

## Jesuit Plots – Chapter IV. The First Public Record Office Surprise



Continued from [Chapter III. Irish Jesuits in Australia during the Great War.](#)

On May 28th, 1934, a fiery little Irish woman forced her way through the crowd at the Protestant Truth Society Meeting at Finsbury Square, London. She roundly denounced our Speakers as liars and impostors who were trading on the ignorance of the crowds.

“How can you have Documents copied from the Vatican?” she cried. “If you had them our Priests would have them also. You are a lot of liars,” etc. Our Speaker let her blow off steam, then quietly said “Madam, this Society will give you or any other Roman Catholic the sum of one pound sterling if you will accompany us to the Public Record Office to test our statements, if you there find that we are not speaking the truth.” She paused for “a moment, then said, “I will go with you, because I want to get to the bottom of this, as I think for myself.” In half an hour she was at the Record Office.

When the Vatican Transcripts were laid before her, she was completely crushed. She saw that they were authentic, and that her priests had been deceiving her. She expressed herself as completely satisfied and left the building. She declared she would consult translations by the Jesuits themselves. This disclosure immediately revived the challenge of September, 1932, by the Protestant Truth Society to Cardinal Bourne, Father Woodlock, S.J., and Father McNabb, to come to the Public Record Office and inspect the Vatican Documents in which the Pope had sanctioned the murder of Queen Elizabeth. The result of the lady’s experience profoundly impressed the Roman Catholics in the crowds, both at Finsbury Square, and on Tower Hill. She never came back to the Meetings again.

Not only this, but the Roman Catholics saw their own Catholic Evidence Guild Speaker fold up his platform and run away, when challenged by the crowd and by the Protestant Truth Society Speakers to follow the Irish lady’s example.

Evidently the Roman Catholic Authorities were being pressed by their own people to make some sort of a defence or give some explanation concerning these terrible documents of which they had never heard before. Jesuits and other Priests began to appear on Tower Hill, notably Father Day, the Jesuit,

and Father McNabb, the Dominican.

On June 15th, 1934, Father McNabb, who frequently preaches for the Roman Catholic Evidence Guild in London, sent the following letter to the Protestant Truth Society:

St. Dominics Priory,  
London, N.W.5.  
June 15th, 1934.

"Sir—Only to-day have I seen for the first time a reference to me in an article on '*The Spanish Armada*' by Albert Close in your issue of September last. The article states:—

**'In 1932 the Protestant Truth Society challenged Cardinal Bourne, Father Woodlock, S.J., and Father McNabb, the Dominican to come to the Public Record Office to inspect these plot documents. All three declined... They knew that if they once admitted having seen these documents it would put an end to their Martyr claims and Martyr Processions in England, so they quietly stayed away.'**

"Naturally I cannot speak for Cardinal Bourne, or Father Woodlock, S.J., but speaking only for myself I venture to say that the writer of this article has (no doubt undesignedly) suggested what is not true. Let me set down the true facts which can be substantiated by my letters to the Challenger in 1932."

- 1. As a lover of Christian truth and charity I was exceedingly glad to receive this challenge. I thought, and still think that nothing but good could come of an unbiased appeal to first hand documentary evidence.**
- 2. But I wanted to give even more than was asked; not less! I therefore accepted the spirit of the challenge by proposing that our reference to first hand documentary evidence should be conducted on lines that would favour neither challenged or challenger, but only the truth.**
- 3. As neither challenger or challenged was an expert in paleography or law, especially the law of sedition, I therefore proposed the usual legal way of substantiating a point based on documents.**

"With a deep sense of the wise procedure of our Law Courts I propose that the challenger should copy out the documentary statements proving his case. I the Challenged would accept these statements as facts. But as neither my challenger nor I was a legal expert I further proposed that the documentary statements should be submitted to two legal experts—one of his choosing and one of mine. I even ventured to suggest Lord Russell and a member of the Protestant Truth Society, Sir Thomas Inskip.

