

Francis Walsingham was reading all of the letters which Babington and Mary Queen of Scots were exchanging. In addition to his other spies, Elizabeth's Minister had an expert decoder and handwriting forger, Thomas Phelippes (Philipps), who was able to write like the Scottish Queen.

The original exchange, between Babington and Mary, included these statements:

Babington to Mary

*We... will undertake the delivery of your royal persons from the hands of your enemies... For the dispatch of the usurper [Elizabeth] ... six noble gentlemen, who, for the zeal they have to the Catholic cause ... will undertake that tragical execution.*

Mary to Babington

*When all is ready, the six gentlemen must be set to work, and.... when it is accomplished, I may be in some way got away from here... then we will await foreign assistance.*

Mary did not give her permission to kill Elizabeth. Walsingham, reading these exchanges, wanted more from Mary. He didn't think he had enough to convince Elizabeth that her cousin should be tried and executed without further proof of Mary's complicity in a potential regicide.

So ... Phelippes (the decoder) - pretending to be Mary, and writing (as best he could) in her hand - forged a new post-script message. It asked for the identities of the plotters. Those words would more directly connect Mary to the plot.

This image depicts the original of the letter, with the forged postscript.

Mary was tried for her part in the Babington plot to kill Queen Elizabeth. The evidence against her included the forged note.

How the forgery happened - and Walsingham's role both in that and in the entire plot - was never revealed during the trial.

Click on the image for a better view.

### Credits:

Image of the Babington letter, with the forged postscript, online courtesy the UK National Archives via Wikimedia Commons.

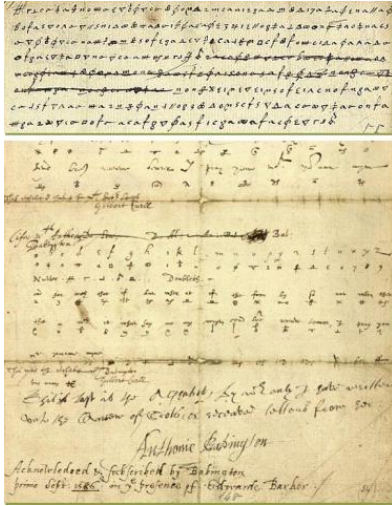
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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Babington-Letter-with-Forged-Postscript>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Babington-Letter-with-Forged-Postscript>



### Babington Letter with Forged Postscript

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