

Queen Elizabeth's Secret Services

Invisible Power: the Elizabethan Secret Services 1570 - 1603

by Alan Haynes; Allen Sutton Publishing, 1992. 200 pages.

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This is an excellently produced book and undoubtedly the subject is an important one. Haynes suggests a reason why it may have been neglected for so long. Of the State Papers of England, which are a prime source of information, "many have been destroyed that would have been cited if they had been allowed to survive, and the manipulation then of those that now remain to us now has to be acknowledged. Even so, the long neglect of such a striking topic is still astonishing..." (vii). Thus, we are fairly warned at the outset that, through no fault of the author, the study is based on material doctored and selected according to the principles of statecraft centuries before he or anyone else appeared on the scene to assess the value of what is left and to make a coherent narrative out of it.

The subject has not been entirely neglected in the past, although a compendium of spying activities as such is something new. No lives of the principal characters of the age—from the queen herself down to the last of her courtiers or subjects who was still important enough for a biography—can omit the subject of spies and espionage. Indeed, "hunting spies for reason of state, and animals for sport, became the great Elizabethan and Jacobean obsessions" (xii). The change in religion at the beginning of the queen's reign, and the insistence on calling those who could not in conscience accept the changes traitors (not merely dissidents), made treason something which involved a considerable portion of the queen's subjects: all those, in fact, who wished to follow another religion, but especially Catholicism.

Sir Ralph Sadler, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, was forced to admit in 1568 that in all the north of England there were not "ten gentlemen that do favour and allow her Majesty's proceedings in the cause of religion" (xvi). Although our author does not say so, there was then a dangerous element of artificiality and misrepresentation in the queen's religious policy from the outset that created a series of false problems by falsely inventing a whole new class of miscreants. If defined otherwise by law, these

might have been subjects as loyal to the queen, on paper as well as in fact, as any of her Protestant subjects. Indeed, for a thousand years until Henry VIII, the adherence of Englishmen to the papacy had never been regarded as contradicting their loyalty to the English Crown. Nor did the question arise again after Catholic emancipation in 1829. So for this period, which commenced in 1559 and lasted, admittedly with much tapering off in severity toward the end of the period, until the nineteenth century, England became a land of paranoids, plotters, and persecutors.

But how many of the plots were genuine? It is worth quoting Martin Hume, a scholar of repute at the beginning of this century and editor of the *Spanish Calendar of State Papers*:

The accusations that have been repeated by nearly every English historian from Elizabeth's time to our own, of widespread and numerous plots by Catholics to assassinate the queen at this period, are to a large extent largely unsupported by serious evidence... In accordance with the usual practice, it was the policy of the English government at the time to blacken the character and methods of the national enemy as much as possible... [Plots] like that for which Dr. Parry suffered and that of Moody and young Stafford, were more or less bogus plots, in which agents provocateurs were sacrificed to the exigencies of party politics... Much of the stuff was obviously untrue, but it was made the most of in England for two reasons. Anything that aroused horror and detestation of Spain, and of those Englishmen who were assumed to have sold their bodies and souls to her, was useful—as we have seen in the report of parliament of 1593—in keeping alive the patriotism of the country, inciting liberality in the matter of supplies for defence against so dastardly a foe, and in attracting to the Protestant side those waverers who declined to continue their identification with a cause which allowed regicide to be used for its ends.¹

The most serious criticism of Haynes's book is that its author is too ready to believe in the plots which proliferated throughout the period and which, it is altogether reasonable to believe, were foisted on the opponents and critics of the Cecilian regime. These opponents were more often than not papists, but by no means all. Indeed, the first spectacular victim of the regime was Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, who remained throughout his life as good a Protestant as any in the country. Haynes mentions *The Marvellous Chance* in his bibliography but the few pages (6-10) on the Ridolfi Plot here seem to me (as one who made the fuller study in two volumes, the second being *The Dangerous Queen*) altogether inadequate.