"Indeed I was so anxious to see the challenge conducted on the only legal lines possible for such a case that I even wrote to Sir Thomas Inskip about the challenge, and my proposal for its enlargement. I am sure your sense of fair play and your badge of Protestant Truth will allow this statement of mine to be published in your pages. I am all the more sure because I believe I was alone in giving a courteous acknowledgment and acceptance of the

challenge.”

Your obedient Servant,  
Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P.

### **The Protestant Truth Society's Reply.**

*The following Reply was published in the "Churchman's Magazine" for August, 1934.*

"The above letter is much shorter than his original declination of the challenge, which was a long type script of four pages. Our challenge as sent to Fr. McNabb, was an invitation to meet two representatives of the Protestant Truth Society at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane on September 22nd, 1932, at 11.30 a.m. and there examine for themselves authentic documents copied from the Vatican Archives. Permits had been obtained and arrangements made for the purpose. Fr. McNabb seems to have misconstrued the purpose of this challenge to *examine* these Papal letters—not translate them afresh!

**The challenge stated:—"The documents we suggest for inspection are the Campion-Parson's Plot, 1580; Jesuit-Parson's Plot, 1582; Throgmorton-Cardinal Allen Plot, 1586-88; Gunpowder Plot, 1605."**

They are documents which prove beyond question, that many whom the Roman Catholic Church has canonized as "Martyrs," were plotters attempting to murder the Queen, and bring about invasion of the realm by foreign armies; and whilst acting seditiously were blessed and prospectively pardoned by the Pope.

Father McNabb's proposal, to ask a busy public servant like Sir Thomas Inskip, to accompany the party to the Record Office to argue out the evidence with Lord Russell, another lawyer, whilst the documents are being translated on the spot was we felt a shallow ruse to make show of pretending to accept the challenge, whilst all the time evading it. They were translated by Roman Catholic scholars between 1882-1916.

Father McNabb knows quite as well as Cardinal Bourne and Fr. Woodlock that the challenge was to come and examine these plot letters recovered from the Vatican Archives, and be convinced that they are genuine, as was an honest Irish priest in 1932, who had at first doubted until he saw them for the first time. The Irish lady on May 28th last was also convinced.

Their bona-fide Vatican origin was admitted thirty-two years ago by the late Father Pollen, S.J., in the Jesuit organ *The Month*, April-August, 1902. Some are printed in Cardinal Allen's Letters and Memorials published in 1882, by Cardinal Manning's orders.

The 1580 Campion-Parson's Plot letters were translated by Fr. McKee of Brompton Oratory in 1916.

Fully a dozen of the Pope's Elizabethan Plot letters are reprinted in these authoritative Roman Catholic works; Fr. McNabb can consult them at any time he has difficulty in reading the Latin copies at the Record Office. He

evidently has never heard of these letters having been translated and published.

It is possible that Cardinal Allen's *Memorials* and Fr. Pollen's writings in *The Month* in 1902, have since been placed on the Index (**Note:** I think this "Index" is referring to the [Index of Forbidden Books](#)). Roman Catholic Authorities have certainly been silent about them for thirty years past.

As Fr. McNabb seems to be still unaware of the existence of these Papal Plot letters in which various Popes sanctioned the murder of Queen Elizabeth and the invasion of England by France and Spain, we here repeat the challenge and offer again to meet Fr. McNabb at the Public Record Office at 11.30 a.m. on August 1st, or other mutually convenient date and there satisfy him and any witnesses he brings, that these documents are authentic transcripts from the Vatican.

Seeing Fr. McNabb admits he is not a competent translator, we will arrange to have with us the various translations mentioned above so that he may have the help of Roman Catholic translators. If further doubt exists then we will undertake to have photographic copies made of any documents in question, and submit them for translation to two University Professors, one to be a Roman Catholic and the other a Protestant. Their translations to be published side by side, by the Catholic Truth Society and the Protestant Truth Society. Father McNabb and the Protestant Truth Society each to add one hundred words of comment. Thus we can leave the fair-minded British public to judge for themselves."

