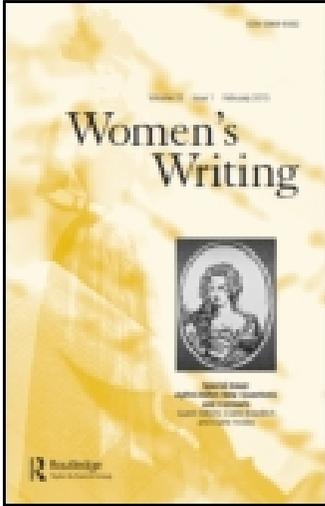


This article was downloaded by: [115.85.25.194]

On: 31 March 2015, At: 18:57

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Women's Writing

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rwow20>

“Memorialls for Mrs Affora” : Aphra Behn and the Restoration Intelligence World

Alan Marshall

Published online: 06 Dec 2014.



CrossMark

[Click for updates](#)

To cite this article: Alan Marshall (2015) “Memorialls for Mrs Affora”: Aphra Behn and the Restoration Intelligence World, *Women's Writing*, 22:1, 13-33, DOI: [10.1080/09699082.2014.941181](https://doi.org/10.1080/09699082.2014.941181)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09699082.2014.941181>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the “Content”) contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities

whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Alan Marshall

“MEMORIALLS FOR MRS AFFORA”: APHRA BEHN AND THE RESTORATION INTELLIGENCE WORLD

Focusing on the “Memorialls for Mrs Affora”, the instructional document issued by the Secretary of State’s office to Aphra Behn in advance of her spying mission to the Low Countries from July to December 1666, this article explores the culture and conventions of Restoration espionage, and Behn’s role within it. In doing so, it seeks to position Behn’s role and correspondence in relation to both the practices of her male and female contemporaries, and the textual aesthetics that characterized correspondence related to espionage—both overt and clandestine—in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Whereas Behn is often seen by literary scholars to occupy a curious position as a female spy for Charles II’s government, this article argues that knowledge of the networks and subtleties that sustained espionage activity during the Restoration complicates that view. Its observations about the textual strategies deployed by Behn and other spies in espionage materials also prompt further thinking about her use elsewhere of the letter form and character development.

The Second World War spymaster Maxwell Knight, writing in 1945, noted of women’s record as secret agents that

it is frequently alleged that women are less discreet than men; that they are ruled by their emotions, and not by their brains; that they rely on intuition rather than reason; and that sex will play an unsettling and dangerous role in their work.

Actually, said Knight, “My own experience has been very much to the contrary”.¹

Although women have, of course, been involved in espionage since the biblical Rahab, their role in this world has usually been condemned and marginalized, and, if recognized at all, frequently judged in sexual terms.² Yet, as Knight noted, beyond the popular myth of the female spy, there is another story.

This article focuses on the correspondence and documentation generated by Aphra Behn’s sojourn in the Low Countries in July to December 1666.³ It will

briefly explore this in the context of the other intelligence-gathering of the Secretary of State's office that was led by Joseph Williamson and Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington.⁴ In particular, it will analyse the "Memorialls for Mrs Affora", a key instructional document that reveals much of Behn's role and what the government wished her to do. Finally, it will seek to place Behn, the "shee-spy", in relation to other women of the era who were entangled in early-modern espionage.

Early-modern espionage

Aphra Behn's employment in this intelligence world from July to December 1666 was not without precedent, although far too often she has been seen in isolation.⁵ The espionage events she was involved in have also, understandably, tended to dominate the biography of her early years. Yet, once we place the intelligence context of the period around her, we find that neither as a woman in the espionage system nor as an agent of government was she original or unique (nor, it must be said, particularly successful). It is also clear that secret intelligence-gathering in the real world of the Restoration period, as opposed to the romanticized spy fiction we are all familiar with, was as much concerned with assembling often very fragmentary information from both overt and clandestine sources as it was defined by the activities of "secret agents". This missing dimension of the Behn story leads us from the biographical reading of the texts into the world of intelligence text, of which the Behn documents are a part.

The historiographical concentration on the "practice" of spying (the adventures of spies) has had a distorting effect on the literature of the subject. Much of the secret information gathered in this and other periods was, in fact, humdrum material. It was usually one step up from basic news-gathering, often speculative (or just plain wrong) and frequently surprisingly dull. By placing Behn in the context of the mundane and unromantic routine that was typical of a spy's life in the era, we discover something about her prose writing in this brief period. Her writing became caught up in the day-to-day (often pointed) analysis of text and form, in a delicate sifting and interpretation of the words of untrustworthy people, and in the note-taking, reporting and filing that produced the pieces of intelligence "gold" which could protect a threatened and frightened Restoration regime. It is this, ultimately, that is the real context of "Mrs Affora". In order to explore this world more fully, we must begin with the content of one of the more famous documents of Behn's espionage activities: the "Memorialls for Mrs Affora".

The “Memorialls”

The “Memorialls for Mrs Affora” is a copy of the instructions first given in around July 1666 to Aphra Behn.⁶ The document is two pages long, broken into 14 numbered sections, and carefully written out in note form. There are some alterations, which suggests that, having been written down, they were read through and amended. This document must be an office copy of the instructions given to Behn, for the original she presumably took with her and, as we shall see, they were not really intended for her alone.

In Restoration terms, a “memorial” meant a “note”, a “memorandum” or, in its technical sense, an informal state paper, giving to an agent an account of a matter under discussion. The word “memorial” was also a preservative one: it sought to preserve memory and, by implication, indicated that something was worth remembering. This document was produced as part of the flow, or memory creation, of an early-modern administration—an administration, in this instance, organized by the men in the office of the Secretary of State for the purpose of covert intelligence. A memorial was not, though, just a reminder of what had been said, but was also a warrant for action, as can be seen, for instance, in a surviving manuscript relating to Behn’s fellow spy, William Leving. The pass he was given to enable him to do his work includes the words: “This is to certify [... to] whome it shall concerne that the bearer hereof William Leving is employd by mee and consequently not to be molested or restrained upon any search or enquiry”.⁷

The “Memorialls for Mrs Affora” was almost certainly preceded or accompanied by an oral briefing. The document should therefore be understood not in isolation, but as connected to oral instructions indicating what Behn was to do. It also had a more thoroughgoing connection to an oral world beyond its textual form.⁸ That oral culture of espionage action has largely been lost to us; indeed, the “winks and blinks” of espionage culture in part ensured that much evidence has disappeared. Usually we have only the written outcomes, but we should not forget that this oral world existed. In interpreting the “Memorialls”, we therefore need to read between the document’s lines and see the signs of an oral debate—arguments conducted elsewhere between Arlington and Williamson and even perhaps the King, with their brokers Halsall and Killigrew, to whom Behn would later write.⁹

