

SUMMARY: This letter of 28 May 1572 from the French ambassador in London, de la Mothe Fenelon, to the French King, Charles IX, describes the departure of a legation from England under the Earl of Lincoln for France to ratify the Treaty of Blois, and the expected arrival of a corresponding legation from France under François, Duc de Montmorency, who was to be met by Oxford and Leicester on his arrival in London. The copy printed below is taken from *Correspondance Diplomatique de Bertrand de Salignac, de la Mothe Fenelon, Ambassadeur de France en Angleterre de 1568 a 1575*, 7 vols (Paris and London, 1838-40), iv, pp.466-7.

TWO DAYS LATER the Earl of Lincoln came to find me at my lodgings, and told me that he was going towards your Majesty with the most ample commission of friendship and the most honourable offers that had ever been ordered here for any prince in Christendom, and that he accounted himself very happy to be involved as minister in such a deed, which would be very agreeable to God, very useful to the two kingdoms, and very honourable before the face of all mankind, and that he bore towards you such good affection that none better or more perfect could be found in the world. And thus, Sire, he left, very honourably accompanied, the 26<sup>th</sup> day of this month, planning to pass to Boulogne the last [day of May], and to arrange for the ships of Monsieur de Montmorency and messieurs, your deputies, and all their troop to journey hither the first of June, the Earl of Pembroke with four lords and a good number of gentlemen being already ordered to go to meet them at Dover, and seven personages of each household office of this Princess to begin to treat with them at the disembarkment. And it is commanded that the noblemen and officers of the country through which they will pass accompany them, and that the Earl of Worcester and particularly the Earl of Huntingdon, who are near to the Crown, go before them with a number of other noblemen to Gravesend, to conduct them along the Thames right to London where the Earls of Leicester and of Oxford will meet them at their arrival at Somerset Place, which is a house of the Queen's, and there they will learn the day that they can go to meet the said Lady. She meanwhile is going to Hampton Court in order to more favourably receive them. You may assure yourself, Sire, that those living today say that they have never seen in their time such an honourable reception prepared for any other lords who came into this realm as is now being prepared for your deputies, which I hope, Sire, will cause you to use there the said Earl of Lincoln in corresponding manner.

This morning my Lord Burghley sent the aforesaid clerk of the Council to me again to tell me that in such legations as these two it is not the custom to use safe-conducts because one is at peace, that the said Earl of Lincoln was not demanding one at all for himself, and that if I requested one for your deputies his Mistress would be astonished at me. I answered him, Sire, that messieurs your deputies, on my advice, would not show less confidence coming to England than was being shown by those going to France, and thus that I would not ask any safe-conduct at all for them. The 28th of May, 1572.

. . . A DEUX JOURS de la, Mr le comte de Lincoln m'est venu trouver en mon logis, et m'a dict qu'il s'en alloit devers Vostre Majeste avec la plus ample commission d'amitye et les plus honorables offers qui jamais heussent este mandees, de ce coste, a nul aultre prince de la Chrestiente, et qu'il se reputoit tres heureulx d'intervenir ministre en ung tel acte, qui estoit tres agreeable a Dieu, tres utile a ces deux royaumes, et tres honorable devant la face de toutz les humains, et qu'il y apportoit de soy une affection si bonne que nulle meilleure ny plus parfaite s'en pourroit trouver, au monde. Et ainsy, Sire, il est party, fort honorablement acompaigne, le xxvje jour de ce moys, en deliberation de passer a Boulogne, le dernier, et accommoder de ses vaysseaulx Mr de Montmorency et messieurs voz depputes, et toute leur troupe, pour les trajecter deca, le premier de juing, estant desja le comte de Pembroth, avec quatre milordz, e aultre bon nombre de gentilshommes, ordonnes pour les aller recueillir a Douvre, et sept personages, de chacun office de la mayson de ceste princesse, pour commancer de les traicter, des le desembarquement. Et est mande a la noblesse et officiers de la contree, par ou ilz passeront, de les acompaigner, et au comte d'Ochester, ou bien a celluy de Hontinthon, qui sont parans de la couronne, de leur aller au devant, avec ung aultre nombre de noblesse, a Gravesines, pour les conduyre contremont la Tamise, jusques en ceste ville, ou les comtes de Lestre et de Oxfort se trouveront, a leur descendre, a Somerset Place, qui est une mayson de la Royne, et leur feront scavoir le jour qu'ilz pourront aller trouver la dicte Dame. Laquelle s'en va cependant a Hamptoncourt pour plus favorablement les recevoir; vous pouvant assurer, Sire, que ceulx, qui vivent aujourdhuy, assurent n'avoir veu preparer, de leur temps, une si honorable reception pour nulz aultres seigneurs qui soient passez en ce royaume, comme maintenant l'on la prepare pour vos depputez. Dont j'espere bien, Sire, que ferez uzer de quelque correspondance, par della, a bien recevoir le dict comte de Lincoln.

A ce matin, milord de Burgley m'a renvoye, derechef, le susdict cleric du conseil pour me dire que, en telles legations, comme sont ces deux, il n'estoit accoustume d'uzer de saufconduictz, parce qu'on estoit en bonne paix; don't le comte de Lincoln n'en demandoit poinct pour son regard, et que, si j'en voulois pour voz depputes, que sa Mestresse m'en bailleroit. Je luy ay respondu, Sire, que messieurs voz depputes, a mon advis, ne voudroient monstrier moins de confiance, venantz en Angleterre, que les leurs en monstroient, allans en France, et par ainsy que je ne demandois point de saufconduict pour eulx. Et sur ce, etc.

Ce xxviiije jour de may 1572.