Indeed, one could describe Haynes's summary, if one were less than charitable, as a botch-up. To say that [George] "Fitzwilliam hurried home [from Spain] to warn Burghley of Norfolk's treachery in consenting to an invasion scheme" (9) needs to be modified or expanded by further comment, for there is every reason to believe that Norfolk was altogether innocent of these charges laid against him. If anything is to be presumed, it is his innocence rather than his guilt. Even if one does not accept the findings of the above-mentioned works, the element of doubt needs to be admitted even in a sketchy summary of the case, which admittedly is all that could have been attempted in a small work dealing with so large a subject.

It is to be regretted that Haynes did not include *The Dangerous Queen* in his reading or bibliography, because it might have made him more cautious in his whole approach to the Scottish queen's aims and policies as well as on the methods of Sir William Cecil. Preparing this book involved a careful analysis of all Mary's letters, as far as they are known to survive, for the period of the Ridolfi Plot. They amount to some hundred. If we find that these letters:

well authenticated and of good provenance, indicate certain very clear lines of thought and tendencies in the writer, we are entitled to examine with more than ordinary care, and even regard with doubt, three or four more which indicate totally different and contradictory attitudes. Depending on historical circumstances, we are entitled to reject such letters as spurious if the total context in which they were produced suggests, for example, that forgery might have been used²

—or some other kind of falsification. A detailed examination was attempted in the chapter "Mary Hopes" of the above book, and even a summary would be out of place here. But it is relevant to select for scrutiny one or two letters which were taken to be damning evidence against her and also the Duke of Norfolk at his trial on January 16, 1572. The letter of February 8, 1571, which fully admits and encourages Ridolfi's invasion scheme, is not in her hand and there is nothing to suggest that it was ever backed by an original.³ What we have in the British Library is a document unmistakably in the hand of William Cecil. It is not signed by him, but at the end there is an attestation in the hand of Robert Higford, one of Norfolk's servants and a man too close himself for comfort to the cauldron which finally overwhelmed the Duke. Higford's attestation runs, "This copy being conferred word by word with the originall copie is agreeing in all points with the sayd originall. This xth of January 1571 [1572]." What can this reasonably be taken to mean except that Cecil is trying to foist off on the Scottish queen a

document falsely produced in her name in order to bring her into the utmost possible discredit? Doing no more than testify that a copy was a true copy of a copy, a phrase evidently designed to confuse, Higford makes Cecil's true purpose clear enough through all this confusion, which could only have been deliberate:

Even more compromising than the last, at first sight, was a longer document directed to Alba and drawn up about the middle of March, 1571... Once again this document exists only in copy in the archives in Brussels and was, no doubt, one of Ridolfi's dubious benefactions to that august institution at least in origin.⁴

Other compromising documents likewise leave us with the conclusion that there is nothing authentic originating from the hand of Mary that amounts to evidence against her sufficient for her condemnation in any impartial court of justice.

But her enemies were not interested in true impartiality, even if they had close contact with courts of justice. For Cecil and Walsingham, Mary was an obstacle to everything they stood for. Had she succeeded the heirless Elizabeth, the Protestant revolution set up in 1559 would have been completely overthrown, and they themselves perhaps have suffered something more than loss of power. Mary, then, had to be eliminated. It was Walsingham's fond hope, shared with Cecil, that the Scottish queen might have been destroyed at the same time as Norfolk. Walsingham wrote to Cecil on January 31, 1572:

I perceive through God's good Providence your Lordship hath escaped the danger of a most devilish Italian practice. Surely so long as that devilish woman liveth, neither her Majesty must make account to continue in quiet possession of her crown, nor her faithful servants assure themselves of safety of their lives. God therefore open her Majesty's eyes to see that which may be for her best surety.⁵

On this occasion, Elizabeth's eyes were open a little wider than Walsingham's: wide enough to realize the dangers of killing a sister monarch unless the evidence against her made it unavoidable. True, in the end, reasons of state would prevail.