A. W. Martin, *London Organiser*,  
PROTESTANT TRUTH SOCIETY.

### **A Scene on Tower Hill, 1934.**

On July 5th, Father Vincent McNabb and a crowd of about 500 men, were waiting for our Speaker on Tower Hill. Father McNabb asked our Speaker if he wrote the paragraph in our September 1933 Churchman's Magazine, in which it was stated that he intentionally stayed away from the Public Record Office in September 1932, as related in the Magazine. Our Speaker called Fr. McNabb on the Platform to state his case, and then replied, "Yes, I wrote that paragraph." After considerable argument, the Priest declared that this statement was untrue; he said that he was away in the country. Our Speaker replied that "you were twice given alternative dates to suit your convenience, and never availed yourself of any during the last two years."

Father McNabb at once turned round and hurried back to his own platform, where after a lapse of two years he announced to the crowd his willingness to accept the challenge to inspect the Vatican Transcripts at the Public Record Office. His subsequent action proved that he meant what he said. On August 1st, 1934, he did meet the Protestant Truth Society's challengers at the Record Office.

## Investigation of Vatican Documents.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, AUGUST 1st, 1934.

At the Public Record Office on Wednesday, August 1st, 1934, at 11.30 am. Mr. A. W. Martin, London Organiser of the Protestant Truth Society and Mr. Albert Close, member of the Council, met Fr. Vincent McNabb and Messrs. Stewart and Palmer, representing the Church of Rome and Catholic Evidence Guild, inspected and handled various transcripts of Elizabethan and other documents as set out in the Agenda of the original challenge.

The Deputy Master of the Rolls had kindly made special arrangements for the party to inspect these documents in a private room, where they had all been previously arranged in their order so as to facilitate the inspection. The documents were examined as follows:—

The Ely-Campion-Parsons Plot transcripts of November 4th and December 12th, 1580, A.D., in which Pope Gregory sanctioned the murder of Queen Elizabeth. Father McNabb queried the photo copies at first, but accepted the same after critically comparing them with the originals. TRA. 9/77 and 9/105 P.R.O.

Fr. McNabb asked to be shown copies of the Ely-Cardinal of Como Plot Letters, when the exact copy was produced—his remark being that it was “authentic too.” Mr. Close pointed out that his photo-copy of this December 12th letter containing the Pope’s sanction of the plot had been sent to Rome and verified at the Vatican.

Then was verified Fr. McKee’s translation of the letter of December 12th, by a photograph from Prof. Meyer’s Catholic Church under Elizabeth, in the British Museum. No actual copy of Prof. Meyer’s book was available, and therefore Fr. McNabb said he could not say he had actually seen it, but he acknowledged the photograph of the page with the British Museum stamp upon it.

Next was perused the Jesuit Father Pollen’s translation of the Campion-Parsons Segar letter of November 14th, 1580, in *The Month*, 1902, p. 605. Fr. McNabb suggested reading of the translations be left for the present. All agreed.

The Campion-Parsons Plot translations were duly verified; also the Jesuit Parsons and Cardinal Allen’s plot of May 8th, 1582, to invade England. The Vatican Archives Stamp was shown on these documents and the same verified on the photostats relating to May 8th, 1582. Mr. Stewart of the Catholic Evidence Guild agreed that the photographs of the documents were facsimile and verified by the stamp of the Vatican Archives. TRA. 9/79. P.R.O.

The next photograph to be inspected was dated May 2nd, 1583 which Fr. McNabb examined closely. This referred to the Pope’s sanction of the plot of the Duke of Guise to assassinate Queen Elizabeth and invade England. TRA. 9/80, P.R.O.

Next were seen the documents and photos relating to Cardinal Allen-Throgmorton-Gregory XIII Plot to invade England, June 20th, 1583, A.D.

Attention was drawn to the translation of these letters in Cardinal Allen's Letters and Memorials. TRA. 9/77.

The Parry-Sixtus V Plot Letters of January 30th, 1584 to murder Queen Elizabeth were next examined. Mr. Close asked that these should be closely scrutinised, as their genuineness had been so heavily challenged in past centuries,—Roman Catholic historians branding them as “forgeries by Lord Burleigh's officials.” Fr. McNabb and Mr. Stewart now acknowledged them as truly verified. TRA. 9/81. P.R.O.