The fact that the “Memorialls” document survives at all of course makes it unusual, but not unique. Documents containing secret orders to the regime’s other agents can be used for comparative purposes, showing that Behn’s instructions were not atypical; the “Memorialls” indeed resonate with tropes and themes found elsewhere in intelligence texts. For instance, we have orders given to a domestic spy, who was “sent purposely [to be] inquisitive in inns and private houses, informing himself also of the opportunity to watch bridges, and to beat

the highway at night".¹⁰ Embedded here are some of the basic actions required of a spy—to be inquisitive, to watch, to work at night—indicating the needs of Restoration intelligence work and its style of governance. Others employed as spies were given more ample instructions. For instance, Johann Böeckel later noted that he was

sent from London att the Hag[ul]e to Sr George Downing concerning their correspondency in advising with one another how strong the Hollanders were in the ports of Men of Warr, pieces of Ordonnance and souldiers and when they would be ready and [...] att sea [...] and travalleing most every month to divers places [...] and] for entertaining some Spyes to [send] from one place to another where I could not come myselfe.¹¹

An undated paper from 1666 also provides insight into the activities of the other side, in its instructions to Dutch spies operating in England. They were to discover the building rates of warships and the movements of merchant men, and were ordered to arrange correspondents to provide further information—mostly by recruiting old republican officers hostile to the Stuart regime.¹²

Some of the techniques used by agents of the government are indicated in *A Brief Narrative of that Stupendious Tragedie*, an account from 1662 by the agent William Hill recalling his own activities under instruction. Hill reports of the meetings he infiltrated: at “our Conference there was all of Gods Glory; in Zeal we were up to the Eyes; and I began exactly to speak their Language”.¹³ Just as Behn was later advised to do, Hill adopted a role to gain information for his employers. In that same pamphlet, we also learn of Edward Riggs, who, according to one victim, was “continually at my shop, and would not let me alone, prompting and inducing me to these things”.¹⁴ Here, Riggs’s “prompting” was his key technique—asking loaded questions to provoke answers and draw in his targets. Immoral, certainly, but in the same pamphlet Sir Orlando Bridgeman noted on the use of spies:

where there are works of darkness, these are things men will not do by daylight but in darkness, and who can discover these works of darkness better than they that have to do with them, if God turn their hearts.¹⁵

The 14 numbered sections of the “Memorialls” are grouped into three underlying parts. The first and second sections specifically deal with William Scot, the real target of Aphra Behn and the “Memorialls”. Articles 3 to 11 deal with intelligence questions to him, and 12 to 14 with continuing his correspondence, his potential rewards and a requirement of secrecy. Key for

the secretariat in such instructions was that intelligence continued to come in, requiring that agents established a secret means of delivering information. Hence, the “Memorialls” notes Mrs Affora’s instruction: “12 to give direction for houlding frequent correspondence, by what names, or places hee [Scot] shall agree, with you. 13 to use all secrecy imaginable”.¹⁶ Secrecy was crucial, though there is evidence in the correspondence which followed that Behn did not fully grasp the significance at this point.¹⁷

Intelligence texts such as the “Memorialls” and, indeed, Behn’s correspondence to the secretariat have often been used to titillate through the very idea of the secret. This characterizes not only the Restoration use of them (they, too, liked the idea of secrecy), but also marks present-day responses to intelligence matters, with the result that secrecy is the prism through which the material is seen. Readers today want such documents to reveal the past’s underlying purposes by containing juicy secrets. This urge, for all its psychological appeal, inevitably distorts the texts, and distracts attention from their real tropes and themes, for such documents are actually replete with familiar rhetorical strategies. They sought to engage their reader; they display ideas of reliability or authority (possibly as a sleight of hand, since participants tended to be neither reliable nor truthful); they carried warnings; they threatened; and they even, occasionally, contained praise. Only embedded within such textual strategies are the real nuggets of fact. Maintaining good continuity and connectivity was essential in this espionage world, so these texts also tend to emphasize date and place in order to bring apparent certainty, and they naturally encouraged reading between the lines, sometimes literally in the case of secret inks. Lastly, these documents provide insight into the dynamics of the social relationships between author and reader, and, somewhat surprisingly given the mental and physical violence of the espionage world, in many senses they demonstrate the operation of a culture of politeness.¹⁸

Such intelligence texts’ social form—their make-up—is actually closely similar to that of the open correspondence of the era, in that they share the fact of being sociotexts; in Gary Schneider’s words, they are “collective social forms designed, understood, and expected to circulate within designated epistolary circles”.¹⁹ Whilst their “epistolary circles” were relatively limited, they aimed at the goals of other correspondence—at creating social connectivity and being part of a network of exchange. This focused on reciprocal news, or gossip, which could be open or covert and formed a pattern of exchange, with both a bargaining structure and a binding mechanism between its participants. The documents thereby formed a cycle of social and knowledge debt for all parties.

Spy and spymaster letters, therefore, should be understood in the context of the culture of client–patron relationships, which themselves of course were based on reciprocal needs. The spy, like many a low-ranking courtier, was thus a supplicant, eagerly seeking a master’s praise. This is the context for Behn’s

adoption of this pose in her correspondence when she seeks to gain money, place and status.²⁰ In general terms, the spy, by engaging in such correspondence at all, also seeks to borrow some of the glamour of their master's status. In effect, a spy could only report their intelligence if they were temporarily accepted on some level of parity by a patron. Meanwhile, a patron's willingness to indulge such people, and then to use their words in other more significant social and political situations, was equally status-driven. The information drawn by spymasters from their sources, often reprehensibly gathered (and espionage itself was morally unclean to many a gentleman), could only be socially cleansed by a temporary acceptance of the spy into a relationship; it could then enable the user to gain political advantage in the bear pit of court life. So this interchange of intelligence texts had a deeper purpose than mere covert knowledge: it was a social and cultural process. The information had to have its uses to both parties, and the idea of having secret knowledge produced potential advantage, giving both parties, in their respective spheres, the chance to be noticed.²¹

