Studies in Modern British Religious History

RELIGIOUS POLITICS IN POST-REFORMATION ENGLAND

Edited by Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake

STUDIES IN MODERN BRITISH RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Volume 13

Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England

Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke

The consequences of the Reformation and the church/state polity it created have always been an area of important scholarly debate. The essays in this volume, by many of the leading scholars of the period, revisit many of the important issues during the period from the Henrician Reformation to the Glorious Revolution: theology, political structures, the relationship of theology and secular ideologies, and the Civil War. Topics include Puritan networks and nomenclature in England and in the New World; examinations of the changing theology of the Church in the century after the Reformation; the evolving relationship of art and protestantism; the providentialist thinking of Charles I; the operation of the penal laws against Catholics; and protestantism in the localities of Yorkshire and Norwich.

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STUDIES IN MODERN BRITISH RELIGIOUS HISTORY

ISSN 1464–6625

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Nicholas Tyacke

Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England

Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke

Edited by
KENNETH FINCHAM and PETER LAKE

THE BOYDELL PRESS

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First published 2006
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 1 84383 253 4

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

This publication is printed on acid-free paper

Typeset by Pru Harrison, Hacheston, Suffolk
Printed in Great Britain by
Biddles Ltd, King's Lynn

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FOR NICHOLAS,
WITH AFFECTION AND RESPECT

The publication of this book has been made possible by a grant
from The Scouloudi Foundation in association with
the Institute of Historical Research.

PREFACE

This book celebrates the scholarship and achievements of Nicholas Tyacke on his retirement from forty-one years' teaching and service at UCL in September 2006. It was obviously not possible to invite all of his large circle of friends and admirers to contribute to this volume, although we did lose one leading light along the way: Conrad Russell was included in the team but alas was no longer with us when these essays went to press. We are grateful to our fellow-essayists, who (for the most part!) made editorial work a fairly light load; to Sarah Tyacke, for much invaluable advice and for a copy of Nicholas's photograph; and to Caroline Palmer and her team at Boydell & Brewer for supervising, with consummate expertise, the production of the volume.

We acknowledge, with gratitude, the fact that publication of this volume has been made possible by grants from the late Miss Isobel Thornley's Bequest to the University of London, and Nicholas's own department of history at University College London.

Kenneth Fincham
Peter Lake

ABBREVIATIONS

APC	*Acts of the Privy Council*
BAR	*British Archaeology Reports*
BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library
CERS	Church of England Record Society
CJ	*Commons' Journals*
CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers Domestic*
CSPF	*Calendar of State Papers Foreign*
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
DUL	Durham University Library
DWL	Dr Williams's Library, London
EH	*Ecclesiastica Historia*, eds. Mathias Flacius, Johannes Wigand and Matthaeus Judex (13 centuries in 7 vols., Basel, 1562–74)
EHR	*English Historical Review*
FSL	Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC
GL	Guildhall Library, London
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HLRO	House of Lords Record Office
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
ITL	Inner Temple Library, London
JAS	*Journal of American Studies*
JBS	*Journal of British Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
Laud, *Works*	William Laud, *Works*, ed. J. Bliss and W. Scott (7 vols., Oxford, 1847–60)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
MGH	*Monumenta Germaniae Historia*
NA	*Norfolk Archaeology*
NEQ	*New England Quarterly*
NRO	Norfolk Record Office
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
PP	*Past and Present*
RSTC	*Revised Short Title Catalogue*, 2nd edn. (3 vols., 1976–91)
SCH	*Studies in Church History*
SCJ	*Sixteenth Century Journal*

TC	Robert Parsons, *A Treatise of Three Conversions of England* (3 vols., St Omer, 1604)
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
TNA	The National Archives [formerly the Public Record Office]
Venn	*Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part I. From the Earliest Times to 1751*, ed. J. and J.A. Venn (4 vols., Cambridge, 1922–7)
WDA	Westminster Diocesan Archives
WP	*The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*

The place of publication is London, unless otherwise specified.

1

Introduction: Puritanism, Arminianism and Nicholas Tyacke

PETER LAKE

Characterizing the nature and significance of the work of Nicholas Tyacke is, on the one hand, extremely easy. Scarcely can one interpretation have had such an influence on a major area of historical research as Tyacke's thesis, article and subsequent monograph on the rise of Arminianism. On the other, precisely because of the impact of that initial thesis, and the considerable body of subsequent research and controversy that it provoked, it is all too easy not only to lose sight of the very distinguished corpus of work on other themes that Tyacke has produced, but also to collapse his very considerable contribution to the field into an often crudely rendered, even caricatured, version of the initial thesis.

However, having said that, we still have to start with *that* article, published in 1973 in a volume of essays edited by Conrad Russell. Tyacke's piece 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution' had an immediate impact, attracting the attention of many reviewers, and passing with remarkable speed into the textbook orthodoxy of the ensuing decades. The collection of essays in which it appeared, *The Origins of the Civil War*, is often, in many ways rightly, regarded as the first coherent statement of the position that quickly came to be known as revisionism.[1] As many of its early champions took great pleasure in pointing out, revisionism was an insurgent movement, designed not merely to modify but in effect to invert the current orthodoxies of the day.[2] Tyacke's article was no exception to that rule. It was launched against an historiography that was still in many ways wedded to the notion of a revolutionary puritan movement, and to some sort of bi-polar divide between an Anglican establishment and a puritan opposition. This was the religious equivalent of the face-off between crown and commons that was, in many ways, the organizing theme for the dominant narratives of the politics of the

[1] C. Russell, ed. *The Origins of the English Civil War* (1973); see G. Elton's review in *HJ*, XVIII (1974), 213–16, which identified Tyacke's article as 'the most important contribution of all' and praised it for its 'outstanding and essential rightness'.
[2] K. Sharpe, 'Introduction' in Sharpe, ed. *Faction and Parliament* (Oxford, 1978).

period between 1559 and the 1640s. Tyacke's argument inverted that claim. Defining puritanism as essentially a political movement for ecclesiastical change, Tyacke argued that in the central years of James's reign puritanism was, if not dead, then certainly dormant, incorporated into a Calvinist consensus, a basic agreement about the central soteriological doctrines centred on predestination that bound the majority of English protestants together, and served as an 'ameliorating bond' linking erstwhile puritans even to some of the most aggressive proponents of the ecclesiastical status quo. What destroyed this consensus, and created a politically dissident and active puritanism where there had been none before, was the rise of Arminianism, a movement within the Church organized around a vision of true religion fundamentally at odds with the Calvinist predestinarianism that until that moment had constituted the mainstream of English protestant opinion.

As the title of Tyacke's article implied, on this account, the real revolutionaries, the intellectual insurgents, were the Arminians and the reaction thereto constituted a sort of Calvinist (counter-revolutionary) reaction. In a number of later articles, Tyacke carried his account of the rise of Arminianism over into other related areas of the intellectual history of the period, arguing, for instance, for links of ideas, personnel and patronage, between Arminianism and atomism, the Laudian establishment and science.[3] What was at stake here was little short of an inversion of the narrative suggested by Christopher Hill. Elsewhere, Tyacke carried the attack to other aspects of Hill's analysis of the nature and provenance of puritanism, using a wonderfully ingenious research technique centred on the brief vogue in certain puritan circles (discussed again in this volume by Patrick Collinson) for distinctive Christian names to test and, in the case of one local study at least, to falsify, Hill's correlation between puritan profession and membership of an emergent middling sort.[4]

Hill's was a narrative in which all sorts of progressive forces, a capitalist economic and social order, the new science, a series of challenges to the ancien régime in Church and state were associated, in one way or another, with puritanism. For Hill religion was the idiom through which contemporaries talked about and acted upon a number of topics that were, by modern standards, not religious at all. It was, accordingly, a code waiting to be cracked by the modern historian. Formal theology produced by the elite – the theology of 'real' 'plebeian' 'radicals' was, of course, a different matter – was never at the centre of Hill's work. For Tyacke, by contrast, theology was of the essence. In making that claim Tyacke was in something like self-conscious reaction against a set of essentially materialist assumptions that held that religious belief and doctrinal assertion were best read as so many expressions of political or material interest or class position. It would be tempting to label the resulting set of assumptions 'Marxist' were it not

[3] See his articles on 'Arminianism and English Culture' and 'Science and Religion at Oxford before the Civil War', both reprinted in his *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530–1700* (Manchester, 2001).

[4] Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan Mentality in late Elizabethan England', reprinted in his *Aspects.*

for the fact that they were even more typical of Hugh Trevor-Roper's high tory account of the career of William Laud than they were of Hill's (Marxist) account of puritanism. Tyacke's project is best seen as a reaction against both tendencies.[5]

Tyacke's work thus addressed a situation in which issues of theology were regarded as the preserve of the theologian and the historian of Christian doctrine. Once such questions invaded the terrain of secular-minded historians like Hill or Trevor-Roper, they immediately underwent an entirely reductive decoding process whereby they were emptied of much of their positive intellectual content and contemporary significance, in order to become signs for something else. By contrast, in Tyacke's account of the period, theology was a major element in the equation, and one, moreover, irreducible to other quantities or considerations of social or political interest or identity. And yet the doctrinal issues at the centre of his account were not treated as though they were best left to the tender mercies either of modern theologians or serially tradition-building historians of Christian doctrine. Rather, having been dragged out of the seminary, such issues had to be treated historically; that is to say, approached strictly through the texts and debates made about them by contemporaries, and thus integrated properly into the various contexts provided by attendant political and polemical circumstance.

Such an approach was novel enough in itself. However, its practical historiographical application called into question many of the received notions of what was radical and what conservative about the period. Tyacke's account of the rise of Arminianism and its effects called in question things that everybody always already knew or assumed about both puritanism and the Church of England, turning, as it did so, focal points of received wisdom into areas for new research and renewed argument. In working such effects Tyacke's approach was, of course, at one with the more intellectually arresting aspects of the revisionist project.[6] Accordingly the rise of Arminianism thesis was integrated almost immediately into what emerged over the next ten or fifteen years as the distinctively revisionist account of the period: an account in which the English civil war emerged not as the 'first modern revolution' but rather as the 'last of the wars of religion', in causing which the rise of Arminianism, rather than of a revolutionary or proto-revolutionary puritanism, played a crucial role.[7]

But despite the centrality of his work to the accounts of the period produced by Conrad Russell (and, for a time at least, by John Morrill), Tyacke had never been a typical revisionist. Certainly, he was at one with the others in finding himself

5 C. Hill, *Puritanism and Society in pre-Revolutionary England* (1964); H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud* (1940). This is not to say that Hill ignored ideas, but his primary focus of interest was the social context and the socio-political interests that the religious ideas can be said to have carried. See his *The World Turned Upside Down* (1972). For a different view of the same material, see G. Nuttall, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Chicago, 1992).

6 By which I mean, for the pre-civil war period, the work of Conrad Russell, Kevin Sharpe and Mark Kishlansky.

7 J. Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (1993), 33–90; see also C. Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990).

from some point in the 1960s dissatisfied with the received narratives of the political and religious history of the period. But, unlike the other revisionists, his was an account of the period that turned not only on ideological change and intellectual innovation, but on the effects of a coherent, polemically engaged contemporary ideology – that in his early work he called English Arminianism. On Tyacke's account Arminianism was an ideology with a precise set of theological preferences and positions at its core. For the Arminians studied by Tyacke, a distinctive take on the theology of grace, a convinced anti-Calvinism, lay behind a wider vision of true religion and of the nature and role of the visible Church and clergy in constituting a Christian commonwealth, preserving order and saving souls. This was quite unlike anything else to be found within the revisionist corpus, which elsewhere played up consensus and played down conflict, and attributed what conflict that did occur not to the clear-eyed pursuit by contemporaries of ideologically defined goals but rather to the inadequacy of the available categories and expectations in the novel circumstances (such as 'the functional breakdown' or the stresses and strains of a newly multiple monarchy) with which contemporaries found themselves confronted at every turn.[8] This was very much not what Tyacke was describing in his study of Arminianism. Here contemporary ideas did matter; new ideas and aims, produced in part by a direct confrontation with the complex legacy of the English Reformation, and in part by a continuing engagement with continental theology – and here the catalyst was, of course, Dutch Arminianism – created ideological conflict, which took the form not only of name-calling factionalism and both national and local power plays, but also of precise theological dispute.

At the time these very marked differences of tone and approach were hidden by a number of factors: the centrality of the Tyacke thesis to the wider revisionist project; the close parallels between the movement of his argument from consensus to conflict, the explicitly revisionist company and terms in which his arguments first appeared; the close collaboration between Russell and Tyacke in the London History School and in the Tudor and Stuart seminar at the Institute of Historical Research. The result was a process of partial misidentification that was aided by the fact that until the late 1980s Tyacke's major arguments were available only in article form. A full engagement with his findings and with the enormously rich range of evidence upon which they were based was postponed until the publication of his *Anti-Calvinists* in 1987.[9] But while they remained largely unnoticed at the time, these differences of historiographical style and approach were to have large consequences both for the future course of Tyacke's own work and for the reception of his initial thesis.

Tyacke's work was also written in self-conscious reaction against an influential set of assumptions about the distinctive nature of Anglicanism, a view, which,

[8] Russell, *Causes*; idem, *The Fall of the British Monarchies* (Oxford, 1991). See my review of both in *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, LVII (1994), 167–97.
[9] N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* (Oxford, 1987).

in more or less secularized form, was also hard-wired into long-standing notions of Englishness and (deeply conservative) whiggish narratives of English exceptionalism.[10] This was a view that emphasized the peculiarly English nature of the English Reformation; an event that in contrast to developments on the continent created a Church both Catholic and reformed; a Church that was always suspicious of theological speculation; a Church that placed enormous stress on continuity with the Christian, indeed with the Catholic, past, a continuity enshrined both in the institution of episcopacy and the prayer book. Intensely moderate, with a vision of religion centred on ceremony and outward worship, the Church of England had always looked to occupy a middle way: a *via media* most often talked about in terms of Rome on the one hand and Geneva on the other. The only exception to this inherently English moderation, was, of course, the puritans, a small group of foreign-inspired zealots who took their (Calvinist) ideas from Geneva and worked tirelessly to impose their ideas of reformation on their fellow countrymen.[11]

Tyacke's vision of the period simply overturned such assumptions. His Church of England took theology very seriously indeed and did so in part because it was integrated into the wider intellectual currents of reformed Europe. Far from following an inherently English middle way, his version of the English Church was integrally connected to intellectual developments on the continent. 'Calvinist' in theology during Elizabeth and James's reigns, the reformed hold on the heights of ecclesiastical and ideological power was broken by a group of men who took their avant-garde theology in part at least from Dutch Arminians. On Tyacke's view, Calvinist views of predestination or styles of piety were not a monopoly of the puritans, but rather part of the mainstream of the Church, whose history, thus, could not be written largely in terms of a bi-polar struggle between a puritan opposition and an Anglican establishment, two parties locked in a fatal embrace from the moment that the Elizabethan Church of England came into existence in 1559.

While it would be unwise to underestimate the sheer innovatory force of Tyacke's intervention, there remains a sense in which, along with the other early revisionists, Tyacke was drawing on and synthesizing work that had been going on in different parts of the field since the late 1950s. Major elements in the revisionist vision of the period – its Everittian localism, its Pocockian emphasis on a consensual common law mind, its Lamontian deconstruction of 'revolutionary puritanism' – long predated the articulation, in the early and middle 1970s, of full-fig revisionism.[12] Similarly, Tyacke's vision of the ideological make-up of

[10] It was almost certainly his lifelong identification with just such a narrative of English exceptionalism, rather than any latter-day conversion to a theistic Anglicanism, that underlay Geoffrey Elton's repudiation, in later life, of his earlier endorsement of Tyackean revisionism. On this see Elton's essay on 'Lancelot Andrewes' in his *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government*, vol. IV (Cambridge, 1992).

[11] P. White, 'The "Via Media" in the Early Stuart Church' in K. Fincham, ed. *The Early Stuart Church* (Basingstoke, 1993).

[12] A. Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion* (Leicester, 1966); J.G.A. Pocock, *The*

the post-Reformation English Church picked up central elements in Patrick Collinson's seminal study of the *Elizabethan Puritan Movement.* Collinson's book effectively undermined any view of the period as consistently or inevitably divided between a puritan opposition and an Anglican establishment. Collinson emphasized the integration of the whole protestant establishment into the ideological and personal connections that constituted reformed Europe. Certainly, for Collinson, there was a puritan movement for further, indeed for Presbyterian, reformation in the Church, but even that movement's connections with pillars of the establishment – with Burghley as well as with Leicester and Walsingham – were so strong that to characterize 'puritanism' simply as an opposition made small sense.[13]

The ease with which Collinson's findings could lead to Tyackean conclusions about the early Stuart period is evident from a footnote on the last page of Collinson's magnum opus in which he neatly slots the findings of 'the unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis' of 'Mr N.R.N. Tyacke' into his own argument.[14] A Church from which, after a brief flurry of activism at the outset of James's reign, the puritan *movement* (if not perhaps puritanism tout court, and both Tyacke and Collinson, not to mention Conrad Russell, have all tended at times to argue as though the one was more or less coterminous with the other[15]) had been all but removed, was one in which Collinson's Grindalian strand of reformed churchmanship could reassert itself in Tyacke's 'Calvinist consensus'. Now the Church of George Abbot could be seen as a continuation of the Church of Grindal. As Grindal's briefly controversial and banned prophesyings morphed into Collinson's consensual, and episcopally sponsored, lectures by combination, the Calvinist doctrine and piety and the reformed evangelical zeal of much of the Elizabethan and Jacobean episcopates could return to centre stage.[16] Peripheral now was not only the puritanism of John Field but also the avant-garde

Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law (1957); W. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne* (1963); see also T. Cogswell, R. Cust, P. Lake, 'Revisionism and its Legacies', in Cogswell, Cust, Lake, eds. *Politics, Religion and Popularity* (Cambridge, 2002).

[13] P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967); idem, *Archbishop Grindal* (1980); idem, *Godly People* (1983), 19–44.

[14] Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 504. Since Collinson's book came out in 1967 and Tyacke's thesis in 1968, there can be no real issue of mutual influence here; it is more a case of two scholars moving independently towards compatible, indeed mutually confirming, conclusions.

[15] This was to prefer one, as it were, 'political' definition of puritanism over against other more ideological and cultural, even religious, definitions, and to leave the way open, in the absence of overt agitation for further reformation, for the collapse of moderate puritanism into the Calvinist mainstream. For a view of moderate puritanism as a separate strand of thought, throughout the period, see P. Lake, 'Puritan Identities', *JEH*, XXXV (1984); idem, 'Defining Puritanism – Again?' in F. Bremer, ed. *Puritanism: Atlantic Perspectives on an Anglo-American Faith* (Massachusetts Historical Society, 1994); idem, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982); idem, *The Boxmaker's Revenge* (Manchester, 2001). Wearing, as it were, a different hat, Professor Collinson has, of course, pioneered a vision of puritanism as a (popular) religious style, a form of 'voluntary religion'. See his *Godly People*, 1–18; idem, 'The English Conventicle' in *SCH*, XXIII (Oxford, 1986); idem, 'Elizabethan and Jacobean Puritanism as forms of Popular Religion' in C. Durston and J. Eales, eds. *The Culture of English Puritanism* (1996).

[16] Collinson, *Godly People*, 467–98.

conformity and Arminianism of, say, Lancelot Andrewes or John Overall and even the version of the national Church being peddled by Richard Hooker.[17] In the confluence between Tyacke's thesis and Collinson's book, we can see the germs not only of Collinson's *The Religion of Protestants* and of Ken Fincham's masterly study of the Jacobean episcopate but also of Conrad Russell and John Morrill's account of the English civil war as a war of religion.[18]

However, the fact that, by the early 1970s, Tyacke, along with the other revisionists was organizing and articulating, in a coherent and polemically effective way, strands of thought and interpretation that had been about the place for the previous ten or fifteen years did not mean that his views did not attract criticism. After an initial period of almost universal assent, they did, and the reasons for that are not far to seek. They lie, on the one hand, in the marked differences of approach and outlook between Tyacke's vision of the role of ideas and ideology and that of the other revisionists, outlined above, and, on the other, in the remarkable staying power of 'Anglicanism' as a myth about the nature not only of the English Church but also (in its more secularized forms) about English exceptionalism and indeed about the very nature of 'Englishness'. The resulting, classically whig, narrative of English exceptionalism contained within it radical and conservative strands. The former privileged the associations between puritanism and liberty and told a progressive story about the rise of liberty, toleration and other such good things. This version had peculiar traction in the United States (as, for instance, the works of William Haller testify). The latter privileged the peculiar balance and stability of the Anglican settlement and traced the (adaptive) triumph of that quintessentially English settlement over extreme, authoritarian, anarchic (and therefore un-English) forces of a puritanism (and then of a dissent) that were often simply equated with Calvinism tout court.[19]

For a good while, the peculiarity of Tyacke's revisionism was masked by its centrality to the work of Conrad Russell. Within the Russellian corpus Tyacke's emphasis on intellectual innovation and ideological conflict was contained within the strict binary division that Russellian and later Morrillian revisionism set up between 'religion' and 'politics', and by the stark contrast the same scholars tended to draw between James I and Charles I. Religious divisions, passions and identities were separated off from issues of political ideology and the conduct of government. Thus isolated they were allowed to cause conflict in ways that left the revisionist account of the rest of political system and social order more or less

[17] For Overall, see Anthony Milton's essay in this volume; for Andrewes, see P. Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and avant-garde Conformity at the Court of James I' in L.L. Peck, ed. *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991); N. Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism' in P. Lake and M. Questier, eds. *Orthodoxy and Conformity in the English Church c.1560–1660* (Woodbridge, 2000).
[18] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982) and K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990).
[19] W. Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York, 1938); idem, *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution* (1955).

intact.[20] Similarly, the division between James (good) and Charles (bad) worked to explain how a polity marked by consensus and moderation had slipped so rapidly, first in the second half of the 1620s, and then again at the end of the 1630s, into crisis and finally into civil war. The religious conflicts set off by the rise of Arminianism constituted the one area of ideological continuity that was allowed to link the conflicts and side-takings of the later 1620s to the events that preceded the civil war. On this account the civil war had at least longish-term religious causes, causes for which Charles I was largely to 'blame'.

The divisions thus set up between politics and religion and between James and Charles worked to confirm one another, since it was Charles's religious convictions as a convinced Arminian that pushed religion into the centre of politics, creating ideological conflict, indeed an increasingly politicized puritanism, where there had been more or less none before. And since, as Conrad Russell asserted, religious belief remained intensely personal, more a matter of 'temperament' than of rational choice, the analysis could be left there.[21]

For other revisionists even this was too much; the contrast between James and Charles appeared too stark; the emphasis on the political failings and Arminian susceptibilities of Charles himself as a major explanation for conflict seemed disproportionate; the emphasis on conscious ideological innovation and conflict, on the long-term continuities stretching from the 1620s, even, on some accounts, from the 1590s, to the 1630s, just too 'whiggish'.[22] Seeking, quite properly, to view the world as Charles viewed it, some revisionists – most notably Kevin Sharpe and more recently Mark Kishlansky – came to see continuity and consensus, where at least some contemporaries and a good deal of recent scholarship (much of it inspired by Tyacke's work) had tended to see discontinuity and disagreement.[23] To do this they displaced Arminianism from the centre of the Laudian or Caroline project. They objected that the enforcement of new canons of Arminian orthodoxy, that is to say, the replacement of one body of ideas about predestination with another, played no central part in the policies of the Caroline Church, which, they claimed, it would, if Tyacke had been right about the Arminian nature of Charles and Laud's opinions and priorities. Having removed Arminianism from the scene, where Tyacke and others had pictured a religio-

[20] Hence the salience of the 'war of religion' argument. See n. 7.

[21] Russell, *Causes*. See P. Lake, 'Introduction' to the 1992 edition of Nuttall's *Holy Spirit*.

[22] For a short but perfectly formed example of this impulse to further revise Tyackean revisionism, see Christopher Haigh's review of *Anti-Calvinists* in *EHR*, CIII (1988), 425–7, which sees the rise of Arminianism thesis as an 'historiographically necessary fiction'.

[23] The same impulse to rehabilitate the actions and perspectives of Charles Stuart has recently led to a similar reversion in the sphere of secular politics as well. The energy and effectiveness of Mark Kishlansky's defence of both Charles and Attorney General Heath against charges of legal chicanery, indeed of 'tyranny', in the five knights' case leaves us with the question of just why the house of commons chose to believe the entirely inaccurate and fallacious arguments of the likes of John Selden rather than the reassurances of their king. The answer seems to be the presence of a radical opposition in the house of commons. M. Kishlansky, 'Tyranny Denied: Charles I, Attorney-General Heath and the Five Knights' Case', *HJ*, XLII (1998) .The wheel of historiographical fortune obviously turns very fast in these bracingly revisionist times.

political movement with a particular view of predestination and therefore of the Christian life, Christian community and visible Church, at its heart, they saw merely a drive towards order, hierarchy and degree, a search for outward uniformity and decency, of a renewed intensity but of an entirely traditional sort. Here was Laud *et al.* as Whitgift and Bancroft on speed, and Charles as a more determined and effective version of Queen Elizabeth. This arguably was how Charles saw, and certainly how he presented, himself at crucial moments throughout his reign. This, of course, had been Christopher Hill's view of the matter. For Hill, as for Sharpe, Bancroft and Laud, Whitgift and Heylyn spoke with one voice on the subject of puritanism and they were all right, all of the time.[24]

All this left the resulting new model revisionism with the task of explaining the extreme reaction against Arminianism or Laudianism of contemporaries. The explanation was found in a refurbished account of puritanism, indeed, in Kevin Sharpe's case, of Calvinism, not only as a deviant 'other', but as a proto-revolutionary ideology.[25] Anti-popery was also called into play at this point. As a species of irrationality, a form of paranoia, it was perfectly suited to make men see Laudianism as what it most patently was not, that is as an inherently popish threat to order and authority in Church and state. Just how such a small and marginalized group of puritans and Calvinists could have so completely hoodwinked their contemporaries and plunged the kingdom into chaos and conflict, was also answered by the invocation of ideologically motivated foreigners – in this case the Scots.[26]

We were back here to a calmly consensual, Hookerian, indeed Anglican, Elizabethan world picture of positively Tillyardian comprehensiveness and blandness, and in the late 1630s we see this consensual intellectual and cultural system being undercut by a small minority of ideologically motivated men ('puritans' and 'Calvinists'), by foreigners (the Scots) and a few malcontents (disaffected courtiers and aristocrats). With Kevin Sharpe's reconfiguration of the religio-political scene we have returned to an entirely traditional game of Anglicans and puritans. In the religious sphere, at least, revisionism had indeed consumed itself and reverted to a form of whiggery in the space of fifteen years.[27]

24 K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (1992), 922–54; C. Hill, 'From Grindal to Laud' in *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill* (3 vols., Brighton, 1985–6), II. 63–86.

25 K. Sharpe, 'A Commonwealth of Meanings' reprinted in his *Remapping Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000).

26 Sharpe, *Personal Rule*, 922–54.

27 A recent development of this position is that of Charles Prior, who, returning to a basic reworking of the old puritan/Anglican binary, constructs his version of an Anglican mainstream against a very narrow definition of puritanism (as the position of the most extreme nonconformists, Presbyterians and proto-Independents). Unsurprisingly Prior discovers that the resulting debates and divisions prefigure or anticipate later engagements between English defenders of episcopacy and Scots Presbyterians. After all, what was at stake in both situations was a dispute about Presbyterianism. More problematically, Prior proceeds to cite the resulting symmetries or correspondences as proof that the English civil war was both a 'war of religion' and a product of 'the British problem' and as such had really nothing much to do with Laudianism or Arminianism about which there was little or nothing novel or disruptive since everyone who was not a puritan (or rather, in Prior's parlance, a 'reformist') must be a 'conformist' and thus largely in agreement

What we have here, then, is a confluence between the leading edge of revisionism and a pre-existing sediment of 'Anglican attitudes', assumptions and beliefs about the essential nature of the Church of England as moderate and non-ideological. However, even working within this vision of the Anglican middle way, very different versions of the resulting Anglicanism can be produced, and such rival versions of the national past have been and remain one of the central means whereby rival claimants to the Anglican essence have made their case to be regarded as the core rather than the periphery of the national Church. Different versions of both 'puritanism' and Arminianism or Laudianism have often tended to be central to the construction of the resulting middle ground. Very different versions of Anglicanism can be constructed as normative by the manipulation and application of those categories. And that, as we have seen, was precisely why Tyacke's initial intervention was so subversive of a number of the received versions of Anglicanism; indeed doubly so, since Tyacke's account did not take sides, but merely presented the post-Reformation English Church as a site within which a variety of claimants to embody that Church struggled, as it turned out, and as his later work on the period after 1660 confirmed, indecisively, for primacy.[28] Initially, as we have seen, the central move in Tyacke's account appeared to be from Calvinist consensus to controversy and conflict via the rise of Arminianism in the 1620s and a reactive resurgence of puritan denunciations of a hierarchy polluted with popery and demands for further reformation. However, as the notion of the Calvinist consensus came under scholarly scrutiny and critique, the materials organized initially under the sign of 'consensus' emerged as something much more like a Calvinist hegemony; a relatively stable but never entirely unchallenged control over what could be said, through the privileged media of the day, on certain subjects. Even at its height that hegemony was never unchallengeable. A function of political and power relations, it had always to be managed and maintained. Indeed, it remained subject to intermittent challenge throughout the period, challenge that at moments of political crisis (obviously in the early 1620s, but also, of course, in the 1590s) could stretch Calvinist control to breaking point.[29] Not only, from at least the 1590s on, were there people in the upper echelons of the Church consciously seeking to alter this state of affairs, even within the 'consensus', that is to say among those willing to observe and enforce certain versions of reformed orthodoxy,[30] there were very considerable

one with another on the crucial issues, which, of course, turn out to be the issues at stake in the debates between Prior's 'reformists' and 'conformists'. There is a winning circularity to this argument that renders it, by turns, both obvious and mistaken, banal and wrong. C. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church* (Cambridge, 2005).

[28] For the later seventeenth century, see Tyacke's essays 'Religious Controversy during the Seventeenth Century: the Case of Oxford' and 'Arminianism and the Theology of the Restoration Church', both reprinted in *Aspects*.

[29] P. Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church 1570–1635', *PP*, CXIV (1987); A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge, 1995).

[30] For an analysis of one such voice, see Anthony Milton's essay on John Overall in this volume. Also see P. Lake, 'The Moderate and Irenic Case for Religious War: Joseph Hall's *Via Media* in Context' in S.

areas of disagreement, ambiguity and tension, divergent trends and tendencies that could easily boil over into formal disagreement and dispute.[31]

To adopt the very useful formulation of David Como, what was at stake was more a negative consensus than a positive one; more a shared sense of the sorts of things that could not be allowed than a detailed list of propositions and positions to which all those within the 'consensus' either had assented or would assent.[32] Once Tyacke's initial insights and evidence were glossed in this way what emerged was something very different from the classic revisionist movement from consensus to conflict. Instead, we had a classically post-revisionist scenario, with a range of possible positions and claims, all held in tension and potential contradiction the one with the other. Now the crucial question became not so much how did consensus break down, but how and by whom it was established in the first place and subsequently maintained? How were the various factions and forces in play held together and controlled?[33] The resultant story was a politically contingent one, with a number of possible outcomes always in play and in prospect. And if there was a turning point, a hinge decade, in this story, it was far more likely to be the 1590s than the 1620s.[34] Moreover, once the 1590s were taken to be crucial, the issues and tensions shaping that decade themselves moved to centre stage. Following this chain of argument, pretty soon we have a prospectus for a dialectical account of the emergence of Arminianism that stretches from an analysis of the tensions and contradictions within the post-Reformation English Church settlement to the religious debates and controversies that attended the breakdown of the Personal Rule.[35]

But, of course, such a post-revisionist account of Tyacke's position was, if anything, even less congenial to traditional Anglican attitudes than the initial

Amussen and M. Kishlansky, eds. *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1995).

[31] P. Lake, 'The Significance of the Elizabethan Identification of the Pope as Antichrist', *JEH*, XXXV (1980); P. Lake and D. Como, '"Orthodoxy" and its Discontents: Dispute Settlement and the Production of "Consensus" in the London (Puritan) Underground', *JBS*, XXXIX (2000); Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*.

[32] D. Como, 'Puritans, Predestination and the Construction of Orthodoxy in Early Seventeenth Century England' in Lake and Questier, eds. *Orthodoxy and Conformity*.

[33] And this became a question as much about moderate puritans as about those in authority, for such puritans had a massive stake in defending the doctrinal purity of the national Church, which rendered defensible their continued entanglement in that Church's corrupt and corrupting structures and hierarchies of employment, influence and reward. See Lake, *Moderate Puritans*. For an account of the subversive effect of Laudianism on the web of subtle trade-offs and compromises between moderate puritans and their friends and sponsors in the establishment, see Lake, *Boxmaker's Revenge*.

[34] Tyacke, 'Andrewes' in Lake and Questier, eds. *Orthodoxy and Conformity*.

[35] This might be taken to be a restatement of the position that Russell came to hold in his *Causes of the English Civil War*. See P. Lake and M. Dowling, eds. *Protestantism and the National Church in Sixteenth Century England* (1987), esp. 193–224; P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* (1988), esp. ch. 4. This is also the form taken by Tyacke's book on the altar written in conjunction with Ken Fincham (OUP, forthcoming). And this adverts to a difficulty that runs throughout this introduction. Despite the fact that this volume is intended to mark his retirement from forty-one years' teaching at UCL (now, if not before, as its new logo informs us, *A Global University*), Tyacke's intellectual career remains very much in *medias res* and therefore any attempt to sum up his contribution to the field must be even more partial and imperfect than such attempts always are.

formulation had been. For the Calvinist consensus might have been taken merely to have been arguing for a reformed version of Anglicanism, moving Grindal and Abbot to the centre and pushing Laud and Andrewes to the periphery. Now, however, we had a situation that called the whole notion of mainstream and periphery into question; to appropriate and adapt Kevin Sharpe's phrase, not so much a commonwealth as a polyphony, indeed at times of crisis, a veritable cacophony, of meanings, as a number of different groups and factions (puritans both radical and particularly moderate, evangelical Calvinist conformists, Whitgiftian conformists, avant-garde conformists, Laudians and proto-Laudians, various sorts of church papist and Catholic loyalist to name a few) manouevred within and in terms of the basic legal and institutional, the political, textual and ideological structures provided by the national Church, structures that, of course, they all hoped (to different extents) to change and even, in some cases and at some times, to transform, in order to gloss and claim that Church as their own. In so doing the various parties very often tried to achieve their ends by establishing some notion of the mainstream. This was very often conceived as a middle way between extremes. It was therefore created through the construction of various versions of the extremes between which such a *via media* could be located and through which that middle way could be ideologically defined. Those extremes also provided deviant identities to which their rivals and enemies, both personal and ideological, could then be assimilated, thus rendering them no longer colleagues and contemporaries to be tolerated, but rather deviants, actual or potential threats to order and orthodoxy, and thus available for excoriation and exclusion from the Church and its structures of authority and reward.[36]

All this makes it doubly crucial that historians trying to understand these interactions should adopt an attitude of critical distance, a more or less permanently suspended judgement about the 'veracity' of the various renditions of the core and the periphery deployed by contemporaries. The aim is to describe and to understand, not to adjudicate these disputes. Not to maintain such a sceptical relativism, risks, indeed almost always leads to, the reproduction, within the terms and structures of the historian's own analysis or argument, of one or other of the contemporary renditions of the core and the periphery thematic.[37] It is far from clear that many of the more negative responses to Tyacke's work, with their combination of what one might term hyper-revisionism and a reversion to long-standing Anglican assumptions and stereotypes, have altogether avoided this fate.[38]

Certainly, Tyacke's claim that the Elizabethan and Jacobean Church was 'Calvinist' produced a number of reactions. Most fundamentally it raised the issue of what it meant to attribute a position or label of that sort to the national Church.

36 See my essay in this volume.
37 Lake and Questier, 'Introduction' in Lake and Questier, ed. *Orthodoxy and Conformity*.
38 Prior, *Defining*; P. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic* (Cambridge, 1992); J. Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church* (Oxford, 1992).

Did it mean that the official foundational documents of that Church – in this instance the book of common prayer and the thirty-nine articles and perhaps the homilies – were simply Calvinist? Or did it mean merely that they were susceptible to a Calvinist gloss?[39] Did it mean that a majority of the members of that Church were Calvinists or merely that the most vocal and influential members of it could be so described? Did it mean that the clergy, or the most vocal elements in the clergy or the bearers of ecclesiastical power and wielders of theological influence, were largely Calvinist?[40] In a monarchical Church could the Church be said to be Calvinist if the monarch was not?[41] Finally did 'the people', that is the majority of the members of the national Church, need to be Calvinist for the national Church to be so described? How far down the food chain of theological instruction and popular belief did Calvinism have to go before Tyacke could be said to be right?[42]

Alongside these sorts of question arose another different set of more overtly theological, terminological issues. In talking of Calvinism, what did we mean? In using the terms Calvinism and Arminianism, Tyacke was talking about rival

[39] These texts remained stable through the period, even as the criteria for various sorts of 'orthodoxy' shifted at home and abroad. The capacity of these documents to maintain a stable, uncontested meaning throughout the post-Reformation period must remain in doubt. Here a robust Tyackean relativism, paying attention to who was glossing these foundation texts of 'Anglicanism', how and for what purposes, is of the essence if the history of these texts, and of the Church whose position they 'define', is to be written at all satisfactorily.

[40] For appeals to the opinions of 'the people' to establish the ideological centre of gravity of the English Church, see C. Haigh, 'The Church of England, the People and the Catholics' in Haigh, ed. *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke, 1984); idem, 'Revisionism, the Reformation and the History of Catholicism', *JEH*, XXXVI (1985); idem, 'The Taming of the Reformation: Preachers, Patrons and Parishioners in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *History*, LXXXV (2000); for a different take, see A. Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999); idem, *Church Papists* (Woodbridge, 1993); idem, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Reconsidered', *JEH*, XLIX (1998). For a third approach, see J. Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998). All these authors position the Church of England between puritanism (or in Haigh's case a reformed protestantism effectively collapsed into puritanism) and Laudianism. Walsham assimilates puritanism to an evangelical protestant mainstream and pushes Laudianism to the periphery, suggesting, with Haigh, that its popular support may well have come from church papists. Haigh, in effect, reverses these claims. Like Walsham, he assimilates protestantism to puritanism, but only the more easily to marginalize both from his version of the popular conservative, indeed in effect 'Catholic', mainstream; a mainstream that he speculates might well have provided the basis for the churchmanship of Laud and his allies after 1603. On this logic Laudianism becomes the embodiment of the Catholic continuity of the English Reformation, the religion of the people developed to the highest levels of coherence, self-consciousness and (both anti-puritan and anti-Calvinist) polemical aggression. Maltby, on the other hand, marginalizes both puritanism (a position she equates with the most extreme and divisive versions thereof – on her account there are no 'moderate puritans') and Laudianism, to concentrate on a popular 'prayer book protestantism', which, like Haigh's parish Anglicanism and proto-Laudianism, she sees emerging from the interaction between the prayer book and the basic religious impulses of the laity. The result is three very different versions of the theological and cultural identity of the English Church and people (aka Anglicanism) all justified by recourse to that most elusive and protean of beasts, the religion of 'the people' in post-Reformation England. For a still more extreme example of the same populist Anglican approach, see C. Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth Century England* (Basingstoke, 1998).

[41] G. Bernard, 'The Church of England c.1529–c.1640', *History*, LXXV (1990); Sharpe, *Personal Rule*.

[42] I. Green, *The Christian's ABC* (Oxford, 1996); idem, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2000).

versions of the theology of grace, different sets of opinions about predestination. But were the opinions he was calling Calvinism really derived from Calvin and his immediate followers? Were indeed the tenets he was calling Arminianism derived from Arminius? If they were not did that render his usage of the terms invalid? If so what terms, if any, should we put in their place?[43] Were Tyacke's terms, or indeed any synonyms we might think of, adequate to the task of accurately characterizing the range of opinions on these questions to be found among theologically literate English people during the period? Does it make sense to give the theology of grace such prominence, to cut it off from other areas of contemporary theological concern and argument? If not, how are these issues best to be integrated into a wider sense of the theological and ecclesiological scene and incorporated into accounts of other areas of theological interest, activity and polemic?[44]

Each of those questions has elicited a range of different answers from the scholarly community and prompted a great deal of research across the board of English religious and political, social and cultural history. Not everyone thus stimulated has agreed with Tyacke, but the richness of the resulting research and the quality of at least some of the resulting debate are in themselves ample testimony to the importance and influence of his work. Indeed, one of the major points of this essay has been to show just how crucial Tyacke's writing has been to a great deal of the most distinguished and important work produced in this field since the 1970s. Tyacke's scholarly mode has always been characterized by a tight focus, a firm conceptual grip, typified by his precise use of terms and categories combined with meticulously conducted research across the full range of printed books and manuscript sources. Seldom has such a tightly focused, meticulously researched and precisely argued body of work exercised such field-shaping influence, while yet retaining its relevance as a basic starting point for anyone wanting to study, teach or research the religious, political and cultural history of post-Reformation England.

While his work has always centred on a connected nexus of issues and interests, as anyone who opens his collection of essays will discover, Tyacke's work has also ranged over a wide variety of subjects and criss-crossed the long seventeenth century. Nor, while he has stuck to his guns in the face of his critics, has his

[43] White, *Predestination*; P. Lake, 'Predestinarian Propositions', *JEH*, XLVI (1995); Davies, *Caroline Captivity*. Equally concerned to defend Anglicanism from the taint of Arminianism or, in White's case, of any sort of theological dogmatism, White and Davies disagree fundamentally about the nature of the Anglicanism being defended. Davies sees a balanced and evangelically effective Jacobean Church settlement being destroyed from within. White, on the other hand, sees only a seamless spectrum of views moderately stated and held, stretching calmly throughout the period, interrupted only by occasional outbursts from zealously Calvinist puritans, genuine radicals, beset, at moments of political crisis, by a paranoid anti-popery. Also see S. Hughes, 'The Problem of "Calvinism": English Theologies of Predestination, c.1580–1630' in S. Wabuda and C. Litzenberger, eds. *Belief and Practice in Reformation England* (Aldershot, 1998); and Diarmaid MacCulloch's essay in this volume.

[44] See Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church'; Lake and Dowling, eds. *Protestantism*, 193–224; Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 225–30; Prior, *Defining*.

work stood still. He has returned more than once to the subject of puritanism and in two very important, and to my mind inexplicably under-used, pieces, outlined an account of the fortunes of English puritanism over the long haul.[45] Increasingly his commitment to the study of the role of ideas and ideology in politics has led him back to the 1590s as a decade of foundational importance for the period that followed. Even as retirement neared he threw himself into the development of a new special subject tracing arguments and ideas unleashed in that decade through to the outbreak of the civil war. Similarly, while he has scarcely abandoned his commitment to the importance of the theology of grace in defining for contemporaries the nature of true religion, of a true Church and the Christian community, he has sought to embed his account of the rise of Arminianism in other areas of ecclesiastical and doctrinal activity. His massive project on the altar in post-Reformation English protestantism (forthcoming from OUP and written in collaboration with Ken Fincham) promises not only to integrate his account of the theology of grace with other issues to do with worship and the sacraments, but also to produce a coherent account of the ideological trajectory of English protestantism, and the struggle for the Church of England, that runs from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign into the later seventeenth century. As ever, the focus will be tight, the research meticulous, spanning the range of available materials, both in print and in manuscript, but the ambition is large and the impact likely to be major.

The essays in this volume are all by people who have been Tyacke's colleagues and collaborators, his protégés and pupils. We are all also his friends and we hope that the range and depth of the pieces collected here – some archivally dense case studies, others overviews of major themes and issues in the period, others (like this introduction) historiographical squibs – will all, in their different ways, bear witness to his standing as an historian of early modern England and to the very high standards that his indefatigable research scholarship has always maintained.

[45] 'The "Rise of Puritanism" and the Legalizing of Dissent, 1571–1719' and 'The Fortunes of English Puritanism', both reprinted in Tyacke, *Aspects*.

2

Art and Iconoclasm in Early Modern England*

KEITH THOMAS

It is usually said that the protestant Reformation severely retarded the development of the visual arts in England. Just when the country was beginning to respond to new Renaissance influences, along came the reformers. The Church, hitherto the main patron of artists, no longer wanted wall-paintings or statues of saints or stained-glass windows. As a result, glass-painting and figure sculpture collapsed, and easel painting was largely confined to secular portraits. Communication with Italy, the centre of artistic innovation, was severely restricted. In Sir Ernst Gombrich's view, the impact of protestantism was a 'catastrophe'.[1]

Even more devastating than the abrupt check to artistic activity was the wholesale destruction of so much art of the past, the deliberate smashing of statues, obliteration of wall-paintings and breaking of stained glass. Of course, the artistic inheritance of the Middle Ages has suffered from time, neglect and so-called 'improvement', as well as from protestant iconoclasts. It is probable that more church monuments and stained glass were removed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than in the sixteenth; and it is certain that, whereas the reformers merely whitewashed over the wall paintings, a reversible process, the Victorians stripped off the plaster altogether.[2] But there can be no denying that reforming zeal led to the destruction of an incalculable quantity of sculpture, wood-carving,

* This article began life as the Annual Lecture to the Society of Renaissance Studies on 21 January 1983. A later version was given as the Medlicott Lecture to the Historical Association on 5 April 2003 and published without notes and under a different title in *The Historian*, LXXVIII (Summer 2003). The torrent of publication in this area during the last twenty years has made some of its argument and much of its illustrative material more familiar than they were in 1983. It is, therefore, with some apologies that it is now offered, in expanded and documented form, as a tribute to an historian who has done more than most to illuminate the character of English protestantism in the century after the Reformation.

1 E.H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (1966), 310. Gombrich's view of the artistic consequences of protestantism had a long ancestry. See, e.g., James Barry, *An Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England* (1775), ch. 5.

2 See, e.g., E.C. Rouse, *Medieval Wall Paintings* (1991), 9; W. Hastings Kelke, 'The Sculptured Monuments of Buckinghamshire', *Records of Bucks*, III (1870), 9; J. Fawcett, 'A Restoration Tragedy', in *The Future of the Past*, ed. Fawcett (1976); *A History of York Minster*, eds. G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant (Oxford,

painted panels and cloths, mural decoration, embroidery, jewellery, illuminated manuscripts, stained glass and metalwork. Today, for instance, of the alabaster altarpieces that were made in huge numbers in late medieval England, the only complete survivors are ones that were exported; and there is not a single undamaged medieval rood – the crucifix with the statues of the Virgin and St John that once dominated the interior of every village church.[3] In the reign of Edward VI shiploads of discarded Catholic sculpture were sent to the continent; and when a traveller visited Venice in 1594, he found the church of San Giuseppe di Castello full of 'graven images . . . of rare beauty', the 'chief' of which were said to have been 'brought out of England after the death of Queen Mary'.[4]

Yet the Tudor Reformation was only the first onslaught. In the mid-seventeenth century, just when it seemed that, under the energetic court patronage of Charles I, English art was well on the way to recovery, the long parliament inaugurated a fresh orgy of destruction, in which succumbed many of the monuments that had escaped the first attack.

What significance should we attach to these two great waves of iconoclasm? What do they tell us about the aesthetic implications of English protestantism? And, more generally, how did they affect the place of 'art' (as we now call it) in the cultural life of early modern England?

Before trying to answer those questions, it is necessary to recall the sequence of events.[5] English iconoclasm made a spectacular beginning in the late 1530s with the dissolution of the monasteries, and the wholesale demolition of altars, windows, shrines, and often the monastic buildings themselves. Outside the monasteries, the attack was at first confined to those images that were thought to have been 'superstitiously' 'abused', that is to say venerated with prayers and pilgrimages, or credited with miraculous powers. In the late 1530s, many

1977), 430–1; D. Hickman, 'Reforming Remembrance', *Thoroton Society Transactions*, CIII (1999), 111; J. Finch, *Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850*, *BAR*, Brit. Ser. CCCXVII (Oxford, 2000), 131.

[3] F. Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters* (Oxford, 1984). For a good general account, R. Strong, *Lost Treasures of England* (1990).

[4] *CSPF 1547–53*, 55; Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary* (Glasgow, 1907–8), I. 177.

[5] The general narrative provided by J. Phillips, *The Reformation of Images* (1973), has been corrected and amplified by M. Aston in *England's Iconoclasts. Volume I* (Oxford, 1988); *Faith and Fire* (1993), chs. 7–10; *The King's Bedpost* (Cambridge, 1994); 'Puritans and Iconoclasm, 1560–1660', in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700*, eds. C. Durston and J. Eales (1996); and 'Public Worship and Iconoclasm', in *The Archaeology of Reformation 1480–1580*, eds. D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist (Leeds, 2003). Other notable contributions include R. Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People* (Cambridge, 1989); E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992), part II; P. Lindley, untitled essay in R. Deacon and Lindley, *Image and Idol: Medieval Sculpture* (2001) and ' "Disrespect for the Dead"? The Destruction of Tomb Monuments in Mid-Sixteenth Century England', *Church Monuments*, XIX (2004); R. Hutton, 'The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformation', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. C. Haigh (Cambridge, 1987), 136; P. Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England* (Basingstoke, 1988), ch. 4; J. Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War* (Woodbridge, 2003); J. Walter, ' "Abolishing Superstition with Sedition"? The Politics of Popular Iconoclasm in England, 1640–1642', *PP*, CLXXXIII (2004) and 'Popular Iconoclasm and the Politics of the Parish in Eastern England, 1640–1642', *HJ*, XLVII (2004); D. Cressy, *Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 2000), ch. 14; *The Journal of William Dowsing*, ed. T. Cooper (Woodbridge, 2001).

celebrated three-dimensional objects of popular devotion, like our lady of Walsingham, were brought to London and publicly burned. The cult of Thomas Becket was proscribed and all statues, pictures or windows commemorating him were ordered to be destroyed.

The Edwardian government began by trying to maintain the Henrician distinction between 'abused' images, which were to be pulled down, and acceptable ones, which could be kept. But it rapidly came to the view that the distinction was unworkable and that the only solution was to get rid of church images altogether. Churchwardens' accounts reveal the extensive removal or destruction of roods, along with other statues, altars, banners and wall-paintings. In their place the royal arms were erected in the churches and sentences of scripture painted on the walls.

The rapid return to Catholicism under Queen Mary revealed that many of these images had merely been taken down and hidden. The roods were put back. The scriptural sentences were washed off. The royal arms were pulled down; and many of the old statues restored, as at Exeter, where 'a cunning Dutchman . . . made new noses to certain fine images which were disfigured in King Edward's time'.[6] But they were not to last, for the accession of Elizabeth resulted in a new wave of iconoclasm, both popular and official. The roods were dismantled. Pictures of God as an old man or of the holy ghost as a dove were forbidden; and many stone churchyard crosses pulled down. Only the painted windows remained, because of the cost of replacing them by new glass; and even they were steadily decaying.

Yet the Elizabethan Church never formally prohibited all religious imagery as such. This made it possible for aristocrats and collegiate institutions to have images and painted glass in their private chapels and for the Laudian clergy to bring them back into the churches in the 1620s and 1630s.[7] It also meant that there was a steady current of unauthorized iconoclasm by zealous individuals who wanted to take the destruction of images further than was officially required. At Boston, Lincolnshire, in 1621, a churchwarden climbed the steeple and broke off the arm of the figure of St Botolph, under the impression it was an image of the pope; and, after a celebrated incident at St Edmund's Salisbury, the recorder, Henry Sherfield, was fined in star chamber in 1632 for destroying a stained-glass window because it pictured God the father as 'a little old man in a blue and red coat, with a pouch by his side'.[8] Numerous crosses in public places were physically assaulted.

[6] *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. S.R. Cattley (1839–41), VIII. 500.

[7] Laud held that the Edwardian prohibitions (3 & 4 Edw. VI, c. 10, repealed by Mary, but renewed by 1 Jac. I, c. 25, s. 48) did not apply to windows or painted effigies; Laud, *Works*, IV. 199–201. In 1684 the court of arches upheld the lawfulness of painted images in churches, provided they were intended only for ornament and remembrance; Sir Robert Phillimore, *The Principal Ecclesiastical Judgments delivered in the Court of Arches 1867 to 1875* (1876), 380–2.

[8] *CSPD 1619–23*, 245; William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (1646), 102; P. Slack, 'Religious Protest and Urban Authority: The Case of Henry Sherfield, Iconoclast, 1633', *SCH*, IX (1972).

The Laudian attempt to restore religious imagery exacerbated the feelings of those who believed that the Elizabethan settlement had not gone far enough. There was a chorus of protest against the reintroduction of crucifixes, statues of the virgin and saints, painted glass and hangings, carved fonts, embroidered altar cloths, gothic chalices, vestments and devotional illustrations for bibles. When the long parliament met, these complaints were converted into violent action. The 1640s saw the removal of most of the Laudian innovations and also of many of the medieval statues, windows, fonts and crosses that the Elizabethans had left untouched. A house of commons order of 1641, followed by parliamentary ordinances in 1643 and 1644, commanded the demolition of all crucifixes and crosses, images and pictures of any person of the trinity, of the virgin Mary or the saints, and all 'superstitious inscriptions', in churches and other public places.[9]

In response to these edicts, the crosses at Cheapside and Charing came down. The queen's chapel at Somerset House was destroyed. The duke of Buckingham's art collection at York House was ordered to be sold, but not before those pictures or statues depicting the virgin or a person of the trinity had been burned. William Dowsing toured over two hundred and fifty churches in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, ordering the destruction of thousands of 'superstitious pictures' (mostly panels of stained glass), and the removal of carved angels from the roof, crosses from the steeples and catholic inscriptions from the brasses. Charles I's magnificent art collection was dispersed;[10] and in 1651 a committee of the rump parliament recommended that, if possible, all the cathedrals in the land should be pulled down.[11] In the localities, there were innumerable acts of destruction, particularly of glass, altar rails, organs and church monuments. At Canterbury cathedral in 1642, it took a hundred men at the end of a rope to haul down the statue of St Michael Archangel over the south door; and a godly minister, with a pike in his hand, climbed the city fire-ladder, sixty steps high, to smash the window depicting Thomas Becket.[12]

The men who did these things were wholly unrepentant. They applauded the smashing of the glass at Canterbury: 'light comes in . . . through the windows where painted images . . . kept it out'.[13] The rarer the work of art, the greater the moral value of its destruction. A London alderman broke all the painted windows in his parish church, 'which some value at 1000l, they were so artificially painted'.[14] Richard Hampden was offered £500 for a painting of the trinity that he had inherited from his grandmother, but, with a gesture as self-sacrificing as it

9 *CJ*, II. 246, 287; *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, eds. C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (1911), I. 265–6, 425–6.

10 *The Inventories and Valuations of the King's Goods 1649–1651*, ed. O. Millar, *Walpole Society*, XLIII (1972); *The Late King's Goods*, ed. A. MacGregor (1989).

11 S.R. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate* (1903), II. 22–3; Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm*, 197–9.

12 Richard Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes from Canterbury* (1644), 22–3.

13 Ibid., 24.

14 HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, XXII. 364.

was godly, he threw it into the fire.[15] The parliamentary soldier, Sir William Springett (Springate), destroyed all catholic works of art, 'without ever reserving one of them for its beauty or costly workmanship'. On one occasion he came to visit a colleague, but was shocked, as he passed through the hall, to spy 'several large, fine superstitious pictures: as of the crucifixion of Christ, of his resurrection, &c. They were thought very ornamental to the hall.' He therefore drew his sword, cut them out of their frames and, spitting them on his sword's point, carried them into the parlour to greet his host's astonished wife.[16]

It is no wonder that later historians have shaken their heads over such apparent barbarism. The puritans, thought Matthew Arnold, 'developed one side of their humanity at the expense of all others'; they were 'incomplete and mutilated men'. 'The motive wasn't so much religious', suggested Kenneth Clark, 'as an instinct to destroy anything comely, anything that reflected a state of mind that an unevolved man couldn't share.' Dr A.L. Rowse was characteristically trenchant: 'among many human idiots there is a loathing for things of beauty they cannot understand'. Even the greatest historian of the puritan revolution drew back at the sight of so much apparently wanton destruction by his godly heroes: 'of the elevating sense of natural or artistic beauty they had no comprehension'.[17]

All these commentators agree that the iconoclasts were either indifferent to what are now widely regarded as things of beauty or, worse still, that they positively hated them. How just is this assessment?

The first point to make about it is that it was not what contemporaries said at the time. In the sixteenth century there was plenty of hostility to image-breaking and much denunciation of the greed and spoliation that accompanied it. But there was a relative absence of what we might call aesthetic objections to iconoclasm. For those in authority, the main worry about image-breaking was quite different: it was the fear that destruction might so get out of hand as to threaten the social order. Hence the enduring concern to ensure that the removal of images was not carried out by unauthorized individuals.[18] Hence also the fear that the attack on images and inscriptions might involve the destruction of the tombs, heraldic escutcheons and painted windows in which the nobles and gentry set out their genealogies, commemorated their ancestors and proclaimed their importance. It was to avert this danger that special exemptions were made, both in mid-Tudor

15 *Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry*, ed. M.H. Lee (1882), 235.

16 *Some Account of Circumstances in the Life of Mary Pennington* (1821), 93–5. Springett was presumably the unidentified zealot whose iconoclasm is recorded in Samuel Torshell, *The Hypocrite Discovered* (1644), 13.

17 M. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge, 1960), 11; K. Clark, *Civilisation* (1971), 159; A.L. Rowse, *The England of Elizabeth* (1950), 416; Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, II. 23.

18 Though this concern was not shared by William Prynne, who cited 2 Kings xi. 18 ('ALL THE PEOPLE [his capitals] of the land went into the House of Baal, and brake it down'), as proof that no special command from those in authority was needed, 'every man in such a case being a lawful magistrate without any special warrant'; *Canterburies Doome*, 494–5. See also *The Souldiers Catechisme* (1644), 21.

times and again in the 1640s, to protect from destruction those images on funeral monuments of people who were not worshipped as saints.[19]

To the nobility and gentry, it was the functional value of images that mattered rather than their aesthetic merits. The same was true of the Catholic opponents of iconoclasm. To them, images were cherished devotional objects. They were laymen's books, teaching the rudiments of the faith. They were a means of remembrance to the forgetful and they awakened devotion by their vivid appeal to the eye. Their desecration was a fearful sacrilege. But it was not primarily their artistic merit that mattered. As Bishop Bonner stressed, it was not to 'the workmanship or beautiful shape' of images that reverence was due, but to their spiritual content.[20] Worldly men might marvel at the art of the painter or engraver, but the artistic value of an image was subordinate to its spiritual purpose. Images were there to stimulate, inform and focus devotion, not to provide aesthetic enjoyment. Both before and after the Reformation, many Catholic leaders felt that, if the images were too beautiful, they would distract the viewer from religious thoughts.[21]

Of course, many of the laity lamented the visual splendour that the Reformation was destroying. For Robert Aske, leader of the pilgrimage of grace, the abbeys were 'one of the beauties of this realm', while in the 1590s an anonymous writer recalled the lost glories of Durham cathedral, with its 'sumptuous' shrine of St Cuthbert, its 'exquisite' images of the apostles and its 'marvellous beautiful image of our saviour'.[22] Papists complained that the protestantized churches afforded 'no pleasing and delighting of our outward senses'; and an Elizabethan recorded the 'weeping and bewailing of the simple sort, and especially of women: who, going into the churches, and seeing the bare walls, and lacking their golden images . . . they lament . . . and fetch many deep sighs'.[23] But the women who threw stones in 1536 at the royal commissioners as they took down the rood loft at St Nicholas's priory, Exeter, were no more animated by aesthetic considerations than were the churchwardens of Covehithe, Suffolk, who refused in 1644 to help William Dowsing to raise the ladders so that he could smash their windows.[24] Local patriotism, resentment of outsiders, an attachment to cherished objects of devotion and symbols of corporate identity: all played their part. But the language

[19] 3 & 4 Edw. VI, c. 10, s. 6; *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, eds. P.L. Hughes and J.F. Larkin (1964–9), II. 146–8; *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, I. 266, 426.

[20] Edmund Bonner, *A Profitable and Necessarye Doctrine* (1555), sig. Iiv.

[21] Nicholas Sander, *A Treatise of the Images of Christ* (Louvain, 1567), fo. 180; E. de Bruyne, *L'Esthétique du Moyen Age* (Louvain, 1947), 191; G.R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1961), 47–54; K.P.F. Moxey, *Pieter Aertsen, Joachim Beuckelaer, and the Rise of Secular Painting* (1977), 198–9; M.B. Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation* (Oxford, 1979), 58; N. Bryson, *Word and Image* (Cambridge, 1981), 1–3.

[22] M. Aston, *Lollards and Reformers* (1984), 326, 330; *Rites of Durham*, ed. J.T. Fowler (Surtees Society, CVII, 1903), 4, 15, 12.

[23] John Walsal, *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse* (1578), sig. Dvi; (Francis Trigge), *An Apologie* (1589), 24; *The Works of James Pilkington*, ed. J. Scholefield (Parker Society, 1842), 129.

[24] W.J. Harte, *Gleanings from the Common Place Book of John Hooker* (Exeter, [1926]), 14; *Journal of William Dowsing*, 294.

in which modern connoisseurs bewail the loss of the artistic inheritance of the Middle Ages is not one that many contemporaries employed.

Indeed it would be anachronistic to expect them to have done so. This was an age that was perfectly accustomed to the demolition of what we would regard as works of art. There was no habit of respect for the artistic creations of the past. All through the Middle Ages, the pulling down and rebuilding of churches, the obliteration of earlier wall-paintings, the replacement of images, the removal of tombs and the recycling of monumental brasses had involved a continuous process of destruction. As has been said of the great East Anglian churches, 'we see [today] what the fifteenth century built, not what it destroyed'.[25]

Such destruction was all the more easily accepted when the work it destroyed was that of mere artisans. How could images remind anyone of God, demanded a Jacobean preacher, when their form was 'but the skill and draught of the craftsman' and they themselves but 'puppets of wood, which every boy can make, after he hath been awhile apprentice with a carver?'[26] Though many were mass-produced, the carvings and wall-paintings of English churches had often been the work of jobbing craftsmen, like John Handros, who was employed in 1533 to regild the rood at Cottesbrooke, Northamptonshire, and is described in the accounts simply as 'wayfaring man'.[27] In Renaissance Italy, painters and sculptors were shedding their servile overtones, as artists claimed to be practitioners of the liberal arts, people of learning and creative imagination.[28] But in England things moved more slowly. For all the teaching of the humanists about the suitability of the visual arts for a gentleman's education, and despite the existence of a number of gentleman painters, Sir George Buck could roundly declare in Jacobean times that the art of painting was 'base and mechanical'.[29] A clear distinction between an artist and an artisan was slow to emerge. A typical local painter, like John Taylor, who in the 1660s did portraits for Magdalen College, Oxford, also mended frames, looked after the chapel woodwork and painted the garden seats.[30]

An even greater precondition of iconoclasm than the low social standing of the artist was the absence of any clearly defined set of aesthetic values to which the opponents of image-breaking might appeal. Of course, there always had been aesthetic appreciation, in the sense of visual delight in the majestic, the luminous and the ornate. By at least the eleventh century, it is claimed, there had emerged

[25] L. Creighton, *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton* (1905), I. 413; G.G. Coulton, *Art and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1928), ch. xxii.

[26] Peter Barker, *A Judicious and Painefull Exposition upon the Ten Commandements* (1624), 95, 91.

[27] R.M. Serjeantson and H. Isham Longden, 'The Parish Churches and Religious Houses of Northamptonshire', *Archaeological Journal*, LXX (1913), 227.

[28] R. and M. Wittkower, *Born under Saturn* (1963), 12, 16, 44.

[29] G(eorge) B(uck), 'The Third Universitie of England', in John Stow, *The Annales* (1615), 986; Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Boke named the Governour*, ed. H.H.S. Croft (1883), I. 43–8; E. Auerbach, *Tudor Artists* (1954), 104, 110; E. Mercer, *English Art 1553–1625* (Oxford, 1962), 152–4; N. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge, 2000), 139.

