

‘Master Smokey Swyne’s-Flesh’: Francis Bacon and the responses to the Edward Squire conspiracy

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Francis Bacon’s *A Letter written out of England to an English Gentleman remaining at Padua*, published anonymously around February 1599, reported the alleged plot against the life of Elizabeth I contrived between Edward Squire and the Jesuit Richard Walpole. Widely understood as the official government publication on the Squire affair, it was answered by a number of exiled English Catholic writers, most notably Martin Aray and Thomas Fitzherbert, who identified its anonymous author, and launched a detailed attack on his account of the Squire affair. This article analyzes those responses to argue that Bacon’s *Letter* was a belated entry in the government propaganda campaign. It forwarded a streamlined and simply anti-Jesuit narrative, rather than the rather muddled version of events that had previously emerged from the interrogations, trial, and early government publications.

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Of all Francis Bacon’s Elizabethan writings, the one that provoked the most immediate attention was not the first edition of his *Essayes* (1597), or even *A Declaration of the Practises & Treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earle of Essex and his Complices* (1601), the government-sponsored account of the revolt of his former patron. Instead, the most extensive and passionate response was garnered by a short, anonymous 1599 pamphlet entitled *A Letter written out of England to an English Gentleman remaining at Padua*, which reported an alleged Catholic plot against the life of Queen Elizabeth, or as its title-page put it, ‘a strange conspiracie, contriued between Edward Squire, lately executed for the same treason as actor, and Richard Walpoole a Iesuite, as deuiser and suborner against the person of the Queenes Maiestie’.¹ This work, published by ‘The

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¹ [Francis Bacon], *A Letter written out of England to an English Gentleman remaining at Padua* (London: the deputies of Christopher Barker, 1599). A1r.

deputies of Christopher Barker', the Queen's printer, and promptly also issued in Dutch translation,² served as the official government publication on the Squire affair.

According to the indictment, Edward Squire, a Greenwich scrivener, was taken prisoner by the Spanish during Sir Francis Drake's final mission in 1595. Released in Seville, Squire was there befriended by an English Jesuit priest named Richard Walpole, and at length recruited to the Jesuit cause, agreeing to act on behalf of the king of Spain in a plot to poison Elizabeth and her favorite, Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex. After spending time under investigation by the Inquisition — supposedly to make him appear properly Protestant on his arrival home — Squire left Seville in May 1597, with one Richard Rolls, and in England promptly gained permission to sail with Essex on his Azores expedition. Before embarking, on 11 July 1597 he attempted to kill the queen in her stables by placing poison on the pommel of her saddle; later at sea, he tried to kill Essex by poisoning the ornamental knob of the earl's favourite chair. Both schemes failed. A year later, denounced by one John Stanley, who had also come from Spain, Squire was arrested and imprisoned, first in the Wood Street Counter for seven weeks, and then at the Tower of London where he was interrogated. Tried before a special commission of oyer and terminer in the Great Hall of Pleas at Westminster on 9 November 1598, Squire was found guilty of treason on charges of plotting to kill the Queen and Essex. He was hanged, disembowelled, and quartered at Tyburn on 13 November 1598.³

Since the late nineteenth century, the case against Squire has been minutely analyzed by historians, notably Henry Foley, Augustus Jessopp, Arthur Freeman, and Francis Edwards, working through the many interrogation reports and declarations extant in the State Papers, the trial documents in the *Baga de Secretis*, and records in Jesuit archives.⁴ The most recent work, by Edwards, has argued that

² [Bacon], *Coppe eenes Briefs geschreven wt Enghelandt aen eenen Enghelschen Edelman woonende te Padua* (London: Christoffel [i.e. Christopher] Barker, 1599).

³ For the *Baga de Secretis* documents detailing the case, see The National Archives (hereafter TNA), KB 8/55, calendared in [Francis Palgrave], *Fourth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records (February 28, 1843)* (London: HMSO, 1843), 291-2.

⁴ Henry Foley, ed. *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, 2nd, 3rd and 4th ser. (London: Burns and Oates, 1875), 236-53; Augustus Jessopp, *One Generation of a Norfolk House: a Contribution to Elizabethan History*, 2nd edn (London: Burns & Oates, 1879), 289-97; Arthur Freeman, 'The Hapless Conspiracy of Edward Squire', in *Elizabeth's Misfits: Brief Lives of English Eccentrics, Exploiters, Rogues, and Failures 1580-1660* (New York: Garland, 1978), 1-48; Francis Edwards, 'The Strange Case of the Poisoned Pommel: Richard Walpole SJ and the Squire Plot, 1597-1598', *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu*, 56 (1987): 3-82; Edwards, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Edward Squier and the Poisoned Pommel', *Recusant History*, 26 (2000): 377-414; Edwards, 'Edward Squier's Plot', in *Plots and Plotters in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002): 253-65. See also Bacon, *The Letters and the Life*, 7 vols. ed. James Spedding (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861-1874), 2:108-20; Martin A. S.

the case against Squire was brought largely by Sir Robert Cecil, in an attempt to assert his authority following the death of his father, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, in August 1598.⁵ It is not my intention here to go over that territory, nor to challenge the general consensus that Squire was very likely not guilty of the charges brought against him. Rather, this article seeks to re-examine the role of Bacon's *Letter* in the reception of the Squire conspiracy. Although this was the official government publication, it was a rather belated entry into a government campaign that was already well underway; this article will argue that what Bacon offered was a rather different version of events from what had previously been promulgated. After surveying the early responses to the Squire case, this article will analyze two sustained and hostile responses to Bacon's *Letter*, by Martin Aray and Thomas Fitzherbert, in order to shed light on the key points of contention. It will then consider the afterlives of the Squire conspiracy in print.

These two hostile responses were part of much wider print controversies. The Squire case broke at a moment when there was a marked intensifying of conflicts between various Catholic constituencies both in England and abroad. The papal appointment in March 1598 of George Blackwell as archpriest to oversee the Catholic mission in England was opposed by a number of seminary priests, led by Dr Christopher Bagshaw, who thought Blackwell too close to the Jesuits; from late 1598, these 'appellants' turned to Rome to call for his removal. The so-called 'archpriest controversy' or 'appellant controversy' quickly became an intense print battle. At the same moment, a tract by Sir Francis Hastings, *A Watch-word to all Religious, and True Hearted English-men* (1598), targeted the Jesuit Father Robert Persons in its claims that all English Catholics were determined to undermine the state.⁶ Persons defended himself against these charges of sedition in *A Temperate Ward-word* (1599), initiating the 'watch-word controversy'.⁷ While for many years, these controversies were understood primarily as intra-Catholic debates,⁸ in the past decade

Hume, *Treason and Plot: Struggles for Catholic Supremacy in the Last Years of Queen Elizabeth* (London: James Nisbet, 1901), 317-27.

⁵ Edwards, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Edward Squier and the Poisoned Pommel'.

⁶ Francis Hastings, *A Watch-word to all Religious, and True Hearted English-men* (London: Ralph Jackson, 1598), D8r.

⁷ [Robert Persons as] N.D., *A Temperate Ward-word, to the Turbulent and Seditious Wach-word of Sir Francis Hastings Knight* ([Antwerp: A. Coninx], 1599).

⁸ See Thomas Graves Law, ed. *The Archpriest Controversy: Documents relating to the Dissensions of the Roman Catholic Clergy, 1597-1602*, 2 vols ([Westminster:] Camden Society [vols. 56, 58], 1896, 1898); J. H. Pollen, *The Institution of the Archpriest Blackwell: a Study of the Transition from Paternal to Constitutional and Local Church Government among the English Catholics, 1595 to 1602* (London: Longmans, Green, 1916); John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975), 35-48; Arnold Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalism in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), esp. chs. 7-9; Peter

the scholarship of Thomas McCoog, Peter Lake and Michael Questier has explored their wider impact.⁹ Attention has been given to the fact that the print publication of the appellant campaign was facilitated and underwritten by Richard Bancroft, bishop of London, apparently on behalf of the government,¹⁰ their engagement with issues such as the succession has been clarified.¹¹ It is now possible to see these print controversies as part of what Lake identifies as a ‘mode of public politicking’ that became ‘increasingly central to the processes whereby the Elizabethan state was both established and challenged’. Such politicking occurred through the making of what Lake calls ‘various pitches to a number of sometimes separate and sometimes overlapping publics, both at home and abroad’.¹² It is the contention of this article that Bacon’s *Letter* also needs to be understood in the context of this ‘public politicking’.

In the torrent of books launched in these print battles, the Squire case was alluded to regularly, serving as the most recent example of the Catholic threat to the life of the English queen and the security of the English state. Two publications in particular gave extensive coverage to the case in a bid to undermine the government campaign. First, in 1599, was an account by ‘M.A. Preest’, later identified as Martin Aray, in his *The Discoverie and Confytation of a Tragical Fiction, Devysed and Played by Edward Squyer*, written in Rome.¹³

Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise: the Political Thought of the Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 186-204; Peter Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Elizabethan Age: a Survey of Printed Sources* (London: The Scholar Press, 1997), 116-26 and 118-44.

⁹ Thomas M. McCoog, ‘Construing Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1582-1602’ in *And touching our society: Fashioning Jesuit Identity in Elizabethan England* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2013), 371-406, at 391-403; McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1598-1606: ‘Lest our lamp be entirely extinguished’* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *All Hail to the Archpriest: Confessional Conflict, Toleration, and the Politics of Publicity in Post-Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

¹⁰ See Gladys Jenkins, ‘The Archpriest Controversy and the Printers, 1601 to 1603’, *The Library*, 5th ser., 2: 2-3 (1948), 180-6; Lake and Questier, ‘Taking It to the Street? The Archpriest Controversy and the Issue of the Succession’, in Susan Doran and Paulina Kewes, eds. *Doubtful and Dangerous: the Question of Succession in Late Elizabethan England*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 71-91, at 82-3.

¹¹ Sandra Jusdado, ‘The Appellant Priests and the Succession Issue’, in Jean-Christophe Mayer, ed. *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England: politics, polemics and cultural representation* (Montpellier: Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, 2004), 199-216; Lake and Questier, ‘Taking It to the Street’.

¹² See Peter Lake, *Bad Queen Bess: Libels, Secret Histories, and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), quoted here at 468. Lake’s analysis does not cover the Squire affair.

¹³ [Martin Aray as] M.A. Preest, *The Discoverie and Confytation of a Tragical Fiction, Devysed and Played by Edward Squyer* ([Antwerp: Arnout Coninx?], 1599), Thomas Fitzherbert refers to ‘A former answer of M. M. Ar.’ and ‘a breif pamphlet written in Rome by M. Mar. Ar’. [Thomas Fitzherbert as] T.F., *A Defence of the Catholyke Cause, contayning a Treatise in Confutation of Sundry Vntruthes and Slanders, Published by the Heretykes* ([Antwerp: Arnout Coninx?], 1602), A2r, also A3r. See A. F. Allison and D. M. Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*

In 1602, 'T.F.' published *A Defence of the Catholyke Cause, contayning a Treatise in Confutation of Sundry Vntruthes and Slanders, Published by the Heretykes*.¹⁴ Multiple seventeenth-century sources identify 'T.F.' as Thomas Fitzherbert, a prominent Catholic exile in Madrid who had been Philip II's last English secretary.¹⁵ Strikingly, both these publications fall into two, clearly demarcated parts: one section written soon after hearing the news of Squire's trial and execution; and another undertaken after reading the *Letter written out of England*. Aray ends and dates his initial discussion on 1 March 1599, before appending a new five-page section entitled, 'An addition, to the reader', explaining that 'Meane whyle the precedent confutation was on the printers presse, there came out of England a printed pamphlet of *Squyres* forged conspiracie, as a letter addressed vnto a gentleman at *Padua*'.¹⁶ Although Fitzherbert's book was not published until 1602, his account of the Squire plot, 'An apology, or defence, of his innocency in a fayned conspiracy against her Maiesties person, for the which one Edward Squyre was wrongfully condemned and executed', is described on the title-page as being 'Written by him the yeare folowing [Squire's execution, i.e. 1599] and not published vntil now', and the preface is signed 'From Madrid, the last of August. 1599'.¹⁷ Since Fitzherbert mentions Aray's treatise, it seems that the 'Apology' was written between March and August 1599. But the treatment of Bacon's *Letter* is also separated out by the author: after nineteen chapters on the Squire case generally, Fitzherbert devotes chapters xx to xxv to 'a certayne pamphlet printed in England concerning the conspiracie of Squyre after his death'.¹⁸ At over 8,200 words, Fitzherbert's treatment of the *Letter written out of England* is more than twice as long as its target.

