

Jesuit Plots – Chapter V. The Great Troubler



The Babington Plot was a plan in 1586 to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I, a Protestant, and put Mary, Queen of Scots, her Catholic cousin, on the English throne.

Continued from [Chapter IV. The First Public Record Office Surprise](#);

WHY LORD BURGHLEY AND QUEEN ELIZABETH EXECUTED 125 ROMAN PRIESTS BETWEEN 1570-1603.

Blasphemous Bull of Damnation and Excommunication by Pope Pius V against Queen Elizabeth, May 3rd, 1570.

ENGLISH ROMAN CATHOLICS INCITED TO REBELLION.

“We do out of the fulness of our Apostolic power declare the aforesaid ELIZABETH, being a Heretic, and a favourer of Heretics, and her adherents in the matters foresaid, to have incurred the sentence of anathema, and to be cut off from the unity of the Body of Christ. And moreover, we do declare her to be deprived of her pretended title to the kingdom aforesaid, and of all dominion, dignity, and privilege whatsoever... and we do command and interdict all and every noblemen, subjects, people, and others aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her or her monitions, mandates, and laws; and those who shall do the contrary, we do strike with the like sentence of Damnation.” *

* *Damnatio et Excommunicatio Elicabethae Reginae Angliae, &c. Datum Romae, &c., 1570, 5 cal. Maii, Pontificatus, Anno 5.*

THE 1580 INVASION PLOT OF POPE GREGORY XIII.

After twelve years of comparative peace Gregory XIII. incited all English Roman Catholics to rebellion and planned a revolt in Ireland, and the invasion of England by the King of Spain and the Grand Duke of Tuscany on February 18th, 1580, exactly two months before Campion and Parsons left Rome together for England.

On May 13th, 1580, Gregory renewed the Bull of Excommunication against Elizabeth and sent it to Ireland along with the notorious Father Sanders, to stir up the Irish. On April 14th, 1580, Campion and Parsons had their last interview with the Pope, and on the 18th they left Rome, and arrived in Rheims May 31st. Parsons landed on June 11th and Campion arrived in London about June 25th, 1580. English Catholics in the Days of Elizabeth, J. F.

Pollen, pp. 331-333.

All these dates fit in perfectly with the Pope's Plot disclosed in the Venetian State Papers, published in 1890 by the Public Record Office. From other State Papers and letters, there can be little doubt that Campion and Parsons and Cardinal Allen knew all about this Plot. The time table agrees too well to be otherwise.

ACT TO RETAIN THE QUEEN'S SUBJECTS IN THEIR DUE OBEDIENCE.

1581. This Act makes it High Treason to reconcile or to be reconciled to the Romish Religion and own allegiance to the Pope of Rome. As Roman priests, such as Campion and Parsons, had evaded the statutes previously enacted to safeguard the realm, a new statute was passed by Parliament.

THE ACT, 1581. 23 ELIZ. c. 1.

"That all persons which shall pretend to have power or put in practice to absolve subjects from their obedience to the Queen or practising to withdraw them to the Romish Religion, and all subjects so absolved or withdrawn declared guilty of high treason." 23 Eliz. c. 1.

The Mass prohibited. This was really a Defence of the Realm Act. The Pope was at war with Elizabeth.

THE NORTHERN RISING, 1569.

The first great rebellion in Elizabeth's reign had for its object the placing of Mary Queen of Scots on the English and Scottish thrones and the establishing of the Roman Catholic religion in both countries by force of arms. The chief plotters were Mary Queen of Scots, the Duke of Norfolk, who professed to be a Protestant, but was a secret Roman Catholic; the Duke of Northumberland; the Bishop of Ross, and Roberto Ridolfi, an Italian banker in London, the Pope's secret Agent in England.

The Duke of Northumberland at the head of 5,700 Roman Catholic insurgents destroyed the Protestant Service books and set up the Mass in Durham Cathedral and also in Ripon Cathedral, November 16-20, 1569. Beheaded at York, August 22nd, 1572. Here is a clear case of a traitor, yet Pope Leo XIII made a martyr of him in 1895.

The Duke of Norfolk was also executed in 1572 for his part in the Rising. He also is regarded as a martyr for his religion by Rome. He was a secret Romanist who posed as a Protestant.

THE RIDOLFI PLOT, 1569.

Roberto Ridolfi was an Italian banker established in London. Lord Burghley entrusted him with Government financial business, received him into his home, and suspected nothing. He was actually secretly financing the Northern Rising that year, and forwarded 12,000 crowns to the rebels from Pope Pius V and promised 100,000 more if they succeeded.

All this time he was also plotting with the Spanish Ambassador for the

invasion of the country. Walsingham suspected and arrested him, but could prove nothing. Queen Elizabeth and Burghley thought he had been unjustly used. He was a most skilful dissembler.

In 1570 he sent Philip II a list of 40 English Peers who were prepared to draw their swords against Elizabeth.