Then the remarkable Certificate was shown signed by the Jesuit Andrea Codretto, that Parry, before setting out on his murder mission, had been to confession. The Vatican Archives stamp was on this certificate. Mr. Stewart asked where that confession belonged: Mr. Close's answer was that it was part of the whole Parry document. Both parties agreed, after close examination that it was genuine. TRA. 9/81.

Then came the investigation of Spanish State Papers, consisting of the Despatch from Rome in which the Pope promised to subsidise the Armada to the extent of two million crowns in 1586. Mr. Stewart asked for originals and was informed by the Record Office Official that they were in the Spanish State Archives and had been officially translated for the British Government. P.R.O. Calendar: *Spanish State Papers, III*.

The original papers used at the Babington—Mary Queen of Scots' Trial next came under review. Mary's letter of July 17th, 1586 sanctioning the murder of Elizabeth was inspected, also actual letters used at the two trials.

Tyrrell's Confession and the Jesuit Parsons' obvious forgery of Tyrrell's “recantation ” of that confession, containing three Articles more than in Tyrrell's original sent to Lord Burleigh were next inspected. Scottish State Papers, Vol. viii and ix, MS., S.P. 53/19, p. 57, P.R.O.

Mr. Close had pointed this out in Lord Burleigh's original. In Burleigh's copy there are 25 Articles, while Parsons in his forgery made 28. Both documents were closely scrutinised. 25 Articles in Burleigh's and 28 in Parsons! S.P. 53/19. P.R.O.

The Jesuit Edmund York's Confession was next examined, made on August 21st, 1594, that he had been commissioned by the Jesuit William Holt to murder Queen Elizabeth and receive 40,000 Crowns reward. Next came the Confessions of the Jesuit Henry Walpole, of April and 15th June, and his last one in July, 1594, The clear signature of Walpole was pointed out on each page. Actual documents used at the trial were then shown. S.P. 12/249. P.R.O. Walpole was a Jesuit chaplain in the Spanish Army yet Rome claims he was a martyr for his religion!

Then Fr. McNabb remarked he just wished to say he had come to the Record Office not to discuss but to see these documents—he would deal with them more fully in future.

Campion and his associates' original indictment used at their trial, November

12th, 1581, was then verified after examination. For *Campion Coram Rege*, P.R.O. KB. 27/1279 Rot 2. *Trials King's Bench*, 12th November, 1581, K.B. 29/216. P.R.O. As Fr. McNabb then remarked that all was in Latin, translations by Fr. Pollen, S.J., in The Month of 1902, were then shown. Mr. Close pointed out that most of them were in Cardinal Allen's Memorials and Letters, as translated by Fr. Knox of the Brompton Oratory.

Last of all was shown the Great Gunpowder Plot Indictment and Documents used at the Trial in 1606. K.B. 8, 61, and S.P. 14/216, P.R.O.

Fr. McNabb remarked that having now seen the originals named in the Agenda he was entirely satisfied of their genuine character. He initialled each plot as detailed and signed a statement to that effect. Mr. Close emphasised the fact that these documents were the original transcript copies brought by the British Government agent from the Vatican Archives between 1872 and 1909 and were not disputed by any authority on the subject.

Both parties then signed the Declaration that three representatives of the Church of Rome and Catholic Evidence Guild on one side, and the two for the Protestant Truth Society on the other, had seen and inspected these documents. Each party kept a signed copy of the Declaration.

#### *Roman Catholic Evidence Guild:*

Father McNabb, Mr. Walter Stewart and Mr. Victor Palmer (representing the Roman Catholic Evidence Guild).

#### **Protestant Truth Society:**

Mr. A. W. Martin and Albert Close.

H. N. Blaikiston,

August 1st, 1934. Public Record Office Official.