[30] Mrs R.L. Poole, *Catalogue of Portraits in the Possession of the University, Colleges, City and County of Oxford* (Oxford, 1912–25), II. xiii–xxiv. Cf. Joshua Poole, *The English Parnassus* (1657), 52.

within the church art of western Europe 'a new sphere of artistic creation without religious content and imbued with the values of spontaneity, individual fantasy, delight in colour and movement, and the expression of feeling that anticipate modern art'.[31] Yet it is hard to find in late medieval England any formal recognition of the possibility that a work of art could have an independent value, unrelated to its religious, political or social function. Indeed, the English language of aesthetic appreciation, so underdeveloped by Italian standards, suggests that most people in sixteenth-century England would have found it hard to distinguish what was beautiful from what was expensive ('rich', 'costly', 'sumptuous', 'rare') or socially imposing ('stately', 'lofty', 'magnificent', 'glorious') or mechanically adroit ('artificial', 'curious').[32]

In Tudor England, pictures usually had a practical purpose: didactic or informative. They preserved likenesses of individuals, commemorated events and held out virtuous exemplars to be followed. Most theorists regarded them as essentially an imitation of nature, thus relegating them to the inferior status of a copy of a better original.[33] In contemporary Italy, by contrast, artists had begun to preach the autonomy of art; they exalted the painter's creative fantasy and praised the poetic freedom that made things of beauty, not by imitating nature, but by improving on nature in response to the semi-divine promptings of the imagination.[34] England was not unaffected by such neo-platonic notions.[35] But it was one thing to use such language about a genius like the Elizabethan miniaturist, Nicholas Hilliard,[36] it was another to apply it to the unpretentious world of the village church and its simple artefacts.

Only under the early Stuarts, when connoisseurship and court patronage elevated the status of the painter, did critical vocabulary become more sophisticated and the aesthetic concept of 'works of art' begin implicitly to make itself felt. In Renaissance Italy it had long been customary for popes and other rulers to form collections of painting and sculpture, taken out of their original context and displayed for reasons that were at least partly aesthetic. By Elizabethan times they had their English imitators, in the form of aristocratic art-collectors, like the earl of Pembroke, Lord Lumley or the earl of Leicester; indeed Leicester, though a

[31] M. Schapiro, *Romanesque Art* (1977), 1, 23. See also C. Barret, 'Medieval Art Criticism', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, V (1965) (a reference I owe to Dr Peter Hacker) and U. Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, trans. H. Bredin (1986).

[32] For such terminology, see, e.g., John Leland, *The Itinerary*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (1964); *Rites of Durham*; 'Relation of a Short Survey of the Western Counties' (1635), ed. L.G. Wickham Legg, *Camden Miscellany XVI* (Camden 3rd series, LII, 1936).

[33] J.H. Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts* (Chicago, 1958), 38, 85–6; W. Tatarkiewicz, *A History of Six Ideas* (1980), chs. 9–10.

[34] Tatarkiewicz, *History of Six Ideas*, 113–15, 247–8; D. Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton, NJ, 1981).

[35] *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. Gregory Smith (Oxford, 1904), I. xxiii, 156–7, 396; II. 3–4, 297; R. Strong, *The English Icon* (1969), 51–3; C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding Drama* (Oxford, 1954), 320–2, 343.

[36] As in Giovani Paolo Lomazzo, *A Tracte containing the Artes of Curious Paintinge*, trans. R(ichard) H(aydcocke) (1598), sig. ¶vi.

puritan leader, owned pictures of saints and new testament scenes.[37] But most aristocratic houses had no easel paintings or sculpture at all.[38] It was the courtiers of James I and Charles I who changed all that, by importing classical coins, statues, and inscriptions, encouraging foreign artists and strenuously competing to collect Veroneses, Tintorettos, Correggios and other lush artefacts of Catholic piety.[39] In 1638 Francis Junius, librarian to the earl of Arundel, commended those 'great and generous spirits' who, like his own employer, filled their galleries with classical sculpture and foreign paintings and made them accessible to all 'lovers and well-willers of art'. Such a term, 'lovers of art', had been unfamiliar in sixteenth-century England.[40] So it is not surprising that, although antiquarians lamented the loss of 'monuments of antiquity',[41] no connoisseurs rose up during the Tudor Reformation to oppose, on aesthetic grounds, the destruction of the statues and the whitewashing of the wall-paintings.

But by the time of the second wave of iconoclasm in the 1640s, things were different. A self-conscious love of 'art' had developed, both in the Church, where the Laudian cult of the 'beauty of holiness' was much more self-consciously 'aesthetic' in the modern sense than medieval piety had ever been, and at court, where Charles I had established himself as the greatest art-collector in Europe. Of course, he and his courtiers were as much concerned with demonstrating their wealth and power as their artistic refinement, while the Laudians were more preoccupied with holiness than with beauty. No one had yet formulated any notion of the fine arts as a separate domain. Moreover, a taste for contemporary Italian painting did not necessarily imply any great admiration for the artistic products of medieval England, which were primarily cherished for historical rather than aesthetic reasons, particularly by the growing community of

[37] On sixteenth-century art collectors, see now *The Evolution of English Collecting*, ed. E. Chaney (2003). For Leicester's pictures, HMC, *De Lisle and Dudley MSS*, I. 290–1; *Bath MSS*, V. 203–4, 207, 221–2; W.J. Thoms, 'Pictures of the First Earl of Leicester', *Notes & Queries*, 3rd series, II (1862), 201–2, 224–5.

[38] S. Foister, 'Paintings and Other Works of Art in Sixteenth-Century English Inventories', *Burlington Magazine*, CXXIII (1981), 279.

[39] Much recent work on this subject is reported in the pages of *The Journal of the History of Collections* and summarized in *The Evolution of English Collecting*, ed. Chaney. See also R.M. Smuts, 'Art and the Material Culture of Majesty', in *The Stuart Court and Europe*, ed. Smuts (Cambridge, 1996); S. Bracken, 'Robert Cecil as Art Collector', in *Patronage, Culture and Power*, ed. P. Croft (2002); A.R. Braunmuller, 'Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, as Collector and Patron', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. L.L. Peck (Cambridge, 1991); M.F.S. Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921), esp. 63, 102, 140, 145, 299–300; D.E.L. Haynes, *The Arundel Marbles* (Oxford, 1975); D. Howarth, *Lord Arundel and His Circle* (1985); *Apollo*, CXLIV (August 1996); C. Pace, 'Virtuoso to Connoisseur', *The Seventeenth Century*, II (1987); A. Macgregor, 'King Charles I: a Renaissance Collector?', ibid., XI (1996); J. Wood, 'Nicholas Lanier (1588–1666) and the Origins of Drawings Collecting in Stuart England', in *Collecting Prints and Drawings in Europe, c. 1500–1750,* ed. C. Baker *et al.* (Aldershot, 2003). For a list of religious paintings executed by Van Dyck for British patrons, see Gio. Pietro Bellori, *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori et Architetti Moderni* (Rome, 1672), 261–2.

[40] Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients* (1638), 81, 345. For similar terminology, see Nicholas Hilliard, *A Treatise concerning the Arte of Limning*, ed. R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain (Manchester, 1981), 82; Lomazzo, *Tracte*, sig.¶ iiij.

[41] William Wyrley, *The True Use of Armorie* (1592), 24–5; *APC 1600–1*, 44.

antiquarians interested in studying and recording the monuments of the past.[42] Even at the end of the seventeenth century, an educated writer could assert that English medieval painting 'did not surpass the dye of the ancient Britons'.[43]

Nevertheless, by the 1640s conditions existed for at least some semi-aesthetic protest against the new wave of iconoclasm, which was accordingly denounced by its opponents not just as dreadful sacrilege, but also as the 'barbarous' work of 'Goths and Vandals', 'utter destroyers of all civility', who had desecrated cathedrals unequalled in Europe for their magnificence, and defaced works 'glorious and beautiful to the eye'.[44] The antiquarian William Dugdale was appalled by the readiness of parliamentary supporters to destroy 'whatever was beautiful or ornamental' in churches and deplored the ruin of 'so glorious a structure' as old St Paul's. Thomas Fuller lamented the 'exquisite imagery' of the west front of Lichfield cathedral, devastated by parliamentary troops; and his fellow-historian, Anthony Wood, deeply regretted the obliteration of the pictures of apostles and saints on the choir-stalls in Merton College chapel, 'to the sorrow of curious men that were admirers of ancient painting'.[45] One commonwealth pamphleteer urged the display in a public library of the works of art that had been confiscated from the royalists: 'medals, statues, ancient rings and other antiquities, pictures of learned delight or famous men'.[46] The council of state earmarked some of Charles I's classical statues 'to be kept for their antiquity and rarity'; many other *objets d'art* were retained or distributed to government members; and Cromwell himself secured some of the king's choicest paintings and tapestries for his use at Whitehall. It was financial need, not indifference, that dictated the sale of the rest.[47]

But, in the mid-sixteenth century, images, crosses and painted glass had not

[42] Though there was not always a clear distinction between the two concerns. At the end of Elizabeth's reign, Sampson Erdeswicke observed that the images on the west front of Lichfield cathedral were so finely carved 'that it is a great place for any man that takes delight to see rarities, to behold them'; *A Survey of Staffordshire*, ed. Thomas Harwood (1820), 210. John Tradescant (d. 1638) was the first antiquarian to collect panels from medieval alabaster altarpieces; *Tradescant's Rarities*, ed. A. MacGregor (Oxford, 1983), 279. By contrast Charles I readily melted down the medieval plate of the Oxford colleges.

[43] James Harrington, preface to vol. ii of Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691–2). Cf. John Evelyn's description of English cathedrals as 'mountains of stone, vast and gigantic buildings indeed; but not worthy the name of architecture'; cited in K. Thomas, 'English Protestantism and Classical Art', in *Albion's Classicism*, ed. L. Gent (1995), 228. On the lack of interest by early modern European connoisseurs in artists active before 1500, see G. Previtali, *La Fortuna dei Primitivi* (Turin, 1964); J. Hale, *England and the Italian Renaissance* (1996), 59; and C. Hope, 'Mind your Maniera', *New York Rev. of Books*, 5 Dec. 2002, 33.

[44] (Bruno Ryves), *Mercurius Rusticus* (1685), 164 and passim; John Hall, *The Advancement of Learning* (1649), ed. A.K. Croston (Liverpool, 1953), 13; Symon Gunton, *The History of the Church of Peterburgh*, ed. Symon Patrick (1686), 97, 336, 337–8.

[45] *The Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. W. Hamper (1827), 14; William Dugdale, *The History of St Paul's Cathedral* (1658), 192, 133; Thomas Fuller, *The Church-History of Britain* (1656), II. 175; *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood*, ed. A. Clark (Oxford Historical Society, 1891–1900), I. 309. For similar complaints of the destruction of 'beautiful' and 'ornamental' objects, see Aston, *England's Iconoclasts*, 64 fn. 10, 65, 92, 271.

[46] Hall, *Advancememt of Learning*, 30–1.

[47] *CSPD 1651*, 151; *Inventories and Valuations of the King's Goods*, xviii–xx; S. Kelsey, *Inventing a Republic* (Manchester, 1977), 34–7, 39.

been thought of as 'works of art' by either their opponents or their supporters. They were too humble in origin and too potent as living symbols to be the concern of the connoisseur – if connoisseurs of Gothic art had existed. The people of Tudor England thought differently from the modern critics who lament the destruction of so much medieval 'art'. They had not yet come to regard 'art' as something superior to mere 'handicraft'; and they had not been encouraged to respect artistic creativity, regardless of its didactic purpose. Because their assumptions were so different from ours, they did not assail protestant iconoclasm with a barrage of aesthetically motivated protest.

But why did the iconoclasts themselves embark on so much destruction? Were they really the 'mutilated', 'unevolved' men, condemned by Matthew Arnold and Kenneth Clark? Were they quite such philistine enemies of art as is so often suggested?

The target against which all iconoclastic effort was directed was what contemporaries called 'idolatry'. This was an elastic term with an ill-defined meaning. It drew its original justification from the old testament prohibition against worshipping graven images, which the reformers elevated into the status of a separate commandment.[48] But extreme protestants gave the concept a wider meaning, applying it to any kind of worship that they believed to lack divine authorisation. Not just the veneration of images, but invented forms of prayer and ritual, were denounced as 'idolatry' or 'will-worship', to be rooted out because they were devised by man, not God. Biblical precedent justified violent action against such idolatry. The Israelites had been commanded to destroy all the pictures of the Canaanites and all their molten images; and when godly protestants attacked rood screens and statues of saints, they did so in conscious emulation of Hezekiah, who had broken the brazen serpent in pieces, and Josiah, who had smashed the images and cut down the groves. In September 1641 the Herefordshire zealot, Sir Robert Harley, pulled down the cross at Wigmore and beat it into dust; three days later he did the same at Leintwardine. He also broke the windows in the church and beat them into small pieces, in imitation of King Asa in the second book of Chronicles, who burned the idol erected at the brook Kidron; but, as our source sardonically remarks, 'because he could not come at Kidron, he threw them into [the] Teme [the local tributary of the river Severn]'.[49]

It is often said that Reformation protestants had no new arguments against images, but merely drew on those that had been deployed in the old testament, the early Church, Islam and eighth-century Byzantium.[50] Certainly, there was

[48] See Aston, *England's Iconoclasts*, 371–92. This fine book is an essential guide to the motives of the iconoclasts, even though its author is confessedly out of sympathy with them (17).

[49] HMC, *11th Report*, appendix, part vii. 147; 2 Chronicles xv. 16. On Harley, see J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads* (Cambridge, 1990), 115–16.

[50] M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (1980), 69; D. Freedberg, 'The structure of Byzantine and European Iconoclasm', in *Iconoclasm*, eds. A. Bryer and J. Herrin (Birmingham, 1977), 165, 166. The analogy with Byzantium was drawn by Thomas Anderton, *The History of the Iconoclasts* (1671), 20–1.

nothing new about the belief that God could not be represented in visible form or that gilded images were a luxurious waste, when the poor, the true images of God, were allowed to go naked and hungry.

Yet there were some original themes in the protestant polemic that gave it a distinctive character and help to explain the virulence of the iconoclastic attack. The first was a strong historical sense. The protestant case was that image-worship had not originally been a feature of Christianity, but had been allowed to creep in by degrees. For the first four hundred years there had been no images at all, save in private houses, 'for ornament['s] sake'. Then they had appeared in churches, first as historical records, to remind worshippers of the past, later, with the sanction of Pope Gregory I, as laymen's books to instruct the illiterate. After that, there was a rapid escalation, first to the rhetorical use of images as a stimulus to devotion, finally at the second council of Nicaea (787) to their veneration as holy objects.[51] For protestants, no abuse of the second council of Nicaea could be too strong. It was 'that most fond and lewd second council', 'that cursed council', 'that illiterate, parasitical and factious assembly', which 'first established baby-worship by a law'.[52]

The second distinctive feature of protestant iconoclasm was that it was a response to the extreme claims for the miraculous power of images that had been made in the pre-Reformation Church. Many images had been credited with healing powers and some had been fraudulently made to simulate living bodies. It was to counter such beliefs that the reformers engaged in their brutal acts of desacralization, mutilating these venerated objects to show that they were only sticks and stones of human making. That was why people had no inhibition about making bridges out of rood lofts, cushions out of vestments, millstones out of altar slabs, pigs' troughs out of holy-water stoups and children's dolls out of images of saints.

All this was part of a wider and distinctively protestant effort to deny that holiness could attach to material objects. Like some lollards before them, the reformers maintained that 'no place on earth [was] holier than an[y] other place'.[53] Puritans attacked the Laudian bishops because they placed 'some secret mystery of speciall holiness in the [communion] table above other parts of the church'; and when William Dowsing came to Cambridge, he was shocked to discover that Dr Brownrigg, master of St Catharine's College, 'manifested more

51 *The Workes of . . . William Perkins* (Cambridge, 1616–18), II. 521–3; *The Works of Symon Patrick*, ed. A. Taylor (Oxford, 1858), VII. 67. For Hobbes's view of the origins of idolatry, see *Leviathan*, ed. R. Tuck (Cambridge, 1991), 455 (chap. 45).

52 *The Works of John Jewel*, ed. J. Ayre (Parker Society, 1845–50), I. 548; *The Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomie* (1583), 137; James Calfhill, *An Answer to John Martiall's Treatise of the Cross*, ed. R. Gibbings (Parker Society, 1846), 155; *The Works of Thomas Jackson* (Oxford, 1854), XII. 166; *The Works of Lancelot Andrewes* (Oxford, 1854), VI. 130; George Tullie, *A Discourse concerning the Worship of Images* (1689), 33.

53 Reginald Pecock, *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy*, ed. C. Babington, Rolls Ser. (1860), I. 222.

reverence . . . to the place called "church" than any other place'.[54] Sir William Springett, the iconoclast who impaled pictures on his sword, was 'so very sensible of their blind superstition concerning the house they called "the church", that sometimes he would use disdainful words about it, and talk of putting their church-timber to very common uses, to show his abhorrence of their placing holiness in it'.[55]

The third way in which the iconoclasts of the sixteenth century differed from their predecessors was that they lived in an age of print. There were now enough book-educated preachers to make visual images superfluous. 'Where there is a frequent preaching', said John Donne, 'there is no necessity of pictures.'[56] Words, whether written or spoken, were claimed to be so much more informative than images. 'The cross, with a picture of a man upon it, with arms stretched, body pierced, and feet nailed', thought the Elizabethan Calvinist, James Calfhill, 'may peradventure put me in mind of a man so executed; but who it was, for what cause it was, to what wholesome end and effect it was, no picture in the world can tell me.' For that, one had to read the bible.[57]

The violence of the attack on images thus sprang from a passionate hatred of 'idolatry', buttressed by a strong historical sense that image-worship was an unwarranted innovation, for which the printing-press had removed the last plausible excuse. Images were tangible symbols of a religious order whose very memory was to be extirpated. The Edwardian and Elizabethan injunctions ordered the removal of all images of superstitious practices, 'so that there remain no memory of the same'.[58] Elizabethan separatists, like John Penry and Henry Barrow, wanted every medieval church pulled down, 'so that all memory of the apostatical Romish religion may be buried'.[59] To the sectarian Samuel Chidley in 1653, it was a source of indignation that St Paul's cathedral, 'that abominable idol . . . that old bawdy house of the whore of Babylon', was still standing, 'the whole fabric thereof being no ornament, but a disgrace to the city and whole nation'.[60]

But does this mean that the iconoclasts were 'mutilated men', hostile to things of beauty? In some cases, it probably does. The second commandment could be taken to mean that all images were forbidden, not just religious ones. Some of the early lollards had attacked what they called 'the sinful and vain craft of painting,

54 *The Retractation of Mr. Charles Chancy* (1641), 29; C.H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842–52), III. 365.
55 *Life of Mary Pennington*, 68–9.
56 *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. E.M. Simpson and G.R. Potter (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953–62), VII. 432.
57 Calfhill, *Answer*, 350.
58 E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (Oxford, 1839), I. 17, 189.
59 *The Notebook of John Penry, 1593*, ed. A. Peel (Camden 3rd Series, LXVII, 1944), 89; *The Writings of Henry Barrow 1587–1590*, eds. L.H. Carlson (1962), 468. They had some justification, as one Catholic priest pointed out. See Richard Bristow, *A Briefe Treatise of Diverse Plaine and Sure Wayes* (Antwerp, 1574), fo. 143r.
60 (Samuel Chidley), *Bells Founder Confounded* ('1603' [1653]), 10.

carving or casting'.[61] Many of their puritanical successors thought the arts unnecessary and wasteful vanities, a distraction from the godly life. An inability to sympathize with the idea of art-collecting led critics of Charles I to blame him for accepting gifts of 'antique idols' and squandering great sums of money 'on braveries and vanities, on old rotten pictures, on broken-nosed marble'.[62]

The platonic notion that art was an illusion, a shadow and a counterfeit, did the visual arts little good among those whose overwhelming concern was truth. 'For liberty of lying', thought Bishop Jewel, 'painters and poets . . . have of long time been coupled both together.'[63] The creative aspirations of the artist could easily be represented as an arrogant intrusion into a sphere that was God's alone.[64] Latent in protestant thought was a fear of the evil potentialities of the unchecked imagination. Anything that made a strong appeal to the senses (the 'carnal affections') was suspect; it was sufficient proof that portraits of Christ were evil, thought the puritan John Vicars, that 'these kind of pictures are so well pleasing to all sorts of carnal men and women'.[65] The Baptist Samuel Herring urged parliament in 1653 to have the walls of all churches coloured black, 'to put men in mind of that blackness and darkness within them'.[66]

Yet few iconoclasts were enemies of 'art' as such. On the contrary, many of them had highly developed aesthetic sensibilities. The Seymours and the duke of Northumberland, who ruled England during the Edwardian reformation, played a key role in the introduction of classical architecture from Italy.[67] Many image-makers became protestants, like Robert Smith, burned as a heretic in 1555, who 'chiefly delighted in the art of painting, which . . . rather for his mind's sake than for any living or lucre, he did practise and exercise'.[68] Archbishop Parker, who presided over the iconoclasm of the 1560s, owned many pictures; in his household he maintained many 'drawers and cutters', 'painters' and 'limners'.[69]

61 *Select Works of John Bale*, ed. H. Christmas (Parker Society, 1849), 96; *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*, ed. A. Hudson (Cambridge, 1978), 28; J.A.F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards* (1965), 129; *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428–31*, ed. N.P. Tanner (Camden 5th Series, XXIII, 1977), 158, 160; *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, ed. J.A. Muller (Cambridge, 1933), 273; Aston, *Lollards and Reformers*, ch. 5.

62 *The None-Such Charles his Character* (1651), 85; Thomas, 'English Protestantism and Classical Art', 224; William Prynne, *Histrio-Mastix* (1633), 901; *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, ed. W. Orme (1830), XI. 184–5. Even John Evelyn thought it wrong to form collections 'for curiosity and ornament only'; *Evelyn's Sculptura*, ed. C.F. Bell (Oxford, 1906), 143.

63 *Works of John Jewel*, II. 660.

64 Edmund Gurnay, *Toward the Vindication of the Second Commandment* (Cambridge, 1639), 34; cf. *The Writings of Clement of Alexandria*, trans. W. Wilson, Ante-Nicene Christian Lib. (1847–9), II. 392.

65 John Vicars, *The Sinfulness and Unlawfulness, of Having or Making the Picture of Christs Humanity* (1641), 64. Cf. William Perkins, *A Treatise of Mans Imagination* (Cambridge, 1607), 21–3, 160–1, 164–9; J. Simpson, 'The Rule of Medieval Imagination', in *Images, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm in Late Medieval England*, ed. J. Dimmick *et al.* (Oxford, 2002).

66 *Original Letters and Papers of State, addressed to Oliver Cromwell*, ed. John Nickolls (1743), 99.

67 Mercer, *English Art*, 60–3.

68 *Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, VII. 347. For others, ibid., IV. 694–5; VIII. 140–1; and for a notable German parallel, A. Morrall, *Jörg Breu the Elder* (Aldershot, 2001).

69 *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, eds. J. Bruce and T.T. Perowne (Parker Society, 1853), 426; W.

In 1641, the future regicide, Colonel John Hutchinson, was active in blotting out wall-paintings and smashing stained glass, but he was also 'a great virtuoso and patron of ingenuity'; his chief recreation was 'seeking out all the rare artists he could hear of'; and when the art collections of the king and other royalists were put up for sale, he laid out two thousand pounds 'in the choicest pieces of painting' and brought them to his country house, 'intending a neat cabinet for them'.[70]

There was no paradox about the existence of art-loving iconoclasts, for the issue was not an aesthetic one.[71] It is true that some iconoclasts used semi-aesthetic arguments, denouncing images for their tawdriness, and disparaging statues of saints as 'toys' and 'puppets', 'babies' [i.e. dolls], designed to appeal only to children and 'foolish women'. They dismissed vestments and liturgical utensils as 'trash', 'trifling toys and trumpery'. They despised 'superfluous deckings and trimmings' and 'gaudy glisterings'.[72] Henry Sherfield defended his destruction of the window in Salisbury by saying 'it was not fair, nor costly, but of very rude work'.[73]

But usually the iconoclasts did not dispute the artistic merits of the images they attacked. 'The more costly the idols be', wrote Samuel Chidley, 'and the more outward beauty and bravery they have, the more dangerous they are.'[74] The defenders of Cheapside Cross pleaded that it was 'an ornament to the city, and of antiquity'. Its opponents conceded the truth of this claim, but dismissed it as of 'of no great consequence'.[75] If anyone moves us to idolatry, then, no matter how 'near or dear unto us', 'we are commanded by God himself to stone them to death; our eye must not pity them'.[76] Images and paintings, 'though in themselves they are never so innocent, rich, splendid, yet when once they have been serviceable to such wickedness, he would have them cast away'. An idol was an idol, regardless of whether it was 'of the common sort' or 'of exquisite graving'.[77] The Church's

Sandys, 'A Copy of the Inventory of Archbishop Parker's Goods at the Time of his Death', *Archaeologia*, XXX (1844), 10–12.

70 Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson,* Everyman's Lib. (n.d.), 79–80, 292. His purchases may be followed via the index to *Inventories and Valuations of the King's Goods.* For the largest parliamentarian art collection, see H. Maddicott, 'A Collection of the Interregnum Period: Philip, Lord Viscount Lisle, and his Purchases from the "Late King's Goods", 1649–1660', *Journal of the History of Collections*, XI (1999).

71 Peter Brown has similarly remarked that the Byzantine controversy about images had 'nothing whatsoever to do with art'. He notes that 'the only two men in the Dark Ages whom we know to have been deeply interested in art . . . were Iconoclast or at least anti-Iconodule', namely the emperor Theophilus and Bishop Theodulf, author of the *Libri Carolini*; 'A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *EHR*, LXXXVIII (1973), 9.

72 *The Catechism of Thomas Becon*, ed. J. Ayre (Parker Society, 1844), 65; *The Two Books of Homilies*, ed. J. Griffiths (Oxford, 1859), 265; *English Church Furniture, Ornaments and Decorations, at the Period of the Reformation*, ed. E. Peacock (1866), 110, 170; *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. D.M. Wolfe *et al.* (1953–82), I. 828.

73 John Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (1721), II. 154. See the robust remarks of J. Foster Palmer, 'Development of the Fine Arts under the Puritans', *THRS*, new ser. V (1891), 225–6.

74 (Samuel Chidley), *Thunder from the Throne of God* (1653), 33.

75 Samuel Loveday, *An Answer to the Lamentation of Cheape-Side Crosse* (1642), sig. A2.

76 Culmer, *Cathedral Newes*, 23.

77 (Joseph Wilson), *Nehushtan* (1668), 75; (Robert Parker), *A Scholasticall Discourse* (n.p., 1607), I. 47.

homily against the peril of idolatry declared that 'better it were that the arts of painting, plastering, carving, graving, and founding had never been found, nor used, than [that] one of them whose souls in the sight of God are so precious should, by occasion of image or picture, perish and be lost'.[78]

Since idolatry was a sin to which man's nature was 'wonderfully prone',[79] risks were not to be taken, particularly if the image was in a church, where there was a greater danger of its being superstitiously worshipped. If there were any doubt, then down it should come. At Balliol College, Oxford, there was a crucifix in a painted window; it survived the Reformation, but when a young man 'was taken praying and beating his breast' before it, the master and fellows had the window removed.[80] The Banbury crosses were pulled down because a local Catholic used to take his hat off when he passed them.[81] At Canterbury the image of Christ and the holy ghost over the south gate was destroyed because it had been 'the means of much idolatry: men now living testify that they have seen travellers kneel to it in the street'.[82] In such cases, no appeal to antiquarian or aesthetic considerations could be of any avail.

Images seemed all the more dangerous in an age when critics expected art to be, above all, lifelike. The terms in which they described the best sculpture and painting are those that were used of machiavellian politicians – 'resembling', 'imitating', 'deceiving', 'eye-deluding'. In Elizabethan English, a painted likeness was a 'counterfeit'.[83] The more striking the illusion, the greater the risk of confusing image and prototype. 'The nearer a thing cometh to the life when it is most void of life', wrote a puritan divine, the more dangerous.[84] 'The ignorant and the common people', lamented the homily against idolatry, 'are deceived by the cunning of the workman and the beauty of the image to do honour unto it.'[85] These fears were not groundless. Puritan suspicion of Italian art would have been amply confirmed if the godly could have read the letter in which the duke of Buckingham's agent, Balthasar Gerbier, reported in 1624 his discovery in Paris of a crucifixion by Michelangelo: it should be viewed on one's knees, he thought, for it was 'the most divine thing in the world. I have been such an idolater as to kiss it three times, for there is nothing more perfect.'[86] Protestant worries about the effect of anthropomorphic art would have been reinforced, had it been known

78 *The Two Books of Homilies*, 243.

79 (John Dod and Robert Cleaver), *A Plaine and Familiar Exposition of the Ten Commandements*, 18th edn (1632), 56.

80 *Cheape-Side Crosse Censured and Condemned* (1641), 6–7.

81 P.D.A. Harvey, 'Where was Banbury Cross?', *Oxoniensia*, XXXI (1966), 106.

82 Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes*, 23.

83 Poole, *English Parnassus*, 155; Henry Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae* (1654), 145; L. Gent, *Picture and Poetry 1560–1620* (Leamington Spa, 1981), 22, 27–8, 39, 43–4, 54–5; *OED, s.v.* 'counterfeit'. For another example, see W.H. Stevenson and H.E. Salter, *The Early History of St. John's College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1939), 229.

84 Gurnay, *Second Commandment*, 127–8.

85 *The Two Books of Homilies*, 172.

86 T. Duffus Hardy, *Report . . . upon the Documents in the Archives and Public Libraries of Venice* (1866), 38n.

that Mary Pennington, a Quaker no less, would dream that she saw in the clouds 'a very bright head, breast and arms, the complete upper part of a man, very beautiful, like pictures I have seen to represent an angel form, holding in his hand a long green bough'.[87]

Fear of idolatry was therefore wholly intelligible. But it did not imply indifference to art; and it is in no way surprising that some of the iconoclasts were artists themselves. For it was those who recognized the power of the images who were the ones most anxious to destroy them. It was because he believed that 'images do fret and eat into the fancy and outward senses more deeply and indelibly than . . . other means of instruction' that the clergyman Edmund Gurnay was so opposed to the Laudian innovations.[88] One early Tudor craftsman, John Warde, once made an image of St Christopher for a Cambridgeshire church, only to discover, on his return a month later, that 'certain superstitious people' had placed candles before it. He removed the candles and took away his image, leaving his hat in its place and remarking that they could worship that: 'for the hatter is as holy a man as I am, and his handiwork deserveth as well to have candles set before it as mine doth'.[89]

But to the art that played no part in religion and was therefore free from the taint of idolatry, most protestants had no objection. 'We are not so superstitious or scrupulous', said the homily, 'that we do abhor either flowers wrought in carpets, hangings, and other arras, [or] the images of princes printed or stamped in their coins . . . Neither do we condemn the arts of painting and image-making as wicked of themselves.'[90] Most English puritans followed Calvin's ruling that the arts of painting and sculpture were gifts of God, that the 'historical and civil' use of images was entirely acceptable and that it was legitimate to paint what one could see.[91] William Perkins accordingly allowed the use of images to adorn secular buildings, to identify coins, to 'keep in memory friends deceased', and to narrate events in human and divine history. 'There is and ever hath been a lawful and laudable civil use of pictures or images . . . both for adornation of houses and convenient places, and for commemoration of persons and things,' agreed John Vicars.[92]

So although the Reformation temporarily eliminated the demand for altarpieces, crosses, chalices, embroidered vestments, books of hours, wall-paintings, stained glass and figural sculpture of Christ, the virgin Mary and the saints, it left room for many other forms of artistic production, including history painting (old testament scenes not excepted), portraiture, and, in the seventeenth century, the

87 *Life of Mary Pennington*, 37–8.

88 Gurnay, *Second Commandment*, 115; 'Edmund Gurnay' in *ODNB*.

89 William Turner, *A New Booke of Spirituall Physik* ('Rome' [Emden], 1555), fos 20v–21.

90 *The Two Books of Homilies*, 221.

91 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. H. Beveridge (1957), I. 100; *Sermons of Calvin upon Deuteronomie*, 133–9. Calvin's views are succinctly summarized by W.J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin* (New York, 1988), 135.

92 *Workes of William Perkins*, I. 580, 670; Vicars, *The Sinfulness and Unlawfulness*, 1–2.

new genre of landscape, which the artist Edward Norgate described as 'as of all kinds of painting the most innocent, and which the devil himself could never accuse of idolatry'.[93]

Portraits were particularly in demand because they preserved the memory of friends and ancestors, and commemorated their virtues, wealth, power and social status. (As Catholics noted sardonically, the reformed religion forbade the image of Christ, yet permitted 'the picture of paramours in every house' and allowed anyone to 'place in their closet, kiss or embrace, the picture or effigy of a person whom they dearly love'.[94]) Portraits also made an admirable memento mori, displaying the gradual deterioration of the body.[95] Royal portraits of Elizabeth came near to being venerated as secular icons,[96] while pictures of protestant reformers were popular as symbols of doctrinal allegiance, not wholly dissimilar in function from medieval images of saints.[97] The portrait miniature, brought to perfection by Nicholas Hilliard, a former Genevan exile, has been rightly described as 'an art form peculiarly expressive of protestant England'. It was Hilliard who was chosen to illuminate the charter of Sir Walter Mildmay's puritan foundation of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.[98]

During the commonwealth era, when portraits of private individuals were becoming very common, there was a reaction against the fantasy portraiture of Van Dyck, favoured by Charles I's courtiers, in favour of a new realistic 'plain' style, which aimed to represent people as they were, not as they would have liked to be. Hence Oliver Cromwell's famous instruction to Lely to 'paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all. But (pointing to his own face) remark all these roughness, pimples, warts and everything as you see me'.[99] By 1712, the *Spectator* could declare that 'face-painting is nowhere so well performed as in England . . . No nation in the world delights so much in having their own, or friends' or relations' pictures.'[100]

Tomb sculpture also flourished in post-Reformation England, as sculptors turned from commemorating saints to memorializing the gentry in the funeral monuments that increasingly dominated the parish churches, and in which enhanced attention was paid to the likeness of the deceased.[101] Public sculpture, particularly statues and busts of monarchs, also became a characteristic art

93 Edward Norgate, *Miniatura*, ed. M. Hardie (Oxford, 1929), 44.

94 Abraham Woodhead, *Concerning Images and Idolatry* (Oxford, 1689), 62; [John Leslie], *A Treatise of Treasons* (n.p. [Louvain], 1572), fo. 145v. On portraits, see Strong, *The English Icon*.

95 As noted in *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. J.M. Osborn (1962), 115–16.

96 R.C. Strong, *Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford, 1963).

97 For the portraits of continental divines in Elizabeth I's Library at Whitehall palace, see *The Diary of Baron Waldstein*, trans. G.W. Groos (1981), 52–5, 61.

98 R. Strong, *Artists of the Tudor Court* (1983), 9; B. Usher, 'Early Puritans and the Arts', *SCH*, XXVIII (Oxford, 1995).

99 *Vertue Note Books*, I, *Walpole Society*, XVIII (1930), 91; L. Knoppers, 'The Politics of Portraiture: Oliver Cromwell and the Plain Style', *Renaissance Quarterly*, LI (1998).

100 *Spectator*, ed. D.F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), DLV (6 Dec. 1712).

101 K.A. Esdaile, *English Church Monuments 1510 to 1840* (1946), 47–8; M. Whinney and O. Millar, *English Art 1625–1714* (Oxford, 1957), ch. vi; B. Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (1980), chs. 3–4; P.

form.[102] Far from being an artistic desert, the Interregnum was a period of architectural innovation, of competitive house-building and of experiment in monumental sculpture. It was a great age for miniatures and medals, and its coinage has been described as 'the finest of modern times'.[103] Moreover, the sale of Charles I's pictures created an art market that for the first time was no longer restricted to the court.[104]

But for the closest approximation to pure aesthetic values in post-Reformation England, we should look outside the realm of sculpture and easel-painting altogether. Those genres enjoy a privileged status in modern art museums that they never had in the early modern period. Few Tudor householders chose to hang framed pictures on plain walls. Instead, the well-to-do lived surrounded by carved panelling, tapestry (which cost much more than paintings) and elaborately decorated plasterwork in rooms that were essentially total works of art. Lower down the social scale, people painted their walls or hung them with painted cloths. In his once-standard history of English painting, Sir Ellis Waterhouse remarks briefly on the existence of this domestic wall-decoration, mainly the work of local house-painters, and adds, rather condescendingly, that 'it is sufficient to have mentioned this class of work'.[105] Yet this class of work meant that a large proportion of the population in post-Reformation England lived surrounded by pictures. Of course, the designs employed tended to be repetitive and uninspired – floral patterns, geometrical figures, strapwork, arabesques and Renaissance grotesque (so-called 'antique work'). But there was a wide range of subject-matter: heraldic arms and badges; proverbs; biblical texts and 'godly sentences'; old testament stories; classical and mythological themes; emblems and allegories; the ages of man, the seasons, the virtues, the senses, time and death.[106] Many of these motifs were copied from continental prints and pattern-books.[107] Decoration of this sort has been uncovered in alehouses and other humble dwellings; literary allusions and household inventories suggest that it was more or less universal. In 1683 a

Lindley, 'Innovations, Tradition and Disruption in Tomb-Sculpture', in *The Age of Transition*, ed. D. Gaimster and P. Stamper (Oxford, 1997), 89; Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, esp. 230–3.

[102] D. Howarth, *Images of Rule* (Basingstoke, 1997), 34–5, 61–2, 285–6; N. Smith, *The Royal Image and the English People* (Aldershot, 2001), 68, 71–5; K. Gibson, ' "The Kingdom's Marble Chronicle" ', in *The Royal Exchange*, ed. A. Saunders, London Topographical Society (1997).

[103] J. Bold, *John Webb* (Oxford, 1989); T. Mowl and B. Earnshaw, *Architecture without Kings* (Manchester, 1995); P.M. Hunneyball, *Architecture and Image-Building in Seventeenth-Century Hertfordshire* (Oxford, 2004), 16; D. Allen, 'Thomas Simon's Sketch-Book', *Walpole Society*, XXVII (1938–9), 43; Palmer, 'Fine Arts under the Puritans', 221.

[104] J. Wood, 'Taste and Connoisseurship at the Court of Charles I', in *The Stuart Courts*, ed. E. Cruickshanks (Stroud, 2000), 131.

[105] E. Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain 1530 to 1790* (1953), 29.

[106] A helpful account, drawing on the earlier work of many local antiquarians, can be found in Mercer, *English Art 1553–1625*, ch. iii. The place of religious themes in this domestic wall-painting is illuminatingly discussed in T. Watt, *Print and Popular Piety 1550–1640* (Cambridge, 1991), ch. 5. See also C. Peters, *Patterns of Piety* (Cambridge, 2003), 246–55, 301–18, 343–4; A. Walsham, 'Impolitic Pictures', *SCH*, XXXIII (1997).

[107] See the excellent study by A. Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England* (New Haven, CT, 1997).

critic of the work at Windsor castle by the Italian court artist, Antonio Verrio, remarked that he knew of better wall-paintings in twenty ale-houses in the bishopric of Durham.[108]

Because so little of this popular art survives today, it is very easy to underestimate the visual side of post-Reformation England. Shop signs, inn signs, furniture, bedcovers, clothes, armour, gold and silver plate, pottery, ballads, broadsides, maps, globes, flags, ships and all sorts of everyday objects were regularly adorned with patterns and pictures, some derived from foreign engravings and similar in style to those painted on walls, others indigenous.[109] The narrative painting that had once been found in churches was now to be seen in the tavern and the domestic interior. Paper ballads with woodcut illustrations were stuck up in alehouses and cottages, while pictorial embroidery for curtains, cushions and book bindings was a widespread female pursuit.[110]

Nor were the churches as bare as is sometimes thought. The roods and images had gone; and so had the wall-paintings, though occasionally the defeat of the Armada or some similar patriotic theme might be depicted.[111] In their place were the royal arms, painted or carved, and intended to 'beautify' and 'adorn',[112] an ever-increasing number of the gentry's funeral monuments, 'comely' communion cups and flagons,[113] carved pews and pulpits, and on the walls a painted array of texts: the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments and other 'chosen sentences of holy writ'. Many such texts survive and one needs only to glance at these elaborate black-letter inscriptions, sometimes edged with elegant borders or framed by painted arches or curtains, with cords and tassels, or accompanied by the figures of Moses and Aaron, to realize that it would be altogether too simple to see in their presence an unqualified triumph of the word over the image. For these texts also had a decorative intention. They were put there by the same local painters and 'writers' who decorated houses, and they were officially intended 'to be not only read for edification, but also to give some comely ornament'. They were meant to 'beautify' the churches, to 'garnish' and 'adorn' them.[114] Of

[108] *The Remains of Denis Granville*, ed. G. Ornsby (Surtees Society, XLVIII, 1865), 118–19.

[109] The wealth of ornament by which ordinary people were surrounded is illustrated in *Design and the Decorative Arts in Britain*, ed. M. Snodin and J. Styles (2001), and J. Ayres, *Domestic Interiors* (2003).

[110] J.L. Nevinson, *Catalogue of English Domestic Embroidery of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1938); idem, 'The Embroidery Patterns of Thomas Trevelyon', *Walpole Society*, XLI (1968); A. Walsham, 'Jewels for Gentlewomen', *SCH*, XXXVIII (2004).

[111] C.E. Keyser, *A List of Buildings in Great Britain and Ireland having Mural and Other Painted Decorations* (1883), lxxxvii–viii. Archbishop Laud ordered the obliteration of pictures of the Armada: *CSPD 1641–3*, 546.

[112] H.M. Cautley, *Royal Arms and Commandments in Our Churches* (Ipswich, 1934), 53; S.J. Wearing, *Post-Reformation Royal Arms in Norfolk Churches* (Norfolk Record Society, XVII, 1944).

[113] Archbishop Parker's decision that every church should convert its chalice into a communion cup was a 'godsend' to English goldsmiths, according to C. Oman, *English Church Plate, 597–1830* (1957), 133–7.

[114] Cardwell, *Documentary Annals*, I. 262; *Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to Inquire into . . . Public Worship* (1868), 434, 521; *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, ed. K. Fincham (CERS, I and V, 1994–8), I. 16; II. 252; H.B. Walters, *London Churches at the Reformation* (1939), 223; Cautley, *Royal Arms*, ch. xvii; G. Montagu Benton, 'Wall Paintings in Essex Churches, viii',

course, they were restrained; the lettering, as George Herbert remarked, was to be 'grave and reverend, not with light colours or foolish antics'.[115] Calligraphy in England never attained the artistic status or the exuberance that it did in Islam. John Ruskin would later condemn these inscriptions as 'frightful things' – 'obstinate offences to the eye'.[116] But, in the sixteenth century writing was regarded as a pictorial art.[117] Stephen Gardiner had more than a debating point when he protested to the iconoclasts that the written word was itself an image: 'if [en]graving were taken away we could have no printing. And therefore they that press so much the words of Non facies tibi sculptile . . ., me thinketh, they condemn printed books, the original whereof is of [en]graving to make matrices literarum'.[118] The carved or painted text was central to the visual culture of the time.

So, just as in eighth-century Byzantium the effect of a ban on religious images had been to stimulate secular painting – portraits, landscapes and hunting scenes[119] – so in post-Reformation England, the prohibition of religious imagery encouraged the proliferation of other forms of plastic and visual art. There was little of that total hostility to artistic representation that had been present in some patristic writings and that had occasionally re-emerged in Reformation Europe.

Only on the extreme protestant fringe do we find a total rejection of the arts as unacceptable vanities. Some distrusted portraits if they were too life-like, preferring them in a flat, iconic style.[120] The Quakers, in particular, refused to have pictures on their walls, abhorred elaborate decoration as a waste of money that should have gone to the poor, and rejected portraits as vain and superfluous. 'I say down with them, out of your houses and off your sign posts,' declared George Fox.[121] At the end of the eighteenth century, an observer reported that the Quakers were 'not brought up to admire such things'. In fact, he could recall only three pictures that he had ever seen in their houses. One depicted the conclusion of the treaty between William Penn and the Indians; another was a print of a slave-ship;

Essex Archaeological Society Transactions, XXIII (1942–5); G.W.O. Addleshaw and F. Etchells, *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship* (1948), 102–7.

115 George Herbert, *A Priest to the Temple* (1652), ch. xiii.

116 J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1855), 101.

117 Sir Thomas Smith, *De Recta et Emendata Linguae Anglicae Scriptione Dialogus*, ed. C.G. Cecioni (Firenze, 1972), 38; Lomazzo, *Tracte*, 2; Gent, *Picture and Poetry*, 59, fn. 78; J.L. Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (2004), 293–303.

118 *Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, 258.

119 Charles Diehl in *Byzantium*, ed. N.H. Baynes and H.St.L.B. Moss (Oxford, 1948), 178; P.J. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephoros of Constantinople* (Oxford, 1958), 8; *Iconoclasm*, ed. Bryer and Herrin, 38; E. de Bruyne, *Études d'Esthétique Médiévale* (Brugge, 1946), I. 262.

120 For fears that portraits of the reformers might give rise to idolatry, see *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation*, ed. H. Robinson (Parker Society, 1846), I. 191–4, discussed by M. Aston, 'Gods, Saints and Reformers: Portraiture and Protestant England', in *Albion's Classicism*, 186–91.

121 George Fox, *Gospel-Truth Demonstrated* (1706), 313; George Fox, John Stubs, Benjamin Furly, *A Battle-Door for Teachers & Professors* (1660), 9th pagination, 27; *John Bellers: His Life, Times and Writings*, ed. G. Clarke (1987), 213; M. Pointon, 'Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650–1800', *Art History*, XX (1997).

and the third was a plan of the Quaker school at Ackworth.[122] In the nineteenth century, the pioneer student of heredity, Francis Galton, found nearly twice as much colour blindness among the Quakers as in the rest of the population.[123]

Yet the restrained elegance of the Quaker meeting-house is a reminder that, when supposedly rejecting aesthetic values, the Friends were merely forging a new, if quieter, aesthetic of their own, an aesthetic that we now call 'minimalist', and which some hail as prefiguring the abstract art of modern times.[124] This aesthetic had been foreshadowed by earlier protestants like Thomas Becon, who rejected 'superfluous deckings and trimmings', or Joseph Hall, who praised 'comely whiteness and well-contrived coarctation', or John Bruen, who removed all the stained glass from the church at Tarvin and thereby 'beautified the windows with white and bright glass'.[125]

When historians say that the Reformation killed English art, they tend to forget that, by Flemish or Italian standards, the art of late medieval England (with the possible exception of its alabaster and wooden sculpture) had been relatively undeveloped. Sir Thomas Elyot wrote in 1531 that in the decorative arts, 'Englishmen be inferiors to all other people and be constrained, if we will have anything well painted, carved or embroidered, to abandon our own countrymen and resort unto strangers'.[126] Artistic patronage was less active and arrangements for training painters and sculptors were rudimentary. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the country remained dependent for artistic innovation upon foreign artists, from grand court painters like Holbein and Van Dyck to the lesser-known Netherlandish illustrators and pattern-makers upon whose designs English textiles, ceramics and domestic decoration drew so heavily. What changed this state of affairs, and led eventually to what economists call import substitution, was not religion but the growth of economic prosperity and of new habits of consumption. By 1700, there was a steadily increasing demand for luxurious objects of furnishing and decoration, comparable to that which had fuelled the art of the Italian Renaissance three centuries earlier.[127] The rise of the London art market, with its dealers, auction houses, connoisseurs, patrons and exhibitions, followed in its wake. In the eighteenth century the number of British-born

[122] T. Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism* (1807), I. 292–7. Cf. George Crabbe's description of the picture-less interior of a Presbyterian household in *The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. N. Dalrymple-Champneys and A. Pollard (Oxford, 1988), II. 86.

[123] F. Galton, *Inquiry into the Human Faculty*, Everyman's Lib. (n.d.), 32.

[124] H. Lidbetter, *The Friends Meeting House* (York, 1961); A. Graham-Dixon, *A History of British Art* (1996), 42–4; W. Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), 308.

[125] Becon, *Catechism*, 65; J.F. Merritt, 'Puritans, Laudians, and the Phenomenon of Church-Building in Jacobean London', *HJ*, LXI (1998), 956; William Hinde, *A Faithfull Remonstrance of the Holy Life and Happy Death of John Bruen* (1641), 78–9. The Laudians, by contrast, saw 'bright light' as 'a hindrance to devotion' and plain windows as 'watrish, bleak and thin'; R.T., *De Templis* (1638), 196; George Herbert, 'The Windows', in *Works*, ed. F.E. Hutchinson (Oxford, 1941), 67.

[126] Elyot, *Boke named the Governour*, I. 139–40.

[127] The most recent survey of this development is M. Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2005). The economic context of Italian Renaissance art is cogently expounded by R.A. Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy 1300–1600* (1993).

artists increased accordingly and the arrangements for their professional training improved.[128] When in 1801 the Swiss-born painter Henry Fuesli observed the flourishing state of British portraiture, he attributed it to the more equal diffusion of 'opulence'.[129]

Protestantism in England never meant the total rejection of art. What it did mean was a plainer style and the increasing divorce of art from religion. It thus assisted that process of the differentiation of experience that has been so central a feature of the development of the modern world. What David Hume called 'the abstract and spiritual religion of the puritans' enabled aesthetic values to be more easily perceived as distinct from devotional ones, and religion as something separate from aesthetics. It taught that 'the true adorning of the Church' was not with pictures, but with holiness, and that 'eye-delights' were a dangerous distraction.[130] God was invisible and could not be represented, even in the mind's eye, any more than could angels or the human soul.[131] The image-less devotion that had been the goal of medieval contemplatives thus became the ideal for everyone.[132] As the moderate bishop Symon Patrick observed, visual art was an inappropriate way of representing religious truth: 'there is too much of sense in the tragical and theatrical representations which are made by some papists of Christ's sufferings . . . The eye and ear are so fully possessed, that their objects work of their natural strength, and not by the soul's considering and meditating powers.' The mind ought to be left 'something to do in making . . . its own thoughts'.[133] Or, as Hegel would later write, 'the manifestation of truth in a sensuous form is not truly adequate to the spirit'.[134] Both Immanuel Kant and Sigmund Freud saw the commandment forbidding the worship of images as a great step forward in the history of the human mind, for it encouraged people to formulate abstract ideas.[135]

By denying that art could express deep religious truths and instead suggesting

[128] I. Pears, *The Discovery of Painting* (1988); D. Ormrod, 'The Origins of the London Art Market, 1660–1730', in *Art Markets in Europe*, eds. M. North and Ormrod (Aldershot, 1998), and 'Cultural Production and Import Substitution', in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe*, eds. P. O'Brien *et al.* (Cambridge, 2001); J. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (1997), part iii; *Design and the Decorative Arts*, eds. Snodin and Styles, esp. 9, 28, 152, 159; H. Hoock, *The King's Artists* (Oxford, 2003); *City Merchants and the Arts 1670–1720*, ed. M. Galinov (2004).

[129] *Lectures on Painting by the Royal Academicians*, ed. R.N. Wornum (1848), 449. The link between growing affluence and domestic picture-ownership had been evident since Tudor times; S. Foister, *Holbein and England* (2004), 100.

[130] David Hume, *The History of England* (1773), VII. 41; Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 299; Edmund Gurnay, *Gurnay Redivivus* (2nd ed., 1660), 10, 26.

[131] Hugh Broughton, *An Exposition upon the Lord's Prayer* (n.p., n.d. [?1613]), 11–12; J. Harvey, *Image of the Invisible* (Cardiff, 1999), ch. 1.

[132] M. Aston, 'Imageless devotion', in *Pragmatic Utopias*, ed. R. Horrox and S. Rees-Jones (Cambridge, 2001).

[133] *Works of Symon Patrick*, I. 72

[134] G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford, 1975), I. 104–5.

[135] *Kant's Kritik of Judgment*, trans. J.H. Bernard (1892), 143–4 (part I, divn 1, book ii, 'General Remark' (between paras 29 and 30); *Moses and Monotheism*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. J. Strachey *et al.* XXIII (1964; 2001), 113–15.

that its true functions were to decorate, to commemorate and to enhance visual understanding, the protestant iconoclasts were, paradoxically, working in the same direction as those Italian Renaissance painters who preached the autonomy of art. Both emancipated art from the need to carry any didactic content; and both encouraged the notion that its chief end was, as John Dryden would say of poetry, 'delight'.[136] In the eighteenth century, British protestant philosophers helped to formulate the new concept of the Fine Arts as an independent sphere, with its purpose not instruction or edification, but disinterested pleasure.[137]

Of course, it could be said that, by excluding art from spiritual life, the protestants were trivializing it, relegating it to the sphere of casual amusement, and thereby opening it to criticism as a form of vanity and self-indulgence. The Edwardian divine Thomas Becon thought music was but a 'vain and trifling science', while all that the Scottish poet William Drummond could find to say about 'admiration of . . . pictures [and] statues' was that it was 'allowable in men which have not much to do'.[138] William Prynne, though conceding that the vellum illustrations found in a devotional work owned by Archbishop Laud were 'gloriously and curiously gilded, and set forth with most exquisite colours', nevertheless disparaged them as 'pretty babies for young children to play with, but most insufferable puppets for an old childish, superstitious archbishop seriously to dote on'.[139] When Calvin required artists to confine themselves to painting what the eye could see, he liberated portrait and landscape painting, but he also encouraged the notion that art was essentially superficial, because it could never get beyond outward appearances, never portray anyone's inner nature or soul.

Whether or not the protestants really trivialized art is a matter about which opinions may differ. What is beyond dispute is that, by encouraging the emancipation of art as an autonomous activity, the reformers set up a lasting conflict between art and religion, warring gods, competing for human allegiance. For how, it has been asked, 'can we make a work of art . . . constituted by beliefs which we do not share, part of our own mental life without some inward treachery or mental schism?'[140] The iconoclasts had their answer: they could not. Nothing deserved admiration if it was theologically false.

Today we are less certain. We think that aesthetic values can transcend local religious loyalties. Our modern concept of 'art' is capacious enough to allow us to admire artefacts derived from wholly alien religious traditions. We therefore side

136 *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W.P. Ker (Oxford, 1926), I. 113.

137 P.O. Kristeller, 'The Modern System of the Arts', in his *Renaissance Thought and the Arts* (Princeton, 1990), ch. ix; J. Stolnitz, 'On the Origins of "Aesthetic Disinterestedness" ', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XX (1961–2); L. Shiner, *The Invention of Art* (2001), part ii. The social context for the emergence of this idea is admirably outlined by M.H. Abrams in his *Doing Things with Words*, ed. M. Fischer (1989), 135–58.

138 *Catechism of Thomas Becon*, 429; William Drummond of Hawthornden, *The History of Scotland, from the Year 1423, until the Year 1542* (1555), 118.

139 Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, 66.

140 M. Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art* (1982), 3.

with Renaissance artists like Ghiberti or Vasari in deploring the irreparable loss arising from the destruction by the Christian Church of the statues, paintings, mosaics and other pagan monuments of classical antiquity.[141] We laugh at the sectary Mary Netheway, who in 1653 urged Oliver Cromwell to demolish the statues of Venus, Adonis and Apollo, newly erected in the privy garden at Whitehall, because such pagan gods were, for her, 'cursed monsters'; and we are appalled by the Quaker cook who, a few years later, crept into the garden with a hammer and tried to batter them to bits;[142] just as we were when, in Afghanistan, the Taleban blew up ancient statues of the Buddha. Yet in the early modern period, Catholics were no less hostile than protestants to what they thought were idols of false gods. In Mexico and Peru, Catholic missionaries engaged without compunction in the wholesale destruction of the monuments of native religion.[143]

Nowadays, when we gaze happily and indiscriminately at altarpieces of the virgin Mary and Greek statues of Apollo and Hindu sculpture and Japanese Buddhas and masks from Benin, are we showing the catholicity of our taste or simply our indifference to religious values? For it would still be almost impossible for us to appreciate an artefact, however exquisite, if we found its symbolic overtones too repugnant. What would we do if we were given, say, a beautifully carved and bejewelled swastika? Would we give it a place of honour in our sitting-room? Or would we, like Sir Robert Harley, throw it into our local equivalent of the brook Kidron? Perhaps the gulf separating us from the Tudor and Stuart iconoclasts is narrower than we think.

141 T. Buddensieg, 'Gregory the Great, the Destroyer of Pagan Idols', *Journal of Warburg & Courtauld Institutes*, XXVIII (1965), 44–5, 50, 58–9. 'The most sustained campaign of iconoclasm in European history', writes Cyril Mango, 'was the destruction or mutilation of antique sculpture by Christians from the fourth century onwards'; *Times Literary Supplement* (15 June 2001), 29. Cf. the Bishop of Bamberg's activities in Pomerania in the 1120s, quoted by R. Bartlett, 'The Conversion of a Pagan Society in the Middle Ages', *History*, LXX (1985), 197.

142 *Original Letters*, 115; *The Diurnall of Thomas Rugg 1659–1661*, ed. W.L. Sachse (Camden 3rd Series, XCI, 1961), 10–11.

143 R. Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, trans. L.B. Simpson (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), 37–8; J. Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas* (1970), 397–8.

3

The Latitude of the Church of England*

DIARMAID MacCULLOCH

My title has a useful ambiguity, reflecting the two tasks that I seek to carry out. One is to continue my efforts to place the pre-Restoration Church of England in its theological latitude in protestant Europe up to the late seventeenth century.[1] The other is to note just how much latitude was possible within this structure, and to consider why that might be. On the first point, the historiography has been complicated by the battles of church parties that started in the seventeenth century, the aim of which was very precisely to shift the latitude of the Church of England. Sometimes the aim has been to tow the Church firmly into the latitude of sixteenth-century Geneva or seventeenth-century Boston: still avowedly the agenda of Peter Jensen, the present Anglican archbishop of Sydney. Sometimes the ship has been tugged into the Tiber and moored against the Trastevere bank within sight of the Vatican. A more generally popular course has been to head for a theological Bermuda Triangle and label the location 'Anglicanism', well out of reach of any foreign pollution and not susceptible to ready identification with any other 'ism'. The implication of this is that Anglicanism is *sui generis,* and that in some mysterious or mystical way this was the intention of the Tudor monarchs, churchmen and statesmen who founded it in the first place.

This Anglican latitude certainly does represent something essential and undeniable about the modern Church of England and its sister-churches of Wales, Scotland and Ireland and their worldwide offshoots; but the Anglican identity is extremely problematic if applied to the pre-1662 Church of England. I have consistently discouraged students from using the word at all in that earlier context, though I still constantly notice the usage in places distressingly beyond my influence or control.[2] It cannot be emphasized too often that the Anglican

* This paper was originally given at All Souls College Oxford in the series 'Doubt and Belief in Early Modern Europe', and I am grateful to those who commented on it on that occasion. I am also grateful to Nicholas Tyacke for inspiring so much of the new direction in discussion of Reformation Church history that has helped to shape this paper. My debt will be apparent from the notes.

1 D. MacCulloch, 'Putting the English Reformation on the Map', *TRHS*, 6th series, XV (2005).

2 For a fine overview of the revised historiography of the English Reformation, see N. Tyacke,

word is comparatively recent as a usage. It may well have been invented by James VI of Scotland, and if so, it was meant as a term of abuse: in 1598, he assured a suspicious Church of Scotland that his proposed strengthening of episcopacy would not take Scotland down a path to 'papistical or Anglican' bishops.[3] After that, the word was hardly used at all until the nineteenth century, when it was found convenient for describing a church now spreading throughout the world – in the case of the protestant Episcopal Church of the United States and its missions, developing beyond the British Empire and therefore without the benefit of a supreme governor. As this sudden vast expansion of the Church was already taking place at a time of internal party strife, Anglicanism was a convenient concept to bridge the Church's theological divisions. For high churchmen turning a wistful eye towards Roman Catholicism, it also had the convenient echo of a respectably antique movement of sturdy independence within the Catholic fold, Gallicanism. So in a nice historical irony, the word Anglicanism took a new lease of life as a result of the American Revolution, just as Gallicanism was eviscerated by the French Revolution.

The prehistory of the 1559 settlement that created the present-day Church of England lay in the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. In the actions of such monarchs as King Henry, we are witnessing an effort to create a European 'third way' in religion that was neither in thrall to Luther nor the pope.[4] The early English Reformation represents a march away from an initial Lutheran mould, at a much earlier stage than the same process in Scotland. There was more to what Alec Ryrie has termed 'the strange death of Lutheran England' than the familiar story of King Henry's mood-swings.[5] Thomas Cranmer, at the heart of the Henrician and Edwardian Reformations, was in close touch with Martin Bucer and the Strassburg Reformation as early as 1531, and any theological pundit worth his salt in the 1530s would have seen Strassburg as the future of any united protestant Reformation. So Cranmer veered away from Luther towards Strassburg and therefore further south, towards the likeminded theologians of Zürich led by Heinrich Bullinger, on the important question of the admissibility of images in worship. This matter was reflected on the basic question of how one numbers the ten commandments. Already in the bishops' book of 1537, the English Church was numbering the commandments in the manner of Strassburg and Zürich, to make a separate commandment of the order to destroy images, in contrast to Luther's loyalty to the western Church's traditional numbering.

The other big divide among evangelicals was on the eucharist. Throughout Henry's life, England did remain officially aloof from the eucharistic theology of

'Re-thinking the "English Reformation" ', in Tyacke, ed. *England's Long Reformation 1500–1800* (1998), 1–32.

[3] James VI's apparent invention of the word 'Anglican' is to be found in D. Calderwood, *History of the Church of Scotland*, ed. T. Thomson (Wodrow Society, 1842–9), V. 694.

[4] MacCulloch, 'English Reformation'.

[5] A. Ryrie, 'The Strange Death of Lutheran England', *JEH*, LIII (2002), 64–92. See also K. Maas, 'Robert Barnes as Historian and Theologian' (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 2005).

Strassburg and Switzerland, and not simply because of King Henry's obstinate refusal to alter the liturgical form of the mass: establishment evangelicals like Cranmer were just as committed to the defence of real eucharistic presence as Luther or the king, and in 1538 they even actively engineered the downfall and eventual burning for heresy of their wayward colleague John Lambert, who had denied the real presence.[6] Yet even in the late 1530s, there are interesting counter-indications. Between the years 1536 and 1538 successive young Englishmen, including young evangelical Oxford dons from Magdalen College, travelled to Zürich, and in return Heinrich Bullinger's foster-son Rudolph Gwalther paid a visit to southern England and Oxford in 1537.[7] He never forgot his warm welcome there, and it had consequences for the rest of the century, as we will see.

Now it is clear that Cranmer was prominent in the actual organization of the initial visit to Zürich and he continued to take an interest in the English 'exchange students'. But as I have looked closely at those involved and their backgrounds, what has struck me forcibly is on the one hand, how few traceable links they had to Cranmer and his Cambridge-educated clerical circle, and on the other, how many they had to Thomas Cromwell and the court circle of the Greys, marquises of Dorset. I suggest that while political proprieties dictated that the clergyman Bullinger should deal with the clergyman Cranmer rather than with politicians, Thomas Cromwell was the driving force behind the Zürich initiative. During 1537–8 Cranmer made it clear that he strongly disapproved of the eucharistic theology of his Strassburg and Zürich contacts. That makes it all the more interesting that Cromwell should be so heavily and consistently involved with the English friends of Zürich, and it makes it all the more clear why Henry VIII was prepared to listen to those who called Cromwell a sacramentarian. Perhaps Cromwell's accusers were right, and Cromwell died for what Henry VIII would have considered the right reason. Cromwell has often been called a Lutheran; perhaps he was actually Zürich's best friend in Henry's England.

The eucharistic gap separating the English evangelical establishment from Strassburg and Zürich was abruptly reversed in 1546–7, when Cranmer and his circle jettisoned their views on the real presence. This remains a mysterious business, and without question the death of Henry VIII counts as a major factor. There is no reason to be too cynical about that: the old man without doubt had a mesmerizing effect on those around him, and his death left them free to think new thoughts. One must also take into account the devastating psychological effect on Cranmer, Latimer and others of the final round of vicious conservative heresy-hunting in spring and summer 1546, when they saw ever closer colleagues burned at the stake for denying the real presence. Real-presence eucharistic doctrine had sustained them even when they rejected transubstantiation as a way of explaining it, but now it must have seemed severely contaminated in what had become

[6] D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: a Life* (1996), 232–4.

[7] D. MacCulloch, 'Heinrich Bullinger and the English-Speaking World', in E. Campi, ed. *Heinrich Bullinger (1505–1575): Leben, Denken, Wirkung* (Zürich, 2006, forthcoming).

literally a fight to the death between traditionalists and evangelicals.[8] So after 1547, on both images and the eucharist, the two greatest points of distinction between Lutheran and non-Lutheran protestants, those in charge of England's religious destiny had made a decisive break with Wittenberg.

