

Key topic 2: Challenges to Elizabeth at home and abroad, 1569–88

1 Plots and revolts at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The reasons for, and significance of, the Revolt of the Northern Earls, 1569–70.• The features and significance of the Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington plots. Walsingham and the use of spies.• The reasons for, and significance of, Mary Queen of Scots' execution in 1587.
2 Relations with Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political, religious and commercial rivalry.• The significance of privateering and the activities of Drake.
3 Outbreak of war with Spain, 1585–88	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reasons for deteriorating relations with Spain: English direct involvement in the Netherlands and the actions of Robert Dudley.• Drake and the raid on Cadiz: 'Singeing the King of Spain's beard'.
4 The Armada	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spanish invasion plans. Key events of the Spanish Armada.• The reasons for the English victory.

Northern Earls Revolt:

Ridolfi Plot

Throckmorton Plot

Babington Plot

Key Topic 2: Elizabethan England

Walsingham Spies:

Commercial rivalry

Religious rivalry

Political rivalry

Netherlands

Spanish Armada:

Reasons for success:

MQS execution:

Northern Earls Revolt:

Ridolfi Plot

Throckmorton Plot

Babington Plot

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Reasons for success:

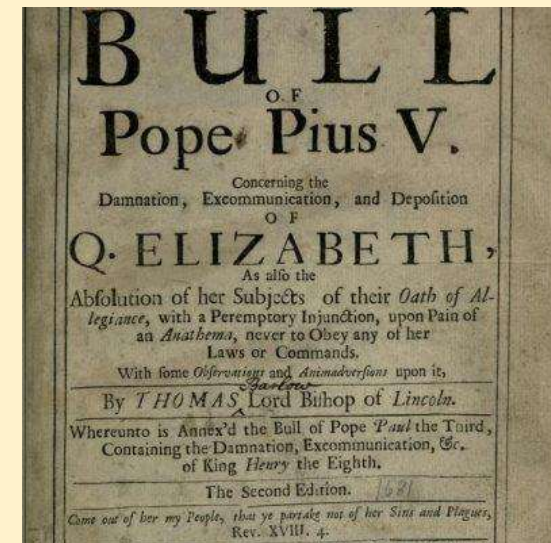
The Northern Earls plan

- Earls Northumberland and Westmorland would raise armies and capture Durham
- They would then march south to link up with the Duke of Norfolk
- Spanish reinforcements would land at Hartlepool to combat resistance forces loyal to Elizabeth
- Then rebel forces would overthrow Elizabeth in London
- MQS freed, married to Norfolk and installed as Queen



What actually happened?

- **Dudley was informed of the plot. Norfolk was arrested** and sent to the Tower of London
- November 9th 1569: **Northumberland and Westmorland pressed on to Durham.** By the 14th they had ousted the Archbishop and celebrated mass
- By November 22nd the rebels controlled the north. By December 14th they had **captured Barnard Castle in County Durham.** However, **no Spanish troops arrived**
- **An army of 14,000 soldiers loyal to Elizabeth was raised,** December 16th they had reached the River Tees. The rebels fled north.
- **MQS moved to Coventry** to keep her under close surveillance.
- The main players were not executed (yet). However, **450 people were executed** across the North as an example to would be rebels
- **1570 the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth by issuing a Papal Bull**



Outcomes

- First and most serious threat Elizabeth faced from her Catholic subjects.
- **Treason laws were strengthened** e.g. including anti-Catholic definitions such as calling Elizabeth a heretic.
- The **traditional powerful families of the north** e.g the Percys and Nevilles **found their power at an end.**
- **Council of the North created to enforce Elizabeths laws.**
- **Majority of northern Catholics remained loyal to Elizabeth** and her Settlement.
- **Papal Bull was a problem.**

Ridolfi Plot

- **Ridolfi was an Italian banker** living in England. He was also **one of the Popes spies.**
- Ridolfi arranged to **murder Elizabeth, launch a Spanish invasion and for MQS to marry the Duke of Norfolk.**
- Ridolfi left England to discuss his plans with the Pope, Phillip II and Duke of Alba. **He sent a letter to the Duke of Norfolk,** saying to prepare an army of 10,000 men.
- **Cecil uncovered** this plot by decoding the letter.
- **Elizabeth signed a warrant for the Duke of Norfolk's execution**