All this suggests that Bacon's tract was considered different enough from the other accounts to merit special attention. In the modern era,

between 1558 and 1640: an Annotated Catalogue, 2 vols (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1989-1994), 2: 9, no. 30.

¹⁴ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*. Allison and Rogers, *Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, 2: 58, no. 279, lists the following as supporting Fitzherbert's authorship: John Pits, *Relationum historicarum de rebus Anglicis tomus primus* (Paris: R. Thierry and S. Cramoisy, 1619), 5K3r; Philippe Alegambe, *Bibliotheca scriptorium Societatis Iesu* (Antwerp: Ioannes Meursius, 1643), 433; and the anonymous manuscript list in Latin preserved in the archives of the English College, Rome (Scrittura XXX 2) of 39 English Jesuit writers and their works (c.1632).

¹⁵ On Fitzherbert, see Godfrey Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests: a Dictionary of the Secular Clergy of England and Wales, 1558-1850*, 4 vols. (Ware and Ushaw: St. Edmund's College and Ushaw College, 1969-1977), 1:117; Thomas M. McCoog ed. *Monumenta Angliae*, 3 vols (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1992-2000), 2:310; Thomas H. Clancy, 'Fitzherbert, Thomas (1552-1640)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *ODNB*); online edn [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9605>. Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁶ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6r, B6v; 'An addition' is at B6v-B8v.

¹⁷ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, O3r.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, L1v-N4v.

however, surprisingly little has been written about Bacon's *Letter* or the responses to it. Editor James Spedding claimed the text for the Baconian corpus in 1862 on grounds of style, noting only 'that Bacon was in a position to write it', although he remained uncertain whether this was 'really a private letter', later circulated, or whether it was drawn up for publication.¹⁹ Later scholars have assumed the latter,²⁰ not least because the *Letter* was printed by the deputies of the Queen's printer.²¹ Francis Edwards elaborates that Bacon's authorship was likely, since 'he was very probably present at the trial and execution', and the pamphlet's writing 'involved access to copies at least of Squier's [*sic*] more compromising confessions and Stanley's deposition of 18 October and the skill to "edit" intelligently'.²² In his capacity as Queen's Learned Counsel, Bacon was indeed present at the examinations of Stanley on 23 September 1598, Squire on 19 and 23 October, and William Munday and Rolls on 3 November.²³ Moreover, he had already proven his ability to edit high-profile cases intelligently, having drafted an account of the poison conspiracy involving the queen's physician Roderigo Lopez in 1594; he would soon be called on to write up the prosecutions of the earl of Essex in 1600 and 1601.²⁴

Edwards also remarks that Bacon's *Letter* 'included much that could be taken for fact but mixed in with more that could not', citing the criticisms of it by Aray and Fitzherbert.²⁵ In what follows, that analysis will be extended, by reconsidering the place of Bacon's *Letter* in the long-running print controversy that followed Squire's trial and execution. While Bacon's *Letter* may have been the official government pitch, on its appearance in February 1599 it was a belated

¹⁹ Bacon, *Letters and the Life*, 2: 109, 110, 109.

²⁰ Jessopp notes that Bacon 'drew up an account of the case with all the ingenuity of a practised advocate'. Jessopp, *One Generation*, 297; Hume suggests that the publication was commissioned by 'the Essex influence in the Government'. Hume, *Treason and Plot*, 326, n. 1; Freeman dubs it 'Bacon's quasi-official account'. Freeman, 'Hapless Conspiracy', 46.

²¹ Rickert reasoned that the pamphlet must be 'some sort of government-approved history of the case', since the deputies of Christopher Barker, the Queen's printer, only published 'official proclamations and orders' and works for which he had an exclusive patent: if not 'printed at government request', the *Letter* 'would stand alone, a unique and most remarkable departure from Barker's usual work for which there would seem to be no explanation'. Rickert, 'An Addition to the Canon of Bacon's Writings', *Modern Language Review*, 51 (1956): 71-2, at 72.

²² Edwards, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Edward Squier and the Poisoned Pommel', 400.

²³ Stanley's examination, 23 September 1598: TNA, SP 12/268, art. 62; Squire's examination, 19 October 1598: TNA, SP 12/268, arts. 83, 84, 85, 86; Squire's examination, 23 October 1598: TNA, SP 12/268, arts. 89, 90, 91; examination of Monday and Rolls, 3 November 1598: TNA, SP 12/268, art. 103.

²⁴ Bacon, 'A True Report of the Detestable Treason Intended by Doctor Roderigo Lopez', in Francis Bacon, *Early Writings, 1584-1596*, ed. Alan Stewart with Harriet Knight, *The Oxford Francis Bacon*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012) (hereafter *OFB*), 427-50; 'The Proceedings of the Earl of Essex', in Bacon, *Letters and the Life*, 2:175-88; [Bacon], *A Declaration of the Practises & Treasons attempted and committed by Robert late Earle of Essex and his Complices* (London: Robert Barker, 1601).

²⁵ Edwards, 'Sir Robert Cecil, Edward Squier and the Poisoned Pommel', 399.

contribution to an already crowded debate. As we shall see, a government ‘Admonition’ was published as early as November 1598, while an alternative account by Henry Garnet made its way to Rome. Ripostes from English Catholics on the continent, including Robert Persons, Martin Aray, and Thomas Fitzherbert were in train before Bacon’s *Letter* appeared, but those by Aray and Fitzherbert were subsequently extended to counter Bacon’s version of events, with Fitzherbert’s account appearing as late as 1602. Its reception by Aray and Fitzherbert—who devoted significant sections of their respective books to answering it specifically—demonstrates that Bacon was presenting a notably different version of events to that which had been promulgated at the trial and in the weeks following Squire’s execution. Whereas these early reports implicated both Jesuits and secular priests, and hinted at both papal and Spanish involvement, Bacon’s *Letter*, it becomes clear, is interested in making a case against the Jesuits alone. This is initially achieved through the case against Richard Walpole, who is alleged to have seduced Squire into the poisonings, and then against ‘this Sect’ as a whole, calling for the ‘suppressing & extirpation of them’ by all Christian nations.

Responding to the Squire affair

In the immediate aftermath of Squire’s arraignment and execution, the authorities went to work to spread news of the case. Martin Aray lamented that ‘the odiousnesse of the pretended cryme [was] so much sounded out, both from the *Bench*, and the *Pulpit*’, including at a sermon ‘at Paules crosse the next sonday after’ (12 November).²⁶ The most prominent London pulpit, Paul’s Cross had a long history of anti-Catholic sermonizing, and, as Mary Morrissey notes, various Catholic polemics ‘suggest that these . . . Paul’s Cross sermons were attended by some Catholics, and that anti-Catholic material in some sermons were repeated abroad’.²⁷ However, apart from Aray’s statement, no other record of this anti-Squire sermon survives.²⁸ The ‘*Pulpit*’ narrative may refer to the brief but surprisingly detailed account of the conspiracy printed, probably in November, in an updated version of ‘An admonition to the Reader’, prefixed to *An Order of Prayer and Thankesgiuing*, designed to be read out in churches.²⁹ It narrates how Squire was ‘appointed’ to kill both

²⁶ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6r.

²⁷ Mary Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul’s Cross Sermons, 1558-1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174; for anti-Catholic sermons, see ch. 5.

²⁸ This reference is not noted in Millar MacLure, rev. Peter Pauls and Jackson Campbell Boswell, *Register of Sermons Preached at Paul’s Cross 1534-1642* (Ottawa: Dovehouse, 1989).

²⁹ ‘An admonition to the Reader’ in *An Order of Prayer and Thankesgiuing (Necessary to be Vsed in these Dangerous Times) for the Safetie and Preservation of her Maiestie and this*

Essex and the queen, using ‘a confection so strong, that the very smell thereof did presently strike dead a Dog, vpon which he first had tried it’. In ‘his voluntarie confession’, provided ‘without any torture at all’, Squire claimed that he was ‘incited’, ‘perswaded’ and ‘at last encouraged by one Walpoole’, and given ‘promise of a large Fee from D. [Christopher] Bagshaw’ along with ‘the hope of eternall merite from God’ (the supposed involvement of the anti-Jesuit Bagshaw would attract particular criticism, as we shall see). He was finally ‘armed with the confection it selfe from Walpoole to effect it throughly, and adiured by receiuing the Sacrament, to performe it secretly’. The plot came to light through the conspirators themselves: when Walpole learned that Squire had been with Essex but failed to follow through, his ‘affrighted mind’ feared that Squire had revealed the plot, and, in a ‘mischieuous deuisse’ sent over to England ‘one [John] Stanly and others, to detect the plot and designment of Squire’.³⁰

The ‘Admonition’ editorializes the Squire affair as one to instill ‘a greater detestation of that blood-sucking *Romish Antichrist*, with his whole swarme of shauelings’.³¹ Despite the gravity of the offence, the writer cannot resist making jokes and scoring points. Walpole is ‘the *Iebusite* (*Iesuite* I should say)’,³² who distorts the meaning of the scripture. The author claims that Walpole made use of the phrase ‘*Vnum necessarium* One thing is necessarie’ (Luke 10: 42) to persuade Squire to kill the queen, ‘as if our Sauour by that *One*, had ment the reasonable slaughter of his *Holy ones*’. Bagshaw is ‘the Popes *Iudas* or pursebearer as it seemeth’ promising a fee, ‘and withall the hope of eternall merite from God, as if with such bloody sacrifices of Christian princes, God were promerited, to vse their own worde, *Heb. 13. 16.*’ With the use of the word ‘promerited’, the author is alluding to a translation in the Douai-Reims Bible that was often mocked.³³

Realme. Set forth by Authoritie anno 1594. and Reuewed [sic] with some Alterations vpon the Present Occasion (London: the deputies of Christopher Barker, 1598), A2r-B1r, at A3v-A4v. The *Order’s* recent editors suggest it was published in November 1598: Natalie Mears, Alasdair Raffae, Stephen Taylor and Philip Williamson (with Lucy Bates) eds. *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation*, vol. 1, *Special Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings in the British Isles 1533-1688* (Woodridge: The Boydell Press/Church of England Record Society, 2013), 226-30, at 226.

³⁰ ‘An admonition’, A3v-A4v.

³¹ ‘An admonition’, A3v.

³² The Jebusites were a Canaanite tribe whom David dispossessed of Jerusalem. From the late sixteenth century, ‘Jebusite’ became ‘a nickname for Roman Catholics, esp. Jesuits’. *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993-) [hereafter *OED*], s.v. Jebusite. Online edn [www.oed.com/view/Entry/100963. Accessed 12 July 2022]. See, for example, the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Croke, who in the 1601 Parliament attacked ‘Jezuities or rather Jebuzites’ and ‘hott-headed Jebusites’. T. E. Hartley, *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, 3 vols (London: Leicester University Press, 1981-1995), 3: 259-60 and 270-1, quoted in McCoog, *The Society of Jesus ... 1598-1606*, 231.