While Henry was the first monarch to break with the Pope, Edward VI's regimes undertook the largest-scale effort at Reformation so far in all Europe, and their failures and imperfections ought to be perceived in that light: the same applies to the failures and imperfections of Mary's effort at Catholic Reformation. One essential aspect was the opening of Edwardian England to the possibility of international leadership of the Reformation: particularly after the crushing defeat of the Schmalkaldic League at Mühlberg in spring 1547, there was not much alternative to England. Hence the piecemeal relocation of many of the brightest stars in the Strassburg Reformation to England between 1547 and 1549 and the setting-up of the London Stranger Church under Jan Łaski from 1550. Hence also the great caution with which the regime approached making any public statement about the nature of the eucharist, until Heinrich Bullinger and John Calvin reached a satisfactory compromise in spring 1549, in what later became known as the *Consensus Tigurinus*. For instance, there was no sermon on the eucharist among the twelve homilies issued in 1547, while the doctrines of justification and works were clearly and indeed classically set out in Reformation patterns. A eucharistic homily was promised in 1547 but not delivered until Elizabeth's reign, and Archbishop Cranmer delayed publishing his own extensive treatise on the eucharist until 1550, when the *Consensus* had been safely agreed and published.

So the Edwardian Reformation was emphatically non-Lutheran: might it still be called simply part of a 'third way'? Such a mediate position became increasingly difficult in the early 1550s, when the fierce gnesio-Lutheran attacks on the *Consensus Tigurinus* meant that increasingly one had to make a decision on the eucharistic issue: Lutheran intransigence was creating a rival bloc, which soon had the label 'reformed' wished on it. Theologians of the 'third way', who in the 1540s would have included such luminaries of Edwardian England as Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr Vermigli and Łaski, were now clearly part of the new confessional bloc, and their host country with them.

With Strassburg no longer a reforming centre, the chief alternative left was Zürich. English contacts with Zürich do not seem to have been close during the protectorate of the duke of Somerset, but when his colleagues overthrew him in autumn 1549, the new regime included the leaders of the Grey family, who had been so prominent in the Zürich exchange visits of the 1530s.[9] Bullinger became a good friend of the English Reformation, commending it as the best hope for convening a true general council, and seeing it as a bulwark against Anabaptism: from 1550, he dedicated parts of his classic collection of sermons the *Decades*

8 MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 352–5.
9 MacCulloch, 'Bullinger'.

successively to King Edward and Henry Grey marquis of Dorset. Bullinger had already become a best-selling English author in the 1540s, although generally anonymously, because of English versions of his treatise on marriage sponsored by Miles Coverdale.[10] By contrast, John Calvin had few close friends in Edwardian England, and kept an obstinate attachment to the fortunes of the duke of Somerset, a stance that became an embarrassment to those who knew England better.[11] An England ruled by Lady Jane Grey would have been an England increasingly tied in with far-distant Zürich, and far-distant Geneva would not have enjoyed much benefit.

That was a might-have-been, thanks not merely to Queen Jane's defeat by the Lady Mary in 1553, but by the rapid movement of the Reformation in Europe as a whole over the next decade. Geneva's burning of Miguel Servetus in 1553 established Calvin as a theologian to be treated with respect throughout protestant Europe. The caucus of English and Scottish exiles from Mary's regime in Geneva for the first time gave the Atlantic Isles a body of churchmen who had experienced Genevan systems at first hand. The extraordinary series of popular protestant convulsions in the 1560s, which produced such great upheavals successively in Scotland, France and the Netherlands, looked to Geneva rather than Zürich. Zürich's European-wide influence began steadily diminishing at least in western Europe, particularly in matters of church government, as embodied in the defeat of Zürich partisans in the debates sparked by Thomas Erastus about excommunication in the Palatinate from 1568.

And in the middle of it all was a Reformation established in England in 1559, with virtually no popular convulsion, but through the will of a monarch operating in close co-operation with a close-knit circle of advisers and a strong body of opinion in the secular political nation. Elizabeth created a settlement of religion on the basis of decisions made in negotiation between herself, her privy council, a small group of clergy and the house of commons – obtaining not a whisker of consent from overwhelmingly hostile legislative bodies or hierarchy of the English Church, and fighting past some formidable opposition in the house of lords. Only when that opposition had been disposed of did the government activate newly purged convocations of Canterbury and York to assent to articles of religion for the new Church in 1563.[12]

Elizabeth's settlement of 1559–63 was the subject of much ingenious analysis in the nineteenth century by representatives of the Oxford Movement, analysis designed to obscure its true nature and impose an anachronistic version of 'Catholicity' on it. In fact the parliamentary package of 1559 did something quite simple: restore the structure and liturgy of the Edwardian Church to the point where parliament had last been able to have a say in it, in other words autumn

[10] C. Euler, 'Heinrich Bullinger, Marriage, and the English Reformation: *The Christen State of Matrimonye* in England, 1540–53', *SCJ*, XXXIV (2003), 367–94.
[11] D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant* (1999), 173–4.
[12] N.L. Jones, *Faith by Statute* (1982).

1552 and the publication of the previous prayer book authorized by parliament. There was a little tinkering: some small modifications were made to the prayer book designed to appeal to the ultra-sensitive eucharistic antennae of Lutherans abroad and perhaps at home (there proved to be virtually none of the latter).[13] One clause of the act of uniformity about 'ornaments' restored the options in relation to clerical apparel that had prevailed in the first English prayer book of 1549.[14] No doubt this equally was intended to appeal to Lutherans, with their increasingly militant defence of much of the range of liturgical vestments. Despite its apparent authorization of the traditional chasuble as an alternative to the cope at the eucharist, there is not a scrap of evidence that any clergyman of Elizabeth's Church habitually used the chasuble when using Cranmer's book of common prayer, and even the wearing of the cope soon became distinctly suspect in English parishes.[15] Nevertheless, the ham-fisted wording of this clause proved a happy hunting-ground for Anglo-Catholics in the nineteenth century, supposedly allowing them to wear or use at pleasure any variety of liturgical garment or liturgical equipment that Rome had developed before or since.

So in essence what was restored was a reformed Church, but, it will be noted, a reformed Church that in Edward's time had been developed in dialogue with theologians of Strassburg and Zürich, not of Geneva. By 1559 Strassburg was out of the picture, no longer a point of reference for protestant Europe but an increasingly conventional part of the Lutheran world. Zürich stood firm in its theology, and its influence was now reinforced by its generous hospitality to a small group of exiled English clergy many of whom now became bishops in Elizabeth's Church of England. But before exploring the consequences of that, we need to note ways in which the atmosphere had changed even while the structures of Edward VI's Church were put back into place. First, the Edwardian Reformation had been a dynamic revolution, constantly moving on, constantly changing, modifying and then destroying more and more aspects of the religious past. The Elizabethan settlement proved remarkably static in its structures, and thanks to

[13] I say more about this in MacCulloch, 'English Reformation'.

[14] Anglo-Catholics did not always relate the clause to the parliamentary authorization of the 1549 prayer book, and seized on the wording's reference to the second year of King Edward VI as referring to the whole of 1548, when in theory there had been much more liturgical leeway possible than survived the first English prayer book. In context, however, it is quite clear that the reference is to the 1549 prayer book authorized by *a session of parliament* beginning in 2 Edward VI (in fact November 1548): it was not therefore authorizing the pre-1549 situation. See the text in G. Bray, ed. *Documents of the English Reformation* (1994), 334, and compare the similar reference in the 1559 act of uniformity to the 1552 book of common prayer, in terms of its authorization by act of parliament in the fifth and sixth years of Edward VI: ibid., 329. The rubric preceding mattins in the 1559 prayer book specifically refers to this ornaments clause in the 1559 act of parliament: J. Parker, ed. *The First Prayer Book of Edward VI compared with the Successive Revisions of the Book of Common Prayer* (1877), 64. The main effect would be to authorize the alternatives of a 'vestment or cope' over plain white alb for use at holy communion: the 'vestment' was the chasuble, traditionally appropriate to the eucharist, while the cope was not a eucharistic garment. This represents a wide latitude indeed.

[15] For an example of a Suffolk clergyman, Thomas Shackleton of Kenton, finding himself in the 1570s embattled and isolated for wearing a cope in worship, see D. MacCulloch, 'Catholic and Puritan in Elizabethan Suffolk: a County Community Polarises', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, LXXII (1981), 254.

the queen deliberately so: as Elizabeth's conservative favourite Sir Christopher Hatton said approvingly three decades after the 1559 legislation, at the beginning of her reign, the queen had 'placed her Reformation as upon a square stone to remain constant'.[16] That meant that it was indeed a snapshot of Reformation at one moment in time, autumn 1552, keeping everything that survived from the pre-Reformation past at that moment.

Most significant of such survivals were the cathedrals, with their unique position in England among European protestant Churches. Nowhere else was there anything like the English cathedral close, with its daily round of liturgically fixed services involving a large staff of clergy and elaborate music sung by paid professionals. Nothing of that seemed at the time of the settlement to have much relevance to a protestant Church. One illustration of that comes from Lady Anne Bacon's translation of Bishop Jewel's official defence or *Apologie* of the Church of England published in 1564, which had an added appendix describing the structures of the Church to show how excellent they were. It is significant that the cathedrals were indeed given honourable and extended mention in this description, together with the collegiate churches of Westminster, Windsor, Eton and Winchester, but there was absolutely no mention of music in either case. The cathedrals on this account were centres of preaching and Eton and Winchester were centres of scholarship feeding the universities; a discreet veil was drawn over what the use of Westminster and Windsor might be.[17]

At the heart of this survival against the odds was Elizabeth's stubborn love of Church choral music. Since she kept her choir in the chapel royal singing and her composers went on producing music of the finest quality, then the cathedrals were emboldened to follow suit as far as they could. This music had virtually no effect on musical and devotional life in the average English parish church down to the time of the Oxford Movement: most parishes sang metrical psalms in the manner of Geneva, at least until the eighteenth century evangelical 'revival' popularized a new sort of hymn not exclusively based on the text of the psalter. So this was not so much a latitude of practice as a polarity, without parallel elsewhere in the protestant world.[18]

The preservation of the cathedral tradition had huge significance for the future of Anglicanism, and it may be Queen Elizabeth's chief original contribution to her Church. Elsewhere I have called the ethos that developed out of this the

[16] FSL, MS V.b.303, pp. 183–6, quoted in P. Collinson, 'Puritans, Men of Business and Elizabethan Parliaments', *Parliamentary History*, VII (1988), 192.

[17] J. Ayre, ed. *The Works of John Jewel* (2 vols. in 4, Parker Society, 1845–50), III. 109.

[18] For John Williams's reminder to Laud in 1637 that there were different canonical provisions for cathedrals and parish churches, see B. Williams, ed. *The Work of Archbishop John Williams* (Sutton Courtenay, 1988), 182. As late as 1680 there was an attempt to institutionalize in legislation the different liturgical styles, when in parliamentary negotiations over comprehension for nonconformists, there was a proposal that surplices should be worn only in cathedrals and the chapel royal: J.T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry Besieged, 1650–1700* (1993), 183. On parochial music, N. Temperley, *Music in the English Parish Church* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1980), and J. Ottenhoff, 'Recent Studies in Metrical Psalms', *English Literary Renaissance*, XXXIII (2003), 252–75.

Westminster Movement, by deliberate analogy with the Oxford Movement. That is because it had much to do with the practice of Westminster abbey, which behaved more like a cathedral than most cathedrals. The outlook was embodied in the conservative, ceremonialist and anti-puritan outlooks of the dean, Gabriel Goodman, and the celebrated antiquary and headmaster of Westminster school William Camden.[19] Admittedly, the new ethos also owed a very great deal to a churchman who only arrived in a Westminster prebendal stall in 1597 and then succeeded Goodman as dean in 1601 – Lancelot Andrewes. Already in the early 1590s, Andrewes as vicar of St Giles Cripplegate was preaching views from the pulpit that would have sounded astonishing in virtually any other parochial pulpit in the kingdom. The texts in *Apospasmatia Sacra*, eventually published in 1657, show a churchman steeped in the liturgical year, criticizing strict predestination and constantly emphasizing the celebration of the eucharist.[20] Nicholas Tyacke has shown how Andrewes's campaign to change hearts and minds came to be reflected in his administration of his Cripplegate parish, particularly in its liturgical reordering at the end of the 1590s.[21]

Andrewes can be regarded as the first and most important ideologue of the movement that became Arminianism, and his transformation from an establishment Cambridge reformed protestant during the late 1580s remains as mysterious as the analogous though not identical shift in Richard Hooker at Oxford at much the same time. From the 1590s Andrewes proved to be the critic of reformed protestant soteriology with the most effective and long-term influence: moreover, he was prepared to speak about predestination outside the universities when others would only speak inside their cordon sanitaire. The most noisy Cambridge anti-predestinarian William Barrett fell by the wayside, crushed by the hostile official reaction to his 1595 sermon, and subsequently a convert to Rome; other anti-predestinarians kept quiet and waited for better times.[22]

Besides the new stasis of the 1559 settlement, and its preservation of cathedrals, a further dimension to Elizabeth's settlement differentiated it from the

[19] MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant,* 204–8, 210–15; J.F. Merritt, 'The Cradle of Laudianism? Westminster Abbey, 1558–1630', *JEH*, LII (2001), 623–46.

[20] Curiously Archbishop Laud contributed to subsequent neglect of the surviving texts of these sermons when he did not embody them in his carefully presented selection of Andrewes's works. We await Peter McCullough's biography of Andrewes; see P. McCullough, ed. *Lancelot Andrewes: Selected Sermons and Lectures* (Oxford, 2005) and his 'Making Dead Men Speak: Laudianism, Print and the Works of Lancelot Andrewes, 1626–1642', *HJ*, XLI (1998), 401–25. Of the few Cripplegate period sermons that Laud did allow into the 96 sermons, the most striking and audacious is that on *Imaginations*, preached and written in January 1593 at the height of the campaign against separatist nonconformity, which also saw the publication of the first part of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity.* I am grateful to Dr Peter McCullough for our discussions on this remarkable sermon.

[21] See N. Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism', in P. Lake and M. Questier, eds. *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560–1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), 19–24.

[22] On the articles, see E. Gilliam and W.J. Tighe, 'To "Run with the Time": Archbishop Whitgift, the Lambeth Articles and the politics of theological ambiguity in late Elizabethan England', *SCJ*, XXIII (1992), 325–40. The best overview of the Arminian movement and its antecedents remains N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* (1987); see especially introduction to the paperback edition, 1990.

Edwardian Church. It was a settlement created by Nicodemites. Neither Elizabeth nor any of her leading advisers (including William Cecil and Nicholas Bacon, Matthew Parker her first archbishop of Canterbury, and William May her first nominee for archbishop of York), had gone abroad under Mary. Although unmistakeably protestant by conviction, they had all conformed to Catholicism to a greater or lesser extent, even if some of them had covertly worked to help the protestant cause, as was the case with Elizabeth's quiet political scheming, and as we now know was also the case with Cecil.[23] Nicodemite too was Elizabeth's first dean of the chapel royal, her cousin George Carew. No other protestant Church in Europe had such a beginning. It meant that the Queen had a sympathy for traditionalist Catholics whose religious convictions she detested, but who kept similarly quiet in her own Church – towards the end of her reign, Sir Nicholas Bacon's lawyer and philosopher-son Francis said admiringly that she did not seek to make windows into men's hearts.[24] That is often misquoted as referring to men's souls, and I wonder whether the difference is significant. The heart is not the seat of salvation as is the soul. It would not be inconsistent with protestantism for the Queen to care less about feelings or opinions than about salvation.

We could simply regard Elizabeth as the last of the 'third way' monarchs of Europe, deliberately avoiding identification with either of the two great protestant groupings that had emerged, and achieving uniqueness for herself and her Church by living so long, long surviving such determined followers of a 'third way' as Countess Anna von Oldenburg of East Friesland or the veteran champion of non-aligned Reformation, Landgraf Philipp of Hessen.[25] But there may be something more about Queen Elizabeth, making for an official Settlement that enjoyed unusual latitude and showed itself distinctly cool towards forward protestantism, and which provides at the very least another example of her lack of enthusiasm for opening casements on to the heart. It arises from her long-acknowledged personal contacts with members of that ultimate Nicodemite grouping the Family of Love, that peculiar quietist and spiritualist sect that established a discreet foothold in Elizabethan elite life, just as it did in the Netherlands.

Great was the consternation in 1580 when some of the yeomen of the guard turned out to be Familists. Puritans, familiar with the Familists' activities in East Anglia and who had led the fight against them there, were enraged: Elizabeth did nothing to oust these personal servants. When in 1581 puritans sponsored a bill in the commons to punish the Family, it was quashed by a committee handpicked

[23] E. Evenden, 'The Michael Wood Mystery: William Cecil and the Lincolnshire Printing of John Day', *SCJ*, XXXV (2004), 383–94.

[24] This remark so often misquoted and so often attributed to Elizabeth herself is to be found in J. Spedding, R.L. Ellis, D.D. Heath, eds. *The Works of Francis Bacon* (14 vols., 1857–74): *Lord Bacon's Letters and Life*, I. 178. It occurs in Bacon's 'Observations on a Libel' of 1592, but is also to be found word for word with its surrounding material in a letter of Francis Walsingham to M. de Critoy, written between 1589 and Walsingham's death in 1590: ibid., 98. Spedding is almost certainly correct in postulating that Bacon had ghost-written this letter of Walsingham.

[25] On these and the 'third way', see D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490–1700* (2003), 253–5, 290, 310, 317–19, 354, 570.

from among the privy council.[26] That was a stonewalling reaction with which puritans were familiar from their other efforts to reform or extend the Elizabethan settlement: as they well knew, such obstructions were directly thanks to the queen. Moreover, after a burst of publicity for their cause in a series of tracts during the 1570s, the English Familists went quiet from 1581 until a petition to James I in 1604. It is as if they had adhered to some sort of deal to fall silent until the old monarch was no longer around. There were still Familists among the court officials of her successor James I, including the keeper of the lions in the Tower of London.[27] All this does make one wonder about the queen's own private religious views, although a fascinating suggestion by David Wootton that she was the author of a French poem voicing Familist sentiments remains as yet controversial.[28]

If I were to name names further, I would also finger Dr Andrew Perne, master of Peterhouse and rector of the Cambridgeshire village Familist stronghold Balsham, as a major protector of the Familists. If you like conspiracy theories, Perne spent his last years at Lambeth palace with his old friend and protégé Archbishop Whitgift, who besides being accused by the muck-raking pseudonymous puritan Martin Marprelate of having formerly been Perne's homosexual lover, was the patron of both Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Hooker.[29] Moreover, Perne was also patron of the French exile Peter Baro, who was the mentor of another notorious anti-predestinarian William Barrett, and who was himself accused of Familism.[30] The Familists' constant emphasis on obedience would certainly be music to the ears of both Whitgift and his royal mistress. But all this may be considered to stretch the latitude of my speculations to *Da Vinci Code* levels.

The Family of Love were not the only anomalous adherents of Elizabeth's Church. Lancelot Andrewes did have one or two predecessors in opposing predestination, the most colourful and puzzling of whom was the Spanish exile Antonio del Corro. Del Corro was a rare example in England of a type more familiar in eastern Europe, a talented maverick theologian from southern Europe, who had passed from the world of the Spanish *alumbrados* through evangelical leadership in France, then to something that did not at all fit conventional northern protestant moulds.[31] This was a man who as minister of the Spanish exile

[26] C.W. Marsh, *The Family of Love in English Society, 1550–1630* (Cambridge, 1993), 131–3.

[27] Ibid., 282–3.

[28] D. Wootton, 'Elizabeth and the Family of Love', inaugural lecture, University of York, 10 Oct. 2005. Noel Malcolm has suggested (in discussion and private correspondence) that the poem is not an original composition, but perhaps the Queen's translation from a Spanish original. For the text, see S.W. May and A.L. Prescott, 'The French Verses of Elizabeth I', *English Literary Renaissance*, XXIV (1994), 9–43.

[29] On Perne and Whitgift, see P. Collinson, 'Andrew Perne and his times', in P. Collinson *et al.*, *Andrew Perne: Quatercentenary Studies*, Cambridge Bibliographical Society, XI (1991), 2, 20, 24, 34.

[30] On Perne and Baro, see H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), 376. On Baro and Familism, see below, n. 33.

[31] W. McFadden, 'The Life and Works of Antonio del Corro, 1527–91' (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University Belfast, 1953); I am indebted to Dr Ronald Trueman for access to this work. For a treatment in print of

congregation in London in the late 1560s was prepared to officiate at the burial of someone he knew to be a crypto-Jew, who was prepared to say that not only Jews but Turks could be saved, and who for some time in the early 1570s, refused to join any congregation, refugee or parish. He then gained lecturing positions first in the Temple and then at Oxford, which were both conveniently marginal and comfortably paid, and finally in 1582 won a prebend at St Paul's (for three years he was a colleague of Lancelot Andrewes there).

All this was despite the fact that from at least 1570, Corro began openly attacking the doctrine of predestination, and that also by 1570 he had moved towards cautious but unmistakable statements of Unitarianism, which put him on the same trajectory as the developing Socinianism of eastern Europe encouraged by similar southern European refugees.[32] He was on at least one occasion accused alongside Whitgift's anti-predestinarian protégé Peter Baro of being a member of the Family of Love.[33] What is most baffling, and still needs fully to be explained, is that Corro's chief patron in his stormy London and Oxford career was the doyen of puritan patrons, Robert earl of Leicester. Leicester may have simply found it useful to have a Spaniard to deal with other Iberian refugees, notably the Portuguese pretender Don Antonio, but if Corro was useful on those grounds, he must have been very useful to make up for everything else.[34]

Corro also gained a good deal of support from William Cecil, and more predictably later on, Sir Christopher Hatton.[35] He also addressed one edition of his printed vindication of his views in 1570 as a new year's gift to the Queen, and he issued another edition with a dedication to her confidante Lady Dorothy Stafford, wife of a former Marian exile in Geneva – Calvin had been godfather to Lady Stafford's son, but there was no love lost between her and the great Genevan reformer, and she might be expected to warm to a man who relished a good scrap with partisans of Geneva. As Corro's biographer comments of his two dedications, 'only a man convinced of the righteousness of his cause and sure of the support of powerful personages in the realm could have done so with impunity'.[36] And William Barlow, son of one of the earliest evangelical English bishops, was not far wrong when he commented in perplexity to the Zürich pastor Josiah Simler in 1575 that Corro's presence in the English Church was one of its mysteries 'which I cannot yet fathom'.[37]

Corro, much indebted to McFadden's work, but with additional material, see C.M. Dent, *Protestant Reformers in Elizabethan Oxford* (Oxford, 1983), 119–22.

32 McFadden, 'Corro', 350–2; on Corro's anti-predestinarian views and Unitarianism, ibid., 362–6, 373–84, 512, 624–32, 648–9, 737–8. The French national Protestant synod meeting at La Rochelle in 1571 explicitly made the connection between eastern European Unitarianism and Corro: ibid., 398.

33 Ibid., 498.

34 Ibid., 508 (quoting the view of the Spanish ambassador Mendoza), and on Leicester's patronage to Corro generally, ibid., 365–68, 405–7, 434–5, 445–65, 484, 494–6, 508, 511–13, 527–8.

35 On patronage from Cecil, see ibid., 337–8, on Hatton, ibid., 482, 539–42.

36 Ibid., 379–80. On Lady Dorothy Stafford, see S.T. Bindoff, ed. *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1509–1558* (3 vols., 1982), III. 365, and C.H. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles* (Cambridge, 1938), 296.

37 H. Robinson, ed. *The Zürich Letters* (2 vols., Parker Society, 1842–5), II. 259. To extend further the interesting tangle of these orthodox and unorthodox clergy, Corro's principal adversary at Oxford in his

So we have a supreme governor presiding rather uncomfortably over a frozen tableau of her brother's Church, a Church officially reformed protestant but not Genevan, with various remarkable undercurrents permissible beneath her jealous but idiosyncratic gaze. The Zürich flavour continued in the upper reaches of the Church throughout the reign to an extent that often has not been fully appreciated. Let us return to Queen Mary's death and Elizabeth's accession in 1558. Several of the clergy exiled in Zürich became bishops in major dioceses. Virtually all the leading former exiles kept in close touch with Zürich. Interestingly some former exiles also chose to join the circus of English correspondence with Zürich even though they had never met the Zürich leadership: notably Edmund Grindal and Richard Cox. Grindal's and Cox's initiative makes it all the more surprising that there is a complete silence from Matthew Parker, the first Elizabethan archbishop of Canterbury. Parker was one of the clergy around the queen who had shared her experience of being a Nicodemite in Queen Mary's Church. Perhaps that made it more difficult for him to join those who had undergone the very different experience of exile in those testing years. Perhaps Zürich also felt the difficulty.

Any initial anxieties in Zürich about what Elizabeth might do with her Church were soon quelled: their main worries were either that there would be major concessions to traditionalist Catholics or a tilt towards the Lutherans. Neither materialized, and there was every reason to suppose that the imperfections already apparent in Edward's unfinished programme of reformation would be remedied over time.[38] That was as much the expectation of the newly appointed English bishops as it was of their friends in Zürich. Moreover, the Zürich leadership were aware of another circumstance about which they would necessarily have to be more reticent in public, but which might give them a certain private satisfaction: it was soon common knowledge that Queen Elizabeth was furious with the Genevan leadership because of their involuntary association with the ghastly *faux pas* of John Knox, when in 1558 he published his condemnation of female governance, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.* However much Geneva and Zürich might seek to co-operate, and however friendly relations might be between their leaders, there was now a discreet power struggle between the two great reforming cities for dominance in the reformed world. In England, Geneva's embarrassment over Knox was Zürich's opportunity.[39] It is interesting that Bishop Jewel's *Apologie*, such a classic defence of the settlement as first conceived in the early 1560s, nowhere mentions Calvin: when it speaks of a rift within protestantism, admittedly in an effort to minimize it to scornful papalist Catholics, the rift is presented as between Luther and Zwingli, despite the bitterness of the 'supper-strife' between Calvin and gnesio-Lutherans in the 1550s.[40]

troubles from 1576 to 1582 was Richard Hooker's patron (from whom Hooker was later to distance himself), John Raignoldes (or Reynolds) of Corpus Christi College: Dent, *Oxford*, 119–25.

38 On these nuances, see MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 620–1.

39 Robinson, ed. *Zürich Letters*, II. 127.

40 See especially Ayre, ed. *Works of Jewel*, III. 69.

In the next few years, Bullinger and Gwalther's tensions with Geneva inevitably affected their attitude to the developing disagreements in England, into which they found themselves being drawn by their former guests in exile. Friends of Zürich chosen as bishops gradually found themselves defending a static settlement in which they had little emotional investment.[41] The approval or disapproval of Zürich was a valuable prize for those involved in conflicts about the pace of reform, and so increasingly Zürich came to be a touchstone for measuring the imperfectly reformed Church of England. It was a two-way process: the warring factions in England sought support from an honest broker, and that role suited Zürich very well in its continuing efforts to maintain its position among reformed Churches.

Broadly speaking, Bullinger and Gwalther acted in the Elizabethan disputes as they had done in earlier clashes about how fast the English should make changes, in King Edward's reign involving John Hooper, and during the Marian exile, the English congregation in Frankfurt: they recommended further reformation, but they did not press uniformity on another Church, and they supported those placed in positions of authority by the civil power.[42] They were annoyed and embarrassed when a consortium of bishops at the height of their clash with puritans in 1566 published an English translation of what the Zürich leadership had intended to remain private expressions of opinion to old friends. Yet they were even more annoyed when an angry young puritan, George Withers, visited Zürich with Beza's backing, and so misrepresented the situation in England that the Zürich leadership wrote more strongly to their English friends than they later felt warranted.[43]

Bullinger and Gwalther were all too conscious that that same young puritan had intervened in the dispute over Thomas Erastus's views on excommunication in the Palatinate, which ultimately represented a defeat for Zürich's ecclesiology at the hands of Geneva.[44] When they met Withers, they met a variety of reformed protestant who rejected the model of ecclesiastical superintendency uniting such reformed Churches as Zürich, England and Hungary and Transylvania. Such people also rejected the model of close union between the authority of the civil magistrate and the administration and discipline of the Church, which in very different settings and with very different origins united England, Zürich and the advocacy of Thomas Erastus in Heidelberg.[45] So when Bullinger and Gwalther

[41] See Bishop Parkhurst's gleeful reaction to the destruction of the silver crucifix in Elizabeth's chapel royal: Robinson, ed. *Zürich Letters*, I. 121, 128; R.A. Houlbrooke, ed. *The Letter Book of John Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich . . . 1571–5* (Norfolk Record Society, XLIII, 1975), 62.

[42] For general accounts, see especially J.H. Primus, *The Vestments Controversy* (Kampen, 1960), and H. Horie, 'The influence of Continental Divines on the making of the English Religious Settlement ca. 1547–1590: a Reassessment of Heinrich Bullinger's Contribution' (Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1991), 243–68.

[43] Robinson, ed. *Zürich Letters*, I. 357; see Gwalther's comments to Bishop Cox in 1572, ibid., I. 362.

[44] A. Mühling, *Heinrich Bullingers Europaische Kirchenpolitik* (Bern and Frankfurt am Main, 2000, Zürcher Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte 19), 116–17.

[45] On this large theme, see J.W. Baker, 'Erastianism in England: the Zürich Connection', in A. Schindler

encountered English puritans, they felt themselves drawn closer to the bishops of England, to whom they sent a steady stream of warm book dedications during the 1560s. And their ultimate seal of approval on England's polity in Church and state was Bullinger's vigorous riposte in 1571 to the papal bull excommunicating the queen, rapidly put into an English translation within a few months of its arrival in England.[46]

Ultimately the issue that made Bullinger and Gwalther support the English bishops was more profound simply than considerations of ecclesiastical politics. Bullinger's natural conservatism as a leader of reformation was sealed from the 1550s by his fraught dealings with anti-Trinitarian radicals in eastern Europe, whom he saw as threatening all the Reformation's gains. In constructing their revisions of the Christology of the fourth and fifth centuries, the radicals maintained that whatever was not taught specifically in holy scripture should be repudiated. Bullinger and Zürich steadily maintained the opposite principle, that that which cannot be shown to contradict scripture may be retained even if it is not prescribed by scripture.[47]

By contrast to eastern Europe, few such radicals strayed to England – of course one who did was Leicester's Spanish protégé del Corro, and it was not surprising that when he wrote to Bullinger from London pleading for help against Calvinist attacks on his criticisms of predestination, he did not meet with a sympathetic hearing.[48] Instead, a different group on the English theological scene might be portrayed as raising an echo of Bullinger's foes in Hungary and Poland. The principle of the eastern anti-Trinitarians could with a certain justice be represented as that of Elizabethan puritans on matters ranging from clerical dress to the office of a bishop: indeed, it could even be represented as that of John Hooper in his intransigence back in 1550. It was a very shrewd hit of Bishop Horne of Winchester when he wrote to Bullinger in 1573 that the English Church was in less danger from papists than from 'false brethren, who seem to be sliding into Anabaptism', by which he meant the puritans. That provoked one of Bullinger's last interventions in English ecclesiastical politics before his death in 1575: in his reply to Horne he expressed his disapproval of disruptive behaviour from those 'that will seem most evangelical', and he reminisced ruefully about the beginnings of Anabaptism in Zürich, back at the beginning of his long career in the 1520s.[49] In

and H. Stickelberger, eds. *Die Zürcher Reformation: Ausstrahlungen und Rückwirkungen* (Zürich, 2001), 327–49. K. Rüetschi, 'Rudolf Gwalthers Kontakte zu Engländern und Schotten', in ibid., 368, sounds a useful note of caution, pointing out the differences in the polities of England and Zürich, likewise Horie, 'Heinrich Bullinger's contribution', 297.

[46] *RSTC* 4044, and see D.J. Keep, 'Bullinger's Defence of Queen Elizabeth', in U. Gäbler and E. Herkenrath, eds. *Heinrich Bullinger 1504–1575: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum 400 Todestag, Bd. 2: Beziehungen und Wirkungen* (Zürich, 1975, Zürcher Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte 8), 231–41.

[47] M. Taplin, *The Italian Reformers and the Zürich Church, c. 1540–1620* (Aldershot, 2003), passim and 191.

[48] Robinson, ed. *Zürich Letters,* II. 254.

[49] Ibid., I. 276; J. Ayre, ed. *The Works of John Whitgift* (3 vols., Parker Society, 1851), III. 496–7.

sixteenth-century terms, puritans would feel that equating them with Anabaptists was the ultimate insult.

It is no accident that Bullinger's swansong letter to England was preserved and published in both Latin and an English translation in a polemical work against puritanism by John Whitgift, the future archbishop of Canterbury. Whitgift represents a third generation of leaders in the English Church who drew on the work of Heinrich Bullinger. The relationship in this generation was completely different from earlier days, or to be more precise, non-existent. Whitgift never seems to have made any direct approach to the Zürich ministers, and his attitude to them might well be described as utilitarian. Take Whitgift's exploitation of Bullinger in his massive literary war with Thomas Cartwright, the so-called *Admonition* controversy in the years after 1572. Whitgift makes much use of the topos of equating Anabaptism with puritanism, given colour by quotations from Bullinger's anti-radical writings, and otherwise he makes a good deal of fairly selective use of Bullinger (his tactical quotations of Calvin are necessarily even more selective). Bullinger is drafted in chiefly to illustrate Whitgift's favourite ecclesiological theme, 'I find no one certain and perfect kind of government prescribed or commanded in the scriptures to the Church of Christ; which no doubt should have been done, if it had been a matter necessary unto the salvation of the Church'. That was the essence of Whitgift's quarrel with the Presbyterians, and it must be admitted that Bullinger would certainly have echoed the general sentiment.[50]

At this stage in the early 1570s, Whitgift made no use of Bullinger's *Decades*, which would certainly have provided him with similar material; yet only a few years later he became involved in an enterprise that posthumously naturalized the former Antistes of Zürich as one of the doyens of English theologians. Remarkably, Bullinger was now cast as the defender of England's episcopal system, and his *Decades* were to be a main bulwark of that defence.[51] This was the background to the first complete publication of the *Decades* in English in 1577. With that enterprise, once more we are taken back to Magdalen College Oxford and Gwalther's visit in 1537, for the moving spirit in promoting the *Decades* was an equally anti-puritan colleague of Whitgift on the episcopal bench, Thomas Cooper, by now bishop of Lincoln, who had been associated with Magdalen since 1531.[52]

The preface to the new complete English edition of the *Decades* places the work firmly on the side of the conformist bishops. It plunges quickly into a defence of the ministry as at present constituted in England, before remembering that one of the tasks of a translator's preface is to praise the author. Even that

50 *Works of Whitgift*, I. 184. See Whitgift's very similar quotation from Gwalther, ibid., I. 186.

51 The story is well told in Horie, 'Heinrich Bullinger's contribution', 302–66, from where citations are taken unless otherwise stated.

52 A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford A.D. 1501 to 1540* (Oxford, 1974), 135.

manages to incorporate a sneer at the 'obscurity' of Calvin in comparison with Bullinger. And the most striking phrase in the preface, one to infuriate any puritan, is the justification for using the *Decades*: 'Better is a good sermon read than none at all.'[53] With this we have a major clue to the purpose of the new edition of the *Decades.* Turning the work to use as a clergy textbook, as was now ordered by Cooper and then other anti-puritan bishops, Middleton of St David's and Chaderton of Chester, was to provide a means of clergy training and instruction to substitute for the structure of prophesyings, the gatherings that between 1574 and 1576 Queen Elizabeth had decided to suppress as unacceptably puritan.[54]

There is irony here. The prophesyings now suppressed as the excesses of puritan zealots were derived from the *Prophezei* of Zürich set up by Bullinger's predecessor Zwingli and so central to its clergy training. Grindal, who had made it his business to become an admiring correspondent of Bullinger even though they had never met, ruined his career defending the prophesyings, and he was not the only bishop from the exile generation who thoroughly approved of them in the face of Elizabeth's hostility. Now a new generation of bishops were exploiting the Antistes of Zürich in a way unthinkable in the days of Edward VI – but there was a certain logic in what they were doing, because their agenda was to combat Geneva's influence in the English Church: to create an alternative reformed protestantism that would owe little to Calvin or Beza. The confrontation between conformists and puritans escalated through the 1580s.[55] Archbishop Whitgift's response to all this was twofold: he summoned up forces of repression, but he also took the positive step of canonizing Bullinger still further as the agent of improving clerical education. In 1586 the archbishop extended throughout the whole province of Canterbury the order for lower clergy to read Bullinger's *Decades* and be examined on it.

The regular use of the *Decades* in this fashion says something important about the official Elizabethan Church, which distinguished it from the Arminianism that became part of the Church's identity in the next century. It was a Church still fully part of the reformed protestant world, and it was able to claim this identity because it drew on Bullinger as an alternative to Calvin and Beza. By canonizing the *Decades*, and getting their clergy to read this book as a statement of the Church of England's own theology, Cooper and Whitgift had still committed themselves to unmistakably reformed protestant theological positions: they maintained a moderate and nuanced predestinarianism, they thought that there was nothing normative or universal about the institution of episcopacy, they saw the leading role of the civil magistrate in the Church as a positive virtue, and they maintained a spiritual presence view of the eucharist within the broad latitude

[53] T. Harding, ed. *The Decades of Henry Bullinger* (4 vols., Parker Society, 1849–52), I. 8, 9.

[54] On Grindal and the prophesyings, see P. Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519–1583* (1979), part 4. On the other uses, Horie, 'Heinrich Bullinger's contribution', 318.

[55] The best account of this period is P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), parts 5–6.

offered by the *Consensus Tigurinus*, firmly differentiated from confessional Lutheranism. The parallel canonization of the English translation of the adopted Züricher Peter Martyr Vermigli's *Common Places* had the same effect.

As late as 1600, therefore, the official Church of England was marching to rhythms partly set in Zürich between the 1530s and 1550s, even though much of its theological life was set in different patterns decided by Churches and theologians with a greater allegiance to Geneva and its heirs. England was not unique in this: later still, in the early seventeenth century, the reformed Churches of Hungary and Transylvania were still troubled by tussles between the traditions of Zürich and Geneva.[56] That element of the ambiguity of English divinity, a tension within the reformed protestant tradition, has largely been forgotten in the concentration of later party strife in the great fault-lines between Arminians and anti-Arminians, Restoration conformity and dissent, and Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics. Undoubtedly the English future turned in other directions, set by the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* of Richard Hooker. But even in Hooker, that delicate subverter of the reformed tradition, the theologian of the Elizabethan Church who most resonates with the idiosyncrasies and strong opinions of Queen Elizabeth I, there is generous quotation from Bullinger, with rather more eclectic reference than Whitgift had made of him. Moreover, one can find emphases that Bullinger would have recognized and of which he would have approved: Hooker's emphatic affirmation of the place of the civil magistrate in the Church, his relativistic discussion of episcopacy and his maintenance of a reformed view of the eucharist, still firmly distanced from Lutherans – even his turning away from Calvinistic harshness on predestination would not raise eyebrows in Bullinger's Zürich. The *Ecclesiastical Polity* was much more in the spirit of the *Decades* than has often been realized.

As I have argued elsewhere, Hooker is too protean a figure to be appropriated as uncompromisingly as he later was by the Oxford Movement.[57] In an important and perceptive article, Mark Perrott has argued that the argumentative strategy against puritans that distinguishes Hooker from his patron Whitgift is not merely his new stress on reason, but through it, an appeal to probability. Whitgift stressed obedience, and saw his puritan opponents as perversely disobedient, showing themselves no better than Anabaptists. That is why he had used Bullinger as he did. Hooker shifted the ground to recognize that puritans had genuine scruples of conscience, and he did his best to resolve them. In doing so, he made reason a foil for what he saw as an excessively scripturalist mentality.[58] If the judgement of reason is a major criterion of authority in deciding on matters of controversy, then 'of some things we may very well retaine an opinion that they are probable and not unlikely to be true as when we hold that men have their soules rather by

[56] For a superb study of these tensions, see G. Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier 1600–1660* (Oxford, 2000).

[57] D. MacCulloch, 'Richard Hooker's reputation', *EHR*, CXVII (2002), 773–812.

[58] M.E.C. Perrott, 'Richard Hooker and the Problem of Authority in the Elizabethan Church', *JEH*, XLIX (1998), 32, 37, 39, 49.

creation then propagation, or that the mother of our Lorde lived alwaies in the state of virginitie as well after his birth as before'. Equally, Hooker could assert of some elements of the Presbyterian case from scripture: 'that some thinges which they maintaine, as far as some men can probably conjecture, do seeme to have bene out of scripture not absurdly gathered'.[59]

In this death by a thousand probabilities, so infuriating to modern journalists seeking snappy quotations from Anglican theologians, we glimpse the taproot of a tradition. Where might it have travelled next, as the Church of England experienced what Patrick Collinson saw as 'the greatest calamity ever visited upon [it]', Archbishop Laud?[60] Certainly to William Chillingworth, a particular sort of fellow-traveller with Laud and the Arminians. But I suggest that one of the most distinguished representatives of the tradition was Richard Baxter, friend and admirer of that most Elizabethan of Stuart churchmen, Archbishop Usher, and himself once nearly a bishop at the hands of Charles II. Baxter was a man who despite that offer, spent most of his career shunted off the main line of the established Church after the Restoration settlement, by what he called 'the new prelatical way', but he was proud to say of himself something that sounds remarkably like the comfortable confusion of modern mainstream Anglicanism: 'You could not (except a Catholick Christian) have truelier called me than an Episcopal-Presbyterian-Independent'.[61]

Baxter knew his Hooker. Like Hooker, logic and metaphysics were his favourite academic study, and consequently he read the medieval schoolmen as attentively as and perhaps more attentively than any protestant scholastic.[62] The consequence sounded like Hooker too: 'And yet, after all, I was glad of probabilities instead of full undoubted certainties.'[63] Baxter, so often seen as a doyen of late puritanism, went so far as to quote Hooker writing against the classic Elizabethan puritan Walter Travers: 'that whatever men may pretend, the subjective certainty cannot go beyond the objective evidence; for it is caused thereby as the print on the wax is caused by that on the seal'. Controverting the priorities of the signatories of the Westminster confession, who followed the innovation of the 1615 Irish articles among anglophone confessional statements in making the doctrine of scripture the starting-point of their text, he produced a personal hierarchy of certainties that would bear interesting comparison with Descartes: 'My certainty that I am a man is before my certainty that there is a God, for *Quod facit notum est magis notum;* my certainty that there is a God is greater than my certainty that he requireth love and holiness of his creature,' and so on.[64]

59 Perrott, 'Hooker', 50, 51, quoting R. Hooker, ed. W.R. Speed Hill *et al.*, *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker* (7 vols., Cambridge, MA, 1977–94), I. 179–80, 185.
60 P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), 90.
61 N.H. Keeble, ed. *The Autobiography of Richard Baxter*, abridged by J.M. Lloyd Thomas (1974), 84, xvii.
62 Ibid., 9.
63 Ibid., 11.
64 Ibid., 111.

No one has ever said that Richard Baxter was a simple or easily defined character, but I would be prepared to try out one title on him. Reginald Askew in an engagingly quirky series of essays on Bishop Jeremy Taylor placed his hero among 'the last of the Anglicans'.[65] I would rather suggest that Taylor's ejected contemporary Richard Baxter was the first of the Anglicans. His problem was that the Restoration Church had altered its latitude in both senses in order to exclude the likes of him. It shifted its centre of gravity away from its particular brand of reformed protestantism to something more sacramental, and in one sense more insular. It had also destroyed the latitude that had made it possible for Lancelot Andrewes, Antonio del Corro, Elizabeth I and Walter Travers more or less to co-exist in the same Church. Anglicanism has been asking questions about latitude ever since; but perhaps it has been hiding from some of the answers.

[65] R. Askew, *Muskets and Altars: Jeremy Taylor and the last of the Anglicans* (1997).

4

Joan of Contention: The Myth of the Female Pope in Early Modern England*

THOMAS S. FREEMAN

During his interrogations in May 1558, the Marian martyr Roger Holland twice referred to the 'fact' that a woman had once reigned as pope in order to rebut his interrogators. Asked where the protestant Church was before Luther, Holland contemptuously answered 'Our Church is not from Pope Nicholas or Pope Joane, but our Church is from the begynnyng, even from the time that God sayd unto Adam that the seede of the woman should breake the serpentes hed.'[1] The fact that Holland, an apprentice draper of London, was familiar with the story indicates how pervasively it had spread since its first appearance three centuries earlier. The fact that his interrogators let the 'historical' allusion pass unchallenged twice demonstrates the wide acceptance of the myth; it was not until four years after Holland's ashes littered Smithfield that the first serious critique of the story appeared.

The myth of the female pope, who came to be known as Pope Joan, circulated throughout Europe and was retold, and debated, for centuries. This essay will explore the reception of the story, and the controversies surrounding it, in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at a time when the story of the female pope was ceaselessly discussed and disputed.[2] The story of Pope Joan was related in such authoritative works as Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' and

* The research for this essay was largely conducted while I was the beneficiary of a short-term fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library. I would like to thank the trustees of the Folger Shakespeare Library for their generosity and the access to their splendid collection. I would also like to thank Kenneth Fincham, Mark Goldie, Victor Houliston and Grant Tapsell for their helpful and instructive comments on an earlier version of this essay. All translations, except where otherwise noted, are my own.

1 John Foxe, *The Ecclesiastical Historye containing the Acts and Monuments* (1570), 2238–9.

2 Craig Rusticci has observed that there were only two books devoted to Pope Joan during Elizabeth I's reign, which, he suggests, was because the story was censored, or self-censored, since it could be used to question the legitimacy of her headship of the English Church: Rusticci, ' "Ceste Nouvelle Papesse": Elizabeth I and the Specter of Pope Joan' in *Elizabeth I: Always her own Free Woman*, eds. C. Levin, J. Eldridge Carney and D. Barrett Graves (Aldershot, 2003), 131–48. However, Rusticci ignores the discussion of Pope Joan in officially sponsored, or highly authoritative, works such as Jewel's *Apologie*.

John Jewel's *Apologie*. From 1563 onwards, the homily for Whitsunday denounced 'Pope Jone the harlot'.[3] Pope Joan was as ubiquitous a presence in Elizabethan and Jacobean controversial literature as she was in polemical literature under the later Stuarts.

The myth of Pope Joan is also a feature of one of the most important forces in early modern English political and religious life: anti-Catholicism. It coursed like a raging river through early modern England, carving its way through the landscape and sweeping everything before it. Of the three great political crises of the seventeenth century, two – the popish plot in 1678–81 and the Glorious Revolution of 1688–9 – were direct consequences of anti-Catholicism. The third, the civil war, was less directly, but still powerfully, shaped by the corrosive hatred and fear of Catholics.[4] Linda Colley has famously maintained that protestantism played a crucial role in creating British national identity.[5] It might be more precisely said that protestantism divided Britain into Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists and Quakers; it was the shared anti-Catholicism of these groups that enabled them to overcome their differences and to bond together.

Part of the reason for the potency and pervasiveness of early modern English anti-Catholicism was its adaptability to changing political and religious circumstances. The face of the papal enemy, while ever-present, was ever-changing. It reflected the fears and concerns of a particular moment; furthermore, as Peter Lake has observed, 'the protestants' negative imagery of popery can tell us a good deal about their positive image of themselves'.[6] And this observation is as true of the story of Pope Joan as it is of anti-Catholicism in general. Debated, defended and denounced, the historiography of the female pope reveals much about English protestantism during the first two centuries of its existence.

II

The oldest surviving account of the female pope appears in the *Chronica Universalis Mettensis* of Jean de Mailly, which was written in the middle of the thirteenth century.[7] This account relates that Pope Victor III (d. 1087) was succeeded by a woman who, disguised as a man, had gained a great reputation for

3 *The Second Tome of Homelyes* (1563), sig. NNNN2r.

4 See J.S. Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil War', *TRHS*, 5th series, XXXV (1985), 135–57; C. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1983); R. Clifton, 'The Popular Fear of Catholics during the English Revolution', *PP*, LII (1971), 23–55; idem, 'Fear of Popery', in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. C. Russell (1973), 144–67.

5 L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, CT, 1992).

6 P. Lake, 'Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice', *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, eds. R. Cust and A. Hughes (1989), 73–4.

7 Alain Boureau has argued that de Mailly was drawing on an older version of the story, now unknown, which, however, did not predate the mid-twelfth century: see Boureau, *The Myth of Pope Joan*, trans. L.G. Cochrane (Chicago, 2001), 116–17. For an acute discussion of the origins of the myth of Pope Joan, see ibid., 29–44, 107–23.

learning and had risen to become first a cardinal and then pope. Her gender was revealed when she gave birth while mounting a horse. She was tied to the horse's tail, dragged around Rome and then stoned to death.[8] This story was repeated by the Dominican Etienne de Bourbon in c.1260[9] and a few years later by an anonymous Franciscan of Erfurt.[10] All of these versions of the story were supplanted by the account given by Martin of Troppau in his very influential *Chronica de Romanis Pontificibus et Imperatoribus*, written c.1280.[11] According to Martin, a woman, who was born at Mainz, went to Athens dressed in male attire, with her lover. She was a highly proficient student there and excelled in all branches of knowledge. She then settled in Rome where – still disguised as a man – she became renowned both for her learning and for the holiness of her life. Her impressive reputation led to her being elected pope on the death of Leo IV. She reigned two years, seven months and four days, but during that time she became pregnant by her lover who was also her 'familiaris'. Her imposture was discovered when, riding in procession from St Peter's to the Lateran palace, she went into labour and gave birth in a narrow street between the Colosseum and the church of S. Clemente. She died giving birth and was buried on the spot where the inauspicious event took place. Because of the shameful incident subsequent popes avoided travelling in that street and her name was removed from the lists of popes. This became the canonical version of the story. Martin was the first writer to give the female pope a name, and following him, it was generally agreed that her papal name was John and that she was the eighth pontiff of that name. Yet Martin's most important contribution was to supply what became the universally accepted date for Joan's pontificate: sometime between the reigns of Leo IV (847–55) and Benedict III (855–8).

Throughout the Middle Ages, Martin of Troppau's tale of a female pontiff was retold by everyone and doubted by very few.[12] The myth of Pope Joan was enduring and popular because it was rooted in some of the most important and problematic ecclesiological issues of the Middle Ages. The story was strategically placed on a mental crossroads where concern about the relations of women with the Church, the relations of women with men and the relations of the clergy with the laity intersected. Pope Joan provided an opportunity to reflect on any of these issues or all of them in combination.[13]

Joan's example could also be used to comment on, often critically, the institution of the papacy and the governance of the Church.[14] Both the greatest

[8] *MGH*, *Scriptores*, XXIV (Hanover, 1879), 514.

[9] *Scriptores Odinis Praedicatorum*, eds. J. Quetif and J. Echard (2 vols., Paris, 1719), I. 367.

[10] *MGH, Scriptores*, XXIV. 184.

[11] *MGH, Scriptores*, XXII (Hanover, 1872), 428.

[12] There was some scepticism about the legend in the fifteenth century: *Die Brefwechsel des Eneas Sylvius Picclomini*, ed. Rudolf Wolkan (4 vols., Vienna, 1909–18), III.1. 36; Bartolomeo Platina, *Vitae Pontificum* (Cologne, 1529), 108; Johannes Aventinus, *Annalium Boiorum* (Ingolstadt, 1554), 474.

[13] See Boureau, *Myth*, 165–218.

[14] For example, the remarks of William of Ockham in *Opus Nonaginta Dierum*, eds. J.G. Sykes and H.S. Offler in *Guilelmi de Ockham Opera Politica* (4 vols., Manchester, 1940–63), II. 854.

heresiarchs of the Middle Ages utilized the story of the female pope. Wiclif argued that her career proved that the curia was fallible and could not claim legitimate spiritual authority over the Church.[15] Jan Hus referred to Joan numerous times, most particularly to argue that the popes did not have a legitimate claim to spiritual headship over the Church and also to maintain that they could not trace a line of descent back to St Peter and to demonstrate their corruption.[16]

III

With the advent of the Reformation the polemical potential of the myth was greatly enhanced. There were, however, a number of different, not entirely consistent, ways in which the protestants could utilize the story of the female pope. The most obvious, and the first to develop, was to use it to condemn the Roman Church, and the papacy, as morally corrupt. Martin Luther recalled seeing a statue popularly alleged to be of Joan, when he visited Rome and he regarded it as conclusive proof of papal depravity.[17] This use of the myth allowed protestants to turn the tables neatly on the steady stream of Catholic attacks on their own alleged vices.[18]

What made this use of the myth particularly effective was that it carried implications of more than mere wrongdoing. A great deal of the enduring fascination of the story of the female pope was that it was a tale of social and sexual inversion. It was also a story of moral inversion that fitted beautifully into the protestant conception of popery as an 'anti-religion', a diabolical parody of God's natural order and his true Church.[19] Frances Dolan has noted the propensity of protestant polemicists to claim that the hierarchy of the Roman Church was dominated by women and to try to represent the invariably male pope as a woman.[20] The myth of Pope Joan enabled protestants to associate the papacy with both unnatural female domination of the Church and sexual degeneracy in a satisfactorily direct manner. And in retelling the story, protestants often emphasized, indeed exaggerated, the elements of lust and illicit sex that were already present in the tale.

Joan's gender permitted an identification that effectively associated Catholi-

15 *John Wiclif's Polemical Works in Latin*, ed. R. Buddensieg (2 vols., 1883), II. 619.

16 *Documenta Mag. Joannis Hus Vitam*, ed. F. Palacky (Onäsbruck, 1966), 59–61, 178, 229, 291; Jan Hus, *Tractatus de Ecclesia* (Cambridge, 1956), 48, 103, 107, 141, 223.

17 Martin Luther, *Werke. Kritische Gesammtausgabe: Tischreden* (Weimar, 1967), V. 667.

18 Protestant immorality, particularly sexual immorality, was part of a fundamental Catholic polemical construction of protestants. See G. Wylie Sypher, ' "Faisant ce qu'il leur vient a plasir": The Image of Protestantism in French Catholic Polemic on the Eve of the Religious Wars', *SCJ*, XI (1980), 59–84. It was an equally important part of protestant polemical constructions of Catholics; see Lake, 'Anti-Popery', 74–5. For its use, see John Jewel, *An Apologie* [1562], fos 22r–4r.

19 See Lake, 'Anti-Popery', 74–6.

20 F. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca, NY, 1999), 53. Also see K. Dean, 'The Gendered Language of Anti-Papist Polemic in England, 1603–1702' (Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 2000).

cism with absolute evil. By means of a literal reading of both the story of Joan and of the final book of the bible, she could be used to identify the Catholic Church with the whore of Babylon. Joan's elevation to the papacy and subsequent downfall were not happenstance, they were God's warning to the faithful of the true nature of the Roman Church. Heinrich Bullinger declared Joan was 'a great whore' who demonstrated that the papacy was the whore of Babylon, and others made the same point.[21]

If the Roman Church was indeed to be identified with Antichrist and with the whore of Babylon, then it was not merely corrupt, it was satanic.[22] This was a potent polemical weapon but it was wielded at a cost. George Downame, bishop of Derry, declared that because the pope was Antichrist, he was incapable of doing anything that was not anti-Christian.[23] However, if one rejected the Catholic Church entirely, as being completely diabolical, one risked throwing out a large baby along with the holy water. For if the papacy was anti-Christian then were all the doctrines and practices it had fostered, some of which were shared by the magisterial protestants, also anti-Christian? Were all those who lived and died members of the anti-Christian Church damned? These questions were particularly pressing, and particularly complicated, in England, whose national Church had closer institutional and historical ties to Rome than those of most protestant Churches. Continuing and protracted struggles within the English Church and state over the relations with either or both Rome and the other Catholic powers further increased the complications, making this an especially controversial and important question within the early modern Church of England.[24]

Even when English attitudes towards Rome softened, and the equation of the papacy with Antichrist was de-emphasized or even rejected, additional objectionable aspects of it came into greater prominence, such as its claims to universal jurisdiction.[25] Here again, the story of Joan proved to be a valuable polemical tool. In 1614, Joseph Hall observed that if the papacy truly was infallible a woman would not have become pope, a point repeated by Richard Baxter forty-three years later.[26]

The myth of Joan could also be used to undermine one of the strongest defences of Catholic apologists: the unbroken succession of the popes from the time of St Peter. If a woman could not be a priest then how could a woman legitimately be pope? And if Joan was not a legitimate pope then links of the Petrine

[21] Heinrich Bullinger, *A Hundred Sermons upon the Apocalypses* (1564), 507. See also John Field, *A Caveat for Parsons Howlet* (1581), sig. B5r; Andrew Willet, *Synopsis Papismi* (1592), 252.

[22] See William Fulke, *A Sermon Preached at Hampton Court 12 November 1570* (1570), sigs. B1v–B2r; Thomas Brightman, *The Revelation of St. John* (Leiden, 1616), 775–6.

[23] A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge, 1995), 173. Also note Joseph Hall's similar judgement, ibid., 346.

[24] Ibid., 93–127, 347–8.

[25] Ibid., 219.

[26] Joseph Hall, *A Recollection of Such Treatise* (1614), 849; Richard Baxter, *The Safe Religion* (1657), 293.

succession were irrecoverably snapped.[27] Protestants had quickly seen the potential of this argument. Robert Barnes, the English evangelical and friend of Martin Luther, produced a heavily revised, indeed rewritten, edition of Platina's papal biographies. A marginal note in this edition, which appeared next to the account of Pope Joan read: 'John VIII, the pregnant pontiff, destroyed the papal succession.'[28]

IV

From the beginning of the Reformation, anti-papal polemic became a staple of protestant writers, engravers and printers. Robert Barnes shrewdly struck at the papacy by producing his own, tendentiously rewritten, edition of Platina's collection of papal biographies. Barnes reprinted Platina's account of Joan's life and career faithfully, although he omitted Platina's doubts about the story.[29] The same is true of Vergerio's strident character assassination of Pope Joan, a pamphlet that was the first work to be devoted solely to the female pontiff. In addition to her sorcery and her pact with the devil, Joan was a 'whore' who (and this Vergerio's original contribution) concealed her frequent pregnancies, the results of an endless string of affairs, by means of both abortion and infanticide.[30] Despite, or because of, its hysterical vehemence, Vergerio's pamphlet was very popular, running through multiple editions and translations.

John Bale was the first author to identify Joan explicitly with the whore of Babylon.[31] His classic version of Joan's story and its apocalyptic significance appeared in the second edition of his great encyclopaedia of British authors. Bale was heavily reliant on Martin of Troppau's account of Joan, but also made a considerable number of important additions to his narrative. Some of these were Bale's own invention, such as his claim that Joan's first lover, who accompanied her to Athens, was a monk of the prestigious abbey of Fulda (a casual but inspired piece of anti-monastic invective).[32] In a far more important passage, Bale wrote that as pope Joan 'performed ordinations, created priests and deacons, promoted bishops, ordained abbots, celebrated masses, consecrated altars and churches,

[27] H.S., *Jesuitas Pontificis Maximi Romani Emissarios, Falso et Frustra Negare Papam Ioannem VIII fuisse Mulierem* (?, 1588), sig. B1r.

[28] Bartolomeo Platina, *Vitae Romanorum Pontificum quos Papae Vocamus*, ed. Robert Barnes (Wittenberg, 1536), sig. K6r; see also *Joanni Calvini Opera*, ed. G. Baum *et al.* [59 vols., Brunswick, 1863–97], VII. 633.

[29] Cf. Barnes, ed. *Vitae Romanorum Pontificum,* sig. K6r with Platina, *Vitae*, 108.

[30] Pietro Paolo Vergerio, *Historia di Papa Giovanni VIII che Femina* (Tübingen, 1556), sigs. A2r–A5r.

[31] John Bale, *A Mysterye of Inyquyte* (Antwerp, 1545), fo. 19r; idem, *Actes of the English Votaryes* (Antwerp, 1546), fos 50r–v. Valerie Hotchkiss states that Ranulph Higden, the fourteenth-century chronicler, compared Joan to the whore of Babylon: 'The Legend of the Female Pope in the Middle Ages' in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis*, eds. A. Moss, P. Dust *et al*. (Binghamton, NY, 1994), 500 fn. 17. I have found no such comparison in Higden's account of Joan, either in its original Latin or in the medieval English translation of it.

[32] John Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Brytannie . . . Catalogus* (Basle, 1557), 116.

administered the sacraments, *proferred her feet to be kissed*, and performed other papal duties'.[33] Bale was referring to widely circulated stories of popes forcing kings and emperors to kiss their feet and was thus attacking the papal usurpation of monarchical authority. But Joan allowed Bale to give an additional twist to the dagger by implicitly adding the spectre of gender inversion and men kissing a woman's feet. This triple usurpation, of the profane over the holy, the clergy over the magistrate and the inferior gender over the superior gender, marked Joan's pontificate as an indication of the anti-Christian nature of the Roman Church.

Bale's account of Joan was remarkably influential. It was incorporated into the two most authoritative protestant ecclesiastical histories of the sixteenth century: John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and the *Ecclesiastica Historia* or 'Magdeburg Centuries'. Bale had written that that Joan's career 'delineates that seat of the great whore and mother of all fornication more clearly than any Apelles could ever paint in colours', which Foxe was to echo in the first sentence of his account of Joan.[34] The Magdeburg Centuriators were equally sedulous in repeating Bale's narrative of Joan and agreed that it demonstrated that Joan fulfilled the prophecy in Revelation about the whore of Babylon.[35]

V

The account of Joan in the Magdeburg Centuries, unlike in Bale, included a detailed defence of the authenticity of the story. The reason was that in 1562, the myth had, for the first time, been subjected to meticulous and hostile scrutiny. The success of Robert Barnes's edition of Platina's papal biographies led the curia to commission a new edition from an Augustinian scholar, Onofrio Panvinio, with an impressive reputation as an antiquarian. Panvinio's demolition of the myth was brief (it was a six-page note appended to Platina's life of Joan) but it was remarkably effective, and laid the groundwork for all subsequent attacks on Joan.[36] Panvinio was the first author to criticize the story systematically and he was the first to dismiss it flatly as a fable. Moreover, Panvinio established the major directions future criticism of the story would take: arguments that accounts of Joan appearing in chronicles pre-dating Martin of Troppau were later interpolations, arguments that there was no contemporary evidence of her pontificate, chronological arguments that Joan could not have reigned in the middle years of the ninth century and arguments based on the inherent improbabilities in the story. If Panvinio's criticisms had a weakness it was that, after

33 Bale, *Catalogus*, 112; my emphasis. This passage is – apart from the words in italics, which are Bale's insertion – a direct quotation from the German humanist Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa's *De Incertitudine et Vanitate Omnium Scientium et Artium* (Cologne, 1531), sig. N1v.

34 Bale, *Catalogus*, 117; Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* [1570], 182.

35 *EH*, V. cent IX. col. 501.

36 Panvinio's discussion of Pope Joan is found in *B. Platinae Historia de Vitis Pontificum Romanorum*, ed. Onofrio Panvinio (Venice, 1562), fos 102r–14v.

having dismissed the story as a preposterous fable, he did not explain how it came to be so widely believed.

Panvinio's criticisms were not only brilliant, they were remarkably influential.[37] Moreover, they were repeated almost immediately by English Catholics. Thomas Harding, John Jewel's nemesis, responded to Jewel's reference to the female pope in his *Apologie* by repeating Panvinio and dismissing the story as 'a fond and vaine fable'.[38] Harding then proceeded to reiterate Panvinio's criticisms of the story, sometimes abridging them, often repeating them verbatim.[39] Panvinio's arguments were difficult to rebut. However, the Magdeburg Centuriators, writing within a few years of Panvinio, had already erected what would become the chief pillar in the defence of the legend of the female pope; they cited in its support every medieval author they could find who mentioned it, even though these wrote after Martin of Troppau and were clearly repeating him.[40] Jewel followed the same tactic, which Harding countered by succinctly pointing out the flaw in his argument. No matter how many authors were cited in defence of Joan, they all 'deserve no more credite than Martin [of Troppau] him selfe, for all have drawen their lyes out of his fountaine'.[41]

The battle lines in the English debate over Joan were drawn in the exchange between Harding and Jewel, and their arguments would be ceaselessly redeployed by their co-religionists. In particular, the appeal to what John Field would refer to as 'an whole cloude of their owne historiographers' against Catholic challenges to the veracity of the legend, and the reliance on the sheer number of sources, irrespective of their provenance or reliability, would become a central feature of later defences of Joan.[42] The mixture of evasion, vituperation and logic-chopping deployed in response to Panvinio's criticisms reveals the effectiveness of those criticisms. Yet although they were not rebutted successfully, at least from the standpoint of either logic or scholarship, they changed few opinions. Protestants continued to believe in the legend of the female pope, and to defend it, because the legend was too useful to be discarded.

