

THE DIPLOMACY OF EDWARD IV,
KING OF ENGLAND, 1475-1483

A Thesis

Presented to

the Division of Social Sciences

Kansas State Teachers College of Arpora

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

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May 1969

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283373⁹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Samuel E. Dicks, chairman, Dr. Loren Pennington, and Dr. Glenn Torrey, for their assistance in the preparation of this thesis. I also wish to thank my typist, Mrs. Manuel Justiz, for her efforts in preparing the final copy.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental hostility between the ruling families of England and France remained long after the Hundred Years War which ended in 1453. Anglo-French differences during the last part of the fifteenth century, and especially during the years of the reign of Edward IV, (1461-1483) are evident in the diplomacy of the period. This thesis briefly traces the acts of diplomacy leading up to the later years of the reign of Edward IV, examines in depth the relationship between the English and French monarchs during these later years (1475-1483) and attempts to determine the extent there was a continuation of the differences present in the Hundred Years War.

The Hundred Years War was a series of wars between the English and French monarchs which began in 1338 and which came to an end without a treaty in 1453.¹ The English kings waged the war to protect and to enlarge their holdings in France, and to realize their claims to the crown of France. The French, of course, opposed

¹Denys Hay, Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 153-157.

this goal and fought for the ideal that the English kings should be ousted from the Continent, or at least should do homage for their lands in France. The English were victorious in many of the earlier phases of the war and controlled much of France. They eventually grew weary of war, and a lack of strong leadership, along with a shift in alliances with the French nobles, helped cause the English forces to be expelled from the Continent, except for the port of Calais.² Nationalism heightened during the last decades of the war and helped maintain suspicion and hostility after 1453, especially in the hearts of those who fought and suffered in the war. The scars of battle and the losses of long-held lands on the Continent were remembered by dispossessed Englishmen, and these thoughts were a blow to their newly formed nationalistic pride. There was a general feeling of hostility and distrust of anything French, and a wish in the minds of many members of the upper classes in England to return to France and recapture old glories.³

In England and in France the lower classes soon were too occupied with feeding themselves or in making a living to become worried about the foreign problems of

²Samuel E. Dicks, The Question of Peace: Anglo-French Diplomacy, 1439-1449 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1966), 2.

³Hay, 160.

their homeland. In fact the peasant in France more than likely had been better off under English rule because of less direct rule. The men with the hostile feelings and nationalistic sympathies were the large landholders, the knights, and the nobles. The merchants' class was looking for ways to increase its financial status.

The methods of diplomacy improved during the Hundred Years War, but, except in Italy, diplomacy in Western Europe remained medieval throughout the rest of the fifteenth century. Renaissance diplomacy, a major feature of which was the resident ambassador, was practiced only by the Italians during the fifteenth century. The use of the resident ambassador was distrusted by Western European leaders because of the difficulty of maintaining control over a man in a foreign country. This change in diplomatic method was not employed until the next century. There was an increase in diplomatic activity during the last years of the war, which was continued into the second half of the century. Rulers dispatched ambassadors to negotiate and to confer at almost every opportunity, with peace being the major issue. Medieval rules and ceremony still applied, but the importance and the use of the ambassadors increased as they were employed and directed by the king or by his council.⁴

⁴For further information concerning diplomacy of the age see: Garrett Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955).

English diplomacy with France, during the last decade of the war, was directed through the Council of Henry VI (1422-1461). Divisiveness on the Council often made his policies weak and inconsistent. In contrast, the policies of Charles VII, the Valois monarch (1422-1461), were usually strong and consistent.⁵ It was during Henry VI's reign that the Hundred Years War ended without any formal treaty. French monarchs increased their control over the princes of the blood although much remained to be done.⁶ Henry VI's rule worsened as the French conflict was supplanted by a dynastic conflict--the Wars of the Roses.

This dynastic civil war was engendered from the losses suffered by the English in the Hundred Years War. Two sides formed within England. The Lancastrian side was symbolized by a red rose and was led by the inept Henry VI and his wife, Margaret of Anjou, niece of Charles VII of France. The House of Lancaster was supported by the French monarchy during the wars, although more in sympathy than through substantial help.⁷ The Lancastrians were opposed by Richard, duke of York, who

⁵Dicks, 299.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Cora Louise Scofield, The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1923), I, 113-116.

was represented by the white rose emblem, and who was allied with the prominent Neville family led by the earl of Warwick.

The Wars of the Roses were bloody conflicts during which Richard, duke of York, and scores of other nobles were killed. The conflict ended in a Yorkist victory at the Battle of Towton on March 29, 1461.⁸ Edward, earl of March, succeeded his father, Richard, as duke of York, and was recognized king of England by Parliament. He was crowned on March 4, 1461.⁹ Margaret and Henry VI were forced to flee to Scotland.¹⁰

Francesco Coppino, an apostolic legate in England, reported that:

their side is practically destroyed and King Edward has become master and governor of the whole realm. Words fail me to relate how well the commons love and adore him, as if he were their God. The entire kingdom keeps holiday for the event, which seems as a boon from above. Thus far he appears to be a just prince who intends to amend and organize matters otherwise than has been done hitherto, so all comfort themselves with hopes of future well-being.¹¹

⁸Great Britain, Public Record Office. Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts of Milan, Vol. I, 61.

⁹Ingulf et al., Ingulf's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland with the continuations by Peter of Blois and Anonymous Writers, trans. and ed. Henry T. Riley. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), 456; Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 61.

¹⁰Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle (London: J. Johnson, et al., 1809), 256; Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 68-69.

¹¹Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 69.

Polydore Vergil described Edward as tall and handsome, with a large but well-proportioned body. He was friendly, especially with the ladies, and was intelligent and possessed of quick wit. Edward loved good food, luxurious clothing, and desired great wealth.¹² The new king was generous in granting offices and lands to his friends among the nobility. Polydore Vergil thought that he was too liberal and generous to both the noble and the commoner. He observed that Edward "used towards every man of highe and low degree more than mete famylyarytie which trade of life he never changed."¹³ Philip de Commines, who glorified Louis XI, king of France (1461-1483), recognized Edward's charm and intelligence, but he thought that Edward's constant self-indulgence in physical pleasures brought about his political and diplomatic decline from 1467 onwards to his death in 1483.¹⁴ In reality, Edward IV was an able and careful administrator, especially in the last ten years of his reign. He was still popular with the English people at his death.¹⁵

¹²Polydore Vergil, Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History, Comprising the Reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, and Richard III, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: Camden Society, Old Series, No. 29, 1844), 172.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Philip de Commines, The Memoirs of Philip de Commines, ed. Andrew R. Scoble, 2 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1886), II, 62.

¹⁵E. F. Jacob, The Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1961), 545.

The whole of England was not yet secure for Edward IV in 1461, because Henry VI's forces were able to come over the Scottish border and remain safe in certain areas of northern England which were still held by Lancastrians. There also remained many Lancastrian sympathizers throughout England.¹⁶ It was evident that Henry and Margaret still maintained some control in 1461, because in April they ceded the port city of Berwick to Scotland in return for aid from Scotland to help Henry VI regain the crown of England.¹⁷ It was hinted that, since the Scots were united with the French by an ancient alliance, France would aid the Scots and the Lancastrians. France would aid them both on land and sea because of the long-held French hostility towards the English, which was increased under the conditions of Yorkist rule.¹⁸

Coppino wrote from England to his friend, Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan, on May 8, 1461, that he felt there had been a worsening of the relationship between England and France since Edward's assumption of the crown. He also mentioned that England might invade France.¹⁹ It was apparent that Coppino was sympathetic toward the Yorkist monarchy and hoped for the invasion of France

¹⁶Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 90.

¹⁷Scofield, I, 176; Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 90.

¹⁸Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 90.

¹⁹Ibid., 88.

by Edward IV. This invasion, if undertaken in the early 1460's, would have been a blessing for Milan, as it would have removed a threat of French intervention in Italy.²⁰ Coppino's dream did not come true, because Edward soon found that he had domestic problems more important than an invasion of France.²¹

Conditions worsened for Margaret of Anjou and Henry VI by the autumn of 1461. They retained only the castle of Harlech in northern England, as Edward and Warwick relentlessly gained their English holdings. Also, their alliance with the Scots had broken down.²² The Scots were not united, and they did not have the will to fight against the English. Margaret turned to her uncle, Charles VII, to seek aid. She wished to obtain a treaty of peace, a loan of twenty thousand crowns, and an army which her envoys, including Henry Beaufort, duke of Somerset, could lead back to England.²³ The duke and two other nobles landed in France in late July of 1461 and learned that Charles VII, who had been somewhat pro-Lancastrian, had died. In early August Louis XI was crowned.²⁴

²⁰Ibid.; Scofield, I, 174.

²¹Ibid.

²²Eric N. Simons, The Reign of Edward IV (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), 86-87.

²³Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 101.

²⁴Ibid., 103.

The death of Charles VII brought about a change in the attitudes of Edward and Warwick towards France, since Louis had favored the Yorkist cause as dauphin. They became optimistic of good relations with France, although they retained some caution.²⁵

Louis XI did not continue the policies of Charles VII for he feared a strong Yorkist king. When he remembered the past struggles and past hostilities between the French and English monarchs, he realized that he could not ally with any English government. This realization persuaded him to meet with Margaret's ambassadors to his late father in a friendly manner, though they received no favors at this time.²⁶

Since her ambassadors gained nothing from France, Margaret and her son, Prince Edward, traveled personally to France in April of 1462, to seek the aid of Louis XI. Louis proved to be agreeable, as he believed that some action was necessary, because England was becoming stronger under Edward IV. He wished to keep England off balance by promoting a renewal of the civil war. Another reason for Louis' alliance with the Lancastrians

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Thomas Rymer, ed., Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, et Curiosumque Generis Acta Publica, 2nd. ed., 20 vols., (Londini: per A. & J. Churchill, 1704-35), XI, 476.

was that he did not like Edward's intervention into the politics of Castile and Aragon. These were areas in which he liked to maintain diplomatic influence.²⁷

In a secret agreement Margaret gave up Calais to France, if the Lancastrians ever came into control of it. In return for this forfeiture, the Lancastrians were to receive a loan of twenty thousand crowns and a payment of forty thousand crowns when Calais was delivered to France. This agreement led to further negotiations, and on June 28, 1462, a treaty was signed which provided for a hundred years' truce between France and England and which recognized Henry VI as the ruler of England.²⁸

In addition to monetary aid, Louis ordered an army to be raised to accompany Margaret back to Scotland.²⁹ Louis even planned an expedition to capture Calais, but it was given up when support from Philip, duke of Burgundy, was not given.³⁰

Louis's support of the Lancastrians alienated the powerful duke, causing him to grow closer diplomatically

²⁷Hall, 262-263; Scofield, I, 260-261. Louis XI was allied with John II of Aragon (1458-1479) in 1462. Louis attempted to renew an old alliance with Henry IV of Castile (1454-1474), but Edward IV interfered. Edward wished to block Louis' influence south of the Pyrenees by renewing an alliance with Castile. Edward was diverted in his Castilian diplomacy when problems with the Lancastrians arose.

²⁸Scofield, I, 252.

²⁹Scofield, I, 253.

³⁰James Gairdner, ed., The Paston Letters 1422-1509, 8 vols. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1904), IV, 50; Scofield, I, 254.

to Edward IV. When Louis saw this, he withdrew much of the support that he had promised Margaret, and she left France with an army of only eight hundred men.³¹ She landed in Northumberland, but Edward and Warwick soon moved against her. Margaret, hearing that Edward was coming, fled to Scotland by boat. She and her force were caught in a storm in which their boats were sunk and most of their arms and possessions lost.³² Some of the Scottish chieftains and their followers had come into northern England to aid Margaret, and they remained in the north holding several castles which the earl of Warwick besieged.³³ Edward never got to Northumberland; he caught the measles while enroute and was forced to stay at Durham.³⁴

The Scots were quickly routed and fled to their homeland. The Lancastrian sympathizers in England who had aided Margaret were permitted to profess allegiance to Edward and to seek pardon, or they were allowed to return to Scotland.³⁵

³¹ Scofield, I, 261.