*Witness.*

Mr. Martin then informed Fr. McNabb and his colleagues that photos of all these documents would be shown at the Protestant Truth Society's meetings on Tower Hill where originally the challenge was given in September 1932 so that the Tower Hill public, which for two years has closely followed this controversy, can judge for themselves as to the Pope's sanction of the plots to murder the Queen and bring about the invasion of the Realm by foreign armies. Therefore, we conclude that these documents are proof that the Pope, Cardinal Allen, and the Jesuit Parsons trained these foreign-educated priests, and sent them to this Country, professedly for religious purposes, only to be convicted of treason after due indictment and trial by jury.

The discovery in 1886 of the Sega-Ely and the Parry-Codretto documents completely justify the trials under Lord Burleigh's Government.

Of the 125 Priests executed during Elizabeth's reign, as traitors, 123 were actually trained at the Colleges of Cardinal Allen and the Jesuit Parsons. Is it not reasonable to conclude that as both Allen and Parsons were continually plotting for the overthrow of England, that they trained their students after their own heart? Like teacher, like pupil, surely applies in these cases.

A copy-of this record was sent to Father McNabb.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.**

At the close of the inspection of the Documents a short discussion arose concerning the "Canonization" of those whom the Church of Rome designates as martyrs for their faith. The shorthand writer missed this, being under the impression that all was finished. The following is the gist of the discussion:—

Mr. Martin and Mr. Close admitted to Father McNabb that it was a mistake to have used the word "Canonized" when the word "Beatified " or "Venerable" should have been used. None of these men have been actually Canonized, but nearly all have been "Beatified" or made "Venerable"—it is merely a difference of degree in elevation, which the Protestant challengers did not realise.

The main fact is not however affected or disputed that all of these Priests are designated as martyrs for their religion by the Church of Rome. The Protestant Truth Society contend that the Documents inspected prove that Lord Burleigh and Queen Elizabeth justly executed these men for treason against the Queen and the realm.

Cardinal Allen and the Jesuit Parsons were both indicted with Campion and his accessories at the Trial on November 12th, 1581, and had they not both fled for safety to the Continent and remained there for the rest of their lives, they also would have been convicted and hanged, the same as the poor Priests whom they trained and sent over to this country to carry out their plots for the murder of the Queen and the invasion and the overthrow of England.

Cardinal Allen in his letter to the Pope, of August 8th, 1583, when speaking of the Throgmorton Plot to invade England, wrote:—

"An army of 10,000 or 16,000 will be quite enough, but the greater the foreign force, the less will be the risk, as the English as a nation are unwarlike."

"We still have nearly 300 priests in various Noblemen's and Gentlemen's houses, and we are almost daily sending fresh ones, who, when it is necessary, will direct the Catholics' conscience and actions in this matter. They would let in Catholic auxiliaries of any nation for they detest their domestic heretic more than any foreign Prince."

**IMPORTANT NOTE:—**This letter of August 8th, 1583, addressed to the Pope, consists of 13 Articles, and is not printed in Cardinal Allen's Letters and Memorials. The reason is obvious to anyone. It is printed in full, however, by Richard Simpson in his *Life of Edmund Campion*, p. 472. British Museum Library, No. 03605 eee. It is also printed in Theiner's *Annals*. These *Annals*, in three volumes, printed in the Vatican Press in 1856, are in the Public Record Office and British Museum Libraries.



## **The History Challenge to Father McNabb.**

*The following correspondence then passed on this matter:*

**Mr. KENSIT TO Fr. McNABB.**

31, Cannon St., London, E.C.4.

"Dear Father McNabb, September 7th, 1934.

I have just returned from my holiday, and now wish to thank you for your letter of August 15th, and I beg to send you herewith a copy of our September *Churchman's Magazine*. If you will carefully read the account of the proceedings at the Public Record Office, as we report them, you will see there is not the slightest possible ground for your statement that there is "misunderstanding" on our part, or that we seek to "cloud the issue by proposing other debatable questions" that were not in the original challenge.