As a result, a dynamic of textual debt and credit is embedded within intelligence texts, building a relationship between sender and recipient, and requiring both sides to play their part in its continuance. In place of this convention, from the start, money looms large in Behn's correspondence, and we know that she faced financial problems almost from the beginning of her adventure.²² This topic is not in itself surprising, as the English system was notoriously a poor payer of its agents.²³ For instance, Edward Riggs, once more, whose secret employment Joseph Williamson oversaw and whose career began in the aftermath of the 1662 plot, was sent into Holland as a spy in 1663. His correspondence indicates that he went with only £35, and he thereafter constantly bemoaned his lot, for, as he said, "Holland was a dear place". The following year (1664), his wages were raised to £40, yet he still faced financial problems, noting that a three- or four-roomed house cost 150 guilders to rent (about £15); that his spying trips cost him at least 20 guilders; and that "I must have victualls, which is dearest of all and cloathes [...] £15 per annum cannot do it". Riggs claimed he needed at least £100 to survive, even if he raised some additional funds by practising "phisick".²⁴

Such references to financial difficulties could only be effective if judiciously combined with the expected evocation of the patron–client relationship, but here is the voice of "Affora" in her correspondence as a client, seeking praise, power and status for her actions:

I am very un happy that tis not yet in my power to do som thing more then hether to I have dun: but I know you would not impute it to neglect if you knew how imposible it is yet for me to send: Mr Nypho & Sr Anthony

who asit me wth their best counsaile can wittness for me how hard a matter, tis yet to acomplish any thing.²⁵

Her pleading with her intelligence patrons for client indulgence, promising to do something more if fully supported, is in fact the main theme of her letters. This compounded a bad beginning in her relationship with them, a relation that shows signs of a breakdown early in the cycle familiar to readers of such texts. Instead of engaging in the invoking of patron–client relations that was essential to this kind of document, the majority of Behn’s intelligence correspondence from Flanders strives to put herself at the centre of the discourse. In doing this, Behn produced a correspondence replete with detail and character studies worthy of the future playwright, but one that was far from the routine ends of intelligence-gathering. As the “Memorialls” show, she was sent not to make character studies, but to gain information from and about Scot. In this correspondence, we can see Behn developing as a writer: she presents us with a heroine who comes unstuck, undermined by wicked men and poor advisors. This, however, relates her language in the documents more to court and dramatic conventions than to true intelligence practice, and it does not utilize the expected dynamics of spying texts. It was not that Behn did not produce some intelligence, but that her language did not follow the patterns expected of a true agent; eventually her appeal to Arlington in November 1666 with yet more pleas for support merely resulted in his orders for her to come home.²⁶

In contrast to Behn, her target, William Scot, was well aware of the conventions of the dynamic they were engaged in. Partly veiled under Aphra Behn’s hand in a further letter, we hear his voice playing the submissive client:

Hee is not resolved now to become a Convert, beinge long since fully determined in poynt of both interest, & Conscience to serve his Ma:ty to the uttmost of his power as his Lawfull Sovereigne, whose [...] full & free Pardon he att present humbly & earnestly begs; And as for wt he shall be able to doe in his Ma:ties service, to wch he will most faithfully & industriously apply himselfe, He shall most willingly & freely leave it to his Ma:ties pleasure & goodnesse, when he shall have considered his slender capacity, & possible mean opportunities, & yet seen his future reall endeavours, fidelity, & diligence.²⁷

Here, Scot, unlike Behn, really was playing the role of an intelligence client. Of course, given what the “Memorialls” asked for, neither of these individuals provided very valuable information; other agents at the time did better. By way

of comparison, we can see in this extract from an intelligence text by an agent in the 1650s how it should have been done:

Just now I have well received yours, and had only time to look it over. As for what the royal party says, you will find truth in short time; but for the number, and where they ship, is not yet known. All the preparations of ships is at Ostend, which will be great and small about 24. But we expect both men and shipping from Holland; but the number of either not known to any but king and council; neither is there any appearance for Ch. Stewart, but his five poor regiments, which will not be 1200, but now have received all one month's pay; and as for Ch. Stewart's own regiment, they have received cloaths, shoes, stockings, and shirts. Ch. Stewart is now in Brussels. The duke of York and the duke of Gloucester are gone with their sister to Breda. The duke of York will suddenly return. Ormond is not yet returned. The leading men with Ch. Stewart are Bristol, Hyde, and Marcine, who is made knight of the garter. He is a great soldier, and a rich man: he has two regiments of his own, and is to be lieutenant-general to the duke of York. Gerrard is daily expected. We have nothing from Middleton. Langdale is great with Ch. Stewart. You had need to be watchful, for our business is kept close; and I find great confidence in the great ones, of success. Ch. Stewart has from several places prophecies, that say, that this is the time.²⁸

Marshall, the agent in question here, teases his reader, John Thurloe, with intelligence facts and a few details that demand further questioning, thus ensuring the continuance of the correspondence and the client–patron link. He uses cloudy descriptions of the doings of the exiled court, implying that all of this was in some way significant. This relatively low-grade information would have been readily available from other sources, so the text's acceptability to its reader is not solely due to its content. Its deployment of a charged intelligence rhetoric aims, above all, to continue the correspondence with his patron with as little cost as possible to the writer, and to hook his reader to ask for more information; he creates, as he writes, a sound relationship.

The “Memorials for Mrs Affora” is a key witness to the activity that was set down by the Secretary of State's office in 1666 for Aphra Behn. How far she achieved those ends is thus very pertinent. In fact, Behn's mission, begun in July, was dead in the water by August, for the real problem was not only that she failed in playing her role; it was that, although the document was headed “Memorials for Mrs Affora”, the instructions were not actually aimed at Behn at all, but at the exiled William Scot.

Wartime contexts

The immediate context of the “Memorialls” was the Anglo-Dutch war.²⁹ By 1666, the Dutch regime was using the exiled republican community in the Netherlands and Flanders as stalking horses for an invasion of southern England. In England, the war had made the regime very nervous of republicans, and common fears in 1663–67 included the combination of a domestic rising with a Dutch invasion. There were thus frequent calls for such exiles to return home and face punishment. The regime also sought to seize particular individuals; they searched known haunts of republicans in London and elsewhere for concealed weapons and ammunition, made repairs to forts and built up garrisons. The failures at sea, such as the Division of the Fleet, left the Stuart regime looking very weak in comparison to its republican predecessor’s foreign policy successes. In light of this disarray, Lord Arlington had even engaged in an abortive coup d’état against John de Witt, the Grand Pensionary of the Dutch republic. He had used Henri Fleury de Courlan, sieur de Buat, who accidentally (and rather stupidly) delivered a letter from Arlington to Buat into de Witt’s hands. In this document was related a design to promote the sovereignty of the young Prince of Orange and to weaken the authority of the republican government led by de Witt.³⁰ Buat was soon exposed and executed, whilst a major part of the English intelligence-gathering activities in the Netherlands crashed. In the contexts of plague in 1665 and a Dutch alliance with France in 1666, the restored Stuart regime was beginning to look decidedly shaky by the time that Behn was enlisted for the tasks which the “Memorialls” outlines.

