97 Foedera, Holmes, 8:102, Nov. 29, 1399, commission.
98 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 2:745.
99 APC, 1:103, Feb. 9, 1400, minutes.
100 Foedera, Holmes, 8:109, Nov. 29, 1399, confirmation of the truce.
or between Henry and Marie of Berry. In order to aid Skirlaw in his dealings with the French, three more ambassadors were added to his delegation. Later the total embassy received orders to explain the truce to the French king and to seek his oath of confirmation. By the end of March, negotiations had broken down, and Skirlaw and his party returned to England.

The records of the Privy Council show that by May the English government had recognized that they were going to have to abide by the terms of the 1395-96 treaty and send Isabelle home if they wanted to maintain the truce. In order to work out an agreement, Walter Skirlaw was designated to head a four-man delegation which was to reply to the requests made for the return of Queen Isabelle and her dowry. On May 28, 1400, Skirlaw departed for Calais. When the English and French embassies met at Lenlingham, Skirlaw still insisted on keeping the dowry. Despite England's intransigence, the ambassadors agreed on October 31 as the day on which Isabelle was to return to France. With this tentative agreement Bishop Skirlaw returned home on

102 Foedera, Holmes, 8:129, Feb. 19, 1400, commission.
103 Ibid., p. 132, Mar. 10, 1400, commission.
104 Traison et mort, p. 106.
105 APC, 1:117-18, Mar. 1400, minutes.
106 Foedera, Holmes, 8:142, May 18, 1400, commission.
August 6, 1400.\textsuperscript{107}

On October 11, 1400, Skirlaw was chosen to work out the details of the October 31 exchange, and soon after commissioning, his embassy departed for France. According to James Wylie, Henry IV's biographer, it is at this juncture, that the French embassy arrived which necessitated Skirlaw's recall. Wylie says that Walter Skirlaw met with the French ambassadors at his hostel in Canterbury. Here it was decided that more could be accomplished by going back to London to negotiate rather than going on to the scheduled October 16 meeting at Lenlingham. In London, King Henry directed the negotiations himself, but no date was worked out for Isabelle's return.\textsuperscript{108}

Though the French and English kings remained in touch by messengers, Walter Skirlaw did not undertake another mission to send Isabelle to France until the spring of 1401. On April 1, he was empowered to lead a four-man delegation to France in order to treat for a truce, a new league, and the restoration of the queen.\textsuperscript{109} The Privy Council directed Skirlaw to agree to return Isabelle, to redress violations against the truce, and to require payment of the outstanding ransom for John, king of France, after deducting certain

\textsuperscript{107} Wylie, \textit{Henry IV}, 1:206.

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 1:154, Wylie dates British Museum MS 4596, art. 14 to some time in October 1400.

\textsuperscript{109} Foedera, Holmes, 8:186, Apr. 1, 1401, commission.
debts due by Henry to Charles.\textsuperscript{110}

With these instructions, Bishop Skirlaw journeyed to France where he concluded the final treaty for Isabelle's return. According to its terms:

1. Isabelle was to be at Canterbury or Dover on her way home by July 1.

2. The English and French ambassadors were to meet at Len­lingham on July 6 to hear Charles' letters of release.

3. If the terms of the release were satisfactory, the French ambassadors were to proceed to Calais taking with them an inventory of the jewels and belongings; at Calais they were to make arrangements for their restoration and for the formal return of Isabelle.

4. When Isabelle entered Boulogne or any other stronghold, she was to sign a bond agreeing to abstain for the future from all opposition and intrigue toward England.

5. Four days after the actual restoration of Isabelle, the envoys were to meet again at Lenlingham to discuss any further matters in dispute, notably in connection with the claim made by Charles for the repayment of the 200,000 francs, and the objection raised by Henry against the action of the French in reference to Guienne.\textsuperscript{111}

Having concluded this treaty, Walter Skirlaw sailed for England at the end of May.\textsuperscript{112}

Because of Walter Skirlaw's experience in dealing with the French, and because of his ecclesiastical rank, the Privy Council, in its June 2, 1401 meeting, decided that he should be one of the clerics aiding Isabelle in her return.

\textsuperscript{110}APC, 1:129, May 20, 1401, letter from the king to the Privy Council.

\textsuperscript{111}Foedera, Holmes, 8:194, May 27, 1401, indenture.

\textsuperscript{112}Religieux de Saint-Denys, 3:3.
to France. On June 21, he was placed at the head of a four-man commission which was to act for the king in returning Isabelle. On June 27, he left London with the former queen, but he was among those who went over to Calais without her in order to make the final preparations for her arrival.

On July 28, Isabelle was escorted to Calais, and on July 31, she was taken to Lenlingham, where extensive preparations had been made for her arrival. The English ambassadors headed by Skirlaw took Isabelle to the chapel at Lenlingham, where Thomas Percy placed her in the hands of the French, and the English received the letters of quitance. Walter Skirlaw had now fulfilled his responsibilities toward the former queen, but he still had some formalities to attend to before he could go home. He stayed at Lenlingham working with the French ambassadors; they agreed that questions as to the hostilities in Guienne and along the coasts of Picardy and Normandy should be discussed in the respective localities on the upcoming St. Martin's day.

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113 APC, 1:136, June 1401, ordinance.
114 Foedera, Holmes, 8:203, June 21, 1401, commission.
115 Mirot, 61 (1900);21, no. 541, Walter Skirlaw's account.
Having completed his mission, Walter Skirlaw returned to England on August 12, 1401. He did not receive full payment for his journey until February 3, 1402.

During Skirlaw's two years of diplomatic service for Henry IV, he labored as hard and as effectively as he had for Richard II. He worked to preserve the general truce which Richard had wanted, but he realized that his efforts to preserve the peace served a different purpose for Henry IV. In reality each confirmation of the truce only gave his king more time to suppress any domestic opposition and to prepare for war. Yet, Skirlaw was a career diplomat and could serve any master and any foreign policy.

After he returned from France in August 1401, he retired again to Durham where he spent the remainder of his life in the routine administration of his diocese. Among other things, he took an active part in rooting out heresy in his diocese. On May 11, 1404, he surfaced again in national life when he attended the ceremony where Archbishop Richard Scrope translated John Bridlington's ashes.

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118 Foedera, Holmes, 8:219, Aug. 3, 1401, indenture.
119 Mirot, 61 (1900):21, no. 541, Walter Skirlaw's account.
120 Issues of the Exchequer, p. 288, 3 Feb. 3 Hen. IV, Walter Skirlaw's payment.
March 24, 1406, he died at the episcopal manor of Howden in Yorkshire, and he was buried in the cathedral church at Durham. 123

In the diplomacy from the declaration of war in 1369 to the peace confirmed by Isabelle's return to France in 1401, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, and Walter Skirlaw played a vital part. Aided by other career diplomats Bishop Thomas Hatfield, Archbishop Simon Sudbury, Bishop John Waltham, Canon Alan Newerk, and Master Richard Rouhale, they undertook mission after mission to enhance England's ability to wage war and then to bring peace to their exhausted country. All these clerics had the diplomatic skills to ensure them reassignment to ambassadorial service. Also they had the political skill needed to ensure the survival of their careers in the vicissitudes of domestic politics during the later years of Edward III's reign, Richard's reign, and the Lancastrian revolution.

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CHAPTER VI

JOHN CATRYK, JOHN STOKES, AND JOHN KEMP

Introduction

The first half of the fifteenth century is marked both by the military victories that brought about England's conquest of Normandy and by the French military victories that led to the final English withdrawal from France. These military efforts were accompanied, though, by extensive diplomatic negotiations which provided an opportunity for clerics like Henry Beaufort, Nicholas Rysheton, Henry Chichele, John Catryk, Thomas Langley, John Stokes, Henry Ware, Philip Morgan, John Kemp, William Lyndwood, William Sprever, Stephen Wilton, and Richard Andrews to advance themselves through diplomacy.¹

When Henry, duke of Lancaster, seized the English throne, the Truce of Lenlingham was still recognized by France and England. Though Henry IV promised that he would win back English lands lost prior to the truce, the internal

¹Henry Beaufort's career extended from 1402-36, and he went on twelve missions; Nichblas Rysheton (1403-28), 14; Henry Chichele (1404-20), 18; John Catryk (1405-19), 23; Thomas Langley (1407-36), 13; John Stokes (1411-41), 28; Henry Ware (1414-19), 12; Philip Morgan (1414-23), 18; John Kemp (1415-45), 24; William Lyndwood (1417-41), 14; William Sprever (1430-58), 11; Stephen Wilton (1433-42), 13; Richard Andrews (1441-59), 11.
instability of the first nine years of his reign forced him to commission embassies to extend the truce. When the civil war broke out between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs, Henry IV tried to take advantage of France's internal weakness. In response to Burgundian and then Armagnac pleas for aid, Henry sent embassies to France to conclude agreements promising English military aid in return for French territorial concessions.

Henry V was in a far better position to launch an offensive that his father. He believed that he had a divine mission to unite the warring lands of France and England under one crown and then thrust the combined forces of these Christian lands against the infidels. During the first three years of his reign, Henry militarily and diplomatically prepared for his invasion of France. To cover his military preparations, he sent numerous embassies to France to conclude terms for a final peace. Moreover, he sent envoys to other European princes to seek their support in his attack on France. Throughout the military action from 1415 to 1420, English embassies continued to negotiate with allies and potential allies. Other embassies were dispatched from England to France with the purpose of coercing the French into a negotiated truce. Such efforts obtained the duke of Burgundy as an ally for England and the recognition of Henry as regent of France and heir to the throne.

Henry VI's council promised to capture those lands which were promised to his father in the 1420 Treaty of
Troyes but which remained in the hands of the dauphin, Charles. Both militarily and diplomatically, the council did little towards accomplishing this goal, and with the failure of the siege of Orleans in 1430, the French took the offensive. In the years that followed, England used her diplomats to maintain her lands in western France and her title to the French throne, but in both efforts they failed.

Of the clerics who participated in these diplomatic events during the reigns of Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI, John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp were the most prominent. As was the case with the other clerics who wished to advance themselves through ambassadorial service, they had to make their availability known to the individual or the group who controlled ambassadorial appointments. During the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V, those seeking such assignments did so from the king. Although Henry IV had to contend with aristocratic discontent and rebel uprisings, he was able to maintain control of the throne and function without the interference of an aristocratic council. Henry V was far more successful than his father in asserting his power over his kingdom and is described by many historians as an authoritarian king.

However, during the thirty-nine-year reign of Henry VI, clerics who sought ambassadorial appointments did so in a far more complex political situation. Henry VI was less than a year old when his father died, and so Humphrey, duke
of Gloucester, was appointed to govern for him in England, and John, duke of Bedford, in France. In reality, though, a regency council governed by controlling official appointments and all other royal prerogatives. This council eventually split into two factions, one led by the duke of Gloucester and the other by Bishop Henry Beaufort. Beaufort was the half brother of Henry IV, and he had been a very influential councillor to Henry IV from 1399 to 1410 and to Henry V from 1413 to 1417 and again from 1419 to 1422. From 1422 to 1436, the power of appointment shifted back and forth in the council between Gloucester and Beaufort. Especially in the years between 1426 and 1430, when Beaufort was absent from England, Gloucester exercised the greatest influence over decisions. In 1436, Bishop Beaufort finally established his ascendancy in the council through the backing of the king. Though the regency ended in 1437, Henry VI was never a sufficiently strong personality to avoid control by one aristocratic faction or another. Consequently during Henry VI's reign, the career of a clerical diplomat was far more subject to the vicissitudes of politics than during the previous two reigns.

During the reigns of Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI, John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp emerge as the most successful clerical diplomats. Through Henry Beaufort, information about John Catryk's talents reached the king, and in August 1405, Catryk received his first diplomatic commission. From 1405, he continued to serve the monarchy in a
diplomatic capacity until 1419. During his fourteen-year involvement in English diplomacy, he served on twenty-three embassies, four of which he led. For his services, he was promoted to the episcopal bench and also received advantageous translations. After he aided in the election of Martin V as pope, he abandoned Henry V and English diplomacy as a means toward advancement. Instead, he placed his hopes in Martin V and took up residence at the papal court. Soon thereafter, he was rewarded with another advantageous translation, but he died before he could reap the benefits of this ecclesiastical reward.

John Kemp began his diplomatic career ten years after John Catryk and had little association with him. Between the years from 1415 to 1445, Kemp went on twenty-four missions and served as leader of eleven of them. Of the clerical diplomats with twenty or more missions that have been the subject of detailed studies, John Kemp's career seems to have been least affected by his diplomatic service. His diplomatic career essentially falls into two periods; the five years from 1415 to 1420, during which he went on seventeen missions; and the twelve years from 1433 to 1445, during which he participated in only six embassies. During and after his first period of diplomatic service, he received appointments as chancellor of Normandy, keeper of the privy seal, member of Henry VI's regency council, and chancellor. His ecclesiastical rewards included elevation to the episcopacy, two advantageous translations to other
episcopal sees, and translation to the archiepiscopal see of York. His royal and ecclesiastical duties and also his allegiance to Henry Beaufort virtually forced his withdrawal from diplomacy from 1420 to 1433. Then with Beaufort's return to England and to favor with Henry VI, Kemp entered his second period of diplomatic service. Five years after his retirement from diplomacy, he was again appointed chancellor, and he received the great ecclesiastical honors of translation to the archbishopric of Canterbury and papal provision as cardinal bishop. Unlike Bateman, Offord, Sheppey, Skirlaw, Gilbert, Catryk, and Stokes, diplomacy played a small part in his life relative to his service in the various permanent offices of state and church.

John Stokes' diplomatic career extended over thirty years as did John Kemp's, but in those years from 1411 to 1441, he went on twenty-eight missions. However, he was far less successful in life than Kemp or Catryk. Of the twenty-eight missions on which he served, he led only nine, but in six of these cases, he was the sole member of the embassy. Moreover, he received only minor preferments and was never appointed to even a poor Welsh see. His appointments to public office were few and mostly ad hoc judicial commissions. He was rewarded with an appointment as chancellor of Normandy, but his tenure in this office was short. Unlike Kemp and Catryk, he failed to secure the patronage of Henry Beaufort, who influenced government for so many years in the
first half of the fifteenth century.

Because of the very divergent nature of Catryk's, Stokes', and Kemp's careers, difficulty arises in determining which of these clerical diplomats was most successful. They served on different embassies during different periods and held very different positions within the embassies on which they served. Furthermore, diplomacy did not play the same roles in their lives, and consequently their appointments to public and clerical office had different relationships to their diplomatic careers. Taking into consideration the number of embassies, positions in embassies, and rewards for service, John Kemp, seems to have been most successful followed by John Catryk and then John Stokes. Stokes, however, received more commissions than any of the other clerical diplomats of the period. In the number of assignments, he surpassed John Kemp, John Catryk, Henry Beaufort, Nicholas Rysheton, Henry Chichele, Thomas Langley, Henry Ware, Philip Morgan, William Lyndwood, William Sprever, Stephen Wilton, and Richard Andrews.

As the diplomatic careers of John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp differed greatly, so did their backgrounds. They were born in opposite corners of England and came from families of different social standings. Though they all chose a university education in law as a method of entrance and advancement in the church, they did not
attend the same university. Once they completed their university education, all three served as diocesan administrators before they entered diplomacy. Only Kemp had some royal service before he received his first diplomatic commission. Despite the diversity in their backgrounds, all three clerics decided to seek their fortunes through diplomatic service to the crown.

While John Kemp's life is very well documented, little evidence exists from which information can be obtained about the early lives of John Catryk and John Stokes. Finding evidence about John Stokes' life outside his diplomatic career is an especially difficult task, because he apparently never achieved high office nor great fame, and because his family name is so common. Diplomatic records provide the most valid information about Stokes' life. They indicate that this diplomat was a cleric, studied civil law, progressed from the licentiate to the doctorate, and was justifiably entitled magister. ²

When utilizing other diplomatic documents, one cannot be certain that the facts obtained from them apply to Magister John Stokes, civil lawyer and clerical diplomat. Those records which mention a John Stokes and identify him as a laymen, can be quickly eliminated from consideration, but careful scrutiny must be given to those concerning John Stokes, cleric. If the cleric cannot be entitled magister,

²The letters of procuration, instructions, warrants, and exchequer accounts refer to John Stokes as doctor legum, doctor of civil law.
then he could not have been the clerical diplomat who was a civil lawyer. Consequently those royal and ecclesiastical records concerning a John Stokes, who cannot be entitled magister, should be set aside. Conversely those pertaining to Magister John Stokes probably relate to the clerical diplomat and should be given more careful scrutiny.

 Nonetheless, one cannot assume that all documents mentioning a Magister John Stokes refer to the clerical diplomat. Two other Magister John Stokes, who had incepted by 1441, lived at approximately the same time as Stokes, the clerical diplomat. John Stokes, D. Th., who incepted by 1374, would probably have been too old to have served as a diplomat until 1441. ³ John Stokes, D.C.L., incepted in 1428, eleven years after the diplomatic documents begin to mention an ambassador named John Stokes, D.C.L. ⁴ Neither churchmen could have been the diplomat, but non-diplomatic records pertaining to them could easily be associated with John Stokes, clerical diplomat. Consequently all such records should be carefully evaluated before such relationships are drawn.

 Because so little information exists on the family of John Catryk as well as the family of John Stokes, neither their birthplaces nor their social origins can be determined with any degree of certainty. An entry in the papal register

³ BRUC, p. 557.
⁴ BRUO, 3:1782.
refers to John Catryk as a "priest of the diocese of York", suggesting that he was born in York, and more specifically in the Yorkshire town of Catterick. 5 John Stokes, on the other hand, may have been born in the diocese of Bath and Wells. As discussed below, Stokes had very early and long-term connections with the diocese of Bath and Wells, suggesting the possibility that this southwestern diocese was his birthplace. 6 The paucity of information on both Catryk's and Stokes' family eliminates the probability that they came from the nobility or gentry, who frequently left records of their land holdings. More likely, both men were sons of humbler families who left few records. Because of John Kemp's social origins, more information exists about his background. He was born in 1380 into a knightly family whose seat was at Olanteigh, Kent, in the archdiocese of Canterbury. Because he was Thomas Kemp's second son, he was not likely to inherit his father's title or lands. 7 As many another second son, Kemp had to make his own way in life, and he saw the church as a method of advancing himself despite the misfortune of his birth.

From his new home in Canterbury, John Kemp journeyed to Oxford, where he hoped to obtain a legal education which


6 Infra, pp. 298, 420.

would facilitate a career in the church. At about the same
time, John Catryk also arrived at Oxford for the same
purpose. Catryk incepted as a master in 1398, and then he
decided to continue his education in the study of both canon
and civil law. By 1406, he had not only received his
bachelor's degree in canon and civil law but also his
license in canon law.\(^8\) Kemp was at Oxford at the same time
as Catryk, for the records of Merton College show that he
was a fellow in 1395.\(^9\) His study of law continued several
years beyond Catryk's though, and he did not receive his
bachelor's degree until 1407 and his doctorate until 1414.\(^{10}\)
Both men were at Oxford when Henry Beaufort was also in
attendance,\(^{11}\) and the probability exists that at Oxford
they both established the relationship which furthered their
diplomatic careers.\(^{12}\)

Where John Stokes obtained his education is much
more difficult to ascertain. The records of both Oxford and
Cambridge claim a John Stokes as one of their students,\(^{13}\)

\(^8\)BRUO, 1:371.

\(^9\)George C. Brodrick, Memorials of Merton College,
Oxford Historical Society Publications, no. 4 (Oxford, 1885),
pp. 221-22.

\(^{10}\)BRUO, 2:1031.

\(^{11}\)Ibid., 1:140.

\(^{12}\)The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter,
1420-55, with Some Account of the Episcopate of John Catryk,

\(^{13}\)BRUO, 3:181; BRUC, p. 558.
but the diplomatic documents point to a Cambridge education. The *Intimationes publicae*, which relates the events surrounding John Stokes' visit to Prague in September 1411, entitles him "licentiate in laws of the university of Cambridge." 14 Further substantiating Stokes' Cambridge education is an entry in Bishop John Fordham's register which refers to him as principal of St. Edmund's hostel, Cambridge. 15

The diplomatic documents indicate that he had received his license in civil law by February 26, 1411, the date at which he was commissioned to go to Bohemia; but he probably achieved this status even earlier. 16 Two entries in the register of Nicholas Bubwith, bishop of Bath and Wells, suggest that he had received his license and even possibly his doctorate in civil law by 1410. 17 Moreover, confusion exists as to the date by which Stokes had received the degree of doctor of civil law. In the English diplomatic documents, he is entitled doctor of civil law for the


15 William Stevenson, A Supplement To Bentham's History and Antiquities of the Cathedral and Coventual Church of Ely (Norwich, 1817), p. 5.

16 *Foedera*, Holmes, 8:674, Feb. 26, 1411, commission.

first time on January 26, 1417, and thereafter. The documents of the Council of Constance imply an even earlier date referring to him as doctor of both canon and civil law in September 1415 and doctor of civil law in April 1416.

From their university studies, Catryk, Stokes, and Kemp entered the service of the church as diocesan administrators. While Kemp served at Canterbury and Stokes at Bath and Wells, John Catryk began his ecclesiastical career in the diocese of Lincoln where Henry Beaufort was bishop. Though he probably knew Henry Beaufort and had gained his confidence before 1398, no concrete evidence links them together until September 21, 1398. On this date, Henry, now bishop of Lincoln, ordained John Catryk as a priest and appointed him perpetual vicar of the church of Norham in Durham. In the seven years that followed Catryk's ordination, Bishop Beaufort generously granted to him several benefices in his own diocese. Catryk was designated as rector of the churches of Charleton-on-Attemore, Winterton, Ecton, and Creek, all of which are in the diocese of Lincoln. Furthermore, he became a member

20 Ibid., 4:18.
22 Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Henry IV, 4 vols. (London, 1903-9), 1
of the cathedral chapter of Lincoln at Beaufort's request; he was, in fact, granted a canonry at Lincoln with the prebendaries of Brampton and Cropperdy. He achieved even greater position within the cathedral chapter, when in 1404, he was elevated to chapter treasurer.

When Bishop Beaufort was translated to the wealthy see of Winchester in 1405, he arranged for Catryk to follow him, and he served Beaufort as his chancellor from 1405 until 1414. In the same year that Catryk went to Winchester, he also received the prebends of Laughton in York and Highworth in Salisbury by papal provision. Despite royal concordance with these provisions, he did not hold them beyond 1405. Because of his service to Bishop Beaufort at Lincoln and Winchester, and the bishop's close ties to King Henry IV, John Catryk moved directly from diocesan administration into diplomacy in 1405 without having served in any department of state or within the royal household.


Register of Edmund Lacy, p. ix.

