Paul Wake. 2008. "Writing from the archive: Henry Garnet's powder-plot letters and archival communication" ***Archival Science*****, 8:2: 69-84.**

Writing on psychoanalysis in *The Postcard* Jacques Derrida asks,

> what happens in the psychoanalytic deciphering of a text when the latter, the deciphered itself, already explicates itself? When it says more about itself than does the deciphering (a debt acknowledged by Freud more than once)? And especially when the deciphered text inscribes in itself *additionally* the scene of the deciphering? When the deciphered text deploys more force in placing onstage and setting adrift the analytic process itself… (Derrida 1987, p. 414)

Directed here to the archive, the questions posed by the self-explicating text become questions of the ways in which the processes of archivization manifest themselves within records, "placing onstage" the mechanisms and functions of the archives in which they exist. In addressing these questions, which turn on archival "saying," explication and deciphering, both archive and record will be figured in terms of communication, situating the record not in isolation but rather in the changing contexts of its activations. In approaching the archive in terms of the interactions between recorders, records, archivists and analyst-historians my understanding of the "communicative" record is easily summarised in terms of John Searle's distinction between the "token" and the "message":

> The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act. To take the token as a message is to take it as a produced or issued token. (Searle 1969, p. 16)

The record, liberated from its status as "token" through its activation as "message," is approached here in terms of the conditions that govern its production by and issuance within the archive along with the processes of communication to which it is subject and on which it insists. The model of archival communication thus developed diverges from Searle's discussion of speech acts in its rejection of linear models of communication (issuer-message-recipient) in favour of reading communication as a "field of equivocality" (Derrida 1982, p. 310) in which "producers" and "issuers" of messages might well be constructed by and from the records themselves and according to which dialogism is stressed over the linear transmission of originary intended meaning.

The analysis of this dialogic and multidirectional archival communication proceeds by way of a reading of the letters of Henry Garnet (1555–1606), Superior of the Jesuit order in England and suspected Gunpowder plotter. While the nature of Garnet's letters and the historical specificity of their archivization are interesting in their own right, they are invoked here in order to affect a movement from their singularity towards a more widely applicable model of archival communication. Archived in the National Archives, Kew, these letters, written during Garnet's imprisonment in the Tower of London, testify all too clearly to the vagaries of written communication and the constantly shifting relation that pertains between writers, texts and readers.[1] Misdelivered, misappropriated, decoded and recoded, these letters bear both the signatures of their authors *and* the inscription of the archives in which they are contained. Approached from a narratological perspective, Garnet's letters afford the possibility of constructing a model of archival communication that stresses the movement inherent in a record-as-message that is characterised by multiplicity, multidirectionality, mediation, displacement and dislocation.

As texts that, to echo Derrida, say as much about "the analytic processes itself" as they do about the events to which they have traditionally been called to testify, Garnet's letters foreground those elements of communication that are inherent, if not always manifestly obvious, in the activations of all archived records. As Sunka Simon has remarked, "letters determine our understanding of the communication process by actually and metaphorically shaping what transpires between send-off and arrival" (Simon 2002, p. ix), and it is this

"metaphorical" aspect that allows the letter (and not just Garnet's letters) to suggest itself as a model of archival communication that might address the complex interplay of writers, texts and readers. Simon's definition of the letter as a "dispatch" which "presupposes a detachment from its originating environment (writer, sender, place and time) but also its arrival at another time elsewhere" (Simon 2002, p. xii) makes clearer the ways in which records as unaddressed and unintended missives might become "letters" through a process of archivization that institutes their dispatch and promises the possibility of their future delivery. Thus receipts, ledgers, plans, wills and all other non-epistolary records take on the force of communication through the address, in the dual sense of origin and destination, of the archive-as-postman: Derrida's *Facteur*.

With the doubled (actual/metaphorical) status of Garnet's letters in mind, and the correspondingly doubled intent of this article, what follows is part history, starting from an exposition of the letters and the reading of those letters that has become part of the history of the Gunpowder Plot, part historiography, as the reading of Garnet's letters passes from the hands of James's government to those of the historian, and throughout part archive theory as the discussion turns on the consideration of the relationship between the archive, its objects and those that consult the archive. In pursuing this reading of archival communication, it is necessary first to add one more layer to the accumulating discussion of Garnet's letters and the specifics of their several writings, deliveries and readings.

London. Tower and Gatehouse. February–April 1606

With the lay plotters executed at the end of January 1606, the second phase of the investigation of the Gunpowder Plot began. The government's focus turned to the Jesuits whose instigation of the whole affair had been firmly established if not, in fact, then at least in the popular Protestant imagination at the trial on the 27th of January in which Garnet along with Oswald Tesimond and John Gerard were named ahead of those in the dock for a treason that Attorney General Sir Edward Coke insisted had been "planted and watered by Jesuits, and English Romish Catholicks" (Cobbett and Howell 1809, p. 168). While the "inferior prisoners,"

Ralph Ashley, John Grissold, Father Edward Oldcorne, Nicholas Owen and Father Thomas Strange, were being put to the torture at the behest of the Privy Council (Anstruther 1953, p. 341), Garnet was being treated with what Philip Caraman has described as "specious civility" (Caraman 1964, p. 366), living in the relative comfort of the Tower. In fact, at his trial, Garnet would give his rather unlikely assent to the claim, made by Principal Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, that he had "beene as well attended for health and otherwise as a nurse child" (Cobbett and Howell 1809, p. 243).