Here is the original challenge as issued by Mr. Martin, our London Organiser, in September, 1932:

**"The Old State Papers, recently recovered from the Vatican Archives, etc., clearly prove that many of those whom the Roman Church now designates as "Martyrs for their Religion" were really involved in Jesuit plots to murder the Queen and bring about the invasion of our Country by foreign armies."**

This challenge as thus worded *originally* was accepted by you on your own initiation, in the document you handed Mr. Martin to sign on Parliament Hill on Sunday afternoon, July 22nd, this year.

In your first reply to the challenge, dated from Rugeley, 23rd September, 1932, you wrote "Therefore to narrow the point to an issue... that some of those declared martyrs by Rome were put to death because they were plotters against the State." Mr. Martin did not sign the document you handed him on Parliament Hill. He explained at the time that first of all it was necessary to obtain your examination of those State Papers which Prove definitely that many of those whom the Church of Rome has, to use your own words "proclaimed as Martyrs" were convicted as treasonable plotters against the Queen and State, and were not tried, found guilty, and hanged, for their religion, but for treason, as indicted under the Statute Laws of the Realm. The Statute Laws define what was really Treason. Obviously it would have been useless to sign an agreement to debate what these State documents prove before they had been verified and their genuineness admitted. Whatever conclusion had been stated in such debate, before examination, the retort or excuse could easily have been forthcoming, that nothing was proved because the verity of the documents was questionable.

Now we can proceed, since we have your admission, on your personal scrutiny with your two co-religionists, that these documents exist and are genuine copies from the Vatican Archives.

**"I undertake to prove from the documents in the Record Office that the men and women whom the See of Rome has proclaimed as Martyrs for the faith were put to death, not for their faith but for sedition."**

We have also your interpretation, in your own words, as quoted above, and handed to Mr. Martin.

There is no real reason to hurry the debate. We have previously stated Mr. Close's proposal to produce, on behalf of this Society, verified copies of the plot Documents (set out in the schedule as examined at the Public Record Office) at his Tuesday meetings on Tower Hill. We desire the public there, where the original challenge was made, to be fully informed of their contents. Mr. Close is at present away out of England on business, and returns early in October for a week or so, and then goes away again for a month at least.

If you accept our preliminary conditions for the debate, viz. both sides to pay half the cost of the Hall, admission to be by ticket, to have two Chairmen at each meeting—a Protestant and Roman Catholic, and the thesis to be that:—

**"The Old State Papers, recently recovered from the Vatican Archives, etc., clearly prove that many of those whom the Roman Church now designates as 'Martyrs for their Religion' were really involved in Jesuit plots to murder the Queen and bring about the invasion of our Country by foreign armies."**

The printed text of the original challenge in September 1932 and the repeated challenge as printed in the Churchman's Magazine for August, 1934, leave no room for misunderstanding, if you take the whole challenge as it stands, instead of omitting a vital part, as you do in your letter of August 15th 1934, where you make it end with the words "murder of the Queen," and omit the remainder of the sentence.

**At the coming debate we suggest that the actual texts of both challenges as printed in our "Churchman's Magazine" \* (1) September, 1932, and (2) August, 1934, be printed on the Agenda as they stand with the exception of the word "Canonized" for which the word "Beatified" or "Venerable" should be substituted, as we frankly admitted at the Record Office that that was a wrong word to apply to these executed priests.**

\* The original Challenge was sent by registered post.

The two texts, if printed on the Agenda, will prevent all misunderstanding, as the audiences will be supplied with copies. In an endeavour to meet your wishes for an earlier date, we shall be glad to hear your suggestion.

Yours faithfully,  
J. A. Kensit.

#### **FATHER McNABB'S REPLY.**

Sr. Dominic's Priory,  
London, N.W.

*"Dear Mr. Kensit, 9th September, 1934.*

I must thank you for your kind letter of the 7th. I especially thank you for the words of Mr. Martin's original "challenge." As I had unfortunately

destroyed my copy, and Mr. Martin was unwilling to provide me with a copy + I am grateful to you.

+ Fr, McNabb never asked Mr. Martin to provide him with a copy.