Having probably attained at the very least a license in civil law, John Stokes, as John Catryk, sought advancement through diocesan administration. He appears to have entered the service of Nicholas Bubwith, bishop of Bath and Wells, by May 10, 1410. On this date, Bubwith commissioned him to investigate charges brought against a Brother John St. Paul of St. John of Bristol hospital. Six months later, he was rewarded for his diocesan service by collation to a canonry at Wells with the prebend of Whitechurch, but he exchanged them for benefices in Surrey on the same day. Possibly Stokes' labors in diocesan administration for Nicholas Bubwith provided him with a sponsor into royal diplomatic service. Bubwith, who had been keeper of the privy seal from 1407 to 1408, seems to be the only means by which information about Stokes' talents could have been transmitted to the crown. He had no previous royal service, nor does he seem to have had any other ecclesiastical associations that would have brought him to the king's attention. From virtual obscurity, Stokes proceeded to the court of Henry IV to serve as his envoy to the Emperor Sigismund in 1411.

Like Stokes and Catryk, John Kemp chose diocesan administration as his method of clerical advancement. The

27Register of Nicholas Bubwith, 1:80, May 10, 1410, commission.

28Ibid., 1:13, Nov. 3, 1410, collation.
sources indicate that he did not actually begin to serve the church until 1413. Before this date, however, he was appointed as rector of St. Michael's Crooked Lane in London and Oldyngton in Kent through the patronage of Archbishop Thomas Arundel. In addition, he received an appointment as rector of Southwark in Sussex. In all probability, the income from these preferments was used to support Kemp during his university studies, and he never performed any of the duties associated with these appointments. By 1413, however, Kemp was serving as examiner general in the archdiocesan court of Canterbury. In this capacity, he took testimony from witnesses during proceedings. In case of the absence of the commissary general and the dean of the Arches, he presided over the archdiocesan court.

Because he displayed such talent in this ecclesiastical tribunal, he was one of the men chosen to assess the testimony of John Oldcastle, when he was tried for heresy before Archbishop Arundel's court in the summer of 1413. John Oldcastle had been an old and trusted friend of Henry V, but his Lollard sympathies had become a threat

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32 Ibid., 1:446.

33 Register of Robert Rede, 1:154.
to Henry's piety and authoritarian administration. Kemp's participation in the trial that condemned Oldcastle could only have ingratiated him with the king and very likely led to his further advancement at Canterbury. By November 21, 1416, Kemp had been appointed as dean of St. Mary of the Arches in London.34

At the court of Canterbury, Kemp made his reputation as a fine civil lawyer, and his talents did not go unnoticed by Henry V. On five different occasions between April 1414 and July 1415, Henry commissioned him to hear royal cases, primarily, ones appealed from the Court of Admiralty.35 From judicial service, Kemp entered diplomacy in 1415 when he was commissioned to negotiate with the king of Aragon. Despite their different backgrounds, Catryk, Stokes, and Kemp believed that diplomacy was a method to advance themselves to high ecclesiastical and public positions. For Catryk and Kemp, this assumption proved correct but not for John Stokes.

John Catryk and John Stokes Serve
Henry IV, 1405-11

John Catryk served on sixteen embassies from 1405 to


1411, and as a result, he was one of the foremost clerical diplomats during the reign of Henry IV. He began his diplomatic career with an embassy to Rome, but after his return, he directed his talents toward the complexities of Anglo-Flemish, Anglo-French, and Anglo-Burgundian diplomacy. In 1406 and 1407, he worked to negotiate a mercantile treaty between England and Flanders. During these same years and from 1407 to 1411, he served on nine embassies in which he negotiated with the French. In these assignments, he worked to prolong the Truce of Lenlivingham, to establish short-term restricted truces, and to arrange a final peace based on a royal marriage. As the conflict between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs rekindled in 1410, he worked to ally the Burgundians with England in her attempt to retake French land. John Stokes received one ambassadorial commission during Henry IV's reign, which took him to the Holy Roman Empire. However, his extensive service in diplomacy did not come until the reigns of Henry V and VI.

Resumption of the War, 1405-7

In the formative years of John Catryk's career, the Lenlivingham truce was abandoned, and England and France resumed hostilities in the winter of 1406. England immediately negotiated a commercial treaty with Flanders in order to protect her wool trade. Henry IV was not prepared to launch a major campaign against the French in 1406 because of aristocratic opposition at home. Consequently the king decided to attempt to negotiate a general peace but succeeded
in concluding only a short-term armistice that applied only to Picardy. John Catryk was commissioned to two of the embassies that were to arrange or confirm an Anglo-Flemish commercial agreement and to two others that were to maintain or restore peaceful relations with France. Though Catryk was primarily concerned with Anglo-Flemish and Anglo-French diplomacy from 1405 to 1407, he began his ambassadorial service for Henry IV with an assignment to treat with the papacy.

Catryk began his diplomatic career with an assignment involving the affairs of York, the diocese in which he was probably born. On Henry Beaufort's recommendation, Henry IV first drafted him into diplomacy to inform the papacy of Thomas Langley's canonical election to the archiepiscopal see of York. On June 8, 1405, the see of York was left vacant by the execution of Archbishop Richard Scrope, who had aided Thomas Mowbray, earl of Northampton, in his rebellion against the crown. Henry immediately arranged for the chapter to elect a royal favorite, Thomas Langley, dean of York, and former keeper of the privy seal. Giving John Catryk a letter which narrated these events, the king dispatched him to Rome to press for papal acceptance of the royal decision.¹ Before Catryk left, he obtained prepayment for the expenses that he was to incur on his long journey to

¹Foedera, Holmes, 8:407-8, Aug. 8, 1405, letter from Henry IV to Innocent VI.
When he reached the papal court, he found that his assignment would be more difficult than he had expected. Before his arrival, Robert Hallum, archdeacon of Canterbury, and chancellor of Oxford, had come to Rome to push for his provision to the archbishopric of York. Evidently Catryk could do nothing to foil Hallum's efforts, since Pope Innocent VI provided Hallum to the archiepiscopacy of York on May 22, 1406. Having failed in his first diplomatic assignment, he returned to England probably in early winter, but he did not receive full payment for his expenses until seven years later.

When John Catryk was first commissioned to negotiate with the French, his letters of procuration gave him power to seek a reconfirmation of the Truce of Lenlingham, which King Henry had vowed to repudiate when he usurped the English throne in 1399. Henry had promised that he would resume the war with France in order to win back those French lands that had fallen into Valois hands by the signing of the Truce of Lenlingham. Despite this promise, the truce continued to regulate relations between England and France throughout the early years of Henry IV's reign. Year after year, it was

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2 Issue Rolls, E 403/582.
3 Annales Ricardi et Henrici, p. 419.
4 Eubel, Hierarchia catholica, 1:242.
5 Issue Rolls, E 403/609.
reconfirmed because of the domestic pressures exerted upon Henry. Uprisings in Wales and in the north country plus Scottish incursions prevented the king from attacking, let alone launching a major invasion of France.

England was in such a weakened condition after the Lancastrian usurpation, that France, under a strong leader like Charles V, could have significantly reduced the lands which the English held. France, though, did not have a dynamic king in the person of Charles VI, who had been plagued by mental problems for many years. Moreover, the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy fought to gain the confidence of the ailing king so that they could control France and its foreign policy. By 1404, the duke of Orleans had established his influence over the king, and he initiated an aggressive foreign policy aimed at completing Charles V's work and driving the English out of Guienne and Calais. In pursuance of these goals, he negotiated an agreement with the Welsh rebels, promising to give them extensive military aid.

By 1406, the political situation in France had changed, and the duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, controlled the king. John, as brother of the French king, duke of Burgundy, and count of Flanders, had a diversity of interests which in many cases conflicted with one another. Due to the pressure from his commercially affluent Flemish lands, which were dependent on English wool, John reversed Orleans' foreign policy and directed France toward concluding
a final peace through reconfirmation of the Treaty of Lenningham.  

When John let his peaceful intentions be known in England, they were well received by Henry IV. He was not only troubled by Welsh, Scottish, and aristocratic opposition, but more recently, he was concerned about mercantile opposition in Commons. English commercial interests denounced French violations of the truce in the Parliament of 1406, and they demanded peace so that "commerce might have a free hand in both countries."  

In response to these pressures, John Catryk went on his first mission to France. On March 22, 1406, King Henry commissioned him and two others under the direction of Henry Beaufort to seek a reconfirmation of the Truce of Lenningham. Beaufort had additional powers to conclude a perpetual peace and to arrange for a marriage between Henry, Prince of Wales, and a daughter of the king of France.  

Having received his commission on March 22, 1406, John Catryk departed for France on March 26, 1406, but he did not leave in the company of Bishop Beaufort. He joined the English embassy en route and travelled with them to Paris, 

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6 Perroy, Hundred Years War, p. 225.  
8 Foedera, Holmes, 8:432-35, Mar. 22, 1406, commission.  
9 Issue Rolls, E 403/594.
where they placed their proposals before the councils of the French king. According to the chronicler Enguerrand Monstrelet, Catryk and his fellow ambassadors failed to re-confirm the truce because Beaufort could not arrange a marriage between Prince Henry and Princess Isabelle of France. The technical reason that such a marriage could not be contracted was Isabelle's previous betrothal to the son of the duke of Orleans. Catryk and his fellow ambassadors returned home to England by May 22, 1406. They were dissatisfied with the results of this mission for, soon after their return, hostilities between England and France resumed.  

About a month later, John Catryk returned to France, but in this mission, he was charged with the responsibility of negotiating with the duke of Burgundy, not as the power behind the throne in France, but as the count of Flanders. Henry hoped that, by sending Catryk and six others to deal with the duke, his ambassadors could at least arrange a commercial agreement with Flanders. In case that the recent hostilities should escalate into a declared war, the Anglo-Flemish wool trade would be protected.  

Before the envoys departed for Calais, they were given more detailed instructions concerning how to conduct negotiations. Firstly they were to propose a general peace. If this proposal were

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11 *Foedera*, Holmes, 8:444, July 3, 1406, commission.
rejected, then they were to suggest a mercantile treaty
which would insure commercial freedom to English and Flemish
merchants, fishermen, and travellers.\textsuperscript{12} Catryk and his
fellow ambassadors opened discussions with the Flemish at
Calais in the first part of August, and by August 14, they
had worked out a tentative agreement providing for free-
dom of trade for one year.\textsuperscript{13}

After corresponding with their lords, the ambassa-
dors reopened negotiations under new directives. On October
5, 1406, Catryk and the same six English ambassadors were
ordered to secure the protection of trade between Whitsand
and Dover.\textsuperscript{14} To enhance his embassy's bargaining position,
King Henry ordered his admirals to cease harassing French
and Breton as well as Flemish fishermen in the Channel.\textsuperscript{15}
The English and Flemish embassies labored through October
and November and finally arrived at an agreement which was
confirmed in London on March 10, 1407.\textsuperscript{16} According to the
terms of the treaty, freedom of travel and trade was guar-
anteed for one year from Dover to Whitsand and from Calais

\textsuperscript{12} APC, 1:292-93, July 3, 1406, instructions.

\textsuperscript{13} Emile Varenburg, Histoire des relations diplomatiques entre le Comte de Flandre et l'Angleterre (Brussels, 1874), pp. 547-48, no. 3.

\textsuperscript{14} Foedera, Holmes, 8:452, Oct. 5, 1406, commission.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., Oct. 5, 1406, letter from Henry IV to his
admirals.

\textsuperscript{16} Varenburg, Relations diplomatiques entre Flandre et Angleterre, p. 548, no. 3, Oct. 24, 1406, indenture.
to Gravelines.  

In the spring of 1407, John Catryk once again turned his attentions to Anglo-French diplomacy. Throughout the winter of 1406 and into the spring of 1407, fighting had continued in a sporadic form between England and France. Henry once again wished to reopen Anglo-French negotiations on the basis of a peace solidified by a royal marriage between the Prince of Wales and a princess of France. Now that Isabelle was no longer available, Henry hoped that his ambassadors could secure Charles' second daughter, Marie, as his son's wife. To accomplish these ends, he commissioned a three-man embassy with John Catryk in its ranks, Catryk and the two other ambassadors journeyed from England across the Channel, through Picardy, to Paris where they were presented to the French court. Monstrelet says that the English demanded such great concessions in return for the hand of the princess that a nuptual agreement could not be written. Though the English embassy failed in this respect, an armistice for Picardy was signed on July 28 which was to last until September 8, 1407. At least,

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17 Poedera, Holmes, '8:469-76, Mar. 10, 1407, confirmation.  
18 Ibid., p. 484, June 11, 1407, commission.  
19 Monstrelet, Chronicles, 1:93-94.  
Catryk's embassy did have a short-term restricted truce to present to the king upon its return to England.

Catryk did not return to England with the rest of the embassy but remained at Calais to aid another embassy that was to arrive at that city in the beginning of August. This four-man embassy was led by Sir Richard Aston and included another prominent clerical diplomat, Nicholas Rysheton. The embassy had power to treat with the ambassadors of the duke of Burgundy about confirming the truce and redressing violations against it. Although the mercantile treaty which Catryk had helped to negotiate was ratified by both sides, the Flemish objected to several terms. In the August and September meetings with the English embassy, they sought to rectify these problems. The Flemish representatives requested that the French be guaranteed freedom to use the land route between Calais and Gravelines, and that fishermen of Flanders, Brittany, and France be allowed to pursue freely their economic endeavors. Catryk's main function in these proceedings was to frame any settlement in the proper legal and Latin terminology. The indenture that he prepared would then be presented to Henry for ratification.

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22 Foedera, Holmes, 8:486-87, June 12, 1407, commission; 491-92, July 22, 1407, commission.

23 Hingeston-Randolph, Royal and Historical Letters of
continued to regulate Anglo-Flemish relations. Monstrelet comments that "the Flemings were much rejoiced thereat, for they thought that their commerce would now be more securely carried on."24

Short-Term Restricted Truces, 1407-10

After the Anglo-Flemish commercial alliance had been confirmed, John Catryk concentrated his talents on Anglo-French diplomacy from winter 1407 to the end of 1410. During this three-year period, he accepted six commissions whose primary goal was to conclude a general peace based on a marriage between the Prince of Wales and one of Charles VI's daughters. These negotiations failed to accomplish their primary goal but did bring peace to Picardy, Guienne, and the seas from December 1407 to May 1410 and from August 1410 to January 1412.

While John Catryk was handling Flemish affairs at Calais, a French embassy arrived in England presumably with the intention of reopening peace negotiations.25 John Catryk may or may not have returned from Calais after the Flemish negotiations of September. Even though he may not have been present at court, Henry assigned him to an embassy

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24Monstrelet, Chronicles, 1:93-94.

25Foedera, Holmes, 8:499, Sept. 27, 1407, safeconduct was good until Dec. 25, 1407.
in December 1407 to treat with a French embassy due to arrive at Calais. He along with two others were to serve under another distinguished clerical diplomat Bishop Thomas Langley in negotiating a peace with France. If they failed to accomplish this goal, they were to attempt to prolong the truce that had already been extended from September 20 to November 1. 26

Not only did the king and his council hope to conclude a peace, but they still had hopes of a royal marriage between the Prince of Wales and Marie of France. 27 Even though the French had rejected England's terms for a marriage alliance in 1406, they did not reject the basic concept of a royal marriage, and the ambassadors that came to England in September encouraged these hopes. They were probably unaware that the duke of Orleans and the king of France found they could not convince fourteen-year-old Marie to marry Prince Henry even if a contract would be negotiated. Marie had been placed in the convent of Poissy when she was four years old. At the age of fourteen, she could not be convinced to leave the monastic life and hastened to take her final vows on October 25, 1407. 28 Consequently when Catryk and the other English ambassadors

26Ibid., p. 504, Dec. 1, 1407, commission.
arrived, they found that the French could not negotiate for a royal marriage because of Marie's decision. Because a general accord could not be reached, they again settled for short-term restricted truces. On November 16, 1407, the English and French ambassadors agreed to proclaim a truce for Picardy from December 15 to March 31 and for Guienne from January 15 to April 15.29

These short-term restricted truces seemed to be the only type of settlements that could be concluded by England and France. On April 1, 1408, the truce in Picardy was extended to September 30 as was the truce for Guienne on April 15, 1408.30 However, hopes had not been abandoned for a lasting peace or even a long-term general truce. On August 3, 1408, John Catryk and Hugh Mortymer were commissioned to go to France and try to negotiate a long-term general truce and at the very least to prolong the short-term truces in Picardy and Guienne.31 This small and unprestigious embassy crossed through Picardy to meet the French embassy. By September 17, they had concluded an agreement by which the truces in Picardy and Guienne were extended for over a year and a half until May 1, 1410, and a general truce was to be proclaimed for the seas, including

29 Du Tillet, Rois de France, 2:336, Dec. 15 and 17, 1407, indentures of the truce.

30 Foedera, Holmes, 8:521-24, Apr. 1, 1408, confirmation; 515-17, Apr. 15, 1408, confirmation.

31 Ibid., p. 546, Aug. 3, 1408, commission.
the coast of Flanders, from November 1 until May 10, 1410. 32

Moreover, Catryk's and Mortymer's success went beyond securing longer and more comprehensive truces. They made arrangements for a conference to be held on February 13, 1409, for the purpose of concluding a "perpetual peace." This peace would be solidified by a royal marriage between the Prince of Wales and Charles VI's youngest daughter, Katherine. 33 Having achieved these diplomatic successes, John Catryk and Hugh Mortymer set out on their return to England passing through Amiens and Boulogne on their way to Calais. 34

Neither the French nor the English made any attempt to implement their agreement to meet on February 13, 1409. Still hoping for a general peace settlement, King Henry sent John Catryk as his sole representative to France on March 3, 1409 in order to make plans for the desired peace conference. 35 He arranged for the French and English embassies to meet in late spring of 1409. On May 15, Henry gave commissions to five men who were to act as his ambassadors at the forthcoming peace conference. These five men, including

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32 Ibid., pp. 555-59, Sept. 17, 1408, indenture; Oct. 31, 1408, confirmation.

33 Ibid., p. 571, Mar. 3, 1409, commission refers to these arrangements.

34 Monstrelet, Chronicles, 1:239.

35 Foedera, Holmes, 8:571, Mar. 3, 1409, commission.
John Catryk and Bishop Henry Beaufort, were to go to Picardy to redress violations made against the existing truce, to expand the truce, and to arrange for future peace negotiations.36 Once John Catryk and the others had received safe-conducts and prepayments for expenses, they travelled quickly to France, only to find that the French had not commissioned an embassy to meet with them.37

By August 15, 1409, procedural problems had been solved to the extent that the English provided safe-conducts for the expected embassy.38 Because so much time had elapsed since Catryk and his colleagues had received their original commissions, new commissions to treat for an extended truce or a general peace were issued on September 3, 1409.39 In response to these measures, French envoys were commissioned on September 12, 1409.40 According to the chronicler of Saint-Denys, the French embassy went to Amiens to meet Catryk, Beaufort, and the others. They waited there until November, but the English never arrived.41 Why the English failed to come to Amiens is not

36 Ibid., pp. 585-87, May 15, 1409, commissions.
37 Ibid., p. 585, May 12, 1409, safe-conducts to John Catryk; Issue Rolls, E 403/596.
38 Foedera, Holmes, 8:593, Aug. 15, 1409, letters of safe-conduct.
41 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 4:353.
recorded. However, they may have feared travelling to Amiens due to the fighting in the area. As a result of the breakdown in negotiations, the French council decided to prepare for war. 42

Consequently the truces in Picardy and Guienne, and on the seas were allowed to expire in May. However after their expiration, the French failed to launch a major attack because English troops had destroyed a large arms depot at the abbey of St. Bertin. 43 Due to this loss, the French were eager to re-establish the truce. In response to their proposals, King Henry decided to commission an embassy to go to Lenlingham to restore the truce, and if possible to treat for a lasting peace. He placed John Catryk on this embassy and appointed another career diplomat, Henry Chichele, bishop of St. David's, as its leader. 44

The embassy left London on May 31, 1410 and journeyed to Lenlingham. 45 By June 21, the French and English embassies had signed the indenture of a treaty. According to the terms, a truce would be established in Picardy, Guienne, and on the seas by August 1, and it would extend


43 Religieux de Saint-Denys, 4:312.

44 Foedera, Holmes, 8:636, May 20, 1410, commission.

45 Mirot, 61 (1900):25, no. 570, Henry Beaufort's account.
until November 1, 1410.\(^{46}\) Having concluded this short-term restricted truce, Catryk and his embassy returned to England on July 15, where they obtained its ratification.\(^{47}\)

By August 1410, the dukes of Burgundy and Orleans were again quarreling. Those who still surrounded the king wished to maintain the truce with England because of France's domestic vulnerability. In response to these gestures, Henry called on John Catryk on August 6, 1410 to return to France in order to reform and prolong the truce. Although Catryk, Chichele, and the others received their letters of procuration in August, they did not secure an extension of the truce until December 10, 1410. This gap between the two dates may be attributed to a delayed departure or to prolonged negotiations. According to the terms of the agreement which Catryk's embassy achieved, the truce was extended in Picardy, Guienne, and the seas from January 1411 to January 1412.\(^{49}\)

Anglo-Burgundian Alliance, 1410-11

Despite the fact that England sought to confirm the

\(^{46}\) **Foedera**, Holmes, 8:641-48, June 21, 1410, indenture; July 20, 1410, ratification.

\(^{47}\) Mirot, 61 (1900):25, no. 570, Henry Beaufort's account.

\(^{48}\) **Foedera**, Holmes, 8:668-69, Aug. 6, 1410, commission.

\(^{49}\) Ibid., pp. 671-74, Dec. 28, 1410, indenture; Monstrelet, **Chronicles**, 1:306.
Anglo-French truce just at the time when Burgundy and Orleans began fighting, Henry realized that he could use the renewed civil war to his own advantage. By encouraging and actively supporting either the Burgundians or the Armagnacs, Henry could weaken France to the point where he could impose a military settlement. In 1410, the king decided that it would be most advantageous to throw his support to the Burgundian faction by attempting to convert the Anglo-Flemish commercial treaty into an Anglo-Burgundian alliance. In pursuance of this end, John Catryk was dispatched on three embassies during 1411 to treat with the duke of Burgundy.

Catryk received the first of these assignments while he was at Calais negotiating for the prolongation of the Anglo-French truce. On November 29, 1410, letters of procuration were issued to him and six others to meet with the emissaries of the duke of Burgundy at Calais. He and his colleagues were to convince the envoys of John the Fearless that the Anglo-Flemish commercial treaty should be superseded by an Anglo-Burgundian alliance. According to the instructions of the Privy Council, they were to treat first for a general truce of three years or longer. Then if this offer were rejected, they were to propose a substantial prolongation of the commercial truce which Catryk had

50 Foedera, Holmes, 8:661, Nov. 29, 1410, commission.
concluded in October 1406. When the English embassy arrived in France, Burgundy's position at the French court was still sufficiently secure that he could not afford to lose his current advantage by making such a treacherous alliance with the English. Consequently Catryk and his colleagues presented Henry with a negative report upon their return.