William Scot

If, despite their title, Behn’s instructions are mostly aimed at William Scot, seeking to attract him with the mention of a reward and pardon, then a fuller understanding of who he was and of his relationship to English espionage concerns in the Low Countries is necessary to interpret the “Memorialls to Mrs Affora”.

William Scot’s replies, via Aphra Behn, swiftly revealed his slippery nature to the secretariat. He was decidedly vague in his responses about coming over to the English side (despite the pardon ostensibly on offer) and unconvincing when he referred to his feelings. Most significantly, the use of such phrases as “it is att present out of his head”, “according to the best information he can gain”, “as neare as he can remember” and “he cannot recall” suggested to readers back in England that he was a man adept at eliding the truth.³¹ This was guaranteed to impress neither Williamson nor Arlington. In sum, to a

practised reader of this sort of text, Scot, seeking delay through his evasive language, implicitly answered the question of where his real allegiance lay, and this led to Behn's abandonment by the Secretary of State's office.

If it is the case that Behn did not share her patrons' swift assessment of Scot's usefulness to them, she nonetheless drew attention to an aspect of his behaviour that is very interesting to present-day researchers of early-modern espionage. Behn shrewdly noted that he slipped into third-person formulations at times in his responses: he "spoke som times of himself as another person, & som times as him self".³² Distancing oneself from such immoral activities seems to have been common amongst the "fragmented personalities" drawn into such a world.³³ Added to this was an early-modern predilection for "performance and rhetoric" and disguise, a predilection that was a valuable asset for any spy. Yet Scot's actions revealed him as ultimately too chaotic and selfish to be of use, and his resort to the third person demonstrates a desire to distance himself from the texts he was helping to create: he was and was not acting in a mode of betrayal; he was frank but secretive, confident yet disconsolate. He craved acknowledgement and respect, but continued to justify his world view and his current double role.

William Scot was the son of Thomas Scot, the regicide who, ironically, had run the English Republic's intelligence system from 1649–53.³⁴ The Restoration regime had, somewhat brutally, interrogated Thomas Scot before his execution in 1660 in order to extract his secrets. In itself, this would have been a sufficiently interesting background for the regime to try to recruit his son William, even though he was, unlike his father, of no particular prominence. He could also have been seen as a valuable intelligence asset due to his connections with the troublesome exiled community in the Netherlands post-1660 and, in particular, with Joseph Bampffield, a figure well known to both Arlington and Williamson through his intelligence background. As a former Royalist, Bampffield had served John Thurloe in the 1650s as a double agent, been imprisoned in 1660 in the Tower of London, and having been expelled from England, after 1661 had worked hard to redeem himself in the regime's eyes.³⁵ He moved to Middleburg in Zeeland (1661–65), a strategic area in the Netherlands, where he tried to renew his work as an intelligencer for the Secretary of State's office in the hope of returning home. While he did spy on the exiles and sent back valuable information on politics and military and naval affairs, Bampffield was also ever ready to write meaningless waffle, and was keen to ingratiate himself with and demand money (usually unsuccessfully) from his masters.³⁶ He was finally cut off by the Secretary of State's office in 1664–65, and almost immediately turned to serving the Dutch. A visit to The Hague with some Zeeland patrons then led him to John de Witt, the Grand Pensionary and leader of the Dutch Republic—to whom he was described as a

“person who can be useful”.³⁷ De Witt, despite many warnings, proceeded to employ Bampffield to identify spies amongst the English communities in the Netherlands, reveal English networks of agents, and give advice on politics and the opposition Orangist party in the Netherlands. Bampffield even subcontracted spies to go into England to learn more there.³⁸

At first, Bampffield trusted Scot, believing that he had come into exile as his goods had been confiscated and that he was in genuine fear for his life. The diplomat George Downing, on the other hand, did not trust Scot at all, but cynically believed he could use him:

I have wrought into Scott his [Thomas Scot's] son by a second hand, for he knows not yet I know anything, and he promises exceeding fayre, as he is a notable man. I shall see what I can work out [...]. I do already throwe away some money to try what this Scott can doe, ye difficulty is once to gett into the right trade.³⁹

Scot was also being targeted by another man, Thomas Corney, an English merchant in Amsterdam who, at the outbreak of war, had turned intelligencer.⁴⁰ Alongside Nicolas Oudart, Corney became involved in Arlington's plans for a coup against the Dutch government to replace it with an Orange one, and was eventually arrested on 22 July 1665 and taken for examination at The Hague with Oudart.⁴¹ It was Scot who had betrayed both men. Corney was banished from the country with the loss of all his goods and money, and fled into Flanders. There, he continued to provide intelligence for the Stuart regime and sought revenge on Scot.

Scot's part in the revealing of this attempted coup and in the disintegration of a useful intelligence network might have been enough to warn the Restoration regime off him. Yet he had, in this wilderness of loyalties, already contacted them, was seemingly looking for a way out of exile, and did not seem reluctant to betray his exiled friends to achieve this. In April 1666, he was specifically mentioned in Charles II's *Proclamation Requiring Some of his Majesties Subjects in Parts beyond the Seas, to Return into England* and linked to his father. This proclamation required exiles to return home or face a charge of high treason.⁴² While, clearly, Scot was seen as dangerous, the regime was still making a conscious effort to get hold of him and also, through him, to target Bampffield and other exiles assisting the Dutch. This was the mess into which Aphra Behn, the “shee-spy”, armed with the “Memorialls”, was sent with “her brother one Mr Cherry and her Mayd, her brother [... being] one of the Duke of Albermarle's guard”.⁴³ Success was never particularly likely.

Women and espionage

There have always been people who find the idea of spying upon their fellows very appealing, and there have always been volunteers for the task. Their motivations might have been very mixed, perhaps including incipient patriotism, a religious conviction, or simple greed. It is clear from the literature, though, that for some what was at issue was the thrilling prospect of the possession of secret knowledge and power not available to most people, pandering to a form of vanity and a sense of self-importance, or simply offering the hope of adventure. Espionage brought excitement to mundane lives and, of course, it was one way in which an otherwise insignificant individual might find a patron and make an impact on the world.