³² Ibid., 263.

³³ J. Warkworth, A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward the Fourth, ed. J. O. Halliwell (London: Camden Society, Old Series, No. 10, 1839), 2-3; Hall, 260.

³⁴ Chronicles of London, ed. Charles L. Kingsford (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1905), 178.

³⁵ Ibid.

The fight with the Lancastrians did not end in 1462. Edward recognized in 1463 that he had to negotiate a treaty to keep France from aiding enemies who wished to destroy his government. After some persuasion from Warwick, Louis proved to be agreeable, and Philip of Burgundy was called upon to mediate between ambassadors of the two monarchs. Margaret of Anjou tried to intervene in the negotiations between England and France, but was unsuccessful. A truce concluded in June, 1463³⁶ included one clause that was a blow to Lancastrian aspirations:

The seid Lowes shall not Geve, nor suffre to be Geven, by Himselpe, nor noon of his subjects, any help, Ayd, or Favour to Henry late calling himselpe Kyng of England, Margarett his Wyff, nor her Soene, nor to Enemyes, or Adversarys of our said Sovereine Lord, to his Hurte or Greef, yn his Reaum of England.³⁷

Margaret would not give up that easily. In the winter of 1463-64, a new Lancastrian conspiracy began which branched out into Wales and Yorkshire. The Yorkist army leader, John Neville, earl of Montague, concluded a fifteen year peace treaty with the Scots, which stipulated that the Scots would no longer aid or shelter any Lancastrian.³⁸ He then proceeded to defeat the Lancastrians

³⁶Jacob, 534.

³⁷Rymer, XI, 509.

³⁸Jacob, 531.

in Yorkshire on May 15, 1464.³⁹ This was Edward's last conflict with the Lancastrians on English soil until they returned in 1469.

The Lancastrian threat was settled for awhile, but a new problem arose for Edward. While he and the earl of Warwick had been fighting the Lancastrians and uniting England, there had been little time for any disagreement between the two strong personalities. With peace restored, trouble soon arose. The first disagreement was over Edward's marriage.⁴⁰

Edward was secretly married in 1463, to Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of a Lancastrian, Sir John Grey. The marriage was revealed in September to the Council.⁴¹ The earl of Warwick, who had been trying to negotiate a marriage of Edward with Bona of Savoy, Louis XI's sister-in-law, was angry because Edward's secret act of marriage caused him to lose face abroad.⁴² With the marriage of Edward, the Woodville family rose in importance in England. This was a factor which caused further alienation of Warwick from Edward.⁴³ Warwick

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 537.

⁴¹R. Fabyan, New Chronicles of England and France, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: James Bohn, 1811), 654.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

was able to contain his anger until 1467, when he saw that his pro-French foreign policy was being cast aside. This was most evident when Edward married his sister, Margaret, to Charles, count of Charolais, who was soon to become the duke of Burgundy.⁴⁴

By early 1468, diplomacy among Burgundy, England, and France was filled with suspicion. Warwick's opposition to an alliance with Burgundy was strong, but Edward went ahead with his plan. Warwick's moves against Edward began when he married his daughter to Edward's younger brother, George, duke of Clarence.⁴⁵ They conspired against Edward for two years; in 1470, Warwick united with Margaret of Anjou, and in early September, aided by Louis XI, they invaded England. Edward was forced to flee to Burgundy.⁴⁶ Edward IV received aid from the duke of Burgundy and returned to England early in 1471, claiming that he came only to regain his ancestral lands. There was disillusionment in England with the Warwick-Lancastrian alliance, and Edward found enough support among the nobility to regain the throne. Henry VI was captured by Edward in London,⁴⁷ then Edward met Warwick

⁴⁴Col. Milanese Papers, I, 123.

⁴⁵Ingulf, et al., 458.

⁴⁶Ibid., 462.

⁴⁷B. Wilkinson, Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485 (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964), 155-156.

and the Lancastrians in the battle of Barnet on April 14, 1471. Warwick was killed and his army was routed.⁴⁸ On the day of the battle, Margaret of Anjou and Prince Edward, her son, arrived in England from France and learned of the loss of Warwick. They raised an army in England and were defeated by Edward at Tewkesbury on May 4, 1471. Prince Edward was killed while fleeing the scene of the battle, and his mother was captured.⁴⁹ On May 21 or 22, 1471, Henry VI was murdered in the Tower of London, finally ending the Lancastrian threat.⁵⁰

The monarchy of Edward IV was restored, civil strife was ended, and Edward was now free to engage in foreign affairs once again. His first action was against Louis XI, who had helped Warwick and the Lancastrians dethrone him. Diplomacy, during the years 1471-1475, was to include a direct confrontation between the monarchs of England and France, something that had not happened since the end of the Hundred Years War.

⁴⁸ Scofield, I, 571.

⁴⁹ Scofield, I, 589; Wilkinson, 155-156.

⁵⁰ J. B. Lander, The Wars of the Roses (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), 154; Hall, 303.

CHAPTER II

EDWARD IV'S INVASION OF FRANCE

Plans for the invasion of France began soon after Edward regained the throne of England in 1471. The antagonizing moves by Louis XI in aiding Warwick and Margaret of Anjou gave a clear justification for Edward to advance his claims against the French crown. Also, Edward needed to increase his control of England, and one way to gain popularity was to regain the lost territory in France. The years preceding the invasion were filled with negotiations of alliances with Burgundy, Scotland, and Brittany, with raising funds to supply and pay the invading force, and with gathering an army.

Edward aided Francis II, duke of Brittany, against Louis XI, who tried to invade Brittany in July, 1472. Edward allowed Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, to send one thousand English archers into battle against the king of France.¹ A treaty of alliance between England and Brittany was made on September 11, 1472, which provided for an English army to land in Guienne or

¹ Scofield, II, 34-35.

Normandy before April 1, 1473. This army aided by Francis II, was to secure these lands for the English monarchy.²

In 1473, Parliament voted a subsidy to enable Edward to recover his French possessions.³ The subsidy was to be raised by a ten per cent taxation of newly assessed property and from revenues. The money collected was to be set aside in a special army account. If the war was not started by Michaelmas, September 29, 1474, the money was to be returned to the people from whom it had been exacted.⁴ This grant from Parliament was not enough to equip an army for a war with France. Edward asked for voluntary contributions or benevolences. These were grants or gifts from private persons which were made directly to the king. This was a successful means of raising money even though it undermined somewhat the control of Commons over the purse of the king. This method of raising money did not destroy the importance of Parliament, for it took more money than could be raised by benevolences alone to support a war against France. The benevolences were tolerated by the Commons

²Rymer, XI, 760.

³The Chronicles of the White Rose of York (London: James Bohn, 1845), 155.

⁴Simons, 258.

largely because they generally were popular. Their dislike of taxation overcame the principle of parliamentary consent.⁵ The gentry, for their part, looked upon benevolences as a way to prove their loyalty to the king.⁶

Charles of Burgundy would not commit himself to join Edward IV in an assault on France, and on January 20, 1474, Parliament was told that because of Charles's hesitancy the invasion would have to be delayed.⁷ Charles finally agreed to take part in the attack on France, and an alliance was agreed upon between Edward and Charles in July, 1474.⁸ They made treaties of perpetual friendship and alliance and arranged for the conquest of France. Charles granted recognition to Edward as the legitimate king of France, and promised the assistance to his army in attaining his inheritance. Edward granted Charles additional lands near the Burgundian lands.⁹

⁵ Wilkinson, 144; S. B. Chrimes & A. L. Brown, eds., Select Documents of English Constitutional History (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1961), 333.

⁶ Chron. of the White Rose, 156.

⁷ Simons, 266.

⁸ Rymer, XI, 806-807.

⁹ Isobel D. Thornley, England Under the Yorkists, 1460-1485 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1921), 86-87.

The treaty stated that:

the most serene lord Edward . . . for the recovery of his duchies of Normandy and Aquitaine and his realm of France, shall splendidly and fittingly equip and prepare himself and his army to the number of ten thousand armed men or more to be transported . . . before the first day of the month of July next coming.¹⁰

Edward also agreed to a payment of money to Charles as an added inducement to get him to agree to the alliance.¹¹

When Edward obtained a satisfactory treaty with Charles, he began to make contracts with lords and knights to accompany him with large and small retinues of men-at-arms and archers on his expedition to France.¹²

He also sent Falcon Herald to France to make a formal demand to Louis for the surrender of Guienne and Normandy and to say that refusal meant war.¹³ In a letter written by Christoffero Bollato, Milanese Ambassador at the French Court to Galleazzo Maria Sforza, duke of Milan, it was mentioned that Falcon Herald had discussed with Louis XI a marriage alliance between Edward's eldest daughter and the dauphin of France,¹⁴ "showing that he [Edward] is

¹⁰Rymer, XI, 806-807.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 817.

¹³Jean de Roye, History of Louis XI, King of France, 1460-1483, Otherwise Called The Scandalous Chronicle, ed. Andrew R. Scoble (London: George Bell & Sons, 1889), 319.

¹⁴Cal. Milanese Papers, 182-183.

inclined to return again to those designs which were suggested on other occasions against the duke of Burgundy and for the ruin of his state."¹⁵ Bollato explained that he did not know if this discussion was a means to put pressure on France so that if the discussions failed, Edward could claim that he had tried to seek peace before the war, or whether Edward was sincere in seeking an alliance because he had a hidden fear of the duke of Burgundy.

Bollato gave a further report of these discussions:

The purport of these transactions against the Duke of Burgundy is as follows: the King of France is to give to the English a part of Guienne or Normandy, on the understanding that they shall assist to destroy the Duke of Burgundy, and from the duke's state the king will afterwards give the English an equivalent for what they claim pertains to them of this kingdom. The English will then give back to his Majesty what they hold of his and further surrender to him all the rights which they claim over this kingdom.¹⁶

Edward may have been sincere in sending Falcon Herald to Louis, because Charles was becoming involved in a conflict in the Holy Roman Empire. Charles marched to support one of two rival claimants to the archbishopric of Cologne and on July 30, 1474, he laid siege to the fortified city of Neuss, near Cologne.¹⁷ This siege was

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Commines, I, 236; Jacob, 574.

part of his plan for eventual control of several German cities. Charles tried to persuade Edward to aid him in this German campaign, but Edward declined.¹⁸ He was interested only in the conquest of France.

In November, 1474, Edward secured a marriage treaty with James III of Scotland, for the marriage of his daughter Cecily, age four, to Prince James of Scotland, age two.¹⁹ This marriage treaty was important to the success of Edward's dealing with France, because it relieved England of an enemy to the north.

Commynes claimed that if the English army had appeared at the beginning of the summer of 1475, as agreed with the duke of Burgundy, and if the duke had not continued to besiege Neuss, then the kingdom of France would have been endangered.²⁰

Even though Edward took a significant armed force to France, circumstances prevented him from sending it into combat. S. B. Chrimes doubts that Edward IV seriously wished to invade France. He writes that "Edward IV was not in fact a Henry V born again, and it is very doubtful whether he ever seriously thought of himself in such a role."²¹

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Rymer, XI, 836-837.

²⁰Commynes, I, 238.

²¹S. B. Chrimes, Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII (London: Macmillan and Company, 1964), 117-118.

This assertion is questionable. Edward spent enormous sums of money to raise an army and devoted a large amount of time and money in making his alliances. He also had the support of the English nobles, who wished to bolster their pride by reclaiming the French lands they had once possessed through their sovereign. Circumstances forced Edward to change his plans for an invasion of France when he reached the Continent. It has been shown that Edward was provoked into declaring the invasion because of the deception and intrigues of Louis XI. The only way that war with France was to be avoided was through compromise, and this was what occurred.

Edward landed at Calais with his army of about fifteen thousand men. It had taken this army three weeks to cross the Channel on boats supplied by the duke of Burgundy.²² Edward had set out for France knowing that his chief ally might fail him. He decided to take his army to Calais and wait there for further developments. When he arrived on the Continent, he sent Garter King-at-Arms to Louis with a letter in which he demanded the surrender of the kingdom of France. He announced that he was coming for the purpose of restoring the ancient liberties for the Church and the people of France.²³ Commines reported

²²Commynes, I, 251-252.