Although Catryk's November mission failed, Henry continued to pressure Burgundy, and Monstrelet comments on the extent of diplomatic intercourse in the months following Catryk's return. These negotiations did not produce the desired treaty nor a prolongation of the Anglo-Flemish commercial treaty. To avoid letting this agreement expire, John Catryk, Henry Chichele, and five others were commissioned for another embassy that was ordered to go to Calais. On St. George's day, they met with the envoys of the duke of Burgundy in order to deal with violations of the commercial truce and to prolong it. Catryk and his colleagues accomplished their mission on May 27 when the Anglo-Flemish commercial treaty was extended for five years.

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51 APC, 2:2-6, Nov. 12, 1410, minutes; Nov. 29, 1410, instructions. The October 1406 commercial treaty had been extended on June 10, 1408 for three years. Foedera, Holmes, 8:530.

52 Monstrelet, Chronicles, 1:360.

53 Foedera, Holmes, 8:677, Mar. 27, 1411, commissions bestowing the same powers was issued on Apr. 16, 1411.

54 Ibid., p. 687, May 27, 1411, indenture.
Because he had been given additional orders to re-
dress violations of the truce with France in the March 27
commission, John Catryk remained at Calais and joined
Chichele and two others in a July meeting with the French.55
In one of the sessions with the French, he prosecuted the
case of seven English merchants. In the spring of 1410,
these merchants had put to sea in a Zeeland vessel and had
loaded a cargo of wine on another that was to follow behind.
Off the coast of Normandy, however, subjects of the French
king had seized the cargo ship. John Catryk requested that
the French emissaries arrange for the return of the mer-
chants' cargo.56

By the summer of 1411, the Armagnac coalition had
assembled a substantial army and then ordered this military
force to attack Burgundian strongholds. Faced with the
reality of the advancing Armagnac army, the duke of Burgundy
finally responded favorably to Henry's offers to strengthen
the ties between them. In July, messengers were hastily
sent across the Channel to secure aid from England. In the
immediacy of the situation, Queen Joan of Navarre pressed
for a commitment of eight hundred men-at-arms without a
formal agreement as to the price for English aid.57

55 Ibid., p. 694, July 1, 1411, commission.
56 CPR, Hen. IV, 4 (1408-13):354, Dec. 14, 1411, let-
ter of marque and reprisal.
57 "Le livre des trahisons de France envers la maison
de Bourgogne," Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de la
Belgique sous la domination des ducs de Bourgogne, ed. Henry
However, rumors circulated that, in return, the duke had agreed to marry his daughter to the Prince of Wales, cede the port towns of Gravelines, Dunkirk, Dixmuiden, and Sluys, do homage for the county of Flanders, and aid England in re-conquering Normandy. Even the chronicler of Saint-Denys questions the validity of these rumors and realizes that they were probably started by Armagnac propagandists.  

As his troops were sailing for France, Henry planned to use the immediate situation to bring John the Fearless into his circle of allies by a marriage treaty. Consequently on September 1, he commissioned the earl of Arundel to conduct a four-man embassy to the Burgundian court to treat for a marriage between John's eldest daughter and the Prince of Wales. As in so many embassies to the Burgundian court, John Catryk was included in the membership of this embassy. Catryk, like the others, received annotated instructions to find out exactly what gifts, lands, jewels, and military aid the duke would give in return for further English support.

With the promised eight hundred men-at-arms, Catryk travelled to Dover, sailed across the Channel to Calais, and journeyed overland to Arras. Arriving on October 2, 1411, Catryk, like the others, received annotated instructions to find out exactly what gifts, lands, jewels, and military aid the duke would give in return for further English support.


58 Réligieux de Saint-Denys, 1:475-77.
59 Foedera, Holmes, 8:698, Sept. 1, 1411, commission.
60 APC, 2:19-29, Sept. 1, 1411, instructions and notes.
he and the rest of the English embassy were lodged at the abbey of St. Vaast. The duke had made elaborate plans for the arrival of the English, decorating his transient court with his most impressive tapestries. On October 4, the English ambassadors were treated to a grand dinner, and at the same time, Catryk received six beautiful cups decorated with silver, adorned with enamelled feet, and styled in the latest fashion. The English embassy tried to arrange for the royal marriage, but the duke was too preoccupied with preparations to relieve the Armagnac siege of Paris. Still hoping to come to some agreement, Catryk and the others followed Duke John to Pontoise where he made his headquarters for the attack on the Armagnacs. On October 18, he sent the English embassy back to Calais without agreeing to the marriage proposal.

In the years between 1405 and 1411, John Catryk had served diligently whether he was representing Henry in Rome, Flanders, Burgundy, or France. During these years, however, his sixteen missions had brought him few rewards and no substantial advancement in either royal or clerical circles.

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62 Livre des trahisons, p. 114.
63 Petit, Itinéraires, p. 383.
64 Laborde, Ducs de Bourgogne, 1:61, 1412, payment to the abbot of St. Vaast.
65 Petit, Itinéraires, p. 383.
He had received the prebendaries of Funtemelle, Stow Longa, Asbaldwyk, and Morton Pawa, but these were hardly fitting rewards for his extensive diplomatic service.

However, Catryk's patron, Henry Beaufort, continued to look after his interests. In 1409, Beaufort was serving as an envoy to the Council of Pisa, and while he was in Italy, he used his influence to have Catryk appointed as a papal notary. This appointment gave Catryk access to a further source of promotion, the papacy. He served as a notary in the papal court from 1409 until 1414, where he took notes, kept records of court proceedings, and authenticated documents. In reward for his service to the papacy, Catryk was provided to the archdeaconry of Surrey. His ability to function within the realm of the sophisticated papal courts was also recognized by Henry IV's son. Shortly after he came to the throne, he made Catryk his papal proctor on May 23, 1413. The office of papal proctor was the only royal appointment that Catryk received either

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70Foedera, Holmes, 9:12, May 23, 1413, commission.
before, during, or after his diplomatic career.

John Stokes' Embassy to the Holy Roman Empire, 1411

John Stokes' name does not appear in the diplomatic records of Henry IV's reign until 1411. In that year, he accepted his first diplomatic assignment which charged him with the responsibility of dealing with both secular and clerical affairs which were of concern to Henry IV. Since Henry's sojourn in the Holy Roman Empire in 1392, he had frequently corresponded with Emperor Sigismund. In the latter part of 1410, Sigismund had written to Henry requesting aid in driving the Poles back after the famous victory at Tannenberg in July 1410. However, Henry was not anxious to commit himself because of the deteriorating relations with France, but he did agree to send an embassy to the imperial court. 71

On February 26, 1411, the king commissioned John Stokes, a young Cambridge licentiate in law, and Hertonk Van Clux, a layman with several years experience in negotiating in the East, to go to Sigismund's court which stayed in Ofen at this time. In their letters of procuration, they received general powers to conclude any agreement with Sigismund. Although Stokes and Van Clux received their commission in February, they did not depart until April 13, a month and a half later. 72 By that time, it was common

71 Wylie, Henry IV, 3:402.
72 Mirot, 61 (1900):25, no. 573, John Stokes' account.
knowledge that the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights had unilaterally made peace with the Poles by the Treaty of Thorn, and that Sigismund was very irritated by this action. Because England had a treaty with the Teutonic Order, Henry also charged Stokes and Van Clux with the task of seeking a reconciliation between them and Sigismund. No records are extant indicating the result of the embassy's work at Ofen, but it may be surmized that Stokes and Van Clux did not agree to Sigismund's request for aid against the Poles seeing that Henry did not subsequently put any troops at his disposal.

From Ofen, Stokes and Van Clux proceeded to Prague in order to accomplish the ecclesiastical goals of their mission. They were to inform the fifteenth century reformer John Hus and his followers at the University of Prague that England and her church disavowed the teachings of John Wycliff. His books had been condemned and publicly burnt at Oxford. Shortly after Stokes and Van Clux arrived at Prague, a delegation from the university came to visit them at their lodgings. At that time, John Stokes stated:

He who reads the books of Master John Wyclif, or studies them, even if he is disposed by nature or good faith, in the process of time he will be led into heresy.

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73 Foedera, Holmes, 8:466, Feb. 16, 1407, commission; Dec. 24, 1410, confirmation.
74 Wylie, Henry IV, 3:403.
75 Ibid.
When the delegation informed John Hus of Stokes' statement, he invited the English diplomat to deliberate with him, but Stokes would only agree to explain his remarks in public. On September 13, 1411, he said that he would be willing to debate with Hus in a more neutral place like the University of Paris, the papal court at Rome, or a general council. Then he went on to clarify his statement to the delegation, saying:

If I knew anyone, who read or studied Wyclif's books, or who wished to foster or to retain his opinion, I would like to counsel him for the sake of God and out of love, that he should desist there from, because I know great evils come from such study; hardly is a man found so well disposed to good, that if he studies such continuously, in the process of time he will be led into heresy.

Then he went on to say that in England all of Wyclif's writings had been condemned.76

In response, Hus wrote a refutation using English references to disprove Stokes. The University of Oxford, he stated, had declared that Wyclif was not a heretic, and its masters and students had been reading Wyclif's works for thirty years. If Wyclif was a heretic, so was his

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76 Palachý, Documenta Johannis Hus, pp. 447-48. "Quod quicumque legeret libros M. Joannis Wiclef, vel studuerit in eisdem, etiam si sit quomodocumque dispositus a nature, vel radicatus in bona fide, ex processu temporis involvetur in haeresim. Quod si scirem aliquem talem, qui legeret vel studueret in libris Wiclef, vel qui vellet fovere et retinere suas opiniones, ego vellem sibi consulere ex parte dei et caritativa dilectione, quam proximus habere tenetur ad proximum, quod desisteret, quia bene cognosco tanta mala ex tali studio, quod vix reperiret hominem etiam bene dispositum ad bonum, quin, si in eisdem continue studuerit, ex processu temporis involvatur in haeresim."

supporter, John of Gaunt, father of King Henry IV. By stressing the implication of Stokes' statement, Hus speculated that he would be punished by Henry for defaming his father. Stokes, with Van Clux, retreated and journeyed back to England arriving in London on October 31, 1411.

Though John Stokes did not receive another diplomatic assignment until 1414 or possibly 1415, he had laid the foundation for further diplomatic assignments by demonstrating his ability to perform both lay and clerical assignments. During Henry V's reign, he would confirm the reputation that he had established as an English envoy to the Council of Constance and as an ambassador to many different royal courts.

John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp Serve Henry V, 1413-22

Even as Prince of Wales, Henry V had proved to be a far more aggressive person than his father. As king, he initiated a very aggressive foreign policy which called for a massive invasion of France to conquer the lands that were, in his opinion, rightfully his as the heir to the French crown. In order to conduct this invasion successfully, Henry had to secure allies and retain them on his side, and he used all sorts of circumstances such as the Council of


Mirot, 61 (1900):25, no. 573, John Stokes' account.
Constance to do so. Once he had conquered Normandy, he was able to conclude the Treaty of Troyes, which recognized his dynastic claim to the French throne. Then he had to make sure that his allies would support him when he went on to conquer the southern part of France which rightfully belonged to him according to the terms of the Treaty of Troyes. In order to accomplish these diplomatic goals, he called upon the talents of John Catryk and John Stokes, two of his father's trusted diplomats. To add to this reservoir of diplomatic talent, he drafted a thirty-five-year old cleric named John Kemp into ambassadorial service.

The Council of Constance, 1414-18

As Henry was preparing for the invasion of France, the Council of Constance was in session. The Emperor Sigismund had forced the convocation of this church council in order to eliminate heresy, reform the church, and heal the Great Schism. The teachings of John Wyclif, John Hus, and Jerome of Prague had created serious doctrinal differences within the Christian commonwealth. Papal taxation and papal provisions plus pluralism and absenteeism alienated layman and cleric alike. But of greatest concern to Christendom was the existence of three popes, Benedict XIII, Gregory XII, and John XXIII. Benedict XIII came from the line of popes who resided at Avignon, and Gregory XII from that line of popes who resided at Rome. In 1409, the Council of Pisa deposed the Roman and Avignon popes and elected a new pope Alexander V. Seeing that few accepted this solution to the
Great Schism, the council just added a third contender for the papal title.

When John XXIII, Alexander's successor, called for a general church council to meet at Constance in 1414, Henry V immediately planned to send an embassy to take part in its sessions. Not only would his representatives help him to deal with vexing church problems, but they could also use the international forum to secure allies, while the planning for the French invasion continued.\(^1\) Having both these ecclesiastical and secular ends in mind, Henry sent both John Catryk and John Stokes to the Council of Constance.

Catryk served as an ambassador to the council from October 1414 to May 1415 and from July 1416 to April 1418, whereas Stokes served from the last months of 1414 to April 1416. During Catryk's first embassy to the council from October 1414 to May 1415, he took a prominent part in the proceedings against Pope John XXIII, but he had to return to England before the sessions in which John was deposed. John Stokes probably arrived at the council after Catryk, but he did not become prominent in the proceedings of the council until 1415 when he questioned John Hus. After Hus' trial, he participated in the council for another year, leaving Constance sometime after April 1416. Three months later in July 1416, John Catryk was sent back to Constance, where he remained until its conclusion in April 1418. During this

second embassy, he played an important role in the deposition of Benedict XIII and the election of Martin V; and he also tried to secure allies for Henry V.

The king chose Catryk to represent him at Constance because he had already proved himself to be a trusted and capable royal diplomatic servant. Moreover, he had become familiar with the personnel and the procedure of the Roman court in his capacities as papal notary and papal proctor. Lastly he had acquired a great deal of prestige by his elevation to the episcopacy. When Henry Chichele was translated to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury in 1414, Pope John XXIII provided John Catryk to Chichele's former see of St. David's in Wales. Because of "wars and other calamities," St. David's was considered an impoverished see by the papacy. Consequently Pope John allowed Catryk to keep all the benefices which he had accumulated until a "fatter" see became available. Because he was in Italy at the time, the pope consecrated him as bishop at Bologna, but he had to return to England in order to receive his temporalities and to make his profession of obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury.

With John Catryk back in England and elevated to the status of a bishop, he was an excellent candidate for

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2 CPL, 6 (1404-15): 454, 5 Kal. May 1414, provision.
3 Le Neve, Fasti, ed. Hardy, 1:296.
4 Foedera, Holmes, 9:135, June 2, 1414, grant of temporalities.
the embassy which Henry V was planning to send to the forthcoming Council of Constance. The expenses of a prolonged stay at Constance could not be offset by the meager income that Catryk was receiving from St. David's. Consequently when the bishopric of Coventry-Lichfield fell vacant in May 1414, Henry decided to have Catryk translated to this wealthier see, which could support his diplomatic activities.5 Though the papal translation was not issued until February 1, 1415,6 and the oath of obedience to Canterbury was not taken until June 21, 1415,7 Catryk started receiving the income from Coventry-Lichfield on October 13, 1414, just in time to support his pending embassy to the council.8

On October 20, 1414, Bishop Catryk received his first commission to go to the Council of Constance. He and ten others received power to deal with church matters, and in addition, he received power to treat with the Emperor Sigismund.9 Seven days after the commissioning, Catryk's embassy set out from London,10 sailed across the Channel to Calais, and travelled overland through Flanders to

7Le Neve, Fasti, ed. Hardy, 1:552.
10Mirot, 61 (1900):27, no. 587, Walter Hungerford's account.
Constance. According to Monstrelet, they had a very handsome retinue of eight hundred to attend on them. On January 21, 1415, they reached the environs of Constance, and several members of the pope's household came out to meet them.

The council officially opened on November 5, 1414, and by the sixth session on April 14, 1415, John Catryk had risen to some prominence within the English nation. According to the procedural arrangements, the various representatives had to group themselves according to their nation, and within the meetings of the nations, the representatives would decide as to how they should cast their vote. Even though the English nation rarely reached above one hundred, it had the same voting power as the larger German and French nations. On April 7 and on May 5, Bishop Catryk represented his nation in the meeting of deputies.

Because Catryk had served as a deputy for his nation in these early sessions, he was a very likely candidate to serve as a deputy for the English in the proceedings against Pope John XXIII. On May 13, 1415 in the ninth session, he

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11 Monstrelet, Chronicles, 1:46.
13 Jacob, Henry Chichele, p. 34.
14 Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum collectio, vol. 27, cols. 606, 637.
was appointed "to receive and examine witnesses as to the waste and scandalous maladministration of ecclesiastical property by lord John, and his other crimes and their notorious character." During the tenth session, he examined witnesses on four different days, May 14, 17, 18, and 21. However, Catryk's name does not appear in the proceedings of the eleventh session nor the important twelfth session that deposed John XXIII. He ceased to play an important role in the council because he had to return to England to receive his temporalities. On May 15, 1415, Henry had again ordered that the temporalities of the see of Coventry-Lichfield be delivered to Catryk, which would make his appointment to the see a certainty. Consequently he had to return to England to perform the oath of obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury which he did on June 12, 1415.

Though John Catryk returned to England, he did so alone, and the rest of the English embassy remained at Constance. Since the commencement of the council, other English diplomats had journeyed to Constance to augment the original embassy. One such diplomat was John Stokes. No

15 Mundy, Council of Constance, p. 243.


17 Le Neve, Fasti, ed. Hardy, 1:552.
letter of procuration is extant to indicate the date on which Stokes was commissioned to go to Constance nor the purpose of his dispatch. The council records, however, give some idea of the period during which he was at Constance. Gebhardt, the archdeacon of Constance, states that he was among those clerics who were at the council in 1414 and 1415. Other documents list him as first present on June 7, 1415, and last in attendance on April 4, 1416. The council documents also suggest the purpose of his embassy to Constance. They record that he was prominent in the trial of John Hus. Henry V was probably aware of John Stokes' 1411 encounter with John Hus in Prague and thought him a suitable ambassador to represent the English nation in Hus' heresy trial.

Stokes not only participated in the trial but achieved prominence as one of the examiners of the accused Bohemian heretic. On the second day of the trial June 7, Hus was questioned about his position on transubstantiation. Stokes said:

I saw in Prague [referring to his 1411 visit] a treatise, which was ascribed to Hus, in which it was expressed, that after the consecration into the sacrament, the bread remains material.

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19 Palachý, Documenta Johannis Hus, p. 277; Finke, Acta Concilii Constanciensis, 4:418.
20 Palachý, Documenta Johannis Hus, p. 277. "Ego vidi Pragae unum tractatum, qui huic Hus ascribatur, in quo posuit expresse, quod post consecrationem in sacramento
Hus replied that his charge was false.

The next day, on June 8, Hus was questioned on his writings De ecclesia, Contra prelatz, and Contra Stanislaus. Hoping to emphasize the English condemnation of Wyclif, Stokes tried to link Hus' ideas with those of his predecessor. He asked Hus:

Do you glorify in these writings and doctrines, ascribing them vainly to yourself? When these doctrines and sentences are not yours, but mostly Wyclif's, whose way you follow.21

The examination of Hus concluded with this session of June 8, and a month later, Hus was declared a heretic by the council and turned over to the imperial authorities to be executed.

Stokes' work at the council did not cease with the conclusion of Hus' trial, for on September 10, 1415 he was appointed as an envoy from the council to the emperor. At that time, Sigismund was at Perpignan where he had gone in order to force the resignation of Benedict XIII.22 By March 13, 1416, Stokes had returned to the council, and on April 4, he served with the cardinals in a tribunal which took testimony against Benedict.23 The council documents remainat pansi materialis."

21 Ibid., p. 309. "Et quid tu glorias in his scriptis et doctrinis, tibi coram titulam vane ascribendo? Cum hae doctrinae et sententiae non sunt tuae, sed potius Wyclif, cujus viam sequeris."


23 Ibid., 4:18.
do not indicate that Stokes took any further part in the proceedings after April 4, which suggests that he left Constance soon after this date.

On July 20, 1416, Henry ordered John Catryk to return to the Council of Constance. He along with five other churchmen were to join those already in attendance at the council. In this period at the council, Catryk played a much more diversified and distinguished part: he protected the voting power of the English nation; he accumulated and presented evidence which led to Benedict XIII's deposition; he pressed for a papal election; and he served as one of the electors of the new pope. Besides dealing with purely ecclesiastical matters, he spent much more time in secular diplomacy trying to secure allies for England as she was preparing for her invasion of 1417.

Just as Catryk was about to leave on August 5, he was given another assignment which he was expected to complete on his way to Constance. The chances of England winning a total victory in France were much greater in 1416 than they had been for many years. Since Henry V's victory at Agincourt in October 1415, he had been attempting to gain the support of other princes which would allow him to impose a crushing defeat on the French. Having secured the allegiance of the Emperor Sigismund in the Treaty of

\[24\] *Foedera*, Holmes, 9:370, July 20, 1416, commissions.
Canterbury, Henry was so encouraged that he thought he could also bring the duke of Burgundy into his circle of allies. As a consequence, the king empowered John Catryk and two others to make arrangements for him to meet with the duke of Burgundy when he arrived at Calais in autumn. For the first time in his diplomatic career, Catryk was designated as the leader of an embassy in which he was to serve.

The next day, Catryk left London but spent the night at the George Inn in Dartford, where he made out his last will and testament. By August 19, he had arrived in Lille where he remained for eight days negotiating with the duke of Burgundy. From Lille, Catryk made his way to Constance, arriving some time before September 24, 1416.

Once again Catryk took a very active part in the proceedings of the council. The English nation had come under attack because its voting power was so much greater than its numerical size. In the session of November 5, 1415, a representative of the recently arrived Aragonese delegation claimed that favoritism had been shown to the English at their expense. John Catryk arose and defended

25 Ibid., p. 352, May 22, 1416, prolongation of the commercial truce until June 15, 1417.
26 Ibid., p. 374, Aug. 5, 1416, commission.
27 Register of Edmund Lacy, pp. xiv-xviii.
28 Petit, Itinéraires, p. 428.
29 Finke, Acta Concilii Constanciensis, 2:347.
his nation's position at great length. 30

Despite the attack which the French, Spanish, and Italian nations had launched against the English, Henry thought that his emissaries, and especially Catryk, could use the international assembly to secure the allies that he needed. Consequently a commission was delivered to Constance empowering Catryk and five others to conclude alliances and mercantile treaties with the king of Aragon, any of the German princes, the Hanse Merchants, and the Genoese. In return for a commitment to the English cause, Catryk and his colleagues were directed to make substantial monetary grants. 31 Yet, anti-English feelings prevented them from concluding any alliances at this time.