Yet towards the end of the sixteenth century, the uses to which the legend was put subtly began to change. A new emphasis on Joan's pontificate as a break in the chain linking the popes to St Peter began to appear. Passages by the veteran protestant writer Robert Crowley in 1588, attacking the Petrine succession,

37 Boureau, *Myth*, 247.

38 Jewel, *Apologie*, fo. 24r; Thomas Harding, *A Confutation of a Booke intituled An Apologie of the Church of England* (Antwerp, 1565), fo. 164r.

39 Cf. Harding, *Confutation*, fos 164r–6 with *B. Platinae Historia*, fos 102r–4v.

40 *EH*, V. cent IX. cols. 501–2. In fairness, the Centuriators did claim that Sigebert of Gembloux (they ignored Panvinio's claim that the account of Joan was an interpolation into his chronicle) and Marianus Scotus had related Joan's history before Martin of Troppau (ibid., col. 502), but they also listed later authors such as Ranulph Higden and Platina as independent sources for her life and pontificate.

41 John Jewel, *A Defence of the Apologie* (1567), 380. Jewel also cited Sigebert of Gembloux as a source for Joan's pontificate, blithely ignoring Panvinio's scepticism about this; a scepticism also expressed by Harding and Harpsfield; Harding, *Confutation*, fo. 166v.

42 Field, *Caveat*, sig. B5r.

epitomize the developing concern with the idea of a continuous apostolic succession.[43] Although Crowley's target is the succession of popes, his language, particularly his description of Joan as an 'arrant whore', echoes the traditional invocation of Joan as an example of papal turpitude. More fundamentally, although Crowley is attacking the idea of the Petrine succession, he is not doing this, as later English writers would do, in order to contrast the flawed Roman succession with the unbroken ties that putatively led from the English episcopacy back to the apostles. Crowley, who at one point had been suspended from his livings for his opposition to clerical vestments, compared the 'succession of the bishops in Rome' to the Levites who lost sight of God's truth and the English bishops to the prophets raised up by the holy spirit.[44] The point of this comparison was not merely to contrast the evil popes with the upright English bishops, it was also to contrast the evil popes, who claimed legitimacy on the basis of an institutional succession, with the righteous English bishops who, according to Crowley, derived their authority charismatically from God. Crowley's remarks on Pope Joan mark an interesting transition in English protestant treatments of the myth as they began to use it both to attack the papal succession and eventually to defend the apostolic succession of the English bishops.

VI

The first work devoted solely to establishing that Pope Joan did not exist appeared in 1584.[45] It was written by Georg Scherer, a Jesuit who was chaplain to Archduke Ernst of Austria. Much more important criticisms of the legend followed a few years later from the great Catholic apologist Cardinal Roberto Bellarmine.[46] Bellarmine dismissed the story of Joan as a 'fabulam', as Panvinio had done, and proceeded to claim that it had been discredited by Panvinio. He went on to repeat Panvinio's arguments about the lack of contemporary sources for the female pope and the chronological impossibity of fitting her reign between the pontificates of Leo IV and Benedict III. Bellarmine, moreover, profited from codicological and diplomatic research by Catholic scholars, demonstrating that the story of Pope Joan had been interpolated into the manuscripts of medieval chroniclers.[47] Bellarmine's criticisms of the Pope Joan myth were influential, partly owing to his considerable reputation as the greatest Catholic apologist of his age, and partly to the presentation of his arguments, which were succinct, lucid, well-organized and relatively free from vituperation.

43 Robert Crowley, *A Deliberat Answere* (1588), fo. 24v.
44 Ibid., fos 25r–v.
45 Georg Scherer, *Grundlicher Bericht ob es wahr sey, dass auf ein Zeit ein Pabst zu Rom schwanger gewesen und ein Kind gebohren habe* (Ingolstadt, 1584).
46 Roberto Bellarmine, *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Ffidei* (3 vols., Ingolstadt, 1586–93), I. bk 3, cols. 942–7.
47 Ibid., I. bk 3, cols. 943–4.

Within the next decade, however, an even more devastating critique of the story of Pope Joan emerged. Its author was Florimond de Raemond, a historian, polemicist and *conseiller* in the *parlement* of Bordeaux. In 1587, Raemond wrote a comparatively brief tract of forty-four pages, which was printed anonymously, entitled the *Erreur Populaire de la Papesse Ione*. A third edition was printed in 1594, which was just over three hundred pages long and which, for the first time, was printed in Raemond's name.[48] In this form, Raemond's book attained immediate and enduring popularity. It went through a further twelve editions in French before its final printing in 1691. It also attracted international attention, and was speedily translated into Latin and Dutch.[49]

Raemond enquired why no contemporary writer had recounted her story. Although it was a point that had been made by both Panvinio and Bellarmine, Raemond was much more thorough than either had been in examining the ninth century records and he compiled an impressive list of ninth-century sources that did not mention Joan.[50] Often Raemond did little more than to add details and data to the arguments that Panvinio and Bellarmine had made.[51] But he also made some important original arguments. Raemond sought to explain not only how the myth originated but how it came to be so widely circulated and believed. He suggested that the legend arose from Pope John XII (955–63) having a mistress who so dominated him that she was, Raemond claimed, nicknamed 'the papess'.[52] Once started, Raemond argued, the story was widely disseminated, partly for political reasons and partly in resistance to the reform movements that imposed celibacy on the clergy; he also perceptively noted that the story was repeated because writers tended to copy colourful stories they read uncritically.[53] In short, Raemond was not merely the foremost critic of the myth of Joan, he was its first historian, describing its development and appeal. He appropriated the best arguments of Panvinio and Bellarmine and reinforced them with a profound knowledge of European history and a prodigious knowledge of controversial literature.

Raemond's work was immediately acclaimed by Catholics. In his great history of the Church, the *Annales Ecclesiastici*, Cardinal Cesare Baronio extolled Raemond as a man of outstanding learning and piety and declared that the *Erreur Populaire* left defenceless those who tried to defend the 'inanis fabula' of a female pope.[54] Indeed, he based his discussion of Joan solidly on Raemond's work. After Bellarmine, Raemond and Baronio had written against the myth, few, if any, Catholics continued to believe it. As for their confessional adversaries, Robert Parsons triumphantly exclaimed that 'this whole story of

48 B.S. Tinsley, *History and Polemics in the French Reformation* (Cranbury, NJ, 1992), 66.
49 Ibid., 66, 70, 183 fn.19.
50 Ibid., 62–4, 72–85, 105–26, 256–7, 266–74.
51 Ibid., 15, 19–20, 40–9, 52–72, 225.
52 Ibid., 251–9, 281–6.
53 Ibid., 126–41, 287–92.
54 Cesare Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici* [12 books in 7 vols., Mainz, 1601–8], V. bk 9, col. 127.

Pope Joane is a meere fable and so knowen to the learneder sort of Protestants themselves'.[55]

Parsons, however, was exulting prematurely. The criticisms of Catholic scholars really had no effect on English readiness to accept the myth. Throughout the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods writers across the spectrum of English protestantism accepted without reservation that a woman had occupied the throne of St Peter. It is perhaps not surprising that puritan writers would have embraced a story that was inherently anti-hierarchical and stridently anti-Catholic, but establishment figures such as Lancelot Andrewes and Peter Heylyn affirmed her existence as well.[56] The one English protestant cleric in this period to question the myth publicly, John Normanton, provides an exception that demonstrates the rule. In 1636, Normanton, a fellow of Caius Cambridge preached a sermon that resulted in his being hauled into the consistory court. Among other objectionable sentiments in his sermon, Normanton approvingly cited Baronio and Bellarmine, and dismissed the story of Joan as an obvious fiction, wondering 'how any wise man living' could believe it.[57] It is indicative that Normanton's peers objected strenuously to these opinions; it is perhaps even more indicative that the man who expressed them apparently converted to Catholicism shortly afterwards.[58]

VII

The ability of protestants to maintain their belief in the historical reality of the female pope was augmented by a dialogue written by Alexander Cooke, the vicar of Leeds, and printed in 1610.[59] This was the most impressive defence of myth produced in the early modern period and yet, paradoxically, it demonstrates its inherent instability. Cooke developed no new lines of research and discovered no new evidence supporting the traditional story of Joan's life and pontificate; rather his skill was in controversial writing and debate. He answered the crucial objection that no writer mentioned Joan for four hundred years by observing that many cherished Catholic beliefs – such as the claim that Christ's image remained on St Veronica's handkerchief – rested on authors who wrote more than four centuries after the event.[60] This is dubious logic, but effective polemics.

As with Napolean's campaigns in 1814, tactical success masked fundamental strategic weakness. On the most important objection to the story of Joan, the point that no writer mentioned her for centuries after her supposed pontificate, Cooke cited six authors who he claimed related Joan's story and who predated Martin of

55 *TC*, I. 391.
56 See below, n. 71 and p. 73.
57 M. Todd, ' "All One with Tom Thumb": Arminianism, Popery and the Story of the Reformation in Early Stuart Cambridge', *Church History*, LXIV (1993), 563–79.
58 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 77.
59 Alexander Cooke, *Pope Joane. A Dialogue betweene a Protestant and a Papist* (1610).
60 Ibid., 69–70.

Troppau: Anastasius Bibliothecaris, Regino of Prüm, Marianus Scotus, Liutprand of Cremona, Gottfried of Viterbo and Sigebert of Gembloux.[61] The citations of Anastasius, Regino and Liutprand were flatly erroneous. The citations of Sigebert and Marianus blithely ignored the objections of Bellarmine and Raemond. Some copies of Gottfried of Viterbo's *Pantheon* and, notably, the edition of the work printed by Oporinus in Basel in 1559, did contain a note declaring that there had been a female pope named Joan; modern scholars regard it as an later interpolation.[62] Cooke would not have known this, but he would have known that there was still a gap of centuries between Joan and Gottfried of Viterbo, who wrote in the late twelfth century. For all of his skill and learning, Cooke did not adequately answer the critics of the myth.

But this did not stop the cream of English protestants from citing his book as the definitive rebuttal of Joan's critics. John White, a Cambridge DD and royal chaplain, when challenged on his claim that Pope Joan had existed, replied by citing Cooke's work, 'which handles the point throughly [sic] and exactly'.[63] Francis Mason and Thomas James also commended Cooke's handling of the matter.[64] The printing history of Cooke's work further demonstrates the enduring popularity of his arguments. It was reprinted in 1625, although with the content altered from a dialogue into a straightforward exposition, and in 1745 and 1809. In 1675 the work was reprinted, anonymously by 'a lover of truth', along with a translation of Platina's account of Joan, as *A Present for a Papist*.[65] This compilation was reprinted in 1740 and 1785. Cooke's dialogue was translated into Latin in 1619, with a title that proclaimed that it made the truth about Pope Joan manifest to the entire world.[66] And in 1633, Cooke's work was translated very faithfully into French, with the purpose, according to its preface, of rebutting the falsehoods of Florimond de Raemond.[67] Cooke's arguments endured, not because of their intrinsic merit, but because they provided plausible pretexts which allowed protestants to believe what they wished to believe.

VIII

But why did they want to believe the myth? At the beginning of James I's reign, an exchange regarding Pope Joan, in some ways very reminiscent of the exchange between Harding and Jewel four decades earlier, took place between the Jesuit

[61] Ibid., 35.

[62] See *Rerum Germanicarum Scriptores aliquot Insignes*, ed. J. Pistorius (3 vols., Ratisbon, 1726), II. 372.

[63] John White, *A Defence of the Way to the True Church* (1614), 543.

[64] Francis Mason, *Vindicae Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (1625), 468–9; Thomas James, *A Manuduction or Introduction unto Divinitie* (Oxford, 1625), 52.

[65] *A Present for a Papist: Or the Life and Death of Pope Joan* (1675).

[66] Alexander Cooke, *Johanna Papissa Toti Orbi Manifestata. Adversus scripta Roberti Bellarmini Caesaris Baronii, Florimundi Raemondi et Aliorum Papicolarum quibus impudenter negant, Johannem hanc Papissam fuisse unquam* (Oppenheim, 1619).

[67] Alexander Cooke, *La Papesse Jeanne* (Sedan, 1633).

Robert Parsons and the protestant controversialist Matthew Sutcliffe.[68] The motives of each author in attacking or defending Joan are striking. Parsons was very concerned to rebut Bale's identification of Joan with the whore of Babylon.[69] To Sutcliffe, however, Pope Joan was important because her pontificate 'would wholy overthrow the discent and succession of Romish bishops, upon which the Romanists do so much depend'.[70]

The shift from Parsons's concern with the apocalyptic use of the myth to Sutcliffe's use of it to undermine the papal succession epitomizes a shift in English protestant utilizations of the myth in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This did not mean that other uses of the myth ceased to be deployed.[71] Nevertheless, the apocalyptic use of the Pope Joan myth declined in the later part of the sixteenth century and more suddenly in the early years of the seventeenth century. Timothy Bright, the first abridger of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, repeated most of Foxe's account of Joan, often word-for-word, yet he omitted the passages identifying Joan as the whore of Babylon.[72] But increasingly protestants cited the story as a means of denigrating the Petrine succession. Thomas Bell, among others, bluntly stated in 1596 that a female pontiff meant there was no legitimate papal succession.[73]

This shift in polemical tactics was part of larger shifts in both English protestant ecclesiology and historiography. One of these changes was the decline in the concept, formulated by Bale, and endorsed by Foxe, of the true Church as an invisible Church, whose members were not linked by institutions or ceremonies but only by common doctrine imparted by the holy spirit.[74] Instead there was an increasing tendency, epitomized in Richard Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, to identify the true Church by its sacraments and its institutional links with the apostolic Church.[75]

Catholic apologists, especially Bellarmine, echoed patristic writers such as Tertullian and Irenaeus, in maintaining that a direct linear and personal succession of bishops was an infallible mark of the true Church. Thanks in part to their writings, English protestants engaged in the cross-confessional cut and thrust, increasingly began to insist on the unbroken lineal succession of their bishops.[76]

68 *TC*, I. 388–404 and Matthew Sutcliffe, *The Subversion of Robert Parsons* (1607), 68–64 [recte 74].

69 *TC*, I. 390–1.

70 Sutcliffe, *Subversion*, 71.

71 On Joan as proof of the depravity of the papacy, see Lancelot Andrewes, *Tortura Torti* (1609), 260–1; James, *Manuduction*, 51–2. On Joan as a means to identify Antichrist, see Gabriel Powel, *Disputationum Theologicarum* (1605), 275.

72 Cf. Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* [1570], 182, with Timothy Bright, *An Abridgement of the Booke of Acts and Monuments* (1589), 98–9.

73 Thomas Bell, *The Survey of Popery* (1596), 192; see also John White, *The Way to the True Church* (1608), 415; Willet, *Synopsis Papismi*, 255.

74 See J. Facey, 'John Foxe and the Defence of the English Church' in *Protestantism and the National Church in Sixteenth Century England*, eds. P. Lake and M. Dowling (1987), 162–92.

75 A. Milton, 'The Church of England, Rome and the True Church: the Demise of a Jacobean Consensus' in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. K. Fincham (Basingstoke, 1993), 187–210.

76 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 46.

Even Archbishop Abbot, who was unswerving in his beliefs that the papacy was Antichrist and that he lived in the end times prophesied in Revelation, was concerned to defend the apostolic succession of the English episcopate.[77]

The obverse side of this coin was that English protestants became increasingly concerned with demonstrating that Rome did not possess an uninterrupted episcopal succession itself. And in this particular struggle Joan was a potent weapon.[78] At the same time, it became more difficult to maintain on the one hand, that the papacy was Antichrist, and on the other hand, to boast of one's institutional links with it. Bishop Davenant, a moderate Calvinist, declared that protestants had to concede that Rome was a Church, if the perpetuity of the entire Christian Church was to be preserved.[79] As a result, even as vehemently anti-Catholic a writer as Matthew Sutcliffe backed away from completely identifying the papacy with Antichrist, claiming instead that it was 'of *nexte affinity* to the whore of Babylon'.[80]

IX

After the death of James I, English religious writing underwent a sea change, particularly after Archbishop Laud and Bishop Juxon gained control of the licensing of books. At first sight, it might be supposed that Laudian domination might, in some respects, favour the tale of Pope Joan. The Laudians were certainly anti-Catholic and some of them, such as Heylyn, had defended the historical existence of Joan. More importantly, Laudian writers were even more concerned than the Jacobeans had been with establishing an unbroken English episcopal succession.[81] Yet the myth of Joan did not help the English establish their episcopal succession, it merely helped to counter the claims of a Petrine succession.

This was an area of sensitivity to the Laudians. For tactical reasons, stemming from a belief that invective and polemic were counter-productive when dealing with Catholics, Laud discouraged attacks on the pope.[82] Nor were denunciations of members of the medieval Church hierarchy now acceptable.[83] Moreover, as tensions over worship exacerbated during the 1630s, English writers became more concerned with iniquity at Lambeth than evil at Rome.[84] For all of these reasons, the tide of anti-papal polemic produced by English protestants, which had been rising for over seven decades, now began to recede swiftly.

Indeed, the cornerstone of anti-papal polemic, the identification of the pope as

77 Ibid., 330 fn.28; also see 286–94.
78 See Cooke, *Dialogue*, 125.
79 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 295.
80 Sutcliffe, *Subversion*, 68 (my emphasis).
81 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 301, 464–7.
82 Ibid., 63–72, 88–91, 122, 220–1.
83 Ibid., 311.
84 Ibid., 92.

Antichrist, was rejected, for the first time since Henry VIII's reign, by some English protestant writers, notably Richard Montagu and Robert Shelford. Their opinion was highly controversial and it was not accepted even by a number of Laudians, but it was an indication of how far the weakening of traditional anti-Catholicism had progressed in the 1630s. More importantly, the claim that the pope was Antichrist was one that the Laudian censors sought, with considerable success, to suppress.[85]

Although both anti-Catholicism and apocalyptic thought re-emerged with vigour during the civil war and Interregnum, anti-papalism did not. Fear of Catholics was widespread between 1640 and 1642 but sharply declined as the real weakness of English Catholics became apparent. Furthermore, what the English protestants feared was an armed uprising by English Catholics, not the papal corruption of the Church and its subversion of true doctrine.[86] At the same time, the tendency to identify the pope as Antichrist or the beast declined as candidates nearer to home – for example, Charles, the Presbyterians, the Scots or Oliver Cromwell – were found. Understandably English concerns were focused on the British Isles during this tumultuous period and people were, in William Sancroft's phrase, 'puzzling . . . to find Armageddon about Preston and Warrington Bridge'.[87] In this new world, the story of the female pontiff was largely forgotten.[88]

X

Meanwhile scholars were becoming increasing sceptical of the story of the female pope. In 1647 a book appeared that destroyed much of the diminishing credit the myth still retained. The *Familier Esclairissement* was written by David Blondel, a Calvinist divine, who had previously gained renown for exposing the pseudo-Isidorian decretals as forgeries. The authority of his book rested on two lines of research. The first was to survey the known sources of the ninth and tenth centuries, not only chronicles but documents, such as charters and letters, and to demonstrate that none of these mentioned a female pope.[89] The second was to compile an exhaustive survey of the evidence regarding the chronology of the ninth-century popes. Blondel produced massive quantities of evidence proving that Leo IV had reigned until 855 and that Benedict III had ascended the papal

[85] Ibid., 120–2.
[86] Clifton, 'Popular Fear', 32–4, 53–5.
[87] B. Capp, 'The Political Dimension of Apocalyptic Thought' in *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature*, eds. C.A. Patrides and J. Wittreich (Manchester, 1984), 109–18.
[88] Robin Clifton declares that in 1641 'the Pope Joan legend was rehearsed once more' ('Fear of Popery', 145). Unfortunately Clifton does not supply a reference for this statement and I have not been able to trace a book on Pope Joan printed in 1641. It is possible that the rehearsal of Joan's story is just part of a book on a different subject. If so, it was not cited in any later discussions of the myth.
[89] David Blondel, *Familier Esclairissement de la Question si une Femme a esté assise au Siege Papal de Rome* (Amsterdam, 1649), 3–19.

throne later in that same year.[90] Both of these arguments went back to Panvinio; Blondel's contribution was to provide overwhelming, indeed irrefutable, evidence to support them.

Blondel's religious affiliation also made his criticisms difficult to rebut. As a Calvinist minister and theologian, he could not easily be dismissed as a Catholic zealot or a papal hireling.[91] Nevertheless, other outraged Calvinists wrote to rebut Blondel and one author, at least, maintained that Blondel had received a pension from the Catholics.[92] Such attacks were testimony to the reluctance of protestants to abandon a cherished myth in spite of all the logical and chronological arguments against it.[93] Yet the scepticism about Joan was taking hold even among English protestants. In 1657 Richard Baxter confidently proclaimed his belief in the authenticity of Joan and her pontificate. Yet in 1680, Baxter would cite the story of Pope Joan as a demonstration of the unreliability and bias of historians.[94]

In the face of the chilling winds of scepticism, it is surprising that debate about Joan would have a final flowering in England. It did so because of the conversion of the heir-apparent to the English throne to Catholicism. In 1673, when the duke of York publicly refused to take the sacrament at Easter and then married a Catholic princess, an eruption of anti-Catholic literature began.[95] And once again, the example of Joan was exhumed as a demonstration of Catholic iniquity. In 1675, Alexander Cooke's defence of Joan was reprinted. In 1677, William Hughes's anti-Catholic polemic, *The Man of Sin*, contained an impassioned defence of the myth.[96] And in April 1680, at the height of the exclusion crisis, Henry Care devoted no less than four sequential issues of his popular anti-Catholic 'newsletter' to relating, and defending, the story of the female pontiff.[97]

The major work of this period dealing with Joan, however, was Elkanah Settle's drama, *The Female Prelate*, which was first performed in 1679. At this stage of his life, Settle was a whig propagandist and in 1680 he would go on to write a tract, *The Character of a Popish Successor*, that was intended to persuade parliament to enact legislation barring a Catholic from the succession.[98] Settle's drama distorted the familiar story of Joan, transforming her into a royal concubine and a poisoner, who adopted male attire in order to gain revenge on her faithless lover. But if *The Female Prelate* was not even faithful to the traditional story of Joan's career, it did help to keep it alive and controversial.

[90] Ibid., 22–70.
[91] Bourreau, *Myth*, 252.
[92] Ibid., 251.
[93] *WP*, II. no. 43 (30 April 1680), 338.
[94] Baxter, *Safe Religion*, 293; idem, *Church History of the Government of Bishops and their Councils* (1680), sig. A3r.
[95] J. Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660–1688* (Cambridge, 1973), 124, 130–1.
[96] Hughes, *Man of Sin,* 242–3.
[97] *WP*, II, nos 40–43 (9 April 1680–30 April 1680), 313–44. Although Care's 'newsletter' covered the entire history of the papacy, no pontiff received more than a fraction of the coverage Care devoted to Pope Joan. On the *Weekly Pacquet*, see L.G. Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care* (Stroud, 2004), 43–80.
[98] Elkannah Settle, *The Female Prelate* (1680). The drama was dedicated to Shaftesbury, which makes Settle's ideological position quite clear (sig. A3v).

Certainly when James II became king, a Catholic author thought it was worth writing *A History of Pope Joan*, an anonymous attack on the myth.[99] This brief tract was a completely derivative work, notable for only two things: it was unmistakably directed at a popular, not a learned, audience and it made great play of Blondel's criticisms of the myth.[100] Nevertheless, whatever the shortcomings of this tract, it provoked one Robert Ware to respond with his own tract defending the myth.[101]

The uses to which the myth was being put had undergone another striking change. There were still citations of Pope Joan to support arguments against papal infallibility and, more occasionally, to attack the Petrine succession.[102] There were even references to Joan as the whore of Babylon, although much of the apocalyptic force had vanished from this epithet. For example, the 1675 reprinting of Cooke's treatise has an illustration of Joan giving birth, with verses beneath. Although the traditional apocalyptic identification is being made tentatively in these verses – *some* people call Pope Joan the whore of Babylon – they accentuate sexual transgression, depicting Joan as a prostitute who gave birth to an illegitimate child.[103] This concentration on the myth as a means of denigrating the morals of the papacy, while at the same time de-emphasizing other anti-papal implications of the tale, is typical of post-Restoration authors.

The most striking late seventeenth-century depiction of Joan as an epitome of vice occurred in Settle's *The Female Prelate*. While Settle, in his baroque retelling of the myth, invents some new crimes (notably incest and murder) to add to Joan's traditional transgressions, he does not call her the whore of Babylon or make any explicit reference to Revelation in his drama. Nor does he say anything about papal infallibility or the Petrine succession. In Settle's drama, Joan, the mistress of the duke, is supplanted by a rival in the duke's favour. Having been betrayed and abandoned by her former lover, Joan disguises herself as a man, becomes a monk, and ultimately is made the duke's confessor. She poisons the duke, flees to Rome and rises in the Church there, ultimately becoming pope. Denounced for her crimes by the duke's son and successor, she accuses the old duke of heresy and declares that she murdered him to defend the Church. The cardinals hail her as a hero. Ultimately, after sleeping with the young duke, while disguised as the duke's betrothed, Joan – along with almost everyone else in the drama – comes to an untimely end.

Settle's drama neatly encapsulates the anxieties of many English protestants during Charles II's reign. The gendered bias latent in anti-Catholicism bubbled to the surface owing to fears of the influence wielded by Catholic women at court, particularly Charles II's mistress, the duchess of Portsmouth, and both of the duke

99 *A History of Pope Joan and the Whores of Rome* (1687).
100 See ibid., 9–10 for the citation of Blondel.
101 R[obert] W[are], *Pope Joan: or an Account Collected out of the Romish Authors* (1689).
102 For example, *WP*, II. no. 43 (30 April 1680), 340–1.
103 *Present for a Papist*, title-page.

of York's wives.[104] Nor did contemporaries fail to perceive the target of Settle's barbed lines: Portsmouth walked out of a performance of *The Female Prelate* in June 1680.[105] Intertwined with such current concerns were traditional fears of the insidious priests, especially confessors, who allegedly manipulated their aristocratic masters.

Settle's drama also graphically depicts the danger the papacy purportedly presented to European monarchs. In *The Female Prelate*, the curia is portrayed as being willing not only to sanction, but to encourage and reward, the murder of monarchs for the sake of Catholicism. The papacy wanted nothing less than the submission of all secular rulers to its will and a monarch who embraced Catholicism was, in effect, abdicating his authority.[106] Furthermore, Catholicism was not only a danger to kings, but to their subjects as well. Once in power, Catholic bishops would resort to the stake and the rack to suppress protestants. *The Female Prelate* includes two scenes, gratuitous to the strict requirements of the plot, in which protestant 'heretics' are tortured in Roman prisons, just to remind those reading or watching the drama, of the dangers in store for them should a Catholic become king.[107]

Under the later Stuarts the wheel had come full circle; the myth of Joan had first been used by protestants as means of depicting the papacy as morally corrupt and, in its final efflorescence in England, it served much the same purpose. Yet there were subtle differences in emphasis in the uses of the myth in post-Restoration England. Ecclesiological issues and doctrinal differences were stressed much less than they had been by Bale, Foxe or the Magdeburg Centuriators. Moreover now the papacy was not presented as posing a direct threat; its power came solely from the influence individual Catholics had over the king or his heir. These changes in emphasis reflected the situation of the Church of England after the Restoration. It was, to an unprecedented degree, free from the internal divisions over doctrine and worship that had plagued it since the breakdown of the Calvinist consensus. There were still persistent fears of the dissenters and of English Catholics, particularly after the declaration of indulgence in 1672. However, the greatest fear was that the monarch would fail to defend the Church or, worse yet, would be a Catholic. Since Charles II would not willingly exclude his brother from the succession, the best chance the proponents of exclusion had of success was to inflame public opinion against the possibility of a Catholic monarch. Apocalyptic concepts and the episcopal succession did not move large numbers of people; denunciation of Catholic clergy as corrupt, and fears of sinister Catholic influence on the king, through his mistresses, were more potent polemical themes, as they conformed to Charles II's well-known weaknesses and

104 On the centrality of the harlot and courtesan in anti-Catholic discourse in the reigns of the later Stuarts, see Dean, 'Gendered Language', 184–7, 207–8. On Portsmouth, see N.K. Maguire, 'The Duchess of Portsmouth' in *The Stuart Court and Europe*, ed. R.M. Smuts (Cambridge, 1996), 247–73.

105 Maguire, 'Duchess of Portsmouth', 252.

106 Settle, *Female Prelate*, 19.

107 Ibid., 40, 47–9.

also exploited potent gender stereotypes. And once again, the myth of the female pontiff was flexible enough to meet the new propaganda requirements.

XI

The Female Prelate was reprinted three times in 1689 as English protestants danced on the political grave of James II. Yet after this the work was never again reprinted and it soon fell into obscurity. *The Female Prelate* was a harbinger of the general fate of the myth of Pope Joan in the coming centuries. Joan was not forgotten but the great debates over her existence were things of the past. Only a relative handful of zealots and cranks insisted that that she was a genuine historical figure. Yet, as the stubborn adherence to Joan during the Restoration indicates, the abandonment of belief in the myth of the female pope was not caused solely by weight of evidence accumulated against it. If that had been the case, then belief in Joan's existence would have ebbed more rapidly after Blondel had written his criticisms of her myth.

The reason why these criticisms only took hold after the Glorious Revolution, was that the myth they demolished had by then lost much of its utility. After the accession of William III, fear of Catholicism had not diminished, but the nature of these apprehensions had once again changed. Fear of English Catholics abated and with it fear of the insidious effectiveness of Catholic priests. Even the gendered attacks on Catholicism faded during the reign of William III.[108]

Nor was there any danger that William III would convert to Catholicism. Now the anxieties centred on foreign invasion. The great enemy, especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was France and later, the Jacobites backed by the French. In this context, anti-Catholic propaganda shifted, to centre on tales of Catholic persecution and on the dangers of armed foreign intervention in England resulting in the violent overthrow of the protestant monarchy and the Church of England.[109] The myth of the female pope was largely useless in this context. The combination of implausibility with irrelevancy was fatal, and the female pope passed from being a figure of controversy into a figure of romance and fantasy.

The myth of the female pope clearly reflects the ecclesiology of English protestants and the images they formed of the true Church. They began by conceiving of it largely in negative terms: it was those who did not owe obedience to a morally corrupt, and corrupting, papacy. It rapidly took on an apocalyptic dimension; it now became those aligned against Antichrist. Later it evolved into the concept of a Church with institutional continuity going back to the apostolic era and still later, in the Restoration, it was perceived as a national Church menaced by foreigners who threatened the monarchy as well as protestants. Presented this starkly, these transformations are too schematic; in reality, things were

[108] See Dean, 'Gendered Language', 209–11, 225–7.
[109] Colley, *Britons*, 18–30.

never quite this neat. But, in general, these changing conceptions mirror the evolution of contemporary self-perceptions of the English protestant Church from a small band of true believers persecuted for the adherence to true doctrine, to a part of the true Church at the apocalyptic end of days, to a national Church united by common sacraments and institutions to a national Church united by its episcopate and its monarch.

Most importantly, the debates over Pope Joan provide an unusual perspective on early modern English anti-Catholicism. Most writers on English anti-Catholicism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have treated it as being essentially the same as anti-Catholicism in the sixteenth century.[110] There were certainly continuities within this tradition, but there were important variations as well. Anti-Catholicism derived its enduring strength from its malleability and the ways it which it could be adopted to fit changing circumstances and enemies. Early modern English anti-Catholicism has been analysed at a number of different periods, by a variety of scholars. But in confining themselves to examining a changing phenomenon within a limited period their efforts resemble Monet's famous pictures of Rheims cathedral; they are brilliantly executed depictions of a subject frozen at a particular moment. Examining the myth of Pope Joan, across 150 years of English history, we have perhaps replaced painting with animation, losing colour and detail, but possibly compensating for this with a gain in the sense of movement and change in a tradition that was not only continually evolving, but which owed its persistent influence to its dynamism and adaptability.

[110] C. Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England* (Manchester, 1993) and Miller, *Popery*, are good examples of this. Also see Colley, *Britons*, 18–30.

5

Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice

PETER LAKE

The title of this essay is, I must concede, flagrantly self-referential. It is designed to recall an earlier piece I wrote in the 1980s called 'Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice'.[1] That article was written when the predominant tendency was to explain the tensions that led up to the British civil wars through religious difference and conflict. On this view, religious principle or identity was conceived as an irreducible, and therefore largely inexplicable, aspect of early modern experience. Consequently 'religion' had merely to be traced running through the language and motivation of a range of contemporary individuals and groups, in order to explain what, in a political system devoid of major differences of political principle or secular ideology, and structured around the maintenance of 'consensus', was an otherwise inexplicable outbreak of conflict. On this account the English civil war was best regarded as 'a war of religion' and religious passion, operating at an irrational level of intensity, was the animating force behind the descent of the kingdom into war.[2]

Thus conflict is here presented as a product of 'religion' rather than of 'politics', of misunderstanding and fear rather than of positive, self-consciously opposed ideological agendas. And in anti-popery, of course, there lay to hand a nexus of fears and priorities that led otherwise loyal and moderate Englishmen to conclude that their king was subject to the influence of popish evil counsellors to such an extent that civil war was not only a justifiable but a necessary expression

1 P. Lake, 'Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice' in R. Cust and A. Hughes, eds. *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (1989).

2 A. Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (1981); R. Clifton, 'Fear of Popery' in C. Russell, ed. *The Origins of the English Civil War* (1973); M. Finlayson, *Historians, Puritanism and the English Revolution* (Toronto, 1983); W. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne* (1963) and his review of Caroline Hibbard's *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1983) in the *London Review of Books*, 21, 21 July–3 Aug. 1983; J. Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (1993), 45–68; J.P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972); for a critique of that approach similar (in some respects) to that offered in my original article, see J. Scott, 'England's Troubles: exhuming the Popish Plot' in T. Harris, P. Seaward and M. Goldie, eds. *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* (Oxford, 1990). Also see Scott's *England's Troubles* (Cambridge, 2000), esp. ch. 2.

of loyalty to the protestant state. As a number of scholars hastened to point out, the view of events produced by certain species of anti-popery did not accord with what historians (and indeed some contemporaries) themselves knew to be really happening. Neither Laud nor Charles were papists, and to claim that they were became therefore either an expression of irrational paranoia or a Machiavellian manoeuvre designed to exploit the fears and phobias of the populace in the political interests of the king's opponents in parliament.[3] On this account, anti-popery was best seen as a cloud of unknowing, which descended on contemporaries at times of crisis and led them to misconstrue the real nature of events and thus to act in ways that they otherwise would never have attempted or even imagined.

My piece on anti-popery was written in reaction against such views. Its title was ironic: the point being that anti-popery was not best seen merely as a prejudice but rather as a species of 'ideology', a complex entity composed of different strands of argument and narrative. The different elements that made up anti-popery were by no means always mutually compatible and they could be combined by different individuals and groups into very different versions both of the popery that was being identified and of the groups doing the identifying. Aspects of popery central to one polemical moment, or to the self-image and purposes of one group or fraction, might, in different circumstances or in the hands of other polemicists, become peripheral.

Thus it became possible to analyse anti-popery as a complicated ideological entity; a synthesis or series of syntheses, not even necessarily the same at any given point in time. Moreover anti-popery could and did change over time. It had, in short, a history, and that history could be written. However, anti-popery is to be found throughout the post-Reformation period operating at a dizzying number of cultural levels, running through a range of cultural forms and literary genres. Writing such a history was a task that I did not so much shirk as never even seriously contemplate.[4]

The same could be said, of course, of anti-puritanism. That too linked the high theology of Richard Hooker with popular village libels, both of which hinged (at times) on viciously polemical anti-puritan stereotypes. Not merely a hatred of 'puritanism', but a whole range of characteristics attributed to the godly connected formal polemic written by university-educated divines and wanna-be bishops with the outpourings of the pamphlet press and popular stage. Again anti-puritanism links the different ends of the post-Reformation period, connecting a pamphlet writer like Thomas Nashe to both emergently canonical figures like Shakespeare and Jonson and to John Taylor the water-poet.[5] The

[3] For the second version, see J.P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603–1640* (Harlow, 1986), 193.

[4] For the sort of energy, erudition and insight needed if such a book were ever to be written, see A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge, 1995) and A. Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999).

[5] P. Lake and M. Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat* (2002), chs. 12–15; B. Capp, *The World of John Taylor the Water Poet* (Oxford, 1994).

writings of Calvinist conformist, proto- and full-fig Laudian divines like Robert Sanderson, Joseph Hall and Lancelot Andrewes can be both differentiated one from another and connected by their anti-puritanism. Certainly, after the coming of civil war in Scotland and then in England, anti-puritanism served to link a range of conformist divines to the works of royalist propagandists and pamphleteers during the civil war and beyond to the outpourings of Anglican/royalist and later tory polemicists and of any number of clerical defenders of the post-1660 establishment against 'dissent'.[6] Just like popery, definitions of puritanism could vary, expressing disagreement as well as a common front, according to the political circumstances and to the preferred policies and views of the national Church that were being canvassed.[7]

In writing that original article I was trying to make several linked points. I wanted to stress the necessity of bringing to bear on the mere prejudice of anti-popery, a historicized, ideological and a narrativized, political, analysis. The aim was not simply to reject the claim that the English civil war could be regarded as 'a war of religion' but rather to render that claim the beginning rather than the end of a chain of argument or historiographical reflection. I wanted to call into question claims about dominance of the political scene by 'religion', based simply on the prevalence of 'anti-popery'. And in the light of subsequent developments in the historiography, I would want now to use the same insights similarly to question claims about the continuity of English politics over the long seventeenth century based simply on the continuing salience of something called anti-popery.[8] But perhaps the main point of the paper was to advert to a central paradox. Anti-popery could, in fact, operate at times just like an irrational 'prejudice'. It could also prompt the most exalted paeans of praise to divine right monarchy, and, in relation to Catholics at least, expansions of the prerogative powers of the crown that looked like tyrannous infringements of the legal rights of Englishmen. But there was also operating near the centre of the anti-popish impulse an ideal of 'enlightenment', as the light of the gospel was shone on the errors, illusions and lies of popery, and the word was brought, through all the available media to a socially heterogeneous and open-ended audience ('the people'). All this was attached to a rhetoric of reformation as the ideals enshrined in the word were brought to bear on the corrupt and residually popish structures of

6 P. Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and avant-garde Conformity at the Court of James I' in L.L. Peck, ed. *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991) and 'Serving God and the Times: the Calvinist Conformity of Robert Sanderson', *JBS*, XXVII (1988); K. Fincham and P. Lake, 'Popularity, Puritanism and Prelacy in the 1630s: Joseph Hall explains himself', *EHR*, CXI (1996); P.W. Thomas, *Sir John Berkenhead, 1617–1679* (Oxford, 1969); D. Hirst, 'Samuel Parker, Andrew Marvell, and Political Culture' in Hirst and R. Strier, eds. *Writing and Political Engagement in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1999); T. Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts* (Harlow, 1993) and his *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge, 1987).

7 Fincham and Lake, 'Hall'; see P. Lake, 'Joseph Hall, Robert Skinner and the Rhetoric of Moderation in the early Stuart Court' in L.A. Ferrell and P. McCullough, eds. *The English Sermon Revised* (Manchester, 2001); and section III below.

8 Scott, *England's Troubles.*

reality by an activist coalition of the non-popish elements in Church and state. Thus anti-popery tended to prompt open discussion and public critique of what was taken to be 'popish' influence, corruption and conspiracy wherever they might be found – and, for many contemporaries, they were all too often to be found operating in the private world of the court. The claim being made, then, was that for all the irrational elements in anti-popery, there remained within it a logic of political virtue and activism, and a rhetoric of public service to the cause of true religion and the commonweal in the face of the inherently private and corrupting influence of popery.[9]

Since I wrote that initial piece a number of commentators have quite rightly pointed out the origins of the resulting vision of political virtue and public activism in certain classical, 'neo-Roman' texts and traditions of thought. In so doing they have tended to appropriate that vision for something they tend to call 'republicanism', hence identifying the political and moral entity under discussion as the product of an entirely secular, indeed in origin pagan classical, discourse of civic humanism and political virtue. The crucial division here is between 'religion' and 'politics'. In taking seriously the undoubted dominance of great swathes of contemporary comment on politics and religion by anti-papal (and, as we shall see below, anti-puritan) discourse, I am accused of arguing for 'the predominance of religion in political life' and of describing a situation in which a 'prejudice' is driving a 'political programme', when in fact the opposite was the case.[10]

Such claims miss the point of the original essay, which was intended to question the status of anti-popery as a mere prejudice and instead to analyse it as a bearer of distinct and distinctive religio-political values and agendas. The piece was not about the dominance of 'politics' by 'religion' but rather about the political salience and implications of an impulse, a mode of argument and vituperation, that was by some revisionist historians not only being too readily consigned to a box marked 'religion', but was also being both dismissed and given an undue explanatory prominence, as a 'mere prejudice'. It would be absurd to deny the classicizing 'neo-Roman' origins of some of the strands of argument and feeling that went into the mix of anti-popish polemic and identity formation, and more particularly into the notions of political activism and virtue, nurtured or enabled by anti-popery. And I must admit that I sadly underplayed the significance of those origins. However, it remains the case that the impulses towards 'active citizenship' and the public discussion of issues traditionally central to the *arcana imperii* that I was discussing were intrinsic to the processes of thought and action that constituted 'anti-popery'.

9 Lake, 'Anti-Popery'; idem, 'Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s: Thomas Scott and the Spanish Match', *HJ*, XXV (1982).

10 M. Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570–1640* (Cambridge, 1995); D. Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 2005); A. McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge, 2004), 128–9.

The point here is not, of course, to decide some contest between 'religion' and 'politics', between 'puritanism' or anti-popery, on the one hand, and 'republicanism', on the other, as the dominant, the most significant, innovatory (or still less 'progressive') ideological impulse or strain of argument and assertion in the period.[11] What is required, and what my original essay was trying to prompt, were increasingly precise analyses of the interface between what we tend (retrospectively and no doubt somewhat anachronistically) to call 'politics' and 'religion'. We need to rescue not only 'anti-popery' but also 'religion' more widely conceived not only from those revisionist historians who want to invoke religious difference and passion as the ultimate, irreducible explanation for political conflict or breakdown but also from secular-minded historians of 'republicanism', anxious to push 'religion' to the very margins of their account of the period as they construct their various histories of 'liberty'.

The approach I adopted in 1989 was, I fear, a sedulously internalist one. The history of English anti-popery I was suggesting was largely a function of the internal differences between protestants as they confronted and constituted the 'popish other'. It was a view that rather took the existence of English Catholicism and the Church of Rome as read. And on that basis I talked rather a lot about anti-popery without much mentioning or still less thinking about the thoughts and activities of real Catholics. That, of course, was and is a mistake. We need to integrate the activities and arguments of those characterized as papists into any comprehensive account of anti-popery. The story of anti-popery would then become an analysis of the different strands of analysis and assertion brought to the definition and excoriation of popery by a variety of different ideological fractions and groups; a story fully integrated into a number of different narrative accounts of who was doing what to whom and why. At stake would not only be struggles between different versions of 'protestant England' constructed and canvassed via different versions of the popish other, but also a story about the interactions between English Catholics (and of course their often foreign patrons and backers) and the (variously constituted) 'protestant nation'. The resulting narrative, starting in the 1530s, might stretch unbroken at least into the eighteenth century, if not beyond. Such research, if conducted with a proper attention to immediate polemical and political circumstance, as well as to long-term discursive continuities and ruptures, offers us one way to analyse and understand the political, cultural and religious histories of England, indeed of 'Britain', over the long post-Reformation haul.

[11] See Morrill, *Nature*, 45–68; Q.R.D. Skinner, 'Classical Liberty and the Coming of the English Civil War' in M. van Gelderen and Q. Skinner, eds. *Republicanism: a shared European Heritage*, II (Cambridge, 2002).

II

In what follows I will argue that something similar could be done with anti-puritanism, as a strand of argument and invective composed of various discursive materials. Just like anti-popery it brought to bear on the situation at hand a variety of narrative materials or templates, connecting current affairs with a particular view of the past, present, and if the puritan threat were not faced down, at the present crucial conjuncture, a distinctly dystopian version of the future. 'Puritanism' studied in this way, that is through the lens provided by anti-puritanism, tells us a good deal more about the people doing the constructing and the labelling – what and who they hated, what they wanted, what they feared and what they hoped for – than it does about the persons being labelled.

Such an approach foregrounds, of course, the extent to which puritanism was 'invented' by its enemies and critics. Is puritanism here like popery? For all its protean constructedness, anti-popery could not, of course, be said simply to have 'invented' either the Church of Rome or indeed English Catholicism. But it could be said to have invented 'popery', the multifaceted image of anti-Christianity that a variety of protestants deployed not only to contest the claims to truth and power of the Church of Rome but to do a good deal else besides. Similarly, did anti-puritan polemic and stereotyping, while it did not invent either proponents of further reformation or the soi-disant 'godly', invent 'puritanism'? Such a formulation is tempting, but it does not perhaps quite fit the bill. For unlike the Church of Rome in the post-Reformation period, puritanism was not always already there; a basic datum, indeed the justifying ground, for a great deal of English protestant thought and action. Puritanism developed in and through debates about a number of topics in the course of which the term puritan was itself coined and then defined and redefined, in a dazzling array of arguments and jokes about the nature of the English Church and protestant state.

Over the years I have had a series of exchanges on this subject with Patrick Collinson, in which, on the whole, I have resisted the claim that anti-puritan satire, polemic and caricature invented puritanism, turning what was really just mainstream protestant piety into the appearance of sub-cultural deviance and sedition. I have wanted to argue, on the contrary, that the persons and characteristics being caricatured and stereotyped as puritan demonstrably existed prior to the period in which the literary stereotypes of the puritan and the polemical narratives of the rise of a puritan threat to order in Church and state came to full coherence, in the late 1580s and early 1590s.[12] Throughout the resulting exchanges with Professor Collinson and others, I was always dimly aware that I was in fact

[12] P. Collinson, 'The Theatre Constructs Puritanism' in D. Smith, D. Bevington and R. Strier, eds. *The Theatrical City* (Cambridge, 1995); idem, 'Ecclesiastical Vitriol: Religious Satire in the 1590s and the Invention of Puritanism' in J. Guy, ed. *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Cambridge, 1995); Lake and Questier, *Antichrist's Lewd Hat*, chs. 12–14.

engaged in a species of circular argument. At issue was the balance between the constructors and those being constructed, between the operation of the caricaturing and stereotyping process and the objective characteristics of those being caricatured. And precisely because the development of the anti-puritan stereotypes and caricatures in question was also constitutive of the thing being caricatured that was a balance that could never finally be struck. As Collinson has observed, with justifiable exasperation, such exchanges could (but should not be allowed to) go on forever.[13]

After all, the label, indeed the insult, 'puritan' came to be internalized and appropriated by the godly themselves, and the deployment of the term as an insult integrated into their own complex, intensely dialectical, account of their own identity as the 'godly' and of their relation as such with a hostile and ungodly world.[14] What we are confronted with here is a constant series of interactions and exchanges between different groups. Certainly for contemporaries, there was no polemically neutral viewing platform from which these proceedings could be observed, and no definitive decision about just what was 'real' and what was being 'invented' could be produced. I was tempted to observe that the same is true for the modern historian of the period. But, of course, that is not quite the case; there is a considerable difference of perspective between that of a contemporary up to their neck in the political, religious and cultural issues at stake in these exchanges, and the more distanced view of the historian, who might well think it part of their task to draw just such a line between the 'real' and the 'invented'. And yet precisely because, in certain circles, the nature of Anglicanism continues to be an issue of urgent current concern, and because the nature of that Church has always been bound up very closely with its history, many modern historians of the period retain a stake – rarely owned or explicated – in the very disputes that they are seeking to explain. This is a situation that makes critical distance of the sort described above something that cannot always be taken for granted.[15] Even those with a more distanced and indifferent attitude to these questions would do well, before pronouncing definitively on the nature of puritanism, to remember that they are dealing with an entity that was always already under construction and contestation both by the people being characterized (then and now) as puritans and their enemies.[16]

What was at stake at the time in the creation of a stable notion of puritanism, as also what is at stake now when that process is repeated by the historian, is the

[13] See Collinson's review of *Antichrist's Lewd Hat* in *The London Review of Books*, 19 Sept. 2002.

[14] P. Lake, ' "A Charitable, Christian Hatred": the Godly and their Enemies in the 1630s' in J. Eales and C. Durston, eds. *The Culture of English Puritanism* (1996).

[15] D. MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *JBS*, XXX (1991); idem, *Tudor Church Militant* (1999), ch. 4. See also my remarks above in the Introduction.

[16] In calling for others to let their assumptions show rather more explicitly, I should add that I am an adherent of the ideology known, in certain circles in the US, as 'secular humanism' and that, as the member of no 'faith community', my aim to produce an atheistically relativist account of the religious history of this period.

relationship between the centre and periphery of English protestantism, nothing short of the ideological and theological identity of the post-Reformation English Church. In that context I take Patrick Collinson's emphasis on the constructed nature of puritanism to be part of a wider claim that much of what has traditionally been seen as puritanism constituted the mainstream of 'the religion of protestants'. My resistance to the strong version of the 'invention of puritanism' claim is, in part, a product of a wider engagement with the case put forward in *The Religion of Protestants*.[17] Not that I want to claim that the argument of that book is anything like wrong, merely that the penetration into the establishment of Elizabethan and Jacobean England of what Collinson terms the religion of protestants was more partial, contested, less complete, more chronologically and geographically uneven, than some readings of that book might imply. But my suspicion of the rhetoric of 'invention' is also a product of an altogether more retrograde impulse; a reaction to having heard too many papers arguing that such and such a thing was in fact socially or culturally or polemically or discursively constructed; a conclusion often presented in triumph as though that were the end of the matter, when what one needs is a more precise sense of the constraints on the process of invention. Out of what materials, how, and by whom, and for what purposes, might the thing in question have been constructed or 'invented' in the first place?

However, as with the central arguments of *The Religion of Protestants*, this is anything but an approach that I wish to reject or repudiate, but rather one I want to appropriate and play with. It is a central contention here, as it has been of my work over the last thirty years, that entities like 'popery' and 'puritanism', let alone the Church of England, were subject to incessant cultural, political and polemical construction and reconstruction. They were variously constructed out of a variety of discursive materials by a number of different groups and individuals to serve what were often identifiable personal, polemical and political purposes. Moreover, having been 'constructed' or 'invented', both 'popery' and 'puritanism' added considerably to the available resources through which they and other related terms and narratives could then be reconstructed and redeployed, even by those whom those very terms and narratives had been intended to marginalize and defame.

The way out of the resulting hermeneutic mess, the concentric circles of circular argument outlined above, is not to start playing 'definitions', seeking, before the inquiry starts, to come up with watertight definitions of just what is going to be studied. To do so not only prejudges the issue, in effect predetermining the nature of the resulting analysis, it also almost always means choosing from among the various definitions produced by contemporaries, in effect endorsing one contemporary version of puritanism and its others as 'true', while rejecting other, rival, accounts as mere constructions. By so doing, one ensures, of course, a certain evidential base for one's preferred view. But one also,

[17] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982).

necessarily, imports something of the assumptions and limitations of the contemporary view into one's own analysis.[18] And, given that it is the nature of 'Anglicanism' that is almost always at stake in these discussions, that is virtually never an ideologically innocent or entirely inadvertent transaction.

Instead, we should be integrating into our story the ways in which, and the purposes for which, the category at hand was variously constructed and applied by contemporaries. The point is to tell the story of how puritanism, both name and thing, came into being. Here the activities of the various groups involved in the labelling and name-calling processes that helped to create and sustain both the name and the identities that went with it will be central. The result will always be a narrative that is, in some fundamental sense, 'political'; a story about who is doing what, with what discursive materials, using what means of communication and control, to whom, and why. It will be a story about power; about the struggle to seize control over the terms in and through which the contemporary socio-political scene could be turned into a narrative, with heroes and villains, a beginning, middle and an end, and thus into a object of polemical and political action. I want to emphasize that to claim this much is not to reduce the history of 'religion' to that of 'politics'; to claim or assume that all the interpretative choices made, all the ideological/theological stances and identities adopted, by contemporaries were merely 'political', that is to say dominated or determined by the need to attain and use power. In constructing such a narrative it is crucial to acknowledge that religious arguments, identities and assertions were not tactical means to achieve essentially political ends, namely the control of the crucial means whereby orthodoxy and deviance could be defined and enforced. On the contrary, on this account, religious commitments, identities and principles retain their autonomy, always inflecting and sometimes, for at least some people, determining, basic (political) choices about what was happening and what to do about it.

It is just that the divided and contested religio-political scene of post-Reformation western Europe, mediated by the peculiar circumstances of Elizabethan England, with its largely unreformed Church structure and, for the most part, reformed ideology, its divine right 'monarchical republic' or 'republican' monarchy, its unsettled succession,[19] ensured that, to quote that famous theorist, Donald Rumsfeld, 'stuff' was always going to happen and that as it did so, religious commitments and beliefs would always involve 'political' choices and pressures, just as struggles for political advantage, even of the most bare-faced sort, would always involve religious identities, arguments and authorities. Not only that, of course, but as they reflected back on what had happened, and viewed

[18] For classic examples of this tendency, see P. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic* (Cambridge, 1992); C. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church* (Cambridge, 2005).

[19] P. Collinson, 'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I' reprinted in his *Elizabethan Essays* (1994) and P. Lake, 'The Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I Revisited (by its Victims) as a Conspiracy' in B. Coward and J. Swann, eds. *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2004).

what they thought/feared might be going to happen next, contemporaries became increasingly aware of the resulting complex interactions between 'religion' and 'politics'. That very self-awareness heightened the tendency to impute both conspiracy and hypocrisy to one's opponents; precisely the conditions, of course, in which strands of analysis and excoriation like anti-popery and anti-puritanism might be expected to flourish.[20]

Thus to insist that the only way to tell the story of the religious and political history of post-Reformation England must involve accounts of anti-popery and anti-puritanism, and the only way to do that is through the telling of myriad political narratives, is not to reduce the history of religion to that of politics, a species of Namierite manoeuvre for advantage, of Blairite brandings and rebrandings. It is merely to argue that any satisfactorily historical account of the period that is to avoid essentializing the polemically generated terminology of contemporaries must feature such inherently contingent political narratives. Moreover, such a narrativizing approach represents the only way out of the circular arguments and exchanges outlined above. For only thus can we both centre our account on terms that were created in and through processes of political and polemical manoeuvre and contest, while, at the same time, conceding a prior, and subsequently an at least semi-independent, existence to attitudes, beliefs and assumptions, persons and groups that I, for one, would certainly want to call puritan.

Doing this requires the recuperation of polemical and literary sources of a sort that some recent trends in the historiography of the period have tended to relegate to the margins of historical interest or examination. Such sources are often characterized as ex post facto rationalizations, told by ideologically motivated or self-interested men, and thus are to be discounted in the search for other, more reliable and very often consensual sources; sources that, it is claimed, tell us a great deal more about what contemporaries really thought.[21] The result is a notion of mere polemic that excuses the historian from paying careful or systematic attention to such texts. This is a tendency compounded by the fetishization of manuscript as opposed to printed sources that accompanied the revisionist assault on the political history of the period. Of course, if all that is being claimed here is that, say, anti-popish polemic is not a reliable source for the reconstruction of what Catholics actually thought or did during the period, this is all fair enough. Similarly, the notion that what is said in private, at the time, very often in manuscript, may be a better guide to what an individual or group was doing at that moment than public statements or claims to virtue or ex post facto explanations or accounts, has much to recommend it. But none of this removes the centrality of polemical sources for the reconstruction of some of the foundational stories that

[20] Lake, 'Monarchical Republic Revisited'.

[21] White, *Predestination*; for the contrary case, see P. Lake, 'Predestinarian Propositions', *JEH*, XLVI (1995). For the recuperation of polemical sources, see P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* (1988); Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; A. Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford, 2004); Prior, *Defining*.

contemporaries told themselves about what was happening to them, and invoked when they wanted to blacken one group or course of action and to praise or legitimate another.

However it is crucial to resist the temptation, in taking them seriously, simply to accept the claims of polemical sources at face value. As I have argued, for many historians, the simple endorsement of one rather than another of the available contemporary renditions of the key terms has proved a seductively easy way out of the hermeneutic difficulties outlined above. Certainly, the acceptance of, say, the contemporary binary opposition between puritanism and what has since become known as Anglicanism (or, in a recent reformulation, between 'conformists and reformists'[22]) or of that between Calvinism and Arminianism, represents an easy way to produce slick, seemingly objective accounts of the period. But, I would argue, it is also an expedient that leads us not so much through as into the circularities and anachronisms already outlined.

Rather than either simply rejecting or accepting the testimony of the polemical and the literary, we need to view such texts as tell-tale signs of contest and anxiety. Polemic, and the inversionary stereotypes and caricatures that so often accompanied its production, was the outcome of very considerable amounts of ideological work performed by contemporaries to meet and control such areas of ambiguity and anxiety. Typically, the world was construed in terms of simple binary oppositions and the reader presented with a seemingly simple set of choices between, say, 'order' and 'disorder', Christian sincerity and hypocrisy, orthodoxy and heresy, unity and schism, the pursuit of the public as opposed to private interest, monarchical loyalty as opposed to populist sedition. In the process, a series of supposedly stable and coherent positions was constructed, which took a great deal of its claimed coherence from the simple fact of its polar opposition to some self-evidently malign 'other'. As Anthony Milton has pointed out, one of the areas of ambivalence and contradiction at the heart of anti-popery concerned, if not popery itself, then at least both things and persons Catholic. And here one might suggest that the utterly binary nature of the divide posited by anti-popery between 'popery' and its virtuous twin, true, genuinely catholic, Christianity, was itself a function of the propinquity and attractiveness of many aspects of a Catholicism that remained a ubiquitous, dynamic and even seductive presence in the environment of early modern England.[23]

[22] As formulated by Charles Prior, whose entire analysis in *Defining the Jacobean Church* turns on adopting one very restrictive contemporary definition of puritanism (*iure divino* Presbyterians, proto-Independents and the most extreme of nonconformists) renaming its exponents as 'reformists', and then using that category to confer coherence on his other key term ('conformists'). The resulting analysis – another turn around the standard Anglican and puritan block (only the names have been changed to protect the novelty of the argument) – is a textbook example of the weaknesses and dangers inherent in the approach being analysed here.

[23] P. Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge* (Manchester, 2001), 221–42; A. Milton, 'A Qualified Intolerance: the Limits and Ambiguities of Early Stuart anti-Catholicism' in A. Marotti, ed. *Catholicism and anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (New York, 1999).

Having constructed these entities, narratives were then produced that construed the world as the grounds of an ongoing struggle between the forces of good and evil thus defined. These narratives conferred meaning on events by linking the past to the present and the present to utopian or dystopian visions of the immediate future. In the case of anti-popery, two such narratives intersected to confirm one another. The first was an eschatological meta-narrative about God's purposes for his Church and elect, about the struggle between Christ and Antichrist, in and through which those purposes would take shape in events in the world and about the end of that struggle, an event that would also end history and herald the second coming. The second was a more local story about the attempts of various papists to subvert, destroy or take over a protestant England that was often assumed to have a very significant role to play in that meta-struggle between popish and non-popish good and evil. In that way a series of local events, of popish plots and invasions – from 1569 to 1688 – could all be linked with a wider narrative of genuinely world historical, indeed eschatological, import and thus forged into a compelling and coherent view of the recent English past, present and immediate future.[24] The period from the 1570s on saw the construction of a similar anti-puritan narrative, as the foreign origins and factious and populist nature of the puritan and then Calvinist threat were given narrative form by the likes of Richard Bancroft and later Peter Heylyn, until the events of the civil war and the implosion of puritan godly rule seemed to confirm the direst warnings of even the most extreme anti-puritans and thus relaunched the anti-puritan narrative, with renewed conviction and force, into the later seventeenth century.

III

When examining the construction of such self-evidently true binary oppositions, we need to pay a good deal of attention to the purposes for which they were initially constructed and subsequently deployed. These were not necessarily the same and could vary considerably over time. Like anti-popery, anti-puritanism was composed of a number of different stands of argument and assertion, and when these were combined in differing quantities, the emphasis put in different places within the overall synthesis, the effect could be very different. Even essentially the same version of the puritan threat could mean very different things and work very different effects, depending on the circumstances within which it was being deployed or invoked, and on who was doing the invoking and to what end. I want to close this essay by giving some simple examples of how this worked using a variety of contemporary constructions and invocations of the puritan threat from the late Elizabethan and early Stuart periods.

Thus when we find puritanism being defined as presbyterianism or overt and

24 See Scott, *England's Troubles*; T. Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match' in Cust and Hughes, eds. *Conflict*.

defiant nonconformity by people like Whitgift or later Bancroft, that is being done to play up the danger of the puritan threat to order in Church and state and to argue for the urgent need to take steps against puritanism and indeed for the presence at the centres of power and influence in Church and state of figures like Whitgift and Bancroft, men skilled in the seditious ways of the godly and determined to scotch the puritan threat. But we can find that same definition also being used to minimize the puritan threat, and in effect to defend many people whom Whitgift and Bancroft would have regarded as dangerous puritans from the prying and hostile attentions of authority. The argument here was that taking the strict definition of puritanism as hardline Presbyterianism and principled nonconformity, there were hardly any such persons left out there. Those there were, were either being dealt with or, through the now highly sophisticated apologetics of moderate puritanism, were in the process of accommodating themselves to the demands of authority. Given this view of the matter, bad as puritanism was, no new initiatives needed to be taken on the puritan front.[25]

The differences of emphasis at work here were often compounded when the division between doctrine and discipline was added to the mix. Here the implicitly ubiquitous and often explicit point of comparison was popery. On this account, the disagreements between puritans and their opponents were about mere externals; either the government of the Church, which (before the rise of *iure divino* theories of episcopacy) was held by all but Presbyterians to be *adiaphora*, and certain ceremonies that all, save the most extreme puritans, agreed were in themselves things inherently indifferent. However, on matters of real spiritual substance, such as issues of doctrine, there was agreement. This claim could also cut both ways. On the one hand, it could be used to heighten the populist and seditious impulses of the puritans. These were men willing to divide the Church, defy the magistrate and appeal promiscuously to the people about things indifferent. On the other hand, such claims could be used to emphasize the puritans' essential religious (and therefore political) reliability on the really big (religious and political) issues of the day – the need to evangelize the people, maintain order and to oppose popery.

Such a view tended, of course, to play down the prevalence and/or the significance of puritanism within the Church. Once the overt agitation for Presbyterianism had been crushed, and nonconformity reduced from a public campaign for liturgical reform to the refusal of certain ministers and congregations fully to conform, then it could be argued that puritanism was well in hand and, but for a remnant of hard-line nonconformists and closet Presbyterians (such as William Bradshaw or William Ames) the puritan threat to order in Church and state had been all but removed. On this account, there was no comparison between the threats represented to the protestant state by the papists and even nonconformist puritans. Thus, while the definitions of puritanism in operation on

[25] Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*; P. Lake, 'Matthew Hutton, a Puritan Bishop?' *History*, LXIV (1979).

either side of these arguments might be more or less identical, the persons using them could scarcely be said to have agreed either about the current condition of the Church or indeed about what to do about it. Indeed, essentially the same definition of puritanism was being used here for diametrically opposite practical purposes.[26]

Again, let us take the relation between 'puritanism' and sacrilege. Conformist opponents of Presbyterianism held that the discipline was a massive scam designed to rip off the clerical estate. The beneficiaries of puritan 'reformation' would not be the puritan clergy, but rather a rapacious laity who were using the ministers as catspaws, through whom they could acquire the remaining wealth of the Church. Moreover the whole notion of a lay eldership involved allowing the unsanctified hands of the ignorant laity to encroach upon the keys of spiritual discipline and the ordaining power of the clergy, prerogatives that really belonged solely in episcopal hands.[27] However, this charge of sacrilege remained tied to a fairly restrictive definition of puritanism. But what if, as John Howson suggested, sacrilege were to be defined so that it came to include sabbatarianism, here denounced as a means to assault the holy times and festival days demarcated by the visible Church? And what if sacrilege were now to be regarded, not only as the moral equivalent of idolatry but, in the current puritan-dominated circumstances, as, in practice, a greater threat to the cause of true religion even than idolatry? This was to make puritanism far more prevalent than a polemic centred either on Presbyterianism or on ceremonial conformity, and would render the puritanism thus redefined a far more pervasive and dangerous threat to order in Church and state than popery. This recalibration of the nature of the puritan threat meant that even someone who agreed that puritan nonconformity was a bad thing, and that Presbyterianism had a tendency towards sacrilege, would remain in fundamental disagreement with Howson's new model account of the current state of the Church and what to do about it.[28]

Others might use the term puritan to categorize a style of piety or body of doctrine, even seeking to distinguish it from protestantism as, in effect, a distinct religion. Such a case could then be used to argue against any claim to ideological coherence in the post-Reformation English Church. For this was a Church that had already established a form of religious pluralism, ceding de facto toleration to a dangerous sect of puritans, a group characterized by their Calvinist doctrine, populist views on Church government and addiction to resistance theory. This last view was propounded by certain Catholics who went on to use it as an argument for toleration for at least some English Catholics, loyal subjects who would

[26] This second approach was typical of a major section of the Jacobean episcopate, most notably of Archbishop Abbot. See K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990); idem, 'Prelacy and Politics: Archbishop Abbot's Defence of Protestant Orthodoxy', *Historical Research*, LXI (1988).