³³ The Douai-Reims Bible translated Hebrews 13:16 as ‘And beneficence and communication do not forget for with such hostes God is promerited’, whereas both the Geneva and

The 'Admonition' concludes by celebrating the fact that this and other 'complots' have foundered, and that the heretics have betrayed each other, 'like the *Midianites* swordes, mutually disbowelling their owne secret conspiracies'.³⁴

In the weeks that followed, written reports were dispatched to foreign courts. John Chamberlain included an account in his letter of 22 November 1598 to Dudley Carleton in the Hague.³⁵ The French ambassador in England, Jean de Thumery, sieur de Boissise, informed his counterpart in the Hague, Paul Clioart, seigneur de Buzanval, that some Jesuits had been arrested, for plotting to poison the queen.³⁶ Principal Secretary Sir Robert Cecil wrote to Thomas Edmondes in Paris; Edmondes replied on 12 December 1598, thanking Cecil for 'instruct[ing] me in the knowedge & passage of thinges there, espetiallie touching the execrable treasons Conspyred against her maiestie', but lamented that there was still no official account of the treason: 'manie are desirous it should be published to the world'.³⁷

At the same time, Catholic sympathizers in England were furnishing to their allies on the Continent very different interpretations. On 28 November, Father Henry Garnet, superior of the English Jesuits, sent an account to Father Robert Persons in Rome; although Garnet's letter is lost, we have Persons' reply of 20/30 January 1599 that reveals some of what it contained. In responding to Garnet's letter, Persons condemns the Squire affair as 'one of the most notorious fables and tragical comedies, that hath byn exhibited in all this tyme, since such affayres have had their place'. He sketches a Squire who, disappointed by Essex in his hopes of 'gayne and vanitie', boasted 'that he might have byn imploied from Spayne if he would, with such other tokens

Bishops' Bible translate 'God is pleased'. *The New Testament of Iesu Christ* (Reims: John Fogny, 1582), 3L3r. The translators claim that 'This latin word *promeretur*, cannot be expressed effectually in any one English word' and charge that 'The Protestants avoid the word *merite*' (*New Testament*, 3L4r). William Whitaker deems this 'a fonde and a false translation': Whitaker, *An Answere to a Certaine Booke, written by Maister William Rainolds Student of Diuinitie in the English Colledge at Rhemes* (London: Thomas Chard, 1585), P4v, and also 2A1v. See also the attacks in T.W., *A Christian and Learned Exposition vpon Certaine Verses* (London: Robert Waldegrave for Thomas Man, 1587), D5v; Edward Bulkley, *An Answere to Ten Friuolous and Foolish Reasons* (London: George Bishop, 1588), C2v, I4r, L4v. In the modern era, the Latinate 'promerited' has still been derided as 'inkhorn' or 'unintelligible': see Stanley R. Maveety, 'The Glossary in the Rheims New Testament of 1582', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 61 (1962), 562-77, at 566.

³⁴ 'An admonition', A4r-v: the reference is to Judges 7:22.

³⁵ Chamberlain to Carleton, 22 November 1598. *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 1:53-4.

³⁶ 'd'Angleterre, Monsieur de Boissise quy est ambassadeur pour Sa Majeste m'escrit qu'il y a heu quelques Jesuytes attrapes quy hayoyent entrepris d'empoisonner la Roynne'. Buzanval to Daniël van der Neulen, 4 December (n.s.) 1598. Paul Clioart, seigneur de Buzanval, 'De brieve van Buzanval aan Daniël van der Neulen (1595-1599)', ed. J. H. Kernkamp and J. van Heijst, in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 76 (1962), 157-261, at 230.

³⁷ Edmondes to Cecil, 12 December 1598. TNA, SP 78/42, fo. 33r.

of discontentment'. These outbursts were 'taken at the aduantage' by the authorities, since they constituted 'treason already for that they were not revealed in tyme', and Squire 'was forced partly by fayre meanes and partly by foule, to say he was imploied indeed'. Persons recounts an alternative version of the time Squire and his alleged associate Richard Rolls spent time in Spain. Far from taking their leave from Walpole, as the indictment insisted, the two men had fled Seville. They sent a joint letter of apology to Walpole explaining their actions, 'layinge the cause upon the desyre they had to see their wyves and children in England' —although they assured Walpole, to the uproarious delight of forty English Catholics in Rome to whom the letter was read out, 'that they lusted not after their wyves in flesh, but thirsted after them in the Lord'. Persons makes only fleeting references to the trial. He notes that it was charged that there was 'poison geven [Squire] by fa: Walpole, and of his imbracing and blessing him at his departure'; Persons counters that 'all which concerneth f. Walpole and Squiars imployment from Spayne, is a mere fiction, and made tale'. To a mention of the appellant priest Dr Christopher Bagshaw, Persons retorts that 'Walpole never saw him, nor knew him, nor wrote nor receaved *lettre* or message from him in his life, so all is faygned'. Persons alludes to Squire's 'inconstant defence at his arraynement'; and reveals that 'at the barre afterwarde he denied [his guilt] agayne, yet would it not serve his turne, as the event shewed, in that he is hanged'.³⁸

Persons's epistolary response is significant, because it set the parameters for the print campaign that followed. In addition to the major works by Aray and Fitzherbert, there was also a brief, belated entry by Richard Walpole himself (as 'W.R.'), as part of *A Brief, and Cleere Confutation, of a New, Vaine, and Vaunting Challenge, made by O.E. Minister, vnto N.D. Author of the Ward-word* (1603).³⁹ While each piece has its individual characteristics, and was published at different moments of specific print controversies, the three responses by Aray, Fitzherbert, and Walpole, are in many ways of a piece. All these authors were associates of Persons, all were published in Antwerp by Arnout Coninx, the prolific printer of English Catholic tracts (including some by Persons), and all offer similar narratives.

Aray's contribution can be seen as a typical example of the strategy employed by Persons to cut off English Protestant narratives as early as possible. There is no doubt that Persons was involved in this publication, since Aray was with him in Rome: in a January 1599 letter,

³⁸ Persons to Garnet, [30 January 1599 n.s.] (copy). Lambeth Palace Library, London [LPL], MS 4267, fo. 13r.

³⁹ [Richard Walpole as] W.R., *A Brief, and Cleere Confutation, of a New, Vaine, and Vaunting Challenge, made by O.E. Minister, vnto N.D. Author of the Ward-word* ([Antwerp]: [Arnout Coninx], 1603).

Persons informs Henry Garnet that ‘Mr. Martin Array, and two others of his coate that came from Sevil . . . have thought good to wryte a breef diacourse [sic] of the whole fiction, for so much as concerneth Squiars imployment from Sivil’.⁴⁰ On 10/20 February, Aray himself confirmed that ‘I have answered the devise of Squire as shortly you wil see’,⁴¹ and the bulk of the book (sigs. A2r-B6r) is dated 1 March 1599 from Rome.⁴² By contrast, the response of Thomas Fitzherbert did not appear until 1602. He wrote his ‘Apology’ in 1599 (it is dated 31 August 1599 in Madrid),⁴³ but allegedly held off publishing it in the hope that the lot of English Catholics might improve in the event of an Anglo-Spanish peace. By the time he finally put it to the press in 1602, the Conference of Boulogne had rendered vain hopes of an entente, and Fitzherbert had moved to Rome and been ordained a priest on 24 March 1602.⁴⁴ He also claims that the Squire affair had recently been ‘reuyved by 2. lybels and much vrged against Catholics’.⁴⁵ While the two texts he cites have only passing allusions to Squire,⁴⁶ one — by the anti-Roman polemicist Matthew Sutcliffe, dean of Exeter, against Persons — belongs in the watchword controversy, in which Persons was forced to defend himself against charges of sedition. The same controversy also prompted the shorter account in Richard Walpole’s contribution, *A cleer and briefe confutation* (1603), which proclaims itself a response to an attack on Persons by Sutcliffe.

Some parts of the publications by Aray and Fitzherbert are clearly responding to an earlier account of the trial, since they mention elements that do not appear in Bacon’s *Letter*: this earlier account may be Garnet’s letter, although Fitzherbert claims they have many sources.⁴⁷ Aray states that the Jesuit Richard Walpole was

⁴⁰ Persons to Garnet, [30 January 1599 n.s.]. LPL MS 4267, fo. 13r. Francis Edwards, *Robert Persons: the Biography of an Elizabethan Jesuit 1546-1610* (St Louis, Missouri: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995), 236-7 n.8, cites another copy, Stonyhurst MS, Christopher Grene, *Collectanea P*, fo. 354: ‘According to Grene, “he giveth a very good account of all that matter”, but Grene did not transcribe this letter further’.

⁴¹ Fifth letter of the Proctors (written by Aray), 10/20 February 1599. Law ed., *The Archpriest Controversy*, 115-23, at 122.

⁴² [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6r.

⁴³ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, O3r.

⁴⁴ Anstruther, *Seminary Priests*, 1: 117; McCoog, *Monumenta Angliae*, 2: 310.

⁴⁵ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, A1v.

⁴⁶ One by ‘an heretical minister ashamed of his name, and therefore Sutly shrowding it vnder a fals Visar of O. E. and the other written very lately a puritan, as it seemeth, calling himselfe Thomas Diggs’. [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, A1v, marginal note. These are, respectively, [Matthew Sutcliffe as] O.E., *A Briefe Replie to a Certaine Odious and Slanderous Libel, Lately Published by a Seditious Iesuite, Calling Himselfe N.D.* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1600), E7r, H7r, H8r, N8v; and a petition, ‘To the most Reuerend Archbishops, and right reuerend Lord Bishops of both prouinces’, probably by James Balmford, in Thomas Digges, *Humble Motiues for Association to Maintaine Religion Established* ([London]: n. pub., 1601), C4r-F1v.

⁴⁷ Fitzherbert claims ‘we heare yt vniformely from dyuers partes’, and refers to ‘diuers relations that I haue seene thereof in writing’ as well as ‘the report of a credible person who was

misidentified in the trial as William Walpole.⁴⁸ Two other men, '[William] Munday and [John] Stanley', had 'appeach[ed], and call[ed] Squyer in question, as was objected in the arraignment that they did'.⁴⁹ He mentions (incredulously) that Squire experimented with the poison 'vpon a dogge, that died presently' and wonders how he could have carried it with him 'and yet his compaignon Rolles to see nor know nothing therof, as he did not'.⁵⁰ Testing out the poison story on 'the learnedest phisitions and Simplicistes [herbalists]' in Rome⁵¹ had provoked only laughter: how could Squire have carried it so far, or decanted it at sea 'from his dooble bladder, into his red botle stopped with corke' without poisoning himself?⁵² Another 'improbabilitie' arises with the notion that Walpole would 'remit Squyer for his directions in these affayres, to Doctor Bagshaw, prisoner in Wisbich castle, and to no more, as was read out of Squyers confession at his arraignment'. For Walpole to cooperate with Bagshaw was impossible, Aray noted: 'euery man that knoweth the persons, will see euidently to be most absurdly faigned, for that F. Walpole neuer had any frendship, familiaritie, or acquayntance with Doctor Bagshaw'.⁵³

In addition to confirming that confessions were 'read out . . . at his arraignment', Aray also provides glimpses of the prosecution team in action, relating how Attorney General Edward Coke 'with weeping teares did congratulate her Maiesties so dangerous escape', applying the psalm 'Thou shalt walk vpon the snake and basilisk without hurt' (Psalms 90:13) to the queen, while Solicitor General Thomas Fleming gave 'vnto her Maiestie the priuilege of Saynt Paule, that shooke of the venemous vyper from his hand without danger, and that this was a miracle if euer their were a miracle' (Acts 28: 3-5; B5^r). 'The Addition' to Aray's discourse elaborates masterfully on the theatrics of the arraignment, using as an analogy the rehearsal techniques of the Lord Admiral's Men, marvelling that 'euen as [the clown William] *Kemp* and his fellowes hauing before-hand studied to con their partes by roate, and each knowes to keepe his cu, and to frame his speech and manners according to his fayned function, euen so was this fore-studied tragedy acted in Westminster hall' – with the prologue giving 'a long and lamentable tale of the horriblenesse of the fayned fact', another 'burst out in teares, and very pittifully wept at it', while a third

present at his execution, with whom I haue spoken here in Madrid'. [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, B2v, L2v.

⁴⁸ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B4r, A4r: 'William Walpole by name, condemned in this action, by a wrong name (for his true name is Richard)'. The Baga de Secretis indictment does indeed credit William Walpole. Palgrave, *Fourth Report*, 291.

⁴⁹ [Aray], *Discoverie*, A4v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, B1v.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, B4v.

⁵² *Ibid.*, B5r.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, B3r.

'fell in to admiration of the greatnes of the miracle, making it in effect, as very a miracle, as euer *Christe* wrought any'. But for all the rehearsal, the tragedy fell flat: 'Squyer in the end proued the foole that mard the play, by denying the acte at his death . . . and so consequently the great miracle *yf euer there were a miracle*'.⁵⁴

Crucially, according to Aray, Squire claimed that his confession was forced by five hours' torture and refused to admit any guilt.⁵⁵ But, as Aray tells it, although 'he stood stifly all the tyme of his arraignement', Squire's resolve wavered when he was told 'by the cheef Iudge' — presumably Sir John Popham, Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, a familiar and tough presence in trials of Catholics⁵⁶ — that, whether or not the matter had been attempted in England, the 'very conceyuing of the matter' in Spain constituted treason. Squire was also subjected to 'diuers speeches and large discourses made vnto him by sondrie Counselours, but especially by Secretarie Cecil', urging him to confess, and claiming that unless 'he yealded to all, as it lay in his first tale, there was no hope of fauour and mercy. And then he falling downe vpon his knees, confessed all agayne'.⁵⁷ But there was to be one more retraction. On the scaffold, finally accepting that no 'faouour and mercy' was forthcoming, Squire 'denied the matter agayne at his death, as they can witness that were present at the same and heard him, whereof some also haue written the same hither'.⁵⁸

Fitzherbert deliberately avoids replicating Aray's account,⁵⁹ intending to prove instead that 'the forme of proceeding' was 'vniust & against all reason, equitie, law, and conscience'.⁶⁰ Much of his 'Apology' seeks to undermine the court proceedings urging that 'eyther he was condemned flatly against our english lawes also, or els that the same are repugnant to conscience and reason . . . Squyre was condemned without any witnesses presented at his arrayment, vpon some light presumptions and his owne confession extorted by torment, as he sayd him-selfe at the barre, and also at his death'.⁶¹ Instead, all the legal team did was 'to amplifie, and exaggerate euery trifle, to make

⁵⁴ 'at the barre he affirmed that he had byn fyue houres vpon the torture'; 'he would haue denied it agayne (as he did at his arrayment)'. [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6v-B7r.