In 1571 he left London to lay the plans for invasion before the Duke of Alva, the King of Spain, and the Pope. The plan was for the Duke of Alva to cross from Flanders and land in England with 8,000 Spanish troops, as soon as the Queen had been killed, and then seize the throne for Mary Queen of Scots. Walsingham, however, intercepted some of his letters, and discovered the plot. In Paris, Ridolfi heard that he had been found out. He then wrote to Mary Queen of Scots that it was impossible to return to England as he had incurred the suspicion of Elizabeth. He at once returned to Italy, and was rewarded by the Pope with a high office in the Government.
Spanish State Papers II, 245.

THE FATHER SANDER'S PLOT, 1579. AN ENGLISH TRAITOR PRIEST IN IRELAND.

Dr. Nicholas Sander was another of those English Roman Priests who put the Pope before his country. He graduated at Oxford in 1551 A.D. He was a bitter enemy of England.

In 1559 he went to Rome, and in 1572 was appointed Professor of Theology at Louvain. In 1573 he went to Spain to carry out a plot to dethrone Elizabeth and place Mary Queen of Scots on the throne. In 1579, the Pope sent him to Ireland as Nuncio, with a commission to incite the Irish Chiefs to rise under the Papal banner against Elizabeth. The Pope promised 5,000 Italian troops, and the King of Spain sent troops, guns and ammunition.

Sanders landed at Smerwick with Spanish troops on July 17th, 1579. Sanders died of starvation after 2 years in the mountains of the West of Ireland.
Dict. Nat. Biog. See Additional M.S. 28420, Brit. Mus. for details.
Spanish State Papers IV, 666.

PLOT OF POPE GREGORY TO INVADE ENGLAND, 1580 A.D.

(Original Despatch, Venetian Archives, Dec. 2nd, 1580). 825. Lorenzi Priuli, Venetian Ambassador in France, to the Signory.

"The English Ambassador has just given me the enclosed copy of a treaty which has been entered into by the Pope, the King of Spain and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, against his Queen."

February 18th, 1580.

826. Articles of the Confederates: copy enclosed in the preceding Despatch.

On Thursday the 18th February in the year 1580, the Ambassadors of the Catholic King and the Grand Duke of Tuscany were together at the audience (in Rome), when a league against the Queen of England was concluded between his Holiness, the said King and the said Grand Duke, in manner following.

"1. That his Holiness will furnish ten thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry, the Catholic King fifteen thousand infantry and fifteen hundred cavalry, and the Grand Duke eight thousand infantry and one hundred cavalry; and to these forces are to be added the Germans who have gone to Spain, and who are to be paid "pro rata" (Latin meaning in equal proportions) by the above named Princes.

2. Should it please our Lord God to give good speed and success to the expedition, the populations are in the first place and above all things to be admonished, on the part of his Holiness, to return to their obedience and devotion to the Roman Catholic Church in the same manner as their predecessors have done.

3. That his Holiness, as sovereign Lord of the Island (of England) will grant power to the Catholic nobles of the kingdom to elect a Catholic Lord of the Island, who, under the authority of the Apostolic See will be declared King, and who will render obedience and fealty to the Apostolic See as the other Catholic kings have done before the time of the last Henry.

4. That Queen Elizabeth be declared an usurper ('detentrice') and incapable to reign, because she was born of an illegitimate marriage, and because she is a heretic." *Venetian State Papers*, pp. 650-51.

GUILT OF JESUITS CAMPION AND PARSONS.

This is the great Plot of February 18th, 1580. The Treaty was signed in Rome. The King of Spain, the Pope and the Duke of Tuscany were to send armies of a total of 35,000 to invade England. That plot was discovered by the English Ambassador in France; also, within eight days it was known in Paris to the Prince of Condé who sent a copy of the Treaty to Queen Elizabeth. That document is amongst the Carew Papers in the British Museum. Then Sir Francis Englefield, a wealthy English traitor living on the Continent and always stirring up trouble, also heard of it and wrote to the Spanish Nuncio, Bishop Sega, on April 11th, 1580, to know what the Bishop thought of it. There are, therefore, confirmations from three different sources. The Prince of Condé wrote to the Queen on February 23rd, 1580. Parsons and Campion and 18 other Priests left Rome on the Jesuit Mission to England, on the 18th April, 1580—two months to a day after the Treaty was signed. Elizabeth's Government knew from the Secret Service Officers what they were after, and that is why the English Government was able to confidently charge them in this Indictment with planning the invasion of England.

Jesuit Translation of Allen, Ely, Campion, Parsons Indictment.

(Translated by Father John Pollen, S.J.) November 6th, 1581.

ALLEN, MORTON, ELY, PARSONS, CAMPION *, BOSGRAVE*, FORD*, COTTAM*, FILBY, COLLETON, RICHARDSON, SHERWIN *, KIRBY *, JOHNSON *, RISHTON, BRYANT*, JOHN HART, OSCLIFFE, SHERT*, ORTON, conspired on March 31st, 1580 (1) in Rome, and on the last of April at Rheims (and at other times and places), to depose and kill the Queen, etc., to cause war, slaughter and insurrection, to change religion and government, to call in foreign armies.