[27] Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 114–19.

[28] C. Dent, *Protestant Reformers in Elizabethan Oxford* (Oxford, 1983), 208–18; P. Lake, ' "The Anglican Moment"? Richard Hooker and the Ideological Watershed of the 1590s' in S. Platten, ed. *Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition* (Norwich, 2003).

provide the crown with much-needed support against the inherently seditious puritan threat.[29] Elements in this mode of analysis were, of course, later taken up by Arminian and Laudian writers who, in perhaps the most famous redefinition of puritanism to have occurred during the period (and one brilliantly elucidated by Nicholas Tyacke), came to equate Calvinism with puritanism, and both with popularity, an addiction to popular forms of government in Church and state sometimes even culminating in resistance theory, and almost always leading to dangerously popular appeals to the people, characteristics that, taken together, were positively anti-monarchical.[30]

Not that anti-puritanism was a monopoly of conformists, Catholics or Laudians. There developed later in the period a phenomenon that can only be called puritan anti-puritanism. Antinomianism was itself a form of anti-puritanism, as was much of the reaction thereto, with both sides mobilizing against the other different combinations or aspects of puritan characteristics long notorious in the canonical writings of other (conformist) anti-puritans. The Antinomians attacked their erstwhile brethren for their allegedly pharisaical legalism, clericalist tyranny and hypocrisy while those attacked replied that the Antinomians were populist, anti-clerical, heretical apostles of libertinism and moral chaos.[31] In these and later exchanges between Presbyterians, Independents, mainstream puritans and the sects, much play was made about the inextricable connections between schism and heresy; about the inherently fissiparous nature of the sectarian impulse; about the divisive effects and inherently semi-separatist logic of conventicles; about the need for discipline and censorship and the defence of the integrity, of the unity, uniformity and order, of the national Church and of orthodox doctrine against the invasion by an ignorant laity of core clerical monopolies over the interpretation and preaching of the word, the definition of right doctrine and the application of spiritual discipline.[32] All these were arguments used by puritans against other puritans from at least the 1620s onwards.[33]

IV

Just like anti-popery, then, anti-puritanism can be seen as a major element in the ideological context of post-Reformation English politics. Just like anti-popery, it was a synthesis of different strands of argument and assertion that could be bent to

[29] Robert Parsons, *A Brief Discourse Concerning Certain Reasons* (1581); D.C. Peck, ed. *Leicester's Commonwealth* (Athens, OH, 1985), 68–9, 181–5. I would like to thank Michael Questier for many discussions on this subject.
[30] N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* (Oxford, 1987).
[31] D. Como, *Blown by the Spirit* (Stanford, 2004); T.D. Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004).
[32] Hughes, *Gangraena.*
[33] Como, *Blown*; Lake, *Boxmaker's Revenge*, ch. 10; D. Como and P. Lake, 'Puritans, Antinomians and Laudians in Caroline London: the strange case of Peter Shaw', *JEH*, L (1999).

a range of often widely divergent political and polemical ends. Just like anti-popery, tracing the deployment and redeployment of various versions of the puritan threat through the period enables us to square the circle between 'politics' and 'religion' and to reconcile continuity with change, as old polemical chestnuts were combined and recombined into new shapes and sizes, applied and reapplied to changing political circumstances and conjunctures.

Again, just as with anti-popery, anti-puritanism tended to carry within itself a certain political logic or message. Almost from the first, anti-puritanism had been associated with both 'popularity' and hypocrisy. Popular spirits, it was claimed, tended towards a view of the political system in Church and state that widened, rather than narrowed, the space for popular participation and power. The result was often claimed to be more or less overtly anti-monarchical. This was where the hypocrisy kicked in. Populist appeals to the people for support, were, on this view, simple power plays. They were means to an end and the end was, of course, enhanced power, status and wealth for those making the appeals, who, for all their claims to hyper-loyalty to the causes of order, monarchy and true religion, were in fact entirely out for their own interests. Puritan hypocrisy thus ensured that puritan popularity became an anti-monarchical conspiracy.[34]

This link between puritanism and popularity was established in the earliest works of anti-puritan polemic produced by John Whitgift and can be found running throughout the subsequent anti-Presbyterian tracts produced by the likes of Bancroft, Sutcliffe or Saravia.[35] But it can also be found in the literary anti-puritan stereotypes of the late 1580s and 1590s, in pamphlets but also in plays. If, in *Henry IV Parts I and II*, Falstaff stands as the archetypal comic representation of the puritan as bible-quoting hypocrite, a man skilled in justifying his lust, greed or gluttony behind an apposite scriptural phrase or aside, he is also associated with the deleterious effects of Hal's courting a following among the people and with the both corrupting and levelling threat of puritan evil counsel on the conduct and course of royal policy and monarchical government.[36] If, in *Henry VI Part II*, Cade's rebellion is justified in the language of reformation and with the promise of a return to some paradise of equality and plenty, it is also associated, on the one hand, with popular ignorance, violence and revolt, and on the other, with the sinister machinations of the duke of York, and the crazy aspirations to supreme power of Jack Cade himself. All this, of course, recalls not only conformist denunciations of the discipline, and the sinister manoeuvres of its noble lay backers, but also the mad-cap revolt of Hacket and Coppinger (with which, of course, the likes of Cosin and Bancroft did their damnedest to associate

[34] R. Cust, 'Charles I and Popularity' in T. Cogswell, R. Cust, P. Lake, eds. *Politics, Religion and Popularity* (Cambridge, 2002); P. Lake, 'John Whitgift, Puritanism and the Invention of Popularity' (forthcoming).

[35] Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*; idem, 'Whitgift and the Invention of Popularity'.

[36] Collinson, 'Ecclesiastical Vitriol'; K. Poole, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton* (Cambridge, 2000), ch. 1; P. Corbin and D. Sedge, eds. *The Oldcastle Controversy* (Manchester, 1991).

respectable proponents of the discipline like Thomas Cartwright).[37] Similar allegations of popularity figured in James I's version of the (Presbyterian) puritan threat and in later conformist and Laudian renditions of a more generously conceived puritan fifth column. And, of course, they are just as prominent in Thomas Edwards's denunciation of the seditious appeal of the Independents and sects.

The popularity thus endemically associated with differently defined versions of puritanism represented a negative image of the political values and priorities inscribed within at least certain versions of anti-popery, which in turn helps to explain the way in which anti-popish and anti-puritan stereotypes and stories tracked one another through the period. One of the main claims to respectability and official patronage made by those labelled by their enemies as puritan was that they really understood and sincerely hated popery, and thus represented not a threat to the protestant establishment in Church and state, but rather its strongest bulwark against the popish Antichrist. On the other side of the argument, the equivalence of the political threat posed to monarchical power by both puritans and papists played a central role in most vigorous denunciations of puritanism. Lori Anne Ferrell has shown how Lancelot Andrewes could transmute that seemingly quintessentially anti-popish occasion, a gunpowder plot sermon, into the launching pad for yet more anti-puritan rant.[38] 'Popery' and 'puritanism' thus served as one another's doppelgänger; evil twins, they marched through the politics and polemic of the period together, as if joined at the hip.

This is not, of course, to suggest, that anti-popery and anti-puritanism represented mutually exclusive ideological positions. As should be clear now, in anti-popery and anti-puritanism we are not dealing with coherent ideological positions, but rather with constellations of ideas, attributes and narratives, which could be arranged into a number of differently inflected syntheses, to meet a variety of polemical circumstances and forward a range of often very different, indeed sometimes mutually exclusive, political purposes. We are dealing here with anti-types, negative images of things, persons and outcomes which, if you accepted the terms of the discourse out of which they were constructed, literally no one would want to own. Accordingly, many English Catholics stressed that they were both loyal children of the Church of Rome and loyal subjects of the English crown, and thus no sort of 'papist'. That was a fate they often sought to visit upon other sorts of ('jesuited' and 'hispanophile') English Catholics.[39] Similarly very large numbers of those known to contemporaries (and indeed to subsequent scholarship) as puritans put almost equal amounts of energy into denying that they were any such thing. Thus at any given moment it is reasonable to envisage the majority of politically sentient and religiously aware contemporaries

[37] R. Hornback, 'Stage Puritanism and the early 1590s: the Carnivalesque, Rebellious Clown as Anti-Puritan Stereotype', *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme*, XXIV (2000).
[38] L. Ferrell, *Government by Polemic* (Stanford, 1998), ch. 3.
[39] A. Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalism in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1979), chs. 7–10.

subscribing to many of the tenets and claims of both anti-popery and anti-puritanism.[40] And yet, particularly at moments of crisis, indeed in deciding just when such a moment had arrived and in deciding just what sort of crisis it was, whether they tended to privilege or emphasize the puritan or the popish threat was very often a crucial determinant of how contemporaries evaluated their situation and what to do about it. The committed – whether Catholics and protestants, puritans and their enemies, 'royalists' and 'patriots', or later parliamentarians, Presbyterians and Independents, puritans and sectaries, exclusionists and their enemies, whigs and tories[41] – as they tried to canvass their particular view of the situation to their less committed contemporaries, tended to couch their arguments in the language or discourse of anti-puritanism or anti-popery. Sometimes they restricted their pitch to one register or the other, but at times they could be combined in what are, to us, seemingly bizarre or anachronistic combinations. While, at certain times, allegations of popish conspiracy could be met with structurally identical, and equally fictitious, allegations of Presbyterian plotting,[42] at others, both sectaries and papists could be denounced as agents of the Antichrist,[43] the regicide seen as both a Jesuit and a sectarian conspiracy[44] and Quakers could be elided with papists.[45]

To thus juxtapose anti-popery with anti-puritanism is not therefore to return to some old bi-polar whig reading of the period. It is rather to provide us with a means to register some of the ways in which contemporaries identified and dealt with areas of religious, political and cultural ambiguity, tension and conflict. Tracing the long-term trajectories and changing ideological contours of both anti-popery and anti-puritanism might well allow us to confer some sort of long-term coherence on the political and religious history of the post-Reformation period without returning to the old polarities and teleologies of the whig account, while leaving us with enough flexibility to accommodate the entirely salutary revisionist insistence on the complexity and contingency of the particular political conjunctures that constitute that history.

Prejudices both anti-popery and anti-puritanism may well often have been or become, but we write them off as such at our peril. For the analysis of the structure and deployment of both has a great deal to tell us about the history of England over the long, post-Reformation, haul.

[40] See J. Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis* (Cambridge, 1991), part I.

[41] Harris, *London Crowd*; idem, *Politics under the later Stuarts*.

[42] R. Weil, ' "If I Did Say So I Lyed": Elizabeth Cellier and the Construction of Credibility in the Popish Plot Crisis' in S. Amussen and M. Kishlansky, eds. *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1995); Scott, *Restoration Crisis*, 44–9.

[43] C. Davies, *A Religion of the Word* (Manchester, 2002); Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*.

[44] W. Lamont, *Marginal Prynne* (1963).

[45] I. Thackray, 'Zion Undimmed: the Protestant Belief in the Popish Plot during the English Interregnum', *History Workshop Journal*, XVIII (1984); S.A. Kent, 'The "Papist" Charges against the Interregnum Quakers', *Journal of Religious History*, XII (1982).

6

The Fortunes of English Puritanism: An Elizabethan Perspective

BRETT USHER

In a lecture delivered at Dr Williams's Library in 1990, Nicholas Tyacke drew timely attention to the ramifications of a godly network, clerical and lay, by means of which the continued existence of 'a radical puritan continuum', stretching from the 1590s to the civil war, could profitably be traced. 'Money, organization and ideology', Tyacke concluded, 'give shape and substance to puritanism under the early Stuarts.'[1]

The intention of this essay is to amplify Tyacke's findings by examining some further sources of that 'money' and the origins of that 'organization' – 'ideology' is left to fend largely for itself – by reference to a series of alliances firmly in place in Elizabethan London no later than the early 1570s. Its focal point is the will of Thomas Crooke, preacher at Gray's Inn from 1581, who was born about 1545 in Cransley, Northamptonshire, evidently of poor parents of whom no record seems to survive.[2] After schooling at Stamford, Lincolnshire, Crooke matriculated sizar at Trinity College, Cambridge, in May 1560. Graduating BA in 1563 he was elected to a fellowship and commenced an MA in 1566. While continuing his studies, he probably quitted Cambridge thereafter for by the time that he was ordained priest at Norwich (11 June 1568) he had undoubtedly married.[3]

Crooke was instituted rector of Great Waldingfield, Suffolk, on 3 April 1571, on the presentation of Edward Colman.[4] To judge from his will Crooke began to preach widely in the Stour Valley, for there are bequests to the poor of nearby Assington, Suffolk, and to those of Elmstead, Fingringhoe and Wivenhoe, all Essex parishes south of the Stour on the outskirts of Colchester. Crooke was also

1 N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603–1640* (Friends of Dr Williams's Library, 1990), 20–1.

2 See the present writer's entry on Crooke in *ODNB*.

3 Venn, I. 424. Crooke proceeded BD in 1573 and DD (from Pembroke Hall) in 1578. His eldest daughter Sara was married in 1585 so cannot have been born later than 1568.

4 NRO, DN REG/13, fo. 168v.

associated with a coterie of nonconformist preachers within the archdeaconry of Sudbury that came to the attention of John Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich, in January 1574. None of the seven men arraigned had 'observed thordre, but have promysed a conformitie requiring a respette of tyme'.[5] Crooke also forged a friendship with John Foxe. A Latin letter in Crooke's hand, dated from Waldingfield on 15 September 1575, survives among Foxe's papers, in response to one of thanks from the martyrologist for hospitality when, travelling in the vicinity, he had fallen ill.[6]

Crooke's elevation in 1581 from rural obscurity in the Stour Valley to the preachership of Gray's Inn, one of the strategic postings within legal London, is obviously intriguing. Friendship with Foxe can only have improved his chances of promotion while as an *alumnus* of Stamford he was doubtless known to William Cecil, Lord Burghley, a dominating presence in the town and himself the school's most distinguished pupil. Indeed, the key to Crooke's appointment lies in a canny letter from Cecil preserved in the pension book of Gray's Inn.[7] Here we glimpse *Regnum Cecilianum* in persuasive mode, working on at least six of its eight cylinders.

The post was vacant because William Charke, preacher since 1574, had now moved across the road to become preacher at Lincoln's Inn.[8] After the usual hearty commendations it was Burghley's understanding that the honourable society was 'in mynde & purpose' to provide 'some meete & suffycient preacher to be conversant & resident' there. And so, Burghley continued ineffably,

> I must admonish you that the good choise of the man is that wch will com[m]end all the rest for your better direction wherein I am lykewyse informed that the B. of London[9] whose approbac[i]on you are principally to expect dothe concurre in good opynion of one who amongst others is named unto yow so fare forthe as he hath solicited unto him the acceptance of the charge. The man is called Mr. Crooks & hath taken the degree of doctor & is otherwise as I here qualyfied with parts of gravitie & discretion such as besides the com[m]on duties of a minister are peculiarlie requisite for that place. I have thought good therefore for the especiall regarde which I have of the good government of yowr house as on[e] of the seminaries of the nobilitie & gentlemen of this realme & as the place where myself came forth unto service to recommende unto

5 R. Houlbrooke, ed. *The Letter Book of John Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich . . . 1571–5* (Norfolk Record Society, XLIII, 1975), 221–3.

6 BL, Harleian MS 417, fos 126v–7r. I am grateful to Thomas Freeman for discussion of the import of this letter.

7 'Pension' is the governing body of Gray's Inn.

8 On 31 Jan. 1576 it had been agreed that Charke should 'contynue still in this house as preacher of the same & shall have his former allowance . . . if it be not otherwise myslyked by the privie councell or the archbishopp of Canterbury or the bishopp of London': R.J. Fletcher, *The Pension Book of Gray's Inn . . . 1569–1669* (1901), xxxv, 22 (but references mistranscribed as to 'John Cherke'). For Charke's turbulent career after his expulsion from Peterhouse, Cambridge, in 1572, see P. Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships* (Stanford, 1970), 185, 192–3, 207, 217–18, 343, 353, 358.

9 John Aylmer, 1577–94.

> yowe both the pursute of yowr own good meanyng in such due order of prociding as to yowr discrietion & proffescion cannot be unknowe[n] & the consideration of this man for the ffulfilling of yowr intention & suppliing of yowr want and with all the conditions of his enterteynment that . . . maye be answerable to his qualitie & condicion. And thus I bidd yow hertilie farewell at the court the xxxth of Januarie 1580[/1]. Yowr loving frend & old fellow of yowr company, Burghley[10]

Hardly surprising, then, that Crooke was swiftly appointed and treated with generosity. He took up his duties at the beginning of Easter term 1581. A special tax was levied on the society to provide a stipend of £66 13*s* 4*d* and two men were ousted from their quarters to provide him with suitable lodgings.[11] It doubtless speaks volumes about Crooke's preaching methods that shortly afterwards an hour-glass was bought for the chapel. A further privilege was granted when he was 'specially admitted' to membership of Gray's Inn on 4 January 1582.[12]

To follow in the footsteps of William Charke was a heavy responsibility – even, perhaps, a direct challenge – and, although never seeking fame or notoriety as publicist or pamphleteer, Crooke was plunged headlong into the upper echelons of London's godly network.[13] Appointed lecturer at St Mary Woolchurch, he thereafter derived a comfortable salary from both promotions until he gave up Woolchurch in 1591.[14] Drafted in by the privy council to dispute with apprehended Jesuits, he was one of twenty-five clerics – including not only seven future bishops but also such committed critics of the ecclesiastical status quo as William Fulke, Walter Travers, John Reynolds and the ubiquitous Charke – who duly submitted their findings.[15]

Obviously these latter are names to conjure with. The London of the 1570s and 1580s was proving a schizophrenic world for men who harboured doubts of any kind about the continuing validity of the episcopal order or who, faced with the brickbat of the 1559 prayer book, challenged the hierarchy's *permissione divina* claim to impose ritual conformity in its divisive name.[16] The vestiarian contro-

[10] Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 48–9.

[11] Ibid., xxxv–vi, 50, 482.

[12] J. Foster, *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521–1889* (1889), 60. For the ecclesiological background to worship in legal London, see R.M. Fisher, 'The Reformation of Church and Chapel at the Inns of Court, 1530–1580' in *Guildhall Studies in London History*, III. no. 4 (April 1979), 223–47.

[13] He wrote against the opinions expressed by Hugh Broughton in his *Concent of Scripture* (c.1590) but the work is lost: J. Strype, ed. *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift* (3 vols., Oxford, 1822), II. 113–18.

[14] Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*, 151, 348. Seaver's assertion that Crooke's combined income from Gray's Inn and St Mary Woolchurch was between £60 and £70 hardly squares with his known income from the former.

[15] ITL, Petyt MS 538/47, fo. 19r. Crooke was also one of the many London preachers and hierarchs delegated to interview separatists: see L.H. Carlson, ed. *The Writings of John Greenwood 1587–1590* (1962), 117, 320; idem, *The Writings of John Greenwood and Henry Barrow 1591–1593* (1970), 314, 356.

[16] No theory of *iure divino* episcopacy was developed until the late 1580s nor did it remotely influence government policy when it finally emerged. Elizabeth's bishops were appointed strictly according to her erastian directions as supreme governor of the Church of England. Once elected and consecrated or confirmed by means of the royal *conge d'elire*, however, bishops described themselves as appointed *permissione* or *miseratione divina*. See P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* (1988), passim.

versy of 1564–7[17] had spawned both Thomas Cartwright's Cambridge lectures in 1570 and the subsequent bombshell dropped by John Field and Thomas Wilcox, the *Admonition to the Parliament* (1572). Not a few of those mentioned below were arraigned or imprisoned following a renewed drive for conformity thereafter.[18] Given these whirlwind events, the life of any preacher who was trusted (even effectively appointed) by the government proved to be a tricky business, particularly if he failed to win the support of a sympathetic diocesan. By early 1577, for example, Aylmer of London was muttering darkly that Charke, Field, Wilcox and Edmund Chapman (shortly to become lecturer at Dedham, Essex) were now preaching 'God knows what' in private houses and recommended that they be sent north to expend their energies on the unconverted.[19]

Their laymen-hosts were by contrast determined to keep them in the south. Thomas Butler of Loughton, Essex, making his will on 23 February 1577 (only days before Aylmer's consecration), had already discerned where the lines of demarcation lay. He appointed as overseers George Carleton and Peter Wentworth, both parliamentarians of radical persuasion who need no introduction here.[20] The will's most arresting provision, however, is the bequest of 40 shillings each to a clutch of preachers – not only Field and Wilcox but also Nicholas Standon, Thomas Edmunds, Nicholas Crane and Giles Seintclere. Two of the witnesses were William Fuller and Arthur Wake.[21]

Here, at a relatively early date, we confront a 'godly core' of ministers emerging undaunted from the battles of the previous decade. Wake, chaplain to Robert earl of Leicester, had just returned from the Channel Islands after helping to draft a discipline for their Presbyterian Church settlement.[22] William Fuller's survival from the circle surrounding the then Princess Elizabeth at Hatfield gave him privileged access to court, allowing him to go so far as to suggest to her, in a phrase that has inevitably appealed to historians, that she presided over a Church 'but halfly reformed'.[23]

Crooke was associated with all these men. Thomas Edmunds later testified that at about the same time as his future son-in-law, Stephen Egerton, Crooke joined

[17] For recent thoughts on the subject, see B. Usher, 'The Deanery of Bocking and the Demise of the Vestiarian Controversy', *JEH*, LII (2001), 434–55.

[18] P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967), 152.

[19] For Chapman, see P. Collinson, J. Craig, B. Usher, eds. *Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church: Dedham and Bury St Edmunds 1582–1590* (CERS, X, 2003), 192–6.

[20] For Wentworth's parliamentary career, first charted by Sir John Neale, see P.W. Hasler, *The House of Commons, 1558–1603* (3 vols., 1981), III. 597–601; for Carleton's, ibid., II. 552–4, where his patronage of Nicholas Standon is emphasized. Carleton's third wife was Elizabeth Crane, implicated in the printing of the Martin Marprelate tracts. Wentworth's exertions on behalf of James VI's claims to the English throne are explored in N. Tyacke, 'Puritan Politicians and King James VI and I, 1587–1604', in T. Cogswell, R. Cust, P. Lake, eds. *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain* (Cambridge, 2002), 21–44.

[21] A codicil (5 March 1577) was further witnessed by Crane and Seintcleire: F.G. Emmison, *Elizabethan Life: Wills of Essex Gentry and Merchants* (Chelmsford, 1978), 172–3. Administration granted to Carleton and Wentworth, 19 June 1577, during minority of Ambrose Barker, executor.

[22] Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 151–2.

[23] For the original quotation in its original spelling, see ibid., 29.

the conference of ministers in London, initiated by Field and Wilcox, which had been meeting since 1570[24] and was by this juncture deliberating whether or not the book of discipline should be introduced into the ecclesiastical equation. His acceptance into London's 'godly core' is demonstrated by his appearance in the will of Richard Culverwell, conceivably the most influential godly layman of Elizabethan London who was not also a member of its ruling elite. The Culverwell family owed its spectacular rise within the capital's merchant community to Richard's brother Nicholas (d. 1569), father-in-law of Laurence Chaderton and William Whitaker and grandfather of William Gouge. Nicholas's eldest son, Samuel, married Jane, one of only two recorded daughters of Thomas Sampson, whose expulsion from the deanery of Christ Church, Oxford, was perhaps the most far-reaching consequence of the vestiarian controversy. His second son, Ezekiel, was to be a beneficiary in Crooke's will, living on to be deprived of his Essex benefice in 1609 and thereafter to cut a major figure in Jacobean London, along with his nephew, Gouge.[25] Here was a true 'puritan peerage' yet neither Nicholas nor Richard attempted to achieve influence by seeking political office or clambering through the lowlier ranks to the dignity of aldermanic status. They represented a new breed of pious citizenry, unconcerned with harnessing their money or their energies to civic enterprises or traditional public benefactions. Instead, they began organizing an 'alternative' London and also tried to engineer an 'alternative' Cambridge. Any government, even one guided by so sympathetic a figure as Burghley, must have viewed this seismic shift of emphasis with a mixture of curiosity and suspicion.

In his last months of life Richard Culverwell quite literally prepared the ground for Walter Mildmay's new Cambridge foundation, Emmanuel College, securing title to the land on which it was built by laborious purchase and reconveyance of leases. He also left it £200 and a generous number (*multitudo*) of books, eight of which still survive.[26] When Culverwell made his will on 1 December 1584 its myriad bequests included the handsome sum of £350 to be administered in trust by his nephews-in-law, Whitaker and Chaderton, along with Charke, Travers and Richard Greenham, on behalf of the deserving godly. Culverwell further remembered nine London preachers, leaving £3 each to Robert Crowley, Charke, Travers, Field, Crooke and Crane; and £2 each to Edmunds, 'Mr Cheston' and 'Mr Santlyes' – this latter one of the many variations on the name of Giles Seintclere.[27]

It was appropriate that Crowley should appear first in the list: probably

[24] One of its earliest surviving letters, perhaps dating from 1571, was signed by Field, Wilcox, Standon and Seintclere: ibid., 139.

[25] For a detailed Culverwell family tree, see B. Usher, 'The Silent Community: early Puritans and the Patronage of the Arts', *SCH*, XXVIII (Oxford, 1992), 287–302; see also the entry on the Culverwell family in *ODNB*.

[26] S. Bendall, C. Brooke, P. Collinson, *A History of Emmanuel College, Cambridge* (Woodbridge, 1999), 21–2, 34, 103, 105; Usher, 'Silent Community'.

[27] TNA, PROB 11/69 (9 Windsor).

regarded as *primus inter pares* among the London godly elite, he had been orchestrator-in-chief of the pulpit battles that were the eye of the storm of the vestiarian controversy.[28] Edmunds survived as a city incumbent, only to blurt out everything he could remember about Field's London conference during the star chamber trials of 1590/1.[29] George Cheston was a London lecturer even now on the brink of suspension by Aylmer and, although a protégé of Ambrose earl of Warwick, his appearances in the record hereafter are few and fleeting.[30]

By the time that his eldest daughter married Stephen Egerton at St Anne Blackfriars on 4 May 1585 Crooke's absorption into London's 'godly core' was complete, for Egerton was to inherit the mantle of John Field (d. 1588) as leader of the nonconformist cause.[31] Yet there is little to be added about Crooke's own activities until he drew up his will. Despite his membership of the London conference he does not seem to have been active within the network of 'synods' and other conferences (such as Dedham's), which it was Field's self-imposed task to co-ordinate. His precise relationship with the political campaigns of the 1580s thus remains equivocal. Although Burghley's personal patronage perhaps saved him from the attentions of Aylmer there is no evidence that he ever fell foul of Archbishop Whitgift and the sole reference to his ministry in Field's surviving papers is enigmatic.[32] What appears to have been the tranquillity of his tenure at Gray's Inn contrasts with Walter Travers's stormy career at the Temple,[33] and if there is a true distinction to be made between 'radical' and 'moderate' puritanism[34] then Crooke was undoubtedly 'moderate'. It may be significant, for example, that he does not feature in the familiar roll call of names benefiting from the munificent liberality of Mrs Elizabeth Walter, who made her will in December 1588.[35]

28 Crowley's career is traced most thoroughly in J.W. Martin, *Religious Radicals in Tudor England* (1989).

29 For the reliability or otherwise of Edmunds's testimony, see Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 132, 134, 152, 233, 237, 351, 390, 410–11, 426.

30 For what little is known of Cheston's activities, see Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*, 126, 210, 218, 333, 342, 356.

31 GL, MS 4509/1 [unfol.]. Egerton's marriage is the first reference to his tenure of Blackfriars: see B. Burch, 'The Parish of St. Anne's Blackfriars, London, to 1665', *Guildhall Miscellany*, III. no. 1 (October 1969), 1–54, plus table of clergy. For his self-imposed silence after 1607 and the consequent domination of the parish by his co-adjutor William Gouge, see my entries on both men in *ODNB*.

32 The survey of the city of London ministry conducted in c.1586 noted 'three exempt places without the walls'. At the Temple '(where Mr Travers did preach)' Mr Hooker 'preacheth but now and then'. At Lincoln's Inn William Charke was 'dilligent and painfull'. 'Dr Crooke' is entered for Gray's Inn without further comment: A. Peel, ed. *The Seconde Parte of a Register* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1915), II. 184.

33 S.J. Knox, *Walter Travers* (1962), 63–88.

34 The most recent discussion on the subject is A. Hunt, 'Laurence Chaderton and the Hampton Court Conference', in S. Wabuda and C. Litzenberger, eds. *Belief and Practice in Reformation England* (Aldershot, 1998), 225–8.

35 There were bequests of between £5 and £10 to thirteen preachers in London and Ipswich, including Charke, Travers, Wilcox, Cheston 'of St Thomas Hospital' and Egerton. £300 was left in trust to Charke, Travers, Wilcox and Egerton for 'the releife of . . . vertuous preachers'. The same quartet was entrusted with £400 for the endowment of scholarships at Emmanuel. The widow of 'Mr Felde minister' received a generous £6 13*s* 4*d*: TNA, PROB 11/73 (15 Leicester).

Although his own was written in January 1595 Crooke was to survive for nearly four years. He was buried at St Mary Woolchurch, as he had requested, on 5 October 1598, probate being granted to his widow on 23 October. That same day Gray's Inn Pension ordered that his stipend be collected for Michaelmas term because he had died since Michaelmas day.[36]

Embracing the burgeoning tradition at Emmanuel, Crooke turned his back on his own college, Trinity, bequeathing it nothing while leaving books to Emmanuel's library and to Laurence Chaderton, its master. At least three of his sons were dispatched there as undergraduates. Was it, perhaps, that Trinity's former master, John Whitgift, now sternly presided at Lambeth? Even more arresting, however, is the fact that the will enshrines a long-standing friendship with Sir John Hart, appointed an overseer alongside two members of Crooke's family and a brace of Culverwells. Hart's place within the godly landscape has largely gone unnoticed – he has not achieved the distinction of an entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* – but investigation shows that his credentials are watertight. At his death in 1604 he was one of the true Janus-figures of protestant England. He was possibly the original owner of the British Library's copy of the first edition of Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1563), which contains a memorandum by the (unidentified) later owner, recalling a conversation with Hart during Mary's reign as they crossed the Thames together to confront Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, in Southwark.[37]

Hart's public career contrasts with those of the Culverwell brothers. Having became free of the Grocers' company he climbed steadily up the ladder of city government, serving as lord mayor in 1589–90 and as one of London's MPs in 1593 and 1597. He was also member of the Muscovy company and a founder-member of the East India company, of which Sir Thomas Smith was appointed first governor.[38]

His will[39] proudly proclaims that he was patron of the city parish of St Swithin, and his protégés in their turn proclaim his status as a patron of the godly. In 1561 John earl of Oxford had presented William Lyving, a survivor of the London protestant congregation under Mary.[40] Lyving was succeeded, on Hart's presentation, by Arthur Bright (1583–6), one of several London clerics who escaped the

[36] Recorded as ill and absent from Gray's Inn on 12 May 1596, he had nevertheless dutifully provided preachers 'to supplye his place'. He rallied sufficiently to accept another lectureship, at St Peter Cheap, in 1597, revising his will thereafter: Fletcher, *Pension Book*, 120, 138; Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*, 358.

[37] I am indebted to Thomas Freeman for this information.

[38] For his public career, see the entry by H.G. Owen in Hasler, *House of Commons*, II. 264–5. Although Owen knew more about the London clergy than any historian of his generation, he failed to discern Hart's importance as a godly patron, noting only that the preamble to his will 'has puritan overtones'. For Hart's only fully documented speech in the commons, on subsidies, see T.E. Hartley, ed. *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I, Volume III 1593–1601* (Leicester, 1995), 114–15. For his benefactions, see W.K. Jordan, *The Charities of London 1480–1660* (1960), 234, 265, 393.

[39] TNA, PROB 11/103 (1 Harte), fos 1r–7r. Dated 3 Jan., proved 23 Jan. 1603[-4].

[40] For Lyving, see B. Usher ' "In a Time of Persecution": New Light on the Secret Protestant Congregation in Marian London', in D. Loades, ed. *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 1997), 233–6, 240, 244. The sustainer John Abell stood surety for his first fruits: TNA, E334/7, fo. 142v.

full effect of Whitgift's articles of 1584 by means of qualified subscription.[41] William Jackson, presented by Hart in 1587, was deprived in 1606 following James I's drive for conformity after the Hampton Court Conference (1604),[42] but not before he had been bequeathed 53*s* 4*d* and a mourning gown in Hart's will.

Sir John's other benefactions included £5 to his godson John Charke, to be handed over to his father 'Mr Charke the preacher'. £30 went to the newly founded Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, to furnish its library with 'Bookes suche as the Schollers there stande in need of'. A majestic £600 was left to Hart's executors for the purchasing of property to the yearly value of £42, this annual income to be settled on the master, fellows and scholars in order to propel the college on its godly way.[43]

In this self-generating world of clandestine 'self-help' summaries are hazardous, but clearly a 'godly network' had sprung into being in the late 1540s to shield the first generation of evangelicals from the bewildering tergiversations of Henry VIII's final years.[44] Godly laymen began to look after their protégés. Wealthy merchants like John Abell, Richard Hilles and Richard Springham were ideally placed, with their trading contacts in Europe, to make the logistics, if not the stark reality, of temporary exile a comparatively simple matter. This proved invaluable after Mary's accession, when the protestant cause had to be 'sustained' by means of strategic withdrawal, either by flight abroad or else by internal exile within the British Isles. The seminal work of Christina Garrett, undertaken 70 years ago, has served to confer a primacy on those who put the English Channel between themselves and the Marian regime[45] but there were many (the future Archbishop Matthew Parker being only the most obvious example) who lived in obscurity in Marian England and a significant number of men and women who engaged in clandestine protestant activity, like Mr and Mrs William Lyving (and assuredly also John Hart). It was this strain of *active* resistance, as opposed to the *passive* decision to withdraw, that most truly guided the fortunes of English protestantism during the following century. The fugitive London congregation of Mary's reign came to be perceived as a model of self-regulation and autonomy.

41 Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*, 214. A graduate of Christ's College, Cambridge, Bright commenced MA in 1576 and by 1580 was teaching and preaching at Stebbing, Essex: GL, MS 9537/4, fo. 91r; DD 1589. St Swithin proved a stepping stone to better things and he subsequently held four other benefices, dying as rector of Great Wigborough, Essex, and prebendary of Wildland in St Paul's, in 1618: Venn, I. 186; G.L. Hennessy, *Novum Repertorium* (1898), 55, 111, 213, 389. As rector of Great Wigborough he was described by the local godly in 1603/4 as 'a sufficiente preacher', although 'for the moste parte non residente' and 'verie scandalous for chopinge and changeinge of benefices': *A Viewe of the State of the Clargie within the Countie of Essex* (c.1890), 15; now LPL, MS 2442.

42 K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), 324.

43 £2 to the master personally; £4 to maintain a Greek lecturer; £10 each to two MAs, 'being fellows' towards 'their exhibition and maintenance'; £4 each to four poor scholars until admitted MA, provided they had come to Sidney from the school he had founded in his native place, Coxwold, Yorkshire, 'soe longe as there shalbe any such fytt to receave the same'; 'for want of such' the stipends to be bestowed on other worthy MAs.

44 For a recent discussion, see A. Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 2003), ch. 3.

45 C.H. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles* (Cambridge, 1938).

Its survival 'in the midst of the flames' was an inspiration for all who were later to find fault with Elizabeth's extremely limited conception of her role as supreme governor of the Church of England, and these included not only separatists and those who, under her Stuart successors, crossed the Atlantic to found the New Jerusalem but also the group of men under discussion here.[46]

It is true that the tradition of the 'old godly puritans' owed something to the longevity of many of its leaders. Charke remained active until his death in 1617 while Egerton lived, if more quietly, until 1622 and John Knewstub until 1624. Ezekiel Culverwell and Laurence Chaderton (famously, as a centenarian) both soldiered on into the reign of Charles and William Gouge into the Commonwealth, to become a member of the Westminster assembly. But the underlying reasons for this 'godly' survivability must ultimately be sought in the self-help of the early evangelicals, of the 'sustainers' who defied Mary and then, by inexorable extension, of the politico-religious campaigners of the 1570s and 1580s who defied Elizabeth. It was not a tradition that was remotely deflected by so comparatively minor a glitch in its 'fortunes' as James I's settlement of religion. The benefactions of Mrs Sarah Venables, to which Nicholas Tyacke drew attention,[47] were merely the spectacular tip of an iceberg that categorically refused to melt. Mrs Venables was looking back to the safety-net painstakingly created for the godly cause over three generations by merchants like Abell, Hilles and Springham, by independent-minded families like the Culverwells, and by powerful London hierocrats like John Hart and Thomas Smith, whom William Charke described in his will as his 'dear landlord'. In 1619 Charke's son, Ezekiel, dedicated *Two Godly and Fruitful Treatises* to Smith not only with his own thanks 'but much more for the many and great kindnesses a long time continued to my dear parents'.[48] The context is highly suggestive: Smith was first cousin by marriage to Ezekiel Culverwell – Ezekiel Charke's godfather? – since his first wife, Judith, was the only child of Richard Culverwell.

Finally, it is worth attempting to administer the *coup de grâce* to the lofty, lingering 'Anglican' assumption that opponents of Jacobean and Caroline religious policies were mere upstarts – irritating fleabites, despised by the *glitterati*, on the dignified, beautified Church of England, which the Stuarts had managed to rescue from the wreckage of Elizabethan compromises. The reality was subtly different. Up in the Stour Valley, for example, one of Edmund Chapman's more intransigent colleagues in the Dedham conference, William Tey, was the brother-in-law of Eleanor Tey (*née* Neville), who in her youth had been entitled to address Queen Katherine Parr as aunt.[49] More spectacularly, the closely connected families of Hastings, Hildersham and Barrington were all descended, through his daughter Margaret Pole, countess of Salisbury, from George duke of

46 Usher, ' "In a Time of Persecution" '.
47 Tyacke, *Fortunes*, 5–6.
48 Ibid., 8, 9.
49 Collinson, Craig, Usher, eds. *Conferences*, 255–60.

Clarence. Henry Hastings, 3rd earl of Huntingdon, might well have been offered the crown had Elizabeth died young[50] and Arthur Hildersham (who recommended William Gouge as Egerton's coadjutor in Blackfriars) reigned supreme at Ashby-de-la-Zouche not only because the Hastings family esteemed him as a worthy pastor but also because he was a kinsman. Much as Elizabeth disliked to be reminded of the surviving Plantagenet blood-line and suspicious as she will have been of Hildersham's brand of churchmanship, she is said nevertheless to have assiduously addressed him as 'cousin'. After his second marriage to Winifred Hildersham (possibly Arthur's sister) Ezekiel Culverwell could similarly address Lady Joan Barrington, who in her turn was aunt of Oliver Cromwell.[51]

Indeed, the popular notion that the future lord protector just happened to stomp out of a muddy field in Huntingdonshire and thereafter just happened to take over the kingdom is to hold the mirror upside down not only to nature but also to political and social realities. Tyacke's ' radical puritan continuum', therefore, may owe as much to these subterranean blood-lines as it does to the godly safety net. His valuable window into the fortunes of puritanism after 1603 can be widened by reference both to Elizabethan precedents and to patterns of kinship, as well as of patronage, which require still further refinement.

Appendix: Will of Thomas Crooke[52]

Consideringe that Sentence of deathe pronounced and executed from the beginninge of the world uppon all the sonnes of Addam that they are duste and into duste shall returne againe, and that the Apostle hath sayde 'It is decreed that all shall die'; Consideringe also that the tyme and hower of deathe is uncertaine so as wee knowe not when yt will please the Lord who hath giuen us this lief againe to require the same at or handes; finally consideringe that God in the example of Abraham and other the faiethful, and by the warninge giuen unto Ezechias both admonished all to dispose and order their howse and estate before they departe this lief, I, THOMAS CROOKE, professor of divinitie and preacher of the word of God in the howse and fellowshipp of GRAIES INN in LONDON, beinge by the grace of God in good healthe of bodie and of sane and p[er]fecte mynde and memory, haue thought it good and my bounden dutie soe to dispose of the fewe

50 C. Cross, *The Puritan Earl* (1966), 144.

51 For the ramifications of these godly interconnections under the Stuarts, see A. Searle, ed. *Barrington Family Letters 1628–1632* (Camden 4th series, XXVIII, 1983), Introduction and appended genealogical tables.

52 London Metroplitan Archives, will register 'Sperin', fos 185v–187v. For ease of reference paragraphs have been introduced and proper names rendered in capitals. For reasons of space, no attempt has been made (with the exception of Robert Dexter) to comment on Crooke's siblings or collateral relations, nor (although at least four invite speculation) on the names found following the revision of 1597. In the remaining footnotes, the names of men who have an entry in *OBNB* are preceded by an asterisk (*) and biographical details are therefore rendered in 'short form'.

things wch God in his goodnes hath graunted unto me, as I would haue the same to stande after my departure oute of this lief.

I doe therefore in the holie name of God this eighte of January in the yeare of our Lord God one thowsand five hundred nyntie fower[53] declare this my laste will and testamente in manner and forme followinge. Firste, as god the father, the sonne and the holie ghoste is myne onely Creator, Redeemer and sanctifier, soe into his handes alone I com[m]end my selfe, humbly beseechinge his dyvine maiestie that, when yt shall please him [that] this earthly tabernacle of my bodie shall be disolued, my spirritt maie by the ministerie of his holie Angells be translated from this Vale of misery into his moste gratious and glorious presence, gathered unto the Reste of his Saincts wch are nowe wth Christe Jhesus their head at the righte hande of his Maiestie in heaven.

As for my bodie, I humbly render ytt unto the earthe from whence yt came untill that daie wherein the Lorde Jhesus Christe shall returne my Redeemer from heaven, to be made glorious in all those that beleeve in him by chaunginge their vilde [sic] bodies that they maye be made like his glorious bodie accordinge to yt power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himselfe. And becawse the Churche of god hath alwaies wth honor layd upp the bodies of the faiethfull in token of their resurrection unto mortallite att the laste daie, I will that my bodie, beinge accumpaynedd of my good freinds, be wthowte all superstition and vanitie comitted unto the earthe. And for that some good parte of my poore labours for manie yeres hath byn bestowed in WOOLCHURCHE in LONDON, I will my bodie be buried in the Chauncell there and that some one of my godlie bretheren of the ministrie doe entertayne the Companie then assembled wth a sermon uppon theis words of the Apostle unto the Hebrues: 'Beare in mynde those that haue had the guidinge of you and haue declared unto you the worde of god: whose faiethe followe yee, Consideringe what hath byn the end of their Conversac[i]on'.[54] This I desire to be donne not onely for the honor of my funerall but alsoe and mutche more for the instruction and edifyinge of that assembly.

For my worldlie goods, thoughe they be not many, yett I thancke the Lord for his mercie towards me: they are moe then I could haue looked for or desiered. That wch I haue, therefore, I will shalbe disposed as followeth.

First I bequeathe unto ye honest poore of the Parrishe where I nowe dwell sixe shillings eighte pence. To the Poore of MUTCHE WALDINGFEILD, whence I came to LONDON, sixe shillings eighte pence. To the poore of NEWGATE in LONDON three shillings fower pence. To the poore of ASSINGTON in SUFFOLKE, three shillings fower pence. To the poore of ELLMESTEDD in ESSEX twoe shillings sixe pence. To the poore of FINGRINGHO in ESSEX two shillings sixe pence. To the poore of WIVENHOE in ESSEX two shillings sixe pence. To the poore of GRAIES INN LANE five shillings.

53 That is, 1595 new style.

54 Hebrews xiii. 7 (Geneva version).

Item: I give to EMANUELL Colledge in CAMEBRIDGE one of my bookes at their Choyce of the valewe of Tenn shillings.

Item: I giue to the poor of CRANESLEY in NORTHAMPTONSHEIRE, where I was borne, sixe shillings eighte pence.

Item: I giue to the schoole of STAMFORD where I was brought upp LAMBINUS Commentary uppon HORRACE in fol. and FOQUELINUS uppon PERSIUS in quarto.

Item: I giue to my brother THOMAS DEXTER and his wief in Remembraunce of my loue towards them twoe Rings of five shillings. To my sister URSULA or her children five shillings. To my brother JAMES and his wief Tenn shillings. To my brother RAPHE DEXTER and his children that fortie shillings wch he oweth me.[55]

Item: I giue unto my good brother in lawe Mr CASAR and his wief <for a remembraunce of me> either of them a Ringe of five shillings.[56] Likewise unto my brother FISHER and his wief, either of them a Ring of two shillings sixe pence. To my brother Mr JOYNER a Ring of five shillings. To my good mother Mris JOYNER a Ring of five shillings.

Item: I will that my good freind Mr ROBERT BROOKE, preacher, shall have ye use of all my writinge bookes and papers for the space of two yeres nexte after my decease. And then I will that they returne unto the possession and use of my sonne SAMUELL.[57]

Item: I giue unto my go[o]d sonne in law Mr EGERTON and to my daughter his wief for a Remembraunce of my loues two Rings of the valewe of twentie shillings.

Item: I giue to my sonne in law WILLIAM GREENE one Ringe of five shillings.

Item: I giue and bequeathe to THOMAS CROOKE my eldest sonne fortie Poundes.[58]

Item: I giue unto SAMUELL my second sonne all my divinitie bookes in Greeke, Hebrewe, Latyn and Frenche.[59]

55 Not certainly identified but for Robert Dexter, see below n. 60.

56 Undoubtedly Richard Cayzer, vicar of Elmstead, Essex (1570–83) and rector of All Hallows Honey Lane, London (1582–1603). Crooke left money to the poor of Elmstead (above) and Cayzer was associated with members of the Dedham conference: see Collinson, Craig, Usher, eds. *Conferences*, lxxiii. ‘Brother-in-law’ obviously suggests that Mrs Samuel(a) Crooke, otherwise unidentifiable, was Cayzer’s sister.

57 No ‘preacher’ of these names is indexed in Seaver, *Puritan Lectureships*. Crooke probably refers to the Yorkshire-born Robert Brooke who graduated BA from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1590; ordained in London on 26/27 Nov. following, aged 28; ‘chaplain in Germany to the count palatine’. Note also that Crooke will have known the future puritan patron Sir Robert Brooke (d. 1646), admitted fellow-commoner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1588 and at Gray’s Inn in 1593: Venn, I. 183.

58 *Thomas (c.1574–1630), born probably in Great Waldingfield; no Oxbridge career recorded but admitted to Gray’s Inn on 1 March 1597 as ‘STD’ at his father’s petition: Foster, *Admissions to Gray’s Inn*, 91. Migrated to Ireland, establishing a protestant colony at Baltimore; granted substantial estates there; created baronet (1624); title extinct on death of his son Samuel (1666): G.E.C., *Complete Baronetage* (6 vols., 1900–9), I. 257.

59 *Samuel (d. 25 Dec. 1649), baptized at Great Waldingfield 17 Jan. 1575. Admitted pensioner at

Item: I giue unto HELKIACH my third sonne all my humanitie bookes.[60]

Item: I giue and bequeathe unto JOHN CROOKE my fowerthe sonne twentie Pounde.[61]

Item: I giue unto RICHARD my fifthe sonne twentie Pounde.[62]

Item: I giue unto RACHAELL my dawghter twentie Pounde.

Item: I bequeathe unto ANNE CROKE my dawghter twentie Poundes.

Item: I bequeathe unto my dawghter ELIZABETH CROOKE the some of twentie Pounde.

All whiche said somes of monney giuen unto my said Children, I will duringe their minoritie shalbe ymploied by some faiethefull freind to the use of their education and other advauncemt as shalbe thought good by their maister and myne overseer.

Item: I will that my sonnes shall haue their Portions at the age of one & twentie yeres and not before, unlesse yt shall seeme unto their freinds to be beneficiall for them.

Item: I will that my said three dawghters shall haue their Portions at the age of twentie yeres or at the daie of their marriage made by the Consente of their freinds.

Item: I will that yf yt shall please god that anie of my sayd children departe this lief before they be Capable of their Portion before mentioned, the portion of sutche one or more departed shalbe devided equally amongste the Reste.

Item: I will that yf anie of them shall proove rebellious and will nott be ruled by the advice of their mother and other my good freinds, the partie or p[ar]ties so offendinge shall for sutch rebellion and refusall of Counsel loose the benefitt of this my laste will and testamente as yf they had neuer byn named in the same, wch I will alsoe in case anie of them shall prevente their lawfull Marriages by uncleanenes of adulterie or fornication.

Item: I giue unto my good freind Mr KNEWSTUBB one booke of five shillings att his choice.[63]

Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1589; BA (Pembroke) early 1593; MA (Emmanuel) 1596 and subsequently fellow. Rector of Wrington, Somerset, 1602–49; chaplain to the East India company 1619.

60 *Helkiah (Hilkias, Hilkiah, Elkiah) (1576–1648). BA from St John's College, Cambridge, 1596; enrolled at University of Leyden 6 Nov. 1596, aged 20. A *Dissertatio exercitii gratia* survives at Leyden with the title *Theses anatomicae de corpore humano*; dated 16 April 1597 and dedicated to his father, to Stephen Egerton, to William Bend and to Mr Robert Dexter: R.W. Innes Smith, *English-Speaking Students of Medicine at the University of Leyden* (Edinburgh, 1932), 58. MD (Cambridge) 1604; physician to James I and member of the Royal College of Physicians; a pioneer of the study of mental illness.

61 The John Crooke admitted sizar at Emmanuel College, Cambridge on 1 May 1598 was 'doubtless' fourth son of Thomas: Venn, I. 424. But no further trace.

62 Richard Crooke (?1586–20 June 1641), matriculated sizar from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, at Michaelmas 1601, fifth son of Thomas; BA 1606; MA 1609. Ordained deacon and priest (London) 4 March and 23 Dec. 1610; aged 24; born in St Lawrence Jewry. Rector of St Mary Woolchurch, London, 1618–41: Venn, I. 424. Not impossibly named after Richard Culverwell, from whom Thomas received a small legacy in 1586.

63 *John Knewstub (1544–1624), already the doyen of the godly clergy of Suffolk, preached the funeral sermon of Robert Walsh of Little Waldingfield (see n. 64).

Item: I giue unto my good freind Mr WALSHE[64] an other of my bookes of the same value five shillings.

Item: I giue to Mr Doctor BRIGHTE[65] one booke of the like price, fiue shillings.

Also to my good brother Mr LAWRENCE CHADDERTON[66] one booke of five shillings. And to Mr EZECHIELL CULVERWELL one booke of five shillings.

Item: I giue and bequeathe unto SAMUELL my wief the lease of myne howse in WOOD STREETE during her lief yf the Tearme thereof doe laste so longe.[67] Butt yf she die before the end of the yeres of the same lease, then I will that the Remaynder be unto my sonne THOMAS CROOKE.

Item: I giue unto her duringe her lief the Annuitie I have in THAME STREET, the remaynder, yf anie shalbe, unto my son THOMAS CROOKE.[68]

Item: I giue unto my said wief all myne howshold stuffe and furniture whatsoever, savinge I will that soe manie of my sonnes as shall goe to the univ[er]sitie she shall fi[r]nishe them wth Conveniente beddinge at there goinge thither.

Item: I giue and bequeathe unto her all my Plate, soe mutche as yt is.

Item: I giue unto her all sutche monney as shalbe in my handes at the tyme of my decease.

Item: I giue unto her the Surplusage of all sutche debts owinge unto me after my legacies discharged and my Childrens Portions assigned.

Item: I giue unto her all myne Englishe bookes.

Item: I giue unto everie one of my children excepte SAMUELL and HERKIAH one Englishe bible wth [Theodore] BEZA his testamente in Quarto owte of my bookes or owte of the valewe of them.

Item: I give unto her all myne Apparrell and whatsoever ells belongeth unto my Person. And that she maie knowe and others alsoe maie understande that I haue not over chardged her nor delte straightlie wth her, I haue in a schedule hereunto annexed both her Chardge & discharge wth the Remaynder.

yf there be anie thinge ells belonginge unto me not giuen nor bequeathed before in this my laste will and Testamente, I giue and bequeathe the same to the said Samuell my wief, whom I make and ordane my full and sole Executrice for the accomplishinge of this my laste will and testamente; whereof alsoe I make

[64] Doubtless Robert Walsh of Little Waldingfield, Suffolk (d. 1605), one of the nonconforming ministers ('Weltch') with whom Crooke was associated before his move to London: see Houlbrooke, ed. *Parkhurst Letters*, 221.

[65] Either *Timothy Bright (as assumed by the present writer in the entry on Crooke in *ODNB*) or else (in view of John Hart's known patronage) Arthur Bright. For the latter, see above, n. 41. For Timothy, see also G. Keynes, *Dr. Timothie Bright 1550–1615* (1962) and D. Nussbaum, 'Whitgift's "Book of Martyrs" ', in D. Loades, ed. *John Foxe: an Historical Perspective* (Aldershot, 1999), 135–53.

[66] That is, brotherhood 'in the Lord': they were not related by marriage.

[67] Wood Street is close to Aldersgate, where John Day's printing press was located. There is no other evidence concerning the Crookes' residence in the city beyond Thomas's rooms in Gray's Inn.

[68] An intriguing but indecipherable reference. Perhaps Crooke refers to a stipend from the Culverwell family, of St Martin Vintry, often described as of 'Thames Street' in the records.

Supervisors and overseers myne assured good freinds Sr JOHN HARTE, Mr STEPHEN EGERTON, Mr THOMAS HORTON, Mr ANTHONIE CULVERWELL and ROBERT DEXTER, decimo die mensis Julii 1594.[69] Subscripsi ego THOMAS CROOKE.

Revisum septimo novembris 1597. Testes JOHN COTTESFORD, for whiche his brother/ SAMUEL is bounde wth him Cli; THOMAS HARVEY Cli; Mr MILES Cli; WILLIAM GREENE xxvli; THOMAS HULL vli; HENRY SMITHE, flaxeman, vli; Goodwief HAYWARD iiili vis viiid; Mr doctor CARTER, Phisician, xs; BERMAN abowte xiiili as shall appeare by his bonde and acquittance compared togeither.

Legacies: small legacies vili is 8d. THOMAS xlli. JOHN xxli. RICHARD xxli. RACHAELL xxli. ANNE xxli. ELIZABETH xxli. Some one hundred fortie six pounds one shillinge eight pence.

[Probate granted 3 Oct 1598 to Samuelis, vid.]

[69] For Hart, see above, 104. *Anthony Culverwell, mercer, only son of Laurence Culverwell (d. 1562), brother of Nicholas and Richard, married Sybil, sister of Sir Thomas Bodley. Anthony's sister Margaret married Thomas Horton, mercer, who may have been involved in the wanderings of the Marprelate press: see D.J. McGinn, *John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy* (Rutgers, NJ, 1966), 5, 96–7. Robert Dexter (d. 1603) was the London printer of these names who left legacies to three of Crooke's sons, Thomas, Samuel and Helkiah, appointing Stephen Egerton one of his executors: see H.R. Plomer, *Abstracts from the Wills of English Printers and Stationers from 1492 to 1630* (1903), 37; R.B. McKerrow, ed. *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers . . . 1557–1640* (1910), 91–2.

7

What's in a Name? Dudley Fenner and the Peculiarities of Puritan Nomenclature

PATRICK COLLINSON

My father claimed to have heard of someone called We-came-into-this-world-with-nothing-and-it-is-certain-we-shall-take-nothing-out Jones. Praise God Barebone, who gave his name to an English parliament, is said to have had a brother named If-Christ-had-not-died-for-thee-thou-hadst-been-damned Barebone, whose name was shortened to Damned Barebone. More securely documented are the following baptismal names: Stand-fast-on-high, and Fight-the-good-fight-of-faith.[1] Of all the peculiarities of puritanism, none has attracted more interest, part hostile, part humorous, than the practice of some puritans (and, as we shall see, the 'some' is significant) of bestowing on their children unusual names, having 'some godly signification'.

For all his anti-puritanism William Camden was more amused than indignant, since the practice had 'no evil meaning, but upon some singular and precise conceit'. He thought it more reprehensible, 'another more vain absurdity', to give Christian names to pet animals. His list of peculiar names, including More fruit, From above and Dust can, as we shall see, be confirmed from the historical record.[2] Camden's friend Ben Jonson, with probable indebtedness to Camden, employed the peculiarities of puritan naming to devastating effect in his anti-puritan city comedies, 'Bartholomew Fair' and 'The Alchemist'. But for Jonson, it is perhaps unlikely that a bishop of London would have asked in his visitation of 1612 whether any children had been given a name in baptism 'absurd, or inconvenient for so holy an action'.[3]

That any burgess of Banbury ever christened his son Zeal-of-the-land is perhaps unlikely. He certainly would not have done so in the 1560s or 1570s, when the character of Zeal-of-the-land Busy would have been born. But whereas

[1] C.W. Bardsley, *Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature* (1880), 156, 174, 180.

[2] William Camden, *Remains Concerning Britain*, ed. L. Dunkling (Trowbridge and Esher, 1974), 58.

[3] K. Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (CERS, I and V, 1994–8), I. 41.

we change, all the cells of our bodies, our names do not, unless we take steps to alter them. When the godly Sussex minister John Frewen, rector of Northiam, called his son Accepted, he could hardly have expected that Accepted Frewen would become archbishop of York, which happened in 1660, by which date the world his father had known had changed several times. Accepted had a brother, Thankful, a minor civil servant and, like Accepted, an Anglican royalist. Accepted was perhaps embarrassed by his strange Christian name. The fact that he was sometimes called 'Stephen' saved his bacon on two occasions in the years of the civil war.[4]

Frewen's native east Sussex was a region where the bestowing of godly names became all the rage in the late sixteenth century, a shibboleth signifying a puritan counter-culture. No one knows more about that counter-culture than Nicholas Tyacke, who in contributing to a Festschrift for the late Joel Hurstfield hit on the idea of analysing the names of children baptized in the parish of Warbleton, where the practice can be dated from 1585.[5] There were eighteen east Sussex parishes where in the 1580s and 1590s puritan names were bestowed. Warbleton yielded the highest concentration of such names, and between 1587 and 1590 around half the children baptized in the parish were so named. This provided for Tyacke an answer to the question later posed by Margaret Spufford, 'Can We Count the Godly?'[6] and suggested a way into that other question: who were the godly? Puritan baptismal names led, at the other end of life, to parents as testators whose wills could be compared and contrasted with the records left by the other half of the village whose children had been given more conventional names: an opportunity to investigate aspects of what Tyacke called 'popular puritan mentality'. Although nineteen families gave their children both puritan and non-puritan names, in the period 1586 to 1596 forty-two families were consistent in their use of puritan names, fifty-eight in using non-puritan names. The Warbleton data posed, for at least one reader of the essay, the question whether this was evidence of a deeply divided community, the very children ranged into rival gangs, Repent and Refrain versus Richard and William. If so, then the 'charitable Christian hatred' investigated by Peter Lake in the sermons of certain Northamptonshire preachers was more than rhetorical and perhaps represented how it was on the ground, in places penetrated by aggressively godly religion, provoking an anti-puritan backlash.[7] In an earlier publication I remarked that 'one can hardly imagine a more public or scandalous demonstration of social fracture'.[8] The

4 See 'Accepted Frewen' in *DNB* and *ODNB*.

5 N. Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan Mentality in Late Elizabethan England', in P. Clark, A.G.R. Smith and N. Tyacke, eds. *The English Commonwealth 1547–1640: Essays in Politics and Society Presented to Joel Hurstfield* (Leicester, 1979), 77–92; reprinted in N. Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism c.1530–1700* (Manchester, 2001), 90–110.

6 M. Spufford, 'Can We Count the "Godly" and the "Conformable" in the Seventeenth Century?', *JEH*, XXXVI (1985), 428–38.

7 P. Lake, ' "A Charitable Christian Hatred": The Godly and their Enemies in the 1630s', in C. Durston and J. Eales, eds. *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700* (1996), 145–83.

8 P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), 240.

naming of children was never a trivial matter. When John Calvin banned the favoured name (for both boys and girls) of 'Claude', a popular local saint, Geneva was in uproar.[9]

Nothing has so far been said about godparents, who, in the terms of the Anglican liturgy, named the child at baptism, and who represented significant extra kin, acquired through these rites of initiation. Tyacke had little or nothing to say about godparents. There may be two reasons for that. When he wrote, we were not as sensitive to the issue of godparenthood as more recent work has made us.[10] And puritans generally, in probably greater numbers than those who baptized with 'godly' names, insisted that the biological parents of the child (in the customary absence of the mother this being the father) should name the child, undertaking the spiritual responsibilities traditionally assigned to godparents by answering questions put to them in the form 'you' rather than the 'thou' required by the Anglican liturgy, which these puritans took to be an absurd fiction.

This issue deserves some elaboration. In the 'Admonition to the Parliament' of 1572, Thomas Wilcox demanded 'that the parties to be baptised, if they be of the yeares of discretion, by themselves and in their owne persons, or if they be infants, by their parents (in whose rowme if upon necessarye occasions and businesses they be absent, some of the congregation, knowing the good behaviour and sound faith of the parents) may both make rehearsal of their faith'. John Field, in his less wordy and more pungent contribution to the manifesto, dismissed the interrogation of infants as a foolish toy, and condemned the making of promises by godfathers and godmothers 'as they terme them' that were not in their powers to perform.[11] Anthony Gilby included the promises made by godparents among his 'hundred points of popery yet remaining' in the English Church.[12] In the 1580s, the Dedham Conference faced the question whether it was permissible to baptize bastards. It was concluded that they should be baptized, 'some approved Christians of the congregation undertaking for their religious education'.[13] The model puritan pastor Richard Greenham, who had insisted from the pulpit that the father ought to promise for the child, was faced with a dilemma when a man, 'not very forward', told him that his friend wished him to baptize his child but could not come to church himself because he was ill. Greenham got the people to sing some psalms, during which time he sent to the father, asking him 'in the name of the Church' either to come to church, or to assent to the baptism as soon as he was

[9] The relevant ordinance of the Council of Geneva (November 1546), prohibiting a variety of names, including Claude, but also 'absurd and stupid names' is included in the 'Documents in Modern History' volume *John Calvin*, eds. G.R. Potter and M. Greengrass (1983), 79–80. See E. Doumergue, *Jean Calvin* (Lausanne and Neuilly, 1899–1927), V. 107.

[10] See especially S. Smith-Bannister, *Names and Naming Pattterns in England 1538–1700* (Oxford, 1997); D. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death* (Oxford, 1997); W. Coster, *Baptism and Spiritual Kinship in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2002).

[11] W.H. Frere and C.E. Douglas, eds. *Puritan Manifestoes* (1954), 14–15, 26.

[12] Cressy, *Birth*, 151.

[13] P. Collinson, J. Craig, B. Usher, eds. *Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church: Dedham and Bury St Edmunds 1582–1590* (CERS, X, 2003), 8.

able. The messengers who brought the father's reply, one of them 'a faithful and discreet Christian', answered on his behalf as the child was baptized.[14] But the Church authorities continually urged the letter of the law in this respect, insisting that godparents should answer for the child and name it. In the 1640s, the *Directory for the Publique Worship of God*, temporarily as it proved, attempted to enforce the puritan preference by abolishing godparenthood altogether.[15] The implications of this particular point of puritanism deserve more investigation than they have yet received, since to eliminate godparents, in the conventional sense, had deep social consequences, intensifying the separateness of the godly counter-community, and indeed opening up a route to outright separatism.