By spring of 1417, the council had turned its attention to the deposition of the last pope, Benedict XIII, who had been supported mainly by the Spanish. On April 1, 1417, John Catryk was again appointed as one of the examiners in the proceedings against a pope. 32 On June 5, 1417, he presented the evidence which he had gathered during his examinations to the general assembly of the council. 33 The evidence was judged overwhelmingly sufficient to depose

30Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum collectio, vol. 27, col. 966.


32Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum collectio, vol. 27, col. 1071.

33Finke, Acta Concilii Constanciensis, 2:111.
Benedict XIII, and thus he was removed from office on July 26, 1417.

Now that all three popes had been eliminated, a dispute arose as to what the council's next step should be. Like the German nation, the English nation was strongly committed to church reform and therefore felt it should take precedence over a papal election. However by September 1417, the English nation began to have disagreements on this question. Ernest Jacob, Henry Chichele's biographer, feels that Catryk led the faction that called for an immediate election. He alleges that Catryk had deserted the English reform program because the cardinals had promised him a richer bishopric if he did so. On the day after Bishop Robert Hallum's death at Constance, September 4, Cardinal Orsini commended Catryk for promotion to the see of Salisbury. "This ghoulish haste to substitute in a cathedral devoted to conciliar interests an inveterate curialist for a noted reformer makes one ask what Catryk . . . had been up to; . . ."35

On September 9, the Emperor Sigismund attacked Catryk for his desertion of church reform. He asked why the English nation had already appointed deputies for the papal election. Catryk admitted that deputies had been appointed and confirmed. Then he tried to placate the emperor by


35 Jacob, Henry Chichele, p. 39.
promising that his nation would follow the decisions of
the Germans, implying that they would not take any further
steps to expedite the papal election. Then on September 15,
a rumor spread that Sigismund was going to attempt to stop
the papal election by arresting those cardinals who were
trying to speed it along. To save these cardinals, Catryk
offered to try and mediate between them and the emperor.

Catryk must have feared Henry V's reaction to his
reversal more than Sigismund's. Luckily for him, the king
finally conceded to an immediate papal election and ordered
Henry Beaufort, who was travelling as a pilgrim to the
Holy Land, to stop at Constance, to inform the English em-
bassy of his decision. When Bishop Catryk went out to meet
his old patron, he must have been overjoyed to hear about
Henry's concession which decreased the probability that he
would be the object of royal retribution.

To his good fortune, Catryk was one of the deputies
selected from the English nation to participate in the papal
election at Constance. On November 8, he entered the con-
clave, and by November 11, he had helped to elect Oddo
Colonna as the new pope. Because he was instrumental in
expediting the election, had voted for Martin, and was known
as an "inveterate curialist," Catryk was in an excellent

36 Finke, Acta Concilii Constanciensis, 2:396.
37 Ibid., p. 147.
38 Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum collectio, vol. 27,
col. 1169.
position to secure further advancement from the new pope. Moreover, he could use his new found patrons to seek promotions for his friends. He acted as Henry Beaufort's agent after Martin V's election by securing Beaufort's appointment as cardinal and the designation of Winchester as a see to he held in commendam. When Catryk's new patron Martin V set out for Rome, he joined him and thereby placed his career in the hands of the papacy. His diplomatic career as well as Stokes' did not end with the termination of the Council of Constance. Both clerics joined John Kemp in other diplomatic assignments outside the context of the Council of Constance that eventually helped make Henry's invasion of Normandy such a success.

The Conquest of Normandy and the Crown of France, 1415-20

By 1415, Henry's foreign policy had been translated into concrete strategies for invasion, and in August 1415, his troops landed in France. Although Henry won an outstanding victory at Agincourt in October, he was forced to withdraw to England. By the summer of 1417, he had formulated another invasion plan, and in August, he launched a second campaign to invade France. In the two and one half years that followed, he conquered and completely subdued Normandy. Also during this period from 1415 to 1420, Henry dispatched many embassies to acquire and maintain allies who

could insure the success of his invasion and his occupation of Normandy. Others were dispatched to negotiate with the dauphin or the duke of Burgundy, who both claimed to represent the ailing king of France. By sending embassies to negotiate with both sides, Henry hoped to play one faction off against the other and thereby to obtain the most favorable diplomatic settlement. Once the Burgundians had offered the best peace terms, Henry dispatched his ambassadors to conclude the Treaty of Troyes, which recognized his dynastic claim to the French throne. John Catryk was to play a minor role in these diplomatic events, because of his involvement in the last stages of the Council of Constance and his final residence at the Roman court, whereas John Stokes participated very actively. However, an unknown clerk named John Kemp came to play the most significant role in English diplomacy from 1415 to 1420.

Acquisition of Allies, 1415-18

For Henry's invasion plans to be successful, he had to secure and maintain allies. Before he actually began his campaigns, and while his troops were conquering Normandy, he dispatched embassies to win the allegiance of such principalities as Aragon, Castile, Anjou, Maine, and Burgundy. From 1415 to 1418, John Stokes and John Kemp received several commissions to win these allies for Henry V.

In September 1415, John Kemp began the first stage of his diplomatic career which was to last until 1420 and
during which he was to receive seventeen commissions. In his first diplomatic assignment, he was ordered to go to the court of Ferdinand, king of Aragon and regent of Castile. Relations between Henry and Ferdinand had been amiable since 1413 when their embassies had agreed to a one-year armistice. This truce applied to both Aragon and Castile and had been subsequently prolonged. On July 21, 1415, an embassy from Ferdinand arrived in England offering to negotiate an alliance between the two princes and to arrange for a marriage between Henry and King Ferdinand's daughter, Maria. Henry was about to launch the attack which led to his great victory at Agincourt in October 1415, and he needed to have as many friends as possible. Although he intended to utilize his eligibility of contract a marriage with someone of more prestige than a princess of Aragon, he commissioned John Kemp and John Waterton to visit Ferdinand and give the impression that he wished to contract the marriage. If his ambassadors were successful, Aragon and Castile would refuse to give aid to France during the attack.

On September 8, Kemp and Waterton left London and joined Ferdinand's ambassadors at Southampton on September 16. From here, the two embassies sailed on the same ship

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40 Mirot, 61 (1900):29, no. 593, Nicholas Harwood's account; he was a clerk for John Waterton who escorted the Aragonese envoys during their stay in England.

arriving at Bayonne in fifteen days. From this port, they travelled to Perpignan where Ferdinand had been residing in order to deal with the deposition of Benedict XIII. On December 5, Kemp and Waterton met with Ferdinand.

Assuming that the negotiations took the direction that Henry had ordered in this instructions, Kemp and Waterton confirmed Henry's marital eligibility. Then they pointed out that any agreement for a marriage between Henry and Maria of Aragon could only be achieved through extensive negotiations. As an alternative, they offered to arrange a marriage between either of Henry's unwed brothers, the dukes of Gloucester and Bedford, and the infanta Maria. The chronicler Geronimo Zurita explains that the marriage negotiations failed because Maria was already betrothed to the king of Castile. When Ferdinand offered to substitute his other daughter Leonora for Maria, the English refused to discuss a marriage contract any further.

Though a marriage could not be contracted, Kemp and Waterton moved on, as ordered, to attempt to negotiate an alliance with Aragon which excluded the French and Scots, but in this manner also, they did not achieve a

42 Mirot, 61 (1900):29, no. 595, John Kemp's account; Usk, p. 125.

43 Geronimo Zurita y Castro, Anales de la corona de Aragon, 7 vols. (Saragossa, 1668-70), 3:120.


45 Zurita, Anales de Aragon, 3:120-21.
settlement. However, these negotiations did prevent Aragon from giving aid to France when England attacked in October. From Perpignan, the English embassy followed the same route back to England, and they arrived in London on June 13, 1416.

As Henry was formulating his plans for his second invasion of France, he again hoped to have the princes of the Iberian peninsula on his side. As stated above, John Catryk was commissioned to negotiate for an alliance with the Aragonese at the Council of Constance. While representatives of Aragon had arrived at the council on October 15, 1416, Castilian ambassadors did not arrive until March 1417. Consequently in order to deal with them, the king had to send a separate embassy to Castile. For this mission, he selected John Stokes, who had performed so brilliantly for the English nation at Constance. On January 26, 1417, he along with two others were empowered to renew the treaty with Castile which had been prolonged to February 1417. Stokes' instructions were to ask the Queen Mother Catherine, who was now acting as regent, if she intended to continue to observe the agreements made by her predecessors.

47 Mirot, 61 (1900):29, no. 595, John Kemp's account.
48 Supra, p. 337.
If she refused, he was to try to coerce her into doing so. If he succeeded, then he was to encourage her to renounce all previous agreements with France. After these letters of procuration and instructions had been issued, the Privy Council authorized a prepayment to John Stokes of a pound per day for his journey, which was anticipated to take ninety-one days. About the end of February, Stokes sailed for Spain on the St. John, a vessel from Bayonne. From this port city, he travelled overland to the Castilian court. No records exist to indicate the outcome of his mission. When Henry launched his next invasion of Normandy in August 1417, the Castilians sided with France suggesting that he failed to secure their allegiance.

Although the first stage of John Kemp's diplomatic career extends from 1415 to 1420, the bulk of his ambassadorial commissions came between 1417 and 1420 when Henry was conquering Normandy and trying to consolidate his military conquests. Kemp was frequently employed in the diplomacy of these years because he had accompanied Henry to France and had received public offices that gave him the prestige

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50 Ibid., p. 419, Dec. 15, 1416, instructions. 
51 APC, 2:205, Feb. 15, 1417, minutes. 
needed in diplomatic circles. As Henry was about to launch
his invasion of France in the summer of 1417, Archbishop
Chichele appointed Kemp as his commissary general for the
king's lands in France. As such, Kemp could perform all
archiepiscopal functions in France. In addition, Kemp
was one of the seven clerics appointed to hear confessions
in the king's invading army.

By virtue of these appointments, Kemp accompanied
the king when his armies set sail for Normandy. Henry's
territorial conquests necessitated the appointment of a
chancellor for Normandy. In 1417, Kemp was selected to ful-
fil this position which he held until 1422. Then on
October 3, 1418, Henry appointed Kemp as keeper of the privy
seal, one of the three great officers of state, and he held
this office until February 25, 1421. More than function-
ing as rewards for diplomatic service, tenure in these
offices served as motivation for commissions to further am-
bassadorial duties.

With Kemp in his entourage, Henry marched inland
and forced the surrender of Caen on September 9. Faced with

53 Register of Henry Chichele, 4:55-56, July 20, 1417,
commission.

54 Ibid., 1:184, Nov. 6, 1417, commission.

55 Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of
the Close Rolls, Henry VI, 6 vols, (London, 1933-39), 1

56 Maurice Powicke and E. B. Fryde, ed. Handbook of
these English military successes, the French king wrote to Henry expressing his sincere desire to bring peace to the Christian commonwealth. 57 On October 1, 1417, the same day that Henry marched south to take lower Normandy, he also dispatched an embassy with orders to negotiate with French ambassadors for a treaty of peace or a truce. Among the six men appointed to the embassy was John Kemp. 58 Although the French embassy, under the direction of the archbishop of Rheims, was appointed the following day, the two embassies did not meet until November 28. By this date, the English embassy had been significantly altered. Of the original six ambassadors commissioned, only John Kemp and two others arrived at Berneville for the negotiations. The original embassy was further altered by the addition of another prominent clerical diplomat, Philip Morgan, who along with John Kemp was very influential in implementing Henry V's foreign policy. 59 The documents describing the diplomatic exchanges at Berneville explain why the embassies did not meet until November.

The archbishop of Rheims complained that he and his fellow ambassadors had been waiting for the English at Honfleur for six days. Due to the delay, their safe-conducts

57 Foedera, Holmes, 9:517-23, Nov. 28, 1417, narration of diplomatic events from Sept. to Nov. 1417.

58 Ibid., pp. 496-97, Oct. 1, 1417, commission.

were about to expire. Moreover when the French sent their heralds to King Henry to inquire about the delay, they were arrested and imprisoned. Aided by Kemp and the others, Philip Morgan responded to the French charges. He pleaded ignorance concerning the arrest of the heralds, but he added that if his king had detained these messengers, he had done so with good reason. Then he explained that the English embassy had proceeded no further than Cadomum because the French had failed to send safe-conducts with sufficient guarantees for its protection. If these diplomatic preliminaries could not be dealt with, how could they open negotiations with any hope of success. The archbishop retorted that the French had a sincere desire for peace and wished to prevent any further delay in the negotiations, but that his embassy had not been given power to grant the essential safe-conducts. To prove the veracity of his statement, he even showed Morgan and Kemp copies of his letters of procuration. The diplomatic narrative ceases at this point, and it may be assumed that the discussions stalemated on the preliminary issue of safe-conducts. Henry was probably not very concerned with the failure of the Berneville discussions because even as the two embassies were meeting, he was preparing to add to his victories with the capture of Falaise.

As news of Henry's success in conquering lower

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60 *Foedera*, Holmes, 9:517-23, Nov. 28, 1417, narration of the diplomatic events from Sept. to Nov. 1417.
Normandy spread, his chances of maintaining old allies and acquiring new ones increased. In March 1418, he placed John Stokes on an embassy which was to go to the town of Balon and treat with the ambassadors of Yoland, queen of Jerusalem and Sicily. Yoland was the mother of young Louis, the count of Anjou and Maine. Acting as regent for him, she had concluded a truce with Henry on November 16, 1417 which was to last until September 29, 1418. This truce had been broken on several occasions, and John Stokes and his two colleagues were to settle the disputes arising from its infractions and to make any further specific agreements which would maintain the truce.

Though Normandy had capitulated by April, Henry did not feel altogether secure in his victory. He no longer felt confident of Burgundy's allegiance, and in April, he appointed John Kemp and two others to promote Anglo-Burgundian friendship. Relations between England and Burgundy had been improving ever since May 1411 when John Catryk worked to extend the Anglo-Flemish trade truce for five years. In May 1416, this truce was extended again but

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61 Ibid., p. 550, Mar. 7, 1418, commission.
62 Ibid., p. 513, Nov. 16, 1417, truce.
63 Ibid., p. 550, Mar. 7, 1418, commission.
64 Ibid., p. 581, Apr. 28, 1418, commission.
65 Supra, p. 318.
but only for another year. 66 This friendship was further enhanced in October 1416, when the duke of Burgundy secretly recognized Henry's claim to the throne of France and promised to do homage to Henry as soon as the English conquered a considerable part of France. 67 Because of these secret agreements, the trade truce was not only prolonged in May 1417 until September 29, 1418, but was extended to include Boulogne and all of the duke's other possessions. 68

As in the past, Duke John hedged all bets, and as he was dealing with England, he was also joining forces with Queen Isabel, now regent for her ailing husband Charles VI. Together John and Isabel had taken up the defense of France against the Armagnac rebels and English invaders.

When hostilities broke out between English and Burgundian subjects, Henry sent John Kemp to solve these specific problems that might destroy his tenuous relations with the duke. 69 By May 5, he and two other envoys arrived at Verneuil, and there they worked to redress the infractions of the truce. 70 As a result of Kemp's labors, the Anglo-Burgundian alliance was maintained.

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66 Foedera, Holmes, 9:354, May 28, 1416, order to publish the prolongation.
67 Ibid., pp. 394-95, Oct. 2, 1416, commission and agreement.
68 Ibid., p. 454, May 14, 1417, confirmation of prolongation.
69 Ibid., p. 581, Apr. 28, 1418, commission.
70 Ibid., Apr. 28, 1418; order to the bailiff of Calais.
Armagnac and Burgundian Peace Proposals, 1418-19

Since his alliances had been secured, Henry attacked Rouen, but the city did not immediately capitulate. As a result, Henry was forced to entrench his army before Rouen and to conduct a lengthy siege which lasted into January 1419. During the siege, both the Armagnacs and the Burgundians tried to relieve the city by negotiating with the English. Both claimed to represent the crown, but in reality, each faction was motivated by its own personal interests. The Armagnacs and the Burgundians were willing to conclude peace treaties which would seriously injure the welfare of Charles VI and his heirs. Henry dealt with both sides so that he could obtain the most advantageous peace by playing one party off against the other. John Stokes and especially John Kemp skillfully aided in carrying out this policy of duplicity. In one embassy, they treated with the envoys of the Armagnacs and in the next with the envoys of the Burgundians.

On October 26, 1418, Henry commissioned a fourteen-man embassy to treat with the envoys of the dauphin and the Armagnac party. Archbishop Henry Chichele was designated as leader, and four other distinguished clerical diplomats, Henry Ware, Philip Morgan, John Kemp, and John Stokes, were included in the ranks of the embassy. They received general powers to treat with the dauphin "who it is said reigns in France" and to arrange a marriage between Henry and the
dauphin's sister Catherine.  

In addition to these powers, Henry gave the ambassadors very specific instructions as to what demands and counterdemands to make in response to predicted offers from the French embassy. Firstly they were to work for a treaty of peace based on recognition of England's right to the lands given her by the Treaty of Calais, the part of Normandy which she had conquered, as well as Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Flanders. Because the representatives of the dauphin would probably not agree to a peace treaty on these terms, they were then to work for a truce. During the armistice, a more substantial agreement could be concluded whereby Henry would give up his claim to the French throne in return for territorial concessions. Thirdly they were to try to obtain an Armagnac commitment to aid in the conquest of the rest of Normandy.

Although the fourteen-man embassy received their commissions and instructions on October 26, the negotiations did not open at Alençon until November 10. According to Richard Caudray's account of the discussions, only six of the appointed ambassadors were at Alençon on the opening day. Of the six, the only clerical ambassadors were John Stokes and Philip Morgan. Morgan appears to have been the English spokesman throughout the sessions which lasted from

November 10 to 22. In the sessions from November 10 to 13, the embassies agreed that discussions should be conducted in Latin rather than French. Representatives of the dauphin were willing to concede the lands granted to England in the Treaty of Calais.\textsuperscript{73} By November 14, the English embassy had probably grown in size to the originally designated fourteen, which means that Kemp, Chichele, and Ware were now present. On this date, the English received powers to promise that Henry would not conclude any alliances with the dauphin's archrival, the duke of Burgundy, before January 1, 1419.\textsuperscript{74}

From November 14 to 17, the French did concede to recognize Henry's conquests in Normandy and to give England part of Flanders when it was taken. Then the thorny issue of sovereignty arose which led to a four-day adjournment. By the time the sessions reconvened, the positions of both embassies had become so rigid that they felt it was necessary to reconsider commissions and the powers which they bestowed.\textsuperscript{75} Because of such inflexibility, the negotiations proceeded no further, and Kemp, Stokes, Chichele, Ware, Morgan, and the others returned to the royal camp at Rouen.

What could not be obtained from the dauphin and the

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., pp. 632-34, Richard Caudray's diary of negotiations.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p. 646, Nov. 14, 1418, commission.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., pp. 634-38, Richard Caudray's diary of negotiations.
Armagnacs might be obtained from Queen Isabel and the duke of Burgundy. Shortly after Kemp, Stokes, Chichele, Ware, Morgan, and the rest of their embassy arrived at Rouen, Henry dispatched them to Pont d'Arche where they were to treat with an embassy sent by the duke of Burgundy.\(^{76}\)

In the company of the Burgundian embassy was Cardinal Orsini,\(^{77}\) who, along with Cardinal Fillastre, had been sent by Martin V from the Council of Constance to restore peace to Christendom.\(^{78}\)

Kemp, Stokes, and the others opened negotiations with the Burgundians on December 2, and they met with them for fifteen days.\(^{79}\) The opening sessions bogged down in matters of procedure: the French wished to conduct the negotiations in their language while the English insisted on using Latin. Language became such a problem that on December 9 Cardinal Orsini travelled to Rouen to try to work out a settlement with King Henry which he, in turn, would instruct Kemp, Stokes, and the others to accept. The king finally issued instructions stating that he would be content to have the French speak Latin or French and his own ambassadors speak Latin or English, but he insisted that a Latin as well as a French copy should be made of all matters

\(^{76}\)Ibid., p. 655, Dec. 1, 1418, commission.

\(^{77}\)Monstrelet, Chronicles, 2:215.

\(^{78}\)Foedera, Holmes, 9:558, Mar. 18, 1418, papal commission.

\(^{79}\)Monstrelet, Chronicles, 2:215.
which had to be committed to writing.\textsuperscript{80} Taking advantage of his personal interview with the English kings, the cardinal asked Henry to consider a peace settlement based on a marriage to Princess Catherine.

In the remaining sessions at Pont d'Arche, the English envoys stated that they could make no agreements with the duke unless the dauphin was included because it was "unbecoming" for the duke to try to arrange a marriage for Catherine without her brother's consent. When the French embassy learned of this new position, they abruptly took their departure allowing Kemp, Stokes, Chichele, Ware, and Morgan to return to their king.\textsuperscript{81}

Probably on his return from Alençon and before his departure for Pont d'Arche, John Kemp accepted another commission from Henry which designated him as leader of his first embassy. Kemp and two others were to meet with the envoys of Yoland, queen of Jerusalem and Sicily, and her son, Louis of Anjou and Maine. The November 16, 1417, truce between these two parties had expired in September and had been allowed to lapse, but now Yoland wanted to renew it.\textsuperscript{82} Kemp's embassy renegotiated this truce but

\textsuperscript{80}Foedera, Holmes, 9:655-57, Dec. 4 and 5, 1418, letters from Henry to Cardinal Orsini; Dec. 9, 1418, letter from Cardinal Orsini.


\textsuperscript{82}Foedera, Holmes, 9:649, Nov. 24, 1418, commission.
for a period of only five months. 83

After Rouen capitulated, the dauphin again offered to conclude a peace settlement with Henry. Still hoping to obtain the most advantageous peace treaty by playing the Armagnacs off against the Burgundians, the king commissioned a five-man embassy with powers to respond to the dauphin's offer. On January 21, 1419, John Kemp, Henry Chichele, Henry Ware, and two others were given the power to treat for a final peace with the dauphin's embassy. 84 Kemp and the others met with the French embassy at the church of Black Friars in Rouen, and on February 12, they concluded an indenture which committed Henry and the dauphin to a personal meeting on March 26, somewhere between Evreux and Dreux. Six days before the scheduled meeting, their representatives were to meet and make the final arrangements for the royal interviews. 85 For the time being however, Kemp and his colleagues agreed to a limited truce extending from February 16 to the Octave of Easter and applying to the area between the Seine and the Loire. 86

Soon after Kemp completed his work with the ambassadors of the dauphin, Henry sent him on a mission to treat

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83 Ibid., p. 692, Feb. 16, 1418, order to publish the truce.