During this brief period of "civil" treatment, Garnet's interrogations at the hands of Sir William Waad, Lieutenant of the Tower, Salisbury, and Coke were supplemented by two schemes designed to get him to incriminate himself. Both depended on allowing Garnet to believe that he might safely communicate with those sympathetic to his cause. Accordingly, he was given the opportunity to send letters out of the Tower, believing them to be smuggled safely past his keepers. During the same period, he was placed in a cell adjoining that of Father Oldcorne in the hope that their conversations, secretly recorded by John Lorcason and Edward Fawcett, might yield information vital to the upcoming trial. It is the former of these expedients, which generated a good deal of "secret" correspondence that readily invites reflection on questions of authors, texts and readers that is of interest here.

While not free of bias, John Gerard's *A Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot* (c. 1606) provides a clear enough account of the circumstances that led to the writing of these letters:

> They did daily vex him with subtle examinations and cruel interrogations, but finding they could win nothing by these means, they devised, by treacherous stratagems, to discover the secrets of his heart, if any were concealed by him of which they might take advantage. And to this end caused the keeper that had particular charge to keep his prison close and surely locked, and who alone was permitted to come unto him and to bring him his meat and other necessities which he wanted. This man was directed to feign himself much moved with Father Garnett his behaviour and words (as, indeed, they were sufficient to move a better and wiser man

> than him that had not been without grace), and to pretend that he began to be much inclined and almost won to the Catholic faith, and in the meantime, to show himself very friendly, and promise to be faithful to Father Garnett in anything wherein he might do him service. And the fellow was so cunning in this art of cozenage, and set so fair a gilt upon his copper, that the good Father, being full of charity, "quæ omnia credit et omnia sperat," [Which believeth all things, hopeth all things (I Cor. xiii. 7)] did hope the best of his mind, though he meant not to trust him so far as might greatly endanger himself or others until he had a better trial. But yet he made use of his offer so far as to send by him some notes of ordinary matters (as the fellow might think)… (Morris 1871, p. 166)

Taking up Carey's "offer," Garnet wrote a number of short letters concerning "ordinary matters" supplemented by hidden text written in an invisible ink made from orange juice and directed to his long-term supporter Anne Vaux and, through her, to the Jesuits still at large in England. Garnet was right not to trust too far as Carey, the "keeper" in question, a man whose historical legacy is divided between Gerard's "most malicious naughty fellow" (Morris 1871, p. 289) and the loyal government servant "never found untrue hitherto in one word" (Giuseppi 1940, p. 113), turned the letters over to Waad, who in turn passed them to Salisbury and Coke, before forwarding forgeries to their intended recipients.

Decoded and annotated, the originals of Garnet's letters remain in government hands in the "Gunpowder Plot Book, Supplementary" in the National Archives, Kew. Mary Anne Everett Green, the editor of the Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: James I, 1603–10, describes the sequence in a footnote to 23rd February 1606,

> In this letter [no. 241] and five others, nos. 242 to 246, Gunpowder Plot Book, the important portion was written with orange juice, so as to be invisible to a casual observer, and thus the letters passed through the hands of the Lieutenant of the Tower. They excited suspicion from the size of the paper employed and the insignificance of their palpable contents. They were therefore examined, and the secret writing being discovered was used

> as evidence against Garnet. Each is accompanied with a transcript, as complete as the faded state of the writing permits, made by Mr. Lemon. (Green 1967, p. 291)

As Green's footnote suggests Garnet's letters and those he received in response from Vaux, which they presumably expected might be read by parties hostile to their cause, are remarkable for nothing so much as their brevity and the prosaic nature of their contents. As Coke put it at his trial, "there was nothing therein to be seen but ordinary matter" (Cobbett and Howell 1809, p. 233). Notwithstanding the "ordinariness" of their contents (and in truth they are not *that* "ordinary") these letters are most remarkable for the force with which they place on view the markers of their own decipherings and it is in this sense that they are read here.

What follows is a brief summary of the contents of these letters that concentrates on what Green identifies as their "palpable contents" and their "secret writing," a summary that proceeds by the somewhat anachronistic ploy of separating their manifest content from their (now equally manifest) hidden content and putting aside for now the other narratives that emerge from within these records. First, given the emphasis that this paper places on reading, writing, authenticity and provenance, it seems sensible to announce, before detailing the letters on which it draws, that the quotations that follow are taken from the transcripts of previous visitors to the archives in which they reside.[2] Such a move might well be regarded as problematic: as Thomas Osborne puts it, "[j]ust as for the anthropologist the notion of fieldwork represents both a form of truth and knowledge and a certain ethical authority, a certain right to speak, so the archive confers similar rights on those whoever they are who seek to generate credibility on its basis" (Osborne 1999, p. 54). Carolyn Steedman goes further in her analysis of this "right to speak":

> [t]he fiction is that the authority [to write history] comes from the documents themselves, as well as the historian's obeisance to the limits they impose on any account that employs them. But really it comes from

> having been there (the train to the distant city, the call number, the bundle opened, the dust). (Steedman 2001, p. 1176)

There is then, in this paper, an act of wilful inauthenticity in the privileging of "Foley 1878, p. 107" over "SP 14/216, no. 242," an apparent lack of authenticity which appears as a multiplication of sources, as a tracing of traces that deliberately reverses the expected trajectory from primary to secondary sources and which is, in fact, a first comment on the archive.