⁵⁵ [Aray], *Discoverie*, A4v.

⁵⁶ David Ibbetson, 'Popham, Sir John (c. 1531-1607)', *ODNB*, Online edn [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22543>]. Accessed 21 July 2022].

⁵⁷ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B5v-B6r.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, B6r. Aray reiterates 'his denyals at his death' (*ibid.*, A4r).

⁵⁹ Fitzherbert notes that 'I heare say that it [Aray's book] may chance come out agayne more ample in a second edition, with many Autentical letters, as wel of the city of Siuil, as of the courte of Inquisition in that place, to shew the manner of Squyers and Rolles running away from those partes with some other circumstances to improue the probabilitie of the deuised slander in England'. [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, A2v-A3r.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, A2v.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, B2v; these points are reiterated at C3r.

mountaynes of molehils and with their retoryke (such as it is) to persuade ignorant men, that thee moone is made of greene cheese'.⁶² For Fitzherbert, the matter is also personal. Hearing of the case 'by common fame, confirmed by letters from Italy, Flanders, and France', he learned that Squire was accused of acting not only 'by the instigation' of Walpole, but 'with the priuity & consent of Father [Joseph] Creswel and my selfe, here in Madrid'.⁶³ Denying any involvement, Fitzherbert condemns 'the wrong donne both to Sqyre and vs, that are conioyned and mentioned in his accusation'.⁶⁴ He focuses on the reading in court of a deposition by John Stanley, who had recently come from Spain, in which Stanley claimed that, in his lodging in Madrid, Fitzherbert had 'enuighed against Sqyre with great passion, and othes, saying that he had deceyued vs in not performing his promise, and that I feared we should be vtterly discredited with the King therby'. Fitzherbert 'protest[s] before God, and vpon my saluation, that I neuer said any such thing to Stanley in my lyfe' and paints Stanley as 'a notable drunkard, a common lyer, a pilfering, cosening, and cogging compaignon', 'a pursecatcher vpon the high-way' and 'a common horse-stealer'.⁶⁵ He questions why Stanley, who was still being held in the Tower of London, was not 'brought to the court to be deposed there & confronted with the prisoner as reason and the custome of our law requir-eth', but instead had his deposition read out.⁶⁶

Fitzherbert also cites reports in which he is implicated by 'a priuie councelor . . . present at Sqyres araygnment', who 'did witness that he had seene a letter which had passed betweene me, & a kinsman of myne at Rome wherein we aduertised one the other, that although Sqyre had not yet performed that which he promised, yet he continued his determination to do it when oportunity should serue'.⁶⁷ Again, Fitzherbert swears that no such letter existed, blaming the unnamed councillor's mistake on 'some of his intelligencers or inferiour informers'.⁶⁸ Moreover, the councillor 'did not speake as a witness, but by the way of discourse' since 'he was not deposed and sworne, neyther yet the letter brought foorth and red in the court, nor proued to be a true and no counterfeit letter'.⁶⁹ Although Fitzherbert does not name

⁶² *Ibid.*, C3r.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, A3v. From 1592 Creswell was 'advocate at the court of Spain for the support of colleges at Valladolid and Seville, in addition to those at Douai and St Omer in Flanders': A.J. Loomie, 'Creswell, Joseph [formerly Arthur] (1556-1623)', *ODNB*, Online edn. [<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6675>. Accessed 21 July 2022]; see also McCoog, *Monumenta Angliae*, 2: 279-80.

⁶⁴ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, B1v.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, C4r, C4v.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, D2v.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, D3r.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, D3v.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, D4v.

him, the reports by Persons and Aray suggest that the councillor must be Sir Robert Cecil.

Coke's emotional performance in court was particularly repugnant to Fitzherbert, who launched a tirade of abuse and weak puns on the attorney general's name. He claimed that Coke 'played the part as wel of a kynd, as of a kindly cook, in seasoning such an vnsauory matter with salt teares'. Coke is guilty of 'belying and slandering' Fitzherbert and Walpole, among others, and most seriously, of claiming that Fitzherbert imparted the plot to Philip II of Spain, 'making his *Maiestie* therby an abettour of that imaginary conspiracy'.⁷⁰ Since Fitzherbert would never implicate a monarch in a murder plot, this was, he said, the creation of Coke's 'Idle . . . imagination'. Indeed, Fitzherbert alleges that Coke's head was particularly 'addle all that day', perhaps as a side-effect of his unexpected (and gossip-worthy) marriage the day before.⁷¹

The key issue on which Fitzherbert insists is Squire's affirmation of his innocence at his execution. Aray mentions this only once,⁷² but Fitzherbert returns to the issue repeatedly. He insists that Squire 'resolved himself . . . at his death to discharge his conscience, and to cleare himself', elaborating that 'at his death . . . he vtterly denyed not only the fact, and all intention therof, but also that he had bene employed to any such end by any man, accusing his owne frayltie in that he had for torment belyed himself.'⁷³ Squire also denied being a Catholic: 'it is manifest, that he was a protestant as he shewed playnely at his death, when yt was no tyme to dissemble'. This final denial is, of course, also crucial to Fitzherbert and his allies: 'Squyre at his death cleared both himself *and vs*'.⁷⁴

In a 1603 publication, Richard Walpole, the central figure in the Squire story, addressed the affair more briefly. However, in similar terms, he describes 'The most ridiculous pageant of Edw. Squier' as 'an inuention so coulourlesse and euey way improbable, so shuffled vp also without proofes or rather so improuueable, a thing denyed by the poore fellow at his arraignment first. And after at his execution'. To anyone who knew the parties involved, the accusations were 'so knowne to be most absurd, and impossible, as not only amongst all Catholics vniuersally, but among the more moderate & prudent prot-estants also, the whole pageant hath ended in a meer iest and laughter,

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, E3r.

⁷¹ Coke had married on 7 November the young heiress Elizabeth, widow of Sir William Hatton, daughter of Sir Thomas Cecil, second baron Burghley, and niece of Sir Robert Cecil; Chamberlain wrote on 22 November 1598 that it was 'the great admiration of all men that after so many large and likely offers she shold decline to a man of his qualitie, and the world will not beleve yt was without a misterie'. Chamberlain, *Letters*, 1:54.

⁷² [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6r.

⁷³ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, E2v.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, B2v (author's emphasis).

wherof yet a more serious accompt one day wilbe demaunded'.⁷⁵ According to Henry More in his 1660 history of the Jesuits, Walpole had initially greeted the news as 'the idle dream of a silly fool'. But when he became 'convinced by repeated letters that the matter was taken in real earnest',⁷⁶ he laid out his response in a letter that opened by ventriloquizing Athanasius of Alexandria: 'With a loud and distinct voice, and with outstretched hand (*quod didici ab Apostolo*), I call God to witness upon my soul, and as it is written in the Book of Kings—I take an oath—may God be witness, and may His Christ be witness, that the whole of this accusation is false'.⁷⁷ Walpole also pointed to the flaws in the documentation: 'so little acquaintance was there between me and Squire, that he did not even correctly remember my name; for in the indictment I am called William instead of Richard'.⁷⁸ He denied that Squire made a 'repeated request that I would, on his returning to England, recommend him to some Catholic who kept a priest in his house'.⁷⁹ Walpole also denied that he had told Squire if he began to doubt him, he should 'go to a certain doctor who, with other secular priests, was confined in prison'. This was Dr. Bagshaw, 'that particular doctor, who of all the clergy in the whole island, it is notorious, is most ill affected towards the Society'.⁸⁰ Walpole also drew attention to 'the last denial of Squire, then after a five hours' torture comes his retraction of his confession upon the rack, and his reiterated protestation before the judges at his trial that he had neither received any poison, nor had attempted any evil whatever in England against the Queen'.⁸¹

⁷⁵ [Walpole], *A Brief, and Cleere Confutation*, 2E1r.

⁷⁶ 'Hæc vt ad *Walpolum* delata sunt, ridere primùm vani capitis inane somnium; Tum constantibus literis certior factus rem serio narrari, scripsit Epistolam . . .'. Henry More, *Historia missionis Anglicanae Societatis Iesv* (Avdomari [St Omer]: Thomas Geubels, 1660), 2E3r; trans. Foley, *Records*, 238.

⁷⁷ 'scripsit Epistolam & exorsus verbis Magni Athanasij. "Magna, inquit, & clara voce, manoque extensa (quod didici ab Apostolo) Deum in meam ipsius animam testor, & vt scribitur in libris Regum, Iusiurandum concipio, testis sit Dominus, & testis sit Christus eius, quod Athaneus, hæc omnis accusatio falsa est, & protestor coram Deo & Cœlesti curiã vniuersa, & in verbo Sacerdotis, mihi in cogitationem nunquam venisse quidquam eorum quæ obijciuntur'. More, *Historia*, 2E3r-v; trans. Foley, *Records*, 238. Walpole's letter is not known to survive.

⁷⁸ 'Principiõ igitur tam exigua mihi intercessit cum Squiro consuetudo, vt nè nomen quidem hic meum rectè tenuerit; nam in accusatione dicor *Guilielmus* quem *Richardum* dici oportebat'. More, *Historia*, 2E3v; trans. Foley, *Records*, 238.

⁷⁹ 'Adde quod sæpe sæpius rogarit, vt reuersurum se in Angliam commendarem Catholico cuiquam qui foueret domi Sacerdootem'. More, *Historia*, 2E3v; trans. Foley, *Records*, 238.

⁸⁰ 'si quid dubitationis in facinore perpetrando occurrisset, iussisse me vt Doctorem quandam adiret inter Sacerdotes seculares carcere tentum, quem nominauit; . . . , quàm ad Doctorem illum, quem palam est vniuersæ Insulæ quàm nullo erga Societatem affectu feratur?' More, *Historia*, 2E3v; trans. Foley, *Records*, 239.

⁸¹ 'Denique Squiri prima negatio, deinde post horarum quinque tormenta, confessionis in quæstione retractatio, & iterata coram iudicibus cùm de capite diceret, protestatio, quod neque venenum accepisset, neque quidquam in Anglia attentasset mali aduersus Reginam'. More, *Historia*, 2E3v; trans. Foley, *Records*, 239.

As should be evident, the accounts of Garnet (via Persons), Aray, Fitzherbert, and Walpole are remarkably consistent. Squire was arraigned on trumped-up charges. Although Walpole had helped him in Spain, there was no poison plot to murder the queen or Essex. The suggestion that Dr Bagshaw might have been involved in any Jesuit activity was ludicrous. Squire may have confessed, but only under the extreme duress of five hours of torture, as he revealed at the trial. There, he retracted his confession, only to make it again, under pressure from the prosecution team and the councillors present, notably Cecil. But ultimately, at his execution, he stood firm on his innocence and his Protestant faith.

Responding to Bacon's Letter

This was the state of affairs before Bacon's text reached its continental readers, presumably early in March 1599. The appearance of the *Letter written out of England* prompted a revisiting of the Squire affair by Aray and Fitzherbert, whose responses are detailed, serious, and specific: despite (or perhaps because of) their open hostility, these writings serve as usefully partisan commentaries by alert and interested readers. In this section, therefore, the prompts provided by Aray and Fitzherbert will be taken as points of entry into understanding what was felt to be so significant about Bacon's *Letter*.