While espionage was predominantly a masculine world, there were women other than Aphra Behn who also entered it as a trade and, in a life of potential danger and violence (both physical and mental), there can have been few attractions to most early-modern women. Within the espionage world, too, they were significantly circumscribed by their gender identity, for the boundaries of moral propriety and economic opportunity were still clear, and women's status and roles in this covert community were conventionally lesser than those of men. Yet there are some other seventeenth-century examples who can serve as comparisons to the experiences of "Mrs Affora".

One unfortunate female spy from 1642, for instance, gives a clear example of the dangers of the trade and how transgressive women were thought to be if they engaged in it.⁴⁴ This nameless victim was caught by members of Essex's army and, at her first refusal to admit to her espionage role, her captors resorted to practices commonly associated with the treatment of witches: they tied a rope round her waist and plunged her in a river to force a confession. Taken half-drowned from the water, "she then confest she had been two moneths in the Kings Army, and had the constant pay of Fourteene shillings a weeke, to be a Spie and bring them [the Royalists] newes [...] what every day shee heard".⁴⁵

Her Royalist activities had included ranging into the City of London to "heare how and which way the People stood affected".⁴⁶ Unlike a man in a similar position, however, once she had confessed she was shown very rough justice. The newsbook blandly records that "this being confessed, they kil'd her presently, and threw her Body backe into the River".⁴⁷ Other female spies operated out of London in the period, including a woman who worked there as "a spie or she-Intelligencer" for the Royalist camp at Oxford, whom one writer damned as "capable of doing as much mischief in that kind as any man whatsoever".⁴⁸

The sexual mores of the time might have prevented indecent searches of women of a certain class, with the result that, sometimes, women could cross

enemy lines with rather more ease than men. One of the “feminine Malignants and traitors” in Plymouth in 1644, however, was caught passing messages to the besiegers about the “store of Powder [there] was in the town”.⁴⁹ Through her links outside the walls, she advised the besieging army where to strike, seeking only protection as her reward—like the biblical Rahab—should the army eventually break in. The fate of this “Virago”, as the pamphleteer calls her, is not given, but it is unlikely to have been pleasant.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Anne Penyall, the wife of Matthew Penyall the younger, who had been a musician and “Singing-man of Windsor castle”, showed her loyalties by working with “Mistris Guy, a Proctors wife” at Oxford to set up an intelligence network; they armed themselves with passes to cross the battle lines “every way” said the newsletter *Mercurius Civicus*.⁵¹ The account of this “shee-informer” being more useful than a man because her sex protected her from being searched indicates resentment at that advantage. Indeed, we also learn the year before of “two young Cavaliers” who cross-dressed for this very purpose. They were caught on London’s streets in 1643 dressed in the “habit of the Female sex”, one “in a red Peticoate and Wastcoat and the other in a black Gowne”. These “comelie Lasses” were “committed to prison till further examination”.⁵²

During the 1650s, there were a number of Irishwomen, also, who were caught when engaged in message-carrying, and then tried and executed in Dublin: Anne Knowden, a “tory spie”, and Joan Doyle were hanged in Dublin Corn Market by the English authorities.⁵³ Then, in 1655–56, Mary Sexby was used by her husband Edward Sexby, the Leveller, as a secret courier: she crossed the Channel “quilted all over the bodice of her gown with [...] pistols [coins], one upon another near 1000”, to provide money to the opponents of the Cromwellian regime.⁵⁴ Some years earlier, Catherine Howard, the Royalist widow of Lord d’Aubigny, had involved herself in plots to seize London for the King, landing in the Tower for her pains; later, remarried, she was described as a “woman of very great wit, and most trusted and conversant in those intrigues”.⁵⁵

Diana Gennings, the wife of Sir William Gennings of Essex, had a story that might have been a suitable case for Aphra Behn’s drama had she been aware of it.⁵⁶ William had been 19 when he and Diana met, and was considered by his acquaintances and family as too young and naive to marry. Perhaps they saw Diana as a low-born adventuress, which, as it turned out, she was. Faced with this opposition, the couple eloped to France and made their way to Antwerp, where they lived for a year and a half. Diana claimed to have been born in Flanders of a Hampshire soldier in Spanish service, and also that she was by birth a Stuart. Having married in haste, the couple soon seem to have fallen out, and Diana abandoned her husband to take up with Colonel Robert Phillips in 1655, either as his mistress or possibly because he saw her as a deserving cause. Diana was certainly adept at covering her tracks, now blithely informing

Phillips's circle that she was the widow of Sir Thomas Stanley (she took to using Stanley as her second name). Phillips, a relative of the Earl of Ormond and associated with the household of the Duke of Gloucester, was Edward Hyde's "main intelligencer".⁵⁷ His wife was living in England and Flanders at the time, and she also played her part in his schemes, despite the recent death of their only son.⁵⁸ Diana, meanwhile, seems to have seen her new patron as another opportunity, as she watched, listened and infiltrated the Royalist plans not through any explicit political motive, but seemingly with an eye for the main chance.

One evening in Brussels, she was in company in a tavern, "the Emperatrice". Lord Wilmot (the Earl of Rochester), Phillips and his wife, Colonel Taffe, Lord Dillon and Major General Massey were soon joined by "one, who named himself Colonel Brookes, who hath been in this service, and was disbanded in Scotland".⁵⁹ They discussed what should be done about the Lord Protector, and decided that Major Gemmat (who was in Liège), two of Brookes's men and one of Phillips's were to be sent to England to contact Hall, a tailor living in Lincoln's Inn Fields who had been a prisoner in the Gatehouse. Hall would connect them to a man who knew when Cromwell went to Hampton Court and the route he took, and, using this knowledge, they could ambush and kill the Protector. Letters were to be sent to Sir Francis Vincent of Stoke in Surrey and William Muschamp, who would provide 50 men to cover any retreat from the assassination. Phillips guaranteed Vincent's cooperation, remembering that he had been loyal in another business, and that Mrs Phillips had sent the "tickets" (commissions) to those who were to act in the last rising. Letters were also to be sent into Bedfordshire to a Mr Conquest to cause disturbances in the counties, while they would also use Mrs Campbell of Woodford in Essex, who, Diana claimed, wanted revenge on Cromwell for her father's sake and was "man enough to engage in the business herself, and her husband was too much [the] fool".⁶⁰

This plot being laid, Diana volunteered to go into England as courier and act as a recipient of correspondence from the plotters. She also made her own plans: after an argument with her French maid, who refused to go with her, she went alone to Dunkirk, claiming that she was going to see friends in England. She then crossed to Queenborough in a small boat with Colonel Talbot, Captain Duggan, an Irishman, and Mr Skinner as her fellow passengers. Diana swiftly went on to London, lodging in Wind-Mill Court in Butcher Row at the back of Lincoln's Inn Fields. From here, of course, she contacted the Cromwellian government to reveal all she knew. Frustratingly, she then disappears from the record. All we have is this fragment of a daring woman's espionage escapade.