All authorities on this subject including, most recently, Scott Smith-Bannister and Will Coster, are agreed that the choice of a name for a child at baptism, and who should make that choice, are matters of very considerable importance. Tyacke was perhaps justified in not investigating the role in this respect of godparents (who, in any event, are not recorded in the Warbleton parish register – they rarely are in any registers[16]), given the puritan objection to the institution. It was a fair assumption that the parents chose these names; but perhaps with some encouragement from a third party, the minister performing the ceremony. Neither Tyacke nor, I think, anyone else has considered the possibility, no, the probability, that in cases of peculiar puritan naming, the minister had most to do with the choice of name, either directly or indirectly, by applying informal pressures of which we have no direct record. This would explain why the practice was almost restricted to a particular locality, and is in all probability to be explained by the presence, and migration, of particular puritan ministers who had become convinced of the validity of names of 'godly signification'.

Tyacke's Warbleton researches provided some plausible evidence of significant differences between the values professed by the godly and, shall we call them, the more 'traditional' inhabitants of the parish. It was evidence that could be used to sociological ends. (In the late 1970s, when Tyacke wrote the essay, we were closer to the vaguely Weberian Christopher Hill sociological model, puritans as 'the industrious sort of people', than we are now.) Tyacke's meticulous and microscopic research revealed that in fact there were no significant socio-economic differences between the two groups, leading to the conclusion that puritanism and its opposites divided the community vertically rather than horizontally. Religion, not class or differential wealth, was the issue. However, Tyacke did find in the two groups marked differences in attitudes to the taking of interest on investments, technically 'usury'. Non-puritans were more comfortable with high interest rates than puritans, one of whom, who named three of his daughters Restored, Flee-Sin and Constant, directed his executors to employ their legacies 'in such sort as the word of God will warrant'.

14 K.L. Parker and E.J. Carlson, eds. *'Practical Divinity': the Works and Life of Revd Richard Greenham* (Aldershot, 1998), 154–5.
15 Coster, *Baptism*, 24.
16 Cressy, *Birth*, 157; Coster, *Baptism*, 7 and passim.

Retreating from reductionism of this sort, Tyacke saw in the rise and decline of peculiar puritan names evidence less of socio-economic differences than of religious anxieties, dread of punishment and judgement, relief at deliverance, sentiments aroused by the menace of Spanish Catholicism, and by the abortive campaign for further reformation, reflected in such names as 'Discipline', and even 'Deprived'.

II

The major contribution made by Tyacke's essay was to correct C.W. Bardsley, in a book called *Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature*, published in 1880. Bardsley made the important discovery that, following, as he thought, the widespread promulgation of the Geneva Bible, biblical names had become more fashionable in the later sixteenth century, especially among puritans, and he called this an 'Hebraic invasion'. In this respect he was correct. (He might have been thinking of the Suffolk minister Richard Dowe, who called his ten children Mary, Elizabeth, Susan, Barionah, Ami, Raboshry, Bathsibrye, Sarah and Abigail.[17]) There is no doubt that puritans came close to insisting on biblical names. In one instance, in Northampton, the puritan minister Edmund Snape allegedly refused to baptize a child in the non-biblical name of Richard, in spite of a family preference for that name, insisting that 'he must have some Christian name out of the Scriptures'.[18] Bardsley also formed the view that peculiar puritan names were very common in every English county south of the Trent. But according to Tyacke in this respect he was wrong. The giving of peculiar names was geographically restricted, almost, with some exceptions, especially in Northamptonshire, to east Sussex and neighbouring parishes across the Rother in Kent, and it was confined, on a considerable scale, to two or three decades at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Tyacke was a little hard on Bardsley and so, for that matter, is Scott Smith-Bannister.[19] Bardsley was a very learned antiquarian who had researched the subject of curious puritan names for twelve years, and who as vicar of Ulverston in Lancashire was familar at first hand with the persistence of puritan nomenclature among the nonconformists of the north-west into his own day. Not only did he collect such names from parish registers all over the country, where admittedly, in many cases, they may have been isolated accidentals. He seems to have had a knowledge of seventeenth-century anti-puritan plays that it would be hard to equal today. Moreover he knew, and pointed this out to his critics, that the practice was characteristic not so much of the years of the 'puritan revolution' as of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Above all, Bardsley knew his

17 Collinson, Craig, Usher, eds. *Conferences*, 204.
18 Richard Bancroft, *Daungerous Positions and Proceedings* (1593), 104–5.
19 Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan Mentality', 78; Smith-Bannister, *Names*, 3–4.

bible well enough to be aware that the biblical names scattered across the English landscape in what he called 'the Hebrew invasion' were often chosen, not at random and for their exotic resonance alone, but because translated from the Hebrew they already had a significant meaning, in context and in the lives of those so named. Thus, when the protestant exile Richard Hilles named his son Gershom, that was because in Exodus we learn that the wife of Moses, Zipporah, gave her son that name, which meant 'a stranger in a strange land'. Camden's 'Dust' was an Anglicization of Aphrah, of whom Micah wrote: 'in the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust'. Hence Aphra Ben. The very name of Christ himself, Emmanuel, had a distinct meaning: God with us.[20] That suggests that to give names such as From Above was not so peculiar after all, but only to render in intelligible English a meaning otherwise concealed in unintelligible Hebrew or Greek. That, as we shall see, was precisely Dudley Fenner's point. The Hebrew invasion, the attempted extinction of Richard, was the crucial watershed, not those odd and peculiar names. But, when all is said and done, Tyacke was right to direct our attention to those Wealden parishes on either side of the Rother.

In any case we should not be surprised by a variety of practice in the administration of baptism. Of all the actions that make up the Christian religion, and for all the strong desire of the Elizabethan puritans to achieve a godly consistency in their public ministry (the very essence of 'Calvinism'), the baptismal rite offered a bewildering variety of nostrums, available to individual choice. Should the ceremony happen around and in the traditional stone font, associated with the days of 'popery', or in a simple basin? Should the infant be sprinkled or dipped? Should any substance other than water be employed, salt, spittle or cream? What about that other relic of the Catholic past, the sign of the cross to be traced on the child's forehead? What words and gestures should be used? Who should be present, the entire congregation, or merely the parties immediately involved, and did that include 'godparents', and the mother, if not already 'churched' following childbirth? Who would play the various parts in this little drama? Who would hold and name the child, and with what kind of name? And so on.[21] In 1564 a conformable minister in Essex alleged that in his vicinity 'some confer baptism in basins, some in disshes . . . Some hold ther must be seven godfathers. Some wold either that every father should christen his owne child or at least admitt him to be a chief godfather. Some take downe the font and paint a great bowle and cause to be written on the owtsyde "the baptisme" as is well knowen.'[22] A little later, Richard Bancroft, whose characteristic polemical weapon was to allege an anarchical chaos of beliefs and practices among puritan 'schismatics', reported that within four miles' radius of Bury St Edmunds there were 'sixe or seven kyndes or formes of baptisme'.[23]

[20] Bardsley, *Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature*, 39, 64, 42.
[21] Cressy, *Birth*, 99–100.
[22] Richard Kitchen to Mr Pearson (Archbishop Parker's chaplain), 3 July 1564; ITL, Petyt MS 538/47, fos 526–7.
[23] A Peel, ed. *Tracts Ascribed to Richard Bancroft* (Cambridge, 1953), 70–1.

III

It is time to introduce the star of our little show, Dudley Fenner.[24] Tyacke believed that 'the chief begetter' of peculiar puritan naming was 'almost certainly' Dudley Fenner, and that the practice had its origins in Cranbrook in the Kentish Weald, where Fenner was a curate in the early 1580s. This was suggested as much by Fenner's published writings as by any parochial evidence.[25]

As we shall see, a newly discovered document, which adds to what Tyacke knew in 1979, confirms some of his instincts, although it is not quite certain that Fenner was the inventor rather than the principal advocate of peculiar puritan names. But first we need to know more about Dudley Fenner, a prodigy of the Elizabethan puritan movement in its 1580s Presbyterian heyday. Traditionally, Walter Travers has been called the 'neck' of the movement, that is, the neck to Cartwright's head.[26] But that may have been the consequence of Fenner's premature and unlooked-for death in 1587 at the age of about thirty. But for Fenner's death, he rather than Travers might have been regarded as the secondary ideologue of Elizabethan Presbyterianism. Fenner's most considerable ideological treatise, the *Sacra Theologia*, was perhaps co-authored with Cartwright, and was prefaced with an epistle by Cartwright that refers to their shared ministry in Antwerp.[27] (Cartwright had succeeded Travers in Antwerp and had not worked with him.) Fenner's eminence was extolled by the printer Robert Waldegrave, who was part of the Presbyterian innner core, in editing his posthumous works. Fenner was 'one whome the Church of God in this age could have hardliest spared', given 'his spiritual understanding in the wayes of the Lord, his great learning, his conflicts with the adversaries of God'.[28]

Fenner was a native of Kent, and was reported by Waldegrave to have been the 'heir of great possessions'. He was a fellow-commoner of Peterhouse (which confirms his gentry status) but left Cambridge without a degree, 'pluckte from the

24 See my account of Fenner's life in *ODNB*.

25 Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan Mentality', 80.

26 S.J. Knox, *Walter Travers* (1962). Our knowledge of Travers is about to be transformed by the forthcoming Cambridge Ph.D. thesis by Polly Ha.

27 The Peterborough Cathedral Library copy of Fenner's *Sacra Theologia, sive Veritas quae est secunda Pietatem* (1585?), now to be found in the Cambridge University Library (Pet.D.2.8), belonged to Bishop White Kennet of Peterborough, who has entered this inscription: 'This Divinity perus'd by T. Carwright and allowed of at Geneva, Bancroft Survey p. 278, Matt[hew] Sutcliffe De Presbyterio pref p. 5'. Cartwright contributed an epistle addressed to Fenner (dated Sept. 1585) in which he referred to their shared ministry 'in ecclesia Anglantuerpiana'. Another edition was published at Geneva in 1586, and bears a dedication to the earls of Leicester and Warwick. The copy in the Cambridge University Library (F.12.152) belonged to Bishop John Hacket.

28 Waldegrave's dedicatory epistle to *Certain Godly and Learned Treatises written by that worthie Minister of Christe M. Dudley Fenner* (Edinburgh, 1592) addressed to James, Lord Lindsay on 24 December 1591. A preface added to Fenner's *A Brief Treatise vpon the First Table of the Lawe* (posthumously published by Schilders at Middelburg in 1588?) relates that the treatise was written by Fenner 'for the profit of his own particular charge and some other his friendes' 'before the twentieth yeare of his age: whereby thou mayest see with what an excellent spirit he was indued, even in his tender yeares'.

university as from the sweetest brestes of the nurse', no doubt the penalty of his outspoken puritanism. The major intellectual influence on Fenner was the avant-garde logician and rhetorician Pierre de la Rame, for Ramism is implicit in everything that he wrote. Every conceivable subject could be divided into two parts, each of them then subdivided, and so ad infinitum.[29] In the late 1570s, Fenner shared the ministry in the church of the English merchants at Antwerp first with Travers and then with Cartwright. There is no evidence that he was ever episcopally ordained.

Fenner arrived in Cranbrook in about 1583. I have written elsewhere about the complex religious history of this populous and industrialized parish.[30] The Elizabethan vicar of Cranbrook was Richard Fletcher, father of another Richard, who ended his days as bishop of London, and thus the grandfather of the dramatist John Fletcher; and also father of a notable diplomat and travel writer, Giles Fletcher. Richard Fletcher and Richard the younger were embattled figures in Cranbrook, protestants with an impeccable past in the days of the Marian persecution (they had witnessed and recorded the death of the first Kentish martyr, Christopher Wade of Dartford), but conformable, and at odds with a militant nonconformist element in this town of wealthy and independently minded clothiers. It looks as if Fletcher established a kind of modus vivendi with his rebellious parishioners by employing a succession of radical curates, who were given control of a lecture preached every Saturday. Or, very probably, he was leant on by powerful and monied interests to tolerate this situation. There is evidence that the first of these cuckoos in the Cranbrook nest of whom we have any knowledge, John Strowd, a printer of radical puritan texts as well as a preacher, was politically protected and probably bankrolled by these people. (Significantly, it may be, Strowd, as curate of another Kent parish, Yalding, had been in trouble with his churchwardens for irregularities in baptism, specifically failure to involve godparents.[31]) Strowd was followed by Thomas Hely (or Ely), whom we shall meet again. And then Fenner arrived on the Cranbrook scene, preaching on both Saturdays and some Sundays.[32] Cloth no doubt laid a carpet from Antwerp to

[29] Fenner published in 1584 (Middelburg, Richard Schilders) his thoroughly Ramist treatise *The Artes of Logicke and Rethorike, plainlie set foorth in the English tounge, easie to be Learned and Practised: togither with Examples for the Practise of the same for Methode*. There were four more Middelburg editions, three of them in 1584. All Fenner's 'examples' are handled by a process of binary division. 'The housholde order hath two partes.' The Lord's Prayer 'hath two partes'. The Epistle to Philemon 'hath two partes'. Although not published in England, Fenner's treatise continued to be known and used. In 1651 *A Compendium of the Art of Logick and Rhetorick in the English Tounge containing all that Peter Ramus, Aristotle, and others have writ therein* incorporated Fenner's *The art of Rhetorick* in its entirety, but with its own examples, not Fenner's. In 1681 Fenner's treatise was published, word for word, as *The Art of Rhetorick plainly set forth; with pertinent examples for the more easie understanding and practice of the same. By Tho. Hobbes, of Malmsby*.

[30] P. Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers: Popular and Unpopular Religion in the Kentish Weald', in P. Brooks, ed. *Reformation Principle and Practice: Essays Presented to A.G. Dickens* (1980), 173–202; reprinted in my *Godly People* (1983), 399–428.

[31] A. Peel, ed. *The Seconde Parte of a Register* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1915), I. 108–16.

[32] That Fenner occupied the pulpit on some Sundays as well as for the Saturday lecture is confirmed by his responses at his trial before the ecclesiastical commissioners (see below).

Cranbrook. The two localities had been religiously linked since the very earliest days of the English Reformation.[33]

Within months of Fenner's arrival in Cranbrook, John Whitgift came to Canterbury (and so became his diocesan) and launched his campaign for absolute conformity to the established religion through subscription to the three articles.[34] Fenner now became the ringleader of seventeen non-subscribing Kentish ministers in their encounters with the archdeacon, Whitgift in person, and the privy council. He features in a sustained attack on the suspended ministers supplied to Whitgift by 'R.S.' (almost certainly Reginald Scot, the author of the *Discoverie of Witchcraft*), 'a false and sclaunderous libel', prompting a lengthy response in defence of 'the mynisters of Kent'. R.S. wrote of 'the broile and contention' made by Fenner in Cranbrook. (There had been plenty of broil and contention in Strowd's time.) In response it was said that Fenner was famous for his 'rare and unheard guifts of God in so yong yers'.[35] The archbishop was not impressed with Fenner's precocity, miscalling the ministers 'boyes, princokes etc. and will you teache all others?' 'By my traweth, Mr Fenner [note the 'Master', confirming Fenner's rank], youe are as bad as the worst . . . Can you tell mee, I was a preacher before some of you weare borne.'[36] Fenner continued to play a leading role in the concerted resistance to Whitgift's subscription campaign, composing a formal petition to the lower house of convocation, ostensibly 'tending to reconciliation'.[37] He himself was subjected to a searching examination before Whitgift conducted on the notorious 'ex officio' oath, to which he offered no resistance, for which we historians may thank him. Following this trial, Fenner remained suspended, but suffered, on his own testimony, no censure or 'other paine in that respect'.[38] We may well suspect that his social status, and connections, protected him from imprisonment or any other punitive measures. The earl of Leicester was one of his patrons, and probably facilitated his return to the Netherlands, where he became again preacher to the English merchants, now relocated at Middelburg.[39] So far as we know, he never returned to Cranbrook or, indeed, to England.

33 Collinson, *Godly People*, 402–3.

34 P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London 1967, Oxford, 1990), part 5.

35 Peel, ed. *The Seconde Parte*, I. 230–41.

36 Sheffield City Library, Wentworth Woodhouse MSS, tracts 32, no. 16. Fenner published his own account of these encounters in *A Defence of the Godlie Ministers, against the Slaunders of D. Bridges, contayned in his Ansvver to the Preface before the Discourse of Ecclesiastical Governement* (Schilders, Middelburg, 1587). The *Defence* was published anonymously, but has always been attributed to Fenner, and is so ascribed in *RSTC*. Fenner complains: 'Yet agayne also wee will not so iustifie our selves but that when comming by dosins and scores to the bishoppes, after halfe a dayes disorderlie reasoning, some not being hearde to speake to the full, some rayled on and miscalled, nor with lenitie satisfied, we were all suspended from the execution of our office, because we could not assent to subscribing to the two last Articles.' It is from this text that we learn that the Kentish ministers 'before manie gentlemen and others' were miscalled by Whitgift: 'You are boyes, princokes etc. and will you teache all others?' (sigs C2v, G1v.).

37 *A Defence of the Godlie Ministers*, 78; *A Parte of a Register* (Schilders, Middelburg, 1593?), 323.

38 Peel, ed. *Seconde Parte*, I. 296.

39 Fenner dedicated to Leicester *An Answere vnto the Confutation of Iohn Nichols his Recantation* . . .

It is not Leicester but his colleague Sir Walter Mildmay[40] whom we must thank for the preservation of Fenner's interrogation before Whitgift, a rare archival survival, given the disappearance of the act books and cause papers of the ecclesiastical commissioners for the southern province.[41] Among the Mildmay Papers (preserved as the Fitzwilliam of Milton MSS in the Northamptonshire Record Office) are files relating to the troubles of the puritan ministry at the time of Archbishop Whitgift's subscription campaign, which closely resemble other collections, such as the materials collected by the puritan activist John Field and known as 'A Parte of a Register' and 'The Seconde Parte of a Register';[42] and a file compiled by Robert Beale, clerk of the privy council, and preserved in the British Library as Add. MS 48064 (MS Yelverton 70). For example, MS F.(M).P.63 is inscribed in Mildmay's hand 'Matters touchinge the archbishop of Caunterburye and the ministers'.

Of immediate interest to us is MS F.(M).P. 62. This is the formal, but undated, record of the questions put to Dudley Fenner by Archbishop Whitgift 'ex officio mero', and Fenner's responses, which were composed with great circumspection and based upon his own sermon notes. There are seventeen articles of enquiry in all, occupying five and a half closely written folios. Fenner was charged with having preached and published that there ought not to be archbishops in the Church. He answered at length (in more than 800 words!) that while he might not have said so in as many words, he had taught that the only callings to be allowed in the Church were those that were maintained out of the word of God, and that this would have been at one of his Saturday lectures at Cranbrook on 16 November. Saturday fell on 16 November in 1583, and Fenner must have delivered this doctrine in the very month that Whitgift became archbishop of Canterbury. Fenner's Presbyterianism was elaborated in the second article in which he was charged with having taught and affirmed that the entire hierarchical ministry, from pope to priest, was the invention of men, which he acknowledged; and in the third and seventh, in which he was accused of teaching the Presbyterian order of ministry, pastors, doctors, elders and deacons, which again was admitted. When the court reached the sixth article, Fenner acknowledged that he had confirmed the doctrine that ministers should be appointed to their office by the consent of the

especially in the matter of Doctrine, of Purgatorie, Images, the Popes Honor and the Question of the Church (1583), writing of 'the band of dutie from me unto your honour, even in regard of many incouragements in those things which are good'.

40 S.E. Lehmberg, *Sir Walter Mildmay and Tudor Government* (Austin, TX, 1964); S. Bendall, C. Brooke, P. Collinson, *A History of Emmanuel College, Cambridge* (Woodbridge, 1999), 17–23.

41 Richard Bancroft noted Fenner's appearance 'before the commissioners' with explicit reference to 'new names and fancies', including the names on which Fenner was questioned (*Daungerous Positions and Proceedings*, 104). This was in all probability William Camden's source. Another rare survival of the same sort is a copious collection of documents relating to the trial of the Scottish minister David Black, then schoolmaster of Kilkhampton in Cornwall, before the ecclesiastical commissioners: LPL, MS C.M. XII, nos 15 and 16; see P. Collinson, 'The Puritan Classical Movement in the Reign of Elizabeth I' (Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1957), 492–6.

42 See earlier references to *A Parte of a Register* and to A. Peel's calendar of the 'Seconde Parte' MSS, preserved in DWL, above, nn. 31, 37.

people. Interestingly, in response to the eighth article, Fenner made it clear that he was not, in the ordinary sense, a sabbatarian, believing that while to keep the Sabbath was a divine commandment, the actual day on which it was to be observed was an indifferent matter, to be decided by the Church. 'The sabbath was another debateable matter among the Elizabethan puritans.'[43] In the fifteenth article, Fenner was charged with having used these words in his prayer before his sermons and lectures, but only after Whitgift had become archbishop of Canterbury: 'that the Lord God would strike through the sydes of all such as goe about to take away from the mynisters of the Ghospell the libertye which is graunted them by the word of God'. Fenner replied, rather implausibly, that those words related to 'rumours and treasons and troubles' at that time, referring presumably to the Throckmorton Plot.

We come to the seventeenth and final article, and to the point of this essay. Fenner was charged with having 'named or consented to naminge of certayne children in baptisme by these or like names Joye agayne, from above, more fruicte, duste'. He answered specifically in relation to each of these unusual names. In respect of the first, he had required of the father, one Henry Netter, a shoemaker, to be a witness (i.e., to act as godfather), and to give his child 'suche a name in the Englishe tounge as maye carrye a thankefull remembrance of the Joye which god gave him in his sonne after the sorowe he had for the death of divers sonnes'. Richard Fletcher, the vicar of Cranbrook, had raised no objection. (Had Fletcher officiated at this and the other baptisms in question?) The next name had been given when Mr Hendley, a prominent clothier of Cranbrook,[44] had asked Fenner to act as 'wytnes', and being 'inforced' by him to give the child a name 'on a sudden I called it (from above)', again with Fletcher's approval. The third name, More Fruit, Fenner had bestowed on his own daughter, 'that I mighte have her to carye a fruitfull remembrance of thestymacion I made that after a deare sonne taken to the Lorde he gave me more fruicte by my wife which I scarsly look for'. As for the name Dust, Fenner said he had no more to do with it than any other, 'nor did any thinge concerninge that ceremonye of naminge the child at that tyme'.

Fenner went on to volunteer his reasons for consenting to such names. He found his justification in the age-old practice of naming children in ways that were significant in the spoken language of the time. Thus, among the Hebrews, Samuel, Ezechiel, Zacherye; in the time of the Apostles, Barnabas; and, in Greek, Timothy, or Damaryus. He also thought it more edifying to use names of which the meaning was understood than names which were not understood. And lastly because it was a matter of Christian liberty to use names that had significance in English. The list of these that Fenner supplied was a curious dog's breakfast: 'Grace. Hope. Clamper, Repentaunce, Hubbarde, Civile, Austen, Merye, Rircharte,

43 Collinson, Craig, Usher, eds. *Conferences*, lxxxv–lxxxvii, 46–70.
44 Collinson, *Godly People*, 401.

Bradbuge Patience, Bathurste, Christian, Stuckwoode, ffaythe, Charles, Charitie, Russell etc.'

Fenner justified the use of such names in two of his publications, *The Order of Housholde* and *The Whole Doctrine of the Sacraments*. Whereas the latter of these works was only published posthumously, in 1588 by Schilders at Middelburg, and in 1592 by Waldegrave in Edinburgh in *Certain Godly and Learned Treatises*, *The Order of Housholde* was printed at Middelburg in 1584 and perhaps reflected Fenner's pastoral experience in Cranbrook in the preceding months. Here he taught that it was the father's duty to present his child for baptism, 'and there to give a name in the mother tongue, which may have some godlie signification, fitte for that worke'; and not a profane name, or a name in another tongue. This doctrine was reiterated in Fenner's book on the sacraments. Parents were to bestow a name 'in the mother tongue', 'such a name as may stand with the reverent worke of baptisme'.[45] It is worth noting that Fenner's translation of the Song of Solomon 'out of the Hebrue into English Meeter' is evidence that he was a very competent Hebraist.[46]

However, we cannot be certain that names of godly signification were Fenner's unaided invention. In his trial before Whitgift he says that he 'consented' to the names of Joy-again, From-above and More-fruit, although Joy-again seems to have been chosen at his prompting, while From-above was the result of a sudden inspiration on his part when appointed by the gentleman Thomas Hendley to act as 'witness', which is to say, in ordinary parlance, godfather. More-fruit was the name that Fenner chose for his own daughter. Joy-againe Netter and From-above Hendley were the first children to be baptized with godly names, in March 1583, which will have been soon after Fenner's arrival in the town. And Free-gift Fenner, the sister of More-fruit, seems to have been born, probably overseas, before Fenner came to Cranbrook. Free-gift died in Cranbrook in September 1583, a little before Fenner's examination before the ecclesiastical commissioners. Faint-not Fenner was baptized two years later, apparently on the eve of her father's departure for Middelburg. And in August Well-abroad Fenner was buried in Cranbrook, after her father's death.[47] Presumably Joan Fenner had remained in Cranbrook after her husband's withdrawal to a self-imposed exile in Middelburg.

So most things seem to point to Fenner's originality and agency. But not everything. Godly names continued to be rareties in Cranbrook (by comparison with

[45] *The Order of Housholde*, printed together with *The Artes of Logike and Rethorike*, by Schilders at Middelburg in 1584, sig. C2r; *The Whole Doctrine of the Sacraments*, quoted here from its inclusion in the 1592 collection, *Certain Godly and Learned Treatises*, 158.

[46] Dudley Fenner, *The Song of Songs, that is, the most Excellent Song which was Solomons, Translated out of the Hebrue into English Meeter, with a Little Libertie in departing from the Wordes, as any Plaine Translation in Prose can use: and interpreted by a Short Commentarie* (Schilders, Middelburg, 1594). This work was dedicated to the Merchant Adventurers with reference to how the merchants, 'ordinarilie eare you depart from the table both at noone and at night, admonishe your selves by singing some spiritual songs', which were then expounded as to their doctrine by any minister present.

[47] Collinson, *Godly People*, 423.

Tyacke's Sussex parishes), which reinforces the impression I gain from other sources of information that puritanism in the town was a sectarian thing, tending to separatism, a counter-culture rather than the mainstream of the place. Smallhope Bigge was the fifth child to be given such a name, and that led to proceedings in the archdeacon's court. Robert Holden, Smallhope's godfather, was also in trouble for saying that his son would grow up to be a bishop, 'bycause that every day after dynner he will fall asleepe'. There were only twenty more peculiar names given in the parish in the next twenty years, among them the six children of Thomas Starr: Comfort, Nostrength, Moregift, Mercy, Suretrust, and Standwell. Comfort Starr would carry the tradition to Massachusetts. Reignold Lovell, who christened his children Thankful and Faithful, was a somewhat notorious and distinctive puritan. So perhaps the practice of godly naming had vernacular roots, and was learned by Fenner at those same grass roots.[48] Godly protestantism was not something imposed on Cranbrook by incoming intellectuals like Fenner. It was in the soil, and had been long before the Reformation.[49] Puritanism in all its prejudices and practices was something created out of the interaction of learned preachers and godly and opinionated people.

But the possibility remains that it is Fenner's predecessor in the Cranbrook pulpit, Thomas Ely, or Hely, to whom we should be looking. That is to assume that Ely, or Hely, was the same man who became curate of Warbleton, where, as Tyacke has shown, puritan names rapidly became not a minority subculture but almost the norm among about half the population of the parish. Hely's own son Much-mercy was the second child to be given one of those names, and many would follow Much-mercy to the Warbleton font.[50] None of these names was given during Hely's brief time at Cranbrook (from 1579 to 1580), but the vicar, Richard Fletcher, may well have overridden Hely where he had to give way to Fenner. Thomas Ely was perhaps the brother of George Ely, vicar of Tenterden, another leader among the seventeen non-subscribing Kentish ministers of 1584. George Ely had subscribed a petition for John Strowd in 1576, and he was an object of 'R.S.'s invective in 1584: 'Hath not Elie set Tenterden, his parish, together by the ears, which before was quiet?'[51] But Warbleton too was a parish with strong grass roots. One of the most celebrated of the Marian martyrs, the ironmaster and distinctly sectarian Richard Woodman, belonged to the parish.[52] There are too many assumptions and perhapses in this paragraph for the comfort of such a conservative historian as myself, and I suspect that Nicholas Tyacke would want to retreat from this tenuous line of argument. The religious sub-cultures of the Kent and Sussex Wealden parishes remain another country, a

48 Ibid., 423–4. Smallhope Bigge was alive and well in 1615.

49 Ibid., 401–6.

50 Tyacke, 'Popular Puritan Mentality', 78–9.

51 Peel, ed. *The Seconde Parte*, I. 114, 238.

52 John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1583), 1983–2003. For more on the religious history of Warbleton, see J. Goring, *Godly Exercises or the Devil's Dance? Puritanism and Popular Culture in pre-Civil War England* (1983).

country where not only did they do things differently, but to which there are no low-cost airflights.

As always, this story ends with a few loose ends. Fenner's unmarried daughters, More-fruit and Faint-not, made their wills in 1602 and 1604, both in the prerogative court of Canterbury, which is indicative of estates of some modest substance.[53] By the time Faint-not made her will, her mother Joan Fenner had married Josias Nicholls, vicar of Eastwell, another of the leading Kentish nonconformists. Nicholls named his daughter Above-hope and his son Repent.[54] Between her first husband's death and her marriage to Nicholls, Joan Fenner had been the wife of the Cambridge academic William Whitaker, the most prestigious English Calvinist of his day, which made her sister-in-law to Laurence Chaderton, the first master of Emmanuel College. But Whitaker was an extreme moderate, who would hardly have condoned the practice of peculiar nomenclature.[55] Wheels within wheels. And such wheels within wheels have always been Nicholas Tyacke's speciality.[56]

Appendix

The 17th article objected against Dudley Fenner in his trial before Archbishop John Whitgift, 'ex officio mero', and Fenner's response:

> 17 Item that thou the sayde dudley ffenner haste named or consented to naminge of certayne children in baptisme by these or the like names Joye agayne, from above, more fruicte, duste, declare what names what persones when where and uppon what occasion thou haste geven and named them so et obiicimus etc.
>
> To the 17. and laste Article I answere that concerninge the 3 first names I consented to the nameinge of them. To the firste becauswe I required of the father bothe to be a wytnes and to geive suche a name in the Englishe tounge as maye carrye a thankefull remembrance of the Joye which god gave him in his sonne after the sorowe he had for the deathe of divers sonnes. The persone was one Henrye Netter a shooemaker the same was receyved by olde Mr ffletcher mynister of Craynebrooke without any dislike. The other name I gave on this occasion beinge desired by one Mr

53 TNA, PROB 11/99 (25 Montagu), PROB 11/104 (85 Harte).

54 See the articles on Josias Nicholls in *DNB* and *ODNB*. One of the prefaces added to the 1586, Geneva, edition of Fenner's *Sacra Theologia*, speaks of the labours that he shared with Nicholls. Nicholls has left a strong impression on historians of Elizabethan puritanism, especially in his apologetic work of 1602, *The Plea of the Innocent*, which records his pastoral experience in the tiny parish of Eastwell – whereas Fenner's Cranbrook was the largest parish in Kent!

55 Details established by Brett Usher in his article on Nicholls in *ODNB*. And see my account of Chaderton and Whitaker in Bendall, Brooke, Collinson, *History of Emmanuel College, Cambridge*, 30–42. For Whitaker's moderation, see P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982).

56 There are numerous examples of Nicholas Tyacke's punctilious and miocroscopic scholarship among his collected essays, *Aspects of English Protestantism*.

> Henlye to be wytnes to his childe and being come to the instante tyme of geivinge the name I was inforced by him to geive it a name on a sudden. I called it (from above) and yt was recyved of Mr Doctor ffletcher without any dislike. The 3. name I gave to my owne daughter, that I mighte have her to carye a fruitfull remembrance of thestymacion I made that after a deare sonne taken to the Lorde he gave me more fruicte by my wife which I scarsly looked for. The other name I had noe more to doe with it then any other. I was neither required to be wytnes, nor did any thinge concerninge that ceremonye of nameinge the child at that tyme. The reason which moved me to consent to suche names and to allowe them was firste because I fynde it the contynuall practise of the Churche in tholde and newe Testament to name their children with signifycant names in their owne tounge. As the Hebrewes in hebrewe. Samuell. Ezechiell. Zacherye. And of the Apostles. Barnabas. And also in Greeke. as Tymothie. Damaryus. The Latines in Latin. Urbanus. Rom. 16.9. Quartus. 16.23. Quod vult deus August[ine]. in prefationem in librum de heresibus. Secondly because fyndinge it a cerrtayne adioyninge to curcumscision and baptisme where every thinge ought to tende moste to edifyinge I thoughte it more to edefye to have the names significant in that tounge which is understoode then in that which is not understoode. Lastly because it is lefte to the libertye of the thinge longe accustomed to name them with significant names in Englishe. As Grace. Hope. Clamper, Repentaunce, Hubbarde, Civile, Austen, Merye, Richarte, Bradbuge Patience, Bathurste, Christian, Stuckwoode, ffaythe, Charles, Charitie, Russell etc.

(Northamptonshire Record Office, MS F.(M).P.62. I am grateful to Sir Philip Naylor-Leyland bt. and Milton (Peterborough) Estates Company for permission to reproduce this document.)

8

Puritan Preachers and their Patrons

PAUL SEAVER

On 1 August 1654 Simeon Ashe preached the funeral sermon at Rotherhithe, Surrey, for Thomas Gataker, BD, rector for forty-three years and an 'eminently learned and faithful minister of Jesus Christ'. Ashe published the sermon some months later to which he appended an account of Gataker's life and his 'patient, comfortable death'. In the epistle dedicatory to 'my much honored brethren, the Presbyterian ministers of the gospel within the province of London', Ashe began by mourning the recent loss not only of Gataker but also of William Gouge and Jeremiah Whitaker, 'members of, but also cordial friends unto our provincial assembly'. Although he mentions the loss of other Presbyterian worthies, naming George Walker, Herbert Palmer, Thomas Edwards, John Gere, Henry Roborough and Christopher Love, he goes on to celebrate the seventy-year struggle to establish the classical system against 'prelatical power and oppression', citing 'a bright crowd of so many witnesses', who 'may be relieving to our grieving hearts'. It is altogether a salute to a clerical elite of preachers 'by your loving brother and fellow laborer in the work of the gospel',[1] a salute to preachers but no mention of their patrons.

Ashe's narrative of Gataker's life, however, tells a different story. According to Ashe, Gataker's father, a Catholic, was a younger son of a Shropshire gentry family, dispatched to make his way to the inns of court. In turn young Thomas was sent off to St John's, Cambridge, where he met Richard Stock who became a lifelong friend; from St John's Gataker was invited to become one of the fellows of Sidney Sussex College, then in the process of being founded. While waiting for the completion of the new college, he was hired as a tutor by an Essex family, where in addition to instructing the father in Hebrew and the son in Latin literature, he began the practice of explicating biblical passages at family devotions every morning, an exercise which the suffragan bishop of Colchester witnessed and which prompted him to urge the young Gataker to take holy orders, a course

[1] Simeon Ashe, *Gray Hayres crowned with Grace* (1655), sigs. A3r–A4v. The spelling of all quotations has been modernized.

seconded by his college tutor, Henry Alvey. He was then among the young ministers dispatched to parishes in the vicinity of Cambridge that lacked preaching ministers, and while preaching at Everton attracted the attention of Roger Burgoyne of Sutton, a Bedfordshire squire, who used him 'with great humanity'.

Shortly afterwards Gataker was invited to serve as chaplain and tutor to Sir William Cooke's family in London (Sir William's wife was a near relative), which 'occasioned the more public discovery of his ministerial gifts', and in 1602 he was invited to become lecturer at Lincoln's Inn, an invitation he was urged to accept by both the master of Sidney Sussex and Lord Chief Justice Popham. For the next ten years Gataker preached at Lincoln's Inn, returning to the Cooke family during vacations. While at Lincoln's Inn, Sir William Sedley, 'a learned Maecenas and pious patron of the Church offered him a fair benefice' in Kent, but not wishing to be a pluralist or to give up his lectureship, he declined the offer. However, in 1611 he was offered the rectory of Rotherhithe in a manoeuvre by some of the inhabitants to defeat 'one of an infamous life laboring hard to succeed in it', and at the urgings of Richard Stock and of Sir Henry Hobart, the attorney general, whose support had been sought by Randle Crew, 'afterword Lord Chief Justice', who had tenants in the parish, he accepted the living. Gataker was to remain at Rotherhithe until his death, preaching there a famous catechetical lecture on Fridays. In 1642 he was invited by parliament to sit in the assembly of divines, and while there the earl of Manchester offered him the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, who, Ashe claims, thought Gataker 'might (both in regard of his gravity and vast scholastical abilities) be a choice ornament of that university and a fair copy for others to write by', an offer Gataker refused in the light of his age and infirmities. '[H]is parlor was one of the best schools for a young student to learn divinity', and 'indeed his house was a private seminary for divers young gentlemen'. Ashe sees him as free of ambition and instances his refusal to pursue a chaplaincy 'to that hopeful Prince Henry' urged on him by friends. He was, Ashe concluded, 'a faithful shepherd and a fit mirror for pastors, as well as an exact pattern for people'.[2]

Ashe's encomium is reasonably accurate, although he misses the fact that Gataker was born in London to a father, Thomas, Sr, who was indeed the son of a Shropshire gentleman, and who did briefly study at Middle Temple in the 1550s, where he met Sir John Popham, a fellow student who became a lifelong friend, but had gone on to take holy orders in 1568, after which he was disowned by his Catholic father. After serving briefly as one of the earl of Leicester's chaplains, Thomas, Sr succeeded to the rectory of St Edmund's Lombard Street in 1572 and was appointed lecturer at Christ Church Newgate in 1579, posts he held until his death in 1593.[3] Ashe also missed mentioning that Thomas, Jr's first patron had

2 Ibid., 41–62. Additional biographical detail is to be found in Gataker's *A Discourse Apologetical* (1654).

3 For Thomas, Sr, see *ODNB*; Benjamin Brooks, *Lives of the Puritans* (1813), II. 68–70; Venn, II. 199; for his London livings, see GL, MS 9537/5, fos 113r, 119v; 9537/6, fos 110r, 117r, and 9537/7, unfol.: [under St. Edmund's Lombard Street].

been the widow of Alderman Gurney, a wealthy haberdasher, at whose request the company had provided Gataker with an exhibition of £5 per annum on 22 March 1596/7 from the Gurney charitable bequest 'so long as he shall remain a student in the university without promotion and shall be thought fit and worthy of the same'.[4] Ashe also failed to note that Roger Burgoyne, whom Gataker met while preaching at Everton, was a member of an important gentry family that, in addition to its living at Sutton near Everton, also possessed the living at Wroxhall, Warwickshire, an ecclesiastical peculiar 'where puritanism had taken root', that had 'sheltered many an hunted deer, both in the days of Queen Elizabeth and in the two succeeding reigns', including Ashe himself when he lost his Staffordshire living for nonconformity in the 1630s.[5]

Gataker himself was not nearly so reticent. *Marriage Duties Breifely Couched Together out of Colossians, 3.18.19* was dedicated to 'the hopeful young couple, the right worshipful Mr. Robert Cooke, esquire, and the virtuous gentlewoman, Mistress Dorothy Cooke', to whom Gataker offered it as a new year's gift to the newly married son and daughter-in-law of Sir Robert Cooke with whom he stayed during the vacations at Lincoln's Inn. When he published posthumously a treatise of William Bradshaw, his old Sidney Sussex friend with whom he had shared rooms, he dedicated it to 'the right worshipful and truly religious Mrs. Katherine Redich of Newhall in Derbyshire', for Bradshaw had 'spent much of his time with you, and under your roof both drew in and let out his last breath'. As Gataker testified, 'the main means of his maintenance were from your family while he lived'.[6] In the same year he published *A Good Wife Gods Gift. A Mariage Sermon on Prov.19.14* (1620), dedicated to 'the worshipful my loving cosins, Mr. John Scudamore of Kenchurch in Herefordshire, and Mrs. Elizabeth Scudamore, his wife', to whom, Gataker wrote, 'I have a long time much desired some good occasion of testifying mine hearty affection to yourselves in particular, among others of that family, which I acknowledge myself so deeply indebted unto.' Gataker went on to hope that they would tread in the steps of their pious parents, thus showing themselves to be their children, not only in the flesh, but 'according to the promise, even of eternal salvation annexed to the gracious covenant of faith in Christ'.[7]

In 1620 Gataker also published *The Benefit of a Good Name, and A Good End* and addressed the epistle dedicatory to 'my loving friends and neighbors, Mr. Robert Bell and Mr. Joshua Downing, joint patrons of the rectory of Rotherhithe', and the year following *A Sparke toward the Kindling of Sorrow for Sion*, a sermon preached at Sergeants Inn, which he dedicated to another patron, Sir Randle Crew, sergeant at law, who years before had helped him to the living at Rotherhithe. In 1623 he published another sermon delivered at the same venue and

4 For the Gurney exhibition, see Haberdashers Company Court of Assistants, 22 March 1596/7, GL, MS 15842/1, fo. 91r; Gataker surrendered the exhibition in July 1602, fo. 124r.

5 Edmund Calamy, as quoted by J.T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry* (1984), 183–4.

6 *A Plaine and Pithy Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* (1620), sig. A1r.

7 Sigs. A2r–A3v.

dedicated to Sir James Ley, lord chief justice, in order to 'give some poor pledge and testimony of my due and deserved respect to your honour and of my thankful acknowledgement of such favors . . . by your lordship shewed me, as well during the time of mine employment at Lincoln's Inn (where your Lordship was one of the first whom I received kind acceptance from . . .) as since also'.[8] Sons of old patrons were remembered: Sir John Hobart, heir to Sir Henry Hobart, lord chief justice of common pleas, and the Whitmore brothers, Sir William of Apley, Shropshire, and Alderman George, whose mother had been Gataker's godmother and had left him a legacy at her death; Alderman George Whitmore had also been master of the Haberdashers company, to which, Gataker testified, 'I acknowledge myself also a debtor unto.'[9] When Gataker published *Abrahams Decease*, his funeral sermon for his old friend Richard Stock, pastor and preacher at Allhallows Bread Street, he dedicated the sermon to Sir Henry Yelverton, one of the justices in the court of common pleas, on the ground that Yelverton had had a 'special interest in that worthy servant of Christ, whom this weak work concerneth, by your singular favors to him . . . Unto your worship therefore I address and direct it, as to one that may justly lay best claim to it.'[10]

Much of the language of patronage in the foregoing is of course familiar and pervasive in the hierarchical society of the times: gratitude for singular favours, acknowledgement of debts owed, due and deserved respect were of course obligations clients of all sorts recognized. Nathanael Cole in dedicating his treatise on assurance to Robert, Lord Rich, baron of Lees, knew that he was but playing variations on a well-worn theme:

> Now, whereas it is an usual course of writers to dedicate their labours to men of a great place, I have been bold (right honourable) to make choice of your honour in this behalf, and that for these reasons. First, to acknowledge my humble duty to your lordship and to honour you, who deserve so worthily to be honoured of the learned, whom you have so long and so much honoured. Secondly, because I know none who more respecteth the poor labours of the despised clergy than yourself. Thirdly, because sundry times I have preached before you, have been countenanced by you, and much encouraged to go on in my calling, and so best known to your honourable self, as being acquainted with my ministry. Lastly, to avoid the least suspicion of ingratitude and unthankfulness to your honour (a sin odious both to God and man) who have vouchsafed from time to time your honourable favour and kindness towards me.[11]

8 *Davids Remembrancer. A Meditation on Psalm 13.1*, sig. A4r. W.R. Prest refers to Ley as 'pious but corrupt': *The Rise of the Barristers* (Oxford, 1986), 376.

9 *Noah His Obedience, with the Ground of it* (1623); *Jacobs Thankfulnesse to God, for Gods Goodnesse to Jacob* (1624), sigs. A2v–A3r.

10 Yelverton's puritanism was notorious and self-proclaimed; on one occasion in 1629 he announced from the bench 'that he had been always accounted a puritan, and he thanked God for it, and that so he would die'. TNA, SP 16/147/15. Richard Sibbes's position as lecturer at Gray's Inn was apparently owed to Yelverton. N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603–1640* (1990), 11.

11 *The Godly Mans Assurance, or A Christians Certaine Resolution of his owne Salvation* (1615), sig.

Two years later Immanuel Bourne wrote a similarly hyperbolic epistle dedicatory to Robert Lord Spencer. Having likened his now published Paul's Cross sermon to 'a little bird' who must fly 'before her wings be grown', Bourne writes that 'it is impossible that she should escape and not be torn to pieces by the sharp-eyed vultures, (the time-consuming critics) of our time, except some princely eagle shall in pity to so poor a wanderer, shadow her with the wings of protection'. Continuing the metaphor, Bourne goes on to say:

> Your honourable disposition, right honourable lord, in giving encouragement to the ministers of Christ, hath emboldened this little bird to shroud herself under the roof of your honorable favour and myself to dedicate this firstling of my studies unto your Lordship, whom (with a most thankful heart) I must ever acknowledge, my first encourager in my work, since I have been a poor and unworthy labourer in the vineyard of Christ.

Bourne concludes by extending his gratitude to Lord Spencer's son, Sir William, 'with his right noble lady, all your honourable progeny, and their posterity for ever'.[12]

Although few such effusions equalled Bourne's genealogical stretch or metaphoric flourishes, and while most epistles dedicatory hide what must frequently have been longlasting personal relationships under conventional phrases of deference and gratitude, these dedications do present an idealized picture of what several generations of puritan ministers came to regard as the proper role and attributes of a lay patron. And for all the repeated expressions of humility and unworthiness, the epistles nevertheless present an equally idealized portrait of the high calling of the preaching minister. But just as Simeon Ashe ignored the fact that Gataker's career was characterized by largely passive responses of acceptance or rejection to active lay initiatives, so the epistles are largely silent about the potential conflict between the demands and expectations of patrons and the claims of clerical clients to spiritual and intellectual leadership. Patron–client relations are necessarily reciprocal in some sense with duties and obligations on both sides, but as Samuel Hoard wrote with rare frankness in his dedication to Robert, earl of Warwick, 'men of inferior condition, while they receive very much from personages of greater place, can pay back little, if anything again'. Granted, no one is so poor 'but he can love his benefactor, and their love they can acknowledge, but how? only in words'.[13]

A4v. Like many puritan preachers, Cole invoked Warwick's patronage even though neither his living at Much Parringdon nor at St Leonard's Bromley were in the Rich family's gift.

12 Immanuel Bourne, *The Rainbow, or A Sermon Preached at Pauls Crosse the tenth day of June. 1617* (1617), sigs. A3v–A4r. Bourne was to spend twenty years at Ashover, Derbyshire, until driven out during the civil war in 1642.

13 Samuel Hoard, *The Soules Miserie and Recoverie* (1636), sigs. A2v–A3r. Hoard was presented to the rectory of Morton, Essex, by the earl in 1626 and held it until his death in 1659. The rectory was valued at £120 p.a. in 1650, making it among the more valuable of Rich family benefices: B. Donagan, 'The Clerical Patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1619–1642', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, CXX, no. 5 (October 1976), 417.

Nevertheless, such words of praise were important. As John Downame preached in praise of William Jones, haberdasher, 'I mean not to make a vain ostentation of his works, like an idle orator, but to propound to my speech these profitable ends.' These were, 'first that God may be glorified in the fruits of his graces' (Jones had left a huge fortune to the Haberdashers in trust, including a number of bequests to ministers and the gift of a lectureship to which the company had appointed Downame), 'secondly, that others may be edified by his good example', and 'thirdly, that the memorial of this just man may be blessed, and his name together with his good works may be had in lasting remembrance'.[14] Dedications to worthy patrons had their uses, and the absence of such would surely be noted. Granted, it was customary 'that such books come under the press to be made public should be pushed forth with an epistle dedicatory', but as Henry Scudder noted, if such an epistle was lacking, 'it calleth into suspicion that either the author hath no friends of worth, or that the work is not worthy patronage'. Hence, Scudder hoped that Sir Thomas Crewe, the dedicatee, would 'suffer these my first fruits in this kind to pass into the world through your hand', for then 'they will be the better accepted of the good, and defended from those that are bad'.[15]

It is perhaps no surprise that lay patrons were praised for their love of 'God's Church'. So William Gouge wrote in his dedication to Robert, earl of Warwick:

> You count it your honour any way to honour her. Witness your diligent frequenting of her assemblies and presenting yourself in her courts; your conscionable observance of all her ordinances; your good respect to her ministers; your faithful discharge of that trust which by the divine providence is committed to you for presenting faithful ministers to her people.[16]

Earlier Thomas Pickering had dedicated his translation of William Perkins's *Christian Oeconomie* to Robert Rich, while the latter was still only the young heir to the first earl of Warwick, on the basis of 'the true report of your ancient love of the truth, and favorable inclination to the ministers and dispensers thereof', 'whose care hath been to maintain the honour of the highest by your constant profession and practice of religion'.[17] Robert Bolton's remarks at the funeral of his patron, Sir Augustine Nicolls, were more expansive, noting Judge Nicolls's 'love of integrity, the right and truth in all his judical courses', his 'resolute heart-rising against bribery and corruption', and his 'mighty opposition of popery, and that without respect or fear of any greatness' in the northern circuit, but when he came

14 John Downame, *The Plea of the Poore, or a Treatise of Benevolence and Almes-Deeds* (1616), sig. A2r. Downame went on to admonish the company to exercise Jones's bequest 'without partiality, favour or by-request', and that the company 'from time to time choose unto these places men godly, learned, and every way worthy' thus showing themselves 'faithful stewards in managing these weighty affairs'. Ibid., sig. A4v.

15 Henry Scudder, *A Key to Heaven* (1630), sigs. A3r, A5r.

16 William Gouge, *The Saints Sacrifice* (1632), sig. A3r.

17 (1609), fo. 7v.

to 'single out and propose for imitation some worthy and noble parts of him', the first that Bolton listed was 'his singular integrity and honourable purpose in disposing those ecclesiastical livings he had in his power', without 'secretly covenanting with the party or friends for present money or after gratifications'. In fact, Bolton insisted that Nicholls was the one in a thousand who returned impropriations to the livings in his gift, restoring 'to a farthing all that which had a long time been detained from the Church, and parted with it most freely'. Bolton also noted that Nicholls forbore to travel 'upon the sabbath in his circuit', his 'patient yeilding and submission to private admonition', and 'his indefatigableness in his judiciary employments', but he ends his list of Nicholls's virtues by noting 'his happiness in having religious followers' and his 'commendation of profitable and conscionable sermons'. As for his love of puritan preaching, 'I cannot tell, says he, what you call puritanical sermons; they come nearest to my conscience and do me the most good'.[18]

Godly preachers and the religion they preached needed the protection of godly patrons, for in their understanding they faced an uncaring when not openly hostile world. As Richard Rogers expressed it, 'the condition of every true servant of God in this world is fitly compared to a warfare, and his life to the life of a soldier, in respect of the many, the mighty, the malicious and subtle enemies he is to deal withall. This is true especially of such as serve God in the work of the ministry,' for ministers had to struggle not only 'against their own lusts . . . (which, too, are common with them and all other Christians) but also (and that in a special manner) against unreasonable and evil men'.[19] Samuel Hieron complained of the 'atheistical profaness of these godless times', and Henry Holland that the English, having avoided 'the unsavory leaven of popish corruption, are fallen asleep in carnal security and profaneness'.[20] Thus godly preachers needed godly patrons, as Richard Rogers informed Sir Edward Coke, precisely because, while the writings of divines 'are of singular use to the Church, yet [they are] never free from the malignity of some men'. What better protector and defender could there be than a 'lord chief justice of England and one of his majesty's most honourable privy counsel?' Particularly one whose 'piety towards God, testified by your reverend hearing of his word, and reflecting itself in love upon his ministry, your sage and well-managed government of civil affairs, your learning . . . all these argue strongly that though popery, ignorance, injustice and evil manners could well forgo you, yet the Church, the commonwealth, and literature could ill want you'. After all, 'your lordship knoweth well that the Church and commonwealth are friendly neighbors, each bordering upon other, both compassed with one wall, and both yielding mutual aids and defences each to other'. It was by implication

[18] Robert Bolton, *Mr. Boltons Last and Learned Worke of the Foure last Things, Death, Judgement, Hell and Heaven*, 3rd edn (1635), 154, 160–8.

[19] Richard Rogers, *Samuels Encounter with Saul* (1620), sig. A2r.

[20] Samuel Hieron, *The Christians Live-Loode, Laid forth in a sermon on Matth.6.33.* (1619), epistle dedicatory, no pagination; Henry Holland, *The Christian Exercise of Fasting, Private and Publike* (1596), epistle dedicatory, no pagination.

as 'mutual aid' perhaps that Rogers offered to the learned judge his commentary on the book of Judges, a work of some 950 large pages.[21]

Puritan clients had equally elevated expectations of their urban patrons. When William Gouge dedicated a treatise published in 1616 to the then lord mayor, the draper Sir John Jolles, as well as to the sheriffs and aldermen, he saw it as no more than what was due to his long connection to the city: 'My father, grandfather, and other predecessors have of old from time to time been beholding to this honourable city, the kindness which they formerly received is still continued to me.' A consummate clerical politician, Gouge went on to mention those 'right worshipful and worthy knights, Sir William Craven, Sir Thomas Middleton, and Sir Thomas Hayes', all recent lord mayors, as well as the sheriffs, 'especially unto your worship (Master John Goare) whose love and kindness unto me hath been as great, as if by the nearest bond of nature I had been knit unto you'.[22] These men and their predecessors were worthy of thanks for 'the kindness shewed to the ministers of his word, and to poor distressed people. Long hath the gospel been purely, powerfully, plentifully preached in this honourable city, and great countenance and maintenance hath by many therein been given thereunto.' In recent years the magistrates were to be celebrated for providing 'for the better sanctifying of the Lord's sabbath' and for 'much relief' given to the urban poor, but while the latter was clearly a duty of the city's rulers, what was of first importance was that 'God's ordinances be advanced', for then London shall be 'accounted the city of the great king . . . for in these things is God highly honoured'.[23]

Some years earlier in 1593, a plague year, Henry Holland had published his treatise on the plague and, like Gouge, had dedicated it to the lord mayor, aldermen and sheriffs, but also to his 'right worshipful my very good friend, Mr. Thomas Aldersey', a prominent and pious haberdasher. Holland urged his dedicatees to be 'very careful to remove all natural causes, which seem to breed, and do indeed give strength unto this venemous contagion', but also to be 'as vigilant and strive with a strong hand to remove the spiritual causes of the same', by which he meant 'the rotten proud sins of this city (which are corrigible by good laws) with the sword of justice', in particular the 'devilish theatres, the nurseries of whoredom and uncleanness'. Having dealt with that crying sin, Holland went on to urge the magistrates to stop those who 'profane the Lord's sabbaths and steal away great flocks of miserable, ignorant people from the holy ministry and ordinance of the Lord', whose preaching, presumably like closing the theatres, would lessen the divine wrath.[24]

[21] Richard Rogers, *A Commentary upon the whole Booke of Judges* (1615), sigs. A3r, A4v–B1r.

[22] William Gouge, *The Whole-Armor of God* (1616), sigs. A3r–A4r. Sir John Gore, a merchant taylor, was to become lord mayor in 1624: A.B. Beaven, *The Aldermen of the City of London* (1913), II. 54.

[23] Gouge, *Whole-Armor*, sig. A4r–v.

[24] *Spiritual Preservatives against the Pestilence* (1593), sigs. A3r, A5v–A6r. Thomas Aldersey died in 1594, leaving a substantial bequest with the Haberdashers' company in trust, including funds for a free grammar school and lectureship at Bunbury, Cheshire, to which the company promptly appointed William Hinde, a puritan nonconformist. GL, MS 15885, pp. 34–45.

Godly preachers on the whole, for all their expressions of humility and unworthiness, had an extraordinarily high sense of the worth of the ministerial function, if not necessarily of themselves as ministers, for while 'other professions do aim at the good of this life, . . . the end of the ministry alone is chiefly to save men's souls'. Further, if ministers are but fallible men, 'the word of God in the mouths of the ministers is not weak, but mighty in operation, able to cast down strongholds and whatsoever opposeth itself to it'.[25] So 'God's ministers should cry aloud and lift up their voices like a trumpet and tell the people of their transgressions and the house of Jacob of their sins'. Sin, of course, was the inevitable condition of a fallen world, but the proper response was not passive acceptance but active opposition. Hence, 'God's faithful ministers' are to be found, 'sometimes piping unto us the sweet tunes of the gospel to allure us unto holy obedience, and sometimes thundering out the dreadful sound of God's fearful judgments due to sin to restrain us from running on in wicked courses'.[26] If one function of the minister was to help the elect along the never easy or unproblematic road to assurance and sanctification, the other was to urge the repression of those manifest evils inherent in human society. As Nicolas Estwick put it, the preaching minister 'is profitable, if not to convert, yet to civilize people and to restrain the corruption of nature', for 'much more effectual sure is the word preached to produce moral virtues and to enable some to do moral works rationally out of the sway of right reason, though not obediently with a pure intention to obey and glorify God'. In short, preaching can 'keep men in outward conformity . . . which otherwise might degenerate into brutishness'.[27]

Few doubted the social utility as well as the spiritual necessity of the preached word (Queen Elizabeth being a well-known exception in that regard), but the very nature of the English Church with its vast number of advowsons and impropriations in lay possession opened the way for the lay patron bent on exploiting the Church's goods, rather than insuring the Church's good. In his *Description of England*, first published in 1577, William Harrison complained that many

> find fault with our threadbare gowns, as if not our patrons but our wives were causes of our woe. But if it were known to all that I know to have been performed of late in Essex – where a minister taking a benefice (of less than £20 in the queen's books, so far as I remember) was enforced to pay to his patron twenty quarters of oats, ten quarters of wheat, and sixteen yearly of barley, which he called 'hawk's meat', and another let the like in farm to his patron for £10 by the year, which is well worth forty at the least – the cause of our threadbare gowns would easily appear, for such patrons do scrape the wool from our cloaks.[28]

25 Nicolas Estwick, *A Learned and Godly Sermon Preached . . . at the Funerall of Mr. Robert Bolton* (1633), 52, 55.
26 John Downame, *Foure Treatises* (1613), sig. A1r–v.
27 Estwick, *Sermon*, 55–6.
28 ed. Georges Edelen (Ithaca, NY, 1968), 38.

Two generations later Bolton echoed Harrison's complaint, for clearly nothing had changed in the interim: 'too many patrons nowadays either by detaining sacrilegiously God's portion . . . or by furnishing church livings simoniacally and corruptly, do certainly pull upon their own heads, souls, and bodies . . . a heavy and horrible curse', and in 1641 Samuel Fairecloth indicted in a sermon preached before the house of commons not only the 'idolatrous romanist', but also 'the simoniacal patron, the sacrilegious pluralist, and unconscionable non-resident'.[29] One of Richard Fishborne's 'princely' acts of charity, according to Nathaniel Shute, was in 'recalling impropriations to the Church', for to take tithes from the Church was to 'snatch at coals from off God's altar'.[30] Such patrons, never named, were clearly the anti-type of the godly patrons celebrated in so many epistles dedicatory.

What these statements conceal behind the formal language of patronage and clientage is the nature of the actual relations between the two, although chance evidence occasionally hints at a relationship that must have been very different from the formal language of deference, subordination and gratitude for favours granted. Immanuel Bourne in a dedication to Sir Samuel and Lady Elizabeth Tryon, 'my ever honoured friends', whom he addressed as 'right worshipful', goes on conventionally to note that 'ancient writers' were accustomed 'to dedicate their works unto the noble Alexanders, Caesars, Maecenases, and Ptolemys of their day', and 'having found the like religious disposition in both your worships, and daily enjoying the fruits of your love towards me', he was 'emboldened to consecrate these, my well-wishing endeavours unto you both'. It is only at the very end of the epistle that a phrase suggests what lay behind these statements, for the epistle was written 'from my study in your worships' house in St. Christopher's near the Royal Exchange'. Evidently Bourne lived with the Tryons, not an uncommon practice among unmarried clergy, but such arrangements imply a level of intimacy the language of patronage scarcely allowed. Again, in a dedication to Henry Carey, Lord Hunsden, 'the most religious lady his wife', his 'most honourable' aunt, and his 'virtuous and most worthy sister', Nathanael Cole states 'special motives' led him to make the dedication to Hunsden, 'first, as a token of my thankfulness for all your honourable favours shewed unto me', but also, 'for the old acquaintance which hath been between us from our youth, being scholars together . . . both in country and university'. 'And here I cannot but recall to mind . . . your entire love and loving affection as then shewed unto me . . . in vouchsafing to accept of me into your company and that daily'. All this is expressed and qualified by necessary expressions of humility and deference, but obviously it implied to Cole a level of intimacy far greater than that implied by a

29 Robert Bolton, *A Discourse about the State of True Happinesse* (1638), sig. A2v; Samuel Fairecloth, *The Troublers Troubled* (1641), 11. Fairecloth's sermon was dedicated to 'his much honoured patron, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston', whose 'patronage and support, both of myself and ministry', was 'so remarkable and conspicuous' in his neighbourhood in Suffolk: sig. A3r.
30 Nathaniel Shute, *Corona Charitatis* (1626), 37–8.

grant of an ecclesiastical benefice.[31] William Gouge, who dedicated his treatise on *The Whole-Armor of God* to Sir John Jolles, the current lord mayor, and to all the aldermen with the usual expressions of thankfulness, concludes with the following brief explanation:

> That which afforded me the opportunity to publish this treatise was the kindness of the right worshipful William Rowe, esquire, and the right religious Cicely Rowe, his wife, at whose country house being entertained a good part of the last summer, I found leisure to review and copy out my notes, which had not been possible for me to have done if I had been in London.[32]

Rowe was undoubtedly the son of Sir William Rowe, ironmonger, lord mayor in 1592–3 and alderman for Castle Baynard ward, of which St Anne Blackfriars was a part.

Sometimes the relationship is specified in terms of kinship, although that term tells little about the degree of intimacy and friendship involved. Thomas Froysell, the vicar of Clun, Shropshire, preached Sir Robert Harley's funeral sermon at Brampton Bryan in 1656, a sermon Froysell dedicated to Harley's son Edward; Froysell describes himself at the end of his dedication as 'your most obliged kinsman and most humble servant', and although he does not specify the nature of his kinship with the Harleys, the connection was real enough since the advowson of Clun had been in Harley's possession since 1622, and Sir Robert had appointed Froysell to the living.[33] Although William Hinde who wrote the famous life of that Cheshire saint, John Bruen of Bruen Stapleford, was not a literal client of Bruen, having been placed as preacher at Bunbury by the Haberdashers company as the first company preacher there in the gift of the Thomas Aldersey bequest, Hinde was married to a sister of Anne Foxe, who became Bruen's second wife. The relationship of Hinde and Bruen must have been based on more than kinship, since Hinde's biography quotes extensively from Bruen's own writings, and the two must have come to know each other at least during the last decade of Bruen's life. It was, Hinde wrote, 'the very joy of his soul to bring in such godly and able ministers amongst them (as he could provide) almost every Lord's day into the public assembly. Such as did sow and plant (as God's husbandmen) the seeds and roots of grace and truth amongst them.' And surely, although Hinde does not say so explicitly, he must have been among those 'godly and able ministers'.[34]

Clearly formal patronage was crucial in planting and maintaining islands of godly preachers and their followers in a sea of the indifferent, when not overtly

31 Immanuel Bourne, *The Godly Mans Guide with A Direction for All* (1620), sigs. A3r, A4v; Nathanael Cole, *Preservatives against Sinne* (1618), sigs. A1r, A2v–A3r.

32 (1616), sig. A7v.

33 Thomas Froysell, *The Beloved Disciple* (1658), sigs. A3r, B4r; J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads* (Cambridge, 1990), 10, 56, fn.30.