For which purposes on the 20th May and at other times, in Rome and in other places, they excited invasion of the realm, and agreed then and on the last of May at Rheims that nineteen of their number should come to England to excite rebellion and subvert religion, and that on the 1st of June these nineteen, comforted by the rest, started from Rheims on their traitorous purpose. (All those in court pleaded "Not Guilty.") CORAM REGE ROLL. K.B. 27/1279. 2.

*The names starred were actually executed. **Allen, Ely, Morton** and **Parsons**, were not tried as they fled to the Continent and remained there for the rest of their lives. The dates are those of the indictments. Writs concerning Campion are also on the Controllment Roll. Ref. K.B. 29/217. Num. 24 and 25, P.R.O.

FRESH PROOFS OF CAMPION'S GUILT.

Campion and Parsons arrived in Rheims on May 31st, 1580, on the way to England.

Note carefully that the invasion of the Realm mentioned in the Indictment at the Trial refers to the invasion planned by the Pope and others named in the Treaty signed in Rome, February 18th, 1580.

It is most interesting to note that the dates named in the Indictment differ by a few days only from those given in the latest Jesuit records; but the facts all agree with the Indictment, which was drawn up from the reports of Queen Elizabeth's Secret Service Officers, in Rome and in Cardinal Allen's College in Rheims.

Lord Burleigh and Walsingham had spies disguised as students quietly sitting at Rheims and Douay listening to the Plots against England and the Queen. In this way the English Govt. became possessed of the plans of Campion and Parsons before they landed. Parsons had been plotting for two years previous to 1582, so the French Nuncio informed the Pope in his letter of May 8th, 1582. For this reason the English Court was sure of the guilt of Campion and his associates.

POPE GREGORY XIII Sanctions the Plot Against Queen Elizabeth by Parsons and Campion.

Letter from the Papal Nuncio, Bishop Sega at Madrid, to the Cardinal of Como, the Pope's Prime Minister.

MADRID, 14th November, 1580.
Nunt. di Spagna 25.
Mons Sega, 1580.

"Amongst other things which this Humphrey Ely tells me, one is a great secret in the name of some Island (English) nobleman and of the "Jesuit Fathers themselves." It was that the said nobles are determined to try to kill the Queen with their own hands if they are assured, at least verbally, by His Holiness that in so doing they would not fall into sin. Because of the dangerous nature of the enterprise they would risk instant death.

I assured him that according to the sentence of Pius V of holy memory that they would be absolved, since he gives special licence to all subjects to take up arms against the wicked Queen. Notwithstanding this I shall not fail to enquire into this proposed enterprise and endeavour to find out more precisely what His Holiness wills. I added that if the Pope's reply should not come before the assassination, I could assure them that His Holiness would grant the necessary absolution afterwards.

I impressed on them the danger of delay, in case the conspiracy should be discovered, that they must seize the first opportunity and occasion. I intend to persuade him to go back to England, daring not even to write about his conferences with his friends, for if by chance the letters should be intercepted it would mean long imprisonment and torture for those who should fall into the hands of the Queen.

I do not know what he (Dr. Ely) will decide to do, but I shall write by the first post. In the meantime we shall meet tomorrow, and shall consider particularly the words of the Sentence in hand (of Pius V).

Notwithstanding that he (Dr. Ely) knows the peril threatening him by going back to England, he is ready to go back rather than risk writing. In my next letters I will be able to inform you of what will have transpired.

Your Honour, neither Brief nor Bull are expected from His Holiness by those Knights, but a bare word signified to me by your Honour "in your ciphers" will be sufficient.

When he (Dr. Humphrey Ely) shall start (for England) I will supply him with a letter in cipher and instructions how the letters can reach him safely.

I hope I have not gone too far in promising the necessary absolution from His Holiness. I beseech your Honour to ask it for my sake, for certainly the zeal of the House of God devoured me."

Copy in Italian from Vatican Archives, deposited in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.

TRA. 9/77 Roman Transcripts.

THE POPE'S REPLY.

Discovered in 1886 A.D.

Gregory XIII sanctions the Assassination of Queen Elizabeth, December 12th, 1580.

ROME, December 12th, 1580.

"Since that guilty woman of England rules over two such noble Kingdoms of Christendom, and is the cause of so much injury to the Catholic Faith, and loss of so many million souls, there is no doubt that whosoever sends her out the world with the pious intention of doing God service, not only does not sin but gains merit, especially having regard to the sentence pronounced

against her by Pius V of holy memory. And so, if those English nobles decide actually to undertake so glorious a work, your Lordship can assure them that they do not commit any sin. We trust in God, also that they will escape danger. As far as concerns your Lordship, in case you have incurred any irregularity, the Pope bestows on you his holy benediction."

Translated by Father McKee of Brompton Oratory. Copy in Italian from Vatican Archives, deposited in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. TRA. 9/105 Roman Transcripts.