The fate of Aphra Behn

So why was Aphra Behn chosen to enter the world of espionage? Her personal links with Scot, once known, would have been thought useful. She was also available. She had wit, intelligence and languages. She even came recommended by Thomas Killigrew and had apparently met the King. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, she was a woman in whom Scot was interested. Clearly, as Behn noted, she “neither petitiond ffor nor desird the place”, but ultimately the spymasters would use whomever they needed to. In this world, she was a convenient dupe for wider purposes.⁶¹

Why, having got her out there and gone to all the trouble of obtaining her services, did the regime apparently ignore her many letters? The answer to this is that they did not, or at least that they ignored her letters no more than they did those of other agents of the era. Her letters ended up in the Secretary of State’s office and they were undoubtedly examined. But Scot had already answered the questions in the “Memorialls” fairly early on, largely in negative terms, and everything else turned out to be mere straw intelligence in the wind. Additionally, it was a common practice to keep agents hanging on in suspense for any acknowledgement.⁶²

Lastly, although severely criticized by Behn and not a few others, Thomas Corney can still give us some hints as to where it all went wrong for her. First, he discovered the main reason for her coming over was to “speake with him [Scot] and as they tell mee with the knowledge of my Lord Arlington”. Second, Corney noted Behn had Arlington’s pass: “I saw it”. Given his history of conflict with Scot, Corney was naturally derogatory about him, noting he was of little use for “discover[ing] the designes of the fannatique party”. Scot, he reports, was heavily “in debt” and, since “hee cannot speake 3 words of Dutch”, would not be in a position to report much if “hee would goe into any Coffee Houses, or Tavarene to hear any newse, that being all the ways hee hath left to doe anything, for De Witt will as soone entrust the Divell as him”.⁶³

It was a combination of this information from Corney and Scot’s own slipperiness in replies that led the regime to abandon the operation and leave Aphra Behn lodged at the Rose Noble in Antwerp—a “place where all the Hollanders come every day; and believe knoweth her business as well as her selfe”—and, it must be said, understandably floundering.⁶⁴ To Behn’s moral credit, perhaps, one feels that Diana Gennings might have been rather more adept at working her way out of this appalling situation than was “Mrs Affora”.

As to any neglect itself, we can return to Thomas Corney, a man whom Behn, taking her lead from Scot, grew to hate. He was not a loveable character, but he had served the Stuart cause since 1642, when the Queen Mother had asked him to obtain arms and ammunition for the royal army, to the loss of his trade; service in the royal army had followed and, in 1665, he

was in the Netherlands playing the part of a spy when Scot betrayed him. Caught when the Buat affair broke out, his cover as a merchant was over, his business was ruined and, after six months' harsh treatment in prison, he was forced out of the Netherlands. It is little wonder that he was bitter when Behn turned up on her mission to gather information from and about Scot. Yet, when we pick up his story again in 1669, having run great hazards for the Stuart regime as a spy, what do we find? We find Corney, like many others—Behn included—desperately writing to a seemingly indifferent Joseph Williamson as follows:

For God's sake see what may bee done in my business for I am reduced to that low Ebb, that I am ashamed to stir aboard, having had all my clothes stolen out of my lodging, And you I hope a friend that will advance anything for the gitting of this place for lively hood for mee, and be asured that it is in the Commiss[oners'] of the Ordinance dispose and may with one word from my Lord [Arlington] be had, but however things happen I shall ever acknowledge the favours received from you and the place shall be yors and I shall desire no more but to be stiled
Sir your obedient servant.⁶⁵

This neglect was a poor reward for all of his services. And, in the end, this is also one of the major points about Aphra Behn in this espionage world: to us, she was and will become Aphra Behn the playwright; to them, she was merely “Mrs Affora” of the “Memorials”, to be used and discarded like many another secret agent of the day.

Notes

- 1 The National Archives (hereafter, TNA), Kew, KV 4/227 19. For intelligence matters in general, see Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence from Security to Policy*, 5th ed. (London: Sage, 2012) 141.
- 2 For Rahab's story, see Joshua 2.1–24. There is no detailed study of early-modern women in espionage, but for later eras, see Julie Wheelwright, *The Fatal Lover: Marta Hari and the Myth of Women in Espionage* (London: Collins and Brown, 1992) 1–7; and Tammy M. Proctor, *Female Intelligence: Women and Espionage in the First World War* (New York: New York UP, 2003). For female roles in the early-modern period, see Ann Hughes, *Gender and the English Revolution* (London: Routledge, 2012); Barbara J. Shapiro, *Political Communication and Political Culture in England, 1558–1688* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2012) 27, 35–38, 40–41, 53; and Kate Loveman, *Reading Fictions, 1660–1740: Deception in English Literary and Political Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) 20, 23, 27, 37, 45, 86.