84 Ibid., p. 670, Jan. 21, 1419, commission.

85 Ibid., pp. 687-88, Feb. 12, 1419, indenture; 701, Feb. 28, 1419, ratification.

86 Ibid., pp. 692-94, Feb. 16, 1419, order to publish the truce.
with the envoys of the duke of Burgundy. He and three others received power to negotiate for a treaty of peace, and this assignment occupied Kemp from February 23 to April 7. Kemp met with the Burgundian ambassadors at Mantes. He and his colleagues indicated that peace was dependent on the tenure of Normandy and Guienne as defined in the Treaty of Calais, and that both were to be held in full sovereignty. On March 28, the English embassy received additional powers to conclude a truce. In their next session, the Burgundian ambassadors were more conciliatory on the territorial issue and proposed a peace settlement solidified by a marriage between Henry and Catherine.

Finally in the April 7 session at Vernon, the English and French envoys came to an agreement recognizing that their principals would have to meet personally in order to conclude a peace treaty and a marriage contract. On May 15, Henry, the king and queen of France, Princess Catherine, and the duke of Burgundy were to meet at Meulan to treat for a permanent peace and a marriage alliance. In the meantime, a truce was to be established in the lands between the Seine and the Somme and the Seine and Loire. Having concluded this agreement, Kemp and the others returned to the king's camp and reported the results of their work.

87 Ibid., p. 696, Feb. 23, 1419, commission.

88 Foedera, Holmes, 9:717-27, documents and narrative of the events leading up to the Apr. 7, 1418 treaty; Religieux de Saint-Denys, 6:325, 327.
In April 1419, John Stokes again accepted an assignment to add another member to Henry's circle of allies. On this occasion, Henry wished to employ Stokes to secure Navarre as an ally through a marriage alliance between Henry's brother, the duke of Gloucester, and Blanche, the daughter of Charles of Navarre and widow of the king of Sicily. On April 1, the king granted a license to his brother to appoint ambassadors to arrange the marriage, and then on April 3, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, empowered John Stokes and William Beauchamp to fulfil the assignment. By April 23, Stokes and Beauchamp had not yet reached the court of Navarre, and Charles wrote a letter to Henry explaining that he was anxiously anticipating their arrival. Apparently the English embassy failed in its mission for on November 5, 1419, Blanche married John, the second son of the king of Aragon.

While Stokes was involved in Navarre, John Kemp was occupied with the royal conference which was to be held at Meulan. He received four assignments that were tangential to the conference, but he did not formally participate in the May 29 to July 3 negotiations. On April 22, 1419, Kemp and seven others were ordered to go to Troyes where they were to meet with the king and queen of France as well as

89 Foedera, Holmes, 9:716, Apr. 1, 1419, license.
90 Ibid., p. 716, Apr. 3, 1419, commission.
91 Ibid., p. 741, Apr. 23, 1419, letter from Charles of Navarre to Henry V.
the duke of Burgundy. At Troyes, they were to make arrangements for the royal meeting at Meulan and to deter-
ing the amount of Catherine's dowry.92

Then on May 28, 1419, Kemp, Chichele, and three others were appointed to receive the oath of the king and queen of France and the duke of Burgundy that they would negotiate in good faith at Meulan as they had promised in the treaty of April 7. All three swore to respect the treaty and to refrain from all "trouble, lies, and evil."93

The conference at Meulan opened on May 29 and continued until July 3, but Kemp does not appear to have played a distinguished role. The Meulan conference is one of the few diplomatic events which is described at length in diplomatic documents and also by the chroniclers. Enguerrand Monstrelet, John Wavrin, Jean Juvenal des Ursins, Antonio Morosini, and Jean Le Fèvre vividly describe the partitioned palisade in which the negotiations were held, the ceremonies and feasts, and the day by day demands and counterdemands. But John Kemp's name does not appear in these chronicle narratives nor in the diplomatic documents.94


93Foedera, Holmes, 9:756, May 28, 1419, commission and oath.

On July 3, the French and Burgundians did not appear at the compound erected for the negotiations, and the English realized that the conference might be doomed to failure. Wishing to make one last attempt to save the conference, Henry selected John Kemp to lead a six-man embassy to the Franco-Burgundian stronghold at Pontoise. In his July 5 commission, he was ordered to reiterate that England hoped to conclude a peace treaty and a marriage contract between Henry and Catherine. He was also charged with the duty of demanding payment of the residue of King John the Good's ransom, a debt that had been allowed to go outstanding for fifty years. Kemp, however, had little chance to exercise his diplomatic skills because the duke of Burgundy refused to see him and his embassy. By this time, John of Burgundy has reached an agreement with the Armagnacs, and he no longer felt compelled to make peace with England.

To provide a setting conducive for the Meulan peace talks, a cease-fire had been established in the area between the Seine and the Somme and the Seine and the Loire. If this truce were to expire, however, neither the French, the Burgundians, nor the English would be able to return to Meulan to resume negotiations and save the conference. Henry sent John Kemp and five others to Pontoise on July 19, (Paris, 1898-1902), 2:158.

95 Foedera, Holmes, 9:774, July 5, 1419, commission.
96 Ibid., p. 789, Aug. 12, 1419, declaration of the king's conduct in claiming his rights in France.
1419, in order to prolong the armistice until July 29.\textsuperscript{97} This time, Kemp met with an embassy that represented not only the Burgundians but also the Armagnacs who had momentarily settled their differences. These negotiations failed to produce the desired prolongation. With the expiration of the truce, John Kemp realized that all his efforts to ensure the success of the Meulan conference had been in vain.\textsuperscript{98}

\textbf{Treaty of Troyes, 1419-20}

With the expiration of the truce, Henry took the offensive immediately and quickly forced the city of Pontoise to surrender. However to sustain this offensive against the combined Armagnac and Burgundian forces, he needed additional aid. As so frequently happened throughout the war, England turned to the German principalities for aid. On August 12, 1419, Henry appointed John Stokes as sole ambassador to the court of Louis, duke of Bavaria and Hainault, and count palatine of the Rhine.\textsuperscript{99} He gave Stokes two letters to deliver to Louis which thanked the duke for his previous aid against the French and requested further help in the campaign that he was about to launch.\textsuperscript{100}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{97}Ibid., p. 782, July 19, 1419, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{98}Titus Livius (pseud.), Vita Henrici Quinti, ed. Thomas Hearne (Oxford, 1716), p. 75, July 30, 1419, proclamation stating that the truce had expired.
\item \textsuperscript{99}Foedera, Holmes, 9:786, Aug. 12, 1419, commission.
\item \textsuperscript{100}Finke, Acta Concilii Constanciensis, 4:489-91,
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Shortly after John Stokes departed for Germany, the Burgundian-Armagnac reconciliation was shattered by the Armagnac murder of John, the duke of Burgundy. Henry immediately realized that the duke's death heightened his chances of concluding the peace treaty and marriage contract which he had failed to secure at Meulan. From September 1419 to April 1420, Henry repeatedly drew upon John Kemp's diplomatic talents to persuade Philip, John's son, to join forces with him.

On September 24, 1419, the king placed Kemp at the head of a seven-man embassy which was to go to Troyes to arrange for either a peace or a truce with Charles, Isabel, and Philip. Also while on this mission, he was to attempt to bring the count of St. Pol, governor of Paris, into an alliance. 101 When Kemp and his fellow ambassadors reached the Burgundian court, they learned that the duke had already dispatched an embassy to deal directly with Henry so they immediately returned to their principal. 102 Henry now had the advantage, and he informed the French embassy that he would conclude a peace treaty only if two conditions were met: firstly, Catherine had to marry him, and secondly, his title to the French crown had to be recognized. Due to Philip, duke of Burgundy's, desire to revenge his father's

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Aug. 12, 25, 1419, letters to Louis.

101 Foedera, Holmes, 9:797, Sept. 24, 1419, commission.

death, the Franco-Burgundian embassy had been empowered to express a desire to negotiate a peace treaty even on such harsh terms.

To solidify this tenuous agreement further, Henry commissioned John Kemp to lead a seven-man embassy to Arras in order to deal personally with Philip, who had been given permission to negotiate for France. On November 21, 1419, Kemp and his embassy received powers to treat for peace on the basis of a marriage contract with Catherine. Recognizing that such an agreement would necessitate a lengthy round of negotiations, the embassy was also given power to conclude a truce which would allow such discussions to transpire in an atmosphere of peace.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 813-16, Nov. 21, 1419, commissions.} By November 30, Kemp and his men had travelled overland from Mantes to Arras, where they met with Philip.\footnote{Monstrelet, \textit{Chronicles}, 2:260.} On December 2, Philip agreed to Henry's and Catherine's marriage, Henry's regency of France until Charles' death, and Henry's enthronement as king of France upon Charles' death.\footnote{\textit{Foedera}, Holmes, 9:816-18, Dec. 2, 1419, agreement.} The next day, on December 3, Kemp, whose elevation to the episcopacy had been in motion since the previous January, was consecrated bishop of Rochester at Arras.\footnote{Le Neve, \textit{Fasti}, Institute for Historical Research ed., 4:38.} By December 24, Bishop Kemp had rejoined the king,
who was now at Rouen, and who was entertaining another em-
bassy from the duke. He returned in time to receive a
specific commission to conclude a truce with this embassy.
On December 24, Kemp and Philip Morgan arranged the details
of a cease-fire, which was needed in order to resolve the
terms of a final peace treaty. They agreed that a period
of general truce would begin on December 24 and extend to
March 1, and that this truce would exist only between the
English, Burgundians, and the French who sided with
Burgundy, and not between the English and the French who
supported the dauphin.

On April 9, the terms of the treaty were outlined at
Troyes, and Charles and Isabel agreed to them and to a
personal meeting with Henry in order to ratify them.
As Henry was travelling to Troyes, he dispatched John Kemp
as leader of a seven-man embassy to precede him. Before
Henry's arrival at Troyes, Kemp's embassy was to receive
the oaths of the king and queen of France and the duke of
Burgundy, in which they were to agree to accept the treaty.
Also they were to make final arrangements for the royal
meeting. Neither the chronicles nor the documents nar-
ratating the events of the May 20 to 21 conference at Troyes,

107 *Foedera*, Holmes, 9:818-19, Dec. 21, 1419, commis-
sion.


109 Ibid., p. 877, Apr. 9, 1420, ratification.

110 Ibid., p. 890, Apr. 28, 1420, commission.
the publication of the truces, Henry's betrothal to Catherine, nor their marriage on June 2 mention John Kemp, because all of the real diplomatic work had been accomplished before the monarchs met in a personal interview, and as such, Kemp's diplomatic talents were not needed in these mere formalities. However in the four missions that he accepted from September 1419 to April 1420, he had contributed significantly to the final conclusion of the Treaty of Troyes.

Allies Needed to Take Southern France, 1420-22

After the conclusion of the Treaty of Troyes, Henry still had to establish his control over the southern part of France which remained in the dauphin's hands. To aid him while he was campaigning in the south, he wanted to retain a wide circle of allies, especially Brittany and the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore, Henry continued to employ the clerical diplomats John Stokes and John Kemp to accomplish these ends.

In July 1420, John Kemp received a commission to maintain the duke of Brittany as one of Henry's allies. The duke had deserted the dauphinist cause and had allied with the English. To counter this move, the dauphînists

\[\text{111 Rélignieux de Saint-Denys; 6:409-11; Monstrelet, 2:270-73; Le Fèvre, 1:278-84.}\]

\[\text{112 Foedera, Holmes, 9:551, Nov. 16, 1417, treaty; 613, Aug. 4, 1418; 663, Jan. 12, 1419, subsequent prolongations.}\]
conspired with Oliver of Blois, a descendent of the family which had challenged the Montfort claim to the dukedom of Brittany in the early years of the war. The Bretons prepared to fight, and one of the measures that they took was to petition the English for the release of Arthur of Brittany, count of Richmond and brother of the duke. He had been captured at the battle of Agincourt and had been imprisoned in England since 1415. 113

On July 12, 1420, Bishop Kemp, along with clerical diplomat Philip Morgan, was commissioned to treat at Corbeil with an embassy from Brittany. 114 By July 22, the English and Breton ambassadors had reached an agreement on the terms for Arthur's release. As soon as possible, he was to be freed and he would retain his freedom until September 29, 1422, provided that he did not make any alliances with the dauphin against England or the duke of Burgundy. 115 England fulfilled her promise, and in October, Arthur was escorted to Brittany by William Knight according to the terms that Kemp and Morgan had arranged. 116

Domestic matters necessitated Henry's return to England in January 1421 which forced him to postpone his

113 Morice, Histoire, 1:472-76.
114 Poedera, Holmes, 9:4, July 12, 1420, commission.
115 Ibid., pp. 8-13, July 22, 1420, treaty.
116 APC, 2:277, May 9, 1421, ordinance, memorandum of expenses.
campaign to take southern France. After his return, he witnessed the deterioration of relations with Brittany. Not only was the Anglo-Breton truce frequently violated by the Bretons on both land and sea, but the Bretons were negotiating again with the dauphin. In order to maintain the Breton treaty, Henry sent Stokes on two missions to Brittany in the early months of 1421. As leader of the embassy, he received letters or procuration on February 12, 1421 to go immediately to Brittany to settle disputes growing out of the numerous violations of the truce. After having met with the Bretons, he arrived back in England on April 7, only to be sent right back a month later for the same purpose.

In July 1421, Henry returned to the continent in order to continue his southern campaign. To expedite this plan, Henry arranged to send John Stokes on a mission to treat with the Emperor Sigismund. Stokes and Sir Walter de la Pole received powers to compel Sigismund into paying an outstanding debt or relinquishing the duchy of Luxembourg which he had advanced as security for his loan. Also they

117 Foedera, Holmes, 10:62, Feb. 12, 1421, commission.
118 Morice, Preuves, 2:1091, May 8, 1421, treaty of Sable between the dauphin and the duke of Brittany.
120 Mirot, 61 (1900):30, no. 600, John Stokes' account.
121 Foedera, Holmes, 10:115, May 21, 1421, commission.
were to try to force him to cede Dauphiné and Languedoc in the south. Although these areas had developed strong cultural ties with France, they were technically still Sigismund's lands. If Sigismund would cede them to England, Henry would have a power base in the south.

Stokes and his colleagues left London on July 22 just when Henry was sailing for France. In the negotiations with Sigismund, they obtained only an informal commitment that he would give Henry aid in his efforts for final conquest. From Sigismund's court, they proceeded to Baden, where they tried to obtain the ransom of Oliver of Blois, who could become a valuable tool in manipulating the duke of Brittany. From Baden, Stokes journeyed to France, where on November 30, he joined Henry who was now campaigning on the continent. Six months later, he left France for a fourteen-day journey to England and arrived in London on May 24, 1422. Despite Stokes' and Kemp's efforts to aid Henry diplomatically in his southern

122 Ibid., pp. 143-44, July 17, 1421, commission.
123 Mirot, 61 (1900):30, no. 601, John Stokes' account.
124 Foedera, Holmes, 10:163, Dec. 28, 1421, instructions to succeeding embassy, "the king is informed by the reporte of his ambassiatour, which he sent late unto him, that he desired to be required on the kings behalve of succurse."
125 Ibid., p. 145, July 17, 1421, commission.
126 Mirot, 61 (1900):30, no. 601, John Stokes' account.
127 Ibid., no. 605, John Stokes' account.
campaign, their king died before he could make any substantial territorial gains in the south.

As stated earlier, John Catryk played only a minor role in the diplomatic events immediately surrounding the invasion of France and the conclusion of the Treaty of Troyes. His involvement in the election of Martin V at the Council of Constance and then his residence at the papal court prevented him from doing so. However, he did receive four commissions from Henry that were peripheral to the events of 1417 to 1420, of which he was only able to fulfill three.

Bishop Catryk received the first of these four assignments from Henry in the spring of 1418. Not only did Henry wish to maintain his allies, but he also wanted to gain support from those within the territories that he captured, especially the ecclesiastical authorities. When he learned that the bishop of Bayeux, John Langret, would perform the acts of homage and fealty to him for his bishopric, he appointed John Catryk, Henry Beaufort and three other clerics to receive Langret's oath. 128 Henry chose them for this assignment because he thought they were at the Council of Constance as was John Langret. Actually Henry Beaufort had already departed for his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, so Catryk and the two other

128 Foedera, Holmes, 9:567, Apr. 1, 1418, commission.
clerics appointed received the oath at Constance. 129

After Catryk had established residence at the papal court, he received a second diplomatic assignment from Henry. In a letter to Henry dated February 5, 1419, he indicates that he performed further diplomatic services for the king, but the letter does not specifically explain the nature of his mission. On September 25, 1418, a messenger designated as "H" delivered a commission to him at Mantua, and sometime between September 25 and February 5, he had an audience with the pope regarding the letter. During the meeting, Martin gave him two letters which were to be dispatched to the king in the utmost secrecy. He told him that he held Henry in the highest regard and that he wished to be his "confidant." 130 Catryk took due precaution as warned, and he enclosed the papal letters in one to Archbishop Chichele so they would not fall into the hands of the French.

On two further occasions, Henry tried to utilize John Catryk's presence at the papal court to perform diplomatic services for him. In his continuous attempt to impose his control over the population of Normandy and especially the church, the king commissioned him as leader of two embassies which were to receive the oath of fealty from the

129 Morosini, Chroniques, 2:158.
130 Foedera, Holmes, 9:680-81, Feb. 5, 1419, letter, uses the word "secretarius." "Secretarius: officium et dignitas Aula Dalphinali, qui est a secretis." DuCange, 6 (S-Z):149.
Normans who were at the papal court. Bishop Catryk was able to fulfil the April 12, 1419 commission but did not the January 20, 1420 commission because he had died before he could receive it.

Catryk did not die as bishop of Coventry-Lichfield. When Edmund Stafford, incumbent of the diocese of Exeter died, Martin V translated Catryk to this vacant see. However, he did not have an opportunity even to receive the temporalities of his see before he died on December 28, 1419. He was buried at the Franciscan church of Santa Croce in Florence in the center of the nave under the dome.

As Bishop John Catryk slowly disappeared from the English diplomatic scene, John Kemp began to achieve prominence as a clerical diplomat. He received seventeen commissions in five years because of his prestige as chancellor of Normandy and keeper of the privy seal. However, the ecclesiastical benefices that he received during those years were rewards for diplomatic service to Henry V. In 1416, Archbishop Chichele secured his appointment as rector of Hawkhurst, Kent, and canon and prebendary of Wingham, Kent. Then he was collated to the archdeaconry of Durham in

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131 *Foedera*, Holmes, 9:730, Apr. 12, 1419, commission; 842, Jan. 11, 1420, commission.


133 *Register of Edmund Lacy*, p. xi.

134 *Register of Henry Chichele*, 1:144, Mar. 27, 1416,
October 1417, and to the prebend of Norton in the diocese of Durham, in April 1418.\textsuperscript{135} Despite these meager ecclesiastical appointments, the king was anxious to generously reward Kemp who had functioned as one of the major agents of his diplomatic policy. When Richard Young, bishop of Rochester, died, the monastic chapter elected Kemp as their bishop because the king had encouraged them to do so. His January election was quashed by the pope because provision to the see of Rochester had been formerly reserved to him. However on June 21, the pope yielded to royal pressure and provided Kemp to the bishopric to which he had been illegally elected.\textsuperscript{136} Kemp received his temporalities on September 9 and was consecrated at Rouen cathedral on December 3 by the bishops of Arras and Hebron.\textsuperscript{137}

Although Bishop Kemp essentially retired from diplomacy after his mission of July 20, 1420, Henry V did not forget the man who had worked so diligently to secure his Norman conquests. In February 1421, Henry pressured for his translation to the bishopric of Chichester, when it fell institution; 149, Oct. 2, 1416, institution.


\textsuperscript{136} CPL, 7 (1417-31):132-33, 11 Kal. July 1419, provision and letter to Gabriel, cardinal priest of St. Clement's.

\textsuperscript{137} Le Neve, Fasti, Institute for Historical Research
vacant, and the papacy concurred. 138 In August of the same year, Kemp received the temporalities of the wealthy see of Chichester. 139 He was not to enjoy them for long because when Richard Clifford died in August 1421, Henry saw an opportunity to have Kemp translated to the much more desirable see of London. The pope again agreed and issued the bull translating him to London on November 17, 1421. 140 Seven months later in June, shortly before Henry's death, Kemp received the temporalities of his prestigious see. 141

John Stokes, too, participated extensively in diplomacy throughout Henry V's reign, but unlike Catryk and Kemp, he did not receive promotions to any substantial royal or ecclesiastical offices. Although Stokes' service was extensive, he never distinguished himself on any of the missions, which discouraged his subsequent commissioning as an embassy leader or appointment to important non-diplomatic royal or clerical offices. Of the three clerical diplomats, John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp, Kemp was the most successful during the reign of Henry V in the terms of the

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number of commissions he received, the frequency of his designation as leader, and the number and value of his rewards.

John Stokes and John Kemp Serve
Henry VI, 1422-45

When Henry V died in August 1422, his son was less than a year old. Therefore, his uncle Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, was appointed protector for Henry VI's English lands and another uncle, John, duke of Bedford, was appointed administrator for his French lands. Despite these official appointments, real power rested in the hands of the members of the regency council. The council quickly split into two factions, one led by the duke of Gloucester and the other by Bishop Henry Beaufort. Although this factionalism existed, the council united in an effort to fulfil Henry V's goal of conquering the southern part of France which had remained under the dauphin's control. The council held on to this belief that England could accomplish this conquest until the dauphin, inspired by Joan of Arc, halted the English troops at Orleans and took the offensive.

By 1433, the English started to realize that Charles VII would be able to hold those areas which he has seized in Anglo-Burgundian France and Normandy. Within the council, this realization produced a division in sentiments over foreign policy. Bishop Beaufort and his supporters became increasingly convinced that England had to negotiate a
peace treaty in order to retain control over as much land as possible. The duke of Gloucester, however, maintained that England had to adhere to Henry V's policy. Consequently the war effort had to be increased to drive Charles' forces back, and southern France had to be taken. Beaufort was eventually able to convince Henry VI that a peace treaty would best serve England's interests.

Throughout the period from 1422 to 1445, as English armies fought the forces of Charles VII, John Stokes was dispatched on many embassies to retain the allegiance of those political units which had committed themselves to England's cause. In 1433, as Henry Beaufort reasserted his influence in the council, John Kemp was drafted again into diplomatic service. Between 1433 and 1445, he served on six embassies in which he labored to negotiate a peace treaty with the French. By 1445, a two-year truce had been arranged which was expected to lead to the conclusion of a final peace. This final peace was never arranged by Kemp, Stokes, or any other English diplomats because English military losses deprived them of any means with which to bargain with the French. By 1452, only Calais remained in England's hands, and the Hundred Years' War came to an end by conquest rather than by a diplomatic settlement.