²³Commynes, I, 252-253; Chron. of the White Rose, 164.

that Edward also told Garter to be attentive to anything Louis might say about a possible treaty.²⁴

Louis saw himself opposed by three formidable enemies at the moment when his government had aggravated his most powerful vassals.²⁵ Louis answered Garter and requested him to tell his master that the duke of Burgundy was deceiving Edward. Louis questioned Garter closely. It was reported by Commynes that Garter answered Louis's questions from secret instructions and on his own initiative.²⁶ He told Louis that if he had any proposal of peace to make that he must make it to Lord John Howard and to Lord Thomas Stanley. These two men had influence with Edward and were most likely to be favorable to Louis.²⁷ Commynes recorded that Louis bribed Garter to take back to Edward a favorable report of their meeting. The bribe was three hundred gold crowns and a promise of one thousand more if a treaty was concluded.²⁸

When Edward crossed to Calais on July 4, 1475, he hoped that the duke of Burgundy would come at the head of an army to join him. The duke was unable to aid

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Chron. of the White Rose, 164.

²⁶Commynes, I, 252-253.

²⁷Chron. of the White Rose, 167.

²⁸Ibid.; Commynes, I, 254.

Edward immediately even though the siege at Neuss, which he had begun ten months earlier, had been lifted. Charles had ended the siege after Edward strongly urged him to do so.²⁹ His troops were tired, so he gave them a rest by sending them into Lorraine to pillage.³⁰ The duke had suffered losses while the siege was going on. The duke of Austria had taken the county of Ferrette; the duke of Lorraine had ravaged Luxembourg, and Louis XI had taken the prévôtés of Roye and Montdidier in Amiens.³¹

The duke went to Edward and proposed that the English overrun Normandy with the help of the duke of Brittany and then make their way into Champagne, while he went to collect his troops in Lorraine. After he gathered his army, the duke of Burgundy said that he would enter Champagne from the east and meet Edward at Reims where the king of England would be crowned king of France.³² But Edward would not fight Louis without immediate aid from the duke of Burgundy, so further action was halted. An angry Charles returned to his army.³³

²⁹Chron. of the White Rose, 165.

³⁰Jacob, 576.

³¹Chron. of the White Rose, 165.

³²Jacob, 576.

³³Commynes, I, 258.

Louis XI sent a servant dressed in the habit of a herald to Edward. This servant was described by Commines.

I was much astonished at the sight of the servant, for he seemed to me neither of a stature nor aspect fit for such an undertaking; yet his judgment was good (as I found afterwards) and his manner of expressing himself tolerable enough.³⁴

Commines and Louis had instructed this servant carefully. He went to the English camp and asked to speak with Lord John Howard and Lord Thomas Stanley. Instead, Edward ordered him to speak with him. The servant explained that he was ordered by the king of France to state that the war between the two kingdoms would be destructive to both. He excused the aid given by Louis to the late earl of Warwick and said "that it was not done out of ill will to Edward, but on account of the duke of Burgundy his master's irreconcilable enemy."³⁵ He spoke of the duke's insincerity and asked Edward whether the conquest of France would be as easy as the king had been led to believe. The servant also mentioned the lateness of the summer and that Louis would not refuse to come to terms submitted by Edward for a treaty if they should be agreeable to himself and his subjects.³⁶

³⁴Ibid., 259.

³⁵Chron. of the White Rose, 166-167; Commines, I, 260-261.

³⁶Ibid.

Edward consulted with his military leaders. Richard, duke of Gloucester, and a few other leaders were opposed to negotiations with Louis XI, but the majority, including the duke of Clarence, assented to the making of a truce with Louis.³⁷ Ambassadors were appointed to hold a conference with the French ambassadors at a place between Amiens and Peronne.³⁸

During these negotiations it was decided that Louis would buy off Edward's campaign for 75,000 crowns to be paid immediately. A 25,000 crown pension was to be paid to Edward every Easter and Michaelmas for a total of 50,000 crowns a year for as long as Edward lived. The negotiators also proposed that a treaty be made for the marriage of the dauphin to Edward's daughter, Elizabeth. Edward's ambassadors further wished to obtain provisions for a treaty of amity forbidding alliances without each other's knowledge. Agreement between Louis and Edward was soon reached. The leaders of Edward's army signed a statement and affirmed the truce.³⁹

The truce recorded that Edward anticipated the coming of winter, the cost of keeping up his army, and the bad faith of his Burgundian ally, weaknesses that

³⁷Jacob, 577.

³⁸Rymer, XII, 14.

³⁹Ibid., 15; Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 204-205.

might have been fatal against the large force being summoned by Louis. He and his counselors chose the best alternative that had been provided them by an able king who knew well how to handle his opponents. Commynes recorded that Louis declared "that he would do anything in the world to get the king of England out of France, except put any of his towns into his possession, for rather than do that, he would hazard all."⁴⁰ Louis possessed an extreme fear of a resumption of the Hundred Years War and was willing to make costly concessions to avoid it. At the signing of the truce a meeting between Edward and Louis was agreed upon.

The duke of Burgundy heard about the proposed truce, and he hurried to Edward's camp to stop the threat to his interests. He was too late to prevent the truce from being signed. Charles left the English camp after an angry exchange with Edward.

The meeting of Edward and Louis took place on a bridge at Pécquigny. This meeting capped a master stroke of diplomacy which helped save both the Valois and the Yorkist monarchs from suffering the agonies of a prolonged war. At this meeting Edward claimed that he would not interfere with any French retaliation against the duke

⁴⁰Commynes, I, 268.

of Burgundy, but if Louis moved against the duke of Brittany, Edward would be forced to oppose the move by returning with an army to aid the duke, who was his faithful friend.⁴¹

The English army withdrew from France. The Anglo-Burgundian alliance was suspended for a time, and the threat to Valois territory was ended. This was the end of what may be classified as an epilogue to the Hundred Years War.⁴² Hostility between England and France would continue. England continued to possess Calais, and Edward kept the empty title of King of France, but the overt war had ended. Edward IV had the last significant opportunity to reopen the Hundred Years War, but a combination of adverse situations and rewarding opportunities compelled him to return to England. This was a wise move and one that tended to refute the belief of Commynes that Edward lacked foresight. War would have been devastating to the economies and populations of both nations, and neither side was anxious to renew the fighting. The maintenance of peace was significant in allowing each monarch an opportunity to solidify his control in his country.

⁴¹Ibid., 277-278.

⁴²Edouard Perroy, The Hundred Years War (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1962), 348.

Diplomatically, Edward's remaining years as king were stormy ones. Although there was temporary peace with France, the hostility was soon to return. The remainder of this thesis is devoted to tracing the events which led to this return of hostility.

CHAPTER III

GEORGE, DUKE OF CLARENCE (1449-1478)

George was the second surviving son of Richard, duke of York, who had been killed in 1460. Edward, the eldest, was seven years older than George, and Richard, the third son of the duke of York, was three years younger than George. In June of 1461, George was given the title of Duke of Clarence by his brother, Edward IV. Later, George was appointed lieutenant of Ireland.¹ Even with these titles Clarence was dissatisfied. He had a higher aspiration--the Crown of England. This aspiration was a major source of trouble for Edward for most of his reign. After an insignificant incident, Edward solved his problem by having Clarence killed in 1478.² The timing of the death and the immediate reasons given by Edward in ordering the death of the duke of Clarence may provide an element of proof to show that Edward may have lost his former emotional stability. This loss of command of his powers of reason is important

¹Warkworth, 1.

²Ingulf, et al., 478-479.

in the events of the later years of his reign, the years with which this thesis is concerned. A brief picture of the deeds or misdeeds of George, duke of Clarence, is needed to show the circumstances which led to his final break with Edward.

The duke of Clarence was not the same character who was depicted by William Shakespeare in his play Richard III.³ He was not the innocent brother who was cruelly tricked into betrayal and who was murdered by his villainous younger brother, Richard. Events of the age show that Clarence was the black sheep in the family of York, although evidence relating to his character is meager. Historians have interpreted his character by his actions, which imply that he had developed from his youth into a conceited person, incapable of loyalty to anything outside of himself and lacking the trait of stability of purpose.⁴ George was born in Dublin Castle in 1449 and even as a young man appeared to lack character and intelligence. He had pale blue eyes, projecting teeth over which his lips did not meet, a false smile and an overbearing manner. He is described by a modern historian as being vain and "womanish",

³See Shakespeare's main source Raphael Holinshed, Holinshed's Chronicles of England and Ireland, ed. Sir Henry Ellis, Vol. III (London: J. Johnson et al., 1808) passim.

⁴See Jacob, Simons, Scofield, Lander.

because of his love in showing off fancy rings and luxurious clothes.⁵ In his youth he came under the influence of the strong-willed earl of Warwick, and Warwick might be blamed for having first drawn him from his loyalty to Edward.⁶ Clarence was basically jealous in nature, and he early showed his jealousy when Edward IV married Elizabeth Woodville in 1463.⁷ The marriage brought several of her relatives to prominence within the government of England.⁸

Warwick became estranged from Edward IV because of his hatred of the Woodville influence on the king and because of Edward's anti-French foreign policy. He secured the loyalty of the duke of Clarence by marrying his eldest daughter, Isabel, to Clarence at Calais on July 11, 1469.⁹ This marriage took place without the permission of Edward IV. Clarence and Warwick quickly moved against Edward in the summer of 1469, when they surprised him and took him prisoner at a village near Coventry. They imprisoned the king in Warwick castle.

⁵Simons, 128-129.

⁶Hall, 264-265.

⁷Fabyan, 654.

⁸Hall, 264-265.

⁹Ingulf, et al., 458.

A calling of a grand council of nobles helped settle the dispute. A list of grievances was accepted by Edward and a full pardon was granted to Clarence, Warwick, and their followers.¹⁰

Clarence and Warwick spent the next six months in self-exile in France. There, they busied themselves in forming an alliance with Margaret of Anjou, the Lancastrian Queen of England, and in gaining the support of Louis XI for a return trip to England. They desired to recover the Crown for Henry VI, which would ensure the return of Warwick as the power behind the throne.¹¹

Edward was surprised by the return of Warwick, Clarence, and their followers who landed at Dartmouth and Plymouth on September 13, 1470. They had been supplied passage on sixty ships owned by Louis XI.¹² The sympathies of the English citizens were divided, but many joined Warwick's army as it moved toward London. His brother, John Neville, marquis of Montague, an ally of Edward and in charge of a large part of his army, defected and almost succeeded in capturing the king. Edward, who had learned of his plans, fled to Holland.¹³

¹⁰Warkworth, 8-9.

¹¹Ibid., 10-11.

¹²Hall, 290-291.

¹³Ingulf, et al., 462.

Warwick released Henry VI from the Tower and held an immediate coronation ceremony. Warwick became the actual ruler of England. He took the offices of Captain of Calais and Lord Chamberlain. He also made himself lieutenant to Henry VI until the arrival of Prince Edward from France.¹⁴ Clarence wished to have a share in the lieutenancy of England, but Warwick gave him only his old position of the lieutenancy of Ireland. The duke of Clarence was upset by this lack of faith in him, and it proved to be a prime cause of his future return to the side of Edward.¹⁵

When he united with the Lancastrians, the duke of Clarence had been promised that he and his heirs would be in direct line to the throne of England if Prince Edward and his wife, Warwick's daughter, Anne, were to have no male heirs. This was no large reward for his alliance with the Lancastrians, and he came to believe that this factor, plus the lack of royal offices that Warwick awarded him for his support were good reasons to cause him to abandon the Lancastrian side.¹⁶

A consideration of his return to Edward may have begun when he was at the court of Louis XI, while plans were being made for Warwick's invasion of England.

¹⁴Jacob, 561.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Scofield, 560.