Throckmorton Plot

- The plan: **French Duke of Guise to invade England, free MQS, overthrow Elizabeth and make England Catholic again**
- **Francis Throckmorton was to act as a go between** (messenger) between MQS and those planning the rebellion
- **The Pope knew and approved of this plan. Phillip II would provide financial help to fund it**
- **Francis Walsingham: uncovered the plot** when his spies found incriminating letters in Throckmorton's house
- **Throckmorton was arrest, tortured and executed**
- **MQS was moved to a different castle and not allowed visitors**
- **11,000 Catholics were even imprisoned or put under house arrest**



Babington Plot

- The plan: **murder Elizabeth, Duke of Guise to invade with 60,000 men, Pope and Phillip support and put MQS on the throne**
- **Walsingham decodes the letters between Babington and MQS.** This included enough evidence to incriminate MQS and had the names of the 6 Catholics who were going to attempt Elizabeths assassination
- **Babington and his accomplices were hanged, drawn and quartered**
- **MQS was finally executed**

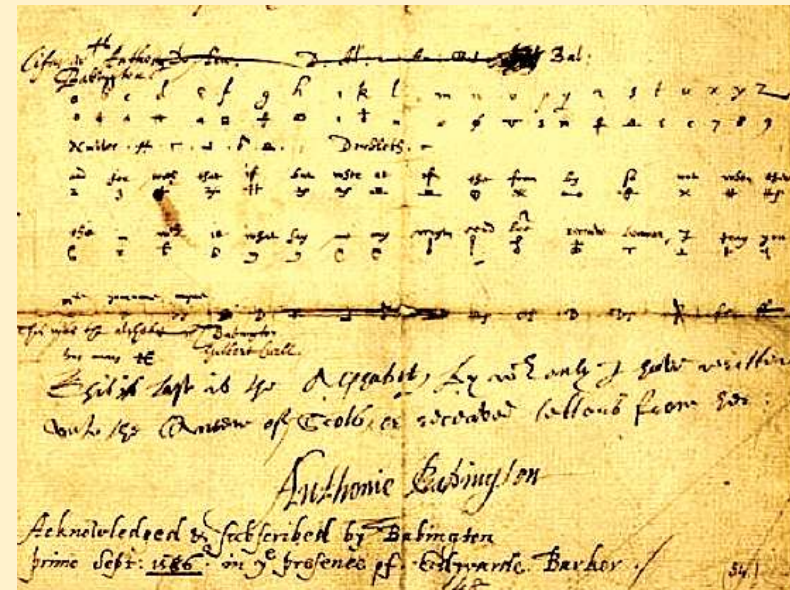
The image shows a historical document with a cipher key at the top and a handwritten letter below. The cipher key lists letters a-z with corresponding symbols. The handwritten letter is in a cursive script and includes the signature 'Anthonic Babington' and the date 'prime Sept. 1586'.

Walsingham's Spy Network



SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM'S FAME

- Walsingham became Elizabeth's Secretary of State in 1573
- He created a spy network both in England and abroad and played a crucial role in uncovering the plots against Elizabeth
- He had spies in every county and major town turning ordinary people to spy on their neighbours for money
- By 1580, he had agents in 12 towns in France, 9 in Germany, 4 in Spain, 3 in Italy
- He mastered writing in code (ciphering)
- He also used captured Catholic priests to inform
- He didn't use torture were possible believing it would make people sympathetic to the "criminal"



Reasons for the execution of MQS

- 1585: the Act for the Preservation of the Queens Safety
- The evidence brought against Mary with the Babington Plot to finally execute her
- Elizabeth reluctantly signed the death warrant in February 1587

Significance of her execution

- Removed an important threat to Elizabeth
- Gave Phillip II another reason to invade England



Commercial Rivalry

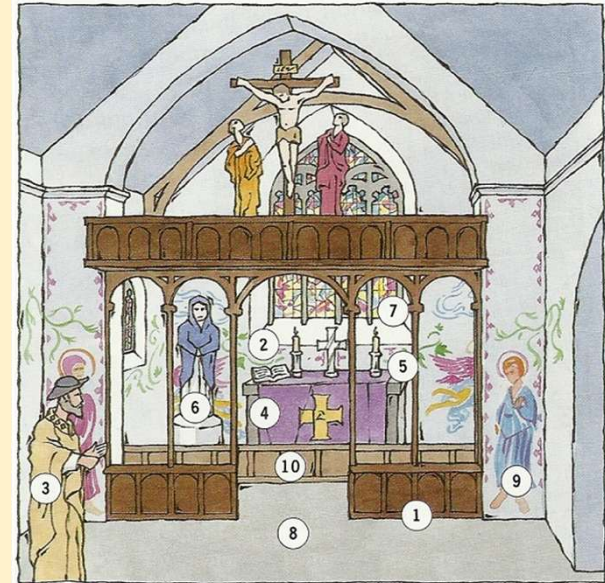
- By the 1570s, England and Spain had emerged as commercial (trade rivals)
- Both competed against each other for access to the markets and resources of the New World
- Spain had conquered Mexico and Peru in the early 1500s which gave them access to vast amounts of gold and silver. It also have them control over the sugar and tobacco trade
- English merchants, financed by private investors, including Elizabeth, raided Spanish colonies as well as their ships
- In one raid alone, Sir Francis Drake captured £40,000 in Spanish silver
- Elizabeth encouraged Dutch rebels, known as Sea Beggars, to attack Spanish ships sailing between Spain and the Netherlands.
- By knighting Francis Drake Elizabeth showed her hostility towards Spain