- 3 The documents in the State Papers on this affair are published in W.J. Cameron, *New Light on Aphra Behn* (Auckland: U of Auckland, 1961) 34–86. His transcripts are accurate, but the original manuscripts have been preferred here. On Aphra Behn’s career, see Janet Todd, “Behn, Aphra (1640?–1689),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> (hereafter, *ODNB*); *An Elegy upon the Death of Mrs A. Behn, the Incomparable Astrea* (London, 1689); *The Histories and Novels of the Late Ingenious Mrs Behn in One Volume* (London: [Samuel] Briscoe, 1696); Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (London: Deutsch, 1996); Janet Todd, ed., *The Works of Aphra Behn*, 7 vols. (London: Pickering, 1992–96); Janet Todd and F. McKee, “The ‘Shee Spy’: Unpublished Letters on Aphra Behn, Secret Agent,” *Times Literary Supplement* 10 Sept. 1993: 4–5; Angeline Goreau, *Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn* (New York: Dial, 1980); Harrison Gray Platt, “Astrea and Celadon: An Untouched Portrait of Aphra Behn,” *PMLA* 49.2 (1934): 544–59; and Jane Jones, “New Light on the Background and the Early Life of Aphra Behn,” *Notes and Queries* 37.3 (1990): 288–93.
- 4 For more on these two, see Alan Marshall, “Williamson, Sir Joseph (1633–1701)” and “Bennet, Henry, First Earl of Arlington (*bap.* 1618, *d.* 1685),” *ODNB*; Alan Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the Reign of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); and Alan Marshall, “Sir Joseph Williamson and the Conduct of Administration in Restoration England,” *Historical Research* 69.168 (1996): 18–41.
- 5 For early-modern spies, see Daniel Szechi, ed., *The Dangerous Trade: Spies, Spymasters and the Making of Europe* (Dundee: Dundee UP, 2010); Lucien Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Fayard, 1990); Paolo Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia: spionaggio e controspionaggio ai tempi della Serenissima* (Milan: Saggiatore, 2004); Jonathan Walker, *Pistols! Treason! Murder!: The Rise and Fall of a Master Spy* (Carlton: Melbourne UP, 2007); Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Re-thinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007) 74–86; Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage*; Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); and James M. Olson, *Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying* (Washington, DC: Potomac, 2006) 15–37.
- 6 TNA, S[tate] P[apers] 29/172, fol. 149r–v; they are labelled as “Memorialls” on the first page. The hand is that of Joseph Williamson, and reappears in SP 29/173, fol. 4r–v. Cameron hinted that Williamson had a part in the mission; his role was (typically for him) obscure.
- 7 TNA, SP 29/103, fol. 13; see also SP 29/173, fol. 205; SP 29/97, fols. 137, 138; SP 29/99, fol. 109; SP 29/113, fol. 83.
- 8 Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic, 1973) 3–30.

- 9 See, for example, TNA, SP 29/181, fol. 76; and James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1990) 4.
- 10 TNA, SP 29/181, fol. 84.
- 11 TNA, SP 29/232, fols. 169–70.
- 12 TNA, SP 29/187, fol. 57.
- 13 William Hill, *A Brief Narrative of that Stupendious Tragedie* (London, 1662) sig. A2v.
- 14 Hill 27.
- 15 Hill 47.
- 16 TNA, SP 29/172, fol. 149v; see also TNA, SP 18/220, fol. 14. See, for comparison, Philip H.J. Davies, *MI6 and the Machinery of Spying* (London: Cass, 2004) xi, 2, 13, 318; Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1998) 31–32, 37, 41, 43, 52, 58, 73, 74, 75; Jacob Soll, *The Information Master: Jean-Baptiste Colbert's Secret State Intelligence System* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2011); J.S. Soll, "From Note-Taking to Data Banks: Personal and Institutional Information Management in Early Modern Europe," *Intellectual History Review* 20.3 (2010): 355–75; and Brendan Maurice Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron, eds., *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001).
- 17 TNA, SP 77/35, fol. 92.
- 18 Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500–1700* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005) 116.
- 19 Schneider 22. See also J. Walker, "I Spy with My Little Eye: Interpreting Seventeenth-Century Venetian Spy Reports," *Urban History* 29.2 (2002): 197–222; and Ann Blair, "Reading Strategies for Coping with Information Overload, ca. 1500–1700," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64.1 (2003): 11–28.
- 20 TNA, SP 29/167, fols. 209–10v; SP 29/169, fols. 47–48, 155–56, 157–58. Equally she was unaware of some of the conventions. See TNA, SP 29/177, fols. 51–52v: "see now, my Lord w[ha]t encouragement this is for y[ou]r servants". While this may be ironic, it is unlike the studied deference Arlington would have expected from a spy. See also Janet Todd, "Fatal Fluency: Behn's Fiction and the Restoration Letter," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 12.2–3 (2000): 417–34.
- 21 Schneider 47; James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512–1635* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012).
- 22 TNA, SP 29/93, fols. 119–20v. See summaries of some of these exchanges in Todd, *Secret Life* 91–109, and transcripts in Cameron, *New Light*.
- 23 TNA, SP 29/366, fol. 11. To be fair, the Cromwellian spymaster John Thurloe had earlier lamented that "The great want is money [...] which puts a wall in all our business". Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, 7 vols. (London, 1742) 7: 4.

- 24 In his other correspondence, Riggs, with no sense of foreshadowing or irony, used the alias Edward Beane and wrote his messages to Edmund Beane, ostensibly the alias of Arlington. TNA, SP 29/90, fol. 61. He was also in touch with James Halsall, much like Aphra. TNA, SP 29/79, fol. 27; SP 29/65, fol. 71; J.T. Peacey, "Halsall, Edward (c. 1627–1686)," *ODNB*. For more on Riggs see Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage* 150–55.
- 25 TNA, SP 29/169, fols. 47–48.
- 26 TNA, SP 29/173, fol. 4; SP 29/182, fols. 168–69.
- 27 TNA, SP 29/172, fol. 107.
- 28 Birch 6: 88.
- 29 C.E. Levillain, *Vaincre Louis XIV: Angleterre, Hollande, France: histoire d'une relation triangulaire 1665–1688* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2010); Keith Feiling, *British Foreign Policy, 1660–1672* (London: Cass, 1968); Steven C.A. Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy 1650–1668* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); J.R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Longman, 1996).
- 30 Pieter Geyl, *Orange and Stuart, 1641–1672* (London: Phoenix, 2001) 203–16, 218–37; Violet Barbour, *Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, Secretary of State to Charles II* (Washington, DC: American Hist. Assn., 1914); Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625–1672* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1978) 613–22; R.R. Goodison, ed., "Further Correspondence Relating to the Buat Affair," *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 57 (1936): 1–61.
- 31 TNA, SP 29/172, fols. 107–09.
- 32 TNA, SP 29/172, fols. 107–09.
- 33 See, for example, Alan Marshall, "Woeful Knight: Sir Robert Walsh and the Fragmented World of the Double Agent," *Szechi* 66–92.
- 34 Alan Marshall, "Thomas Scot and the Rump Parliament's Intelligence Service," forthcoming; John Lilburne, *As You Were* ([Amsterdam?], 1652) 30; Rawlinson A ms. 45, fol. 189r–v, Bodleian Lib., Oxford; Clarendon ms. 63, fols. 105–06, Bodleian Lib.; C.H. Firth, "Thomas Scott's Account of his Actions as Intelligencer during the Commonwealth," *English Historical Review* 12 (1897): 116–26; James Sykes, "Thomas Scot, the Regicide," *Notes and Queries* 6th ser. 7 (7 Apr. 1883): 264–65; *A Proclamation Requiring Some of his Majesties Subjects in Parts beyond the Seas, to Return into England* (London, 1666); C.H. Firth, "Scott, Thomas (d. 1660)," rev. Sean Kelsey, *ODNB*; Lady Russell, "Thomas Scot, the Regicide," *Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archaeological Journal* 1 (1895–96): 46–49, 84–88.
- 35 Alan Marshall, "Bampffield, Joseph (1622–1685)," *ODNB*; Clarendon ms. 62, fols. 77–78v, Bodleian Lib.; John Loftis and Paul H. Hardacre, *Colonel Joseph Bampffield's Apology* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1993); Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage* 169–74.
- 36 His texts would certainly repay analysis, which they have not yet received.