As time went by and it became increasingly obvious that Elizabeth would not marry or produce an heir, the problem represented for the regime by the continued existence of the rival monarch became increasingly acute. Mary was intelligent enough to realize that time was on her side. She was also intelligent enough to realize the problem she presented for her enemies

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in Elizabeth's government. She also knew from experience that her correspondence was watched and the slightest false step could literally destroy her. While she would have been willing to countenance any practicable means of effecting her escape, as was her right and even duty, it could not be supposed that she would entertain any escape project lightly or without caution. Perhaps with a growing sense of desperation and urgency forced on them by the passage of time, from the mid-1580s on it was deemed politic by Elizabeth's government to shape up a new plot that would bring about Mary's destruction. It was not difficult to select from the ingredients spread around them in the shape of spies eager for any employment: a few idealistic young papists who might have been willing to assist Mary's escape, and any number of desperate men who would be willing to say and do anything they were told for a few crowns. Times were hard and work often hard to come by. In this regard, Haynes has given us the atmosphere of the age excellently well.

So it was that the Babington Plot came to be concocted. It was the end product of much experience and engineered with no little skill, so that at last "public enemy number one" was forced to lay her head on the block at Fotheringhay on February 8, 1587. Haynes spends no less than three chapters on this episode and no doubt he is justified. As J.H. Pollen commented:

It is a mournful, sordid scene, in which Mary comes out a heroine by the exercise of the highest moral courage... That Elizabeth's government would avoid giving the secrets of the plot to the public followed at once from the way in which the conspiracy had been instigated, nursed, and exposed. The part which Walsingham and his agents had played must be kept quiet at all costs. If public attention had been directed to the fact that Elizabeth's ministers had conspired against the heiress to the throne, it would have caused an outcry in that day as it would in ours... ⁶

Claims made by Mary at her trial cannot lightly be set aside. Her defense delivered in the course of her trial at Fotheringhay on October 12, 1586, is unambiguous and scarcely refutable. "I am an absolute queen, and will do nothing which may prejudice either mine own Royal Majesty or other princes of my place and rank, or my son. My mind is not yet dejected, nor will I sink under my calamity... The laws and statutes of England are to me most unknown. I am destitute of counsellors, and who shall be my peers, I am utterly ignorant. My papers and notes are taken from me and no man dareth step forth to be my advocate." But there were more telling claims to follow. "I am clear from all crime against the Queen. I have excited no man

against her, and I am not to be charged but by my own word or writing, which cannot be produced against me.”⁷ When Anthony Babington’s confession was later read out and “mention was made of the Earl of Arundel and his brethren, and the Earl of Northumberland, the tears burst forth... And shortly after, having wiped away the tears, she answered that Babington might confess what he list, but it was an open lie that she had devised such means: that her adversaries might easily get the ciphers which she had used to others, and with the same write many things falsely. That it was not likely she would use Arundel’s help, whom she knew to be shut up in prison, or Northumberland, who was very young, and to her unknown” (Cobbett and Howell, 142).

Against all this, Haynes follows the prevailing fashion and decides that Mary knew and approved of all that was going on. “Mary had no part in the minutiae of planning, but her desire for the elimination of Elizabeth is not disputed”—indeed, it could be disputed by anyone who has studied the evidence—“and her silence on the plot was at once understandable and fatal to all concerned” (79). All the same, Haynes cannot, and does not try, to conceal the affair’s generally base atmosphere, nor attempt to deny a clever coup on the part of the covert operations department of Cecil and Walsingham.

Shortly before Mary’s trial, a typically shady character in Walsingham’s entourage, William Stafford, called on the French ambassador, Chateauneuf. Stafford began with general complaints and then brought the conversation round to the subject of killing Queen Elizabeth. On the strength of this—Chateauneuf did not even wish to hear of the subject in his presence—Leicester, Christopher Hatton, and William Davison, Walsingham’s principal secretary, to whom the matter had been purveyed by design, interviewed Chateauneuf on the matter. He did not deny that Stafford had raised the dread topic. This was made the excuse to confine the ambassador to his residence until after the execution of Mary on February 8, 1587. This made it impossible for him to convey news of what was going on to the French king, who might have registered a very strong protest and intervened in the proceedings with some effect. Haynes fully admits that Michael Moody, another of Walsingham’s agents in this,

had little to gain unless he was put up to it by Walsingham to block the French. The minister and Elizabeth did apologize to Chateauneuf when Mary was dead. Walsingham even trumped her corpse by having Sidney’s long-delayed and lavish funeral in London on 16 February 1587. Any weeping was to be reserved for a Protestant hero. (82)