The Garnet–Vaux correspondence

To his nephew Thomas Garnet, also a Jesuit priest, imprisoned in the Gatehouse, Garnet sent his spectacles wrapped in a long piece of paper with a note requesting their repair and a fresh case. The second letter, directed to "Sister Anne [Vaux]," is a request for money and an inventory of goods received,

> I have receaved 2 bands, 2 handkerchers, 1 paire of sockes, and a Bible. God rewards all frends. I would you could make shift to borrow eleven pounds. I shall be able to repay at ye least half againe, when I can send to a frend. I and Mr. Hall have not yet payed our fees; whereof I am ashamed. This with most harty comendations. I ceas, 3 Mar. Y^{rs} for ever, H.G.
>
> (Foley 1878, p. 107: SP 14/216, no. 242)

The next two letters in the sequence are from Vaux, a fact which serves to confirm that counterfeits of Garnet's originals were being forwarded. Of these, the first (Foley 1878, p. 108: SP 14/216, no. 243), written in orange juice, is largely illegible, leading Anstruther to conclude that "besides being a chronic invalid she was very short-sighted. Unaccustomed to writing at the best of times, she found writing in orange juice a sore trial for her eyes, and on this occasion she could not see when she had left a mark and when her pen had failed" (Anstruther 1953, pp. 347–348). The second, which is not in Vaux's hand,

presumably accompanied the return of Garnet's glasses: "I pray you prove whether these spectacles do fytt your sight" (Foley 1878, p. 108: SP 14/216, no. 244). Garnet's next letter to Vaux (Foley 1878, p. 109: SP 14/216, no. 245), written, as Foley remarks, on similar paper to that in which he'd wrapped his spectacles, bears only his signature while the last letter in the sequence, from Vaux, written in orange juice, begins "I received your spectacles, and think it be the greatest comfort that I have in the world to hear from you…" (Foley 1878, p. 109: SP 14/216, no. 246) possibly indicating that the spectacles had accompanied Garnet's previous letter, performing, as Travers suggests, a double role as both a reason for writing and a visual cue to alert the reader to the presence of a hidden message (Travers 2005, p. 146). More likely still, this letter, which appears to respond to Garnet's first letter, appears out of chronological sequence in the Gunpowder Plot Book.

These often largely blank missives were intercepted and decoded and their hidden contents revealed. While what emerged when the letters were subjected to the necessary heat, revealing the "brick-red" (Anstruther1953, p. 197) orange-juice ink, might be of interest to the historian of the Gunpowder Plot, it was of little interest to a government that was desperate for evidence incriminating their Jesuit prisoners. The intercepted letters, which give details of Garnet's capture at Hindlip and his early interrogations (Foley 1878, pp. 80–86: SP 14/19/11; Giuseppi 1940, pp. 60–61) a number of directions to the Jesuits at large (Anstruther 1953, p. 345; Giuseppi 1940, pp. 107–111) and more personal advice to Anne Vaux (Foley 1878, p. 109: SP 14/216, no. 245), told their unintended government readers very little that they didn't already know. As Caraman has remarked, Garnet "gave nothing away in any of the letters he sent out from the Tower: just one phrase from them was cited against him at his trial" (Caraman 1964, p. 359). That, a short quotation from *John* 11:50 included in his letter to his nephew, "necesse est ut unus homo moriatur pro populo" [It is necessary that one man should die for the people], was used by Coke as evidence of Garnet's blasphemy rather than as evidence of his involvement with the Gunpowder Plot, while declarations of his innocence given in the same letter would be cited as evidence of his hypocrisy and equivocation; "note his prevarication and equivocation; for before the Lords Commissioners he truly and

freely confessed his treasons … in his Letters which he wrote abroad, he cleareth himself" (Cobbett and Howell 1809, p. 233). Garnet's letters, then, allowed Coke to construct a "character" (a term which pre-empts the discussion that follows) who was very much a creation of a particular set of readers and who, in turn, would be read by a jury that might well be described as the "narratees" of Coke's own narrative.