I have no wish to ask you for more than I originally asked. Mr. Martin's original challenge is:-

**"The Old State Papers recently recovered from the Vatican Archives, etc., clearly prove that many of those whom the Roman Church now designates as 'Martyrs for their Religion' were really involved in Jesuit plots to murder the Queen and bring about the invasion of our Country by foreign armies."**

This is all I have ever wished Mr. Martin to do. I have "only wished him to prove what they undertake to prove. If you are likely to be in London during the week I should be glad to talk over the debate. A mouth to mouth talk may save much letter-writing. I could call on you on Tuesday at 3 pm. Yours faithfully,  
Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P."

"P.S.-But in order to meet your Society in the most sportsmanlike way I will meet any accredited representative of your Society who will undertake to prove what Mr. Martin undertook to prove."

The suggested interview took place at 31 Cannon Street, on September 11th. It was perfectly amicable, but both sides agreed to make no public record of the conversation.

#### **Mr. KENSIT SENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER:**

Dear Father McNabb, *September 25th, 1934.*

I was glad to have the opportunity of meeting you face to face on Tuesday last, and I have been giving considerable thought to the talk we had together.

I feel, however, that the time has now come to bring our challenge to a definite conclusion, so that we may be in a position to book the Hall and complete the arrangements. We, therefore, make the following definite proposals:-

**(1) To meet your wishes for an earlier date. We suggest that we book Caxton Hall for the first date convenient to yourself after March 4th next.**

**(2) We think that we cannot do other than adhere to the original challenge as sent to Cardinal Bourne, Father Woodlock, and yourself, and that it would not do to depart from it. As stated in my last letter, this was the challenge set out in a registered letter in September, 1932, and again in our "Churchman's Magazine" in August, 1934. All our arguments have been centred around this up till now, and we undertake to prove from the Vatican transcripts, printed records, State papers, and State trials, that many of those whom the Roman Catholic Church now designates as martyrs for their religion were really involved in Jesuit plots to murder the Queen and bring about the invasion of our Country by foreign armies. The Public Record Office documents, we**

contend, substantiate the evidence given by the witnesses at the trials, and justify the findings and verdicts of the juries. It will be for you to prove that the men your Church designates as martyrs were not involved in such plots, and were only executed for their religion.

(3). The general rule for debates of this character is to select two Chairmen, one from the Roman Catholic side and the other from the Protestant side, and as you wish that a lawyer should be the Chairman on our side we will do our best to provide such a Protestant, and this will leave you the same privilege on your side.

(4) We ought to agree a little later on as to the length of the speeches to be given.

(5) As you state you have no money with which to pay half the cost of the hire of the Hall and other expenses, in order to ensure that the debate takes place we will undertake to hire the Hall and pay for the same out of the proceeds of tickets.

(6) Admission should be by ticket, and according to the number of seats in the Hall; these to be equally divided.

Yours faithfully,  
J. A. Kensit.

*FATHER McNABB'S REPLY.*

Sr. Dominic's Priory,  
London, N.W.

Dear Mr. Kensit, *September 27th, 1934.*

Thanks for your kind note.

1. I quite agree to the conditions of the proposed meeting and debate.

2. But I note one oversight in your letter. You say "It will be for you (Fr. Vincent McNabb) to prove that the men your Church designates as Martyrs were not involved in such plots." On the contrary it is Mr. Martin's duty to prove his challenge. If I accuse you of being drunk you have not to prove that you were sober. But you have to disprove or discredit my alleged proofs. If this point of proof or disproof is not accepted I cannot accept the debate.

3. I am away from my notes and documents, but in your letter you add to "Vatican transcripts" also "printed records, State Papers." I think this was not in the original challenge.

4 When I return I will see to a date if the points in (2) and (3) can be settled.

Yours faithfully,  
Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P.

**Mr. KENSIT WROTE TO FATHER McNABB.**

Dear Father McNabb, *October 2nd, 1934*

I thank you for your letter of September 27th, and am glad that you agree to the conditions as to the coming debate, as set forth in my letter of September 25th. There need be no difficulty in settling the points you raise in your paragraphs two and three.