COMMENTS ON SEGA LETTERS. TWO JESUITS ONLY IN ENGLAND IN 1580 A.D.

For over 300 years the Jesuits and Church of Rome have denied that the Jesuits Campion and Parsons were conspiring against the throne of Elizabeth. "Only religious teachers!" That is the story Rome tells in her history books.

The discovery in 1886 of these Sega despatches in the Vatican Archives by Mr. W. H. Bliss, the British Government Research Officer at the Vatican, finally settled this long-disputed question.

The letter states the Jesuit Fathers were conspiring in 1580 with the English Roman Catholic noblemen to murder Queen Elizabeth.

According to the Jesuit records published by Father Pollen, S.J., in *The Month*, January to June, 1902, p. 606, there were only two Jesuit priests in England in 1580—Campion and Parsons. Father Pollen says, concerning the Nuncio Sega's letter: "Parsons and Campion seem to be meant." Of course they were; there were no others in England. This settles the long-disputed question as to whether Campion was involved in the conspiracy to dethrone or murder Elizabeth. He was ONE of the only TWO!

Father Pollen, S.J., continues: "The letters of the Nuncio and the answer . . . presses on none more hardly than on the Jesuits." "As the Nuncio's phrase stands, these Jesuits may have gone almost as far in approving the conspiracy as the members of the Roman Curia did."—*The Month*, June, 1902, p. 606.

CARDINAL ALLEN'S DOUAY-RHEIMS-ROME ASSASSIN PRIESTS.

Father Humphrey Ely, Campion's and Parsons' emissary in Spain, was educated first at Oxford, then at Cardinal Allen's Douay College and finally at Rheims. He accompanied Cardinal Allen to Rome in August, 1579. In June, 1580, he visited England in disguise as a merchant under the name of "Howard" about the same time as Campion and Parsons, the Jesuits, landed. In November, five months later, we find him in Madrid proposing to Bishop Sega, , the Spanish Nuncio, on behalf of Parsons and Campion and some disloyal English noblemen, a plan to murder Queen Elizabeth. He afterwards became a Professor at Douay.

This is the man who trained Allen's Priests at Rheims, and sent them to England to be hanged as "Martyrs."

What are the real facts as disclosed in these recently discovered Vatican and Venetian State Papers of Campion's day, when examined in the light of the Indictment at the Trial and Evidence recorded in State Trials?

(1) The Plot of Pope Gregory XIII to invade England was signed in Rome on February 18th, 1580.

Campion and Parsons and 18 other Priests left Rome on the Jesuit Mission to England on the 18th of April, 1580—two months to a day after the Treaty was signed. Elizabeth's Government knew from the Secret Service Officers what they were after, and for this reason the English Government was able confidently to charge them in this Indictment with planning the invasion of the country.

(2) Did Campion and Parsons know about this plot to invade England as planned by Gregory XIII, the Duke of Tuscany and the King of Spain? To get the answer we must read the letter written two years after by the Papal Nuncio on May 8th, 1582.

The letter of the Papal Nuncio in France to the Cardinal of Como, the Pope's Prime Minister, dated May 8th, 1582, proves conclusively that two years before that date, which would be May 8th, 1580, Parsons and Campion, then about half way between Rome and Rheims on the way to England, already had this plot in hand.

Hear what the Nuncio says in his letter:—

"Father Robert (Parsons) has arrived from England where he has had this affair in hand for the last 2 years."

Two years before the Nuncio wrote that letter, Campion and Parsons had left Rome on April 18th, 1580, for England.

On May 31st they reached Rheims and stopped at Cardinal Allen's College. About June 14th they arrived in London.

That letter of the Nuncio makes it clear that Campion and Parsons had the Plot in hand before they landed in England.

(3) Another very important fact is that Humphrey Ely, Cardinal Allen's Rheims student, accompanied Campion and Parsons from Rheims and landed in England in disguise under the name of Howard. Four months later we find he travelled to Madrid on behalf of Campion and Parsons to get the Spanish Nuncio Sega to enquire of the Pope whether it were lawful or not to kill Queen Elizabeth. We have already read the Pope's reply sanctioning the murder of the Queen.

(4) Again, the evidence recorded in *State Trials* records the fact that Campion left books behind him—in the houses where he had lodged. In these were found form of Oaths to be administered for renouncing obedience to Her Majesty the Queen.

The evidence states that Campion preached a sermon in Berkshire on: "A coming day, comfortable to the Catholics, but terrible to the heretics flourishing in the land." When the Queen's Counsel asked Campion what he meant by "a terrible day for the heretics," he replied that he "meant the restoration of religion in the land." The Attorney General replied, "*No, you meant the invasion of the country by the Pope, King of Spain and Duke of Florence.*" The

Jury then retired and after a short absence from Court brought in a verdict of Guilty. The Attorney General then said: "All you jointly and severally have received money from the Pope and you are his agents."

Let anyone read the Indictment again and read the Vatican and Venetian State Papers on pp. 88-95 in conjunction with the record of the Trial in *State Trials*, now in the British Museum and all doubts as to Campion being equally guilty with the others will vanish.