Narrative communication and the archive

Leaving the specific events that are documented in Garnet's letters in the hands of expert historians what follows is a history of the reading of these letters, a history that is supplementary in the sense that the term is deployed in *Of Grammatology* to refer to "a necessarily indefinite process" that functions through both "substitution and accretion" (Derrida 1976, pp. 281, 200). As Jacqueline Rose puts it, in the encounter with the archive "[w]hat seems to be at stake … is not just the question of the facts, but that of interpretation. For it is in so far as a fact never comes independently of its context and enunciation (who is offering the facts and why) that it is liable to be interpreted, becomes a hypothesis, or an unrecognisable variant of itself" (Rose 1996, p. 66). Accordingly, my attention now turns towards theories of writers, readers and reading, and to the relation of writers and readers to text and to the (con)text of the archive. This (meta)reading offers a narratological analysis of Garnet's archived in order to draw out a number of conclusions about the ways in which archival communication might be understood.

The opening position of this narratological analysis is that the archival source affords not access to the past but rather an always already mediated representation of the past. That the practice of history is subjective is well known to its theorists, nevertheless, the temptations of what Derrida has called a "transcendent reading" driven by "a powerful, systematic, and irrepressible desire for … a signified" (Derrida 1976, pp. 160, 19) remain, generating readings that look beyond language towards the historical referent.[3] It is against this temptation, which is manifest in the National Archives' claim to contain

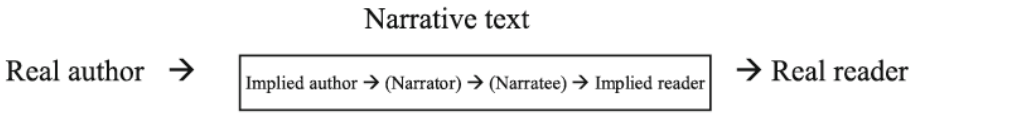
"900 years of *history*" [emphasis added] (National Archives 2008a), that this analysis is situated. Accordingly, I argue that the archived text testifies not only "to the event as recorded" rather than "the event itself" but also to its "archivization" in, and of its subsequent "activations" within the archive. Conceived as what Eric Ketelaar has described as "tacit narratives of power and knowledge" (Ketelaar 2001, p. 132) and embodying, perhaps, Walter Benjamin's suggestion that "[t]here is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (Benjamin 1999, p. 256), the archived record, and through it the archive itself, invites analysis along narratological lines that foreground the creation, communication and control of knowledge. With this in mind, what follows approaches Garnet's archived letters in terms of the constituent elements of narrative communication as theorised by, among others, Roman Jakobson ([1960] 1987), Wayne C. Booth ([1961] 1983), Gérard Genette ([1972] 1980), Seymour Chatman (1978) and Mieke Bal (1997).

Of the various models of communication that might be applied, Jakobson's model of verbal communication in which an "ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE" (Jakobson 1987, p. 66), while ultimately a little limiting, offers the most obviously applicable terminology by which to discuss the record-as-letter. Taking the first of Garnet's "orange juice letters" and confining ourselves at this point to the "real ink" (*Foley 1878*, p. 107) letter, putting aside its subsequent accretion of text and context at and in the hands of government and archive, it is easy to identify Garnet as the "addresser" of this letter, it is signed both "H.G." and "Henry Garnett." The addressee, if the text is taken in isolation from its context (a context that is witnessed in its relation to other texts), is "Mr Rookwood" an alias of Garnet's nephew the Jesuit priest Thomas Garnet (Anstruther 1953, p. 342; Foley 1875, pp. 483–484). The "message" written in "real ink" is a request that his spectacles be repaired and furnished with a new case:

> I pray you lett these spectacles be set in leather and with a leather case, or lett the fould be fitter for ye nose.—Yrs for ever, H.G. Henry Garnett.
> (Foley 1878, p. 106: SP 14/216, no. 241)

This deliberately naïve reading effects an act of (re)creation that has little to do with the letter as it appears in the National Archives, telling less than half of the story of the letter which, even at the point of its writing (before its inscription as an archived object), played deliberately and knowingly with the always-double nature of writers, their works, readers of the texts those works become once written and the multiple readers who, to use Roman Ingarden's term, "concretize" them (Ingarden 1973, p. 53).

Garnet's letter "no. 241," like the archive in which it resides and for which it is taken here to stand, demands, expects, perhaps, more detailed analysis than Jakobson's model allows. Such a reading might be facilitated by the introduction of a model of archival communication based on what Chatman calls the "narrative transaction" (Chatman 1978, p. 147):

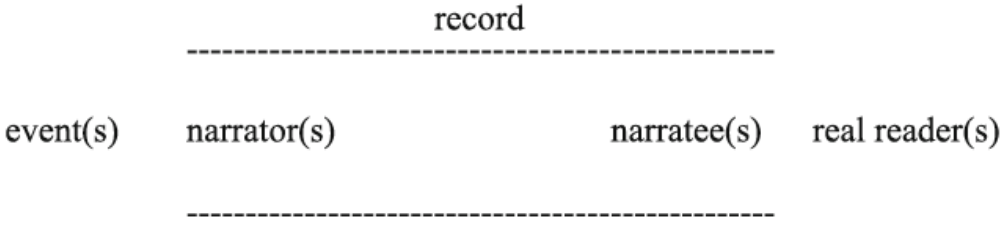


(Chatman 1978, p. 151)

On the extremes of Chatman's diagram are the real author and real reader, the flesh and blood entities (to cite Booth 2005) who generate and interpret the text, respectively. Within the boxed section are those elements that are considered to be purely textual. Narrator and narratee are, respectively, the providers and recipients of the narrative as they appear within the text (if indeed they do, for Chatman they are non-essential and hence bracketed). The implied author, a term reworked from Booth (1983), is constructed by the reader from the text and is best viewed as a constructed set of norms, or standards, against which a narrative can be judged and not in the vaguely personified form that the term might suggest. The implied reader is a similar construction; this is the reader who is interpellated, assumed and constructed by the text.