Aray reacts to the appearance of the *Letter* with incredulity: 'why yet after all this there should need any pamphlet, to giue new credit to the matter?'.⁸² The question betrays the belatedness of the appearance of the *Letter*. It was common for accounts of Elizabethan treason trials to be published as soon as possible: the narrative about Edmund Campion and his alleged co-conspirators was reportedly read out at his execution.⁸³ Bacon's *Letter* indeed claims to be 'a true report of a fresh accident of State'.⁸⁴ However, while Squire's arraignment took place on 9 November 1598, there is no mention of Bacon's publication until 1 March 1598/9, when John Chamberlain included a copy in his regular dispatch from London to Dudley Carleton in The Hague, as one of 'three or fower toyes to passe away the time', commenting that 'the letter of Squires conspiracie is well written'.⁸⁵ Given

⁸² [Aray], *Discoverie*, B7r.

⁸³ Exchequer official Richard Stonley recorded the execution at Tyburn of Campion and his accomplices in his diary on 1 December 1581, noting 'at which tyme a pamphlet boke was redde, by way of Aduertisement agenst all thos that were busye flaterers favorers or whisperers in his course': this was presumably *An Aduertisement and Defence for Trueth against her Backbiters: and specially against the Whispring Fauourers, and Colourers of Campions, and the Rest of his Confederats Treasons* ([London: Christopher Barker, 1581]). For Stonley's entry, see Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC, MS V.a.459 fo. 33v.

⁸⁴ [Bacon], *Letter*, A2r.

⁸⁵ Chamberlain to Carleton, 1 March 1598/9. Chamberlain, *Letters*, 1:70. The other books were [John Dee], *A Letter, containing a Most Briefe Discourse Apologeticall* (London: Peter

Chamberlain's investment in news it seems likely that on 1 March these books were freshly available, probably in late February: the *Letter* was a late addition to the government's case against Squire, who had by then been dead for some three months.

Faced with the mystery of the belated *Letter*, Aray answers his own rhetorical question by claiming 'the forgers in this mint were afraid lest their coyne would be the more suspected to be counterfeit and so the lesse go for good payment', because Squire had insisted on the scaffold that he was an innocent Protestant. He comments that 'such protestations, and at such tymes, do comonly make strong impressions in the myndes of the people, who generally are giuen to belieue, that at the very last instant of lyf, men are lykelyest to declare the truth of their causes'.⁸⁶ With this powerful testimony circulating, 'No maruel then is it', he concludes, 'that a smooth penned pamphlet is now come abrode, to reuyue the decaying credit of this late-made-matter, rather than that it should be holpen vp, by the rymings of some od pot-poet or idle balletmaker'.⁸⁷ The weakness of the case as reported to date necessitated the composition of this 'smooth penned pamphlet'.

Centuries before Spedding identified the *Letter* as Bacon's,⁸⁸ its early readers came to the same conclusion. Aray suggests that 'the wryter' might be '*M. Smokey-swynes flesh*, at the instance of Sir R.C.'⁸⁹ Here he plays on the porcine connotations of Bacon's name, and points towards Bacon's cousin, secretary Sir Robert Cecil, as being responsible for the commission.⁹⁰ Fitzherbert also pretended to ponder the *Letter*'s authorship: on the one hand, the fact that the pamphlet lacked author, privilege, or license for printing argued that it should be 'relected as an infamous libel'; but, on the other, 'the Author therof taketh vpon him such particuler knowledge of all the proceedings in that matter, that he seemeth to be no ordinary person, but rather some one that had his hand in the pye'.⁹¹ Later in his discussion, Fitzherbert reveals that he knows who the author is. Addressing 'Sir libeller' directly, he identifies the pamphleteer as a 'barrister': 'although yow dissemble your name . . . yet I am not ignorant who yow are, and haue forborne to yow, only to requite your curtesy in sparing to name mee in your said libel, which at the bar other

Short, [1599]); Thomas Moffett, *The Silkwormes, and their Flies* (London: Nicholas Ling, 1599); and [John Hayward], *The First Part of the Life and Raigne of King Henrie the IIIII* (London: John Wolfe, 1599). Only the most substantial book, Hayward's, was entered in the Stationers' Register, on 9 January 1598/9: Edward Arber ed. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1640, A.D.*, 5 vols. (London and Birmingham: privately printed, 1875-1894), 3:134. Although they were all published before 1 March 1598/9, Bacon's, Moffett's and Hayward's books have titlepages with the date 1599.

⁸⁶ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B6v.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, B7r.

⁸⁸ Bacon, *Letters and the Life*, 2: 108-10, at 2: 109.

⁸⁹ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B7r.

⁹⁰ This attribution was noted in Rickert, 'An Addition'.

⁹¹ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L1v.

your fellow barristers did not forbear to do'.⁹² In person, Fitzherbert was less circumspect. Henry Saunder recalled a conversation in which Fitzherbert asked him, 'you haue seene sayth hee I am sure the booke of Edward Squires treason written by *master* Bacon to his Padoan frend'.⁹³ Bacon's authorship was also attested to by the Jesuit historian Henry More, in his *Historia missionis Anglicanae Societatis Jesu* (1660). Against a passage recording that 'Those who favour the idea of conspiracy say that Squire did not simply escape from Spain, but that an exchange was made with some Spanish prisoners, and in this way he departed' is a printed marginal note that attributes that view to 'Baconus in literis ad amicum Patauij' ('Bacon in a letter to a Paduan friend').⁹⁴ While More's work was written over a half a century later, his note testifies to an enduring acceptance among English Jesuit circles of Bacon's authorship of the *Letter*.

Pursuing the authorship question, Fitzherbert (knowing fine well who it is) writes that the author 'seemeth to be no ordinary person, but rather some one that had his hand in the pye', especially since 'it may be thought that the Queenes printers, neyther would nor durst set foorth any such pamphlet touching her *Maiestie* & the state, without the warrant of some man in authoritie'.⁹⁵ Here the identity of the printers jeopardizes Bacon's underlying conceit that the report is a letter written by someone in England to 'an English Gentleman remaining at *Padua*'.⁹⁶ The printed news-report from overseas couched as a manuscript letter was by 1599 familiar: as Matthias Shaaber suggests, because news was naturally associated with letters, a printed newsbook framed as a letter was more convincing.⁹⁷ Bacon attempts to add further authenticity to the *Letter* in two ways. First, he places the recipient in Padua, a city that offered 'a considerable lure' for Englishmen, being 'the most favoured foreign destination for English students'

⁹² *Ibid.*, O1v.

⁹³ Saunder to Cecil, [1599 <> 1601?]. Hatfield House, Cecil Papers [CP] 142/158-160, at 159r.

⁹⁴ 'Narrant enim qui fauent conspirationi non fugisse Squirum ex Hispanijs; sed permutatione facta cum captiuis Hispaniensibus excessisse, cum palam sit ex ipsiusmet literis subduxisse se clanculum'. More, *Historia*, 2E4r; trans. and ed. Francis Edwards in *The Elizabethan Jesuits: Historia missionis Anglicanae Societatis Jesu (1660) of Henry More* (London: Phillimore, 1981), 281, although Edwards does not print the marginal notes. Bacon does indeed record this exchange: 'it was deuised that there should be a permutation treated, by the meanes of a Chanon in *Ciuill* of two *Spanish* prisoners here, taken at *Cales*, friends of the saide Chanon, for *Squire* and *Rowles* nowe Prisoner in the Towre, who came ouer with him' (*Letter*, B1r-v).

⁹⁵ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L1v.

⁹⁶ [Bacon], *Letter*, A1r.

⁹⁷ M. A. Shaabar, *Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England, 1476-1622* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1929), 58.

throughout the Tudor period.⁹⁸ Second, he frames it as a response, ‘paiment in the like commodities’ to a ‘Relation of *Ferrera*’.⁹⁹ Bacon draws here, as Gary Schneider observes, on an established ‘letter as debt’ rhetoric implying a ‘social affiliation’ between writer and recipient with a ‘fiction of ongoing correspondence’.¹⁰⁰ In early 1599, ‘Relation[s] of *Ferrera*’ were especially *au courant*, as Margaret of Austria had recently arrived in the city to marry Philip III of Spain; two pamphlets on the subject had been registered by newsletter publisher John Wolfe in London in January.¹⁰¹ Yet, as Fitzherbert hints, despite these tactics, Bacon’s appropriation of the genre is strangely off the mark: why should a letter sent from London to Padua be published in London?¹⁰² and by the deputies of the Queen’s printer?¹⁰³

Aray notes that in order to persuade the reader to believe him, the author ‘telleth him so direct and redy a tale, as though himself had bene in euery place, at euery tyme; when, and where, the matter was delt in, or spoken of’. Alternatively, ‘he hath had his intelligence by espetiall reuelation, for that he seemes to knowe all, so precisely, and so perfectly, yea he knowes now to call the Iesuyte in Spaine, Richard Walpole, that so often in the indightment was William Walpole’. On other occasions, however, as when he says that ‘*Richard Walpole is a man of principall credit in Spaine, and as Vicar generall to Persons in his absence*’,¹⁰⁴ the author’s knowledge must be ‘supernaturall, because he knowes that, that no man els knows’.¹⁰⁵ However, whether Aray’s ‘that’ means the fact that Walpole is ‘Vicar generall’, or that Persons is only temporarily absent in Rome, is unclear.

Drawing to an end, Aray ‘tell[s] the pamphleter, that he doth serue his Paduan frend but by peecemeal’, since he chose ‘to leaue out the later and chief parte of all, which was played by the principall actor

⁹⁸ See Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1998), 4, 5, and *passim*.

⁹⁹ [Bacon], *Letter*, A2r.

¹⁰⁰ Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 204-05.

¹⁰¹ *The Happy Entrance of the High Borne Queene of Spaine, the Lady Margarit of Austria in the Renowned City of Ferrara* (London: John Wolfe, 1599), entered 11 January 1598/9; H.W., trans. *A Briefe Discourse of the Voyage and Entrance of the Queene of Spaine into Italy* (London: John Wolfe, [1599]), entered 30 January 1598/9. Arber, *Transcript*, 3:134, 137.

¹⁰² Other letters printed in London in 1599 included ‘a certaine letter written by a person of reputation, to a prelate of brabant, being at Brussels’, translated from the Dutch, STC 3470; and told of ‘what is hapned since the last of August 1598, by comming of the Spanish campe into the dukedome of Cleue’, translated from the Latin, STC 20861; ‘the cruell dealings of the Spanyards, in the Dukedomes of Gulick and Cleue’ translated from the Dutch (i.e. German), STC 23008; ‘the sicknesse, last wordes, and death of the King of Spaine Philip the second’, translated from the Spanish, STC 19833.5 and 19834. Bacon’s alone went from England to overseas.

¹⁰³ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L1v.

¹⁰⁴ [Bacon], *Letter*, A2v.

¹⁰⁵ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B7r.

Squyer himself. He notes that the pamphleteer omits Squire's denials at Tyburn, namely, 'the one of Catholique religion, declaring himself a perfect protestant, and the other of his practisment of poyson, all which I say to be left behinde sticking in his pen, must needes be but a sly trik of his'. He advises the Paduan friend not to reveal the letter's contents to any Italians, 'least he be well laughed at for his labour, for they are to wise for him to delude with flimflammes, and to wel acquainted with the ridiculous rumors of English Queen-killinges'.¹⁰⁶

Some of Fitzherbert's supposed treatment of the *Letter* is still devoted to the settling of various scores raised by the trial, which are not included in Bacon's text. But when he turns to the *Letter*, Fitzherbert gives a canny account of its structure and Bacon's technique. As he states, the *Letter* 'consisteth of 3. partes: the first, his declaration of Squyres confession, touching the particulers, as wel of the supposed conspiracy, as also of the execution therof: the second the manner of the discouery of it, the third this pamphletters comment and censure vpon the same, interposed, sometymes by the way of discourse'.¹⁰⁷ Fitzherbert here rightly notes that, while Bacon's 'comment and censure' dominate the final part of the *Letter*, they are also 'interposed' throughout – that is, according to the *OED*, 'introduce[d] between other matters, or between the parts of a narrative, as an interruption or digression'.¹⁰⁸ Bacon's comments and censure often start by signaling their digression and end by making a determined return to the narrative, using phrases such as: 'though Sir, you know very well . . . But now to the purpose',¹⁰⁹ and 'And surely for my parte . . . But to returne'.¹¹⁰ The technique allows Bacon to weave in a personalized response to the narrative he tells.