(2) Your duty in accepting this challenge is to disprove or discredit the proofs produced by us; otherwise there would be no point in having a debate.

(3) We merely introduce printed records and State Papers as evidence in support of our contention that many of those who have been designated as "Martyrs" were agents of their superiors.

All the documents we intend to use in the coming debate have been read and-quoted on Tower Hill during the last two years, and Roman Catholics in the crowd are perfectly familiar with their titles and contents. Your co-religionists will be glad to hear your explanation of these documents.

I trust this will remove all your difficulties, and shall be glad now if you will agree on, ought we to say two nights, after the 4th March next, and we will see to securing Caxton Hall. Yours faithfully,  
J. A. Kensit.

#### **THE DEBATE TAKES PLACE—MARCH 20th, 1935, AT CAXTON HALL.**

On November 4th, 1934, Father McNabb replied, accepting the Challenge to debate the question at issue on March 20th, 1935, in the Caxton Hall, Westminster. The Debate duly took place. Mr. Albert Close represented the Protestant Truth Society and Father McNabb the Roman Catholic Evidence Guild. There were two Chairmen: Sir Alfred Baker, J.P., Protestant, and Mr. Richard O'Sullivan, K.C., Roman Catholic. The Hall was packed and 400 were turned away. The full verbatim report was published by the Protestant Truth Society at 6d. Both sides certified it a true record.

**The whole of the British Press under some powerful influence was silent. Not a word was published!**

Mr. Close began by saying that for 350 years the Church of Rome had contended that those Priests who had been put to death during Queen Elizabeth's reign, were put to death for their religion. On the other hand, Elizabeth's Government claimed that they were put to death as traitors to their country and agents of their superiors, carrying out the behests of a foreign usurper and foreign power, i.e., the Pope of Rome.

British official history and Roman Catholic historians tell two different stories about the cause of the trouble and each side believes, or pretends to believe, that theirs is the true story. The true Roman Catholic side lay hidden in the Archives of the Vatican down to the year 1872, when Pope Pius IX, falling in with the action of all the other European Governments, threw open the Vatican Archives to research scholars of each nation.

Mr. Close stated that he had photostats on the table of about 40 of these

Vatican documents, and lantern slides of each, which he proposed to throw on the screen. He also had at the Press Table an expert Record Office translator who would translate any document afresh, in case of dispute.

Fr. McNabb also had photographs on the table of the same documents. In the course of the whole evening not one was disputed. As Fr. Pollen, S.J., a late Editor of *The Month*, had in 1902, published the most damaging of these documents in his journal, the Roman Catholic audience accepted them as authentic. All of the translations shown on the screen were by Jesuit and Brompton Oratory Fathers.

The whole debate went through with the utmost good feeling on both sides. The seating accommodation in the hall was equally divided between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Fr. McNabb found it impossible to dispute the evidence of the Vatican documents as shown on the screen, and confined his remarks to other questions. The documents were a revelation to all in the audience, both Protestant and Roman Catholics.

At the end both parties cordially shook hands and agreed that they had spent a most instructive and profitable evening.

#### **A FAR MORE COMPLETE LIST OF DOCUMENTS.**

In the following pages are given a far more complete text of the Vatican and other Documents shown on the screen at the Debate at Caxton Hall, as well as many explanatory notes, which in the short time available it was found impossible to bring in. These notes explain many mysteries which occurred to those unfamiliar with the history of those times, or who had been trained on falsified Roman Catholic History.

The Jesuits quote Hallam, the historian, and The Cambridge Modern History as saying that Campion had an unfair trial and was innocent of plotting. These authorities are now both out-of-date.

Hallam's History was published in 1827 and the Cambridge History in 1907. The Vatican Documents proving the Plots of 1580 and Campion's guilty knowledge were not published until 1911 in Germany, and 1916 in England.

Continued in [Chapter V. The Great Troubler](#)

### **All chapters of Jesuit Plots From Elizabethan To Modern Times – By Albert Close**

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