There are, of course, a number of limitations (perhaps, it would be better to speak of necessary divergences) in using Chatman's model as an approach to archival records although these do not stem from the fact that such a model is derived from the study of fictional texts. In fact, the insistence on the constructed

nature of authors and readers, and the multiplication to which they are subject under such a model of communication, is the main purpose of applying such a model to archival work. The explication of these limitations and divergences might function as a comment on the specific nature of archival communication in its specificity while providing a commentary on Chatman's narratological model. With this dual intent in mind, the following diagram is offered as a starting point for a model of archival communication:



This model is reworked according to three related principles: plurality, temporality and dialogism; principles intended to recognise what Ketelaar has called the "membranic" properties of records that are "open yet enclosed … allowing the infusing and exhaling of values which are embedded in each and every activation" (Ketelaar 2001, p. 138). First, it attempts take into account the plurality of the archival record and of those parties that shape it, recognising what Terry Cook describes as its "mediated and ever changing construction" (Cook 2001, p. 10). Second, it places the text (the archival record) within a notion of the temporal that is similarly plural/multiple. As Jennifer Meehan put it in a recent conference paper, "the meaning-making process is not unidirectional" (Edinburgh 2008, p. 6), thus the arrows directing communication from author to reader are removed in an effort to move beyond the implicit suggestion that the trajectory of communication, Genette writes of "*vectorality*" (Genette 1988, p. 149), is fixed from author through text towards reader. Third, by opening up the boxed section surrounding Chatman's "Narrative text" this diagram rejects the interior/exterior model of text and world, a model which denies the possibility that the text itself might have a constituting effect on the "real." Thus the record is opened out to both authors and readers, calling into question the idea that the

archive is somehow neutral in relation to those elements Chatman deems "extrinsic and accidental" (Chatman 1978, p. 150). As a corollary to this "opening up" it becomes necessary to indicate the distinction between event and representation which appears here in the retention of the horizontal lines that demarcate the (still permeable) record. Finally, to bring this diagram in line with archival theory, there is a change in terminology. "Real author" is replaced by "event(s)" which, always plural, encompasses both the originary event, its recording and the subsequent archivization of that recording. In this way, archivists are placed in a functional position that is analogous to that of authors, recognising their role as "creators of social memory through the *active* formation of the archival heritage" [emphasis added] (Cook 2000, p. 5) and the resultant impossibility of what Brien Brothman describes as the "dream of transparency or disintermediation [that] lies at the heart of the pursuit of recordness" (Brothman 2002, p. 322). "Narrative text" becomes "record" with the intention of more clearly encompassing non-narrative texts while emphasising the always-recorded (narrated) nature of the texts so designated. Finally, in order to insist on the always-mediated nature of the record, narrator and narratee are figured as essential (non-bracketed) elements of records in place of implied authors and readers. In this, I follow Bal's somewhat counter-intuitive but nonetheless compelling claim that, "'I' and 'He' Are Both 'I'," in other words, that when "the speaking agent [the narrator] does not mention itself… it may as well have done so" (Bal 1997, p. 120). The narrators and narratees that emerge within the record are, perhaps, best conceived in terms of narrator-characters and narratee-characters who approximate the text's real authors and readers but who can only remain textual constructs. The narrator-character, for example, approximates Booth's description of the implied author as "an ideal, literary, created version of the real man" (Booth 1983, p. 75) but never the author her/himself. The narratee-reader relationship is a similarly textual construct. Again, as with "event(s)," the plurality of terms is central, requiring them to operate on a number of narrative "levels" across which multiple narrators (archivists, record makers) address multiple narratees (from original intended readers to readers entirely unexpected and unimagined).

In negotiating the plurality that is attendant on this model of the archived record it is helpful to draw on Genette's work on narrative levels according to which "*any event a narrative recounts is at a diegetic level immediately higher than the level at which the narrating act producing this narrative is placed*" (Genette 1980, p. 228). It thus becomes possible to capture the structure of the record in several temporal phases each containing or contained within another. In this way, the original historical message might be identified, along with its own narrator and narratee, *within* the narrative according to which it was archived. However, the spatial nature of these levels, which Genette describes variously as inside/outside, above/below, must be recognised as metaphorical. While Genette's notions of interdiegesis, extradiegesis and metadiegesis (narratives variously "inside," "outside" and "about") facilitate the discussion of the structure of the record they do so at the cost of a necessary but artificial separation and prioritisation of levels that suggests the possibility of an unpacking of the record which, despite being rooted in the temporal order of accumulation of such details, leads to a synchronic view of the record that is not entirely helpful.