(5) Richard Simpson, Campion's biographer, as a Roman Catholic, settles the doubt when he writes:

"The (Jesuit) Mission of 1580 into England was ultimately a spiritual failure, because it was not purely a spiritual mission. The intention of its chiefs was not single. They doubtless had the intention to save souls, and looked on them also as the moving forces of bodies that might be useful soldiers in the coming struggles." Simpson's *Life of Campion*, 472.

This letter was intercepted by Walsingham's Secret Service Agent at Burton, copied, sealed and sent on to the unsuspecting Jesuit Agents of Queen Mary in London. It was used at her Trial.

Mary's letters had been secretly passing in and out of Chartly Manor House where she was confined since February, enclosed in a small watertight tube concealed inside the family beer barrel. This was allowed to pass in and out apparently undetected. But Sir Aubrey Paulet, her keeper, and Walsingham's private Secretary, Phellipes in league with the Brewer removed and copied all of the letters as they passed in and out and then forwarded them to the Jesuit Agents as if nothing had been detected. Pheilipes then sent the copies on to Walsingham in London. It was years after the execution of Mary before the secret came out. Morgan, Mary's Agent in Paris disclosed the facts at his trial in Brussels on a charge of betraying Mary. The Duke of Alva put him on trial for his life. "He was acquitted.

ANTHONY BABINGTON'S PLOT FOR TWELVE ROMAN CATHOLIC GENTLEMEN TO SHOOT DOWN THE WHOLE ENGLISH CABINET IN THE STAR CHAMBER AND SEIZE THE TOWER OF LONDON.

In Article IX of his Confession to Lord Burghley, August 31st, 1586, Father Anthony Tyrrell gives the following account of the Plot to shoot down the Cabinet, at the same time that the six gentlemen would shoot the Queen. The Tower was to be stormed and the Earl of Arundel to be released. The guns of the Tower were to be turned on the citizens of London, and Mary Queen of Scots proclaimed Queen of England.

"At a time when we may be certainly assured that all the chief Councillors of the realm are there assembled, the Earl of Leicester, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Treasurer Burghley, Sir Francis Knollys, Sir Francis Walsingham, and others, a dozen lusty gentlemen, well picked out with double pistols under their cloaks, shall be beforehand get every man his place, every man take his man as he sitteth, most convenient for him, and fire upon the sudden.

The act shall seem so terrible, and so amaze the company that we shall with small danger get down. If any resistance be offered, we have each man another

pistol, and not only that, but also our men with swords and bucklers shall make our defence, that we may have passage either by water or by land.

At that instant, many chosen men shall make errands to the Tower, others approach near the Gates, murder the Guard, recover an entrance, and then a sufficient number up on Tower Hill to surprise the Tower, AND MAKE OUR CAPTAIN, THE EARL OF ARUNDEL.

Having the full force of the Tower, money and munition, the Council all slain, let us have as many more in 24 hours as shall take all London, and then, what think you, may become of the Queen and the rest of the realm?"

Article IX, *Tyrrell's Confession*. Mary Queen of Scots, MSS., P.R.O. *Scottish State Papers* VII, 641.

MARY'S COMPLICITY IN THE PLOT CONFIRMED BY SPANISH PAPERS. BERNARDINO DE MENDOZA TO KING PHILIP II OF SPAIN, OCTOBER 20th, 1586.

On September 10th, 1586, Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, wrote to Philip, as follows:—

Bernardino Mendoza to the King of Spain.

PARIS, September 10th, 1586.

"The whole of the affair of the plan appears to have been discovered, some of the leaders having confessed. Of the six men who were sworn to kill the Queen, only two have escaped.

The Queen of Scotland must be well acquainted with the whole affair, to judge from the contents of a letter which she has written to me. I do not enclose it, as it is not ciphered, but will send it with my next. Doubtless, it is God's will to give England to your Majesty by the strong arm only, since He has allowed so much Catholic blood to be shed by the discovery of this business.

Even if my letters were discovered and printed, they are so worded that they may have another construction placed on them easily." *Spanish State Papers* III, 623-24.

As proof that Mary was as guilty as any of the other conspirators, we need only read the letters of the Spanish Ambassador to Philip, dated September 10th, 1586. The Ambassador wrote this letter as soon as the plot had been discovered.

PARIS, October 20th, 1586.

"They have executed 14 of the English Catholic prisoners, the names of whom I enclose: Babington, Savage, Ballard, Barnwell, Tylney, Abington, Tichborne, executed at St. Giles in the Fields, on the 20th September, and Salisbury Dunn, Jones, Charnock, Travers, Gage and Bellamy on the 21st. They all died as Catholics, confessing that they died for religion's sake. They did not incriminate any one else. Ballard the Priest was the first one they executed, and he exhorted all of them that since they had been Catholics in life, should prove themselves in death." *Spanish State Papers* III, 641.