34 William Hinde, *A Faithful Remonstrance of the Holy Life and Happy Death of John Bruen of Bruen-Stapleford* (1641), 112, 83.

hostile. From the earliest days figures at court such as Robert Dudley, the earl of Leicester, and his brother Ambrose, the earl of Warwick, and such determined local patrons as Katherine Willoughby, duchess of Suffolk, who held sixteen benefices in Lincolnshire and appointed to another six (and many of her chaplains and clerical clients were nonconformists), were crucial in planting radical protestantism in the north-east.[35] The work of planting preachers by Henry Hastings, the earl of Huntingdon, in Leicestershire and Yorkshire, and in the 1620s and 1630s by Robert Rich, earl of Warwick, with his nineteen livings, are well known, as is the importance of gentry patrons.[36] However, it is evident that patronage in many instances involved far more than the bestowal of a living or subsequent protection of nonconformity.

A handful of correspondence survives between John Trendle, the parson of Ovington, and several of the local Norfolk gentry. Early in 1593 he asked Sir Bassingborne Gawdy of Harling to intervene to suppress an unlicensed and unwanted alehouse, noted for 'ill rule', where 'poor men spend their thrift, poor women spend their husbands' earnings, men drinken there and come home and disquiet their whole families and children'. Six years later there are letters asking Gawdy to mediate a difference between a local minister and 'an honest and peaceable man'. Some months later still Trendle wrote again to Sir Bassingborne, this time asking whether he needed a tailor in his household, and if so, would he be willing to consider Trendle's son. There are also several letters to Sir Thomas Knyvett. In one Trendle asks Knyvett's support of another local minister and 'to stand up' for this minister at the next sessions; in a second Trendle asks for Knyvett to show 'the courage of godly Joshua' and to support the appointment of a constable who was opposed because he was an utter enemy of 'papists and a precision'. All these are quite unexceptional examples of the sort of requests found elsewhere in correspondence between clerics and their puritan patrons. However, there is one letter from Trendle to Knyvett that is radically different both in subject and in tone. Trendle begins,

> albeit your last letters have enforced an answer by oppressing me to my credit, yet it is not such (as it may be) as you do expect. It seemeth unto me in the whole prolix discourse of your second reply to my letters that

[35] For Leicester, see in particular P. Collinson, ed. *Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566–1577* (1960); for Willoughby, see M.F. Harkrider, ' "Faith is a Noble Duchess": Piety, Patronage and Kinship in the Career of Katherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk, 1519–1580' (Ph.D. thesis, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2003), ch. 6.

[36] C. Cross, *The Puritan Earl* (1966); Donagan, 'Clerical Patronage of Robert Rich'; K.W. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage of East Anglian Puritan Clerics in Pre-Revolutionary England' (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1972); for the gentry, see, e.g., Cliffe, *Puritan Gentry*; R. O'Day, *The English Clergy* (Leicester, 1979), ch. 7; W.J. Sheils, *The Puritans in the Diocese of Peterborough 1558–1610* (Northampton, 1979); F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales 1500–1700* (Stanford, 1994), chs. 9–10; A. Hassell Smith, *County and Court* (Oxford, 1974), ch.10; D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors* (Oxford, 1986), ch. 6; A. Fletcher, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600–1660* (1975), ch. 3; A. Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620–1660* (Cambridge, 1987), chs. 3 and 8; and this is but a sample of a vast literature.

> you offer me prerogative measure to mangle my meaning in my words and sentences, and then to tell me I do but set new ears upon my old pot to make it seem a new vessal with many words digesting the same sense.

The letter then drops this facetious tone and becomes a learned discussion, larded with Latin, Greek and Hebrew phrases, about a possible distinction between Sunday, sabbath and the Lord's day. Apparently Trendle and Sir Thomas had been carrying on a scholarly epistolary exchange of some duration about theological matters and meanings, an exchange not between patron and client, but between two intellectuals evidently happy to be in a position to find a learned and sympathetic audience in the midst of East Anglian rusticity.[37]

In September 1600 Edward Lord Zouch wrote to Laurence Chaderton, master of Emmanuel College, about his concern as governor of Guernsey 'to prosecute a supply of scholars for the furnishing of the ministry here', a letter that then introduces a local young man who has been supplied with 20 marks, whom Zouch hoped Chaderton would accept as a student. Along with his official correspondence, Zouch also wrote a series of letters, mostly to the wife of Sir Edward Leighton, whom Zouch served as deputy, complaining of the possible loss of Thomas Cartwright, the well-known Presbyterian minister, who lived with him; Zouch wrote in one letter of walking up and down in his parlour with Cartwright in prayer and conversation, and in others of his fear of losing him: 'However I use Mr. Cartwright, I fear I shall not have him . . . then you are unkind to leave me alone in this country and with this people.'[38]

Henry Rich, the earl of Holland and the courtier brother of the earl of Warwick, was a much more problematic figure as a patron of the godly than Lord Zouch, and yet was for years patron and protector of the heterodox John Everard. When the high commission attempted to silence John Stoughton, DD, the curate and lecturer at St Mary Aldermanbury in London and a much more orthodox puritan than Everard, the case eventually collapsed for lack of evidence, and a Suffolk diarist at the time noted that Stoughton 'returned with credit in the earl of Holland's coach'.[39] Such conspicuous acts of essentially symbolic support clearly did not pass unnoticed. Two years later in 1637 Sir John Lambe was informed that

> Mr. [Charles] Chauncy, whom you lately corrected in the high commission, doth mend like sour ale in summer. He held a fast on Wednesday last and (as I am informed) he with another preached some 6 or 8 hours; the whole tribe of God did flock thither, some threescore from Northampton; the Lord Saye with his lady did honour them with their presence.

[37] BL, Egerton MS 2713, fo. 284r; MS 2724, fos 4r, 18r; MS 2713, fos 278r, 279r, 213r–14v.

[38] BL, Egerton MS 2812, fos 28r, 42r, 45r, 86r, 115r.

[39] P.S. Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships* (1970), 232 and n.; Bodl., Tanner MS 67, fos 143r–4v, 149r–v, 187r–8v; for Everard's peculiar Antinomianism, see D.R. Como, *Blown by the Spirit* (Stanford, 2004); for the Stoughton affair, see M.A.E. Green, ed. *The Diary of John Rous* (Camden Society, 1st series, LXVI, 1856), 79.

The fast ended with a prayer that 'God would deliver his servants from persecution', apparently with Burton, Bastwick and Prynne in mind, and the informant urged Lambe to inform Archbishop Laud of these events, although it is hard to imagine what Laud could do that would counteract the public countenancing of such a fast and such a nonconformist by Lord Saye and Sele.[40]

Laud and the high commission could humiliate, suspend and deprive clerical clients, but their lay patrons were largely beyond reach. The archbishop must have been aware of, but could do little about, the web of patrons and patronage of the godly stretching back to the early years of Elizabeth's reign. Clearly some lay patrons saw their advowsons and impropriate livings as simply another economic asset to exploit. But for godly patrons these assets provided an opportunity to turn their neighbourhoods into little godly commonwealths. That the puritan movement was a religious movement generated by the preaching of godly ministers is in part an illusion created by the vast number of printed sermons and tracts, but a glance at the correspondence of godly peers, gentry, livery companies and urban corporations suggests that the initiative was in lay hands, and that their relationships with their ministerial brethren went far beyond the formal ties of the patron–client connection to create a web of friendships that transcended the obvious social divisions.

After the death of John Preston, who had been master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, lecturer at Lincoln's Inn, and was probably the most prominent puritan spokesman in the 1620s until his death in 1628 – he was briefly a chaplain to Prince Charles – a group of prominent puritan divines set about getting some of his unpublished work into print. The dedications read like a roll call of the godly ministers' supporters among the titled aristocracy. Preston's *The New Covenant*, published in 1629 and edited by Richard Sibbes and John Davenport, was dedicated to Theophilus Clinton, earl of Lincoln, and William Fiennes, Viscount Saye and Sele; *The Breast-Plate of Faith and Love,* published in 1630 and again edited by Sibbes and Davenport, was dedicated to Robert Rich, earl of Warwick; *Life Eternal*, published in 1631 and edited by Thomas Goodwin and Thomas Ball, was dedicated to Saye and Sele again; and *The Saints Qualification*, edited by Sibbes and Davenport, was dedicated to Philip Herbert, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery (the first surviving edition, the second, dates from 1634). Given his prominent positions, Preston must have met all of these peers at one time or another. Nevertheless, when Goodwin and Ball published Preston's *The Golden Scepter* in 1638, they dedicated it to a mere gentleman, Richard Knightley, esquire. The editors noted two things: first, that they had been 'deputed' by Preston 'to put forth' his unpublished writings and 'to inscribe or dedicate' them 'to some of his special friends, as proofs of our fidelity in discharging of the trust imposed in us'; secondly, 'special friend' must in this instance be taken literally, for the editors go on to note that 'seeing it pleased the author to choose your habitation, wherein to

[40] TNA, SP 16/361/67.

put off and lay up his (then) decaying and declining body, why should it not be proper and convenient to send these living and surviving pieces of his soul, for to attend it?' The dedication concludes with the typical rhetoric of patronage. 'And now what rests but that these treatises crave shadow and protection from you, now own you for their patron.' But that concluding sentence then invokes a different relationship: 'and, by your acceptance of it, you shall shew friendship to this posthume', thus encapsulating in a single sentence the double role of puritan patrons with their clerical clients.[41]

[41] Preston's funeral sermon was preached by John Dod, who had been deprived of his living at Hanwell, Oxfordshire, and silenced again at Canons Ashby in Northampton, from which Knightley rescued him, setting him up with a preaching licence at Fawsley. Dod outlived not only Preston but his patron, Knightley, dying at the age of 96 in 1645. Preston's contemporary biography was written by Thomas Ball, another native, like Preston, of Northamptonshire: Samuel Clarke, *The Lives of Thirty-Two English Divines* (1677), 75–114.

9

New England's Reformation: 'Wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the Eies of all People are upon Us'*

SUSAN HARDMAN MOORE

In October 1640, John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, solemnly noted in his journal an act of God's providence:

> About this time there fell out a thing worthy of observation. Mr. Winthrop the younger . . . having many books in a chamber where there was corn of divers sorts, had among them one wherein the Greek testament, the psalms and the common prayer were bound together. He found the common prayer eaten with mice, every leaf of it, and not any of the other two touched, nor any other of his books, though there were above a thousand.[1]

The volume survives in the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and I can report that the governor is guilty of overstatement: 'less than half the pages' of the book of common prayer are nibbled, and 'only at the tips of the lower right-hand corners'.[2] Despite his exaggeration of the rodent appetite for prayers, Winthrop reveals two crucial themes in the rhetoric that shaped New England's Reformation: colonists' determination to invest everything with providential meaning; and their hostility to aspects of the English Church.

Between 12,000 and 21,000 people crossed the Atlantic in the 1630s, to take part in a unique experiment in reform.[3] The Great Migration, as it is often called,

* This paper originated as a Reformation Day Lecture for the Reformation Studies Institute, University of St Andrews. I am grateful to the Institute for the invitation to give the Lecture.

1 *The Journal of John Winthrop 1630–1649*, eds. R.S. Dunn, J. Savage, L.Yeandle (1996), 340–1. The volume belonged to Winthrop's son. *ODNB*, 'John Winthrop (1588–1649)', 'John Winthrop (1606–1676)'.

2 *Journal of Winthrop*, 341n; S. Mitchell, 'Note on Two Winthrops and a Mouse, 1640', *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXII (1937), 387–94.

3 The number of emigrants is hard to determine. D. Cressy, *Coming Over* (Cambridge, 1987), 192, mentions estimates of 13,600, 17,600 and 21,000; C.G. Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of*

uprooted well-established families from all over England to establish the new colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Haven.[4] These are not the pilgrim fathers, who sailed on the *Mayflower* in 1620, and who were a relatively small group, despite their prominence in American mythology. The *Mayflower* pilgrims turned their backs on the English Church as Antichristian.[5] Most emigrants of the 1630s claimed they did not. This may seem unlikely, given the way Winthrop's godly mice attacked the prayer book. And in fact New England presents us with a puzzle. On one hand, settlers seemed to cast off the Church of England. They not only condemned 'remnants of popery' back home, but set up Congregational churches – a startling innovation, soon nicknamed 'the New England Way', which made each local church autonomous, and restricted membership to 'visible saints' (people who could give a satisfactory testimony of their conversion to the assembled Church). On the other hand, colonists still loudly protested their loyalty to the English Church: for soundness of doctrine and power of religion, nowhere could match their dear native country. One way to make sense of this puzzling behaviour is to judge settlers' declarations of loyalty hypocritical, a 'cobweb of sophistry' to disguise their radicalism and protect them from interference. This line of argument has been pursued in recent scholarship by historians for whom New England is a sign of the sectarian drift of English puritanism; a sign that puritan demands for reform were leading the break-up of the Church of England; reformation as a process of fragmentation.[6]

I think there is a more subtle way to read colonists' behaviour, which takes us into the dynamic of this experiment in reform. I want to suggest that the origins and evolution of New England's Reformation were deeply circumstantial: that the rhetoric that motivated emigration came about in very particular circumstances, and led in directions that were not wholly intended or predicted.[7]

It may seem strange for a discussion to refer in the same breath to seventeenth-century New England and 'Reformation': wrong century, wrong continent. Not so strange, though, if one thinks in terms of a 'Long Reformation': that

Revolution, 1640–1661 (Cambridge, MA, 2004), 230, notes that 'in spite of the migration of as many as 21,200 into . . . [Massachusetts Bay] by 1643, the figure of 12,500 for 1640 is widely accepted'. However, from 1640 onwards many colonists reported that immigration had dried up.

4 Recent studies interpret migrants' motives differently, but all agree settlers were 'wrenched out of settled, circumscribed lives': R. Thompson, *Mobility and Migration* (Amherst, MA, 1994), xiv and passim; V. DeJohn Anderson, *New England's Generation* (Cambridge, 1991), 12–46; Cressy, *Coming Over*, 37–106; A. Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA, 1999), 42–71.

5 J.P. Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (2nd edn., Oxford, 2000). Pestana, *English Atlantic*, 230, estimates 2,300 settlers in 1640, but Plymouth's population growth was largely the result of outflow from Massachusetts.

6 P. Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Gloucester, MA, 1961), 84; S. Foster, *The Long Argument* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991), 138–74.

7 This argument draws on and extends the case made in my paper, 'Popery, Purity and Providence: Deciphering the New England Experiment', in A. Fletcher and P. Roberts, eds. *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), 257–89. I will explore the themes further in a book, *The Atlantic Pilgrims' Progress* (forthcoming).

is, religious reform as a long-drawn-out process, stretching on into the religious upheavals of the seventeenth century, international in its ramifications and influence.[8] New England's experiment in reform is part of the outworking of the English Reformation, deeply bound up with the religious crisis that brought England to civil war in the 1640s. New England's Churches show us Calvinism transplanted to a new world, one face of the expanding international reformed tradition. The puritan venture in New England represents one aspect of a British debate about reform, a debate among fellow-Calvinists about how to create a reformed Church. During the civil wars, New England writers competed with Scottish Presbyterians to influence English opinion: among the colonies' fiercest critics were Scots like Samuel Rutherford and Robert Baillie.

So: let's take up the story of 'New England's Reformation'. First, we will examine the terms on which emigrants set sail; then see how they translated their ideals of purity into practice on American soil. Finally, to illuminate the significance of the New England experiment, we'll consider its impact in England. To do this I want to play off print and people: the New England Way as it appears in books and pamphlets; and the New England Way as it figured in the lives of colonists who came home.

II

The phrase 'citty upon a hill' comes from a sermon preached by John Winthrop to emigrants on their way to the New World:

> wee shall be as a citty upon a hill, the eies of all people are upon us; soe that if we shall deale falsely with our God in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present helpe from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world, wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake euill of the wayes of God and all professours for Gods sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of Gods worthy servants, and cause theire prayers to be turned into cursses upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whether we are goeing . . .[9]

'A city on a hill': New England as a beacon of reform. Winthrop's phrase has been taken up by politicians looking for triumphalist rhetoric about America's role on the world stage.[10] But, in context, his vision for New England seems shot

[8] On this wider perspective, see N. Tyacke, ed. *England's Long Reformation, 1500–1800* (1998); D. MacCulloch, *Reformation* (2003); P. Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (2002).

[9] John Winthrop, 'A Modell of Christian Charity', *Winthrop Papers*, eds. A.B. Forbes *et al*., (Boston, MA, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929–47), II. 295; see F.J. Bremer, *John Winthrop* (Oxford and New York, 2003), 173–84.

[10] Perry Miller argued that Puritans went to America 'to work out that complete reformation', not yet accomplished in England or Europe, but which quickly could be 'if only the saints back there had a working model to guide them': *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA, 1956), 11. New England as 'city on a

through with anxiety about getting it wrong, about becoming a by-word for error. Winthrop portrays New England as a very public enterprise, for which emigrants would be held accountable: 'the eies of all people are upon us'.[11]

To understand the hopes and fears that built New England, we need to appreciate the terms on which emigrants set sail. Did they jump or were they pushed? Clement Corbet, chancellor to the bishop of Norwich, thought they jumped – religious zealots, who seized the chance to go. Actually, he wished that, like the Gadarene swine, these puritans would jump off a cliff with their 'silly inventions', but 'seeing they have found a New England', he wished them 'safely transported and pitched there that they may triumph and practice their . . . fooleries'.[12] By contrast, Michael Metcalfe, a Norwich weaver, thought emigrants were pushed out. He fled to America to escape the Church courts, protesting against 'innovations . . . never heretofore urged upon any man's conscience . . . since the Reformation'; 'God is about to try his people in the furnace of his affliction . . . O Norwich! the beauty of my native country – what shall I say unto thee?'[13] Recent opinion about the Great Migration has been as divided as Corbet and Metcalfe, and relates to debate about the character of the religious crisis that brought England to civil war.[14] Were emigrants 'religious extremists whose views few high Calvinists would have tolerated', as one scholar suggests? I think not: rather, they were reluctant migrants, for whom New England was a last resort.[15]

For a long time, the puritan movement kept up a delicate balance between loyalty to the Church of England, and criticism of it, in order to reform from within. They sustained this by their enthusiasm for the preaching of godly ministers and pious practices that went beyond prayer book worship; and by agitating against what they saw as remnants of popery. They were deeply averse to the idea of separating from the national Church to form breakaway reformed Churches: to do so was schismatic, unlawful, not a course of action God would smile on. But events of the 1630s upset the balance. Archbishop Laud's reform of liturgy seemed to puritans a creeping Catholicism. We witness an intriguing tactical

hill' becomes a foundation for the American sense of national destiny, a theme pursued perhaps most notably by S. Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven, CT, 1975), and, more recently, by A. Zakai, *Exile and Kingdom* (Cambridge, 1992).

[11] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 273; T.D. Bozeman, 'The Puritans' "Errand into the Wilderness" Reconsidered', *NEQ*, LIX (1986), 231–51; A. Delbanco, 'The Puritan Errand Re-Viewed', *JAS*, XVIII (1984), 343–60.

[12] Bodl., Tanner MS 68, fo. 189; *ODNB*, 'Clement Corbet'.

[13] Michael Metcalfe, 'To All the True Professors of Christs Gospel within the City of Norwich', 13 Jan. 1636/7, *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XVI (1862), 281.

[14] Nicholas Tyacke's work has been fundamental in setting the agenda: *Anti-Calvinists* (Oxford, 1987); idem, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530–1700* (Manchester, 2001). M. Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and their Opponents in Early Modern England: Religion in Norwich c.1560–1643* (Woodbridge, 2005), 186–213, casts new light on divisions in Norwich.

[15] G. Bernard, 'The Church of England c.1529–c.1642', *History*, LXXV (1990), 199. My own view follows Nicholas Tyacke's argument that a broad Calvinist consensus was disrupted by Laudian policy in the 1630s. Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 177–80, critiques Bernard for arguing against the idea that 'the English Church went through a Calvinist phase' and argues that 'by 1640 the earlier charge of Arminianism had escalated into the much more damaging one of Popery' (197).

game: the Church authorities set conditions they knew puritan clergy would not meet, and waited for resignations; while ministers manoeuvred to gain time, hoping the demands would be dropped – going into hiding for a while, or moving to a parish in another diocese. Eventually, New England came to be seen as a safe haven from the storm, and, more than this, a God-given chance to do abroad what could not be done in England. The threat of popery at home created a vision of purity abroad, a kind of reformation by evasion.[16]

How could emigrants be sure God's providence was leading them to New England? It mattered enormously to these people that the hand of providence in the New England venture was clear to both the godly who left and to the godly who stayed behind. Perish the thought that settlers could be accused of deserting the English Church in its hour of need. Reaching a consensus about the providential meaning of emigration was an intensely collaborative business. As John Allin and Thomas Shepard later put it, defending their decision to leave: 'Yea, how many serious consultations with one another, and with the faithfull ministers, and other eminent servants of Christ, have been taken about this worke, is not unknowne to some; which cleares us of any rash heady rushing into this place [New England], out of discontent.' These discussions played an important part in detaching these people from home, and explain their fierce sense of being accountable to the godly in England for what they did in America.[17] They were unlikely migrants: well-settled families with strong local ties, not the sort of people usually attracted to colonial ventures (a motley assortment of young single men). Historians sometimes play off religious motives for emigration against economic motives, but emigrants were not in the habit of separating out their motives. In fact, their belief in providence harnessed many different motives together, and thus provided a powerful means to stir up mass migration. Emigrants believed a true call to go proved itself by the sheer variety of signs that pointed to New England. They counted up the ways providence led down the same path.[18] So religion and profit could go hand in hand: in this venture, 'Religion and profit jump together (which is rare)', as one colonial entrepreneur put it. But what if there were no profits in the wilderness?[19] What of God's blessing then? Putting that to one side for now, let us just observe that colonists understood very well that God's blessing depended on the obedience of his people:

[16] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 261–71, to be explored more fully in *Atlantic Pilgrims' Progress*. Important themes not touched on here are the role of the Netherlands as a refuge, and the precedents emigrants cited to argue for the legitimacy of flight from persecution.

[17] John Allin and Thomas Shepard, 'The Preface', 28 November 1645, *A Defence of the Answer* (1648), 6. Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 269; T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), 268–85.

[18] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 270–3; Cressy, *Coming Over*, 74–106, plays down the significance of religion in light of the variety of motives. On providentialism, see A. Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999).

[19] Edward Winslow, *Good Newes from New-England* (1624), 64. See J.F. Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness* (1991); S. Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth* (New York, 1995).

> is he not a God abroad as well as at home? is not his power and providence the same in N[ew] E[ngland] that it hath been in old E[ngland?]. if our wayes please him he can commande deliverance and safetye in all places, and can make the stones of the feild, and the beastes, yea, the raginge seas and our verye enemies, to be in league with us [Job v.23]. but if we sinn against him, he can rayse up evill against us out of our own bowels, houses, estates etc.[20]

So in the exceptional circumstances of the 1630s, a bunch of unlikely migrants were carried away from home by providence, to be a 'city on a hill', a beacon of purity to witness against popery in England. The terms of emigration were agreed with godly friends who stayed behind, because this was reformation by evasion, not schism. Colonists were in no doubt that they would be held accountable for the way their experiment worked out, not only by their peers, but by the almighty.[21]

III

To prove that they had been right to leave England, colonists had to show what a Reformation they could achieve. In Winthrop's 'city on a hill' sermon he told fellow-travellers that they had to do more than replicate the religious life they had known:

> whatsoever wee did or ought to have done when wee lived in England, the same must wee doe and more allsoe where wee go: That which the most in theire Churches mainteine as a truthe in profession onely, wee must bring into familiar and constant practise . . .[22]

Settlers did not set off for America with a clear idea of how to put this into effect. Nor did their peers expect this. The theologian William Ames wrote to John Winthrop from the Netherlands a few months before Winthrop's departure:

> I purpose . . . God willing . . . to come into England in sommer, and (upon the news of your safe arrival [in New England], with good hope of prosperitie), to take the first convenient occasion of following after yow. Concerning the directions you mention, I have nothing to write: as being ignorant of special difficulties; and supposing the general care of safetie, libertie, unitie, with puritie, to bee in all your minds and desires. If upon further information, any thing come in my minde, I shall be ready to communicate the same with yow.[23]

[20] *Winthrop Papers*, II. 209.
[21] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 273.
[22] Winthrop, 'Modell of Christian Charity', *Winthrop Papers*, II. 293.
[23] *Winthrop Papers*, II. 180; K.L. Sprunger, 'William Ames and the Settlement of Massachusetts Bay', *NEQ*, XXXIX (1966), 66–79; *ODNB*, 'William Ames'.

Yet within three or four years, New England arrived at a very distinctive model of what a pure Church should be, which proved immensely controversial back home.

What emerged was partly a response to the needs of new communities in harsh conditions: strategies to stabilize settlement. It was also a fierce reaction to the threat of popery they had experienced in England: their view of popery defined the kind of purity they looked for. So the circumstances of the New World, and the circumstances that motivated emigration, set the context. The unusual shape of New England's Reformation came about because the rhetoric that carried settlers away from England, and the hardships of the New World, turned elements of piety into principles of ecclesiology. Pious practices that had become popular in the years before emigration were pressed into service to define the nature of the Church. Three aspects of puritan piety are especially pertinent: vows or covenants, which the godly used to steady themselves in times of difficulty, and to give a framework to their fellowship; the practice of keeping track of one's spiritual experience, which helped the godly to work out whether they were of the elect; and, more generally, the local focus of puritan piety, which became strong after puritans failed to achieve national reform in Elizabethan times. These elements in puritan piety had been enormously successful in England as a way for puritans to establish their identity as godly people. Now we see a significant transformation: these means of puritan self-definition are used to define the identity of the Church.

To understand the context for this transformation, it is necessary to appreciate how hard life in America was, at the beginning. A colonial chronicler recorded how settlers waited in 1631 for a ship to bring badly needed supplies:

> The women once a day, as the tide gave way, resorted to the . . . Clambankes . . . where they daily gathered their families food with much heavenly discourse of the provisions Christ had formerly made for many thousands of his followers in the wildernesse . . .[24]

A surgeon called John Pratt pictured himself, like Jesus in the wilderness, tempted by the devil to ask God to turn stones into bread.[25] The situation became acute as more and more boatloads of emigrants sailed into Boston harbour. New settlers struggled to build houses and cultivate land, in a precarious effort to establish fledgling towns, taking on kinds of work they had never encountered before. From the start, some questioned whether providence intended such hardship. Had they settled in the right place? Should they move south to better prospects in the West Indies? Should they have left England in the first place? One colonist, Giles Firmin, told Governor John Winthrop

> I have heard a conclusion gathered against these plantations, because the Lord hath so sadlye afflicted the founders of them in their estates; that

[24] Edward Johnson, *A History of New England* (1653), 49.

[25] 'Pratt's Apology', Nov. 1635, *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 2nd series, VII (Boston, 1818), 126–8; Luke iv.3–4.

> therefore it was not a way of God, to forsake our countrye, and expose ourselves to such temptations, as we have done, so long as wee might have enioyed God in any comfortable measure in the place whence we came, alledginge that it is scarcely knowne that any Church in a way of separation as wee are did euer yet thrive in grace.[26]

John Cotton, preaching to large crowds in Boston, Massachusetts, used a culinary image to stop the restless in their tracks:

> If men be weary of the country and will [go] back againe to England because in heart they are weary . . . I feare there is no spirit of reformation . . . As it is with some syrups, when they are boyled up to their full consistence, they will not run where they fall, but there they will stand: So if men be boyled up to a full consistence, they will not be flittering.[27]

New England's innovations took shape early on, in the midst of colonists' struggle with their harsh environment. Church covenants as a way to bring new Churches into being; conversion narratives as a test for those who wanted to become Church members; the novel claim that Christ's visible Church on earth exists only in the form of local congregations; sweeping powers given to lay people to admit or get rid of members, and to choose or throw out ministers. All this was going to look strange to those left behind in England – several critical steps beyond puritan experiments with discipline in English parishes. So why did colonists choose to interpret scripture in the way they did, and adopt this model of the Church as 'primitive purity'?

Church covenants quickly emerged as a way to bind people together. Like New England's town covenants, and land grants with conditions attached, they fixed precarious communities. You needed at least seven people to 'gather a Church' (as settlers liked to put it); many Churches began with the bare minimum of seven colonists composing and signing their covenant. Constituting Churches by covenant was already something done in England by breakaway separatist Churches. In their experience, we can see a similar process at work as in New England: circumstance transforming elements of piety into definitions of the Church. But in New England, it is highly likely that the momentum for covenant came not directly from separatism, but from the stabilizing role of personal and communal vows in mainstream puritan piety.[28] Critics in England quickly spotted that New England's Church covenants meant 'Thatt none are to be admitted as sett members, butt they must promise nott to departt or remooue, unlesse the congregation will giue leaue'.[29] Colonial spokesmen were happy to agree that this

[26] *Winthrop Papers*, IV. 191; K.O. Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641* (Cambridge, 1993), 320–5.

[27] John Cotton, *The Churches Resurrection* (1642), 21.

[28] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 278–9; Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness*, 139–48, 310–15; S. Foster, *Their Solitary Way* (New Haven, CT, 1971), 11–64; P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), 269–73.

[29] 'John Dod and Twelve Other English Ministers in England to New England "Brethren" ', c. June 1637, S. Bush Jr, ed. *The Correspondence of John Cotton* (2001), 264.

was so. John Davenport, answering the point, argued that Church covenants averted

> the necessarie ruine that may fall upon the body, if every . . . member should depart at his own pleasure . . . if one man may . . . depart, why not another also . . . and if one, why not 2.6.10.12? . . . and so . . . the whole building must fall down. And if that may be so in one Church, why not all?[30]

The practice of asking people who wanted to become church members to give a conversion narrative, a personal testimony of religious experience, was unique to New England, but later much copied elsewhere. Again, we see how something in puritan piety gets reworked into an ecclesiological principle. On the eve of emigration, English puritans were increasingly preoccupied with examining their spiritual experience for signs of God's work, to be sure they were truly godly, truly of the elect. Self-scrutiny played into the process of decision about emigration. Once in New England, this habit of puritan piety was put into a communal, ecclesiological context. This was more than a confession of faith that could be learned by rote. People were expected to give an account of their conversion in front of the assembled Church, and be questioned on it; often they didn't pass the test first time, or even the second. Conversion narratives identified the godly to one another in a strange new world, to form pure Churches of 'visible saints'. What's more, the sharing of spiritual journeys helped to contain doubts and disappointment about coming to New England, and to define settlers' common purpose. Some of New England's churches shied away from this radical innovation, but most took it on. It might seem that these Churches of visible saints were extremely exclusive. Studies of New England towns show that in the early days, most people became members. The test of a conversion narrative, like Church covenants, was part of a drive to nurture community.[31]

To understand colonists' novel claims about the local character of the Church, and the sweeping powers lay people were given to admit and exclude members and ministers, we have to look to the rhetoric that motivated emigration. To witness against the advance of popery in England, settlers had to establish purity. Their perception of what popery was defined the kind of purity they looked for. They made their Churches the antithesis of all they saw as popish in England. Thus New England's Churches were local, with voluntary membership, demo-

30 Davenport's answer is in 'An Answer of the Elders . . . unto . . . Nine Positions', 72–6, published as part of [Richard Mather], *Church Covenant and Church-Government Discussed* (1643).

31 P. Caldwell, *The Puritan Conversion Narrative* (Cambridge, 1983), 45–80; C. Cohen, *God's Caress: the Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience* (Oxford, 1986), 137–61; C. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982), 76–89. For English background, see M. Todd, 'Puritan Self-Fashioning', in F.J. Bremer, ed. *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith* (Boston, MA, 1993), 57–87; T. Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *HJ*, XXXIX (1996), 33–56.

cratic, made up of those who were visibly godly. This in contrast to the English Church as settlers perceived it, after their experience in the 1630s: national, mandatory, hierarchical, too tolerant of the ungodly. Colonists' origins in English parishes had already set an agenda for reform that was strongly local. In New England this localism became a Church-defining principle. Puritans in England had not yet settled important theoretical questions about the ideal form of Church government, such as the role of synods in relation to individual Churches, or the balance of authority between minister and people. New Englanders chose to resolve the ambiguities of English puritanism in a direction that provided the starkest witness against popery back home. As a result, they reached their very distinctive understanding of the visible Church, seeing it in purely local terms, and gave radical powers to the people.[32]

Winthrop had made it a principle that 'whatsoever we did . . . in England, the same must we do and more also where we go'. And that is just what we find in the dynamics that shaped New England's Churches: out of the circumstances that led to emigration, and the circumstances of the early settlements, came a new model of the Church. However, it is important to recognize the degree of 'sameness' that framed New England's innovations. Colonists kept some familiar features of their religious life in England. Each town had its church – that is, the Church was organized geographically, in a way similar to the parish system, even though being in the parish, so to speak, did not mean you were automatically a member of the church. Public preaching was vital. Church membership might be voluntary, but hearing sermons was compulsory. The magistrates required everyone to come; in an attempt to ensure this, the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed a law in 1636 that no house could be built more than half a mile from the meeting house.[33] New England has been described as 'a very tightly controlled experiment': it was.[34]

IV

How did New England look to the 'eies of all people' left behind in England? The message that England took from the experiment, though it was not at all the message colonists intended to send home, was that New England had cast off England in the cause of purity: 'I haue heard of many of your colony, that saye with the Pharasie *Stand further off, I am holier than thou*.'[35] The New England experiment started to fragment godly unity. Despite colonists' best intentions, the New England experiment became a major cause of division at home. New

[32] Hardman Moore, 'Popery', 281; Tyacke, *Aspects*, 128; S. Brachlow, *The Communion of Saints* (Oxford, 1988); C.G. Schneider, 'Roots and Branches: From Principled Nonconformity to the Emergence of Religious Parties', in Bremer, ed. *Puritanism*, 167–200; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 287–332; J.F. Cooper Jr, *Tenacious of their Liberties: the Congregationalists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Oxford, 1999), 11–67.

[33] This proved hard to enforce: D. Rutman, *Winthrop's Boston* (New York, 1972), 93.

[34] C. Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990), 9.

[35] *Winthrop Papers*, III. 112. Luke xviii.11, Isaiah lxv.5.

England's supporters expected innovations in the cause of reformation, and understood that there might be 'special difficulties' in a new plantation.[36] But they felt colonists had gone too far. They were alarmed by the New England's example being used back home to justify a step colonists had refused to take: withdrawing from parish churches to form breakaway independent congregations. Queries came to New England first in letters from old friends; then, more ominously, long lists of questions drawn up by groups of ministers who had once given their blessing to emigration. New England sent back careful replies, hyper-sensitive to opinion back home. These exchanges, put into print, became the first shots in a battle of books.[37]

As so often in Reformation times, print played a major role in polarizing opinion. Old allies in nonconformity found themselves divided. By 1643, party-lines were pretty clear: Congregationalists and Presbyterians each claimed the most scriptural form of Church government. New England and the Scots vied with each other to steer the course of English reform. New England, 3,000 miles away, was at a disadvantage. Colonists had to wait months for books to reach them, and wait again for their replies to reach the London press (the colonies had no printing press until 1649, and anyway, since the tracts defending New England were for an English audience, it made sense to send work home).[38] Colonial authors had to risk their manuscripts being lost at sea. Pity Thomas Hooker, whose *Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline*, a weighty answer to *The Due Right of Presbyteries* by the Scot Samuel Rutherford, was 'buried in the rude waves of the vast ocean'. What providential meaning might that have? John Winthrop recorded that 'while Mr Hooker lived, he could not be persuaded to let another coppye go over'.[39]

Meanwhile, Presbyterian propagandists wanted evidence to discredit New England. The campaign was conducted not only in arguments over biblical texts, and tales of New England's excesses, but by trading alarming stories about the activities of colonists who returned to England. The leader of the pack for this kind of popular propaganda was Thomas Edwards. Edwards's *Gangraena* delighted in information about anyone 'lately come out of New-England'. Former colonists who appear in Edwards's pages fit one of two stereotypes: radical advocates of the New England Way, causing disruption back home; or witnesses against New England, appalled by what they had seen there. Either way, Edwards's reports fulfilled Winthrop's worst fears about New England becoming a by-word for error.[40]

36 See n. 23.

37 Nicholas Tyacke used John Dod's letter in his 'The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603–1640', *Aspects*, 111–31; see Bush, ed. *Cotton Correspondence*, 257–72; Schneider, 'Roots and Branches'.

38 Pestana, *English Atlantic*, 53–85, 235–40; F.J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610–1692* (Boston, MA, 1994), 123–74.

39 Thomas Goodwin, 'Preface', 17 April 1648, to Thomas Hooker, *A Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline* (1648); Winthrop, *Journal*, 609.

40 Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena* (1646). A. Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford, 2004) provides the definitive account.

It is intriguing to juxtapose the New England Way promoted in books and pamphlets, with the New England Way brought home by hundreds of people. The certainties of print contrast with much more ambiguous personal histories. Those who returned to England are usually forgotten in the onward march of American history, but my own research has found enough specific families and individuals going home to show that at least 1,500 settlers left for England in the 1640s and 1650s. Well over a thousand of these returned for good. This is a remarkably high number to have identified from actual cases, and these are only the settlers who left footprints in the surviving sources: many more must have made the same voyage. This amounts to one in nine colonists leaving New England after circumstances in England changed in 1640.[41] Since virtually no shipping lists for the return journey across the Atlantic survive (in contrast to the English authorities' efforts to list outbound passengers in the 1630s), these settlers have been traced through all kinds of documents: wills, deeds, letters of attorney, church and town records, letters, printed books. It is often easiest to catch people just before they set sail, when a will or letter of attorney drawn up before setting sail signals their intention to return home. From that point their stories can be traced backwards and forwards in time, from their origins in English counties to New England towns, and back again across the Atlantic. Some had been in New England two or three years; others for more than twenty. One of the striking findings is that a third of the clergy who emigrated in the 1630s returned home before 1660. Certain New England towns lost a high proportion of settlers. The temptation to return was greatest in the early 1640s, as soon as the bishops were gone; in the short interval of peace between the first and second civil wars; and in the early 1650s, when Cromwell's regime brought new opportunities. Although the people who went home shared the experience of emigration and settlement, and in most respects differed little from those who stayed, their collective story casts the New England experiment in a different light.[42]

To leave, or to stay: this question hung over settlers in the 1640s and 1650s. It was not so much a matter of being disenchanted with the New England experiment, though some certainly were. It was more a matter of not seeing any reason to stay on, now the cause of reformation had advanced so far at home. Nathaniel Ward, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, argued that 'Divers make it an article of our *American* Creed, which a celebrate divine of *England* hath observed upon *Heb.*

[41] Based on a conservative estimate of New England's population; even if we took the highest estimate, the figure would be approaching 1 in 15. Cressy, *Coming Over*, 192, suggests from demographic evidence that 'as many as one in six' returned: his figure and mine are not so far apart, given that they were arrived at in completely different ways. Return traffic in the 1630s is not included, although some migrants – discouraged by harsh conditions – sailed back straightaway.

[42] The detail will be presented in *Atlantic Pilgrims' Progress*. Discussion of the more prominent or notorious ex-colonists appears in W.L. Sachse, 'Harvard Men in England 1642–1714', *Transactions of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXV (1942–6), 120–31; Sachse, 'The Migration of New Englanders to England, 1640–1660', *American Historical Review*, LIII (1947–8), 251–78; H.S. Stout, 'The Morphology of Remigration: New England University Men and their Return to England, 1640–1660', *JAS*, X (1976), 151–72; Bremer, *Congregational Communion*.

11.9 That no man ought to forsake his own countrey but upon extraordinary cause, and when that cause ceaseth, he is bound in conscience to return if he can.' Ward, who been excommunicated by Laud, went back to his native Essex after news of Laud's death reached the colonies.[43] Some feared the loss of settlers would fatally damage New England, but New England's communities had to find ways to unravel the providential rhetoric that had taken them away from England, to respect a call to go home. Just as the decision to leave England had often been a corporate, social process, so too was the decision to leave. People consulted their Church about release from covenant, their neighbours, leading ministers.[44] It was a commonplace that anyone who 'left against all advice', should expect to meet with terrors from the almighty.[45] A Harvard graduate in England, teasing classmates for not sending letters, reveals these colonial assumptions:

> do they so much question our call [to England] that they also question Gods blessing upon us, and therefore conclude that we are either drowned, or if got to England [are] . . . despised afflicted creatures . . . not worth bestowing a few lines on: or hath the meagreness of their winter commons shrunk up their guts and made their braines to perish so that they have . . . forgotten us?[46]

New England settlers scattered widely across the British Isles, seeking out 'God's glory and my owne comfort' (as one former colonist put it), still showing a determination to see a thread of providence through their experience.[47] Many reappeared within their old local communities, which is not surprising, but has never been fully mapped out. Some became adventurers in the new climate created by Cromwellian policy, and played a substantial role in the fabric of the regime in Ireland, Scotland, the north, and in the development of Cromwell's administration.

How well do these former settlers fit the stereotypes we find in print, particularly in Edwards's *Gangraena*? Some promoted Independent gathered Churches.[48] Others spoke out against what they had seen in against New England.[49] But many colonists slip back into English parishes, and defy the stereotype of being militant campaigners for the New England Way. Most lay people are hard to track: they do not stand out in the records, which is in itself revealing.

43 Nathaniel Ward, *The Simple Cobler of Agawam in America* (1647), 24. *ODNB*, 'Nathaniel Ward'.
44 For examples, D.G. Hill, ed. *Record of Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths, and Admissions to the Church and Dismissals . . . from the Church Records of . . . Dedham, Massachusetts* (Dedham, MA, 1888), 36–7; Bush, ed. *Cotton Correspondence*, 419–21.
45 Winthrop, *Journal*, 414–16, records bitter disappointment at colonists' departures.
46 *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 4th series, VIII (1868), 2–3; 'winter commons' refers to the food at Harvard.
47 John Nickolls, ed. *Original Letters and Papers of State Addressed to Oliver Cromwell* (1743), 54.
48 For example, *ODNB*, 'Thomas Weld'. However, Pestana shows that most tracts written to support New England came from the colonies, rather than from those who had returned: *English Atlantic*, 240.
49 For example, *ODNB*, 'Thomas Lechford'.

More can be said about ex-colonists who were ministers. Rather than being uniformly militant for Congregationalism, they found a variety of ways to adapt the colonial vision to the English context. The vast majority went to parishes, not Independent congregations. They entered the ambiguous world of English parish life in the 1640s and 1650s, little explored by scholars, where the relationship between the godly and the wider community worked its way out from place to place with varying degrees of clarity and hostility. They used their New England experience within the surviving structures of a national Church, with its parish boundaries and parish ministry.[50]

Ex-colonists are prominent in an unusual group of clergy: those who, in the special circumstances of the Cromwellian Church, combined a parish living with ministry to a gathered Church.[51] Take the case of John Phillip, who brought New England experience home to his English parish. Apart from three years abroad, he was Rector of Wrentham, Suffolk, from 1609 to 1660. Bishop Wren excommunicated him in 1636. He emigrated in 1638, but sailed home in 1641, as soon as news came of Wren's impeachment. Phillip was known as a 'New England man' – the only New Englander to attend the Westminster assembly. But he waited eight years to gather a Church in his parish, until it was legal to do so within the structures of the national Church. Before his parishioners made their covenant, he read out a paper to explain what they were about: 'but the re-forming of ourselves according to that church estate the patterne whereof is set before us in the words of Christ', done 'as all right reforming must be, by reducing things to the primitive and first institution'.[52] In other words, in the reformation of Wrentham, an existing church was being reshaped, rather than a new one created.

For people like Phillip, and for those who stayed on in the colonies, perhaps the most significant difference between the Reformation in Old England and New was this: England's Churches were long-established, but corrupt; whereas New England's Churches were *new* – the special opportunity of a New World was to begin again, and get it right. According to John Allin and Thomas Shepard, the colonial context made a difference: 'where there is no Church relation, but a people are to begin . . . new . . . Churches, reformation is to be sought in the first constitution. This is our case.' In England, however – as the colony's leading advocate for Congregationalism, John Cotton, put it – 'all the worke now is, not to make them Churches, which were none before, but to reduce and restore them to their primitive institution'.[53] This made room for the New England experiment to be relativized: it might not be possible to transplant the purity achieved 'over

[50] For the context, see J. Morrill, 'The Church in England, 1642–9', in Morrill, ed. *Reactions to the English Civil War* (1982); C. Cross, 'The Church in England 1646–1660', in G.E. Aylmer, ed. *The Interregnum: the Quest for Settlement* (1974).

[51] An unusual group, first called to notice by G.F. Nuttall, 'Congregational Commonwealth Incumbents', *Congregational Historical Society Transactions*, XIV (1943), 155–67.

[52] Wrentham Church Book, transcribed in DWL, Harmer MS 76.7, fos 5–8. A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), 389.

[53] Allin and Shepard, *Defence of the Answer*, 10; John Cotton, *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645), 111–12.

there' back home. By the 1650s, Cotton was convinced by the activities of radical sects that 'for [the] present, it is certaine that the body of the nation of England is not capable of fellowship in Independent Churches'.[54] He affirmed the old formula that Church government 'give[s] not being . . . but wel-being to Churches'. New England ways were not essential.[55] Giles Firmin, who returned from America to become vicar of Shalford in Essex, shows how someone could absorb New England experience but nip and tuck his ideals to accommodate to an English parish. Firmin loved what he had known in New England – he said of Church covenant, 'if ever I can attaine it, I will' – but judged it too divisive to implement back home:

> You must put a difference between Churches new erecting and these in England, which have been Churches for so long; when I raise a house new from the ground, I may then doe as I please, but if I be mending of an old house, I must do as well as I can, repaire by degrees.[56]

It is intriguing that the most outstanding Congregationalists in England were not colonists, but people like John Owen, who had been converted to the Congregationalist cause by reading books. Owen adopted the dogmatic model of the New England Way set out in print, and as a result left parish ministry to work with gathered Churches.[57] In contrast, many people who had lived through the rhetoric and circumstance that formed New England's Churches came back to parishes, and accommodated what they had known to the English context.

V

What does the New England experiment tell us about the evolution of England's Long Reformation; and, more generally, about the process that created so many varieties of Reformation?

We have seen how the terms on which emigrants set sail shaped the New England experiment: a rhetoric of purity, to witness against popery; and a providentialism that made the stakes very high. The decision to emigrate had consequences colonial pioneers did not expect or want. The experiment abroad had an impact at home altogether otherwise from what was intended. Print, printed polemic, was a culprit in bringing this about. What we have seen above all is that the origins and evolution of New England's Reformation were 'more circumstantial than wholly intentional or predictable'.[58]

54 F.J. Bremer, ed. 'In Defense of Regicide: John Cotton on the Execution of Charles I', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, XXXVII (1980), 122.

55 John Cotton, 'Queries tending to Accommodation between Presbyterian and Congregationall Churches', 3, published in his *Covenant of Grace* (1655), separately paginated.

56 Giles Firmin, *Separation Examined* (1652), 82.

57 P. Toon, *God's Statesman: the Life and Work of John Owen* (Exeter, 1971), 27.

58 As Patrick Collinson observes, in a more general way: 'Sects and the Evolution of Puritanism', in Bremer, ed. *Puritanism*, 164.

American history traces a firm road forward for New England's Calvinist, puritan establishment. Denominational history traces a clear future for Congregationalism, in New England and old. But in reality, New England's Reformation was precarious. In the 1650s, the city on a hill looked isolated, irrelevant. Cromwell thought so, and tried to persuade settlers to go elsewhere: Roger Williams reported that he looked on New England 'only with an eye of pity, as poor, cold and useless'.[59] The English Church proved capable of containing experiments in parish reform shaped by New England experience. It is interesting to speculate what would have happened if Charles II had not been restored to the English throne in 1660. Would New England's future have become more uncertain? Would parish reformations have achieved more of the New England Way at home? But as it was, the ejection of puritan ministers from their parishes at the Restoration gave New England a new sense of purpose; quite a few colonists who had returned to England decided it was time to cross the Atlantic again.

The dynamics at work in the New England experiment are apparent in many reformation movements. Ecclesiology does not define itself in a vacuum. Contradictory tendencies co-exist in the Church, in pragmatic compromises, until circumstances tip the balance in a new direction. The circumstantial character of reform means we cannot invest the evolution of reformation with inevitability, or irreversibility.[60] The printed certainties of reformation tracts can obscure this. As individuals try to be true to their faith in shifting and uncertain times, progress is often made by regress. If we want to think in terms of a Long Reformation, we have to be wary of investing any position with the quality of being absolute.

[59] Cited by Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 352.
[60] Collinson, 'Sects and the Evolution of Puritanism', 166.

10

'Anglicanism' by Stealth: The Career and Influence of John Overall

ANTHONY MILTON

If we understand by 'Anglicanism' an assumption that the Church of England occupies a distinctive 'via media' between Rome and reformed protestantism, allied to a distaste for speculative theology, a strong concern with ceremonies and their value, a deep attachment to the prayer book, a reverence for patristic authority and a strong sense of continuity with the medieval past, combined with a conviction that these attitudes constitute a natural reflection of a coherent English Reformation settlement, then it has been not the least significant achievement of Nicholas Tyacke (along with historians such as Peter Lake and Patrick Collinson) to have established that much of what we think of as 'Anglicanism' was not present in the churchmanship of the leaders of the Elizabethan Church and state. In light of this fact some historians have begun to search for the origins of this 'Anglicanism' not in the Reformation settlement, but in the 1590s, either in the figure and writings of Richard Hooker or in the 'Anglican moment' that created him.[1] The promoters of some of the features of later 'Anglicanism' were, however, a controversial minority of divines in the 1590s, who would have struggled to find earlier English protestant advocates of the richly ceremonialist 'avant-garde conformity' that they espoused. The process whereby these divines – Hooker, Andrewes, Howson, Saravia – became the mainstream spokesmen of an 'Anglican' middle ground (however distorted by the apparent excesses of the Laudian movement), nevertheless remains little studied.[2]

In the search for the emergence of characteristically 'Anglican' ideas one

[1] P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?* (1988), esp. 225–30; idem, 'The "Anglican Moment"? Richard Hooker and the Ideological Watershed of the 1590s' in S. Platten, ed. *Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition* (Norwich, 2003).

[2] For the later reputations of Andrewes and Hooker, see A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge, 1995), 532–3; N. Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism' in P. Lake and M. Questier, eds. *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c.1560–1660* (Woodbridge, 2000); D. MacCulloch, 'Richard Hooker's Reputation', *EHR*, CXVII (2002); P. McCullough, 'Making Dead Men Speak: Laudianism, Print and the Works of Lancelot Andrewes', *HJ*, XLI (1998).

figure is frequently left out, or simply appended to lists of early anti-Calvinists, and that is the regius professor of divinity at Cambridge, dean of St Paul's and later bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and then Norwich, John Overall. The neglect of Overall is partly owing to the fact that his recorded ideas survive only in fragmentary and dispersed materials. Nevertheless, this disparate survival has served to disguise the comprehensive range and coherence of his views, which were frequently pioneering in their anticipation of later developments. Moreover, it will be suggested here that Overall also provides us with a way into the conundrum of how the apparently marginal 'avant-garde conformity' of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean Church became the mainstream 'Anglican' position. It will be argued that Overall is an especially important figure in the emergence of the notion of 'Anglicanism', partly because of his readiness to identify in broader terms the distinctiveness of the Church of England, but also because of the ways in which he was arguably a crucial developer (in some ways, indeed, an inventor) of what we might term an 'Anglican' methodology. In this role, it is Overall's apparent obscurity, and the way in which he managed it, that may itself provide the key to his influence in the development of the Church of England.

While Overall may often appear as a defensive and reclusive individual – a shadowy figure who deliberately sought the shadows – it is important to grasp that he was in fact consistently more audacious and radical in his thinking than others of his generation. He was the only divine centrally involved in the Cambridge predestinarian disputes of the 1590s who survived to play an important role in the Jacobean Church. He was a friend and supporter of Peter Baro (while Baro himself opposed attacks made on Overall). Overall's insistence in sermons and disputations that the truly justified man might fall from the grace of justification, that his perseverance was conditional on repentance for sin, that Christ died for and was offered to 'every singular man' and that reprobation stemmed from sin and not from the mere will of God, all provoked hostile opposition from the Cambridge college heads and accusations of doctrinal innovation.[3] His connections with Dutch Arminianism are therefore especially noteworthy. He appears to have been the only prominent English divine who corresponded directly and regularly with the Dutch Arminian party in the shape of Hugo Grotius, to whom he conveyed his support in their struggle with the Contra-Remonstrants. Again, he seems to have been more audacious than Lancelot Andrewes in his overt advocacy of the Dutch party.[4]

While Overall's concerns with the doctrine of predestination are well known, his broader ceremonial interests are less often emphasized. But in defending the ceremonies of the Church of England at the beginning of James's reign, Overall

[3] CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 25v–6r, 42r–56, 98r–v, 102–5, 119r; HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, X. 209–11; H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), 385, 398–403.

[4] A. Milton, ed. *The British Delegation and the Synod of Dort (1618–1619)* (CERS, XIII, 2005), xxviii–xxxii, 22n, 26–7; *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius* (11 vols., The Hague, 1928–81), I. 240–5, 516–17, 522–3, 571–2, 574, 577–8, 579–80, 593–5, 607–8, 613.

readily followed Richard Hooker's lead in emphasizing that the Church's ceremonies and ritual observances could play a positive role in devotion. Having defended the notion that images and ceremonies could be of value for ornament and 'historical instruction', Overall insisted on going further. Denying the distinction between 'instruction' and 'devotion', Overall stated emphatically that the instruction provided by the Church's images and ceremonies was fruitless unless it stirred up devotion. He saw this as 'good and lawfull', while admitting frankly that the book of common prayer and its preface did not prescribe ceremonies for such an end.[5] Replying to the puritan claim that the second commandment and the homily against the peril of idolatry intended to refer to all Church ceremonies when condemning the use of images in worship, Overall made the obvious point that the word 'images' did not refer to the Church's ceremonies, but rather than limit himself to this position, he devoted most of his answer to defending the religious use of images.[6] He also displayed an elevated sense of the importance of the eucharist: his emphasis on the eucharistic presence created unease in 1590s Cambridge, and he made liturgical amendments when he considered them appropriate (which may have encouraged the liturgical researches of John Cosin, and may also have influenced the Scottish prayer book of 1637).[7] It is striking that a hostile contemporary observer condemned the 'madd gazings, and foolish gaudes' that were to be observed 'at the high alter, at Powles' when Dean Overall and his attendants celebrated the sacrament of the eucharist. There is surely more than a whiff here of Peter Smart's condemnation of the liturgical innovations at Durham in the 1620s.[8]

Overall was also one of the most prominent and emphatic promoters of auricular confession. In 1600 in Cambridge he opposed the theses of the later Durham house leader Richard Neile on this topic, and Overall was the first post-Reformation bishop to recommend private confession in his visitation articles, followed later by various Laudian bishops (including Neile himself).[9]

Overall was also a vehement opponent of puritanism. He targeted nonconformists at a diocesan level when bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and his radical visitation articles for Norwich diocese aimed to outlaw the various forms of occasional conformity that had so typified the Jacobean Church.[10] But his

5 BL, Harleian MS 750, fos 95v–6r, 98v. This tract is dated 1605 in the copy in Bodl., North MS a2. For Hooker on ceremonies, see Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, 164–82.

6 BL, Harl. MS 750, fos 91r–9r.

7 CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 25r–v, 26r, 105r; *The Works of . . . John Cosin*, ed. J. Sansom (5 vols., Oxford, 1843–55), V. 114–15, 128, 155; B.D. Spinks, *Sacraments, Ceremonies and the Stuart Divines* (Aldershot, 2002), 96.

8 Centre for Kentish Studies, U 951/Z16, fo. 106r–v. I am very grateful to Dr Ken Fincham for this reference.

9 CUL, MS Gg/1/29 fos 19v–21r; HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, X. 210; N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* (Oxford, 1987), 110–11; K. Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (CERS, 1 and V, 1994–8), I. 86, 164; K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), 238. Montagu cited Overall's visitation articles as evidence that the Church of England approved of private confession to a priest: Richard Montagu, *A Gagg for the New Gospel?* (1624), 84.

10 Fincham, *Prelate*, 238, 258; *Briefwisseling*, I. 577–8 (cf. Neile's earlier complaint of puritanism in

attack on puritanism was much broader than this. He was one of the earliest divines (perhaps the earliest divine) explicitly to define puritanism in a way that included Calvinism – an equation that would become a feature of Laudianism and later conformist thought.[11] He also licensed in 1605 what was the first sustained attack on the association of Sunday observance with the fourth commandment, and on the puritan religiosity that accompanied this.[12]

Most notably, Overall was a pioneer in his insistence that English protestants needed to adopt a tactically moderate line in their responses to the arguments of the Roman Church. Preaching to convocation in 1605, just after the Gunpowder plot, Overall was emphatic that the response to Roman arguments required care and learning, and warned of the danger of allowing people to refute papists from their own private ideas, rather than according to the public doctrine of the Church. He therefore urged the divines of convocation to undertake collective action when responding to Roman Catholic writings. This was a proposal that may well have prompted a number of collaborative projects in the following five years, from Bancroft's promotion of the *Catholike Appeale* (intended by Bancroft to be the work of a panel of divines and published under Thomas Morton's name but with Overall reportedly a significant contributor), to King James's encouragement of Chelsea College (to which Overall was appointed as a fellow).[13] Overall's emphasis on the need for restraint, and for a concentration on emphasizing to Catholics the continuity and catholicity of the Church of England, may have partly reflected his own experiences with recusants, as well as a telling exchange that he claimed to have had with Henry Garnet before his execution, when Garnet supposedly affirmed that the book of common prayer was agreeable to scripture and the primitive Church.[14] There was still, of course, plenty of room for what Overall dubbed (in a very similar speech in Cambridge the following year) 'negative doctrine', in which the many errors of the Church of Rome should be opposed, but still with an emphasis on continuity.[15] Nowhere in either of these speeches was there any hint of more apocalyptic lines of argument. This was not an unintentional omission: in the 1590s Overall had specifically attacked the tendency to associate the pope exclusively with the Antichrist, whereas a decade

Coventry in Fincham, *Prelate*, 239). Paucity of records means that there is little information on Overall's diocesan government (ibid., 279).

[11] Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 8n; Milton, ed. *British Delegation*, 67. Overall may well have been the instructor of Oldenbarneveldt, Grotius and de Dominis in making this connection.

[12] See below. Thomas Rogers's more well-known attack on sabbatarianism was published in 1607.

[13] CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 84v–5r (cf. fo. 87r–v); Thomas Morton, *A Catholike Appeale for Protestants* (1610), sigs. A3v–A4r; T. Faulkner, *An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs* (2 vols., 1829), II. 225.

[14] Anon., *The Black Box of Roome* (1641), 12–13. Overall was appointed to a rectory in 1601 by a convicted recusant days before she formally conformed to the established Church: M. Questier, 'Conformity, Catholicism and the Law' in Lake and Questier, ed. *Conformity and Orthodoxy*, 258. One Roman Catholic tract that Overall may well have had in mind in his convocation speech was Robert Parsons's comprehensive attack on Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* in his *A Treatise of Three Conversions* (published the previous year): Overall's copy survives in DUL, Cosin Library Q.5.15–17.

[15] CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 88r–v.

later Lancelot Andrewes was still endorsing this identification in print, and it would not be publicly questioned again until the 1620s.[16]

In all these attitudes Overall anticipated the emphases of the later Laudians. In his warnings that puritans falsely attributed their own views to the Church of England in their controversial writings against Rome, Overall conveyed cogently and comprehensively what was the essential argument of Richard Montagu's notorious *A Gagg* of 1624.

Central to the response to Rome that Overall outlined to convocation in 1605 was his insistence on the need to defend the moderation of the Church of England's own reformation. Overall charted the framework for a polemical response to Rome that would emphasize the moderation and historicity of the Church of England and her doctrine. English writers against Rome, he declared, should strive to demonstrate that the Church of England had not changed or departed in her doctrine, religion, Church, ministry, ecclesiastical order or sacraments from the form of doctrine and religion received in the primitive Church. Proper synodical authority had been observed in an orderly reformation of abuses that had observed legal precedent. In an address on the eve of the Cambridge commencement the following year Overall similarly avoided the language of separation, emphasizing the stability that was ensured by the Church of England's exercising of its right of self-reformation.[17]

In this attempt to reposition the Church of England, Overall was also one of those most emphatic in his insistence on the importance of patristic authority. In a series of addresses to the Cambridge commencement and to convocation, Overall made the appeal to the fathers a dominant theme of his whole theological approach.[18] This was another area where he found himself having to lecture an unwilling pupil in the shape of Richard Neile, later patron of the Durham house group.[19] Overall's patristic expertise was celebrated in England and the continent alike: John Williams reportedly remarked that 'above all men that ever he heard, he [Overall] did most pertinently quote the fathers, both to the right sense of their phrase, which few did understand, and out of those their treatises, wherein especially they handled the cause, for which he appealed unto them'.[20] In particular, Overall constantly invoked canon 6 of the 1571 collection, which directed preachers to teach nothing 'but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the old testament and the new, and that which the catholic fathers and ancient bishops have gathered out of that doctrine'.[21] In repeatedly emphasizing this canon, Overall sought to direct English theology away from the dominant high

[16] Ibid., fos 39–42r, 67v; Lancelot Andrewes, *Responsio ad Apologiam Cardinalis Bellarmini* (Oxford, 1851), 304–411.
[17] CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 84v–5r.
[18] Ibid., fos 16r–21r, 22r–5v, 82r–6v, 87r–91r.
[19] Ibid., fo. 21r.
[20] John Hacket, *Scrinia Reserata* (1693), I. 11.
[21] E.g. CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 23v–5r, 28v; G. Bray, ed. *The Anglican Canons 1529–1947* (CERS, VI, 1998), 197–9.

Calvinism and towards a less speculative theology. He aimed thereby to influence more than just the universities. At Cambridge he insisted to new DDs that they must avoid teaching vain and useless questions but should maintain their agreement with the ancient fathers while only teaching matters that related to true piety, and he even urged canon 6 in his 1619 visitation articles, instructing churchwardens to report preachers who insisted on anything that was not agreeable to what 'the catholike fathers and auncient bishops' had deduced from scriptural doctrine (thereby revealing a remarkable confidence in the patristic knowledge of the churchwardens).[22]

Overall's emphasis on the distinctiveness of the Church of England's reformation and official doctrinal stance was not combined with a denial of her identity with foreign protestantism: he reportedly showed some reluctance in reordaining foreign protestants and was later alleged to have had 'a hand' in the composition of a work defending the legitimacy of ordinations in foreign reformed Churches.[23] Nevertheless, his determination to focus on the distinctive nature of the Church of England's reformation, and his anxiety to assert a minimalist sense of its doctrinal basis, meant that he was content to speak dismissively of foreign reformed divines when they were invoked against his teaching. When the work of Amandus Polanus was cited against him by his Cambridge inquisitors, Overall complained that Polanus's name was set up 'as a skare-crowe to drive mee from my arguments', while he was reported as saying when Calvin's *Institutes* were cited in disputation before him 'why cite you Calvin? I have studied divinity more yeares than he was yeares of age when he wrote his *Institutions*.'[24] Overall was also prepared to move against the stranger Churches when he felt that their example encouraged nonconformist behaviour in the established Church: in 1619 he tried to prohibit Norwich Walloons their habit of sitting to receive the eucharist.[25]

These are all early manifestations of ideas and attitudes that we associate more with the later Laudian movement – and indeed Overall was the hero of many of those closely involved with the new orthodoxies of the 1630s. John Cosin acted as Overall's secretary and ever after cherished his memory, later erecting a monument to him.[26] Possibly even more significant was Overall's influence on Richard Montagu, the central figure in the religious controversies of the 1620s. The similarity between Overall's views and those of Montagu is not a mere coincidence. They were involved in scholarly exchanges by 1610 at the latest, and these continued until Overall's death in 1619.[27] In his *Appello*, Montagu praised

22 CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 21v–3r, Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles*, I, 162. Even Grotius learned to cite canon 6: *Briefwisseling*, I. 431.
23 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 482 and see below n. 50.
24 CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 104r; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 142.
25 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 514.
26 *ODNB*, 'John Cosin'. See also Edmund Reeve, *The Communion Book Catechisme* (1636), sig. B3r.
27 E.g. *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni in Iulianum Invectivae Duae*, ed. R. Montagu (Eton, 1610), Notae, sig. a3r; Richard Montagu, *Acts and Monuments of the Church* (1642), 138.