Reading "no. 241"

The replacement of Chatman's trajectories of narrative communication with a multi-levelled model of the archived record, along with a denial of any direct access to event through record, opens up the possibility of approaching the record from a number of perspectives. No. 241 makes manifest this possibility, its once-secret text, written "cunningly with the juice of an orange or of a lemon" (Cobbett and Howell 1809, p. 233), gesturing towards events, narratives, readers and writers (and readings and writings) while testifying to the existence of those elements *within* the textual record:

> ***A.*** The bearer knoweth that I write thus, but thinks it must be read with water.
> ***B.*** The paper sent with buiscuit bread I was enforced to burn, and did not read. I pray write again.

C. I have acknowledged that I went from Sir Everard to Coughton and stayed 2 or three days after my Lady went to London, and then rode away alone.
D. Also that Bates and Greenway mett by chaunce, and Greenway sayed all Catholickes were undone, not as they would have it that Jesuites only were discredited.

I read the letters before Bates and Greenway. My Lady Digby came. What did she? Alas, what, but cry.

E. My answer was to Bates by word of mouth. I am sorry they have without advice of friends adventured in so wicked an action. Lette them desist.

F. I must needs acknowledge my being with the two sisters and that at White Webbs as is trew. For they are so jealous of White Webbs, I can see no way else.

My names I all confesse, but that last.

Appoint some place near where this bearer may meete some trusty friend. Where is Mrs. Anne? (Foley 1878, pp. 106–107: SP 14/216, no. 241).

This short letter, which is almost entirely comprised commentary on other narratives, figures Garnet as both a writer and a reader of letters and as a writer of confessions. The "bearer" of the letter becomes a potential, if inadequate, reader in addition to his function as a (literal) carrier of information while at the level of the interrogation that appears as the letter's interdiegetic narrative the government interrogators figure as "jealous" narratees who are uncertain of the narrator-confessor's multiple names. Further to this, the marginal notations, A, B, C etc., which are in Coke's hand, inscribe the record with the act of an initial illicit reading, become writing, and to this marginal notation might be added the

handwritten transcriptions of the letters that accompany the faded and scrawled texts of nos. 241–246 (and which are the real reader's most likely starting point) provided by the Deputy Keeper of the State Paper Office, Robert Lemon (1779–1835) in June 1825. This diachronic model of archival communication allows these markers of reading to be positioned as acts of narrating at a level above that of Garnet's own narrative. Coke's marginal notes might then be figured as the manifestation of the apparently absent narrator of Garnet's first-person narratives (Bal's "he said"), recognising that those narratives always were facilitated, mediated and authorised by their government readers. Similarly, Lemon's transcripts testify to the record's continued mediation within the archive. Written and overwritten, letter no. 241 as palimpsest (it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain the appellation "Garnet's letter") attests not only to the always multiple nature of the event (witnessing, recording, transcribing) but also to the status of the archived record in its physicality, affording due attention to the paper-and-ink make-up of the record, to the plurality of its readers, literal and metaphorical, and the synchronic nature of the record in by which readers become inscribed as narrators and narratees. The "overwriting," which is both temporal and spatial, of Garnet's real ink letters, an overwriting that includes his own secret interdiegetic narrative ("the bearer knoweth I write this") admits nothing so much as the expectation that they might be misdirected and misread.

Misdirection, misreading and overwriting were of course the fate of Garnet's letters which were intercepted, decoded and, in all likelihood forged and forwarded. As both Caraman and Antonia Fraser point out the presence of Garnet's letters in the National Archives is highly suggestive of the fact that the letters that finally reached their intended addressees in February and March 1606 were forgeries. Fraser, who has presumably done the experiment for us, writes: "words written in orange juice remain visible once that have been exposed to heat (as opposed to lemon juice, which becomes invisible once more when it is cold)" (Fraser 1997, p. 302). The "real" author of these forgeries, written presumably in a similarly "cunning" mixture of "real" and orange juice ink, is conjectured to be government code breaker and forger Thomas Phelippes (Travers 2005, pp. 140–144) or, more convincingly, the forger Arthur Gregory (Edwards 2008, pp. 285–286). Whatever the identity of the forger, his work was evidently convincing

enough as Garnet's intended real readers, now present as the narratees and narrators of records nos. 241–246, responded with similarly secretive letters. While Gregory, whose name is used here for convenience rather than as a statement of historical fact, was no more the "real" author of the letters than the historians that have followed him in transcribing the letters, his position as the real author of these "unreal" texts, or perhaps as the unreal author of these "real" texts, is highly suggestive of the relationship between authors and the books to which their names are attached. As Roger E. Stoddard puts it, "Whatever they may do, authors do not write books. Books are not written at all. They are manufactured by scribes and other artisans, by mechanics and other engineers, and by printing presses and other machines" (Stoddard 1987, p. 4). Roger Chartier, responding to Stoddard in *The Order of Books*, similarly insists on the materiality of what he terms the "book": "we need to remember that there is no text apart from the physical support it offers for reading (or hearing), hence there is no comprehension of any written piece that does not at least in part depend upon the forms in which it reaches its reader" (Chartier 1994, p. 9). All of which is evident in the text of no. 241, where letters themselves appear in their physicality, as paper sent with "buisuit bread," burnt, written in orange juice, mistakenly read with water, and delivered "some place nere." Thus, according to Chartier's analysis, the record is not simply divided into text and book, rather, its meaning becomes dependant on a materiality that not only encompasses the form of the physical record but which extends to the context of reading, to the existence of the record within the archive itself. In other words, returning to the terms of the model of archival communication, the architecture and infrastructure of the archive might also be addressed under the heading of event(s).