The Campaign Against the Dauphin, 1422-33

From 1422 to 1433, Henry VI's minority council attempted to fulfill Henry V's plan of establishing a dual
monarchy in England and France. In order to transform this vision into a reality, the dauphin had to be driven out of southern France. Yet with the aid of Joan of Arc, the dauphin began campaigning north of the Loire, and English armies had difficulty holding the lands that Henry V had conquered. To facilitate their effort against the dauphin, the council had to neutralize Scotland which they accomplished through the conclusion of a separate peace treaty in March 1424. The minority council also took steps to maintain the friendship of the papacy, the emperor, the king of Aragon, and the duke of Brittany in this period that saw the reversal of English military fortunes. John Stokes participated in nine embassies that were dispatched to accomplish these ends, and as a result, he proved to be the most active clerical diplomat of the period from 1422 to 1433.

In December 1423, Stokes accepted an assignment to conclude arrangements for the release of James I of Scotland, who had been a prisoner in England for eighteen years. The council hoped to use his release to encourage the Scots to withdraw their troops from France and to enrich English coffers with his ransom.¹ A treaty for James' release was signed on September 10, 1423. According to its terms, James was to be freed in return for a ransom of forty thousand pounds to be paid in six yearly installments. Furthermore, he was to marry an English noblewoman in order to promote

¹ Ridpath, Border History, pp. 387-88.
friendship between England and Scotland.\textsuperscript{2} To make the final arrangements for James' release, an embassy was sent to England, and John Stokes, Philip Morgan, and five others met with this embassy when it arrived in the southern kingdom.\textsuperscript{3} Stokes and his colleagues worked with the Scottish embassy to adjust the schedule for payment of the ransom, and they selected the Scots who were to act as hostages during the six-year payment period.\textsuperscript{4} Sometime after his February 1423 mission, Stokes accepted another assignment which took him to the court of Emperor Sigismund.\textsuperscript{5}

Although the Scots had been a party to the Treaty of Troyes, England wished to conclude a separate peace agreement with them. These circumstances provided John Kemp with his sole commission in the years from 1422 to 1433. On February 14, 1424, Bishop Kemp, with career diplomat Bishop Thomas Langley and seven others, was appointed to treat for a general peace or a truce with Scottish envoys.\textsuperscript{6} On the same date, Kemp received instructions that he was to accompany James and his bride, Lady Joan Beaufort, to Durham where he was to oversee the receipt of the first installment of the ransom, the exchange of hostages, and the presentation

\textsuperscript{2}Froodora, Holmes, 10:299-300, Sept. 10, 1423, commission.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., p. 301, Dec. 3, 1423, commission.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., pp. 302-3, Dec. 4, 1423, commission.

\textsuperscript{5}Foreign Accounts Enrolled, E 364/58.

\textsuperscript{6}Rotuli Scotiae 2:246, Feb. 14, 1424, commission.
of diplomatic documents. Once these preliminaries had been dealt with, negotiations for a general peace or a long-term truce were to begin. Kemp and the others arrived at Durham on March 1, and by the twenty-eighth, had negotiated a seven-year truce in which both parties agreed to refrain from assisting each others' enemies. Back in London by May 15, Kemp appeared before the regency council and presented all the diplomatic documents, the commissions, the bonds, and the indentures of the Anglo-Scottish agreement. Not until 1433 was he again to be involved in any further diplomatic activities.

Kemp withdrew from diplomacy for two reasons: his extensive domestic responsibilities and his alienation from the duke of Gloucester. As a trusted servant of Henry VI's father, he had been appointed to the council that was to govern during the king's minority. However, he not only participated in this conciliar body that governed the king's English lands, but he also participated in the Grand Conseil of Rouen in May 1423 and 1425. As a member of this council, he aided the duke of Bedford in governing Normandy.

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8 Foedera, Holmes, 10:328, Mar. 28, 1424, truce.
10 APC, 3:157, Dec. 3, 1424, order to pay the Privy Council.
relations between the duke of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort worsened, Kemp managed somehow to secure public promotion despite his obvious allegiance to Beaufort. On March 16, 1426, he was appointed to the office of chancellor, a position that Beaufort had just vacated. 12

Not only did the duke of Gloucester have to contend with John Kemp, the chancellor, but also with Kemp, the archbishop of York. The council nominated Kemp to fill the seat left vacant when Martin V refused to accept the 1423 election of Philip Morgan. Although Morgan was a partisan of the duke of Gloucester, Humphrey accepted Kemp's translation. 13 From 1426 until 1433 when Beaufort reasserted his influence, Kemp was at the mercy of the duke of Gloucester, and the duke had no reason to employ the associate of so hated an enemy as Henry Beaufort in the embassies that he dispatched. In fact, Gloucester applied so much pressure to Kemp that he finally resigned the chancellorship in 1432. 14

During the years from 1424 to 1428, the whole scope of English diplomacy contracted because England was technically at peace with France, Scotland, and all their allies.

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12 Foedera, Holmes, 10:353, Mar. 16, 1426, appointment.
14 Foedera, Holmes, 10:500, Feb. 25, 1432, memorandum.
In the summer of 1428, several issues brought John Stokes back into diplomacy with a mission that took him away from England from August 15, 1428 to February 5, 1429. During these six months, he journeyed to the court of Pope Martin V and probably to those of Sigismund and Alfonso V of Aragon.¹⁵ Anticipating that his mission would take at least six months, the council issued a warrant ordering the Exchequer of Receipt to make a prepayment to Stokes at the rate established for a cleric of his rank.¹⁶

Although no commission exists to explain the purpose of Stokes' journey to Rome, it may be assumed that he was sent to the papal court to convince Martin V that he should not suspend Archbishop Henry Chichele nor place England under an interdict.¹⁷ Martin V had tried to coerce the council into repealing the Statutes of Provisors and Praemunire. Finding the secular authorities in England uncooperative, he began to pressure the clerical authorities, most notably Archbishop Chichele. When Chichele said that he was powerless to force the repeal, the pope threatened him with personal suspension and national interdict. Chichele pleaded with Parliament to prevent such papal retribution, and the Commons issued a petition asking the pope


¹⁶ APC, 3:300-1, July 5, 1428, warrant; 311, July 12, 1428, minutes.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 301, note 1.
to dismiss any proceedings that had been initiated against the archbishop.\textsuperscript{18} To communicate the Commons' petition to the pope, the council chose John Stokes and three others to make the journey to Rome.

Before Stokes and his colleagues had departed, they received two additional assignments. They were commissioned to negotiate an alliance both with King Alfonso V of Aragon and Sicily and with Emperor Sigismund. In the summer of 1428, England maintained control of the area between the Seine and the Loire, and the council chose to strike Orleans in order to make a pathway into southern dauphinist France.\textsuperscript{19} If Stokes and his embassy were successful, France would be encircled by England's allies when the siege began. England was now in a good position to secure Sigismund's allegiance. The emperor had launched another crusade against the Hussites in 1427, and the pope had already asked England to aid Sigismund in his mission against the Bohemian heretics.\textsuperscript{20} If Sigismund would ally with England, she would send troops to fight in the crusade. Whether the English embassy was successful in these assignments at the papal court or at the courts of Alfonso and Sigismund is not certain. However, the negotiations did consume six months of Stokes' time, and


\textsuperscript{19}Perroy, \textit{Hundred Years War}, p. 274.

\textsuperscript{20}APC, 3:295, May 10, 1428, minutes.
he did not return to England until February 5, 1429.21

After his return to England from this lengthy continental mission, John Stokes once again directed his attention to Scottish diplomacy. During the next four years, he journeyed to Scotland on five different occasions to deal with the Anglo-Scottish problems. In June of 1429, he received the first of these five commissions in which he was directed to preserve the truce which already existed between England and Scotland. Since James I had ascended the Scottish throne, he had been playing off England and France against one another. Despite the existence of the seven-year truce which John Kemp had helped to conclude, Scotland renewed its alliance with France by arranging for a royal marriage between the dauphin and James I's eldest daughter.22 England feared that Scotland would give aid to the dauphin, whose cause had been strengthened with the appearance of Joan of Arc in March 1429. In order to maintain good relations with Scotland, the council dispatched John Stokes and six others to go to Scotland and meet with James' embassy at Haudenstank. On June 15, 1429, the English embassy not only received powers to rectify any violations of the truce, but they were also empowered to treat for a general peace or an extension of the truce.23 For his anticipated journey to


22Ridpath, Border History, p. 393.

23Rotuli Scotiae, 2:266, June 15, 1429, commission.
the Anglo-Scottish border town, Stokes received a prepayment of ten pounds. 24

During the negotiations at Haudenstank, Stokes and the others were able only to settle the diplomatic problems that resulted from violations of the truce. They personally handled cases only where proof was readily available that goods had been seized on land or sea in violation of the truce. Then they arranged for future meetings where the wardens of the marches or special commissioners would handle the more difficult cases. Lastly they ordered the release of all prisoners who could prove, at that time, that they had been unlawfully incarcerated. 25

Seven months later, Stokes returned to Scotland with another embassy, which included in its ranks Bishop Thomas Langley. On January 24, 1430, Stokes and his colleagues were granted power to arrange for a prolongation of the truce which was due to expire in 1431 and to treat for a general peace supported by a royal marriage. 26 On February 16, 1430, the council further instructed the embassy to stress the connection between perpetual peace and a royal marriage. 27 By suggesting a marriage between Henry VI and James' daughter, Stokes' embassy would discourage the renewal

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25 Foedera, Holmes, 10:428-31, July 12, 1429, indenture.
26 Ibid., p. 447, Jan. 24, 1430, commission.
27 APC, 4:19-27, Feb. 16, 1430, instructions.
of the Franco-Scottish alliance.

Unfortunately Stokes, Langley, and their colleagues could not prevent the Franco-Scottish marriage. However, the council wished to prolong the truce even if a general peace and a royal marriage could not be arranged. Therefore, on November 20, 1430, a commission of eight, including Stokes and Langley, was directed to go to Edinburgh to treat for an extension of the truce. They succeeded in their more limited assignment, and on December 15, they concluded an agreement extending the truce from May 1, 1431 for another five years.

An entry in the Issue Rolls indicates that Stokes went to Scotland in the summer of 1431, and another in the Minutes of the Privy Council indicates that he returned there on an embassy in the summer of 1432. Neither party indicates the nature of Stokes' two final embassies to Scotland. After 1432, his talents were directed to other diplomatic problems, one of which was the deteriorating relations between England and Brittany.

In March 1433, he accepted a diplomatic assignment

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28 Rotuli Scotiae, 2:272, Nov. 20, 1430, commission; APC, 4:71, Nov. 8, 1430, prepayment to John Stokes.
29 Foedera, Holmes, 10:482, Dec. 15, 1430, truce.
30 Bain, Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland, 4:217, July 18, 1431, prepayment to John Stokes.
31 APC, 4:125, July 21, 1432, minutes.
ordering him to go to Brittany. In 1426, the duke of Brittany disregarded his commitment to the Treaty of Troyes and his personal alliance with the dukes of Burgundy and Bedford by giving aid to the dauphin. England was able to bring the Bretons into line by 1427; they once again agreed to accept the Treaty of Troyes, and they also signed a truce. ³² Despite this confirmation of allegiance to Henry by the duke of Brittany, the subjects of both countries frequently breached the truce. Consequently on March 24, 1433, a seven-man embassy, including Stokes and the distinguished clerical diplomat William Lyndwood, was dispatched to Brittany. They had orders to redress the many violations of the truce: the murders, imprisonments, captures of men, and the seizures and destruction of ships, goods, and merchandise. ³³ By 1433, however, the Treaty of Troyes had become a mere fiction because of Charles VII's victories. Not even talented diplomats like John Stokes could compel the signatories to adhere to a document that denied the shifting balance of power. As England began to see her former allies turn to Charles VII, she realized that she could not maintain her bellicose pretensions and that she had to negotiate a new treaty which would preserve the land that she still held.

³² Morice, Histoire, 1:502-3.

³³ Foedera, Holmes, 10:546, Mar. 24, 1433, commission.
Henry Beaufort's Peace Policy, 1433-45

Charles VII proved capable of maintaining the territories that he had captured from the English, and Bishop Beaufort's party began to reconsider England's position much to the contempt of the duke of Gloucester. Beaufort realized that England had to negotiate a new peace treaty in order to keep the lands that she still had. Confusion and discord arose when the peace party considered the terms on which they would be willing to negotiate a peace. Would they concede the title to the French throne? What land, if any, would they relinquish? Would they agree to do homage to Charles for lands held in France? Throughout the period from 1433 to 1445, Beaufort and the peace party answered these questions in a progressively conciliatory way.

As their position changed from 1433 to 1445, embassies were dispatched to inform the French of the latest terms which England would find acceptable as a basis for a peace treaty. Despite the participation of English delegations in such important conferences as those held at Arras in 1435 and Oye in 1439, only a two-year truce could be arranged by 1445. In the meantime, England was careful not to lose the support of her allies and dispatched many embassies to prevent any loss. Seeing that John Kemp had proved his allegiance to him long ago, Henry Beaufort wished to utilize his talents and loyalty in pursuit of his peace program. Consequently in 1433, John Kemp began the second phase of his diplomatic career which was to last
until 1445. John Stokes was also employed by Beaufort in the diplomacy of the period, but his talents were generally directed to maintaining the allegiance of the principalities and towns which lay to the east of France.

**Congress of Arras, 1433-35**

John Kemp began the second stage of his diplomatic career with a commission to the Council of Basel, whose members intended to work to end the Anglo-French conflict. Although Kemp never fulfilled his commission, he received two commissions in 1433 ordering him to negotiate toward the same end. Then in 1435, he served as leader of the English embassy dispatched to the international peace conference at Arras. This conference did not lead to the conclusion of an Anglo-French peace, but unfortunately for the English, it resulted in the desertion of the Burgundians from the English cause.

At the time that peace sentiments were growing in England, Pope Martin V convoked a general church council that was to be held at Basel. The council's goals were the eradication of the Hussite heresy and the restoration of peace and unity to Christendom. On December 1, 1432, England dispatched a four-man embassy to Basel. These men composed the advance party of a larger embassy, and they were sent ahead in order to participate in the proceedings against the Hussites. Four days before this commission was issued, John Kemp began the second stage of his diplomatic career with a commission to the Council of Basel, whose members intended to work to end the Anglo-French conflict. Although Kemp never fulfilled his commission, he received two commissions in 1433 ordering him to negotiate toward the same end. Then in 1435, he served as leader of the English embassy dispatched to the international peace conference at Arras. This conference did not lead to the conclusion of an Anglo-French peace, but unfortunately for the English, it resulted in the desertion of the Burgundians from the English cause.

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34Ibid., p. 529, Dec. 1, 1432, commission.
John Kemp had been granted a prepayment and letters of protection to go to the Council of Basel. Apparently though, he was not a member of the advance party and did not depart with them, because on February 21, 1433, he again received letters of safe-conduct to the council, and on April 1, 1433, he received letters of attorney for his forthcoming journey to Basel.

According to A.N.E.D. Schofield, Kemp and several other ambassadors delayed in England because the king's council wished to see how several other matters developed before their dispatch. Firstly the royal council did not wish to send Kemp and his party until the proceedings against the Hussites had been completed, and peace proceedings could begin. Also its members wished to see if the advance party could reverse the innovation of deputations and incorporation oaths, both of which tended to decrease the power and independence of the English embassy. Lastly they wished to see the outcome of the peace negotiations scheduled for spring 1433 before they dispatched Kemp to treat in a more hostile territory.
While waiting to go to the Council of Basel, Archbishop Kemp was ordered to participate in the peace negotiations that were to be held at Calais and London. As a member of the council, he went to Calais in April to negotiate with the French and took the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon with him. 38 He brought these prisoners, captured at the battle of Agincourt, to Calais in order to convince Charles VII's embassy that England sincerely desired peace. The archbishop unfortunately never had an opportunity to make his point because the French king did not dispatch an embassy to Calais. Because the French failed to appear, Kemp returned to England to see if he should now go to Basel. 39

Shortly after he returned to England, Hue de Lannoy and the treasurer of Boulennois, envoys from the duke of Burgundy, arrived in London with the intent of discussing, among other things, the possibility of an Anglo-French peace. Therefore, Kemp again postponed his trip to Basel. As a member of the council, he met with the Burgundian ambassadors other three accepted the recommendation, then the General Congregation voted on it. *The Council of Basel also departed from the practice of the Council of Constance by requiring incorporation oaths which obligated the entrant to work for the council's honor, to give good advice, not to disclose individual votes, not to leave the council, and to maintain and defend the council's degrees,* A.N.E.D. Schofield, "The First Delegation to the Council of Basel," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 12 (1961):16 ff.


39 Stevenson, *Wars of the English in France*, vol. 2,
on July 4, when they presented their credentials. Then on
July 5, Kemp and two other members of the council, Cardinal
Beaufort and the earl of Warwick, met with them in a more
private setting. The Burgundians presented a list of
proposals from their duke, related certain "secret" informa-
tion from the duke of Brittany, and conveyed the duke of
Savoy's promise to aid the Anglo-Burgundian cause.

The next day, Kemp met with them again and pre-
sented the council's reaction to Burgundy's proposals. 40
He said that England had made an extensive military com-
mitment to protecting Anglo-Burgundian France against the
foray of Charles' troops and expressed the hope that these
English troops would halt his advance. The English re-
jected Charles' proposal of a four-month truce because
Charles wished to use the cease-fire to regroup for another
attack. However, England would definitely consider a long
truce or a general peace. 41

Even though the negotiations held in the spring and
summer of 1433 did not produce any measurable progress
towards peace, Kemp did not depart for Basel. On July 23,
he refunded the money that he had received as prepayment for

40Ibid., pp. 221-30, July 18, 1433, letter from Huete de Lannoy and the treasurer of Boulennois to the duke of
Burgundy.

41Ibid., pp. 249-62, July 1433, answer to articles presented by the ambassadors of the duke of Burgundy.
his anticipated journey. He did not go to Basel because the chances of achieving peace at the council seemed less likely than achieving the same end closer to home. The Council of Basel, although dedicated to peace, failed to initiate peace discussions within its sessions. The council did, however, arrange for the convocation of a peace conference at Arras. Although Kemp was never to participate in the Council of Basel, the chronicles and diplomatic documents indicate that he attended and played a significant role in the international peace conference at Arras.

After a year of negotiations, England agreed to send an embassy to the Arras conference. On June 20, 1435, commissions were issued to a twenty-five-man embassy which bestowed powers to treat for peace and for a marriage alliance with the French. The English embassy was to represent Henry's dual monarchy; his ambassadors were to represent both his lands in France as well as in England. At the time that the procurations were issued, John Kemp's position in the embassy was not confirmed. According to the terms of the commission, he was to function as leader in the event that neither Cardinal Henry Beaufort nor Philip, duke

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42 APC, 4:168, July 23, 1433, minutes.
43 Foedera, Holmes, 10:611, June 20, 1435, commission. Joycelyn Dickinson, The Congress of Arras (Oxford, 1955), p. 30, argues, that a second letter of procuration was issued giving power to treat for a marriage alliance, and that this document is the procuration which Thomas Rymer misdated May 20, 1436 in Foedera, Holmes, 10:642.
of Burgundy, could or wished to do so. Also included in this embassy along with Kemp was William Sprever, a clerical diplomat who served on many embassies from 1430 to 1358.

According to Joycelyn Dickinson, author of The Congress of Arras, Kemp and his embassy received four sets of instructions between the time of their commission and the time that they walked out of the Arras conference on September 6. Two of these documents are extant, and two others can be inferred from them. The first set of instructions is in the Codex Sprever, which directed Kemp to deliver a commission to the duke of Burgundy appointing the duke as head of Henry VI's embassy to the Arras conference; to treat with Breton and imperial embassies; and to make a range of peace offers based on a marriage alliance. The second set of extant instructions directed the English embassy to agree to a peace treaty with a marriage alliance and a territorial settlement based on the status quo or concessions of English holdings north of the Loire. From these extant instructions, Dickinson infers that two other sets were issued, one dealing with the deliverance of the duke of Orleans and the other supplementing and modifying the instructions of July 31, 1435. Dickinson contends that throughout these

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44Dickinson, Congress of Arras, p. 32, quoting fo. 47 of the Codex Sprever, Bibliothèque National MS, latin 1448.
46Dickinson, Congress of Arras, pp. 32-34.
instructions and the action that was based on them is the demand that Henry should be recognized as king of France for whatever land he did hold in France. Moreover in all of the proposals set forth by Charles' representatives is the demand that Henry do homage for any lands held in France. Therefore, the crown of France was the main issue under debate at Arras, and both sides were as inflexible in their positions as they had been throughout the war. 47

Whether Archbishop Kemp realized the futility of his assignment when he was preparing for his journey cannot be determined. He was paid one quarter of his anticipated expenses 48 and was given permission to take gold, silver, and jewels up to the value of three thousand marks out of the country. 49 On July 2, he set out from London, and by the thirteenth, he had travelled as far as Canterbury. 50 Between Canterbury and Arras, he joined the other ambassadors except for Cardinal Beaufort. Travelling with the rest of the English embassy, he arrived at Arras on July 25. 51 Dickinson contends that Beaufort had not travelled to Arras

47 Ibid., p. 144.
48 Issue Rolls, E403/720.
49 APC, 4:302, June 30, 1435, minutes.
50 Dickinson, Congress of Arras, p. 218, no. 4, memorandum of the dates of departure and return of the English ambassadors to the Congress of Arras.
51 Schneider, Europäische Friedenskongress, p. 82, English protocol.
with the rest of the embassy because he had been instructed to remain at Calais. Here he was to stay until events proved so favorable that the French would come to Calais to complete the negotiations; only if matters proved very critical was he to go to Arras. 52

Although Beaufort had not come to Arras by the twenty-fifth, Kemp still was not certain whether he would have to assume leadership of the embassy or not. As instructed, he presented Henry's commission to the duke of Burgundy on the day when he arrived. Also he presented his credentials to Cardinal Albergati of Santa Croce and Cardinal Hugh Lusignan of Cyprus. Both men were to act as mediators, Albergati as a representative of the pope, and Lusignan as representative of the Council of Basel. 53 Each side was to present their demands to these two mediators who would communicate them to the opposing side. Only as the negotiations broke down in the latter part of August, did the two embassies negotiate directly. 54

The following day, July 26, Archbishop Kemp delivered a formal speech to those already assembled for the conference. He emotionally praised the papacy and the Council of Basel for having worked to convokve the peace conference at Arras. It was God's wish that peace should reign in the

52 Dickinson, Congress of Arras, p. 36.
53 Schneider, Europäische Friedenskongress, p. 82.
54 Dickinson, Congress of Arras, pp. 111, 78.
Christian commonwealth, and those who labored in the cause of earthly peace were indeed blessed. For the text of his speech, Kemp used a quotation from Romans, 10:15 which says "How beautiful are the feet of those spreading peace." Then he cited numerous references from the Old and New Testaments plus from the writings of St. Augustine, which further substantiated the sanctity of laboring in the cause of peace.  