Bacon says as much in the *Letter*, claiming that 'I haue had good meanes, to informe my selfe to the full, of that which passed in this matter, and the trueth of all the particulars, aswell those which were opened at the arreignment . . . as those which were reserued'.¹¹¹ At the same time, however, he states that the narration is 'rather abridged of some circumstances, then any wayes amplified or enlarged',¹¹² signaling that those materials have been streamlined. The *Letter* certainly draws on 'reserued' interrogation reports, and often 'abridge[s]' them, but it is disingenuous to claim that they are in no way 'amplified or enlarged'; rather, Bacon routinely adapts the texts he lifts from the

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, B8r.

¹⁰⁷ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L2r.

¹⁰⁸ *OED*, s.v. interpose, I. 5b. [www.oed.com/view/Entry/98193, accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁰⁹ [Bacon], *Letter*, A3r-v.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* B2v-B3r.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, A2r-v.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, A2v.

reports. While some of the speeches quoted can be found *verbatim* in the interrogation reports, Bacon is more inventive with Walpole's persuasions, cherry-picking striking sentences from separate speeches and stringing them together, with the resulting speech being simultaneously archivally-supported and confected.¹¹³ He also develops a subtle editorial line. For example, the narrative's opening draws on Squire's second examination which is preserved in the State Papers as follows:

He confesseth that he hath dwelt in Grenewich this xvj yeres, and married there about xj yeres past, and being demaunded how he hath gotten his lyving, saith, that cheifly he maintained himself by making of writinges, taking vppon him to be a Scryvener. [He] confesseth that he was deputie *purveieur* to keys for provision of the stable for the space of twoe yeres immediatelie before his viage with *sir frances drake*.¹¹⁴

In Bacon's hands, this becomes

This *Squire* dwelt in *Greenwich* diuers yeeres, and tooke vpon him the practise of a Scriuener, **yet rather as a helpe to maintaine himselfe for a time, then that he bare a minde to settle in that trade.** He obtained also before his going to Sea, for some two yeres space, **an employment about the Queenes Stable,** by way of deputiation to one *Kaies*, a *Purueiour* of those prouisions. **But being of a wit above his vocation, disliked with that condition of life, and put himselfe into action by Sea,** in the last voyage *Sir Francis Drake* made into the *Indies*.¹¹⁵

Bacon trims the confession, dispensing with Squire's marriage; indeed, Squire's wife and children, frequently mentioned in the interrogations, are never cited in the *Letter*. But he also adds a running commentary that presents Squire as an unsettled, discontented, opportunistic type, becoming a scrivener for the money, and feeling himself superior to his station in life. The detail about 'the Queenes stable' neatly introduces both the victim and location of the attempted murder. With the malcontent 'disposition and temper of the man'¹¹⁶ in place, Bacon is able to invent the response to Squire of Richard Walpole, who 'found him a man of more then ordinarie sence and capacitie, for his qualitie and education; found him a man, that had passed his middle age, well aduised, and yet resolued enough, and not apprehensue at all of danger'.¹¹⁷ This response is then 'affirme[d]' in parentheses by Bacon's firsthand impression of Squire at his arraignment: '(for I doe affirme this vnto you, that neuer man answered vpon his triall for life and death, with lesse perturbation, nay scarsely with any alteration, as if he vnderstood not his perill and calamitie, and yet as sensible for speech, as insensible for passion)'.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ See [Bacon], *Letter*, A4v.

¹¹⁴ Squire's second examination, 23 October 1598. TNA, SP 12/268, arts. 89, 90, 91.

¹¹⁵ [Bacon], *Letter*, A2v. Bacon's additions are marked in bold type.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, A3r.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, A2v-A3r.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, A3r.

Beyond the general charge of ‘interpos[ing]’, Fitzherbert specifically accuses Bacon of a series of falsifications: ‘his exaggerations of the foulness of the fact, his opprobrious speeches against Father Walpole[.] his deuises of charmes, coniurations, enchantments, exorcismes, cyrcles, & all his Sinons tale so smothely framed’.¹¹⁹ Fitzherbert here astutely notices the fleeting allusions that Bacon makes to magic during Walpole’s persuasion of Squire. ‘[W]hen the wicked Frier sawe hee was gotten into the true circle, hee began to charm’,¹²⁰ Bacon writes, drawing on the popular notion that magicians and necromancers conjured within a circle.¹²¹ After Walpole blesses Squire, ‘And vpon this imbracement and inchantment, this desperate wretch and this blasphemous Exorcist parted for that time’; he arrives in the Queen’s stables, ‘full of those euill spiritess wherewith so many exorcismes had possessed him’.¹²² All this together provides a ‘Sinons tale’, Sinon being the Greek who persuaded the Trojans to allow the wooden horse into Troy.

Fitzherbert gives most significance to Bacon’s explicit commentary on the case, and here there is evidence that Bacon is adding his own long-held views to the *Letter*. Fitzherbert complains that ‘In the third page yow appeale Sir Pamphleter to the knowledge of your frend in Padua for the distinction & moderation of the proceeding in England in ecclesiastical causes with what lenitie and gentlenes it hath bene caryed, except where it was mixed with matter of state, for such are your owne wordes’.¹²³ This is the moment in Bacon’s account when Walpole opens his campaign with Squire by complaining of the treatment of Catholics in England, or as Bacon puts it, ‘the ordinary burden or song, of that kinde of people, touching the tyrannies and persecutions exercised here in *England* against Catholiques’.¹²⁴ In insisting on the ‘distinction and moderation’, ‘lentitie, and gentlenesse’ of the English, Bacon returns to a theme he had elaborated in ‘On the Religious Policies of the Queen’, another letter-format piece written in or around 1589 (and later recycled in his *Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell*, 1593).¹²⁵ There, Bacon pushes back at a Frenchman’s ‘superficiall vnderstanding’ of ‘the proceedings here in

¹¹⁹ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L2v.

¹²⁰ [Bacon], *Letter*, A3v.

¹²¹ Christopher Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus begins his incantations ‘Within this circle’. Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (London: John Wright, 1616), B1r.

¹²² [Bacon], *Letter*, B2r.

¹²³ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, M1r.

¹²⁴ [Bacon], *Letter*, A3r.

¹²⁵ For ‘On the Religious Policies of the Queen’, see *OFB*, 1:213-34; the relevant section of *Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell* is *OFB*, 1:379-82.

Ecclesiasticall Causes’, seeing that ‘you seeme to note in them some inconstancy and variation, as if Wee inclined sometimes to one side and sometimes to another, and as if that Clemencie and lenitie were not vsed of late, that was vsed in the beginning’.¹²⁶ In the *Letter*, Bacon similarly highlights the apparent discrepancy between religious toleration at the start of Elizabeth’s reign and at later moments in the early and mid-1580s, claiming that it was not the laws that had changed, but the Catholics.¹²⁷

I would gladly learne, what should make the difference, betweene the temper of the Lawes in the first yeere of the Queene, and in 23. or 27. but that at the one time, they were Papists in conscience, and at the other they were growne Papists in faction; or what should make the difference at this day in Lawe, betweene a Queene *Mary* Priest, and a *Seminarie* Priest, saue that the one is a Priest of superstition, and the other is a Priest of sedition.¹²⁸

‘On the religious policies’ had claimed that the difference between 1558 and the 1580s came about when ‘the Seminaries begann to blosome and to send forth dailye Preistes and professed Men, who should by vow taken at shrift reconcile her Subiects from their Obedience, yea and bind many of them to attempt *against* her *Maiesties* sacred Person’. This ‘poison *which* they spread’ altered ‘the humours of most Papists’, so that ‘they were were noe more Papistes in Conscience, and of Softnesse, but Papists in faction’;¹²⁹ when the laws imposing fines for recusancy proved ineffective, the only recourse was to restrain ‘the Merchants that brought it in’ – hence the ‘Lawe whereby such seditious Preists of new erection were exiled’, passed in 1585.¹³⁰ In the *Letter*, not only does Bacon echo his earlier language (proceedings here in ecclesiastical causes, lenity, papists in conscience, papists in faction, priest of sedition); the Squire case allows him to turn his metaphors into reality. Squire is taken from his ‘Obedience’ to the Queen, and bound ‘to attempt *against* her *Maiesties* sacred Person’; the ideological ‘poison *which* they spread’ is crudely literalized and spread on the queen’s

¹²⁶ *OFB*, 1:228.

¹²⁷ For an account of the government’s changing attitude to Catholic dissent in the first decades of Elizabeth’s reign, see Wallace MacCaffrey, *Queen Elizabeth and the Making of Policy, 1572-1588* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 119-53.

¹²⁸ [Bacon], *Letter*, A3v.

¹²⁹ *OFB*, 1:230.

¹³⁰ *OFB*, 1:231. The 1585 act ‘against Jesuits, seminary priest and such other like dissident persons’ (27 Eliz. I, c.2), confirming in law a royal proclamation of 1582, made being a seminary priest or Jesuit a capital crime. See Arthur F. Marotti, ‘Alienating Catholics in Early Modern England: Recusant Women, Jesuits and Ideological Fantasies’, in Arthur F. Marotti, ed. *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1999), 1-34, at p. 25. Bacon here interestingly uses ‘Merchants’, a term by which Jesuit missionaries would refer to each other, although his usage is presumably negative: in ‘On the Religious Policies’ he scorns ‘the bringing in of the Agnus dei, Hallowed bread, and such other Merchandize of Rome’ (*OFB*, I: 229). I thank the anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

pommel. Fitzherbert accepts none of this: 'Hereto I answere that by your restriction & exception of state matters yow ouerthrow your general proposition of clemency, and proue that ther is no moderation lenitie nor gentlenes vsed at all'.¹³¹

In response, Fitzherbert draws attention to the author's 'hypocrisy' in his performance of 'the religious zeale, and deuotion towards God'. He takes aim at Bacon's religious rhetoric, 'your gloses wherin you interlace not only examples of scripture', claiming there is 'sommuch mention in your discourse of God, of his mercy, of his prouidence ordinary, and extraordinary, and of his more then natural influence to the preseruacion of her Maiestie'.¹³² For Bacon, each element of foiling of the plot revealed its providential nature. '[I]t pleased God for the manifestation of his glory' that Squire chose a particular day for his attempt on the queen's life. When Squire ironically says '*God saue the Queene*' as he poisoned the saddle, 'it pleased God to take his words and not his meaning';¹³³ when he fails to poison Essex, 'thankes be to God nothing came of it neither'; the detection of the plot 'God did likewise strangely bring about'.¹³⁴ In conclusion, invoking the abundant attempts on her life, 'by violence, by poisoning, by supersticious Votaries, by ambitious Vndertakers, by singular Conspirators, by Conspirators combined', Bacon opines that we 'will not find the like reflexion of Gods fauour in any Soueraigne Prince that hath reigned'.¹³⁵ Of the inventions on 'Gods part', one in particular irked Fitzherbert: Bacon's note that 'as the Viper was vpon S. *Pauls* hand, and shaked off without hurt', so the attempt to poison the queen's hand was made 'in *Iuly* in the heate of the yeere, when the poores and veines were openest to receiue any maligne vapor or tincture, if her Maiestie by any accident had layd her hand vpon the place'. Just as the heathens concluded that St Paul was a God, Bacon asserts, 'so wee may christianly inferre that it was Gods doing and power who hath defended his Handmaid and seruant by his secret and more then naturall influence and preseruatiue from so actuall & mortall a danger'.¹³⁶ Fitzherbert retorts that 'you make it miraculous ... but in such ridiculous manner, as in truth it made me and others good sport when I red it'. Elizabeth, he points out, never touched the saddle, as the viper touched Paul, so there is no miracle: 'yow might haue done wel to haue put this conceit in ryme for so it would haue beene at least ryme without reason, wheras now it is neyther ryme nor reason'.¹³⁷

¹³¹ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, M1r.

¹³² *Ibid.*, O1r.

¹³³ [Bacon], *Letter*, B2r.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, B3r.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, B2v.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, B2r.

¹³⁷ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, N4v, O1r.