The chronicler, Hall, wrote that when Clarence was with Louis XI, Edward sent a lady to the duchess of Clarence to help persuade the duke of Clarence that

it was neither naturall, nor honorable to hym, either to condiscende or to take parte, against the house of Yorke, and to set up the house of Lancaster. . . Farthermore she declared that the marriage of therls daughter with Prince Edward, was for none other cause but to make the Prince kyng, and clearly extinguish all the house of York.¹⁷

These reasons reported Hall, "so sancke in the Dukes stomacke, that he promised at his returne, not to be so an extreme enemy to his brother, as he was taken for, whiche promise afterward he did not forget."¹⁸ Other members of his family, including his mother and sisters, also worked for reconciliation between Clarence and Edward IV.

The rule of Lancaster was shortlived as Edward IV, with the help of his brother-in-law, Charles, duke of Burgundy, was able to return to England with an armed force. He entered London on the Thursday before Easter, April 11, 1471.¹⁹ The duke of Clarence had come to Edward's side in an emotional reunion when he had heard of his brother's arrival in England. On Saturday Edward and Clarence met the earl of Warwick in battle at the

¹⁷Hall, 281.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Warkworth, 14.

village of Barnet, and the battle lasted until Easter morning, April 14.²⁰ The battle of Barnet was a terrible defeat for the Lancastrians because the earl of Warwick was killed. Prince Edward, his wife Anne Neville, and his mother, Margaret of Anjou, arrived in England on the day of the earl's death. They raised allies in the southwest. Edward learned of this and pursued them, finally meeting them at Tewkesbury on May 4, 1471. Prince Edward of Lancaster was killed and his mother was captured, ending any further threat from the family of Lancaster.²¹

The duke of Clarence thought when the battles were over and Warwick was dead, that he would be able to secure the lands of the earl of Warwick, but he failed to recognize that his younger brother Richard, duke of Gloucester, then nineteen, might prove to be a problem. Gloucester sought to marry Anne Neville, Warwick's daughter and the Lancastrian Prince Edward's widow, whom he had known since boyhood. Clarence tried to prevent the marriage by hiding Anne as a cook-maid in London. He was unsuccessful, because the duke of Gloucester found her and married her. He was also unsuccessful in persuading his brother, Edward, to deny Gloucester a part of the Warwick lands. The Croyland Chronicler has

²⁰Cal. Milanese Papers, 142.

²¹Jacob, 568-569.

written in his description of the settlement of the lands of Warwick that Edward left the final division of the lands up to the mediation of arbitrators who ensured that both brothers would receive equal shares of the lands.²² The duke of Clarence reacted with great jealousy when he saw that Gloucester was rising steadily in the king's confidence and trust.

In another burst of jealousy caused in part by the preceding incident, the duke of Clarence was suspected of supporting John de Vere, earl of Oxford, who revolted against Edward IV in 1473. Oxford was also backed by the ever-interfering Louis XI and by James III, king of Scotland. Edward did not openly accuse Clarence of treason, but he suspected him and was afterwards on his guard.²³ The earl of Oxford bothered the coast of England, capturing and plundering English ships. He failed in any further attacks on England when Louis XI withdrew support from him out of fear that Edward would find out about the French involvement with the earl and would take revenge. James III also withdrew his support and tried to convince Edward that he had been blameless from the first.²⁴ Edward was kept in a state of anxiety

²²Cal. Milanese Papers, 178.

²³Ingulf, et al., 470.

²⁴Cal. Milanese Papers, 176-179.

for the whole summer of 1473. He was unable to be active in organizing his invasion of France, which he had been occupied with since returning to the Throne in 1471. When he saw that the earl of Oxford would be of no use to his aspirations, Clarence again became reconciled with Edward and stayed by him until their final falling out which occurred after Edward returned from France in 1475.

Clarence accompanied Edward to France in 1475. The duke supported Edward's decision to make a truce with Louis XI. He was with Edward at the meeting with Louis XI at Pécquigny and took part as one of the four arbitrators in negotiating the Treaty of Pécquigny, also known as the Treaty of 1475.²⁵

Edward left both of his brothers in France when he returned to England. He feared that his withdrawal without engaging in any battles with the French might lead to a rebellion among the supporters of the war with France at home in England. He especially feared that these people might back the often unfaithful duke of Clarence in his never ending desire for the Crown.²⁶

George, duke of Clarence, who had once been offered in marriage to a daughter of Louis XI before he had united with the Neville family, had not been too

²⁵Rymer, XII, 478 (see above, p. 19).

²⁶Cal. Milanese Papers, 217.

important in foreign affairs prior to the invasion of France. When his wife, Isabel Neville, died in 1476, he looked for marriage alliances in order to increase his power both inside and outside of England. With the death of Charles of Burgundy in 1477, Clarence saw himself as a good match for Mary, the heiress of Burgundy.²⁷ His own sister, Margaret, the dowager duchess of Burgundy, foolishly encouraged him in this match. Clarence had always been her favorite brother.²⁸ Edward IV would have no part of the scheme of his brother to gain land and foreign power. He would not even accept his own wife's idea that her brother, Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, also recently having lost his wife, might become a good husband for Mary of Burgundy. It was a relief for Edward when Mary soon married Maximilian of Austria and removed the tempting marriage opportunity from his family's range of aspiration.²⁹ This act, plus Edward's later thwarting of a marriage alliance between Clarence and a daughter of James III of Scotland, caused the duke to become almost totally estranged from the court of his brother.³⁰ This caused

²⁷Ingulf, et al., 478.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Chrimes, Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII, 123.

³⁰Ingulf, et al., 478-479.

Edward to become watchful, and when the duke of Clarence's household was linked with sorcery and murder, the king had Clarence indicted for crimes against the Crown. The duke was brought before Parliament. Edward was the only one to speak against him at the trial, and Clarence denied all the charges. His denials did not save him, and he was convicted and sentenced to death.³¹ On February 18, 1478, he was executed, probably by being drowned in a bath.³² The Croyland Chronicler believed that Edward later regretted having Clarence executed.

The king however, although, as I really believe, he inwardly repented very often of this act, after this period, performed the duties of his office with such a high hand, that he appeared to be dreaded by all his subjects, while he himself stood in fear of no one.³³

The king was justified in getting rid of Clarence, but his actions were not consistent with his previous actions or with his personality. Edward often had forgiven Clarence. It appeared that the king had a tolerant and forgiving personality, especially toward members of his family. The final handling of the duke of Clarence seems to indicate a decline in the powers of judgment of Edward IV. It may be that adversity

³¹Ibid., 470-480.

³²Jacob, 581.

³³Ingulf, et al., 480.

rather than success brought out his best qualities. He seemed to perform best when fighting for his Crown or while invading other lands. Success brought him to a position of great power where there was no one to challenge his policies. The very success which he had obtained and the fulfillment of many of his projects seemed to have left him with no clear objectives. His tendency to over-indulge in the pleasures of life appeared to have induced him to lose his power of reason. The murder of the duke of Clarence was a prime example. The years of conflict with the duke and the duke's death may be related to Edward's diplomacy for the years 1477-1483. It appeared that in these last few years of his reign his luck or ability in the sphere of foreign affairs had deserted him. During these years he was to feel the sharp pangs of disillusionment and failure in some of his most wanted schemes. The death of the duke of Clarence appeared to mark the beginning of the period of this disillusionment and failure which was to climax with Edward's death and the ensuing death of the house of York. The events following the death of Clarence show a shortsightedness on the Valois and Yorkist sides that led to new hostilities.

CHAPTER IV

LOUIS XI - DIPLOMACY (1477-1480)

The death of George, duke of Clarence, and the ensuing decline in the diplomatic ability of Edward IV, as previously indicated, were not coincidental. The death of Clarence in early 1478, may have been good news for Louis XI. His death was certainly no great loss for Louis, even though the duke, at one time, had been an ally and a tool of Louis XI against Edward. It may have indicated that a kind of long-range poisoning of Edward's mind by Louis was taking effect.¹ Not only was the ability of Edward in decline, but so was England. Plague and crop failures were prevalent in the years 1478 and 1479. The plague affected the cities and caused great suffering and some unrest among the citizens. This unrest is reflected in reports of internal disorder, although there is no report of rebellion against the king.²

Because of England's domestic problems at this time, the basic need in English foreign policy was stability. This was what Edward strived for. Anglo-French relations

¹ Scofield, II, 193.

² Gairdiner, Paston Letters, V, 28.

continued to be good until 1478, when a gradual worsening began. Louis had tried, since Edward's invasion in 1475, to ingratiate himself with the English king. In addition to providing a pension of 50,000 crowns to Edward every year, Louis, in 1476, sent 700,000 casks of wine to the people of England as a gesture to help better Anglo-French relations.³ Louis, a year later, came to feel that he was in such good favor with Edward that he asked him for the special favor of letting his own agent in England take out English goods without paying customs duties on them.⁴

Diplomacy between Edward and Louis XI in the summer of 1477 concerned a renewal of the treaty of 1475.⁵ Edward chose delegates to meet with the ambassadors of the king of France in London to negotiate a new treaty.⁶ The renewal was quickly agreed upon by both parties on July 21, 1477.⁷ The new treaty included provisions for the yearly pension of 50,000 crowns to be paid to Edward. It also provided for the reaffirmation of the amity between the two monarchs for their lives and for a year after the death of whomever died first.⁸

³Cal. Milnesse Papers, I, 229.

⁴Scofield, II, 193.

⁵(see above, p. 19).

⁶Rymer, XII, 51.

⁷Ibid., 46.

⁸Ibid.

More important than the extension of the treaty was the conversation recorded during the negotiations in which the French ambassadors, under instructions from Louis XI, asked Edward to assist Louis in an invasion of the Burgundian lands. This was the first mention of an alliance to attack the lands of Mary, duchess of Burgundy (1477-1482), which was to become the major issue of Anglo-French diplomatic relations between 1477 and 1480.

Mary came to power following the death of her father, Charles, in a battle against Swiss mercenaries on January 5, 1477.⁹ Louis XI took the opportunity to declare the late duke of Burgundy and his daughter to be rebellious subjects of the king of France, thus forfeiting all their rights to the duchy and county of Burgundy, and the Low Countries.¹⁰ Louis at once confiscated the duchy of Burgundy and the Low Countries.¹¹ In August of 1477, he lay siege to St. Omer, a city near Calais, as he moved to occupy the Low Countries.¹²

⁹Commines, I, 337; Ingulf, et al., 477-478; Joseph Calmette and G. Perinelle, Louis XI et l'Angleterre (Paris: A. Picard, 1903), 224.

¹⁰Seoffield, II, 192-196.

¹¹Albert, Guérard, France, A Modern History (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959); John S. C. Bridge, A History of France From the Death of Louis XI (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1921), 4; Mattingly, 126.

¹²Ibid., 196.

In the meantime Mary negotiated a marriage with Maximilian, the archduke of Austria and the son of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick III. Maximilian and Mary were married on August 18, 1477.¹³ Mary hoped that this alliance would discourage Louis from any further attacks on what remained of her lands, but her new husband brought her little immediate aid.¹⁴ Louis continued his hostile action.

Edward was evasive in his answer to Louis XI's proposal for English aid to invade the Burgundian lands. He wished to maintain his policy of no foreign alignments other than the ones he already possessed.¹⁵ Louis continued to press Edward for an alliance against Mary, as he proceeded with his attack on Burgundy. Edward thought the proposal over again and then instructed his ambassadors, who had just returned from the French court, to return to France and protest against the attack on his niece. He told his ambassadors to ask Louis what excuse he had to offer for what he was doing.¹⁶ Louis told the ambassadors that Edward would regret not entering the war with him. He explained at great length

¹³Calmette, 225.

¹⁴Gairdiner, Paston Letters, V, 297-298.

¹⁵Jacob, 582.

¹⁶Scotfield, II, 196.

that the actions of the "Madame d'Autriche," as he called Mary, against France were a "trés juste et raisonnable cause" for the attack.¹⁷ He asserted that he was justified in seizing the rest of the Burgundian lands because they had been forfeited by the rebellions, the disobedience, and the crimes committed first by Charles and afterwards by his daughter. He also asserted that he was entitled by right of conquest to the lands outside of France which Charles had held.¹⁸ He explained that the sole right and title which the house of Burgundy had to the duchy and the county of Burgundy had been derived from the gift King John II of France (1350-1364) once made to his son, Philip. It was not unusual for the kings and princes to give their younger sons gifts of land or money to help in their support. These gifts were called appanages. Louis XI said that in France it was customary for all appanages to return to the crown if there were no male heirs.¹⁹ The duchy of Burgundy in France and the Free County of Burgundy in the Empire legally had reverted, at the death of Charles,

¹⁷As quoted in Scofield, II, 196.