Kemp visited the duke of Burgundy again on August 1 to see if he had decided whether he would accept his appointment or not, but Philip did not come to a decision until August 3, at which time he rejected the commission.  

Because of Philip's decision, leadership of the embassy fell to John Kemp, and he continued to serve as leader until August 23, 1435, when Cardinal Beaufort finally arrived at Arras. On August 8, Kemp, now the confirmed leader of the embassy, explained England's view on the role of the mediators in the negotiations. He claimed that the king of England recognized no superior but God in temporal matters and viewed the cardinals as solely mediators, not judges. Then on August 10, he enunciated the least conciliatory English peace program. Kemp said that Henry would agree to a peace treaty only if the lands seized from him in Anglo-Burgundian

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55 Urban Plancher, Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne, 4 vols. (Dijon, 1739-81), 4: cxlviii, no. 121.  
56 Schneider, Europäische Friedenskongress, pp. 84, 94.  
57 Ibid., p. 136.
France were restored, based on the assumption that he would hold these lands as king of France.\textsuperscript{58}

Two days later, John Kemp fell ill, and in the sessions on the twelfth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth, the bishop of Lisieux acted as spokesman, which indicates that Kemp did not attend.\textsuperscript{59} Then on August 23, Cardinal Beaufort arrived, and assuming that the directives of the June 20 procurations were still operative, Kemp now had to step aside and accept Beaufort as his superior.\textsuperscript{60}

Despite Beaufort's presence, Kemp seems to have continued to act as spokesman in the sessions with the papal mediators. On August 28, he reported to the cardinals that, on the previous day, the French had presented a peace proposal based on England's concession to the French crown, French recognition of England's control over Guienne and Normandy, and a royal marriage.\textsuperscript{61} Then on August 31, he presented the English refusal to this previous peace proposal. He said that England had no intention of renouncing sovereignty over lands which she already held in Guienne and Normandy. He thanked the cardinals for their efforts at mediation and announced the pending departure of the English embassy. Following this statement the cardinals attacked Kemp and

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., p. 37.

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., pp. 98, 104-8.

\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., p. 108, supra, pp. 391-92.

\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., p. 113.
the English embassy for their intransigence.62

Although the negotiations between the English and the French had completely broken down, Kemp remained at Arras to help Cardinal Beaufort, who had finally been ordered to go to Arras to salvage the Anglo-Burgundian alliance. On September 1, Kemp accompanied Cardinal Beaufort to a dinner given by the duke of Burgundy. The cardinal and the duke withdrew from Kemp's presence and spoke alone for one hour. The discussions between the two grew so heated that sweat poured from the cardinal's brow in large drops. Kemp, however, was not party to these discussions in which Beaufort failed to prevent Philip's defection.63 With the alienation of both the French and the Burgundians, Kemp, Beaufort, and the English embassy left Arras on September 6, 1435,64 leaving the representatives of Charles VII and Philip of Burgundy to conclude a final peace, which they achieved on September 21, 1435, with the signing of the Treaty of Arras.65

Maintenance of English Allies, 1434-36

While John Kemp was involved in negotiations to conclude a peace treaty with Charles VII, John Stokes was busy

62 Ibid., p. 148.
64 Le Fèvre, Chronique, 1:325.
65 Monstrelet, Chronicles, 3:122-40.
with the diplomatic relations between England and the principalities to the east of France. From 1434 to 1436, Stokes received five commissions in which he was empowered to negotiate with Sigismund and Louis, duke of Bavaria, as well as representatives of the towns of Flanders and the Hanse. The circumstances that necessitated his five missions were indirectly related to French diplomacy. As Charles' military success continued, the princes of Europe who had allied with England began to question the desirability of such commitments.

On July 3, 1434, John Stokes received a prepayment for a mission that he was to undertake as the sole ambassador to the court of Emperor Sigismund.66 Ten days later, he left London for Germany, but the purpose of his departure remains uncertain.67 In the spring of 1434, Sigismund had made a surprising volte face and had negotiated an alliance with Charles in which he agreed to declare war on the duke of Burgundy.68 Possibly Stokes, who had negotiated with the emperor and his envoys so frequently, was sent to the imperial court to dissuade Sigismund from fulfilling his commitment to Charles VII and from attacking England's ally, Burgundy. As the purpose of his mission remains unclear so

66 APC, 4:265.
67 Mirot, 61 (1900):34, no. 629, John Stokes' account.
68 Joseph Toussaint, Les relations diplomatiques de Philippe le Bon avec le Concile de Bale (Louvain, 1942), p. 112.
do the results, but on November 7, 1434, Stokes was back in London. 

Three months later on February 14, 1435, he received three commissions which empowered him to treat with Flanders, the Hanseatic League, and Louis, duke of Bavaria and count Palatine. In two very active months, Stokes journeyed to Calais, Bruges, and Bavaria in order to handle his diplomatic assignments. Although Stokes received his commissions on February 14, he, Stephen Wilton, another prominent clerical diplomat, and their colleagues did not set out for Calais until March 21. From Calais, they journeyed to Bruges where they had to deal with the Flemish and the Hansards about economic problems.

At this time, harmonious trade relations between England and Flanders had degenerated due to regulatory legislation which England had imposed on the Staple in 1429. These regulations fixed the price of wool, prohibited credit transactions, and forced the members of the Staple to pool their capital. The Flemish complained that these statutes had increased prices, slowed the import of wool, and decreased its quality. Now after several requests that these ordinances be withdrawn or modified, Stokes and his colleagues were sent to investigate the Flemish objections and

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69 Mirot, 61 (1900):34, no. 629, John Stokes' account.  
70 Foedera, Holmes, 10:604-5, Feb. 14, 1435, commissions.  
to devise a mutually acceptable modification of the English statutes. Yet, despite the efforts of the English embassy they did not reach a settlement in 1435.

The 1429 Staple regulation not only angered the Flemish but also the Hansards. The increased prices that the Flemish weavers paid for English wool were passed on to the Hanseatic middlemen, who bought Flemish cloth to resell along the Baltic and in the German, Polish, and Russian hinterland. In addition to this complaint against the English, the Hanseatic League objected to England's efforts to enhance her trading position in the Baltic. The English wanted admission to the Livonian and west Russian markets, fiscal exemptions equivalent to those which the Hansards claimed in England, and permission to have a factor at Danzig. When the Hanse merchants of the Steelyard were required to pay additional duties, the Hanse, with the support of the Grand Master of Prussia, threatened to expel the English merchants from Prussia.

With relations so strained, the Hanse sent an embassy to England in the summer of 1434. Failing to achieve anything in England, the Hanseatic embassy adjourned the negotiations and retired to Flanders. After meeting with the Flemish at Bruges, John Stokes'
embassy then met with the Hanseatic embassy. Although they tried to deal with these problems, they failed to produce any material results toward reconciliation. Because of this failure, relations between England and the Hanseatic League deteriorated even further. In the spring of 1435, the Hanse ordered their merchants to leave England, warned them to stay out of English waters, and urged its member towns to expel English merchants. 73

Since the negotiations at Bruges proved abortive, Stokes and his embassy journeyed up the Rhine to Heidelberg. There they were to deliver one thousand marks to Louis, duke of Bavaria and count of the Palatinate, which the Privy Council had authorized on February 8, 1435, as payment of his annual pension. 74 The king's father, Henry V, had granted the duke such an annual pension in December 1420 in return for military aid, 75 and this obligation was passed on to Henry VI. 76 Having completed the third part of the assignment, John Stokes and the others travelled back to England, arriving in London on May 23. 77

74 APC, 4:294, Feb. 8, 1435, minutes.
75 Foedera, Holmes, 10:95, Apr. 3, 1421, warrant for payment describes terms of agreement.
77 Mirot, 61 (1900):35, no. 631, Stephen Wilton's account.
Shortly after John Stokes returned from Heidelberg, the English embassy, under the leadership of John Kemp, departed for the Congress of Arras. England realized very clearly that Kemp might not be able to negotiate a peace treaty with France, and that Beaufort would fail to maintain the Anglo-Burgundian alliance. Consequently England prepared for the possibility that both Kemp and Beaufort would fail. Embassies were dispatched to those principalities east of the duchy of Burgundy for the purpose of rallying as much English support as possible before the final break came.\(^\text{78}\) In order to earn the support of Louis of Bavaria, John Stokes was again given orders to go to Heidelberg. Stokes was to try to accomplish this end by promising to pay part of the arrears of Louis' pension.\(^\text{79}\) He reached Heidelberg on October 21, and here he negotiated an agreement with Louis that a payment of 1,200 marks would be made to him by Easter at either Bruges or Calais.\(^\text{80}\)

After John Stokes returned to England from Heidelberg, he was dispatched on a mission resulting from the reconciliation between Charles VII and Philip of Burgundy. England feared that Philip would prevent Flanders from buying English wool. England's wool industry was

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\(^\text{78}\) Marie-Rose Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre: relations politiques et économiques entre les Pays-Bas Bourguignons et l'Angleterre, 1435-67 (Brussels, 1966), p. 73.

\(^\text{79}\) Foedera, Holmes, 10:622, Aug. 15, 1435, commission.

\(^\text{80}\) Ibid., pp. 634-35, Mar. 1, 1436, letter to Louis.
already in bad straits because of the Hanseatic League's embargo, so she could not risk losing two buyers. Consequently England decided to try once again to settle her dispute with the League.\(^{81}\) On December 17, 1435, John Stokes and four others were sent to Bruges to meet with the representatives of the Hanse and the Grand Master of Prussia.\(^{82}\) The negotiations dragged on until January 13, 1436, with no result, notwithstanding the good intentions of the king.

In the year following this round of Anglo-Hanse discussions, the league itself became more conciliatory because the embargo against the English could not be enforced. Many of the member towns continued to trade with England despite the objections of the very influential Hanse town of Danzig. On October 26, 1436, safe-conducts were issued to the Hanseatic embassy at Bruges to come to England and again work for a reconciliation.\(^{83}\) Then on November 6, 1436, a six-man embassy was appointed to treat with the Hansards when they arrived in England. Included in this embassy were the clerical diplomats John Stokes, William Lyndwood, and William Sprever.\(^{84}\)

In the meantime, Cardinal Beaufort lent his great prestige and power to the pending negotiations. In the

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81 Thielemans, Bourgogne et Anglet, p. 74.
82 Foedera, Holmes, 10:627, Dec. 17, 1435, commission.
83 Ibid., p. 656, Oct. 26, 1436, safe-conducts.
84 Ibid., p. 657, Nov. 6, 1436, commission.
presence of the council, he attacked the merchants' demand
to abolish all Hanseatic privileges in England, saying:

give up these new claims and do not force
this kingdom into a new war with countries
and towns without which we cannot get along,
and with which our merchants must keep up
relations in order to make profit.

With such support in England and the conciliatory attitude of
the Hanse, Stokes and the other English representatives were
able to restore harmonious relations with the League in a
treaty signed on March 22, 1437. According to the terms of
the treaty, the ancient rights of both parties were restored.
An innovative clause provided that both English and
Hanseatic merchants could choose to have disputes settled
either through the formality of a law suit or by two judges
appointed by authorities. After the conclusion of this
treaty with the Hanseatic League, John Stokes was then
assigned to a wider variety of diplomatic missions. His
commissions directed him to deal with French affairs as well
as those of the countries to the east of France.

Conference at Oye, 1438-39

After the Congress at Arras, John Kemp did not
undertake another mission until 1438. During these years,

85 Chronik des Franciscaner Lesemeisters Detmar, ed.
Ferdinand Grautoff, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1830), 2:75 "Ghevet
over de nyen vunde, unde maket unsem ryke neu nyen orleghe
myt Landen under steden, der wy nicht entberen konen und
dar unse koep man van weghen verkeren moet."

86 Foedera, Holmes, 10:666-67, June 7, 1437, confirma-
tion of the treaty.
the French, with Burgundian aid, had made substantial military progress. Angry over the Burgundian defection in 1435, England prevented its merchants from trading with Philip's Flemish territories. As in the past, only a short time expired before the Flemish felt the repercussions of the English embargo and complained to the duke of Burgundy about their financial losses. By 1438, the Flemish complaints escalated into threats, and Isabelle, duchess of Burgundy, approached the English about the possibility of a commercial treaty with Flanders.

In response to these overtures, Henry assembled a six-man embassy in which the clerical diplomats John Kemp, Stephen Wilton, and William Sprever participated. Kemp, the leader, directed the rest of the embassy to depart for Calais on November 20. Enroute Kemp's embassy received powers to treat with the duchess of Burgundy for the restoration of mercantile intercourse with Flanders. Somewhere between Calais and Gravelines, they met not only with Isabelle but also with representatives of Charles VII.

C. T. Allmand contends that the presence of French envoys

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87 Ibid., pp. 654-55, Sept. 8, 1436, royal prohibition.
88 Varenburg, Relations diplomatiques entre Flandre et Angleterre, p. 517.
89 Mirot, 61 (1900):36, no. 644, John Kemp's account.
90 Foedera, Holmes, 10:713, Nov. 23, 1438, commission.
91 Ibid., pp. 718-19, Mar. 4, 1439, Henry VI's letter relating the events.
proves that Kemp's embassy was not only negotiating for an Anglo-Flemish commercial alliance but also discussing the possibility of an Anglo-French settlement. 92 Although no agreement was reached in the November meeting, the ambassadors of England, France, and Burgundy agreed on January 31, 1439 that these same issues should be discussed at a more formal meeting at Calais or Cherbourg. The three parties also agreed that the English should bring the duke of Orleans to this meeting to convince the French and the Burgundians of their sincere desire for peace. Having made these plans, Kemp and the others returned to London on February 26, 1439. 93

In May when preparations were being made for the conference, John Kemp was chosen to lead the English embassy in the negotiations to be held at Oye, between Calais and Gravelines. On May 23, he, Stephen Wilton, William Sprever, and twenty-one others, representing Henry's lands both in England and France, were empowered to treat with Charles of Valois for the return of "what he holds contrary to God and justice." 94 In addition, Kemp, Wilton, Sprever, and five other ambassadors received power to treat with the duchess of Burgundy about a treaty to re-establish free


93 Mirot, 61 (1900):36, no. 644, John Kemp's account.

94 APC, 5:335, Thomas Beckyngton's journal.
mercantile intercourse between England and Flanders.\(^9^5\)

Two days later, a commission was issued to Cardinal Henry Beaufort which gave him power to negotiate with the French ambassadors concerning the title of the king of France.\(^9^6\) Allmand sees this commission as a very vague grant of powers which gave Beaufort much more maneuverability than Kemp and the men under his direction, and which consequently enhanced his position far beyond Kemp's.\(^9^7\) Beaufort's power was further enhanced by his designation as a mediator along with the duchess of Burgundy. According to these plans, Kemp would present English demands to Beaufort and the duchess, and they in turn would communicate them to the French.\(^9^8\) Allmand concludes, therefore, that Beaufort was the most influential person in the embassy despite Kemp's appointment as leader.

The negotiations held at Oye in the summer of 1437 are very well documented. Thomas Beckyngton, who was also a member of the English embassy, kept a daily journal of the negotiations, and Allmand has recently discovered the French protocol which contains a daily account of events from the French point of view.\(^9^9\) John Kemp's name appears

\(^{9^5}\) _Foedera_, Holmes, 10:730, May 23, 1439, commission.

\(^{9^6}\) Ibid., p. 732, May 25, 1439, commission.


\(^{9^8}\) Ibid., pp. 12-13.

\(^{9^9}\) Ibid., pp. 3-5, the original MS of the French protocol is found in the Archivo General de Simancas, Spain,
frequently throughout these accounts indicating that he was an active participant despite Beaufort's commission. Moreover in the days from July 6 to 16 and from September 9 to 28, Kemp was a far more active participant than Cardinal Beaufort.

On June 26, John Kemp commenced his mission by joining with the other ambassadors at Dover, where they secured passage on a ship bound for Calais. Arriving on the same day, they had to wait until June 28 for the arrival of their French counterparts. When the French did arrive, Kemp entertained them with a lavish dinner at his hospice in Calais. He hoped to start the discussions at Oye on July 6, but he failed to achieve this goal due to the French objections to the wording of the English commissions. The French embassy objected to the designation of their king as "Charles of Valois" rather than "King Charles of France." Furthermore they protested that further meetings would be futile if Henry would not consider renouncing the French crown. Kemp rode back to Calais and informed Cardinal Beaufort of these hindrances to the negotiations, and the Cardinal amended the commissions by altering their wording.

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100 APC, 5:335, Beckyngton's journal.
101 Ibid., p. 337.
102 Ibid., pp. 340-44.
When the first session actually opened on July 10, Kemp presented a speech in elegant Latin. Hoping to use this opportunity to present England's least conciliatory position, the archbishop quoted from the revelations of St. Brigit in which Christ said "if the kings of England desire peace, I shall give it to them." He went on to explain that peace and justice were inextricably linked since peace could only come when justice had been achieved. He defined justice as the recognition of Henry's claim to the crown of France in addition to all French lands. The French countered by attacking the writings of St. Brigit, stating that they had not been sanctioned by the Church. They asserted that Charles was the rightful king of France and that Henry had to do homage for any French lands that he held. In a more conciliatory spirit, Kemp concluded that the king of England would consider relinquishing some lands beyond the Loire to Charles. 103 From this date on, Kemp negotiated with the French through the duchess of Burgundy and Cardinal Beaufort, who were to serve as mediators. 104

As Beaufort moved into prominence at Oye, Kemp handled some auxiliary matters at Calais. An embassy had arrived on July 11 from the Council of Basel, which offered to mediate in the name of the council as Cardinal Hugh Lusignan of Cyprus had done at the Congress of Arras. On

103 Ibid., pp. 352-53.
104 Ibid., pp. 373, 375.
July 16, Kemp responded to their offer stating that the English preferred to maintain the procedure that had already been established. He graciously thanked them for their offer of help, but he then affronted them by claiming that the Congress of Arras had failed to produce an Anglo-French peace because of papal-conciliar mediation.\textsuperscript{105}

Back at Oye, negotiations had stalemated on the duchess of Burgundy's proposal of a lengthy truce, instead of a peace. According to the terms of the proposed truce, England could keep Guienne and Normandy, and both sides would ignore the issue of sovereignty and the title to the crown of France. Needing new instructions to deal with this proposal, Beaufort ordered Kemp and five others to return to England and seek an audience with the council, and on August 5, Kemp and his colleagues sailed from Calais to Dover.\textsuperscript{106} Beckyngton's journal, however, does not cover Kemp's work in London because Beckyngton remained at Calais. A year later, the duke of Gloucester described Kemp's appearance before the council in a letter where he brutally attacked Kemp and his patron Beaufort for their efforts in the cause of peace. The warhawk, Gloucester, charged that Kemp requested that Henry lay aside his claim to the crown of France.\textsuperscript{107} Due to Gloucester's presence at the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[105] Ibid., pp. 364-65.
\item[106] Ibid., p. 377.
\item[107] Stevenson, Wars of the English in France, vol. 2, part 2, p. 446, 1440, duke of Gloucester's protest against
\end{footnotes}
council and Beaufort's absence, Kemp received instructions indicating that Henry would not give up his claims to the throne of France, nor do homage for the lands he held in France. 108

With these inflexible instructions, Kemp sailed from Dover to Calais on September 9. 109 The English did not even have an opportunity to make use of these directives because the French had left Gravelines on July 29. On September 11, Kemp and the English embassy went to Oye for the next session, but the French did not appear. At the site for the meetings, Kemp read a prepared condemnation of the French for their failure to appear. 110 The duchess of Burgundy had not left, however, and from September 19 to 28, Kemp conducted daily negotiations with the Burgundians in order to restore commercial relations with Flanders. 111 Finally on September 28, 1439, he concluded a treaty with the Burgundians guaranteeing peaceful commercial intercourse between England and Flanders for three years. 112 The day after the treaty was signed, Kemp, Beaufort, and the other envoys made provisions for their passage back to Dover, but the liberation of the duke of Orleans.

108 APC, 5:388-95.
109 Ibid., p. 388.
110 Ibid., pp. 95-96.
111 Ibid., pp. 400-1.
112 Foedera, Holmes, 10:376, Sept. 28, 1439, treaty.
rain and high winds kept them at Calais until October 2. Despite their three-day wait, they encountered rough seas when they sailed and had to land at Sandwich rather than Dover. Kemp and Beaufort journeyed back to London via Canterbury, where they spent three days. On October 7, they reached London, and two days later, they dined with the king. Then on October 10, Kemp rather than Beaufort appeared before the council and presented the details of the negotiations.113

Two months later on December 18, 1439, Pope Eugenius IV made Kemp a cardinal priest of Santa Balbina. Eugenius wanted to honor Kemp with elevation to the College of Cardinals because of the Englishman's efforts to end the conflict that had plagued Christendom for over one hundred years. King Henry, the pacifist, found such an appointment an acceptable honor for the man who had labored diligently for peace at Arras and Oye.114

The Anglo-French Rapproachment, 1439-45

Though an Anglo-French peace treaty had not been concluded at Oye in 1439, Henry Beaufort continued to encourage King Henry to negotiate with the French and the Burgundians but on more conciliatory terms. His efforts resulted in the release of the duke of Orleans; the

113 APc, 5:405-7, Beckytegent's journal.
114 Foedera, Holmes, 10:758, Feb. 4, 1440, royal license to receive the cardinalate.
conclusion of a truce which was to be used to negotiate a final peace; and the inclusion of the Burgundian provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland in the terms of the Anglo-Flemish commercial treaty. Beaufort was aided in his efforts by John Stokes and John Kemp, who were approaching the end of their diplomatic careers.

The mercantile treaty which Kemp helped to conclude in September 1439 did not include the Burgundian subjects of Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland within its terms. These three provinces were also closely tied to England through their commerce, and they wished to clarify their status with England. On December 8, 1439, John Stokes, the embassy leader, received powers to settle claims made by the merchants of Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland. In addition, he further received power to make any agreement that would facilitate trade with these three Burgundian provinces.115 With three Merchant Adventurers to aid him, Stokes departed for The Hague on December 29, 1439, and did not return to England until May 3, 1440.116 Under Stokes' direction the English embassy negotiated at The Hague during January and February 1440, and they dealt with the claims of the people of Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland as the duke of Burgundy had requested.