Clearly, the main object of this last exercise was not to magnify Sidney

but to divert public attention away from what many could have taken to be the dubious spectacle of regicide countenanced by government. In view of the general atmosphere of plotting on all sides, it is surely one-sided of Haynes to pick out the Scottish queen for special censure. "After all, conspiracy itself was like food and drink to the stupid and cunning Mary, Queen of Scots. Her eerie emotional detachment that remained yoked to soaring self-interest, was abetted by bigots like de Spes [the Spanish ambassador] and callow innocents like Babington. Her ambitions cost many lives..." (157). And were hers the only ambitions, or the worst in this age, that cost lives?

Haynes's somewhat dyspeptic comments on the Scottish queen are not typical of his asides on other characters in his story, even when he cannot approve of them. His comments on the new Catholic mission which arrived in England in the summer of 1580 with the Jesuits Robert Persons, Edmund Campion, and a group of distinguished seminary priests, could not be expected to provoke his admiration, but his comments are measured and restrained. "Persons undertook a defiant, politically slanted peregrination around the clandestine Catholic communities then seething with rumours of a great foreign invasion and news of papal troops landing in Ireland. Edmund Campion, devout, zealous and eloquent, travelled with alacrity to say Mass, and to preach to eager listeners" (37). This follows the usual distinction made between Campion the saint and Persons the political operative. Persons was probably shrewder in some ways than Campion, but it is important to the story to realize that the object of the 1580 mission was to promote reconciliation, not further division. The missionaries as a body genuinely hoped that it might be possible to bring the lost sheep of Israel back into the Catholic fold. Had it been left to the nation to decide, their avowed purpose might not have been hopeless. Given the attitudes of Cecil, Leicester, and Walsingham, however, their intentions may be seen as naive. But there is no reason to suppose they were insincere. The mission left Rome with an assurance from the Pope that Elizabeth's right to the throne need not be questioned. The object of the mission was religious, not political.

The essentially religious aspect of the mission was stressed from the outset when the Jesuits set up their clandestine press at Greenstreet, East Ham, near London. The first book off the new press was *A Brief discours conteynynge certayne reasons why Catholiques refuse to go to church*. The preface was dedicated "to the most highe and mightie Princess Elizabeth by the grace of God, Queene of England, France and Ireland"—even Ireland, which had been technically a papal fief since the days of King John! Addressed as "most excellent and souveraygne dread ladye and princesse," neither she nor the "honorable lords of the counsaile," nor "the whole estate

of [her] noble realme” could find anything unacceptable in the book “but onely in respect of the wryter’s zeale and opinion in religion” but this, after all, was still “the common received religion of universal Christendom.”⁸ He protested against the queen’s persecution of her Catholic subjects, referring to “the extreme penalties laid upon the practice of... Catholic religion, as imprisonment perpetual, loss of goods and lands, and life also for refusal of the oath against my religion.”⁹ This religion had been that of all the queen’s ancestors.

The dividing of the ways was provided for Persons and many of his friends and fellow-exiles abroad when Elizabeth’s government examined, tried, and executed Edmund Campion, Ralph Sherwin, and Alexander Bryant on December 1, 1581. It was taken as a gauntlet thrown in the face, which Persons and many of the exiles picked up. From this time they began to work with Spain for an invasion and the overthrow of the present regime. It will be said, quite reasonably, that if Persons and his party opposed themselves against Elizabeth and her government, one could not expect the latter to neglect all steps necessary to pursue their war to victory. But the question remains as to whether, with some show of goodwill on the government side, the long and bloody confrontation which followed could have been avoided. Nor could it be said that, even under the extreme provocation of a ruthless persecution, all the Catholics, not even all the Jesuits, felt it expedient or even right to resort to the counterargument of force: certainly not those who lived and worked in England itself.