¹⁸Ibid., 198.

¹⁹Louis claimed both the Duchy and the Free County of Burgundy. The Free County had been subinfeudated to the Empire but had been controlled by the Duchy since the Capetians. Hay, 98, 143.

duke of Burgundy, to the crown of France. Mary had no rights to them whatsoever. Louis declared that Mary had offended him in another way by breaking a French law. By this law, the daughters of princes of the blood could not marry without the consent of the king. She had married Maximilian and had not consulted Louis.²⁰

While these discussions were being held with Edward, Louis was negotiating with Maximilian. The negotiations with Maximilian were successful in a sense. The war had not been going well for Louis in the late summer of 1477. He had lost the support of the Swiss mercenaries, an important French military commander had defected to the Burgundian side, and the towns in Flanders were resisting vigorously. He also realized that it would take time to win Edward to his side.²¹ The year's truce that Louis concluded with Mary and Maximilian on September 18, 1477, promised to restore to them, within a month, all places which his armies had taken in the county of Burgundy and the county of Hainault.²²

Even though Louis had called off his armies, that action did not mean he still did not wish to conquer what remained of the Burgundian lands. Soon after the

²⁰Scotfield, II, 198-200.

²¹Jacob, 583; Scotfield, II, 200.

²²Ibid.

truce with Mary and Maximilian, Louis sent his emissary, Charles de Martigny, bishop of Elne, to England to persuade Edward to join him in opposing Maximilian. The bishop persuaded Edward to send ambassadors to France, and he did on November 30, 1477.²³ The ambassadors explained to Louis that Edward had been slow in answering the question of English involvement because he had to consult with, and gain the approval of his Council, influential nobles, and members of the Commons. These men had raised several objections to the proposed war with the Burgundian rulers. Edward wanted a good explanation of the reason for Louis's quarrel with the Burgundians. Edward's ambassadors also claimed that it would be difficult to raise the money to support a war. The close commercial ties of England with the Low Countries caused the English king to hesitate in taking any hostile action against the duchess of Burgundy. Another reason mentioned by the ambassadors concerned the lack of agreement between England and France over the division of the proposed conquests. They then said that although there was amity provided in the renewal of the treaty of 1475 between the king of England and the king of France, that amity was for the lives of the two monarchs only, whereas, the war, if once begun, might outlast the lifetime of both kings. England possibly could find

²³ Scofield, II, 200; Rymer, XII, 50.

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²³ Scofield, II, 200; Rymer, XII, 50.

herself left alone in the war and could suffer a great loss. The king of England and his subjects feared plunging into a war on the Continent without knowing on whom they could depend. Knowing Louis XI as they did, they probably were justified in their fears.

Edward did not accept Louis' proposal, but he did not refuse it either.²⁴ It was at this time that Clarence was ordered killed.

The same problems and issues present in Anglo-Burgundian-French diplomacy before Clarence's death continued through the years 1478-1480. These were years dominated by the complex negotiations, discussions, and intrigues of a triangle of powers - England, France, and Burgundy. They were filled with numerous negotiations and discussions which were basically designed either to protect the balance of power in Western Europe or to advance the power of a single ruler. The tracing of events in these three years may provide a basis for what was to happen in the future.

The bishop of Elne was still in England in the spring of 1478, trying to persuade Edward to go to war against Mary of Burgundy. Edward still maintained three ambassadors at the court of Louis XI. While the

²⁴Jacob, 583.

discussions with Louis were taking place, Edward sent an ambassador, Sir John Coke, to Burgundy in May of 1478, to negotiate a new commercial treaty between England and Burgundy. Coke was successful in arriving at a treaty similar to a previous treaty that had been made in 1467, but without the reservations concerning the importation of English cloth into Burgundian territories and the movement of war material out of Burgundian lands.²⁵

When Louis learned of this treaty, he must have realized that Edward was not interested in agreeing to a treaty leading to war on Mary of Burgundy. Louis remained undaunted. He simply ignored these relations between Edward and the Burgundians and proposed to the English ambassadors present at his court that in place of the treaty of peace between England and France that had only recently been renewed, there should be arranged a one-hundred and one year truce. He also proposed that the pension of 50,000 crowns a year should be paid to England by the sovereign of France for the length of the truce.²⁶ Louis then persuaded the English ambassadors

²⁵This treaty was ratified by Edward IV and by Charles, count of Charolais, in October, 1467. It was part of a pact of friendship between the two. Philip, duke of Burgundy, Charles's father, prohibited the importation of English cloth into the Burgundian lands. The commercial treaty of 1467 declared that this prohibition would be formally discussed when Charles became duke of Burgundy. (Calmette, 228; Jacob, 583; Simons, 130-131).

²⁶Scofield, II, 226; Jacob, 583.

to discuss the subject of the division of the possible conquests if the Anglo-French alliance was extended to include a joint invasion of the Burgundian lands. The English ambassadors informed Louis that by agreeing to any kind of a division, Edward would be withdrawing his claim to his inheritance of the French crown. Louis replied that this difficulty could be overcome by stating explicitly, when the division was made, that there was to be no impairment of the rights and claims of either monarch. He said that those rights would be in no more danger from the proposed partition treaty than they were from the existing treaty of amity. Louis proposed that all lands conquered after England had declared war on Mary and Maximilian should be held by Edward and himself jointly while the war lasted. When the war was over, Edward would be entitled to take all the acquired territories outside of the kingdom of France, with the exception of such places as Lille, Douai, St. Omer, and Aire, which were part of the ancient demesne of the crown of France.²⁷ Flanders and the duchy and county of Burgundy were to remain in Louis' hands.²⁸ Louis further proposed that Edward should immediately sign

²⁷Scofield, II, 227.

²⁸Lettres de Louis XI, roi de France (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1890), VII, 36.

the one-hundred and one year truce and declare war on Burgundy, leaving the final peace treaty between England and France to be negotiated at leisure. Louis also suggested that he and Edward might meet and discuss these matters together.²⁹

This proposal did not sound overly generous to Edward's ambassadors. They saw that the difficulty of Louis' proposal to divide the lands after the conquest, was that the lands which made up the English share, Holland, Zeeland, and Brabant, were a part of the Empire. Anyone who attacked these areas would run the risk of finding himself at war, not only with Mary and Maximilian, but with Maximilian's father, the Emperor Frederick III.³⁰

Edward's ambassadors expressed another concern to Louis. This was the problem of the loss of commercial ties with the Low Countries which would occur if Edward helped Louis attack Mary and Maximilian. In reply to Edward's worry, Louis proposed that as soon as Edward declared war he would proclaim that all foreign cloth, wool, and tin, except that coming from England, should be excluded from France while the war lasted.³¹

While Edward's ambassadors were at the French court discussing Louis' proposed joint invasion of the Burgundian lands, Frederick III sent an ambassador to

²⁹Scofield, II, 226.

³⁰Ibid., 227.

³¹Jacob, 582-583.

Edward with a proposal to form a marriage alliance between England and the Empire. He offered his daughter in marriage to Edward's eldest son. Frederick also asked for an alliance for mutual defense against the king of France.³² Edward did not agree to either of these proposals, but on December 18, 1478, he did agree to a secret league of friendship with Mary and Maximilian. This friendship was based on the renewal of two articles of the treaty concluded with Charles in 1474, before Edward's expedition to France.³³

Edward now could inform Louis that he did not want any war with Mary and Maximilian. He was content with his pension from Louis and with peace. The English monarch did have one major concern in late December of 1478. He was concerned about the marriage treaty between England and France. He wanted the marriage of his twelve-year old daughter, Elizabeth, and the dauphin of France to take place at once.³⁴ Edward sent ambassadors to the French court to demand the payment of the dowry of 60,000 crowns promised to Edward in the treaty of 1475. Louis assured Edward that the marriage would take place when the dauphin and Elizabeth were of age. As for the question of the dowry, he referred it to his Council, who decided that he was not bound to pay any dowry at

³²Scofield, II, 240-241.

³³Rymer, XII, 95-97.

³⁴Scofield, II, 241.

that time, because it was not the custom in France to pay the dowry before the marriage took place.³⁵

Giovanni Cagnola, the Milanese ambassador to the French court, wrote a letter to Gian Galeazzo Sforza, duke of Milan, on April 16, 1479, that stated:

However, he gave them a thousand fair words, as well as hopes, although from what I understand, the king is firmly resolved that the marriage shall not take place, and so he temporizes until such time as he shall have worked his plans.³⁶

So Edward was put off again, frustrating his desire of gaining more money and causing him to distrust Louis XI even more.

In February of 1479, Charles de Martigny, bishop of Elne, was persuaded by Edward IV's ambassadors to sign three agreements which were to be submitted to the kings of England and France for their approval.³⁷ The first agreement was for a truce between England and France which was to be for one-hundred and one years. In this agreement the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany were named among the king of England's allies.³⁸ The second agreement was a promise that Louis and his successors would pay to Edward and his successors 50,000 crowns a

³⁵Ibid., 242; Jacob, 580.

³⁶Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 235.

³⁷Scofield, II, 246-247.

³⁸Rymer, XII, 101-103.

year as long as a truce continued.³⁹ The third agreement was that a treaty of amity, like the truce, should continue for one-hundred and one years.⁴⁰ These three agreements were to be ratified by both kings, by the three estates of France and by the Parliament of England.⁴¹

A diplomatic paradox appeared at this point in Anglo-French relations. This occurred when Edward and Louis joined to intervene, through diplomatic means, in Italian politics. In late 1479 and early 1480, the Italian states were in advanced stage of political disorder, which was a situation that often occurred in those areas.

The major struggle in Italy centered around a war between two strong states, Florence and Naples. The Florentine allies were Venice and Milan, and the Neapolitan ally was Pope Sixtus IV. The Pazzi conspiracy in Florence was the first major outbreak of this conflict. The Pope and the Neapolitan ruler, Ferdinand, induced the prominent Pazzi family in Florence to revolt against Florence's most powerful family, the de' Medici. An assassination attempt was carried out by two priests hired by the Pazzi family and Pope Sixtus

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 105-108.

⁴¹Ibid.

against Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici. Giuliano was murdered and Lorenzo was wounded. The Florentine population was so incensed by this act that it was not stirred by the exhortations of the Pazzi leadership to follow its call to revolt for freedom. The Pazzi family and their followers, seeing no chance of success, tried to flee from the city, but most were caught and executed. Commynes estimated that there were two hundred Pazzi relatives and followers killed before the city was restored to order.⁴²

The Pope, learning of his failure in Florence and the victory of the de' Medici family, excommunicated the Florentine citizens and ordered his army and the army of Naples to march against Florence. Several battles took place with no clear victory for either side. It was at this time that Edward IV and Louis XI joined to try to solve the problems in Italy. They wished to mediate between the two sides in order to prevent the Emperor, Frederick III, and his son, Maximilian, from intervening in Italian affairs. They did not wish other foreign problems like the conflict with Maximilian over the Burgundian lands.⁴³

⁴²Commynes, II, 26-29.

⁴³Ibid., 30.

Edward and Louis agreed that the key figure in the Italian situation was Pope Sixtus IV. The best way to settle the struggle was to try to force Sixtus, through threats of their outside intervention, to make peace. Sixtus did not like the role that Edward was playing in this diplomatic move. He proposed that France should do all the mediating.⁴⁴

While discussions were going on in Italy, Louis was defeated by Maximilian in a battle at Guinegate on August 7, 1479.⁴⁵ The loss was a shock for Louis. It caused him to quickly change his Italian policies, and he withdrew his and Edward's diplomatic services. In March of 1480, a treaty of peace was signed by Ferdinand of Naples and Lorenzo de' Medici of Florence.⁴⁶

Edward IV, seeing that the powers of influence of England in Italy were far less than those of France, was jealous. This jealousy caused him to grow somewhat more hostile towards Louis. Because of their failure in Italian diplomacy, the relationship between Edward and Louis appeared to worsen from that moment on; but there was no sudden break at this point.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Scofield, II, 267.