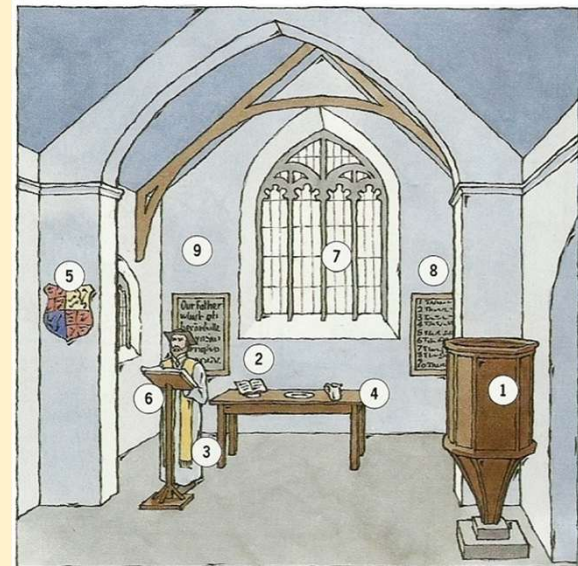
Religious Rivalry

- Under Mary Tudor Spain and England were allies as a Protestant country **under Elizabeth I, relations soured;**
 - Phillip II backed by the Pope saw Protestantism as a threat to the authority of the Catholic Church
 - Many English Protestants saw Spain and Catholicism as a threat
 - Phillip II of Spain was involved in several plots against Elizabeth

7 A typical English Church in 1533



A Typical English Church in 1570



The Netherlands

- **The Netherlands were ruled by Spain** but the English saw the Netherlands as a vital place for trade.
- By **1572** Protestant ideas had spread in the Netherlands and **Protestant Dutch rebels began a campaign for independence from Catholic Spain**, leading to the **Dutch Revolt**.
- King Philip of Spain sent an army to defeat the rebels. Following the death of the Dutch rebel leader, William of Orange, Elizabeth was approached to become Queen of the Dutch. **She declined but sent an army to fight with the Dutch against Spain.**
- Throughout the **1590s the Dutch won several victories against the Spanish** and by 1609, after Elizabeth's death, the Dutch Protestants won control of Holland.



The Raid on Cadiz/The singeing of the king's beard

- **Background:** In 1587, tensions were high between Protestant England and **Catholic Spain who was preparing the Spanish Armada to invade England.**
- **Sir Francis Drake:** A trusted sea captain and privateer for Elizabeth I, Drake was sent to **disrupt Spanish preparations** for the Armada.
- **Attack on Cadiz:** Drake led a surprise naval raid on the Spanish port of Cadiz, destroying around 30 ships and capturing or burning vital supplies (like wood for barrels).
- **"Singeing the King's Beard":** Drake joked that this daring attack was like **burning the Spanish king's beard**, a bold insult to show how close he'd come to Spain's heart of power.
- **Impact:** The raid **delayed the Armada by about a year**, giving England precious time to build up its own defenses.
- **Significance:** The raid was both a **military success and a propaganda win**, showing that England could strike first and weaken a much stronger enemy.



Phillip II plan

- Phillip ordered the Armada (130 ships with 2431 guns) to sail along the English Channel to the Netherlands
- From there the ships would join forces with Spanish troops under the Duke of Parma and transport 27,000 troops to Kent
- The Spanish army would the attack London and end Elizabeths reign and establish a Catholic government



Why did it fail?

- English ships were better armed and equipment
- The Spanish panicked at the Battle of Gravelines when the English sent in fire ships
- The weather
- English tactics
- Spanish ships lacked supplies
- Communication problems