The physicality of the "public" (published) form of the record with which readers engage also lends itself to a consideration of the connection between the record and its authors. Specifically, it allows comment on the translation of meaning from author to reader. Operating as a metaphor for the act of translation inherent in language use, the letter is, from the moment of its inscription, invested with the possibility of misdelivery. As Rose puts it, "in so far as it circulates, language can, by definition, always fail to reach its mark or alight in the wrong place" (Rose 1996, p. 84). The possibility that letters might "alight in the wrong

place," while literally applicable in the case of letter no. 241, functions here as a comment on language as it is more broadly conceived. Derrida, writing on Codillac in *Limited Inc.* summarises this aspect of writing clearly:

> One writes in order to communicate something to those who are absent. The absence of the sender, of the receiver [*destinateur*], from the mark that he abandons, and which cuts itself off from him and continues to produce effects independently of his presence and of the present actuality of his intentions [*vouloir-dire*], indeed even after his death… (Derrida 1988, p. 5)

This "independence" of a language which both predates and survives its absent author figures, through a reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, in Maurice Blanchot's "Literature and the right to death" in which the translatable/transcribable nature of the written text—demonstrated here by the production of a series of forged letters that were indistinguishable from their originals—institutes a division of the work (the originary and authentic event) from the book (the record produced). This vital distinction makes clear the impossibility of the task faced by authors in their attempts to achieve authentic expression: "the work exists only when it has been made this public, alien reality, made and unmade by colliding with other realities … the work itself is disappearing" (Blanchot 1999, p. 364). What appears in its place is the "book" with the consequence that it becomes impossible to reach an originary event that has not been subject to processes of recording and transmission—hence the merging of event, real author and writing in the model proposed above under the plural heading of "event(s)."

Figuring the nature of the archived event such that it encompasses the author's disappearance, or to quote Roland Barthes "death," in the act of recording returns us to Garnet as he appears in no. 241.[4] Accepting the multiplication of identities attendant on the proposed model of archival communication, it is possible to identify three "Garnets" in no. 241, a fact to which the two "real ink" signatures and his elusive secret-ink comment "My names I all confesse, but that last" attest. Accordingly, the letter's real author "Henry Garnett" must be distinguished from the text-generated "Garnet," the

inferred author that approximates that inaccessible real author, from "H.G.," the narrator of the "real ink" letter who acknowledges receipt of necessities and requests further assistance, and finally from the narrator of the interdiegetic secret narrative to whom might be attached that last tantalisingly "unconfessed" name. For the government, in a gesture that attests to the truth of Michel Foucault's claim that "[s]peeches and books were assigned real authors, other than mythical or important religious figures, only when the author became subject to punishment and to the extent that his discourse was considered transgressive" (Foucault 1977, p. 124), it became necessary to privilege the narrator of the "invisible ink" passage as "true" identity as if the act of decoding were the guarantee of authenticity. Recognising the "authoring" inherent in such an act, the displacement of "real author" by "event(s)" works to figure the author as one element alongside the circumstance recorded, the act of this recording, and its subsequent writing and rewriting in the archive. In effect, the move from author to event(s) marks a return to Foucault's "mythological" state—at least in as much as it refers to an accumulation of signifiers that serves to distance text (record) from object (event). Thus the archived record accumulates and generates a series of narrators that attest to its always narrated (mediated) and textual nature.

To Garnet as narrator must be added the readers who are evident as the narratees of the multi-levelled record that letter no. 241 has become (at least according to this analysis). Addressed to Mr. Rookwood (an alias that itself becomes an act of misdirection), the letters were destined for Vaux who, in turn, would be expected (and in later letters explicitly directed) to pass on their contents to a third reader (or readers) within the hierarchy of the Jesuit order in England. Vaux's role as conduit in this sense is made explicit in later letters, "The Latin was for Mr. Blunt [Father Blount], or any other of the Society" (Foley 1878, p. 107: SP 14/216, no. 242), the deployment of both English and Latin attesting to the duality of the letter's intended readership. To these narratees (who might have been termed "intended real readers"), it is necessary to add the "unintended real" readers of the letters to whose presence the secret ink attests whom it might be fair to assume were the unnamed but expected first narratees of the "real ink" message. Thus Carey, Waad, Coke, Salisbury and Popham, at the

very least, must be included amongst list of narratees constructed from the record, a readership that was expected if uninvited.