⁴⁵ Commynes, II, 30.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 36.

⁴⁷ Scofield, II, 270.

The joint intervention into Italian politics did not stop Louis XI from commenting on the proposed agreements that had been signed by the bishop of Elne.⁴⁸ Louis told an ambassador from England that the documents sent to him by the bishop of Elne included some clauses which would injure him without benefiting the king of England. In the renewal of the truce for one-hundred and one years, as agreed to by the bishop of Elne in February of 1479, Edward had named the duke of Burgundy among his allies. Louis recognized only himself as the duke of Burgundy since the duchy of Burgundy had reverted to him at the death of Charles. Louis also disagreed with several minor points in the other two agreements.⁴⁹

Edward's patience with Louis was now rapidly breaking down. Louis would not ratify the agreements which the bishop of Elne had signed, and he would not pay the dowry that had been promised Edward's daughter. Ambassadors continued to be exchanged for the first six months of 1480, but no agreement was reached on either of these points.⁵⁰

A major breakthrough in Anglo-French-Burgundian diplomacy occurred when Edward's sister, Margaret, the

⁴⁸Ibid., 261-263 (see above, pp. 38-39).

⁴⁹Ibid., 271-280.

⁵⁰Ibid., 285.

wife of the late duke Charles of Burgundy and the step-mother of Mary of Burgundy, visited England in July and August of 1480. Margaret had been instructed by Mary and Maximilian to discuss, and if possible, to negotiate a stronger alliance with Edward. She asked her brother to supply archers for her son-in-law, Maximilian, to aid him in his struggle with Louis.⁵¹ She succeeded in obtaining the services of 2,000 English archers.⁵² Margaret was even more successful in other activities. She was able to arrange with her brother on August 1, 1480, for the renewal of the treaty of perpetual friendship, which Edward and the late Duke Charles of Burgundy had signed on July 25, 1474.⁵³ On August 3, 1480, Edward agreed to send 6,000 archers to assist Maximilian and Mary against Louis.⁵⁴ The next day a promise was made by Margaret that Mary and Maximilian would take over the payment of the yearly pension if the French king ceased to pay it because of the aid given to the Burgundians by King Edward.⁵⁵ To further solidify relations between England and

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., 289.

⁵³Rymer, XI, 125.

⁵⁴Ibid., 126.

⁵⁵Ibid., 127.

Burgundy, a treaty of marriage between Philip, count of Charolais, son of Maximilian and Mary, and Anne, daughter of Edward IV, was drawn up.⁵⁶ Edward then agreed to try to make a truce with Louis XI, which had the stipulation that he would be allowed to mediate between Mary and Maximilian and Louis. If Louis did not accept this truce, then Edward would help the Burgundians against France.⁵⁷

Without Margaret's knowledge, Maximilian entered into negotiations with Louis XI. These negotiations ended on August 21, 1480, in a seven month's truce with an agreement that plenipotentiaries would meet on October 15, 1480, to negotiate a lasting peace.⁵⁸

The news of Maximilian's treaty with Louis was an unpleasant surprise for both Edward and Margaret. She apologized to Edward for her son-in-law's action. Margaret was somewhat heartened when Maximilian wrote to her and requested that Edward send representatives to the October meeting to aid in the negotiations to achieve lasting peace between the duchess of Burgundy and Louis XI. Edward agreed to send representatives.

⁵⁶Ibid., 128.

⁵⁷Ibid., 133.

⁵⁸Scofield, II, 291.

He also promised Margaret that he would agree to the treaties with Maximilian, if the duke signed them within the allotted time and if he would take no other steps toward peace with Louis without Edward's consent.⁵⁹

The conference that had been set by Louis and Maximilian for October 15 failed to take place. Louis XI was chiefly to blame for this, because he objected to Maximilian's demand that the English be represented at the meeting. Louis claimed that the English only wanted war, and because of this they would obstruct any negotiations for peace between himself and the Burgundians.⁶⁰ Louis and Maximilian could not reach any agreement concerning this point, and no final peace was achieved.

Anglo-French relations were not helped by the short truce between Louis and Maximilian. They continued to grow worse because of the rise of a new problem for England on its own border to the north--Scotland. Scotland was a perennial ally of France. Therefore, Edward suspected French involvement in this new threat. Edward became occupied with this new problem and let political affairs on the Continent be carried on without his aid or intervention.

⁵⁹Ibid., 293-295.

⁶⁰Lettres de Louis XI, VII, 295-297, 301.

CHAPTER V

EDWARD IV'S PROBLEMS WITH SCOTLAND (1480-1482)

English diplomatic relations with France and Burgundy in 1480 became less important to Edward IV than what was happening on the northern border of England. Since early 1480, the Scots had been causing trouble in Northern England. As they had done off and on for centuries, clan chieftains and their followers kept coming into Northumberland to loot Englishmen.¹ Either James III of Scotland had no control over these clan chieftains, or he deliberately tried to create a problem for Edward IV while the English monarch was moving toward unity with the duchess of Burgundy against Louis XI.²

James III was not as anti-English as some of his predecessors. In fact he displayed Anglophile tendencies. He and Edward IV had concluded a marriage treaty before Edward's invasion of France in 1475. Edward wanted this treaty in order to protect himself in the North.³ The treaty provided that Edward's second daughter, Cecily,

¹Jacob, 584.

²Simons, 290.

³Gordon Donaldson, Scottish Kings (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967), 114.

and James's son, the future James IV, would be married when they came of age. Edward was to provide a dowry to be paid in regular installments to James III in the years following 1474.⁴ Until 1480, this treaty had kept peace between the two kingdoms.

It may be questioned why the Scots wished to attack England, knowing that there probably would be instant retaliation. James III was pressured by Louis XI and by his nobility to enter into a war with Edward.⁵ Historically, the Scottish king never had been able to make his authority acceptable to the nobility. James III was no exception to this.⁶ It was recorded that his nobles held him in contempt for his love of art and science. Musicians, scientists, and architects made up a large part of his court, and a number of these had joined James' Council.⁷ Members of the Scottish nobility considered these men of low rank and devious motives. They had reason to fear and to be jealous for in 1479, the Council persuaded James to act against certain members of the nobility, driving many of them from Scotland. For unknown reasons James imprisoned his own brother, Alexander, duke of

⁴Rymer, XI, 836-837 (see above, p. 15).

⁵Donaldson, 114.

⁶Hay, 136.

⁷Gairdiner, Lancaster and York, 206.

Albany, for a brief period of time. Alexander was able to escape to France.⁸ Edward Hall observed:

But this king James beyng a man of a sharpe wit, more wedded to his awne opinion then reason would scace bere, would neither her nor geve credite to them, that spake contrary to his awne phantesie, or this imagined opinion . . . he so punished and greved his nobilitie, bothe with emprisonment, exaccions, and death, that some of their voluntarie will, went into Exile, and other fainyng cause to departe, fled into other landes and straunge countreys.⁹

This is a clear account of what was happening to a segment of Scottish nobility in 1479 and 1480. To what extent James's actions were carried out against the nobility has never been determined. It appears to have made a good excuse to justify the movement of the alienated nobles to govern and to control Scotland.¹⁰ The Scottish nobles had problems in opposing or in uniting to overthrow James III, because he maintained his popularity with the commons.¹¹

Before James III had agreed to a marriage alliance with Edward IV in 1474, Scotland had been an ally of France. In 1480, James III was forced by his nobles and by Louis XI to move again toward closer relations with

⁸Hall, 330; Donaldson, 107.

⁹Ibid., 330-331.

¹⁰Donaldson, 118.

¹¹Ibid., 107.

France. Louis was growing tired of paying Edward to keep him allied with France, especially when French money was not keeping Edward away from an alliance with the duke of Burgundy. Louis feared another combination of his neighbors, similar to the one which five years before had threatened his crown.¹² He knew that he must find a way to stop this threat, and Scotland was most convenient. The circumstances were different in 1480 than they had been in the early 1470's. He could no longer help cause a civil war in England, because the Lancastrians had been extinguished, but he could help cause a renewal of the conflict between England and Scotland in order to keep Edward away from the problems which were occurring on the Continent. As in the previous invasion of France, Edward had to be sure of peace with the Scots before he could take part as an ally of Burgundy in any invasion of France.¹³

It was reported by Carlo Visconti, the Milanese Ambassador at the French court, to Giangaleazzo Sforza, duke of Milan, in October of 1480, that the Scots had attacked the English. He also thought that the French king had a hand in the attack as he wrote:

¹²Chronicle of the White Rose, 168; Scofield, 302. The rulers of Burgundy, England, and Brittany were allied in 1475 against Louis XI.

¹³Scofield, II, 302.

I think it is the handiwork of the king here, Louis XI in order that others may have to think more of their own affairs than those of others. I am confirmed in this opinion because I chance to have seen a letter of the King of Scotland to the king here, in which he advises him that the English had made an incursion into his country, but his people had forthwith cast them out, and they had but little harm and had gone away with the worst of it . . . In conclusion, he asks for one or two gunners or bombardiers and some artillery, saying that he has need of both. This makes me practically certain that the king here has a hand in it, since he asks him for help against the English.¹⁴

Knowing the devious mind of Louis XI and having seen his handiwork in diplomatic actions and acts of war throughout the twenty years of his reign, it was easy for Edward and the Milanese ambassador to assume that Louis was giving aid to the Scots.

In the late fall of 1480, Edward became too occupied with Scotland to aid Maximilian in any invasion of France, as they had agreed in their treaties of alliance in August of 1480.¹⁵ When the October meeting to negotiate a permanent peace between Louis and Maximilian fell through, Maximilian returned to his plan to invade France, hoping that he would receive help from Edward. This invasion would take place as soon as his truce with Louis ended in March, 1481.¹⁶ Maximilian soon learned

¹⁴ Cal. Milanese Papers, I, 244-245.

¹⁵ (see above, 42).

¹⁶ Jacob, 584-585.

that any aid from Edward IV was to be denied him, because Edward considered his problems with Scotland as the primary object of his foreign policy. He ignored his agreements to aid Burgundy, as he organized a naval and land force to deal with Scotland.¹⁷

Edward's movement against Scotland in January, 1481, consisted of developing a land force to be commanded by Richard, duke of Gloucester, and a fleet of ships to be lead by John, lord Howard.¹⁸ The fleet had two purposes. One was to attack the coast of Scotland, and the other was to protect England from the Scots and the French.¹⁹ The fleet was made up of four large ships and several smaller ones and employed approximately three thousand men.²⁰

The preparations for war with Scotland were similar to those preparations for war prior to Edward's invasion of France in 1475. Even though his finances were much better in 1481 than in 1475, Edward knew that he could not carry on any extended invasion without direct financial assistance from the people of England. He sent out letters to each city in England asking for benevolences

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ingulf, et al., 481.

¹⁹Scofield, II, 303.

²⁰Ibid.

to support the war. Most cities responded, but the money received was not enough, and he found it necessary to ask Parliament to impose a tax on the English people.²¹

Louis XI had led James III to believe that Edward's mind was in a bad state, that his life of over-indulgence had brought him to such an advanced state of lethargy that he would not retaliate against the threats of Scotland. When James heard of Edward's preparations, he grew worried and sent ambassadors to discuss Anglo-Scottish problems, but these men were rebuffed by Edward without a hearing.²²

In March of 1481, Maximilian was still observing his truce with France, though the truce was to end on March 27. There were no hopes for an extension as Maximilian planned to attack France, even without the aid from Edward. In April of 1481, Maximilian secured an alliance with Francis II, duke of Brittany, who promised monetary support for Burgundy against France.²³ A few weeks later, in May, Edward IV obtained a marriage treaty with Francis II for the marriage of his son Edward, prince of Wales, to Francis's daughter, Anne. Edward

²¹Ibid., 304-305.

²²Ibid., 305-306.