Significantly, in summarizing this ‘commentary’ section of the *Letter*, Fitzherbert omits the most extended scriptural allusion made by Bacon. In writing about ‘the strange mysteries of the *Iesuites* doctrine’, that raises ‘the hands of Subjects against the anointed of God . . . their naturall Soueraigns’, Bacon insists

there is great difference betweene the spirite that wrought in *Dauid*, and this that worketh in them. For *Dauid* when relation was made to him (by one that thought he had done *Saul* the last good office) how *Saul* had fallen vpon his owne sword in battell, and being in the anguish of death, and carefull not to fall aliuie in the hands of the *Philistims* a people vncircumcised, desired this soldiour to make an ende of him, who did so, and was therefore by *Dauid* adiudged to die, because hee dared to lay his hands vpon the anointed of the Lord: and yet was *Saul* a king forsaken and abandoned of God; he had taken his mortall wound before, so as this soldiour tooke from him his paine, and not his life; and it was to a good ende, least a heathenish people should reproch the name of God by insulting vpon the person of *Saul*.¹³⁸

In 2 Samuel 1:1-16, an Amalekite informs David that he found King Saul leaning on his spear, and obeyed Saul’s command to kill him; David condemns the Amalekite to death for killing an anointed king. As Anne Lake Prescott notes, Bacon is parroting ‘the default position of the authorities . . . that no matter how terrible our Saul, we should emulate David’s humble loyalty and never, ever, use violence against an anointed monarch’.¹³⁹ Prescott demonstrates how the example of the Amalekite also features in the prescribed ‘Homily of obedience’, ‘being so manifest & euidēt, it is an intolerable ignorance, madnes & wickednes, for subjects to make any murmuring, rebellions, resistance, or withstanding, commotion, or insurrection against their most deer & most dread soueraign Lord & king, ordained and apointed of gods goodnes for their commoditie, peace & quietnes’.¹⁴⁰ Not only is it intolerable, the correct punishment for king-killing, no matter the circumstances, is death. Writing at a moment when Jesuits are routinely being accused of king-killing, Fitzherbert opts not to take on this argument.

Instead, Fitzherbert takes particular issue with the author’s ‘inuetiue’ against the Jesuits’:

In your 10. and 11. page yow make a digression to treat of the strange mysteries as yow cal them of the Iesuits doctrin, how they mingle heauen and hel, and lift vp the hands of the subjects against the anointed of God, yow wonder that Princes do not concurre in suppressing them, who yow say make traffyck of

¹³⁸ [Bacon], *Letter*, B2v.

¹³⁹ Anne Lake Prescott, ‘Exploiting King Saul in Early Modern England: Good Uses for a Bad King’, in Arthur F. Marotti and Chanita Goodblatt, eds. *Religious Diversity and Early Modern English Texts: Catholic, Judaic, Feminist, and Secular Dimensions* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2013), 178-94, at 185.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Cranmer, et al., *Certaine Sermons appointed by the Queenes Maiestie* (London: Edward Allde, 1595), I7v-I8r.

their sacred lyues; yow compare them to pirats that are publyke enemies to humayne society, and to the Templars that were all put downe throughout Christendome within a few weekes, and lastly yow fynd it strange that the Bishop of Rome doth not purge out a leuen as yow cal them, so strange and odious.¹⁴¹

This is perhaps Bacon's most outspoken intervention, as he ponders aloud why the Jesuits are allowed by princes to remain active:

For I doe not see that Pirates (whom the *Ciuilians* [civil lawyers] account to be *Publici hostes societatis humanæ*, and therefore Princes bound as they affirme, though they be otherwise in no league one with an other, yea and though they be enemies, to ioyne in the suppressing & extirpation of them) are any such disturbers of humane societie as these are.¹⁴²

He goes on to wonder how the Templars were dealt with more speedily, and why the pope does not act against the Jesuits. Fitzherbert knows exactly what Bacon was aiming at: with his 'childish and vayne' comparison to pirates, Jesuits become 'publyke enemies of humayn society, meaning (by lyke) by humayne society your selues, whose publyke enemies yow may in deed accompt them in respect of your heresies'. But although Fitzherbert allows that Protestants may be 'humayn and earthly in the highest degree, yet a true society yow cannot be called, being so dissociate, and deuided in religion amongst your selues as yow are, except it be the society of Sampsons foxes whose tayles were only tyed together and their heads seuered'.¹⁴³ In truth, Jesuits were accepted by 'so many wise pious, and polityk kinges, Princes, counsels, magistrates, and gouernours (whose dominions extending from one pole to the other, do conteyne the noblest, and worthyest parts of humain society among Christians)'.¹⁴⁴ In contrast, Bacon's proclaimed 'society' was just 'a few poor sectary Caluinists hated & contemned by all other sectes of the same breed', 'not woorthy to be counted the parings' of Christendom.¹⁴⁵

For Fitzherbert, as for Aray, the most scandalous part of Bacon's *Letter* came in its closing page. First, Bacon proclaimed that Squire 'disclosed all without any rigour in the world'. Then, 'being a man of a very good reach', Squire decided to retract some of his confession, and 'endeuoured at his arraignment to haue distinguished, and auowching the first part [i.e. the plotting], to haue retracted the second [i.e. the execution of the plot]; pretending that although he vnderooke it, yet he had not any purpose to performe it'. According to Bacon, this was challenged in court by 'one of the Commissioners', who 'did set before him the absurditie of his deniall against his former confession

¹⁴¹ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, N2v.

¹⁴² [Bacon], *Letter*, B2v-B3r.

¹⁴³ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, N3v.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, N3v-N4r.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, N4r.

which was voluntarie, particular, and needlesse (otherwise then in conscience of trueth)'. On hearing this, 'being stricken with remorse, and conuicted in himselfe', Squire 'acknowledged and iustified the trueth of his former confession in the hearing of all the standers by'.¹⁴⁶ The *Letter* thus ends with Squire reiterating his confession in open court: there is no account of Squire's execution, and therefore no mention of Squire's subsequent second and crucial retraction at his death, as reported by Garnet, Aray, and Fitzherbert.

Bacon is, in fact, repeating points he has made earlier in the *Letter*. When claiming that his account of Squire's 'subornation' by Walpole was 'confessed by the same *Squire* almost in the same wordes, as well for the perswasions as for the instructions', Bacon makes an intervention based on personal knowledge:

Which confession I doe affirme vnto you vpon knowledge was deliuered without torture or shewe of torture: and was roundly and sensibly vttered with all circumstances of a credible narration for that part which concerneth the maner of the impoisonment: and for that part which concerneth the manner of the perswasion was set downe by an aduised declaration vnder his owne hand.¹⁴⁷

Even at his execution, Bacon avers, Squire did not retract his confession, which 'was mainteined and confirmed, and in no point retracted or disauowed, either at his trial or at his death'.¹⁴⁸

For Fitzherbert, the *Letter*'s 'two notorious and impudent lyes' are that Squire's confession 'was deliuered by himself, without torture, or shew of torture', and that 'it was in no point retracted or disauowed, eyther at his tryal, or at his death'. Indeed, 'all those that were present thereat, are witnesses of the contrary', including 'some of your Lordships that assisted at his tryal'. In Fitzherbert's account, Squire 'vrge a long tyme that his confession was extorted by torment' and any confession was provoked by 'some perswasions and expectation perhaps of pardon'. More significantly, 'at his death when it imported him for his euerlasting good to discharge his conscience, he reuoked his said confession, not only disauowing the fact, and all intention therof, but also his supposed employment by Father Walpoole'. When at Tyburn, the sheriff, 'kindled with great choller against the poore man for denying it', pushed him to acknowledge his confession, Squire 'answered in the hearing of all the assistants and lookers on, that he would as wel haue said any thing els in the world at that tyme to deliuer himself from the torments which he endured'; he 'flatlie denyed' being suborned and employed by 'the Iesuit', and in fact

¹⁴⁶ [Bacon], *Letter*, B4r. The identity of the commissioner is unspecified, but of the nine members of the Special Commission, Cecil was the most 'wel acquainted with all the particular circumstances'. See Palgrave, *Fourth Report*, 291.

¹⁴⁷ [Bacon], *Letter*, B1r.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, B1r.

ran away from Seville.¹⁴⁹ Given this evidence, '[w]hat then may I say', asks Fitzherbert, 'of the impudency of this man that maketh no bones to put in print, yea and to affirme vpon his knowledge such a notably, disprouable by the testimony of so many hundreths as were present as Squires death?'.¹⁵⁰

But Aray and Fitzherbert both miss what is probably the most distinctive feature of Bacon's treatment of the case. As we have seen, Bacon, intimately involved in the inquiry and active in the trial itself, writes with access to interrogation and confession documents. While happy to colour and heighten individual moments, he is at pains to simplify the narrative as a whole, losing many of the twists and turns it had taken during the interrogations. Bacon effectively abstracts the Squire case from the detail of its proceedings, and presents it through a deliberately selective quotation of documentary evidence. The plot is simplified: there is no mention now of the dead dog and red cork-stopped bottle that sparked derision in earlier accounts. The dramatis personae are also brutally cut down: Thomas Fitzherbert, John Stanley, Richard Rolls, William Munday, Robert Persons, and Christopher Bagshaw, all important names in the archive of the Squire case—and elsewhere in the print controversy it sparks—are entirely elided. The only characters in Bacon's narrative are Squire, Walpole, the queen, and Essex, with the briefest of namechecks for Sir Francis Drake and Kaies, the Greenwich purveyor under whom Squire worked. The story Bacon tells is a simple one of a malcontent Englishman (Squire) seduced by a Jesuit (Walpole) into killing the queen and a leading nobleman (Essex).

The afterlives of the Squire affair

Fitzherbert's outrage at Bacon's silence on Squire's execution is understandable: no matter how many hundreds attended his death, the account that would enter the history books would be Bacon's. As early as May 1599, Squire's example served to discourage some from flirting with the Jesuits: Francis Duckett wrote to his 'Coosin' Richard Brother in May 1599 that 'thowghe my opynyons some tymes have bene addycted that way, yett I protest sence I sawe the trecheryes revealed of the Iesuytes by sqwyer, the traytor, in mychelmas terme last, I have abiured theyre irrelgyous & damnable courses agaynst the state'.¹⁵¹ It was not long before Squire entered the litany of alleged conspirators who had allegedly threatened the life of Queen Elizabeth: similar lists would be repeated *ad infinitum* in the years that followed, in polemics,

¹⁴⁹ [Fitzherbert], *Defence*, L2r.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, L2v.

¹⁵¹ Francis Duckett to Richard Brother, 31 May 1599. CP 70/67.

histories, and even a Welsh ballad.¹⁵² In 1606, Attorney General Coke kept the memory of the case alive by invoking Walpole and Squire in his prosecution of Father Henry Garnet following the Gunpowder Plot.¹⁵³ All these commentators claimed Squire was guilty and had confessed. The historian John Speed's account in his 1611 *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, drew heavily on Bacon's *Letter*. It similarly ended by asserting that 'by good Counsell (the truth withall working) [Squire] disclosed the Treason, and how farre he had therin gone which indeed no man had knowledge of but himselfe, and this confessed at the Tower, without torture, and at the Barre with remorse of conscience, he had his sentence of death, which he accordingly suffered'.¹⁵⁴ Bacon's *Letter* itself received a new readership when George Carleton, bishop of Chichester included a faithful transcription as chapter 14 of his third and fourth editions of his popular *A Thankfull Remembrance of Gods Mercy*, published in 1627 and 1630 respectively,¹⁵⁵ enhanced by an illustration by Frederik van Hulsen, showing the scenes of Walpole blessing Squire, and Squire attempting to poison the Queen's pommel.¹⁵⁶

But it was not only representatives of the Protestant establishment who continued to charge Squire with treason. In 2017, Thomas McCoog mused, with reference to the early accounts of the case, that 'if the charge had included only Jesuits'—rather than the bizarre mix of Jesuits, secular priests, Spain and Rome featured, for example, in the 'Admonition to the Reader'—'it could have been nicely exploited by the Appellants to reinforce their arguments for Jesuit exclusion'.¹⁵⁷ With Bacon's *Letter* redefining the case as Jesuit-only, this indeed came to pass, albeit belatedly. Appellant priests proclaimed the veracity of the Squire plot. In March 1601, Thomas Bluet added 'the late

¹⁵² See Francis Hastings, *An Apologie or Defence of the Watch-word, against the Virulent and Seditious Ward-word published by an English-Spaniard, Lurking vnder the Title of N.D.* (London: Ralph Jackson, 1600), V2r-v; Matthew Sutcliffe, *A Challenge concerning the Romish Church, her Doctrine & Practises* (London: J. Harrison, 1602), M8v-N1r; [Thomas Bell], *The Anatomie of Popish Tyrannie* (London: Richard Bankworth, 1603), ¶4r, E4r, H2r, K1r; George Abbot, *The Reasons which Doctour Hill hath Brought, for the Vpholding of papistry. Vnmasked: . . . The First Part* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1604), 15r; Thomas Morton, *An Exact Discoverie of Romish Doctrine in the Case of Conspiracie and Rebellion by Pregnant Observations* (London: C. B[urby] and E. W[eaver], 1605), E1r; for the ballad, see Sally Harper, "'A dittie to the tune of Welsh Sydannen": a Welsh Image of Queen Elizabeth', *Renaissance Studies* 19 (2005): 201-28, at 221-2.