The reference above to papal troops landing in Ireland brings us to the question as to how many of the ostensible rebels were working for Cecil and Walsingham. Certainly, a large problem remains where Thomas Stucley is concerned. The landing in Ireland in which Stucley had no direct part but some earlier involvement while he was in Rome, is well summed up by Haynes. The expedition consisted of “one leaky galleon with four small canon, manned by an extraordinarily motley crew... The effort successfully mounted to track him was a measure of the rapid development of intelligence work” (27). It may be that something was due to Walsingham’s intelligence service, but one suspects that even more was due to the fact that Stucley was all the time an agent of the Elizabethan government. Or so the evidence suggests to the present writer.

Stucley’s career at this time was examined in some detail in chapter 5 of *The Marvellous Chance*. This adventurer’s behavior is erratic and incalculable, yet shows a method behind which is madness with a purpose. The purpose and the madness seemed at all points to favor those who should have been Stucley’s enemies. One enemy, William Cecil (Lord Burghley), summed him up in no uncertain terms in his *Justitia Britannica* as “infamous

throughout the whole world, a treacherous wild beast rather than a man, a most vile off-scouring of his native land, who fled first from England because of his frequent acts of piracy, and afterwards left Ireland on account of certain inexplicable crimes which could not be so much as named for any ear with a sense of shame.”¹⁰ But perhaps Cecil did protest too much, lest it be concluded that this colorful miscreant was working for Burghley after all. Indeed, as early as 1552, Stucley returned from France to purvey to Cecil interesting details concerning the intentions of the French king, Henri II, to mount an invasion of England to restore Catholicism.¹¹ The rest of Stucley’s career does not belie the idea that whatever superficial appearances might suggest to the contrary, his real allegiance remained always to Burghley. Perhaps this was appropriate for one who claimed to be an illegitimate son of Henry VIII (Edwards 1968, 271). His last exploit was typical of the rest. “Having helped to prepare an expedition against Ireland at Lisbon, he led it boldly into Africa. This time Nemesis went with him. He died at the battle of Alcazar on August 4, 1578” (Edwards 1968, 302). An interesting question remains as to the possibility of an understanding between Stucley and Ridolfi. Certainly, they were closeted together on occasion while Ridolfi was peddling his schemes in Madrid.¹²

One of the principal aims of Elizabeth’s government was to divide the Catholics among themselves. At first this proved difficult, if not impossible. But as time progressed, it became increasingly evident that there could be no adequate answer by force from outside to the internal problem of getting some kind of toleration or relief from persecution. So it was that an increasing number—including some of the priests, though not the English Jesuits—thought that some kind of rapprochement should be sought with the English government. Without making definite promises or holding out more than the vaguest of hopes, the Cecils allowed it to be thought that perhaps some accommodation might be made: but only in return for proof of loyalty and complete rejection of the Jesuits and Hispanophil priests. This meant giving information on what was happening abroad, especially in the seminaries, and betraying those who acted as agents for them in any way in England. Father John Fixer, alias Thomas Wilson, and Father John Cecil, alias John Snowden, thus became informers for the Privy Councillors without any formal repudiation of their own faith. As Haynes rightly says, “John Cecil was no ordinary mercenary spy” (134), but Haynes does not much enlarge our understanding. Watson could be taken as a Catholic who believed that the whole approach to the papist dilemma by Persons and the Jesuits, and most of the secular priests who were their colleagues, was basically unrealistic. The papists could only wait for what the reigning Cecils would be prepared to give them in charity. They were right in thinking that

there would be no solution by force or foreign invasion, but the Jesuits were right in thinking that the ruling regime in England was implacable and desired only the total destruction of Catholicism.

So the story of English Catholicism becomes highly complex, a tale of internecine warfare which included a battle of the books at the time of the Appellant crisis toward the end of the century. Essentially, this was a difference about how the papists should be governed. Some of the priestly writers on the Appellant side were prepared to see the Jesuits and their supporters as the real cause of all their troubles. However untrue, it assured to those who held such views the enjoyment of some kind of practical toleration since they were, in effect, working toward the end desired by government—the demise of their religion. So they might be left in a kind of peace (at least for a time) until their contribution to the work of destruction was considered adequate.