²³Ibid., 312-313.

and Francis made this treaty to protect themselves in case either of them were forced to go to war against Louis XI.²⁴

A few days after the final ratification of the marriage treaty with Brittany, two French ships were captured by the English near Calais. It was reported that there were a number of Scots on board.²⁵ This added strength to the case against the French, who were believed to have been aiding Scotland, and made Edward even more determined to fight the Scots.²⁶

Since the fall of 1480, an army under the command of the duke of Gloucester had been skirmishing in the north. In November of 1480, Edward was ordered by Parliament to raise another force and lead it to the north to aid Gloucester in an invasion of Scotland. Before doing this, Edward had to raise money to finance the expedition. He also looked for allies among the dissident Scottish nobles, and he found several in April of 1481.²⁷ The most important ally was Alexander, duke of Albany, the brother of James III. Albany was in line for the throne of Scotland after James's son, the

²⁴Rymer, XII, 142.

²⁵Scotfield, II, 314.

²⁶Ibid., 315.

²⁷Jacob, 586.

future James IV.²⁸ Edward IV sent an emissary to France, where Albany was in exile. The emissary relayed an offer from Edward in which he would recognize Albany as king of Scotland if he would help drive James III from the throne. Edward also asked that the duke of Albany recognize the right of England to Berwick castle and town, which Gloucester was besieging, and the whole of the western March up to the headwaters of the Esk and Liddell rivers.²⁹ Berwick was a port city northeast of England which Margaret of Anjou had sold to Scotland while Edward IV was fighting to solidify his hold on her husband's former throne in 1461.³⁰ The duke also had to promise to do homage and fealty to the king of England, break off any Scottish alliance with France, and to arrange his life according to the laws of the Christian Church so that he could marry Edward's daughter, Cecily.³¹ This proposed marriage broke the marriage treaty between Edward and James III, in which Cecily had been promised to the future James IV. Albany came to England at the end of April, and the final terms of an agreement were arranged.³²

²⁸Polydore Vergil, 170.

²⁹Jacob, 586.

³⁰Hall, 335.

³¹Jacob, 586.

³²Ibid., 585.

Edward was slow in moving to aid the duke of Gloucester, but Richard was able to hold his own, even though he could not invade Scotland without Edward's help.³³ Edward was detained in London, as he was still negotiating with Maximilian. Both men were encouraged by reports of Louis's illness, hoping that he might be near death. Nothing came of the reports, and Louis lived to continue his bothersome ways.³⁴ Edward did not start for the north until September 22, 1481, and he only got as far as Nottingham, where he was to stay two weeks before returning to London.³⁵ It has never been known why Edward did not go to aid his brother, Richard. It may have been that Edward became ill, or that he simply became reluctant to extend the war into Scotland. Edward may have discovered an easier and less costly means of dealing with Scotland, because while he was traveling north he decided to renew the treaty of July, 1477. This action ensured the continuance of the truce between France and England.³⁶ Louis paid for this renewal by promising to have nothing more to do with the Scots.³⁷

³³ Scofield, 318.

³⁴ Scofield, II, 267. Louis XI suffered a stroke in 1479 and was never well after that. (Ibid.)

³⁵ Ibid., 320.

³⁶ Ibid. (see above, p. 49).

³⁷ Commynes, II, 57.

The duke of Gloucester continued the war in Scotland, as his forces besieged Berwick the whole winter of 1481-1482. James III made no move to aid this city on the coast, nor did he make adequate provisions to defend Scotland from an invasion by the forces of Gloucester and the rebel Scots.³⁸

The breach between the Scottish nobles and James III hindered the efforts of James and the Scottish Parliament to mobilize a system of defense against Gloucester. They also were hindered by the lack of expected aid from Louis XI, which stopped when Edward renewed the treaty of July, 1477.³⁹ In spite of these problems James gathered a small army to meet the invasion of Gloucester and Albany. The Scottish nobles met with James and claimed that they would support him if he gave up his court favorites. He refused to give them up, so the nobles captured James and confined him in Edinburgh Castle.⁴⁰

In the summer of 1482, Gloucester learned that the Scottish army was in disarray. He and his army left the siege at Berwick, and marched through the Scottish

³⁸ Polydore Vergil, 170.

³⁹ Scofield, II, 344.

⁴⁰ Hall, 332-333; Donaldson, 107.

countryside, burning and looting. He headed for Edinburgh which surrendered to him without resistance on August 1, 1482.⁴¹

After Edinburgh had been taken, Gloucester went out to meet the rest of the Scottish forces at Haddington, but there was no clash, as the Scottish lords asked for a treaty of peace and a renewal of the marriage treaty between James III and Edward IV, in which the future James IV and Cecily of York were to be married. Gloucester greeted the request with the remark that "he did not know his brother's mind about the former treaty."⁴²

Richard knew that the duke of Albany had been promised Cecily in marriage and feared promising her to James III's son without knowledge of what his brother wanted.⁴³ The duke of Gloucester announced that if the Scottish lords did desire peace, then they must pay back all the money sent to James III for Cecily's dowry, and that they must promise to surrender Berwick castle or promise not to interfere with the siege of it if they did not have the power to demand surrender of the fortress.⁴⁴

Gloucester did not demand the abdication of James III in favor of the duke of Albany. He knew, as did Albany,

⁴¹Jacob, 587.

⁴²Hall, 333.

⁴³Ibid., 334 (see above, p. 49).

⁴⁴Hall, 333.

that the nobles recognized the feelings of the Scottish commons and did not favor the deposing of James III. James was the lawful king, and Scottish nobles and commons accepted his hereditary rights. This strong sense of justice of the Scottish nobility and commons overcame any desire they might have had for a new king. The duke of Albany already had been approached by some of the Scottish lords, and claimed that he was willing to renounce his usurpation of the throne for the return of his lands.⁴⁵

And also that our Soverane Loud shall frely Gif to him and to the Persons being with him, that he will herefter Neme and desire full and plane Remissions of all Offensis and Crimis committit be him or thaim, also wels of his and thair being in Ingland aspiring and tending to the Throne of Scotland.⁴⁶

The duke of Gloucester and the English forces gained the promise from the Scottish lords that if the king of England did not agree on the marriage between the future James IV and Cecily of York, then the dowry would be paid back to Edward in installments as originally paid to James III.⁴⁷

Until the agreements with the Scottish lords, Berwick castle had been defended against all attacks. When

⁴⁵Rymer, XII, 160.

⁴⁶Ibid., 160-161.

⁴⁷Hall, 335-336; Rymer, XII, 161.

Gloucester left Edinburgh with his gains, he hurried back to Berwick. The Scottish lords thought of intervening in the siege of Berwick, but Gloucester's forces were superior. The lords were forced to negotiate. Gloucester finally obtained a surrender of the castle, and a truce in the war was signed on August 24, 1482, to last from September 8 to November 4, 1482.⁴⁸

An English force occupied the city, and the town and castle were once again in English possession.⁴⁹ The Croyland Chronicler referred to the taking of Berwick as, "This trifling, I really know not whether to call it gain or loss, (for the safe keeping of Berwick each year swallows up ten thousand marks), as this period diminished the resources of the king by more than a hundred thousand pounds."⁵⁰ The Chronicler also reported that Edward was unhappy over the large cost that it had taken to recover Berwick, but his sorrow was somewhat alleviated by the victory.⁵¹

There is some difficulty in understanding why the English did not secure the Scottish throne and take more advantage of what seemed to be a victory in the war

⁴⁸Hall, 335.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ingulf, et al., 481.

⁵¹Ibid.

with Scotland. The duke of Gloucester was either in apparent control of Edinburgh, or he could have been, with little effort, since James III was powerless to act against him. The nobles were against James III, and the duke of Albany appeared to be a suitable replacement as ruler of Scotland. It seemed a little unusual that Edinburgh was not burned or plundered, even though the countryside from Berwick to Edinburgh had been. Evidently Gloucester did not feel powerful enough to conquer all of Scotland without increased military aid from his brother. Instead he must have felt that he had a much better claim to the port city of Berwick, which had once been an English possession and which he had had so much trouble in conquering. Also Edward's policy was not one of aggrandizement, but was aimed at keeping Scotland out of continental politics and keeping it from threatening the northern marches of England. Through negotiation, Edward was successful in keeping Scotland and France from allying, but the threat to the northern borderlands did not end with the capture of Berwick in 1482. This threat might have been ended if Edinburgh had been conquered and if the crown of Scotland had been permanently usurped and secured for a Scottish noble who had allied himself with England.

CHAPTER VI

ENGLISH DIPLOMACY (1482-1483)

TO THE DEATH OF EDWARD IV

During the struggle with Scotland, Edward declared to Maximilian that he was fully occupied with that problem and could not aid Burgundy in the invasion of France that had been proposed and agreed upon in the August treaties of alliance in 1480. In February, 1481, a diplomatic delegation from Burgundy arrived in London and declared that Maximilian wanted Edward to join immediately in an attack on France. If Edward could not do that, then Maximilian wished to have the six thousand archers which had been promised him in their 1480 alliance.¹ Neither of these requests having been granted, Maximilian ordered his negotiators to try to show Burgundy's good faith to Edward by informing him that James III of Scotland had sent an ambassador to offer an alliance between Scotland and Burgundy against

¹Scofield, II, 326; (see above, p. 42).

Edward, and that Maximilian had declined that offer by stating that he wished to do all that he could to restore peace between Scotland and England.²

Edward answered the duke's requests by stating that Burgundy should seek another truce with France. Maximilian replied in correspondence with Edward that he did not think another truce would be advantageous for Burgundy. He also stated he realized that without aid from England an invasion of France could not be undertaken. He, then, asked Edward to try to arrange a three to four year truce with France on the terms that soldiers would be withdrawn from the borders of the two warring parties. England would enter into a war on whichever side that might break the truce first.³ Edward was so involved with his Scottish problem that he did not attempt to arrange a truce between Maximilian and Louis, and nothing further came from these discussions.⁴

French pressure on Maximilian's Flemish possessions was growing, because Louis XI believed that Edward would not aid Maximilian since he was at war with Scotland. Louis was surprised when James III collapsed so quickly in the face of Gloucester's forces. He knew that he

²Ibid., 328.

³Ibid., 330.

⁴Jacob, 586.

could no longer depend on Scotland to keep Edward from allying with Maximilian against him, so he published the secret truce that he had made with Edward in 1479. This truce was a continuation of the treaty of 1475.⁵

Maximilian had known a little about the truce, but he had not been sure of its total nature. Edward was concerned about how Maximilian might react, but there was little that he could do to avert Maximilian's decision to ally with Louis XI. Maximilian's learning of the truce between England and France, together with two other events, soon drove him to seek such a truce. One of these events was the death of his wife, Mary, on March 27, 1481. She died from the effects suffered from a fall off a horse.⁶ Commines wrote that,

Her death was a great loss to her subjects; for she was a person of great honour, affability, and generosity to all people, and she was more beloved and respected by her subjects than her husband, as being natural sovereign of their country.⁷

Mary's death led to increased dissatisfaction of the Flemish people with Maximilian. The estates of Flanders neither recognized Maximilian's claim that he

⁵This truce originally was for seven years. Allies of both kings were included in it. It was renewed for the lifetimes of both Edward IV and Louis XI in 1479. Jacob, 587; Scofield, II, 142; (see above, pp. 38-39).

⁶Communes, II, 17.

⁷Ibid.

was the duke of Burgundy, nor did they think that he should be the regent for his children. The estates declared that "Maximilian was unfit to direct the affairs of his children, and handed his son and daughter over to the custody of the citizens of Ghent."⁸ These citizens quickly entered into negotiations with Louis to obtain a peace treaty for the two children.⁹ Maximilian had no way to turn. England was still involved with Scotland. His subjects were restless for peace, and Louis was keeping the pressure on. The outcome of Maximilian's crisis was the treaty signed by Maximilian and Louis at Arras on December 23, 1482.¹⁰

This treaty contained sixty-nine provisions which included stipulations concerning a marriage between the dauphin of France and Maximilian's daughter, Margaret. This was a direct blow to Edward IV, whose daughter, Elizabeth, was to marry the dauphin, according to the treaty of 1475.¹¹ The treaty of Arras also required that the counties of Artois and Burgundy were to become a part of the dowry that went with Maximilian's daughter.¹²

⁸ Lettres de Louis XI, IX, 221-222.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Commynes, II, 45.