- 37 Robert Fruin and Nicolaas Japikse, eds., *Brieven aan Johan de Witt*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Muller, 1919–22) 2: 189–205, 269–71, 298; Herbert H. Rowen, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625–1672* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1978) 160–61.
- 38 Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage* 169–74.
- 39 T.H. Lister, *The Life and Administration of Edward, First Earl of Clarendon; with Original Correspondence*, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Orme, Brown and Green, 1837) 3: 388.
- 40 TNA, SP 77/35, fol. 77b; SP 29/229, fol. 164. For Corney's history as told by himself, see TNA, SP 29/236, fol. 157; SP 29/229, fol. 164; and Thomas Bebington, *The Right Honourable Earl of Arlington's Letters*, 2 vols. (London, 1701) 1: 65–67, 100–01.
- 41 TNA, SP 29/236, fol. 157; SP 29/229, fol. 164; SP 77/35, fols. 135–74v, 181, 189, 193; SP 77/34, fols. 78, 113–14; SP 77/36, fol. 41; SP 84/180, fols. 62, 64; SP 84/18, fol. 129; Geyl 203–16, 218–37; A.B. Hinds, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and Other Libraries in Northern Italy: 1664–1666*, vol. 34 (London: HMSO, 1933) 63, 67, 74, 92.
- 42 *A Proclamation Requiring Some of his Majesties Subjects*; TNA, SP 77/35, fols. 77b, 91–92, 189.
- 43 TNA, SP 77/35, fols. 77b, 185v.
- 44 *A True Discovery of a Womans Wickednesse, in Endeavouring to Betray the City of London to the Cavaliers* (London: J. Rich, 1642) 4–5.
- 45 *True Discovery* 4.
- 46 *True Discovery* 5.
- 47 *True Discovery* 5.
- 48 *Mercurius Civicus, Londons Intelligencer* 26 June–3 July 1645: 980. See also *Newes from the New Exchange, or the Commonwealth of Ladies* (London, 1650); and for the countess of Derby see M.A.E. Green, ed., *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for the Advancement of Money: 1642–56*, 3 vols. (London: HMSO, 1888) 3: 1295–98.
- 49 *A Continuation of the True Narration of the Most Observable Passages in and about Plymouth [...] with the Discovery of a Shee Traytor* (London: I.D. for Francis Eglesfield, 1644) 8–9. See also “An Order of the House of Commons Assembled in Parliament to Prevent Spies and Intelligencers,” *Historical Collections*, ed. John Rushworth, 8 vols. (London, 1721) 5: 309–41.
- 50 *Continuation of the True Narration* 9.
- 51 *Mercurius Civicus, Londons Intelligencer* 21–28 Nov. 1644: 729; see also TNA, Court of Chancery, six clerks office, C5/17/174; M.A.E. Green, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1664–65* (1863), 137–58; Joseph L. Chester, *The Marriage, Baptismal and Burial Registers of the Collegiate Church or Abbey of St Peter, Westminster* (London, 1876) 6, 165–66; R.O. Bucholz, “The Chapel Royal: Gentlemen,” *Officer Holders in Modern Britain. Volume 11: Court Officers 1660–1837* (London, 2006) 279–87.

- 52 *Mercurius Civicus, Londons Intelligencer* 25 May–1 June 1643: 26; Maureen Bell, “Alkin, Elizabeth (c.1600–1655?),” *ODNB*. See also the account of “one lone (a clamorous woman) whose husband was hang’d at *Oxford* for a spie” in *A Perfect Diurnall of Some Passages in Parliament* 2–9 July 1649: 2635; Marcus Nevitt, “Women in the Business of Revolutionary News: Elizabeth Alkin, ‘Parliament Joan’, and the Commonwealth Newsbook,” *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Joad Raymond (London: Cass, 1999) 85–108; and *Mercurius Civicus, Londons Intelligencer* 26 June–3 July 1645: 980.
- 53 Heather MacLean, Ian Gentles, and Michéal Ó Siochrú, “Minutes of Court Martial Held in Dublin in the Years 1651–53,” *Archivium Hibernicum* 64 (2011): 56–164 (69, 71).
- 54 Birch 6: 833. Mary survived and was eventually placed in a house in Ghent by her husband, where, in October 1656, “she was delivered of a sonne”. Clarendon ms. 52, fol. 318, Bodleian Lib.
- 55 Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, 6 vols. (London, 1888) 5: 19–20. See also *England’s Monuments of Mercies in her Miraculous Preservations from Manifold Plots, Conspiracies, Contrivances and Attempts* (London, 1646), where her position is prominent enough to be displayed in a central portrait, and Ann Hughes, “Stuart, Katherine, Lady Aubigny [other married name Katherine Livingston, Viscountess Newburgh] (d. 1650),” *ODNB*.
- 56 Birch 1: 748–49.
- 57 William Dunn Macray, ed., *Calendar of the Clarendon State Papers: Volume 3, 1655–57* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932) 14.
- 58 Macray 14, 117, 119, 198.
- 59 Birch 1: 748. Brookes was really the Leveller Edward Sexby.
- 60 Birch 1: 748.
- 61 TNA, SP 28/82, fols. 168–69. See also TNA, SP 29/172, fols. 15–15A, where she writes of how she is “great a Child so ever I am”.
- 62 TNA, SP 29/172, fol. 107.
- 63 TNA, SP 77/135, fol. 77b; SP 29/69, fols. 157–58v.
- 64 TNA, SP 77/35, fols. 92, 185v.
- 65 TNA, SP 29/255, fol. 39; see also TNA, SP 29/128, fol. 26; SP 29/229, fol. 164; SP 29/255, fol. 192.

Alan Marshall is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and head of Humanities at Bath Spa University, UK. He has published widely in the areas of seventeenth-century governmental and espionage history, and is currently working on a monograph, *Killing Cromwell: The Death of the Leveller Party, 1649–1658*. Address: School of Humanities and Cultural Industries, Bath Spa University, Newton Park, Bath, BA2 9BN, UK. [email: a.marshall@bathspa.ac.uk]