One of the most remarkable and most vehement of these—in his denunciation of Jesuits in general and Robert Persons in particular—was the secular priest, William Watson. He wrote in a well-known book, “I am not of that wretch Persons’s mind, that none can be a right Catholic, or established in God’s favor, unless he run his restless cursed race against his prince, country, and dear friends, none I verily think—unless it were some such atheist as Persons—or an odd reprobate amongst a thousand, but come to be Catholic of mere remorse of conscience, for the love of God and resolute belief.”¹³ Elsewhere in the same book, he stated his basic loyalties clearly enough: “For what can the Council or State get out of us more than is in our hearts... to wit a Catholic resolve for our Roman faith, church and religion: an English resolution for our native prince, state and country; and a resolute intent... in weal and in woe, to remain constant, loyal, serviceable and faithful to both to death” (Watson, 350).

In spite of all these professions of loyalty to Church and State, whose sincerity we need not doubt, Watson was successfully implicated in a plot which secured his death for treason. That the affair was yet another in a long line of government misrepresentations and propaganda was indicated in a letter to Robert Persons in Rome from an unidentified correspondent from England dated December 18, 1603:

In the northern parts of the kingdom there were a number of men going about collecting names and signatures from various people to a memorial which they wished to present to the king, asking for liberty of conscience. It pleased the Bishop of Durham, however, who is a great enemy of the Catholics, to attempt to ingratiate himself still further with the king by making the affair seem altogether suspect. He hinted that its real purpose was to set on foot

some kind of rebellion. In consequence, he further obtained a commission to seize and examine all persons found to have had some part in this memorial. The general feeling is that much will be made of the business.¹⁴

Much was. Nothing less than the execution of William Watson and his fellow priest and victim, William Clark, for treason at Winchester on December 9, 1603. Before his death, Watson admitted having written "a number of lying and scandalous books against the Jesuits, of which he heartily repented" (Persons's report).

The minister chiefly responsible at the end of Elizabeth's reign for maneuvering those deemed to be enemies of the State beneath the axe or hangman's knife was, of course, the formidable Sir Robert Cecil. His great rival was the Earl of Essex, a man who, as Haynes rightly says, "conspicuously lacked the political guile of Robert Cecil" (122). It may be, as our author says, that Cecil's initial involvement in spying was "faltering" (128), but he developed fairly swiftly into a master of intrigue and the most skillful plotmaker of all time.¹⁵ Indeed, so skillful that, if he had only the Gunpowder Plot to his credit, he might almost be given the benefit of a large doubt. But his handling—or mishandling—of an earlier plot indicates fairly clearly how much could be taken as due to him in these alleged treasons and how little to the convicted miscreants.

The Squire Plot of 1598 is one which standard historians have tended to ignore. There is no mention of it in J.B. Black's *The Reign of Elizabeth 1558-1603*, not even in the second edition published at the Clarendon Press in 1959. What would still appear to be the best life of Robert Cecil up to the year 1604, that by P.M. Handover, *The Second Cecil* (1959), likewise avoids mention of this episode. Haynes does not mention it. One could argue that the incident was not all that important, and certainly if one wishes to maintain the reputation of the first Earl of Salisbury as a humane and enlightened statesman, it is no doubt best forgotten. But in the interest of a larger truth it is important that it should be remembered, if only as an indication of the methodology employed to bring enemies first into disrepute and then, if possible, to destruction.

The basic idea was that the Jesuit Richard Walpole was supposed to have persuaded Edward Squire to smear a mercurial concoction on the saddle of Queen Elizabeth's horse so that, when she mounted and took the stuff on her hands, it would find its way to her food and so kill her. Squire was thoughtfully provided with the poison by the Jesuit. If it was objected that even if the queen had taken the poison on her hands, she would have washed it off before eating, the answer was that the Jesuits were such experts in poisoning that, even if one washed a vessel twenty times, it would still

retain its power to kill. Squire was associated with two shady characters who could well have stood alongside many others of the kind who appear in Haynes's book—Richard Rolls and Edward Stanley. But these typical agents of government got off, while the wretched Squire was duly, or unduly, executed. Despite being tortured five times to make him confess to this plot, he retracted his confession on the scaffold. After this, Cecil had to ensure that that, in the future, means would be found to persuade the victims not to change their minds until it was too late. The Squire Plot has been written up in detail¹⁶ and it is interesting to see how later plots of the kind improved vastly on the first.¹⁷ Incidentally, there is no extant official account of either the trial for treason or the subsequent execution of Edward Squire. The best contemporary account of the whole strange proceeding is that by Thomas Fitzherbert.¹⁸