Nau and Curll, Mary's Private Secretaries, on Sept. 5th and 6th, 1586, confessed that they wrote the letter of July 17th, 1586, at Queen Mary's dictation, sanctioning Babington Plot and the murder of Queen Elizabeth. Their signed Confessions are still preserved at the British Museum and other copies at the Public Record Office. A fire nearly destroyed these priceless Records in 1614, at Whitehall.

FIRST CONFESSION OF CURLL, MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS' SCOTTISH PRIVATE SECRETARY.

September 5th, 1586 A.D.

The Confession of Curll (as) to Babington's letter to the Scottish Queen, was as follows:

"The aforesaid I acknowledge to have put in cipher, 1586.

'Then must I and do confess to have deciphered the like of the whole above written, coming written in one sheet of paper as from Mr. Babington. And the answer thereunto being in French by Mr. Nau to have been translated into English and ciphered by me, 5th September, 1586, CURLL."

It is very important to note that this Confession refers to the Great Plot letters of Queen Mary sanctioning the murder of Elizabeth which Mary sent to Babington on July 17th, 1586. In this letter she mentions the firing of the barns near Chartley Manor House where she was imprisoned, Roman Catholic historians have attempted to make these Confessions refer to earlier letters in which no plot is sanctioned.

Because of the attempt of Mary's followers to twist these letters, after her death, both Secretaries afterwards signed a second Confession confirming those they made on the 5th and 6th of September, 1586. Curll's is dated August 6th, 1587, and Nau's in 1605, after he had returned to France.

The subtle cunning of the Devil himself runs all through the Roman Catholic and Jesuit interpretation of these letters.

Lord Burghley and his Council declared that they were the most cunningly worded letters that they had ever read in all their public lives.

CONFESSION OF JACQUES NAU, FRENCH SECY. TO QUEEN OF SCOTS. THE DEATH LETTER, July 17th.

September 5th and 6th, 1586 A.D.

Confession of Nau, Secretary of the Queen of Scotland, before my Lords the Chancellor, Treasurer and Admiral of England, touching the manner of writing the letters of the said Queen written with her own hand.

"As to the letter written to Babington, Her Majesty delivered it to me written for the most part by her hand, and I neither did nor wrote anything, as I have protested, without her express commandment, and especially touching the point of her escape and SETTING FIRE TO THE BARNS NEAR THE HOUSE. Sept. 5, 1586. S.P. 53/19, P.R.O. Scottish Calendar State Papers, VII, 679-80.

"As to the letter written by the Queen my mistress to Babington, I wrote it from a minute by the hand of her Majesty, as I have already deposed; she herself sitting at the table, and Curll and I before her.

"I wrote the said letters and showed and delivered them to her to do therewith as it pleases her to ordain, For Her Majesty will not permit letters of importance and secret be written out of her cabinet, and no despatch is even closed without her being present there, and rereading always the letters before they be put into cipher and translated, which is done by Curll especially as to the letter written to Babington. NAU."

Sept. 6th, 1586 S.P. 53/19, P.R.O.

Endorsed by Thomas Phelippes: "Copies of Curll's Confession touching Babington's letters." S.P. 53/19 P.R.O, Scottish Calendar. *State Papers VIII*, p.679.

THE FINAL CONFESSION OF CURLL.

August 6th, 1587 A.D.

"Moreover were showed me the two very letters written by me in cipher and received by Babington, and the true decipherments of both word by word with the two alphabets between Her Majesty and him, the counter alphabets whereof were found amongst her papers. The copy of the first of the said letters written with my own hand which I could not avoid to acknowledge as I did, and a true copy of Babington's principal letters'to Her Majesty, the whole acknowledged by his Confession under his own hand... . It behoved me for most important respected to confess, as I did that I had deciphered Babington's principal letters to Her Majesty, and that I received from Mr. Nau by her commandment her answer thereto, after she had read and perused the same in my presence, which answer I translated into English, after perusing thereof by Her Majesty put it in cipher, ere it was sent to Babington. In witness whereof I have subscribed these presents with my hand at London, the 6th August, 1587." – CURLL.

COTT., MSS. Cal. DI, p. 10987. Brit. Mus.

Below Curll's Confession is Nau's Confession on the same sheet. This sheet was badly burnt on the top in the Whitehall fire on February 12th, 1618, when so many of the Gunpowder Plot and Babington Confessions and Documents and the Privy Council Records from January 1st, 1602, to April 30th, 1613, were destroyed. Privy Council Records, 1619 A.D, P.R.O.

Two men named Gore and Sampson were prosecuted for causing the Fire.

JACQUES NAU'S FINAL CONFESSION.

PARIS, March 12th, 1606.

"I certify on my honour and my life that the above copies have been transcribed by me word by word from their originals which I promise and undertake to show every time there will be need for it. J. NAU."

COTT., MSS. Cal. DL, p. 10987. Brit. Mus.

This Confession was signed by Nau, 19 years later, when he was safe in France, and had no fear of death or imprisonment from the English Government. These final confessions settled the question for all honest minds.