The inclusion of these historical readers as narratees is evident in the ways in which they have been used in the work of historians of the Gunpowder Plot where the events of 1605–1606 are supplemented by a second narrative concerning the writing and reading of the letters themselves. Garnet, unable to supply much detail, became the first to consider this unintended readership, writing on 13th April 1606, "I know not by what treachery that which I wrote in orange to Mrs. Anne was taken at the Gatehouse, where they took some advantage, yet without cause" (Giuseppi 1940, p. 109) and again on the 21st, "my letters taken by some indiscretion abroad" (Foley 1878, p. 105: SP14/20, 39). Accordingly, the *reading* of Garnet's letters becomes an object of historical interest in and of itself. This is most evident in the work of Catholic historians such as Gerard's *Narrative* (c. 1606) in which Coke and Waad's "treacherous strategems" are carried out by Carey, a "faithless messenger, opposing his malice to the Father's charity" in what is adjudged to be a "bad office" (Morris 1871, pp. 166–168), in Oswald Tesimond's *Narrative* (c.1608, Edwards 1973), in Foley's *Records*(1878), in Anstruther's valedictory history of the Vaux family (1953), and in Caraman's biography of Garnet (1964) where the reading of the letters is described in terms of "stratagem[s]," "ruse[s]," "snares" and "trick[s]" (Caraman 1964, pp. 359, 370, 372). In the work of these historians, the act of deciphering itself takes over from the deciphered content as the letter's revealed "secret." A similar emphasis is placed on the rewriting of the letters: for Edwards, "[t]he significance of this Garnet–Vaux correspondence cannot be overstressed," not for its contents but for the radical doubt that it legitimates, "a problem arises at least as to how many signatures on all the surviving confessions and examinations are genuine" (Edwards 2008, pp. 285, 286). Accordingly, in historical accounts of Garnet's letters an emphasis is placed on the power relations evinced in the reading and (re)writing of his letters. To be more specific, the government readers that appear as narratees are simultaneously figured as the records' authorising narrators. Effectively, Garnet's supposedly secret letters were always already placed in the third person by the unwritten "he said" that appears as Coke's marginal notations and, in a more sustained fashion, in the archival

infrastructure within which the letters now exist. With this shifting of focus from the plane of content towards that of readers and towards a reworked notion of authorship, Garnet's letters as archived objects perhaps begin to tell us more about the nature of the archive, and of the readers of archived objects (both these in particular and the archived object in general) than they do about the events of 1605 and 1606.

Finally, if Garnet's "government" readers were unimplied they were at least imagined and attempts were made, as far as was possible, to prevent their reading of the letters, then the same could hardly be said for the numerous professional historians and other visitors to the National Archives that have joined a real readership of the letters that is, by definition, multiple in nature. As Steedman has noted, "[t]he archive gives rise to particular practises of reading. If you are an archival historian, you nearly always read something that was not intended for your eyes: you are the reader impossible-to-be-imagined" (Steedman 2001, p. 1177). This is true at the first level of archival communication in which real readers, detached from both record and events, are in no way constrained to approximate the text's narratees (the addressees of the letter for example). However, at the point at which the archive itself is figured as author-event then this real reader is very much intended and imagined. Moreover this readership is enshrined in law. The *Public Records Act 1958 (c. 51)* states that the Keeper of Public Records, appointed by the Lord Chancellor, has the power to "regulate conditions under which members of the public may inspect public and other records of use the other facilities of the Public Records Office" (National Archives 2008b, p. 2) and a duty to "arrange that reasonable facilities are available to the public for inspecting and obtaining copies of those public records in the Public Records Office which fall to be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000" (National Archives 2008b, pp. 4–5). Reader's tickets respond to this legal imperative, defining the conditions by which one might assume the position of reader (one's identity as reader becomes a matter of public record): reader's tickets are "Available only to persons aged 14 years or over. Proof of identity is required…" (National Archives 2008c, p. 8), readers must avoid being "offensively unclean in person or in clothing" (National Archives 2008c, p. 2). In this way the real readers of the archived record might be

subject to the same processes of "textualisation" as their historical counterparts. Thus the archive, assuming the position of the record's top-level narrator goes some way towards the selection and construction of this real reader as narratee in an assertion of power that parallels those events by which Garnet's private letters were translated into public records. As Richard Harvey Brown and Beth Davis-Brown have remarked, "power is part of everyday practice in the archives" (Brown and Davis-Brown *1998*, p. 21) and this power is made manifest in the inscription of the archive itself, and subsequently the reader of that archive, as narrator and narratee within the record itself.

Notes

1 In actuality, the documents are available to view on microfilm at Kew while the originals (a term which is problematic in the case of Garnet's correspondence) are maintained at DeepStore in Cheshire.

2 The letters can be found, transcribed and annotated in the fourth volume of Henry Foley's *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*(1878), in Anstruther's *Vaux of Harrowden* (1953), and the more recent *Gunpowder: The Players Behind the Plot* (2005), written by James Travers and published by the National Archives.

3 See, for example, Hegel (1956), Foucault (1971, 2002), Ricoeur (1984–1988), White (1987).

4 The modernised spelling with which recent commentators render his name functions as an acknowledgement that access to the martyred priest is purely textual, a convention that is readily adopted here.

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