Haynes's book, then, leaves much to be desired. One suspects that some of the limitations, especially of space, were forced on him by a publisher who, for reasons of economy, could not allow him to do all that he might have wished or to write more that would have been relevant to a vast subject. Perhaps this is also why the annotation is often inadequate and references to key quotations or statements simply not backed up by a source. The style is often telegraphic in its efforts to cram a large incident or series of facts into as small a compass as possible. Nevertheless, the book contains a good deal of valuable information on spy activities culled from other printed sources: details on organization in general (13); how spies were paid (49); the use made of merchants (51); and so on. On the other hand, there are some rash statements based on no evidence whatever: that Robert Persons prepared *Leicester's Commonwealth* on his press (43), and that Hugh Owen and Persons tried to persuade Pope Sixtus V to excommunicate King James VI of Scotland (142).

One suspects that the author felt himself constrained at many points to reach conclusions that would not prejudice him with the prevailing views of Academe nor provoke those who do not take kindly to revision of the standard mythology. But at the end Haynes feels bound to admit, "Various earnest, burlat, and corrupt, all the spymasters assisted in the protection of the last Tudor. The queen had survived many real dangers early in her life and naturally buoyed herself up with subterfuge, so that disguise became the essence of her rule. To have survived for over forty years without the spymasters might have been more difficult than it proved and she was pleased to employ their skills" (156-7). This is not an unfair summing up of the general situation; more especially if we remember that subterfuge and deceit played the larger part among the "skills" of her chosen protectors.

Notes

- 1 Martin Hume, *Treason and Plot* (London, 1901) 88-89.
- 2 Francis Edwards, S.J., *The Dangerous Queen* (London, 1964) 360.
- 3 Letter of 8.ii.1571; *ibid*, p 391, note 1.
- 4 Letter of about 15.iii.1571; *ibid*, p 395, note 1.
- 5 Walsingham to Cecil, 31.i.1572; *ibid*, p 268.
- 6 J.H. Pollen, S.J., *Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Plot* (Scottish History Society) 3rd series, 1922, clxxviii.
- 7 Cobbett and Howell, *State Trials*, vol. I (London, 1730) 139.
- 8 *A brief discours...*, sig. iir.
- 9 *Ibid*, sig. ++++ iiv.
- 10 *Justitia Britannica...*, (London, 1968) 272.
- 11 F. Edwards, *The Marvellous Chance* (London, 1968) 272.
- 12 ? to Robert Hogan, 8.vii.1571; Public Record Office, State Papers Foreign, cxix, ff. 3-4, from Madrid. Hogan did not guess at Stucley's double role, although he spied on him for a time. However, Stucley discovered Hogan's occupation, and resenting his "presumption," had him expelled from Spain in 1571.
- 13 William Watson, *A Decachordon of Ten Quodlibeticall Questions Concerning Religion and State...* (London, 1602) 134
- 14 Robert Persons's report on a letter from England, 18.xii.1603 (N.S.); *Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu*, Anglia 31.I, f.247.
- 15 Francis Edwards, S.J. "Still Investigating Gunpowder Plot," *Recusant History*, July 1993, 305-46.
- 16 Francis Edwards, S.J., "The Strange Case of the Poisoned Pommel," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu*, vol. LVI, 1987, 3-82.
- 17 Francis Edwards, S.J., *The Real Story of the Gunpowder Plot* (London, 1969) 56-60. A second edition should be published shortly.
- 18 Thomas Fitzherbert, *An Apology of T.F. in defence of himself and other Catholyks, falsly charged with a fayned conspiracy against her Majestie's person, for the which one Edward Squire was wrongfully condemned and executed in...1598...* (Antwerp, 1602).