¹⁵³ *A True and Perfect Relation of the Whole Proceedings against the Late Most Barbarous Traitors, Garnet a Iesuite, and his Confederats* (London: Robert Barker, 1606), Q2r. For Persons's attack on Coke's strategy, see *An Answere to the Fifth Part of Reportes Lately Set Forth by Syr Edward Cooke Knight* (St Omer: F. Bellet, 1606), esp. c4r.

¹⁵⁴ John Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (London: John Sudbury and George Humble, [1611, i.e. 1612.]), 6I2v-6I3r.

¹⁵⁵ George Carleton, *A Thankfull Remembrance of Gods Mercy* (London: Robert Mylbourne and Humphrey Robinson, 1627), 2C3v-2E3r; (1630), 2C4v-2E4r.

¹⁵⁶ Carleton, *Thankfull Remembrance* (1627), 2C4r.

¹⁵⁷ McCoog, *Society of Jesus . . . 1598-1606*, 99.

villanous attempt 1599. of *Edward Squire*: animated & drawne thereunto (as he confessed[)], by *Walpole* that pernicious Iesuit', to the roll-call of 'those traitorous and bloody designments of *Throckmorton*, *Parry*, *Collen*, *Yorke*, *Williams*, *Squire*, and such like'.¹⁵⁸ As Peter Lake and Michael Questier have recently highlighted, following the martyrdom of Thomas Benstead in July 1601, Robert Persons printed a letter from Benstead written in April 1601. Benstead accused Dr Bagshaw not only of ignoring his insistence that the alleged Walpole-Squire plot was 'a forged calumination', but also of claiming that Benstead had said there was indeed 'some priuy dealing and secret conueyance betwixt F. Walpoole & Squire'¹⁵⁹: it would seem Bagshaw was keen to exploit the guilty verdict to hurt the Jesuits. Bagshaw's supporter William Clark similarly rejected Persons' claim that the Squire case was 'a meere fiction', claiming that it had caused Bagshaw to be taken to London, imprisoned, and threatened with the rack.¹⁶⁰ The writings of Aray and Fitzherbert had not convinced Clark of Walpole's innocence: Clark 'saw a little Pamphlet, to cleare Ma. *Rich. Walpole*, as actor, or plotter of such a matter', but felt that its two 'chiefest reproofes'—the misnaming of Walpole as William, and that physicians claimed that the 'poison could not be made'—did not constitute 'in my vnderstanding any conuincing argument in the discourse to cleare Fa: *Walpole*, thereof'.¹⁶¹ Clark then reiterated 'the vehement suspicions of the matter': its discovery by Rolls and Stanley ('for the which they remaine in the *Tower*, and affirme as much still'); the fact 'that *Squier* at his death confessed the plot, though he denied his intention to performe it; so loud an vntruth it is, that at his death (as Fa: *Parsons* saith) it appeareth to be but an inuention'.¹⁶² In March 1602, Thomas Bluet, another associate of Bagshaw, recounted Bacon's version of the Squire story as fact in a declaration shown to Cardinals Borghese and Arrigoni.¹⁶³ The French lawyer Etienne

¹⁵⁸ Thomas Bluet, *Important Considerations, which ought to Moue all True and Sound Catholikes, who are not wholly Iesuited* ([London]: [Richard Field], 1601), F1v, F4v. Bluet's mistaken dating of Squire's case to 1599 may reflect his use of Bacon's pamphlet, dated on its titlepage as 1599.

¹⁵⁹ [Persons], *A Brieue Apologie, or Defence of the Catholike Ecclesiastical Hierarchie, & Subordination in England* ([Antwerp: Arnout Concinx, 1601), 2C3v-2C4v, quoted at 2C4r. Benstead was executed in July 1601. See Lake and Questier, *All Hail to the Archpriest*, 91-2.

¹⁶⁰ Bagshaw was summoned by the Privy Council to explain his involvement. McCoog writes that he and Thomas Bluet 'seized this opportunity to denounce the Jesuits to the government'. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus . . . 1598-1606*, 99.

¹⁶¹ [William Clark as] W.C., *A replie vnto a certaine libell latelie set forth by Fa: Parsons* ([London]: [J. Roberts], 1603), 2A3v.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 2A4r.

¹⁶³ TNA, SP 12/283 art.70.

Pasquier, an arch anti-Jesuit, devoted a full chapter of his 1602 *Le catechisme des Iesuites* to the Squire affair.¹⁶⁴

With both Protestant and anti-Jesuit and appellant Catholic writers maintaining the case against Walpole and Squire, it may feel as if Bacon's narrative had won the day. There was, however, one contemporary historian who did not entirely accept the *Letter's* line on the case. The account by William Camden, in the fourth book of his *Annales*, first published in Latin in 1625, and translated into English in different versions in 1629 and 1630,¹⁶⁵ added elements of caution. While Camden noted that Squire initially 'voluntarily confessed' all, he clarified that 'at the Barre, and at the Gallowes he protested, that though he were suborned by *Walpoole* and others to this fact, yet he could neuer be perswaded in his heart to commit it'.¹⁶⁶ Camden then goes on to refer the reader, not to Bacon's *Letter*, but to (presumably) Aray's book: '*Walpoole*, or some other for him, set forth a Booke in print, wherein he precisely denied with many detestations all which *Squier* had confessed'.¹⁶⁷ Although his account ends with a lament that 'some fugitiues out of *England*' had come to believe that 'to take away Kings excommunicate, was nothing else but to weed out the Cockle out of the Lords field',¹⁶⁸ Camden here allows the possibility that Edward Squire was not one of those murderers. It is an intriguing departure

¹⁶⁴ Estienne Pasquier, *Le catechisme des Iesuites: ov examen de levr doctrine* (Villefranche: Guillaume Grenier, 1602), 2D3v-2D6v; trans. William Watson as *The Iesuites Catechisme. Or Examination of their Doctrine* ([London]: [James Roberts], 1602), 2O2v-2O4v. Pasquier adds the detail that, after Squire spreads poison on Essex's chair, 'at supper-time, the Earle found loathsomeness, and distaste in himselfe whereupon *Squier* supposed that he had gotten the goale, but he was deceived in this, euen as he was in the first attempt': Pasquier, *Iesuites catechisme*, 2O4v. Jean Lacouture describes Pasquier as 'the true begetter of Jesuitophobia, the man who raised the phenomenon to the level of a literary genre'. Lacouture, *Jesuits: a Multibiography*, trans. Jeremy Leggatt (Washington DC: Counterpoint 1995), 352. The translator Watson was an opponent of Pasquier.

¹⁶⁵ For the complicated manuscript and print history of the *Annales*, see Patrick Collinson, 'One of Us? William Camden and the Making of History', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 8 (1998):139-163; and idem, 'William Camden and the Anti-Myth of Elizabeth: Setting the Mould?', in *This England: Essays on the English Nation and Commonwealth in the Sixteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 270-82.

¹⁶⁶ William Camden, *The Historie of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princesse Elizabeth, Late Queene of England* (London, Benjamin Fisher, 1630), 3R2v; 'Pro tribunali tamen, & ad patibulum, protestatus est, licet à Walpolo & aliis ad hoc scelus fuerit subornatus, nunquam tamen animum induxisse ut admitteret'. *Annales rerum Anglicarum, et Hibernicarum, regnante Elizabetha* (Leiden: ex officina Elzevziana, 1625), 2Z3v.

¹⁶⁷ Camden, *Historie*, 3R2v-3R3r; 'Walpolus, aut pro eo alius, singula quæ Squierus confesus erat, edito libello multis cum detestationibus præcis pernegavit'. *Annales rerum Anglicarum*, 2Z3r. In 1717, editor Thomas Hearne identified the 'libello' as [Aray's] *Discoverie*, noting that the book is now very rare ('Nunc perrarus est'). *Annalium rerum Anglicanum et Hibernicarum, regnante Elizabetha*, ed. Thomas Hearne, 3 vols. ([Oxford,] 1717), 3: 954.

¹⁶⁸ Camden, *Historie*, 3R3r; 'Vt cunque se res habuit, nonnulli ex Angli profugi, in hominum perniciem, & suam ipsorum infamiam, nimis ingeniosi extiterunt; Pestifera enim opinio nonnullorum etiam sacerdotum (pudet dicere) animos invaserat, excommunicatos Reges tollere nihil aliud esse quam lolium ex agro Dominico extirpare' (*Annales rerum Anglicarum*, 2Z3v).

from the official line peddled by Bacon—and it cannot be explained away by claiming that Camden was unfamiliar with that line, since he possessed a copy of Bacon's *Letter*, which survives in Westminster Abbey's library.¹⁶⁹

It may even be possible that Bacon himself changed his mind on the Squire affair. When Camden was working on his *Annales*, he had Bacon read through the manuscript, and invited his comments and corrections. In addition to inserting 'a number of passages helpful to the posthumous reputation of his father, Sir Nicholas Bacon',¹⁷⁰ Bacon made substantial changes to events of which he had personal knowledge, including the prosecution of Roderigo Lopez in 1594, and Essex's 1599 campaign in Ireland. But, significantly, Bacon did not emend Camden's treatment of the Squire case in the same volume, leaving Squire's retraction of guilt intact.¹⁷¹ Might we see this as Bacon's belated and tacit acceptance that Camden's claim is correct—that even if Walpole had persuaded Squire to kill the queen, 'he neuer resolved with all his heart to doe it'?

While there may be several reasons behind his apparent change of heart, there is evidence that Bacon gradually revised his attitude to the Jesuits. When he recycled his comment about pirates being public enemies to human society in his 1624 *An Advertisement touching the Holy War*, he notably did not make the allusion to pirates being like Jesuits.¹⁷² More positively, in his 1623 *De augmentis scientiarum*, the Latin translation and expansion of his *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bacon added several highly complimentary references to the Society: their hard work in promoting learning and conduct at their colleges; their energetic pursuit of letters, which had helped strengthen the Roman see; their unsurpassed pedagogy; and the training provided by their stage-playing.¹⁷³ Bacon's changing attitude towards the Jesuits remains to be fully analyzed, but his later enthusiasm suggests that he may not have been personally invested in making the case against Squire and Walpole, and certainly not in defending it when Camden was drafting his *Annales* in the late 1610s.

This article has argued that Bacon's *Letter written out of England* needs to be reconsidered in the contexts of the print controversies of which it became a part. As part of the government's propaganda campaign, it served to revise the official case, streamlining it into a simple anti-Jesuit narrative. But it also provoked writers who were firmly

¹⁶⁹ Westminster Abbey, CB. 16(3). See Richard DeMolen, 'The Library of William Camden', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 128 (1984): 326-409, at 401.

¹⁷⁰ Collinson, 'One of Us?', 145.

¹⁷¹ BL Cotton MS Faustina F IX. For the Squire case, see fos. 18r-19r.

¹⁷² Bacon, *An Advertisement touching the Holy War*, in *The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry the Seventh: and Other Works of the 1620s*, ed. Michael Kiernan, OFB, 8 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 202-03.

¹⁷³ Bacon, *Opera . . . tomus primus: qui continet De dignitate & augmentis scientiarum libros IX* (London: John Haviland, 1623), D1v, G3r, 2X1v, 2X2v.

engaged (as Robert Persons's proxies) in what we now name the arch-priest and watchword controversies. Here, Bacon's *Letter* took on a wider significance as its Catholic readers understood it as engaging in the English appellants' campaign against the Jesuits. The question remains: was this Bacon's intention? Did he, as Aray suggests, write this at the instigation of Sir Robert Cecil?¹⁷⁴ And if so, what was the motivation? It seems highly unlikely that in February 1599 Bacon could have known the details of the defence that Aray and Fitzherbert would mount in their writings. As a lawyer, he may simply have seen the holes in the government case — the nonsensical involvement of Rome and Spain, Jesuits and appellants, Walpole and Bagshaw in the Squire prosecution — and decided to erase the most unlikely components. Whatever the case, it is clear that Bacon's *Letter* changed the direction of the government's propaganda campaign in the wake of the Edward Squire affair, and became the standard line on the case for all but the Jesuit faithful for the next three centuries.

¹⁷⁴ [Aray], *Discoverie*, B7r.