Both Nau's and Curll's final Confessions are omitted from Boyd's Calendar of *Scottish State Papers*, published in 1915.

He has left out several vital letters which leads me to distrust this Calendarer. The Record Office officials informed the author that the work has been very badly done, and many have complained of the mistakes in Boyd's volumes of the official *Scottish State Papers*.

There is no doubt to-day as to the guilt of Mary Queen of Scots; the Vatican and foreign Archives Documents recently disclosed settle the question once for all.

Father J. H. Pollen, S.J. Editor of the Jesuit organ *The Month*, in his book *The Babington Plot*, p.51, states that Babington was one of those who accompanied the Priests of the Jesuit Mission in England. He accompanied Campion and Parsons from Rheims,

Father John Savage of the Babington Plot, was a young Priest trained at Allen's College at Rheims, 1581-85 A.D., and left on August 16th, 1585. P, XLIV.

Foley, the Jesuit, author of *Records of the English Province*, includes Father John Ballard in his catalogue of Martyrs for their faith. *Records*, S.J., III, pp. 801-808.

Father Henry Garnet, S.J., the Gunpowder Plotter, is also included in Rome's Calendar of Martyrs for their religion. He is included in the latest list of Martyrs, issued by the Roman Catholic Truth Society, edited by Father Newdigate, S.J.

Cardinal Bellarmine designates Garnet as a Martyr. Mission, the great traveller, records that he saw a painting of Garnet's portrait in the hall of the Jesuits' College in Rome and by his side an Angel who points to him the open gates of heaven. Mission, *Travels in Italy*, I, Part I, p. 173.

A CARDINAL SPY AT THE VATICAN.

Mary Queen of Scots found at her trial that some most deadly and accurate evidence had been given against her, and she knew that it could not have been obtained from any other source than from somebody inside. The facts were that Walsingham's Secret Service had a Cardinal acting as a spy in Rome and others at Rheims. So here is what Mary says:—

*Autograph (to Sixtus V).—
Secret Archives at the Vatican, Rome.*

FOTHERINGAY, November 23rd, 1586.

Jesus Maria.

"Holy Father,— ... I hear, to my regret, evil reports of some persons near your Holiness, who are said to have received wages from this (ENGLISH) Government to betray the Cause of God; AND THERE ARE CARDINALS IMPLICATED with them. I leave it to your Holiness to institute an enquiry into this."

"From your Holiness's very humble and devoted daughter,

MARIE, Queen of Scotland, Dowager of France."

Arc. Vat. Pro. Tra. 9/82a.

This letter was found in the Vatican Archives by Mr. Bliss, the British Government Research Officer, in 1886. A transcript is now in the Public Record Office. For some mysterious reason it is not reprinted in Boyd's *Calendar of Scottish State Papers*, at the P.R.O.

The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

DIES WITH A LIE ON HER LIPS.

Roman Catholic historians have created a widespread impression in the minds of their readers that Queen Elizabeth was entirely responsible for the death of Mary Queen of Scots; that she had her executed solely to get rid of a dangerous rival claimant to the Throne of England.

The Old State Papers and authentic Court Records of the times, still preserved at the Public Record Office, prove conclusively that both the House of Commons and the House of Lords were responsible for bringing Mary to trial, and for her subsequent execution. After Mary had been found guilty by a Court of 36 Lords and Judges, the House of Commons twice petitioned Elizabeth before she could be induced to sign Mary's Death Warrant. She had been found guilty and sentenced to death on Oct. 25th, 1586, in the Star Chamber at Westminster, but the sentence was not published to the nation until Dec. 4th.

As soon as the news became known, from tower and steeple bells crashed out unceasingly for a whole day and night. Church answered church till the news had been borne to the furthest glens in Cumberland and Northumberland. London was illuminated and bonfires blazed in cities, towns and villages. Fiercely and sternly Mary dared the Government to do their worst upon her. Having condemned her to death, they might complete their wicked work she said, and God would recompense her in Paradise.

ELIZABETH REFUSES TO SIGN THE DEATH WARRANT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Elizabeth could not be induced to sign the Warrant until nearly two months later. Meanwhile the temper of the nation was getting beyond control. On Feb. 1st, 1587, Lord Howard of Effingham who commanded the English Fleet which defeated the Armada, came to Elizabeth to represent that the condition of the

country could no longer be trifled with; that some positive course or other must now be taken with the Queen of Scots. He, himself like every other intelligent statesman who was not a traitor at heart, had long decided that she ought to be executed. Elizabeth was really shaken. She said that she had delayed so long, in order to show how unwillingly she had consented. Elizabeth then ordered Lord Howard to fetch the Death Warrant. He did so, and Elizabeth signed it at once and threw it on the floor, and told Davison, Walsingham's secretary, to trouble her no more about the matter. Davison then took the Warrant to the Court of Chancery, where it was sealed by Lord Burleigh the Chancellor.