Finally in April, an agreement was reached which

115 Ibid., pp. 739-40, Dec. 8, 1439, commission.
116 Mirot, 60 (1900):37, no. 654, John Stokes' account.
would facilitate the settlement of claims in the future. According to this plan, embassies from England would present their countrymen's claims before the council of Holland, and representatives from Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland would do the same before the council in England. Moreover, money due to the English would be placed in a depository at the Council of Holland. As claims due to nationals were paid, money due to English claimants would be dispersed from the depository.\textsuperscript{117} In accordance with the plan, John Stokes, William Sprever, and William Lyndwood were appointed on July 14, 1441, to go to The Hague to present the claims of English subjects that had developed within the year.\textsuperscript{118}

In the late autumn of 1440, John Stokes turned his attentions to French diplomacy for the last time. According to an entry in the Foreign Accounts Enrolled, he was involved in the embassy commissioned to accompany the duke of Orleans back to France upon his release.\textsuperscript{119} One of the minor issues of debate at the conferences of Arras and Oye had been the liberation of the duke of Orleans, one of the prisoners taken at Agincourt who was still in captivity. Despite the objections of the duke of Gloucester, Beaufort and those committed to peace with France effected an

\begin{thebibliography}{119}
\textsuperscript{117}Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre, p. 139.
\textsuperscript{118}Foedera, Holmes, 10:848, July 14, 1441, commission.
\textsuperscript{119}Stevenson,Wars of the English in France, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 460-62, account of the expenses of the duke of Orleans.
\end{thebibliography}
agreement on July 2, 1440, providing for the duke's release. According to the terms, the duke had to pay a ransom of fifty thousand marks, twenty thousand of which were to be delivered at the time of his release. In addition, he was obligated to labor in the cause of peace, and if he failed to achieve this end, he was to be returned to captivity.\textsuperscript{120}

When the twenty thousand marks were delivered in November, the duke was released,\textsuperscript{121} and a seven-man embassy was appointed to accompany the duke, to receive his second oath to the July 2 accord, and to arrange for another peace conference in the marches of Calais. The names of clerical diplomats Stephen Wilton and William Sprever appear in these commissions though John Stokes' does not.\textsuperscript{122} However, the Foreign Accounts Enrolled indicate that Stokes left London on November 5 with the embassy for the purpose of accompanying the duke to Calais. Five months later on April 2, 1441, he returned to London which suggests that he possibly fulfilled some additional assignment during his lengthy absence from the English court.\textsuperscript{123}

After the conference at Oye, Archbishop Kemp did not

\textsuperscript{120}Foedera, Holmes, 10:776-86, July 2, 1440, English and French indentures.

\textsuperscript{121}Ibid., pp. 819, 821, Nov. 3, 1440, receipt and indenture.

\textsuperscript{122}Ibid., pp. 826-27, Nov. 3, 1440, confirmation.

\textsuperscript{123}Stevenson, Wars of the English in France, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 460-62, John Stokes' account.
receive another diplomatic commission until 1445. His July 20, 1445, commission was his last diplomatic assignment, and it did not even require him to leave England. As the forces of Charles VII were increasingly successful in seizing Henry's French lands, Beaufort and his party acquired greater support for their peace program. In May 1444, arrangements were made for the marriage of Henry VI to Margaret of Anjou, Charles VII's niece. Moreover, a two-year truce extending to April 1, 1446, was concluded in order to arrange for a lasting peace settlement.\footnote{Foedera, Holmes, 11:59, June 27, 1444, confirmation.} On July 2, 1445, two months after the marriage ceremony had been performed, a French embassy arrived in England to conclude a final peace treaty.\footnote{Stevenson, Wars of the English in France, vol. 1, pp. 89-159, French embassy's journal.}

Due to the preservation of the French embassy's journal, the details of John Kemp's participation can be discerned, as in the case of his diplomatic efforts at Arras and Oye. Kemp, now a cardinal as well as archbishop of York, dealt with the French as Henry's spokesman and as his ambassador. On July 15 and 16, Henry, attended by Cardinal Kemp and several other members of the council, received the French ambassadors. Charles' envoys presented their credentials and greeted Henry in French. Kemp took charge of examining their credentials and then welcomed them.
in Latin. After these formalities had been concluded, Henry appointed Kemp, the earl of Suffolk, the duke of Buckingham, and William Bouteiller as his representatives in the actual negotiating sessions.

Three days later, the French met with the English embassy in the refectory of the Jacobin's house. Acting as spokesman for the embassy, Kemp explained that Henry would agree to cease campaigning in return for Normandy and Guienne. He stated further that these territories had to be held in full sovereignty, but he did not mention the title to the French throne. The French said that their king would agree to cede only Guienne, Quérain, Périgord, Calais, and Guînes, but he would require homage for them from Henry.

On the next day, Kemp entertained the French embassy at a splendid dinner, perhaps hoping to put Charles' envoys in a more agreeable mood. However on the following day, when they met again, the French added only the province of Limousin to their earlier concessions.

Following the July 21 session, Kemp did not meet

127 Foedera, Holmes, 11:94, July 20, 1445, commission. The journal does not list the duke of Buckingham as one who took part in the negotiations.
129 Ibid., p. 136.
130 Ibid., p. 138.
with the French again until July 29, when they requested an audience with the king. During this session, they asked that Henry and their master meet together and personally work out the terms of a lasting peace. In order to make the arrangements for this personal interview, they wished to prolong the truce, which was due to expire on April 1, 1446, until November 1. Speaking in Latin for the king, Cardinal Kemp expressed his lord's sincere desire for peace, but he said that such proposals must be given a great deal of consideration before any decision was reached. 

Apparently Kemp met again with the French embassy after this interview for he was one of the four parties to sign the prolongation of the truce on August 13, 1445.

Neither John Stokes nor John Kemp served Henry VI or the factions that controlled him after 1445. The scope of English diplomacy contracted in the years from 1445 to 1461. The land which France obtained was acquired by military force rather than by diplomacy, and by 1452, only Calais remained in English hands. Hostilities between various aristocratic factions grew as the health of Henry VI declined, and England turned inward to handle her mounting

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131 Ibid., pp. 142-43.
133 Foedera, Holmes, 11:97-100, Aug. 13, 1445, prolongation.
domestic problems, therefore requiring the talents of only a few diplomats. Though John Stokes lived for ten years after his 1441 mission to the Low Countries, he did not serve as a diplomat after this assignment. Cardinal Kemp lived for nine years after his 1445 commission, but he did not receive any more diplomatic commissions.

When Stokes retired from diplomacy in 1441, he had little to show in the way of either ecclesiastical or royal rewards for thirty years of diplomatic service. When he entered diplomacy he was a canon in a cathedral chapter, and in thirty years, he had not advanced to any chapter office, nor did he receive preferment to the episcopacy. Unlike John Catryk, his efforts to heal the Great Schism at the Council of Constance went unnoticed, and he failed to attach himself to the future pope. However, Stokes did accumulate some benefices: the prebend of Lyme and Halstock, Salisbury; the prebend of Strensall, York; a canonry at St. Paul's and the prebend of Wildland; a canonry and prebend of St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster; a canonry at Lincoln and the prebend of Langford Ecclesia; as well as the prebend of Centum Solidorum, Lincoln. 134

Stokes does not appear to have had any association with these benefices beyond the income that he received from

them. However, the association that he established with Bath and Wells before his diplomatic career began seems to have been maintained. On November 24, 1419, Bishop Bubwith collated him to a canonry at Wells cathedral and to the prebend of Henstridge, and Stokes continued to hold this canonry and prebend until September 1441. Then on September 19, 1422, Bubwith ordained Stokes as a subdeacon. Seventeen years later in 1439, Stokes is referred to as the clerk of John Stafford, bishop of Bath and Wells from 1425 to 1443. Although Bishop Bubwith may have been a valuable aid in obtaining royal commissions, Bishop Stafford was an even more valuable connection because he was chancellor from 1432 to 1450 and an active supporter of Henry Beaufort. Unfortunately for John Stokes, his diplomatic service never impressed Beaufort as did the work of Catryk and Kemp. As a consequence, he rarely received distinguished diplomatic assignments, commissions as an embassy leader, or outstanding rewards. In March 1423, he was appointed Constable of Bordeaux, but his tenure in this office appears to have been less than a year. As early as 1441 when

135 Register of Nicholas Bubwith, 1:347, Nov. 24, 1419, collation; Register of John Stafford, 2:272, Sept. 14, 1441, exchange.

136 Register of Nicholas Bubwith, 2:555.

137 CCR, Hen. VI, 3 (1435-41):246, Feb. 11, 1439, commission.

138 APC, 3:52, Mar. 3, 1423, minutes.
John Stokes retired from diplomacy and as late as 1448, he is referred to as pronotary or chief clerk of Chancery. Perhaps of more importance were the temporary judicial commissions that Stokes received from 1422 to 1451. He was commissioned to hear appeals from the Courts of Chivalry and Chancery, but he was mainly concerned with cases appealed to the king from the Court of Admiralty.

The obscurity that surrounds John Stokes' life outside of his diplomatic career also surrounds his death. The last diplomatic document that concerned him is a commission issued on July 14, 1441. However, the last royal document that can be attributed to him is a judicial commission dated July 20, 1451. Assuming that the Magister John Stokes, who was a pronotary and royal judge after 1441, was the clerical diplomat, the conclusion can be drawn that John

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142 Foedera, Holmes, 10:848, July 14, 1441, commission.

143 CPR, Hen. VI, 5 (1446-52):466, July 20, 1451, commission.
Stokes lived at least ten years after his diplomatic career ended and probably died about 1451.

In complete contrast to Stokes, John Kemp's years, after the second stage in his diplomatic career ended, were filled with even greater ecclesiastical and royal rewards. Although he was sixty-five when he retired from diplomacy, he continued to play an active role in the life of the church and state. On January 31, 1450, he was again given the great seal of England, and he served as chancellor until his death on March 22, 1454. Then on July 21, 1452, he was translated to the primatial see of Canterbury, and at the same time, he received the dignity of cardinal bishop of Santa Rufina. By this time, Kemp was seventy-two years old, a very advanced age for a man of his times. The Rolls of Parliament indicate that he was so ill in March 1453 that he could not open Parliament. He managed to survive another year, one which was filled with the rumblings of the War of the Roses. He stood by Henry VI when the king went mad in August 1453, and continued to do so in March of the next year when the Yorkist lords threatened his position and his life. But this final assault was too much for the former clerical diplomat, and he died on March 22, 1454, at the age of seventy-four. He was

144 Powicke, Handbook of British Chronology, p. 85.
146 Rotuli Parliamentorum, 5:227.
buried at Canterbury, his archiepiscopal see, in the south aisle of the choir.\textsuperscript{147}

The first half of the fifteenth century was a period laden with opportunities for clerics to advance themselves through diplomacy. In the years from 1400 to 1461, England used diplomacy to help her military forces take Normandy, to secure her title to the French throne, and to retain her French conquests. John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp were the clerics who were most actively involved in these diplomatic events. In the number of missions, they surpassed prominent clerical diplomats like Henry Beaufort, Nicholas Rysheton, Henry Chichele, Thomas Langley, Henry Ware, Philip Morgan, William Lyndwood, William Sprever, Stephen Wilton, and Richard Andrews. Because their service was so extensive, they were the most influential clerics in the diplomatic events that increased the territorial holdings of the Lancastrian dynasty far beyond the original duchy of Guienne and saw them shrink to the minor stronghold of Calais by the close of the Hundred Years' War.

\textsuperscript{147}\textit{CPR, Hen. VI, 6 (1452-61):147, Apr. 9, 1454, license; DNB, 2:1032.}
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

As shown by the preceding individual studies on the careers of John Offord, William Bateman, John Sheppey, John Gilbert, Walter Skirlaw, John Catryk, John Stokes, and John Kemp, clerics could advance their personal fortunes through diplomatic service for the king of England during the years from 1327 to 1461, essentially the period of the Hundred Years' War. These churchmen, like the twenty-five other clerical career diplomats of the times, tried to secure ad hoc ambassadorial commissions not as an end in themselves but as a means to other royal and ecclesiastical offices.

The statistical studies have shown that the thirty-three clerics, who became career diplomats in England's foreign service during the Hundred Years' War, were men who were not satisfied with the social class to which they had been born, and who consequently wished to rise above their social origins. Because of their desire for social mobility, they decided to enter the service of the church, which was one of the few routes of social advancement in the later middle ages. They realized, however, that they would have difficulty in obtaining access to important, prestigious, and strategic church offices without a university education. Consequently they enrolled at Oxford or Cambridge and
followed a course of studies in canon or civil law. Both curricula provided them with the training that was necessary for successful careers in ecclesiastical or royal administration.

When they began their university studies, the thirty-three men, who were to become career diplomats, technically assumed the status of a cleric, and as such, they began to accumulate benefices. However, most did not receive major preferments until after they had completed their university studies. Many were appointed to canonries in the major cathedral chapters; others were elected as officers in these chapters; while several were even promoted to the English episcopacy. Those of episcopal rank were very likely to be drafted into royal service because bishops were considered the natural councillors of the king. Those of non-episcopal rank also had prospects of being recruited into the service of the king. Generally they did not actively serve the church in the benefice to which they had been appointed. Instead, they served as administrators in dioceses far removed from their benefices. In positions as diocesan vicars-general or officials in the archdiocesan court of Canterbury, they had an opportunity to win the confidence of a politically influential bishop who could recommend them for royal service.

Half of the clerical career diplomats were drafted into diplomatic service directly from their ecclesiastical offices. The other half were recruited into ambassadorial
service from positions in the Chancery, Exchequer, or Privy Seal. During their first ambassadorial assignment, these thirty-three clerics displayed sufficient talent for diplomacy so that they received another ambassadorial commission. With each additional \textit{ad hoc} embassy, they gained more diplomatic expertise which in turn increased the probability that they would be commissioned again. Each of the thirty-three clerical career diplomats displayed such a talent for diplomacy that they were dispatched on at least ten embassies by the crown, while two served on as many as twenty-eight.

For the clerical career diplomats, their extensive ambassadorial service in England's behalf brought them substantial ecclesiastical and royal rewards. Half received promotions to important chapter offices, to the episcopal bench, or even to the archiepiscopal sees of Canterbury and York. Half also were rewarded with appointments to such royal offices as chancellor, treasurer, or keeper of the privy seal. The thirty-three clerical career diplomats then rose far beyond their humble social origins through a university education, ecclesiastical and royal service, but mostly through extensive ambassadorial service for the crown.

The thirty-three clerical career diplomats plus the 256 other clerical diplomats played a major role in the embassies dispatched by the king of England from 1327 to 1461 and as a consequence greatly influenced the direction of English diplomacy during the Hundred Years' War. The
preceding statistical studies have shown that during the period under consideration, clerics participated in a wide range of embassies, but their proportional representation within any given embassy was small. The range and proportion of clerical participation in embassies did not remain constant, however, for the whole period from 1327 to 1461. From the reign of Edward III to that of Richard II and to that of Henry IV, the proportional membership of clerics in embassies declined, but the range of their participation was consistent. From the reign of Henry IV to that of Henry V and that of Henry VI, both the range of this participation and their proportional membership in embassies increased.

The declining percentage of clerical membership in individual embassies from one reign to another from 1327 to 1413 can be credited to two factors, the increasing availability of educated laymen who were trained at the Inns of Court, and the increasingly popular attitude that clerics should not hold secular offices. The increasing range of clerical participation in English embassies plus their increasing proportional membership from one reign to another from 1413 to 1461 can be attributed to an increasing demand for Latin-speaking diplomats and to a decline in the stability of secular institutions that could provide potential diplomats.

As has been stated, clerics generally served on a wide range of English embassies from 1327 to 1431 although
their proportional representation on individual embassies was small. The data on the destination and purpose of English embassies with clerical participants shows that clerics were not only commissioned to deal with the papacy or other church authorities on religious matters but were also commissioned to negotiate with lay princes on secular matters. In fact, clerics were more frequently dispatched to treat with the French, the Flemish, and the Scottish than with any religious authority. As a consequence, they not only had a great deal of influence on England's diplomatic relations with the papacy, the church hierarchy, and the councils but also her relations with the secular princes of Christendom.

The role that clerics played on individual embassies in addition to their influence on English diplomacy in general was further enhanced by their education and diplomatic expertise. As doctors of canon or civil law, they were well versed in the international law of the middle ages and had the rhetorical and grammatical skills necessary for debate and drafting diplomatic documents. As previously mentioned, many of the same clerics were repeatedly commissioned to English embassies, and they gained such experience through frequent commissioning that they can be considered career diplomats.

As education and experience accentuated the impact of clerics on individual embassies and diplomacy in general so did their ecclesiastical rank and the leadership role
that they so often assumed. The English kings tended to appoint only doctors of law, canons and chapter officers of the important cathedrals, bishops, and archbishops to the embassies which they dispatched. Moreover, they frequently designated one of the clerical members, usually a cleric of at least episcopal rank as leader of their embassies. Many of the churchmen who functioned as embassy leaders were not only of high ecclesiastical rank but also accumulated considerable leadership experience through repeated commissioning.

This foregoing study on the English clerical diplomats, 1327 to 1461, has proven that clerics wished to take part in English embassies because extensive diplomatic service resulted in social advancement. Clerics then formed a very fruitful source of diplomatic personnel for the embassies which the English kings dispatched during the Hundred Years' War. Their numerical participation, added to their range of assignments, education, experience, ecclesiastical rank, and leadership roles gave them a great deal of influence in individual embassies and on the general course of English diplomacy. Even during the years from 1327 to 1461 when medieval institutions were giving way to modern ones, clerics played a major role in English diplomacy as historian Frantz Funck-Brentano contended when he considered the pattern of diplomacy during the more general period of the middle ages.
APPENDIX A

PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Embassies with Lay Members Only</th>
<th>Embassies with Lay &amp; Clerical Members</th>
<th>Total Embassies</th>
<th>% of Embassies with Clerical Participants</th>
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<td>67</td>
<td>190</td>
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<td>491</td>
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NOTE: The number of English embassies and their composition is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's Foedera.
### APPENDIX B

**NUMBER OF EMBASSIES ACCORDING TO THE PERCENTAGE OF CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Clerical Membership</th>
<th>Edward III</th>
<th>Richard II</th>
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<th>Henry V</th>
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**NOTE:** The number of English embassies and their composition is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera.*
PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES ACCORDING TO

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<th>Richard II</th>
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NOTE: The number of English based on letters of procuration, let-safe conduct, warrants, and inden-Foedera.
PERCENTAGE OF CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP

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embassies and their composition is ters of credence, letters of tures compiled in Thomas Rymer's
# APPENDIX D

## PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS

(EXCLUDING PAPAL AND CONCILIAR EMBASSIES)

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<th></th>
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<th>Embassies with Lay &amp; Clerical Members</th>
<th>Total Embassies</th>
<th>% of Embassies with Clerical Participants</th>
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<td>64</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>70</td>
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**NOTE:** The number of English embassies and their composition is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera.*
### NUMBER OF EMBASSIES ACCORDING (EXCLUDING PAPAL)

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<tr>
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<td>31-40.</td>
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**NOTE:** The number of English based on letters of procuration, let-conduct, warrants, and indentures in
TO PERCENTAGE OF CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP AND CONCILIAR EMBASSIES

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<th>1327-1461</th>
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Embassies and their composition is ters of credence, letters of safe-Thomas Rymer's *Foedera.*
### APPENDIX

#### PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES ACCORDING (EXCLUDING PAPAL AND

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**NOTE:** The number of English based on letters of procuration, letters of conduct, warrants, and indentures
TO PERCENTAGE OF CLERICAL MEMBERSHIP
CONCILIAR EMBASSIES)

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embassies and their composition is listed of credence, letters of safe-compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*.
### RANGE OF CLERICAL

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**NOTE:** The number of English embassies letters of procuration, letters of credence, let­ indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera.*
### AMBASSADORIAL ASSIGNMENTS

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and their composition is based on terms of safe-conduct, warrants, and
## APPENDIX H

### LIST OF ENGLISH CLERICAL DIPLOMATS, 1327-1461

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APPENDIX H continued

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<td>Wendlynburgh, John.</td>
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### APPENDIX H continued

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<td>Younge, Griffin.</td>
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NOTE: The total number of embassies attributed to a clerical diplomat is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Rymer's Foedera; and on entries in the Foreign Accounts Various, Foreign Accounts Enrolled, Issue Rolls, and the Acts of the Privy Council.
**APPENDIX I**

**ECCLESIASTICAL POSITIONS OF CLERICAL DIPLOMATS (NUMBERS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Archbishop</th>
<th>Bishop</th>
<th>Chapter Officer</th>
<th>Canon</th>
<th>Monk Friar</th>
<th>Doctor Etc.</th>
<th>Clerk</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III.</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>61</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>Henry V</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
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<td>123</td>
<td>101</td>
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<td>332</td>
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**NOTE:** The ecclesiastical rank of cleric commissioned to English embassies is based on the title by which they are designated in letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera.*
### APPENDIX J

**ECCLESIASTICAL POSITIONS OF CLERICAL DIPLOMATS (PERCENTAGE)**

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<th>Canon</th>
<th>Monk Friar</th>
<th>Doctor Etc.</th>
<th>Clerk</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>Henry V</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
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**NOTE:** The ecclesiastical rank of the clerics commissioned to English embassies is based on the title by which they are designated in letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*. 
APPENDIX K

PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES WITH CLERICAL LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Embassies with Clerical Leaders</th>
<th>Total Number of Embassies</th>
<th>Percentage of Embassies with Clerical Leaders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward III.</td>
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<td>257</td>
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<td>Richard II.</td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Henry IV.</td>
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<td>96</td>
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<td>Henry V</td>
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<td>Henry VI.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>1327-1461</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>629</td>
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NOTE: The number of English embassies and their leaders is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*.
APPENDIX L

PERCENTAGE OF EMBASSIES HAVING CLERICAL PARTICIPANTS AND CLERICAL LEADERS

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Embassies with Clerical Leaders</th>
<th>Embassies with Clerical Members</th>
<th>Percentage of Embassies with Clerical Members and Leaders</th>
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<td>Richard II...</td>
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<td>Henry IV...</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<td>Henry V</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>Henry VI</td>
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<td>74</td>
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<td>1327-1461...</td>
<td>299</td>
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NOTE: The number of English embassies and their leaders is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*. 
APPENDIX M

ECCLESIASTICAL POSITIONS OF CLERICAL EMBASSY LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Edward III</th>
<th>Richard II</th>
<th>Henry IV</th>
<th>Henry V</th>
<th>Henry VI</th>
<th>1327-1461</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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NOTE: The ecclesiastical rank of clerics commissioned as leaders of English embassies is based on the title by which they are designated in letters of procuratio, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Thomas Rymer's Foedera.
**APPENDIX N**

**LIST OF CLERICAL EMBASSY LEADERS, 1327-1461**

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## APPENDIX N continued

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<td>Houghton, Adam</td>
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<td>John I, Abbot of Rievaulx</td>
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APPENDIX N continued

<table>
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<th>Missions</th>
<th>Clerical Embassy Leaders</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kyldesby, William</td>
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<td>Wynkele, Richard</td>
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NOTE: The total number of leadership positions in English embassies attributed to a clerical diplomat is based on letters of procuration, letters of credence, letters of safe-conduct, warrants, and indentures compiled in Rymer's Poedera.
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The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.