¹¹ Ibid., 46.

¹² Ibid.

Edward was hurt and angered by this action. The Croyland Chronicler recorded that:

the king thought of nothing else but taking vengeance; and accordingly, having again summoned Parliament, disclosed to them this prolonged series of frauds, and conciliated the minds of all, as often as time and circumstances afforded him an opportunity for so doing, in order to obtain their assistance in carrying out his plans of revenge.¹³

Edward called upon Parliament to honor his request for a grant for the defense of the realm.¹⁴ By February 18, 1483, a subsidy of a fifteenth and a tenth was granted to Edward, as was a tax on aliens.¹⁵ There was never any direct mention of an invasion of France, although it was implied through diplomatic actions of Edward, and by the sympathy that appeared to be present in England.

Communes reported that the reason Edward did not move against France was that he still had hopes of receiving the pension from France, even though there was a French alliance with Burgundy.¹⁶ He also stated that Edward did not wish to leave the life of ease to which

¹³Ingulf, et al., 582.

¹⁴Jacob, 588.

¹⁵Ibid.; a subsidy was a percentage tax, not unlike an income tax, voted by the representatives of those who had to pay it. The representative body was Parliament for the laity and the Convocation for the clergy. The subsidy was usually in the rate of a fifteenth or a tenth. It might be as low as a twentieth (a shilling in the pound), or as high as an eighth (a half crown in the pound). It was assessed on lands and goods. L. F. Salzman, English Life in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), 247.

¹⁶Communes, II, 59.

he had grown accustomed.¹⁷ Edward, sick at heart at losing his marriage treaty with France, wished revenge. But first, he had to lay the diplomatic groundwork for such a move.

Although Edward had problems with the Franco-Burgundian alliance, he again tried to deal with the old Scottish problem. The duke of Albany had been made lieutenant general of his brother's kingdom by the Scottish Parliament. This Parliament, in seeking an honorable peace with England in late 1482, thought that the duke would make a better negotiator than James III.¹⁸

The duke of Albany had other plans, as he had never been totally reconciled with his brother. He still aspired to the throne. Instead of negotiating for Scotland, the duke retired to a castle away from Edinburgh and sent envoys to negotiate with England for his own benefit. Edward made a treaty with Albany which provided that if he was made king, then he would side with England against France, and would promise undisputed possession of Berwick to England.¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Scotfield, II, 358.

¹⁹Ibid., 360-361.

Also, at this time Edward began discussions with the duke of Brittany to change their defensive alliance of 1481 against France to an offensive alliance. These discussions never brought about any agreement.²⁰ Edward appeared to be grasping for any possible alliance to keep Louis from totally upsetting the balance of power in Western Europe, and from permanently securing the English monarch's claim of the inheritance of the French crown for himself. It was evident that it would take more and stronger allies than Scotland and Brittany before Edward could mount an invasion of France.

The duke of Albany soon abrogated the treaty with England. On March 18, 1483, he signed an agreement with James III, whereby James promised to forgive the wayward duke and admit him into favor once again if Albany would surrender his office of lieutenant general and pledge that he would never again come within six miles of James III, without special permission.²¹ An agreement was reached whereby the duke would try to obtain a peace treaty for Scotland with England, and he would seek to restore the marriage treaty between James and Edward. The reuniting of James III and the

²⁰Ibid., 363.

²¹Ibid., 364.

duke of Albany was a blow to English diplomacy, because the duke, if he had been able to secure the Crown, would have been a valuable ally in the struggle by England to secure safety in the north.²²

The biographers of Edward IV claim that Edward probably never knew of the duke of Albany's duplicity, because in the last days of March, 1483, an illness overcame the king. He died on April 9, 1483.²³ The immediate cause of death, according to Hall, appeared to have been indigestion which was caused by eating too many fruits and vegetables at a dinner on Good Friday.²⁴

Commines declared that what really killed the king of England was the treaty of Arras between Maximilian and Louis.²⁵ Edward was ashamed of losing the marriage treaty that he had with Louis, and his spirits were lowered when he learned that he would lose his pension from France.²⁶ The editor of Commines' Memoirs wrote this comment concerning Edward's life:

His dissolute mode of life renders it exceedingly probable that he died of a surfeit, according to the popular report. "He was a prince," says Hume, "more splendid and showy than either prudent

²²Jacob, 589.

²³Commines, II, 62; Hall, 338; Scofield, 365.

²⁴Hall, 338.

²⁵Commines, II, 62.

²⁶Ibid.

or virtuous, brave, though cruel; addicted to pleasure, though capable of activity in great emergencies, and less fitted to prevent ills by wise precautions, than to remedy them after they took place, by his vigour and enterprise."²⁷

Edward's death left a void in the English monarchy. His son, Edward V, was only thirteen years old. By the rights of inheritance, he should have become the king, with his mother and his uncle, Richard, as co-regents. Richard had other plans. With support from the English nobility, he usurped the crown of England. He claimed that Edward IV's sons were illegitimate, and had Parliament proclaim himself as Richard III.²⁸ Edward's two sons were imprisoned in the Tower of London. They died mysteriously in either 1483 or 1484.²⁹

During his reign Richard had few problems with Louis XI. As soon as Edward died, Louis stopped the payment of the pension to the English monarchy. Richard was busy trying to solidify his hold on the English monarchy when Louis XI died on August 30, 1483. Louis left his son, Charles VIII, as his heir. Anne of Beaujeu, daughter of Louis XI, was made regent to young Charles.³⁰

²⁷Commines, II, 62n.

²⁸Ingulf, et al., 489; Chrimes, Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII, 133-135; Jacob, 619.

²⁹Chrimes, Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII, 134-140.

³⁰Paul Murray Kendall, Richard the Third (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1955), 307.

The relationship between Richard III and Maximilian, duke of Austria, was good. Edward IV's old alliance with Maximilian might have been renewed if Maximilian had not been so involved with his problems in the Low Countries, where he had not abandoned his struggle with the burghers.³¹ This problem had been silenced for awhile by the treaty of Arras in 1482. In 1485 he crushed a rebellion at Utrecht and forced the burghers of Ghent to restore his regency for his son, Philip.³² The conflict between Maximilian and France was renewed in 1485 and continued for four years. Peace was finally arranged between Charles VIII and Maximilian in July, 1489. By that time, Maximilian had lost the county of Burgundy (He lost the duchy of Burgundy when Charles died), but he still retained control of the Low Countries through the regency of his son.³³ By the time Maximilian became Holy Roman Emperor in 1493, he had done much to restore Habsburg power in Austria, but he was unable to extend his power over the lands of the Empire because his interests were widespread and his finances were limited. Maximilian died in 1519.³⁴

³¹John S. C. Bridge, A History of France From the Death of Louis XI (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1921), 118; Jacob, 625.

³²Mattingly, 130.

³³Guerard, 126-127.

³⁴Hay, 193; Mattingly, 169-170.

Richard III's rule was short-lived. Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, assisted by two able captains and a small force, invaded England from Brittany where they were in exile. They were joined by some dissatisfied English nobles. Together, this force met Richard III in battle at Bosworth Field, and he was killed during the action. There was no clear rule of inheritance upon which Henry Tudor could claim the crown in 1485, so he simply had Parliament proclaim him king, thus ending the period of Yorkist rule.³⁵

³⁵Chalmers, Lancastrians, Yorkists, and Henry VII, 154-155.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The decades following the end of the Hundred Years War were filled with a diplomatic fervor of an intensity similar to that which occurred during the war. Men of strong character followed Henry VI, Charles VII, and Philip the Good as rulers in England, France, and the Burgundian lands. Edward IV, Louis XI, and Charles the Bold believed in the utilization of ambassadors to negotiate and discuss matters of concern to their respective countries in order to strengthen their positions. If diplomatic means did not settle their differences, then they would use force to achieve their ends.

Feelings of nationalism in France and in England grew out of the Hundred Years War. These feelings, plus the English desire for the old French crown and Angevin lands, led to a growth of feelings of hostility between England and France. This feeling extended through the Wars of the Roses and into the period of Yorkist kingship. The examination of diplomacy of the last eight years of the rule of Edward IV has shown that this hostility was still present in England and France.

The relationship between Edward IV and Louis XI during the last eight years of their reigns was extremely complex. Any attempt to isolate acts of diplomacy between two such characters is impossible. There were motives behind each of their actions, and their diplomacy was influenced by personalities, events, and historical precedents.

The final years of Edward IV's reign were filled with diplomatic activity. Alliances seemingly were sought with anyone who had something to offer regardless of whether they had once been an enemy or a friend. The years, 1475-1483, were filled with treaty making and treaty breaking. Enemies and friends were double-crossed alike, as the diplomatic policy of the age seemed to be one of pragmatism. A look back at the process and the progress of history may bring to view several historical trends in the fifteenth century. One of these trends was the growth of the monarchy in England and in France.

Edward IV worked to raise the influence of the king over the nobility. He increased the wealth and the prestige of the English crown, and he proved to be an able ruler. His love of pleasure did not stop him from paying attention to the business of England. The amount of public business dealt with by the king increased, as was indicated by the greater use of the signet and the

sign manual.¹ The nobles became more dependent on the crown for their livelihood and for their power. The days of the kingmaker, such as the earl of Warwick, were over. Parliament was relatively inactive during Edward's reign, but it retained power as a limiting influence on the king's purse.

The kings of France increased their powers within their realm, as they fought successfully towards overcoming the powers of the princes of the blood. Following the end of the Hundred Years War in 1453, the French monarch moved from being the defender of his country towards the goal of becoming its master. Louis XI was responsible for much of this new power. He helped France recover from the ordeal of the Hundred Years War, and he helped it gather strength to deal with a second historical trend. This trend was the recurring hostility between the monarchs of England and France, which began before the Hundred Years War, was increased by the war, and carried through the period of the Yorkist kingship.

An assessment of these two monarchs must show Louis XI to be the stronger of the two. He was successful in increasing the power of the monarchy in

¹J. Otway Ruthven, The King's Secretary and the Signet Office in the Fifteenth Century (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1939), 41.

France, and he secured a valuable alliance with Maximilian, duke of Austria. His efforts led to the acquisition of the duchy of Burgundy for the French crown. Louis was generally successful in keeping peace in France, which aided the recovery from the Hundred Years War.

The closing years of Edward's and Louis's reigns were peaceful in comparison with their earlier years, but their relationship with the Burgundian rulers prevented the two monarchs from ever achieving true diplomatic peace. Louis feared another alliance between the Burgundians and the English monarch similar to the one during the Hundred Years War and the one in 1475. He did everything in his power to prevent such an occurrence. This led to French involvement with Scotland against Edward and increased diplomatic activity among the rulers of England, Burgundy, France, the Empire, and Scotland. Diplomacy was not always successful, however, for the rulers would not hesitate to violate a treaty if they believed it was in their self interest to do so.

The pragmatic diplomacy of the age led to the complex series of treaties between major European powers of which marriage treaties were the most prominent. Edward was fortunate to have five daughters and he was eager to marry them to any foreign power in order to gain an advantage. His most important marriage treaty was with Louis XI. The breaking of that treaty

by Louis in favor of another agreement with Maximilian, regent for his son who ruled over the remaining Burgundian lands, disappointed Edward and formed the basis for increased hostility between England and France. This never developed into an open conflict because of the premature deaths of the two opposing monarchs. Even though conflict did not break out, the tenseness did not subside in the following years. The English monarch still claimed his inheritance and the French monarch still denied it.

Although no peace had been ratified, the Hundred Years War had been over since 1453. The basic hostility continued for centuries afterward. The period of diplomacy from 1475 to 1483 helped this hostility evolve. Calais did not become French again until 1553, and for centuries English kings continued to bear the title of King of France. The major occurrence in this period and for a few years after this period was the dismemberment of the lands of the troublesome duke of Burgundy. The Anglo-French conflict was relegated into the background as the Valois and the Habsburg monarchs began to contend for the hegemony of western Europe. England, under the Tudors, would swing back and forth between France and the Empire in a policy that had been initiated by Edward IV. This was the beginning of a new struggle for a balance of power in Europe.

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