Burleigh perceiving the risk of leaving Davison with so tremendous a responsibility, invited such of the Council as were in London to come to his room. Leicester, Howard, Hunsdon, Cobham, Sir Francis Knollys, Lord Derby and Hatton attended. Walsingham and Davison were also present. On the will and resolution of these ten, hung the life or death of Mary Stuart.

Every Minister present agreed that the execution was absolutely necessary. Lord Kent and Lord Shrewsbury were the Commissioners named to see the Warrant executed. The necessary letters were written to them, and with these and the Warrant itself, Secy. Beale left London early on Saturday morning, Feb. 4th, and arrived at Fotheringay Castle on Sunday evening, Feb. 5th. A message was despatched to the Sheriff of Northampton to be in attendance on Wednesday morning. On Monday evening the Earl of Kent came, and Shrewsbury on Tuesday, at noon.

When the early Castle dinner was over, they sent a servant to the Queen of Scots with a request to be admitted to her presence.

Briefly, solemnly, and sternly they delivered their awful message. They informed her that they had received a commission under the Great Seal to see her executed, and she was told that she must prepare to suffer on the following morning, Wednesday, Feb. 8th, 1587. She was dreadfully agitated. For a moment she refused to believe them. Then as the truth forced itself upon her, tossing her head in disdain and struggling to control herself, she called her Physician and began to speak to him of money that was owed to her in France.

At last she broke down altogether, and they left her with a fear either that she would destroy herself in the night, or that she would refuse to come to the scaffold, and that it might be necessary to drag her there by force. 124
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MARY'S LAST NIGHT BEFORE HER EXECUTION.

Her last night was a busy one. A few lines to the King of France were dated two hours after midnight. She sent a message to Philip of Spain, that it was her last prayer that he should persevere, notwithstanding her death, in the invasion of England. After this she retired to rest and slept for three or four hours, then rose and prepared to encounter the end. At 8 a.m., Feb. 8th, the Provost Marshal knocked at her outer door. It was locked and no one answered. On his returning with the Sheriff however a few minutes later, the

door was open, and they were confronted with the tall majestic figure of Mary Stuart, standing before them in splendour. A crucifix of gold hung from her neck, and in her hand she had a crucifix of ivory. "Let us go," she said, and passed out into the Hall of Execution on the arm of an Officer of the Guard. At the upper end of the Hall stood the scaffold, twelve feet square and two feet and a half high. It was covered with black cloth. On the scaffold was the block; the axe leant against the rail, and two masked figures stood like mutes on either side at the back.

Secy. Beale then mounted the platform and read the Warrant aloud. Mary then knelt in prayer, and when she had finished, the black mutes stepped forward and in the usual form begged her forgiveness. Her lawn veil was lifted carefully off so as not to disturb the hair; the black robe was next removed, and the black jacket followed and underneath was a petticoat and bodice of crimson silk and thus she stood on the black scaffold dressed in blood red crimson from head to foot. The pictorial effect must have been appalling. Then she knelt on the cushion; Jean Kennedy, her maid, bound her eyes with a handkerchief, and then stepped back from off the scaffold and left her alone.

THE SCENE AT THE EXECUTION.

Mary knelt and then felt for the block, laying down her head and placing her hands under her neck. The executioners gently removed them lest they should deaden the blow, and then one of them holding her slightly, the other raised the axe and struck. The scene had been too trying even for the practised headsman of the Tower; his arm wandered, the blow fell on the knot of the handkerchief, and scarcely broke the skin. She neither spoke nor moved. He struck again and this time effectively; and at once a metamorphosis was witnessed, strange as was ever wrought by wand of fabled enchanter.

The coif fell off and the false plaits; the laboured illusion vanished. The lady who had knelt before the block was in the maturity of grace and loveliness. The executioner when he raised the head as usual to show it to the crowd, exposed the withered features of a grisled wrinkled old woman.

"So perish all enemies of the Queen," said the Dean of Peterborough, a loud, "Amen" rose all over the Hall. "Such end" said the Earl of Kent, rising and standing over the body, "to the Queen's and Gospel's enemies."

Never did any human being meet death more bravely; yet, in the midst of the admiration and pity which cannot be refused her, it is not to be forgotten that she was leaving the world with a lie upon her lips. She was a bad woman disguised in the livery of a martyr, as were nearly all Rome's "martyrs" executed during Elizabeth's reign.

In face of the fact that Babington and her two secretaries confessed that they had written the Plot letters at her dictation, Mary denied the fact to the end. There was no true repentance at her death.

The recently recovered letters which she wrote to the Spanish Ambassador at the time, prove conclusively that she was lying, and she stuck to the lies to the bitter end. See *Spanish State Papers, III.*

The Church of Rome claims Mary as a martyr for her religion. If the murder of Queen Elizabeth and the shooting down of the whole English Cabinet in the Star Chamber was religion, then Mary was a martyr for religion; but that religion cannot possibly be that of Christ.

For these facts see *Scottish State Papers IX* and *Life of Wm. Davison*, Secy. of State to Queen Elizabeth, by Sir W. H. Nicholas.

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