Overall as 'that reverend prelate, and most accomplished divine (whose memorie shall ever be precious with all good and learned men)'.[28] In fact, Montagu took material extensively from Overall's unpublished papers. Thus, when arguing that the papacy and Turk together represented the political 'state' of Antichrist, and suggesting that 'that Antichrist' might in fact be a future individual composed of the two, Montagu did not just reproduce Overall's arguments, but duplicated precisely the order of Overall's points and the authorities that Overall cited in a manner that makes it clear that he was simply copying from Overall's manuscript text.[29] He would later devote twenty pages of his *Apparatus* (1635) to a complete transcription of Overall's manuscript account of his conflicts in Cambridge at the 1599 commencement.[30] Overall's surviving papers (almost all in Latin) and prayer book annotations were enthusiastically copied after his death and distributed among a number of Laudian figures, and provided them with a significant inspiration.[31] His visitation articles also influenced at least twenty sets in the next two decades, including those of a series of Laudian bishops (not least Richard Montagu once more).[32]

II

It may seem curious, then, that Overall has attracted merely a fraction of the interest and study that scholars have devoted to Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes, John Cosin and others. The fact that almost none of Overall's writings were published before the nineteenth century (and that most still remain unpublished), that several of these were misattributed, and that they are almost all written in Latin, can help to explain why he has not received systematic attention before.[33] But Overall was a shadowy figure in his own lifetime. The unconventional nature of his views provides part of the explanation, but his bruising experiences in 1590s Cambridge are equally important. These included two bitterly fought elections – for the regius professorship and the mastership of Catharine Hall – in which his victory merely led to further public rebukes. In 1599 he suffered the indignity of a university committee of investigation into his alleged doctrinal errors on topics ranging from justification and Christ's descent into hell to the identity of Antichrist, which resulted in a year-long series of frosty

[28] Richard Montagu, *Appello Caesarem* (1625), 31.
[29] Compare LPL, MS 2550, fo. 105; CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 39r–40r, 41r; Montagu, *A Gagg*, 75; idem, *Appello*, 143, 148–9.
[30] Richard Montagu, *Apparatus ad Origins Ecclesiasticarum* (Oxford, 1635), 49–68; CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 16r–37r.
[31] Among those who managed to copy a number of Overall's papers was James Wedderburn: see BL, Harl. MS 750.
[32] Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles*, I. xviii, 157n.
[33] For pre-nineteenth-century publication of materials by Overall, see John Plaifere, *Appello Evangelium* (1651), 24–31; Montagu, *Apparatus*, 49–68; F.G., *Articuli Lambethani* (1651); A. Campbell, *The Doctrines of a Middle State between Death and the Resurrection* (1721).

exchanges and confrontations, and rumours of his notorious heterodoxy spread throughout Cambridge. At the 1600 Cambridge commencement, after the previous day he had disregarded a request not to attempt to refute certain points of doctrine, he suffered such a violent verbal attack by the moderator that a European visitor noted that Overall 'went quite red with mortification'.[34] He was not just attacked in the schools. William Perkins preached against him in Cambridge, while Perkins's protégé Robert Hill seems to have pursued Overall to his parish of Epping. It was here that Overall famously found his flock worried whether Christ had died for them, and preached a sermon reassuring them on this point. This was no mere local difficulty, however, as Dr Merritt has demonstrated. Hill, who had been involved in the charges against William Barrett, found his way down from Cambridge to be present in the congregation to hear the sermon and note its errors, and to preach his own correction, all at the time when the controversy over Baro and Barrett was at its height.[35] Overall can hardly have been surprised to find his Cambridge disputes over perseverance being raised once more at the Hampton Court conference.

Overall had his own supporters, of course, who seem to have included both the queen and Archbishop Whitgift by 1598, and Fulke Greville reportedly helped to secure him the deanery of St Paul's in 1602. Nevertheless, the clear lesson for Overall was that, regardless of his supporters or even the attainment of higher office, he was always vulnerable to attack. It is hardly surprising that, in the face of such sustained assaults, he chose to become more circumspect. Archbishop Abbot later remarked that Overall, having infected many with unsound doctrine, was 'by sharp rebuke and reproofs . . . beaten from the publique avowing of those fansies'.[36] He had not, however, been frightened off the stage altogether, and did not retreat into passivity. Under James, Overall still occupied important positions as dean of St Paul's and regius professor (until 1607) in Cambridge, and would later move on to two bishoprics. He would appear to have been a trusted figure at the heart of the clerical establishment. He interviewed the gunpowder plotters, was one of the delegates at the Hampton Court conference, acted as one of the translators of the authorized version of the bible, and was appointed a member of Chelsea College. He clearly relished his central location in London: even after vacating his deanery on being raised to the episcopate he appears to have continued to reside in London although no ostensible duties kept him there, and he held regular ordination services in various churches and chapels in the capital.[37]

Overall was thus an important clerical figure who remained at the centre of ecclesiastical politics, despite his controversial views. His brooding presence

[34] Porter, *Reformation*, 375, 397–404; G.W. Gross, ed. *The Diary of Baron Waldstein* (1981), 97–9.

[35] J.F. Merritt, 'The Pastoral Tightrope: a Puritan Pedagogue in Jacobean London' in T. Cogswell, R. Cust, P. Lake, eds. *Politics, Religion and Popularity* (Cambridge, 2002), 152–3; CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 119–22v.

[36] TNA, SP 105/95, fo. 9v; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 37.

[37] Fincham, *Prelate*, 43, 54.

may be one that historians need to take into account when they note the emergence of new developments or enthusiasms in Jacobean ecclesiastical policy. That Overall continued to be strongly out of sympathy with the churchmanship of bishops such as Abbot, and the religiosity of the puritans, cannot be doubted. The challenge for Overall was of how to continue to promote his preferred agenda, and oppose his enemies, without inviting further condemnation. His preferred route was not that adopted by Andrewes, who condemned his opponents by implication, so that implicit criticisms could be decoded in his public sermons, or exemplified in the ceremonialism of his chapel.[38] Instead, as we shall see, Overall found other ways of promoting his ideas.

Overall did not publish formal treatises – his most significant doctrinal works circulated only in manuscript – but he did find his way into print in other forms of publication. Two of these publications were short semi-official works that did not bear his name: a dedicatory preface (to King James) of the new official edition of the works of John Jewel in 1609, and the brief section on sacraments added to the prayer book catechism. Both of these were opportunities for Overall to promote his own agenda. We will discuss the edition of Jewel in a moment, but it is worth noting that even Overall's very brief catechetical section on the sacraments raised a potential point of controversy: by stating that the Church considered there to be 'two onely [sacraments] as generally necessary to salvation', Overall's addition implied more strongly than the thirty-nine articles did that there were other sacraments. Certainly puritan writers immediately warned of this danger, and indeed twenty years later Richard Montagu used this passage in defence of his claim that the Church of England had not reduced the number of sacraments to two.[39] Both the catechism and the preface to Jewel's works presented Overall with the opportunity to expound his own views while apparently simply setting forth the approved doctrine of the Church of England. We shall return to this point later.

Other publications by Overall were his visitation articles. The 1619 set are revolutionary, as we have seen, but did not of course require a licenser. Dr Fincham has noted that visitation articles provided an opportunity 'for anti-Calvinist bishops chafing at the broad accommodation of puritan piety within the Jacobean Church' to publish opinions and manifestoes for change: Overall's set provide a perfect example of this phenomenon.[40] The form of episcopal visitation articles also, of course, enabled such personal manifestoes to appear with the apparent authority of the national Church behind them.

Another method of disseminating his ideas was to edit and oversee the

38 See P. Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and Avant-Garde Conformity at the Court of James I' in L.L. Peck, ed. *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991).

39 S.B. Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (1962), 79; *An Abridgment of that Booke* (1605), 71; Thomas Hutton, *The Second and Last Part of Reasons for Refusal* (1606), 107; Montagu, *Appello*, 306. Article 25 distinguishes baptism and the eucharist from 'those five commonly called sacraments', but does not affirm that there are any other forms besides the two specified that should be given the name of 'sacraments'.

40 Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles*, I. xxii–iii.

publication of works with which he was in agreement. The new edition of Jewel's works is one telling example of this. The dedicatory preface of this enormous folio volume, addressed to King James, was written by Overall but does not bear his name, thereby appearing as authoritative a statement of the Church of England as Jewel's own *Apologie of the Church of England* (which similarly did not bear Jewel's name in the original edition).[41] But Overall used the preface to provide his own very conscious gloss on Jewel's arguments. In his 1605 convocation speech he had specifically highlighted Jewel when urging that the defence of the Church of England should rest on Jewel's declaration that she only ever maintained doctrine that was supported by scripture and the unanimous agreement of the fathers of the Church. In his preface to Jewel's works, Overall therefore makes his customary invocation of the fathers, and even quotes his favourite canon 6 of the 1571 set, while distinguishing between the 'public profession of our Church' of consent with antiquity on the one hand, and the manner in which 'particular men may have otherwise their private opinions, and take some libertie of dissenting from the ancient fathers' on the other.[42] Jewel's *Apology* has virtually nothing to say about the Church of England's own reformation, yet Overall seizes the opportunity to defend 'the publike reformation of our Church, doctrine and service' in his favourite terms as a purging of abuses, like a body being purged of ill humours.[43] Overall thus seized on a rare example of a relatively moderate defence against Rome in order to present this as the essential position of the Church of England – effectively, he transposed the arguments of his convocation sermon of 1605 into a semi-official declaration by the Church of England.

Overall was also involved in securing the publication of other controversial works, even if he did not compose anonymous prefaces for them. The two most notable examples of this phenomenon are both treatises written in Latin. One is Richard Thomson's notorious *Diatriba*, for which Overall helped to secure posthumous publication at Leiden after it had apparently been refused an English licence for publication in the late 1590s.[44] Thomson's work argues in familiar Overall vein that justifying faith (which was accessible to the reprobate) could be lost, and that even the elect could temporarily lose their faith and state of justification, which they could only regain through repentance. Thomson also uses a characteristic Overall ploy by seeking to provide a moderate gloss on the predestinarian articles of the Church of England's confession by looking at them in the light of the Church's discussion of the sacraments, in this case the articles on baptism. Not surprisingly, Thomson finds room early in his discussion to

[41] *An Apology of the Church of England by John Jewel*, ed. J.E. Booty (Ithaca, NY, 1963), xxxvii–viii.

[42] CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 86r; *The Works of the Very Learned . . . Iohn Iewell . . . Newly set forth* (1609), sig. ¶2r–v. Contrast this with Jewel's confident urging of his opponent to read anything that English protestants were publishing: *Apology*, 43.

[43] Jewel, *Works*, sigs. ¶2v-3r. Jewel's *Apologie* essentially offers a defence of European protestantism (e.g. 44, 48, 57–8, 63, 75). Only two sentences in the whole book specifically defend the moderation of the English Reformation's own settlement (104) and the point is not emphasized, restated or reinforced.

[44] Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 36; *Briefwisseling*, I. 244, 516–17, 523, 571, 574.

quote Overall's favourite canon 6 from 1571, with the regretful reflection 'that it would be happy for England if all divines' speeches and writings were regulated by this canon'.[45]

An earlier, and hitherto unnoticed, example of Overall's role in securing the publication of controversial works is his licensing in 1605 of an extraordinary and neglected tract by Robert Loe, a divine from Exeter. Entitled *Effigiatio Veri Sabbatismi*, it is a work that the Laudian polemicist Peter Heylyn would praise some thirty years later as having expounded 'the truest and most justifiable doctrine of the Sabbath of any writer in that time'. The *Effigiatio* certainly provides by far the most sustained assault on the doctrine and practice of the puritan sabbath to emerge before Heylyn's book.[46] But the treatise also has a broader anti-puritan agenda. A significant portion of Loe's book takes the form of a detailed refutation of recent puritan attacks on the prayer book and its ceremonies (although the puritan positions are rehearsed without specific quotations and references). The *Effigiatio* presents an enthusiastically ceremonialist account of the conformist position, offering a systematic explanation of why public prayer is more important than sermons, a lengthy defence of the use of music in church services and a strong attack on extemporary prayer.[47]

This was also in a sense a typical Overall performance: a comprehensive attack on puritan sabbatarianism that tackled its doctrinal roots, as well as a strongly ceremonialist defence of the Church of England that Overall doubtless wished to write, but published by another divine, in Latin. It might have seemed calculated to avoid hostile attention – and it has certainly escaped the notice of subsequent historians. But the book was dedicated to King James – and he was perhaps the only reader whom it was necessary to provide with this alternative early Jacobean defence of the settlement. It is, of course, impossible to know how far Overall was able to influence James's thinking. There is no doubt that many of Overall's ideas would have been amenable to James's own views, but it is at least possible that James's spasmodic enthusiasm for irenical enterprises and collective responses to Rome that emphasized catholicity, and his occasional hostility to puritan spirituality and dogmatic theology, reflected the passing influence or encouragement of Overall and others. Certainly, Overall proved remarkably adept and determined in cultivating the friendship of James's favourite adopted foreign divines, such as Isaac Casaubon and Marc'Antonio de Dominis.[48]

Overall could also surreptitiously disseminate his views by influencing the content of works that were published bearing the names of other divines. This was reportedly the case with at least one book that represented a semi-official work of the Jacobean Church – the *Catholike Appeale for Protestants* – a work that sought

[45] Richard Thomson, *Diatriba de Amissione et Intercessione Gratiae et Justificationis* (Leiden, 1618), 20, 33 and passim.

[46] Peter Heylyn, *The History of the Sabbath* (1636), II. 261; Robert Loe, *Effigiatio Veri Sabbatismi* (1605).

[47] Loe, *Effigiatio*, 82–114.

[48] M. Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon* (Oxford, 1892), 277, 291, 294, 300, 304, 418; BL, Add. MS 4236, fo. 337r.

to cite Romanist authors in support of the protestants' doctrines. This was a collaborative volume of precisely the kind that Overall had urged in convocation, and gave Overall a perfect opportunity to exercise influence behind the scenes – certainly Cosin was later emphatic that Overall 'was the chief author' of the work.[49] It was even later claimed by Cosin that Overall was 'the cheife composer of the 1st draught' of another central Jacobean defence of the Church of England's continuity with the past, namely Francis Mason's *Of the Consecration of Bishops in the Church of England*, although 'Mr Mason indeed added something to it, with the approbation of the bishop, and printed it in his own name at the desire of the bishop'.[50]

Overall may also have played a significant role in the publications of one of the more exotic figures of the Jacobean Church, the apostate Catholic archbishop of Spalato, Marc'Antonio de Dominis.[51] It was Overall who was appointed to conduct a five-hour 'conference' with de Dominis on his first arrival in England in order to confirm his orthodoxy. Cosin also later reported that James commanded that whatever de Dominis wrote 'he should first communicate it in sheets and chapters one after another to the bishop [Overall] whose approbation his majestie would trust before all others'.[52] Overall may thus have acted as editor of some of the most notable passages in de Dominis' famous *De Republica Ecclesiastica*, in which the archbishop defended the catholicity of the Church of England, emphasizing the continuity of its liturgy and outward worship, and arguing that its reformation had merely pruned the excesses of the visible Church.[53] De Dominis's attempts to intervene on the Remonstrants' behalf at court, and his constant insistence that predestinarian issues should not be seen as

49 Cosin makes this assertion in a manuscript note in his copy of Barwick's life of Thomas Morton (DUL, Cosin Library P.4.40). Morton is known to have approached Howson and Donne for comments on the text: see *ODNB*, 'Thomas Morton'.

50 Bodl., Tanner MS 52, fos 103, 152. Cosin's remarks were conveyed via George Davenport in January 1656, who seems initially to have thought that Cosin was referring to Francis Mason's 'The Validity of the Ordination of the Ministers of the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas', published posthumously in *Certain Briefe Treatises* (Oxford, 1641), as 'the booke wherin the ordination of the French Church is vindicated' (fo. 103). Overall was soon afterwards alleged to have had 'a hand' in this work (Richard Baxter, *Five Disputations* [1659], 179), although this may reflect the dissemination of Davenport's original report. In a letter sent in August 1656 Davenport seems to have corrected this earlier account, with Cosin clarifying that he meant that Overall was the chief composer of the book 'De Minist: Anglic: in English, which was printed at London by Bill the Kings printer' (fo. 152). However, none of Mason's works was published by Bill, although *Of the Consecration* was published by the king's earlier printer, Robert Barker. The fact that Mason was Archbishop Abbot's chaplain (and not Overall's, as Davenport surmised) and that Mason himself claimed that it was Abbot who had instructed him to write *Of the Consecration* (while it was also Abbot who instructed Nathaniel Brent to publish Mason's posthumous expanded edition of the work, the *Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae*) makes it difficult to confirm the veracity of Davenport's rather garbled account of Cosin's comments.

51 On de Dominis, see W.B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge, 1997), 220–59. Some amendments were reportedly required at the press (by Overall?) to the text of the 1617 edition of the *De Republica* on issues of Church government: *CSPD 1611–18*, 423, 432.

52 BL, Add. MS 4236, fo. 337r. Cf. Grotius, *Briefwisseling*, I. 572.

53 See the 'Ostensio Errorum quos adversum fidem catholicam Ecclesiae Anglicanae conatus est defendere' in *De Republica Ecclesiastica* (1620), 877–1009 (esp. 878–80, 887–9, 892, 900–1, 916–17).

necessary articles of faith, may all reflect Overall's influence and encouragement.[54] De Dominis's later chiding of Joseph Hall sounds an Overallian note in his insistence on the kinship of puritanism and Calvinism and the insidious role of these two forces in subverting the essential moderation of the Church of England's official reformation, and in his complaint that the British divines at Dort had agreed in the name of the Church of England to what were 'nothing but Calvinist doctrines' rather than the official confession of the Church of England.[55]

III

Overall was, then, able to spread his ideas in a variety of ways. He also managed to make larger claims for his approach precisely as he appeared to retreat from confrontation. His constant emphasis on the need for divines to show peace and charity in their doctrine as well as their personal life, to avoid all vain and useless questions, and to distinguish between public and private doctrine, was an attempted self-defence against his opponents, but was also in practice an attempt to marginalize the doctrines of which he disapproved.[56]

Most intriguing of all is the way in which Overall wove his own ideas into the Church's official position. From his addresses as regius professor or prolocutor of convocation and his collaboration in the *Catholike Appeale*, to his preface to Jewel's works, his visitation articles and his addition to the official catechism, Overall was consistently in a position, not to argue his personal position, but rather to present himself as the spokesman of the orthodoxy of the Church of England. Increasingly, Overall did not present direct arguments against specific Calvinist or robustly anti-Catholic positions, but rather he appealed to the position of the Church of England as the authoritative arbiter in these debates. Of course, as we are so often reminded by historians, the Elizabethan Church of England did not speak with a single voice: its prayer book and thirty-nine articles were the work of conflicting bodies of people, its homilies and injunctions in potential conflict and of disputed authority, its canons unclear.[57]

It was Overall, however, who was one of the first divines to create for the Church of England a coherent theological identity. Reluctant to become once more the punch-bag for his Calvinist opponents, Overall instead created a new theologian, 'the Church of England', for whom he was merely the spokesman. He was well aware that he could not easily cite earlier English protestant divines to endorse many of his ideas: indeed, in all his exchanges with his Cambridge opponents in the late 1590s he only cited foreign protestant authors. The first surviving

54 Milton, ed. *British Delegation*, 24, 26; Grotius, *Briefwisseling*, I. 572; Patterson, *King James*, 238–9.
55 Marc'Antonio de Dominis, *De Pace Religionis . . . Epistola* (Besançon, 1666), 6–14 and passim.
56 CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fos 16r, 21v–2r, 22v, 23r, 24v–5r.
57 E.g. C. Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990), 86–8.

example of his invoking of his favourite canon 6 is in self-defence against the charge of his Cambridge opponents that all the more learned bishops of the Church of England, including the archbishops of Canterbury and York, opposed his position – Overall responded by rather lamely citing the 1571 canon as the position of the archbishop of Canterbury (albeit an earlier one).[58] Given such a shortage of English divines to whom he could appeal, it is no surprise that Overall subsequently seized upon Jewel's works once he had convinced himself that they could support his preferred doctrinal emphases. Ultimately, however, Overall's preferred method was not to cite previous divines, but to create a coherent theological entity in the shape of the Church of England herself: canon 6 became not merely the voice of the archbishop of Canterbury, but the principle on which the Church itself was based, and the yardstick by which all modern doctrines should be judged. The constant complaint of his opponents that he was opposing what had been consistently taught in the Elizabethan Church and universities could thus be treated as an irrelevance.

According to Overall, the Church of England's doctrine was to be read not just in its confessional articles, but in its liturgy – indeed, it was the liturgy that should guide divines in interpreting the Church's position in the most arcane theological differences. There were also broader assumptions behind the Church's position that could be invoked: a reluctance to enter into problematic doctrinal areas, and a readiness to seek out moderate courses. Overall might have to search through canons and liturgical formulations in a highly selective way to locate these principles, but that did not stop him from asserting them to be the guiding tenets of the Church of England. He knew better than anyone how close the Lambeth articles had come to being the approved doctrine of the Church, and yet Overall created an image of the Church of England as a body congenitally incapable of conceiving of such a thing. Not the least irony in Overall's rendering of the Church of England's position was that an alternative reading was being provided at precisely the same time: Thomas Rogers in 1607 presented an account of *The Faith, Doctrine and Religion professed and protected in the Realme of England* ('perused, and by the lawfull authoritie of the Church of England, allowed to be publique'), which upheld an emphatically Calvinist predestinarianism far removed from Overall's views.

Given this context, probably the most striking examples of Overall's creation of an 'Anglican' theological position can be found in the two short manuscript tracts on the predestinarian controversies in the Netherlands, which he composed and circulated during the 1610s.[59] Unlike all the other contributions to the Arminian debate by English theologians, these tracts do not ostensibly set out their author's interpretation of the debate – rather, they simply present the distinctive position of the Church of England. A theological position is created by appealing not just to the thirty-nine articles, but also to the book of common prayer, the

58 CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 23v (cf. fo. 21v).

59 For these tracts, see Milton, ed. *British Delegation*, 64–92.

catechism, the book of homilies, and of course to the 1571 canons. Overall's presentation of parts of the liturgy as laying out a means of glossing and interpreting the thirty-nine articles, alongside patristic doctrine, is particularly noteworthy, and his invoking of canon 6 (defending the orthodoxy of the prayer book) neatly implies the legitimacy of deriving doctrinal points from it.[60]

Also striking in the tracts' 'Anglican' methodology is Overall's presentation of the Church of England's position as that most cherished 'Anglican' phenomenon – a *via media*. It is a *via media* between the Dutch Arminians or Remonstrants on the one side, and the Calvinists (or 'puritans', as Overall directly calls them) on the other. The Church of England thus emerges with its own entirely consistent and coherent position, which also enjoys the Aristotelian privilege of being a golden mean between two extremes. That this was a consciously polemical manoeuvre on Overall's part is evident if we consult the letters that he wrote to the Dutch Arminian Hugo Grotius during this period. In all his correspondence with Grotius, Overall always presented the Dutch controversy as being between two sides, one of which (the Remonstrants) he wholly supported. He commented on how 'the moderate, nay I might say the better and truer, opinion concerning predestination' was being opposed in the Netherlands by those who despised 'the doctrine of the fathers'. He applauded the 'pious and moderate opinions' of the Remonstrants and assured Grotius that in London he would do all that he could to 'promote your cause, which I constantly recommend to God in my prayers'.[61] There was no suggestion here that the Remonstrants represented an extreme position that Overall was defining himself against. This cannot be explained away by suggesting that Overall was incapable of telling Grotius that he disagreed with him: in the same letters Overall makes his opposition to Grotius's views on the relationship of Church and state, and the nature of episcopacy, entirely clear.[62]

These tracts arguably represent another vintage Overall performance: widely distributed but always in manuscript, in Latin rather than English, attributed to Overall but not publicly owned by him, said to have been written for the king though not bearing a specific royal endorsement, and presenting what was ostensibly not an individual interpretation but rather a statement of the formal position of the Church of England.[63] They also represented a remarkable success for Overall, although he may not have been fully aware of it. A British delegation attended the Synod of Dort in the last few months of Overall's life. It is clear that at least one of the delegates – John Davenant – had a copy of Overall's tract with him, that he consulted it and that, when urging his fellow-delegates to support a

60 Ibid., 78, 82 (cf. CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 25r).

61 G. Brandt, *The History of the Reformation . . . in . . . the Low Countries* (4 vols., 1722), III. 261, 314; Grotius, *Briefwisseling*, I. 522, 578. Grotius had visited Overall (and Andrewes) during his visit to England in 1613 (ibid., I. 230–6).

62 Ibid., I. 589–90.

63 On reports that one of Overall's predestinarian tracts was written 'upon the king's command' see *The Correspondence of John Cosin*, ed. G. Ornsby (Surtees Society LII and LV, 1868–72), I. 5.

hypothetical universalist position on the atonement, he appealed to a liturgical example that Overall had presented (as well as the inevitable canon 6).[64]

This was not the least of Overall's posthumous triumphs. In the pamphlet debates of the 1620s, Overall was appealed to by both sides. George Carleton quoted Overall against Montagu on perseverance with the reflection that 'D. Overall would never have refuted a doctrine reserved in this Church', while Joseph Hall treated Overall as a means of glossing Montagu's position in order to concoct a workable compromise between the two sides in the Church of England so that their divisions would not undermine the necessary common front against the Roman enemy. 'It plainly appeared to me', Hall later explained, 'that Montagu meant to express not Arminius but Bishop Overall, a more moderate and safe author.' Hall also noted approvingly that Overall went 'a midway between these two opinions'.[65]

It could, of course, be argued that this represented simply the triumph of Overall's views in a Church that had finally come around to his more moderate views. There is certainly some truth in this. After all, even as determined a defender of the reformed tradition as Hooker's opponent the moderate puritan Andrew Willet felt the need in 1611 to dissociate himself publicly from the supralapsarian views that he had propounded just eleven years previously, refuting directly the notion of an absolute decree of reprobation without respect to sin (which Overall's opponent Hill had insisted upon).[66] The rigours of the supralapsarian position were effectively opposed by all delegates (bar one) at the Synod of Dort, where the British delegates also favoured a hypothetical universalist position on the atonement that moved at least some of the way towards satisfying Overall's earlier concerns. But if some divines were starting to find some of Overall's arguments useful, this was not because Overall had discovered the true 'Anglican' way, and that churchmen of all parties in the Church of England had recognized this and united around the Anglican core that he had made manifest. Rather, Overall's success was in many ways a rhetorical one: he had maintained a number of positions – on doctrine, on worship and ceremony – that were significantly at odds with opinion in the Church of England. Challenged by his opponents, he had beat an effective retreat by instead creating a vision of the Church of England in his own image. Rather than disproving Calvinist doctrine, he argued that it simply was not English. As his opponents sought to abandon more hardline positions, Overall provided an alternative position with the force of the Church's authority behind it and the allure of a supposed *via media*. It was therefore not surprising that, as we have seen, among the British delegation at Dort those divines urging a

64 Exeter College, Oxford, MS 48, fos 80r–3r; Milton, ed. *British Delegation*, 71n, 78, 84, 218n, 219.

65 George Carleton, *An Examination* (2nd edn, 1626), 9; Francis Rous, *Testis Veritatis* (1626), 54; Samuel Ward, *Opera Nonnulla* (1658), 114; *The Works of Joseph Hall*, ed. P. Wynter (10 vols., Oxford, 1863), I. xliii–iv; P. Lake, 'The Moderate and Irenic Case for Holy War: Joseph Hall's *Via Media* in Context' in S.D. Amussen and M.A. Kishlansky, eds. *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1995).

66 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 414–15; CUL, MS Gg/1/29, fo. 119r–v.

moderate position on the atonement seized on Overall's liturgical references to legitimate their position to their colleagues. By the 1620s, Overall's tactical moderation also represented a more understated position on predestinarian issues than that being promoted by the more assertive younger generation of 'Arminian' divines.

Not the least remarkable aspect of this transformation was that Overall had secured his own rehabilitation. His name had now become a watchword for a 'more moderate and safe author' who would never oppose the received doctrine of the Church. Montagu's opponents partly cited Overall against him because he was an authority whom Montagu recognized, and because on the subject of perseverance he maintained a more qualified position than Montagu did. But it also clear that by the 1620s Overall's name was synonymous with moderation and authority (with only older divines such as Archbishop Abbot and Lionel Sharpe aiming to attack him, rather than to co-opt his reputation).[67] Peter Lake can thus write of 'all of the cultural capital attached to the name of John Overall' by 1624; just twenty-five years earlier there had been little cultural capital attached to the isolated controversial professor publicly condemned for spreading dangerous doctrinal innovations. So revered had he become, however, that when Montagu printed the first extended piece of Overall's manuscript writings in his *Apparatus* of 1635 some people could not believe what they were reading: the covenanter Robert Baillie declared that Overall was only the 'pretended author' of the piece, reflecting either that it was a forgery, or that Overall had resolved to keep it in obscurity 'and never in publike to avow' it as his own.[68] Perhaps the apogee of Overall's reputation was reached in 1690, when William Sancroft sought to justify the non-jurors' stance by authorizing a publication with the telling title of *Bishop Overall's Convocation-Book*. This set of canons on secular and ecclesiastical government had been passed by the Church of England in the convocation of 1606, but those involved in their later publication chose to draw maximum attention to the fact that the surviving copy used for the edition was in the hand of Overall as prolocutor. By now, Overall's reputation was such that his name could add status and legitimacy to what was in fact an official work of the Church of England, albeit one that never received the royal assent.[69]

At the heart of Overall's rehabilitation, I would argue, was his polemical

[67] For Sharpe, see *Correspondence of Cosin*, I. 5; Milton, ed. *British Delegation*, 103.

[68] Lake, 'Moderate Case', 73; Robert Baillie, *The Life of William now Lord Archbishop of Canterbury examined* (1643), 103–4. Cf. Robert Kendall, *Sancti Sanciti* (1654), sig. *2v.

[69] *The Convocation Book of MDCVI commonly called Bishop Overall's Convocation Book* (Oxford, 1844). As prolocutor, Overall undoubtedly copied the canons and signed the copy to testify to convocation's assent, but it is far from clear that he was actually responsible for drawing them up. Probably the strongest counter-evidence comes from John Cosin. Cosin wrote to Thomas Morton in August 1648 that Cosin had 'often heard it' from Overall that when he was prolocutor of convocation in 1606 'there was a certain book, made, as I remember, by Archbishop Bancroft, or some other, at his appointment' (ibid., 10n). Given Cosin's penchant for reporting Overall's authorship of texts with which he had been involved, it seems highly unlikely that Cosin would not have mentioned it had Overall indicated in these conversations that he had drawn up the initial canons himself.

triumph in presenting himself as the mere dispassionate spokesman of the Church of England. Moreover, this was a Church of England with a coherent set of principles that matched his own perfectly – moderate, patristic, distrustful of speculative theology, drawn to a *via media*, its doctrinal essence located in the liturgy as much as the thirty-nine articles. In the process of creating a platform for defending his own views Overall had, perhaps, also created 'Anglicanism'.

11

Destroyed for Doing My Duty: Thomas Felton and the Penal Laws under Elizabeth and James I*

THOMAS COGSWELL

After John Felton stabbed the duke of Buckingham in 1628, contemporaries scrambled to identify the assassin. East Anglian residents immediately recalled the Feltons as 'a very ancient family of gentry in Suffolk, very valorous and of a stout spirit'.[1] Beyond that, however, information about John Felton trickled in from unusual sources. Catholics, it turned out, were well acquainted with John's father, and over a decade after his death, they still shuddered at the mention of his name. Many exchequer officials also knew John and his family, although they were hesitant to admit they were on a first-name basis with them. Equally knowledgeable, and equally reticent, was Charles I. Not only did he know John Felton, albeit distantly, but he and his father had paid the assassin's mother a pension; indeed so strong was Mrs Felton's grip on the royal bounty that even after the duke's assassination, the king continued to honour his financial obligation to her.[2]

Such a disparate array of contacts is, to say the least, surprising; it is also almost wholly absent from the sparse secondary literature on John Felton. This essay seeks to correct this omission, and in the process it will argue that the career of the assassin's father provides not only the deeper background to Buckingham's murder, but also it unexpectedly illuminates the murky administrative workings of 'practical anti-papistry'. Generations of ecclesiastical scholars have carefully analysed the major strands of protestant theology and practice, into which we are belatedly incorporating the comparable developments among English Catholics. Yet in sharp contrast, our knowledge of the actual enforcement of the penal laws is sketchy. While Catholic scholars have admirably described how recusants

* I am grateful to Alastair Bellany, Peter Lake and Michael Questier for many discussions of this topic.

1 *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* (1845), I. 382. See also M.A.E. Green, ed. *The Diary of John Rous* (Camden Society, 1st series, LXVI, 1856), 27.

2 Payments, 16–23 July 1630, TNA, SP 16/171/25. For further details, see A. Bellany and T. Cogswell, 'England's Assassin: John Felton and the Assassination of the Duke of Buckingham', *HJ* (forthcoming, 2006).

coped, almost no one has attempted similar research from the state's perspective. Consequently we are only dimly aware of the personnel, practices and periodic fluctuations in the implementation of anti-Catholic legislation, arguably the early modern state's most sustained attempt to modify individual behaviour.[3] To understand precisely what we have missed, we have only to follow John Felton's father through Whitehall.

I

In the late sixteenth century, those who clung to the old faith found their position increasingly precarious as a creeping barrage of statutes steadily boxed them in, restricting their movements, blocking their education and, if they failed to pay a monthly fine of £20, seizing two-thirds of their property. Local enforcement, however, depended on zealous churchwardens and magistrates, some of whom were Catholic sympathizers loath to do anything more than go through the legal motions. In 1596, for instance, the fifty-three convicted recusants from Worcestershire paid nothing on fines totalling £2,000. Consequently for much of Elizabeth's reign, the status of the recusants embraced wide variations. Each year executioners eviscerated several Catholics, while crushing fines flattened others. At the same time, some employed sympathetic magistrates, legal subterfuges and occasional *douceurs* to blunt the state's impact. Thus waves of persecution broke over the Catholic laity tolerably well – until, as Francis Cordale explained in 1599, 'then cometh Felton'.[4]

After Robert de Felton emerged under Edward I, the clan flourished in the fourteenth century, producing two seneschals of Poitou, a chief justice of Chester and one of the original knights of the garter. The most prominent branch of the family had settled at Playford in Suffolk where they steadily merged with the county elite, all the while burnishing the memory of their kinship to the dukes of Norfolk. By 1625, the family head was a baronet and a knight of the bath, and a cadet branch had produced Nicholas Felton, the bishop of Ely.[5] For Thomas Felton, these distinguished figures were only distant relations. His ancestors had settled in northern Essex where they did not flourish, as royal officials in 1570 discovered on surveying the estate of Edmund Felton who left behind a wife and three sons, the eldest being the eight-year-old Thomas. The will left the reversion

3 J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community* (1975); H. Aveling, *Northern Catholics* (1966); J. La Rocca, 'James I and His Catholic Subjects, 1606–1612: Some Financial Implications', *Recusant History*, XVIII (1987), 251–62; and M. Questier, 'Practical Antipapistry during the Reign of Elizabeth I', *JBS*, XXXVI (1997), 371–96. For a spirited study of Felton, see J. Holstun, *Ehud's Dagger: Class Struggle in the English Revolution* (2000), 143–91.

4 TNA, SP 12/271/108; and V. Burke, 'The Economic Consequences of Recusancy in Elizabethan Worcestershire', *Recusant History*, XIV (1977), 71–7. See also M. Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge, 1996).

5 *Shotley Parish Records* (Bury St Edmunds, 1912), 210–12; and BL, Add. MS 19129, fo. 132v. See also W. Metcalfe, *The Visitations of Suffolk* (Exeter, 1882), 190.

of some land to the two youngest lads, while Thomas on his mother's death inherited £10 a year from a local rectory as well as Peacock's Hall in Little Cornard. The scant inheritance having left no money for education, Thomas's talent for numbers vastly outstripped his facility for letters, and a contemporary later mocked Thomas for being 'noe scolar', someone who 'can hardely write his owne name'.[6]

From unpromising beginnings, Thomas Felton developed into an enterprising young man. In 1580, he married Eleanor Wright at St Bride's, Fleet Street, and to provide for the nine children who followed, Thomas devoted himself, as his son recalled, to 'following the discovery and convicting of recusants and for seizure of their lands and goods and estates to their maiesties use'. The details of this administrative 'wet work' are not for the faint-hearted; in 1581, no less than the godly earl of Huntington complained about his method of shaking down suspects in which 'he hath dealt very hardlie with a great number of poore persons'.[7] Therefore it is perhaps just as well that Thomas laboured in relative obscurity until the mid-1590s. Although active across the realm, Felton remained 'desirous or rather importunate to hyer the mannor of Cawsons in Suffolk belonging to Robert de Grey, a recusant, the same adioyning a mannor of Feltons called Peacockhall'. Repeatedly he pressed de Grey, who as an imprisoned recusant had few other options. Nevertheless de Grey repeatedly declined. In his frustration, Felton guided the crown in seizing the estate for recusancy fines and then directed 'his complice' to rent the land for a rent of £80. By 1594, he did even better, securing a long-term crown lease after haggling the rent down to £43 6*s* 8*d*, £120 less than the de Greys reckoned it was worth. Thus, as the de Greys noted, 'it being Feltons cors alwaies to rack such lands as were in recusants hands, but to conceale the true value of such lands as were in his owne hands'.[8]

Felton seemed destined to be a small-scale operator, for in the throng of projectors at Whitehall, there was little chance that anyone important would pay attention to a semi-literate hustler like him. Only in the late 1590s did Felton's luck change as the Spanish war threatened to plunge the treasury into bankruptcy, and, as money became an obsession at Whitehall, senior officials were now inclined to listen, however faintly, to an unknown schemer. The centrepiece of Felton's proposal was the sombre fact that

> the most parte of recusants made fraudulent estates and conveyances of their landes and goodes to avoid the seazure and by dyvers other undue

6 TNA, WARD 7/13/18, 16 May 1571; SP 12/286/56. See also W. Copinger, *County of Suffolk* (1904), I. 140; S.H.A. Hervey, ed. *Suffolk in 1568* (Bury St Edmunds, 1909), 21; and A. Hervey, 'Playford and the Feltons', *Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, IV [1864], 52–3.

7 Edmond Felton, *The Humble Petition of Edmond Felton Gentleman* (1642), sig. A2; BL, Lansdowne MS 31, fo. 92. On Felton's children, see Eleanor Felton's will, 1 Feb. 1638, TNA, PROB 11/177, fos 478v–9; and Little Cornard Parish Register, in Suffolk RO [Bury St Edmunds], FL 555/4/1.

8 NRO, WLS IV/9; and H. Bowler, ed. *Recusant Rolls No. 2–4* (2 vols., Catholic Record Society, 1965–70), I. 166, II. 93, 225.

> practices they found to defraude her majesty of the greatest part of the forfeitures.

To correct this situation, Elizabeth had merely to issue commissions of *melius inquirenden* 'to discover those abuses and deceyt' and to increase the returns from Catholic estates.[9] This skilfully crafted scheme combined theological zeal and financial rapacity, arguing that the heaviest possible pressure on the recusants would generate the maximum return for the exchequer. Yet Felton's plan, while tempting, possessed a crippling flaw; neither Catholic families desperate to preserve their estates nor reformed entrepreneurs eager to exploit them would welcome Felton, who lacked support at court to weather the inevitable protests that would accompany such aggressive activity.

Felton's break came in 1596 when the Queen's Latin secretary introduced the scheme to Elizabeth who 'tooke the better apprehension' of it. The secretary soon died, but an unknown new patron then stepped forward. Although Sir John Stanhope, the vice-chamberlain of the household, later protested that 'I know not by whom' this was done, Sir John was the most likely suspect. By 1597, Felton had a royal order, authorizing Chief Justice Popham and Stanhope to draft the necessary commissions. Furious protests greeted the new project. After enduring three fruitless searches, Thomas Stowe and Thomas Keyes strenuously objected when Felton planned a fourth one. Likewise William Ager, a loyal protestant, complained that Felton and his associates 'brok up the dores' of his house and then 'ransacked and made havock of what they listed', while Robert Towle insisted that Felton had armed two dozen 'idle and riotous persons' with 'staves swords and pistolls' to conduct searches that verged on outright pillage. The most dangerous allegation, however, came from Robert de Grey's tale of Felton's 'uniuste and unconscionable course'. Lord Burghley cast a sceptical eye on the enterprise, and after an investigation pronounced de Grey's charges 'moste true', Felton's lease on Abbas Hall seemed in danger. So intense was the criticism that Stanhope disavowed any association, begging Burghley to believe that 'I was a mere stranger to the said Felton'.[10]

Disaster loomed – until Elizabeth herself intervened in response to Felton's pleas that the queen support him 'for the better furtherance in the prosequation [sic] of the said servyce', and with her blessing, both Popham and Stanhope formally adopted Felton as their protégé. Indeed Popham predicted that Felton will 'bring her in so much money and revenew, as shall defray the greatest part of the charg of the warres of Ireland'.[11] Consequently over the next five years, exchequer clerks came to know Felton well, drafting dozens of commissions in his name.

As Felton moved into high gear, the Catholic jungle telegraph relayed the warning that he had 'a new large commission for finding all recusants lands and

9 BL, Royal MS 17 A IV, fo. 1; and Bowler, ed. *Recusant Rolls*, I. lxxvi.
10 BL, Lansdowne MS 85, fos 12–12v, 93; MS 87, fos 19v–22v; NRO, WLS IV/9.
11 WDA, A VII/1. I am grateful to Michael Questier for this reference.

goods'. There was little they could do to hinder 'this course', which 'is with all violence and extremyty prosequited', because the lord chief justice 'concurreth with all his industry to further Felton'. Meanwhile Thomas and his 'many base fellowes . . . never cease travayling', visiting 'all the Shyres of England' in order to 'survey theire [Catholic] lands and examine theire tenants uppon theire othe' and to subject the landlords to 'barbarous usage'.[12] Felton's Catholic sting operation snared the elderly Lady Stourton. His methods, her daughter-in-law objected, 'hath seldom been used to a lady of her place, birth and years', but even more upsetting was Felton's use of the queen's name to 'make spoil of all things, and evry way work their most profit'. Likewise Christopher Roper was appalled at the 'most outragious manner' with which a Felton protégé 'vyolently by force of armes' drove off £120 worth of cattle, 'as yf I had ben an outlawe, felon or traytor'.[13] Robert de Grey also protested that Felton looted £500 in trees, £200 in linen, £160 in goods and £25 in cattle from his Suffolk estates and so thoroughly plundered the manor houses that 'some of them are ready to fall downe'. Hence 'his olde age is nowe overweried with molestations which Mr Felton still uncharitably deviseth against him'.[14] In the face of such a relentless onslaught, some Catholics 'seeing no other reamedy but that Felton must have all have broken theire glasse windowes, turned upp theire gardens, destroyed theire dove coates and warrens'. Consequently after detailing 'what miserable estate he [Felton] hath broughte many papists', one Catholic commentator insisted that 'never was the oppression like to this'. The de Greys certainly agreed; Felton's 'infinite vexations' were 'the utter undoinge of Robert de Grey and his noble family', and 'so many others felte it in the kingdome to the ruine of their houses and waste of theire inheritance'.[15]

Such opposition, Stanhope noted, made Felton's job 'painfull, chargeable and daungerous'. Outraged men threatened him with pistols in both Hertfordshire and Worcestershire, and a mob assaulted his lodging in Hereford. Nevertheless the money came in, £6,519 from recusant forfeitures alone in 1597–8, and the sums rose to £10,333 five years later. In addition he oversaw recusant leases and rent, which in 1598–9 netted a further £6,687. His critics would dispute these precise figures, but not his overall effectiveness.[16]

With these successes came rewards. His energetic service made him familiar with the interlocking elite who ran late Elizabethan England: Stanhope and Popham, Burleigh and his son, Sir Robert Cecil, Lord Treasurer Buckhurst, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and the queen. By 1600, it was only natural for the privy council to delay any decision about a Catholic family until they knew 'what Felton can object in his knowledge concerning their hability'. More tangible

[12] TNA, SP 12/271/33, 12/271/108; WDA A VII/1.
[13] Hatfield House, MSS 93/3 and 74/56; TNA, SP 12/271/108.
[14] Hatfield House, MS P 1305; NRO, WLS IV/9.
[15] TNA, SP 12/271/108.
[16] BL, Royal MS 17 A IV, fo. 6v; Harleian MS 6072, fo. 32; Lansdowne MS 153, fos 188, 190. See also Burke, 'Economic Consequences', 71–7.

fruits were soon abundant. The crown underwrote his expenses, which were far from notional, witness the £200 payment in June 1602 'to furnish him selfe for his journey'. Furthermore even a frugal monarch had, at least occasionally, to acknowledge successes; hence in the last five years of her reign, Elizabeth awarded Felton £968 in rewards.[17] Yet even this largesse was soon inadequate, and in July 1598, as Elizabeth strained every financial nerve to retain Ireland, she granted Felton an annuity of £200 in addition to his expenses and periodic rewards. Yet the most valuable recompense was insider knowledge of forfeited property coming on to the market, information that allowed him to lease Catholic estates, most notably the Fawkenor lands in Hampshire. Hence in Elizabeth's last years, Thomas's children witnessed the astonishing transformation of an obscure relation of the Playford Feltons into 'Felton the queenes farmor', a Whitehall insider with a royal pension and a burgeoning estate.[18]

This arrangement, however favourable, soon dissatisfied Felton, and in March 1602, frustrated with the long delays in getting paid, Felton threatened to resign unless the crown immediately issued a privy seal to settle his arrears and improved his compensation package. Lord Treasurer Buckhurst's response was hysterical: 'I protest before God if he once give it over yea if it be but bruted so once abroad all that service will fall to the groud and it wilbe impossible to recover it.' Therefore 'I beseech you move hir maiestie to signe his bill.' The choice confronting the regime was stark indeed: 'either presently he [Felton] is to be supported for his service or else it must fall to the ground'. Therefore 'the service of Mr Felton touching the lands of recusants is of such importance and by him so carfully and effectuallie followed and without him so hardly to be accomplished' that Buckhurst advised the queen to accede to his requests. Given the lord treasurer's lavish praise, Thomas and his children understandably treasured these letters, regularly citing them in later years.[19]

Elizabeth proved of flintier stuff; she accepted her obligation, but refused to issue a privy seal. Instead she ordered Buckhurst to find 'some other waie . . . [to] make satisfaction and payment to the saide Mr Felton by waye of guifte or rewarde'. Eventually, the crown paid Felton a further £645. To sweeten the deal, Elizabeth issued a patent for a sixth of all the money he had brought in. To be sure, Felton had to deduct his considerable earlier payments and, reportedly, to make substantial kickbacks to Stanhope for arranging the deal. Nevertheless he had achieved the near impossible, shaking down the Elizabethan exchequer almost as thoroughly as he had Catholic families. Not counting some padding of his expense account or the profits from his own leases, the amount he received in rewards in Elizabeth's last five years came to a staggering £2,687 8*s* 9*d*, about half of which had come in his *annus mirabilus* of 1602–3. The bonanza would only grow larger still once his new patent was enrolled. So complete was his

17 *APC 1599–1600*, 43; TNA, SP 14/28/144, 29/144.
18 *CSPD 1598–1601*, 72; BL, Lansdowne MS 161, fo. 155.
19 BL, Lansdowne MS 153, fo. 114–14v; Felton, *Humble Petition*, sig. A3.

success that in March 1603, an alarmed Catholic letter-writer noted Thomas's new patent before making the only logical conclusion – 'now is Felton aloft'.[20]

II

With this administrative coup came more troubling signs; early in March, Elizabeth's health collapsed, and by 24 March she was dead, taking Felton's dreams with her. Initially Felton retained his confidence; since James would also be under severe financial pressure, he too would surely prize Felton's revenue-enhancement schemes. Thomas therefore immediately pitched his services to Elizabeth's successor. Thanks to Felton's 'great travayle and charges', the total revenue from the various recusant fines had increased, but it 'mighte have ben farr more'. After reviewing 'some fewe of the yearly improvements' that had brought in around £15,000 a year, he vowed to raise the total to £20,000. The figure could go higher still 'yf recusants had not so muche prevayled with undue courses', details of which Felton kindly offered 'to make knowen unto your highnes'. In the process, Felton reviewed the sad tale of his extended struggle for appropriate compensation, which Elizabeth's patent would have corrected, but it 'by reason of her late maiesties decease imediately after, tooke noe effect', a detail that James would surely correct.[21]

For a time, it was business as usual, but James steadfastly declined to reissue Elizabeth's patent. The fact of the matter was that by 1603 the tide was rapidly running out on Felton's operation. Behind his heavy-handed approach was the Anglo-Spanish war, which had isolated the English Catholics from their foreign protectors and which ensured that most councillors were all too ready to milk the Catholic community. The new king, however, swiftly concluded Elizabeth's war, allowing Habsburg agents to re-establish their quasi-protectorate over English Catholics. A preliminary Spanish survey of the Jacobean court highlighted Felton's patrons, Stanhope as 'a great heretic' and Popham as 'a depraved heretic who persecutes Catholics extensively'.[22] And with the return of Spanish diplomats, the recusants flooded Whitehall with protests.

The critical flaw in Felton's operation was its seriously invasive nature, his 'many base fellowes' specializing in 'barbarous usage', and his excessive zeal, which led him to seize goods from gentlemen who 'were not at all indighted', much less convicted, of recusancy.[23] Yet the most telling criticism, as the de Greys argued, was that 'Felton neither respected religion conformity nor the benefit of the queen no farder then it might be profitable for himselfe', witness

[20] TNA, SP 14/28/144; BL, Royal MS 17A IV, fo. 6; H. Foley, ed. *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus* (7 vols., 1875–83), I. 16.
[21] BL, Royal MS 17A IV, fos 2, 4v, 9v.
[22] A.J. Loomie, ed. *Spain and the Jacobean Catholics* (2 vols., Catholic Record Society, 1973–8), I. 6.
[23] TNA, SP 12/271/108, 286/56.

Felton's protracted struggle with de Grey's son. On Robert's death in 1601, William de Grey promptly conformed, thus ending the crown's seizure of his father's estate. Felton in response cited a mysterious debt, which Robert allegedly owed the crown in order to get Abbas Hall extended and himself the royal lease. Such legal legerdemain, however, could not secure the property, for the young heir retained a team of attorneys, and ultimately spent some £500 battling Felton in the courts. By 1604, Thomas with characteristic boldness argued that *he* was actually the injured party, having been swindled out of £1,500, and in the end, Judge Popham quashed the proceedings.[24] Nevertheless the auguries were clear; mounting complaints about thuggery and venality would dog Felton, and William de Grey was indefatigable.

Felton might have weathered these attacks if his administrative nemesis had not emerged at the same time. Against Felton's hardline policy, Henry Spiller, an exchequer official, argued for a softer option. Catholic gentlemen under intolerable pressure from Felton could find instant relief by conforming to the Church of England, as William de Grey and others had done. Consequently Felton's revenue spikes were hard to sustain as Catholic gentlemen discovered the attractions of occasional conformity. Alternatively a more sympathetic collection policy would produce roughly the same amount of money without the grief; hence, compounding with convicted recusants would yield a steadier, if somewhat smaller, revenue stream without producing additional Church papists. It has to be conceded that Spiller had a special insight into this problem, being a crypto-Catholic himself. Nevertheless he advanced an appealing idea, much more in line with James's easy-going attitude, and by 1606, an administrative battle royal erupted between the two rivals.

Sensing Spiller's rising favour, Felton launched a ferocious assault. 'By Spillers devise and practise', Thomas alleged that the exchequer had discharged 'the most parte of the landes' of John Webb and William Middleton, two convicted recusants. The answer for such inexplicable actions was simple; Spiller 'hath continual rewardes and other gratuyties from recusants for his advice, furtherance and direction', all designed, Felton insisted, 'to defraude the kinge of the true revenues he ought to have from them'. Spiller's slack approach prompted him to 'cast up the debtes of recusants farre under the true value', and when awarding leases, he discouraged all but Catholics from bidding, thus ensuring the lowest possible rent for the crown and minimal inconvenience for the recusants. While Spiller denied the allegations, citing warrants and legal judgments in his defence, his cleverest response was the simplest. By carefully adding up Felton's rewards, Spiller calculated that the crown, far from owing him anything for his Elizabethan service, had actually overpaid him £762 13*s* 9*d*, an amount that Spiller, rather ungenerously, suggested be repaid.[25] Such was the seriousness of these charges that James ordered Sir Julius Caesar, chancellor of the exchequer,

24 BL, MS Lansdowne 161, fos 153–8.
25 TNA, SP 14/28/144.

to investigate the matter, and after a careful study, Caesar plumped for Felton. Spiller's policy, he concluded,

> seeme to me to savour of noe thing but a directe purpose and intent to discharge by degrees all his maiesties revenue by recusants and to give them whom the wholsoome lawes of this realme have provided good meanes of enfeebling and keeping in due obedience and subiection, power and strength.[26]

Again, victory seemed within Felton's grasp.

While Felton advanced a compelling case against Spiller, he lacked a purse large enough for a prolonged campaign, because Thomas, never a paragon of frugality, became in the words of a junior protégé 'a dissolute fellow' who 'wasted his substance'. The fledgling Felton estate around Sudbury rapidly crumbled, and with creditors closing in, Peacock's Hall went on the block. In 1604, Thomas moved his family to the land he leased in Hampshire where the Fawkenor heir watched in dismay as Felton's 'wife and children . . . have very much spoyled and ransackt the mansion house, torne downe the seeling therof and sold the very lockes of from the doors'. To end the misery, the heir offered to buy Felton's lease, a deal Thomas eventually accepted.[27]

The steady downward spiral ended in 1607 when debt forced Felton into Fleet prison where his pleas mixed pathos and paranoia. His thoughts almost became unhinged, recollecting Elizabeth's patent for a sixth of all he had raised, a figure that he estimated to be around £50,000, and he could not comprehend 'how I should be so blessed then and now so much oppressed', especially since 'the same lawes then weare being in as great force now or rather greater'. His darkest apprehensions quickly focused on what he termed the malice of 'evill affected inferiours clarkes more respecting theire owne private gayne then theire duty', bureaucrats eager to see him receive 'noe recompense but disdayne rigoure and imprisonment'. Meanwhile he bemoaned 'the crewell practices of Spiller most maliciously ever seeking my utter over throwe', all to cover up 'his undue course in defrauding of longe time both his maiestie and the late queene' of some £100,000. To expose this conspiracy, Felton offered some details that reveal 'I doe not much err', and on his release, he offered 'a great deale more'. In his travail his eyes naturally turned to his old patrons like 'my Lord Stanhope whoe I hope for this service sake was and ever wilbe ready to doe his best' and to Sir Julius Caesar who had sided with him in 1606. A letter survives in which he begged the chancellor to arrange for his 'speedy relief'; 'otherwise for doinge my duty I and all myne are utterly destroyed'. Unless Caesar intervened, 'my mother is undone, myself and family like presently to perishe having not any meanes left to releeve us'. As one official to another he pleaded, 'lett me not be destroyed for doing my duty'.[28]

26 BL, Lansdowne MS 153, fos 158–60v, 161–2v, 169.
27 Edinburgh University Library, Laing MSS, La II 636/32; Hatfield House, MS P 2036.
28 BL, Lansdowne MS 153, fos 112, 125.

Whatever Felton's administrative skill, his plight was compelling. It is now unclear who arranged for his release, but in less than a year he was free. Spiller was terrified, as he confessed to Salisbury, for 'my service is unknowne' to the king. Felton meanwhile knew his way around Whitehall, and although both Popham and Buckhurst were then dead, Stanhope and Ellesmere were very much alive. Thus Spiller trembled to imagine 'soe many to whome Felton liberally traduceth mee'.[29] The struggle continued into the following year, and once Felton returned to prison, he resolved on a desperate manouevre.

Hitherto Felton's numerous protests had remained within the acceptable bounds of bureaucratic behaviour, but on 6 June 1610, he stepped well over the line when Sir Francis Hastings rose in the house of commons to present his petition. Well might the members of the government bench have assumed that they had timed their intervention to do the most damage. Far from an anodyne intermediary, Hastings had earned a well-deserved reputation at Whitehall as someone far too zealous for nonconformists and against recusants, and for his pains the crown had stripped him of his local offices several years earlier. He ran true to form with Felton's petition. In the preceding weeks, the government had carefully made the case for the great contract, stressing the crown's poverty. Yet with Felton's help, Hastings had exposed a substantial revenue stream that the crown apparently refused to exploit, and even better was the fact that this untapped wealth was Catholic.[30]

Weaving general statistics with specific cases, Felton painted a grim picture whose centrepiece was the startling drop in recusant fines, which plummeted from £9,000 in 1603 to less than £4,000 in 1604 and £2,100 in 1605. Felton's explanation was simple: lands had been 'too far undervalued', royal agents in the field willingly 'deceived by the recusants', and collected fines quietly repaid to Catholics. At the centre of the systematic corruption was Henry Spiller, 'an evil-affected clerk serving in the exchequer to the great and insufferable prejudice of his majesty', whose venality could be seen in his wife's new taste for silk gowns. The money for the Spillers' new lifestyle came from Catholics who showered Sir Henry with bribes, celebrating him as 'their friend, their father, their agent, their protector and mitigator of all lawes and statutues'. Consequently, since English Catholics then stood 'in as good estate as if they had obtained toleration', Spiller was 'as evil to this state as if his majesty should suffer in his kingdom a legate from the pope'. MPs, Felton proposed, should punish Spiller and annul all of his leases and grants. Such extensive allegations were a sensation. Nevertheless Felton vowed that he would 'affirm and prove' the truth of the matter; otherwise 'he submitteth himself to undergo any punishment to be inflicted upon him'.[31]

On this final cast of dice, Felton wagered his remaining hopes of vindication.

[29] Hatfield House MS 125/54.

[30] C. Cross, ed. *The Letters of Sir Francis Hastings* (Somerset Record Society, LXIX, 1969), xiii–xxxiii.

[31] E.R. Foster, ed. *Proceedings in Parliament* 1610 (2 vols., 1966), II. 128–30, 377–8.

The house quickly sent the petition to the committee on grievances, which in turn summoned Spiller, Felton and their witnesses. Since Felton had returned to prison, which was then experiencing an outbreak of the plague, the house ordered that he be given temporary 'liberty to go about his business' as hearings continued into July. Meanwhile on 7 July MPs eloquently testified that they had taken on board Felton's accusations. Front and centre in the lower house's 'petition of ecclesiastical grievances' was the charge that laws against the Catholics 'are not executed against the priests'. Equally disturbing was that

> many recusants have already compounded, and, as it is to be feared . . . more and more will compound with those that beg their penalties, which making the laws either fruitless, or of small effect, and the offenders to become bold, obdurate and unconformable.

Naturally enough MPs wanted to see these laws 'duly and exactly executed without dread, favor or delay'. The king should also scrupulously collect 'the penalties due for recusancy, that the same be not converted to the private gain of some, to your infinite loss, the imboldening of the papists, and decay of true religion'.[32]

Yet while the members were impressed with his general points, they were less certain about the specific allegations against Spiller, and on 15 July, the commons abandoned proceedings. One member at least concluded that Spiller, although 'a knave', was 'a crafty one'; Felton for his part was 'a silly fool'. This decision was not the house's final answer, for much to Ellesmere's disgust, Hastings persuaded the house to reconsider Felton's accusations. By that time, however, the attack on Spiller's policies was 'hindered by other business', and on 19 July with adjournment only a few days away, the commons referred the matter to the next session, which they were never able to reconsider. Spiller thus ended the session in triumph, and Felton back in the Fleet.[33]

This result was understandably hard for Felton to endure. An alliance with a gadfly like Hastings had been a calculated risk; while the controversial militant would alienate Felton's remaining friends at Whitehall, he was the only effective way of persuading the commons to listen. Thus, Thomas's return to the prison was chilling evidence of the new *froideur* in his relationship with his old government colleagues, none of whom lifted a finger after Felton had had the temerity to entangle his own concerns with the passage of the great contract. After a year in prison, Thomas begged Salisbury to save him from 'the common gayle of the Fleete and restrained of all libertie, whereby the wost [sic] is done that can unto me'. His sharpest pain, however, was not that he was in this dire situation for 'doeing my dutie in the late queenes service'; rather it was his inability to relieve 'my aged mothers distresse'. The lengthy confinement, 'void of all reliefe',

32 *CJ*, I. 437; Foster, ed. *Proceedings*, II. 255.

33 Foster, *Proceedings*, II. 131, 378; T. Birch, ed. *Court and Times of James I* (2 vols., 1848), I. 116; C. Tite, *Impeachment and Parliamentary Judicature in Early Stuart England* (1974), 72–3.

Thomas ascribed to ‘a hard opinion your honour should have of me in wronging your lordship’. Yet although Felton understood that any hope of release centred on an abject apology, the best he could manage was a conditional one. While vowing ‘it had bene unseemely and most evill to have ill behaved myself towards you’, he could not resist adding, ‘nether will any iust man say I ever did’. Likewise he swore that ‘if my allegations against Henry Spiller were disliking unto your lordship, I will forever forbeare anie matter against him’, and ‘I wilbe silente’. Nevertheless he would happily prove how he had been ‘most unduly and sinsterly oppressed and wronged by his [Spiller’s] practizes’ when ‘in your honourable wisdome you shall take liking thereof’. In addition to being released, Felton also asked Salisbury ‘not to bee any hinderance to his maiesties confirmation of that gratious reward the late queene gave me in recompense of my soe chargable and dangerous service’. Sad to say, since Felton was psychologically unable to fade away quietly, the lord treasurer this time left him to his grim fate.[34]

Salisbury’s inaction made it imperative to continue the campaign against Spiller, in which Felton found considerable support. In 1613, Secretary Lake ordered Spiller to prepare a detailed report on ‘the names of all recusants within your notice’, together with ‘which of them are neither indicted nor convicted and why’. Spiller stalled for time only to have Felton’s allegation emerged in the 1614 parliament where no less than Secretary Winwood demanded an accounting, wondering aloud ‘how a poor clerk he came to dispend 3,000 per annum’. After the dissolution, George Margitts with support from the duke of Lennox pressed the case at court, echoing Felton in his attack on ‘compositions made by combination between the recusants and his maiesties inferior officers aforesaid to defraud his maiestie, as in takinge of 200 li to their owne uses to deceave his maiestie of a thousand pounds’. Although he persuaded Ellesmere to denounce ‘the unorderly proceedings in th’exchequer, as by Mr Spiller as others’, Margitts had no better luck than Felton in penetrating Spiller’s veil of secrecy. The ‘strange course’ of the warden of the Fleet left him unable to interview prisoners about Spiller’s practices, and he was denied access to the exchequer rolls since ‘the danger is made soe great for our men for the kinge to see the records, when it is held no danger for the disloyal recusants to see the same’. Bereft of solid evidence, what had once seemed the ‘playnest and benefitiallest busynes in his maiesties owne right that ever was propounded’ collapsed late in 1615 as the councillors, reluctantly in some cases, supported Spiller.[35]

Felton did not have to witness this ignominious result. Early in March 1612, the Fleet claimed his life, although the family was convinced that Spiller had ordered his murder. The parish clerk at St Bride’s, Fleet Street, duly recorded that Thomas Felton returned to the church where he and Eleanor had married. To Felton’s many humiliations, the clerk added a final one, listing him as ‘a

[34] TNA, SP 14/64/22.
[35] TNA, SP 14/74/30, 78/24, 44; M. Jansson, ed. *Proceedings in Parliament 1614* (Philadelphia, 1988), 186.

prisoner'. Yet he also recorded a final honour that Spiller's prolonged efforts had been unable to remove, for the parish interred the body of a 'gentleman'.[36]

Ironically Felton's death improved his claim on royal bounty. Alive he had been socially awkward and increasingly out of step with the cheerful venality and theological ambiguity in an era dominated by the Howards. Yet death transformed him into a pathetic creature, an unlettered but faithful royal officer whose services had never been adequately rewarded. Sympathy swelled even further after meeting Eleanor Felton and her children, all of whom seemed destined to end up in the Fleet – unless the government belatedly acknowledged its obligation. She proved resourceful, recruiting her husband's clerk to ferret through the exchequer records, and once armed with hundreds of receipts, collectively proving that Thomas was responsible for 'above 30,000 li brought into theexchequer' [sic], she renewed her husband's struggle. While even experienced exchequer hands were doubtless confused in this blizzard of old receipts, Eleanor thumped home a vital point. Spiller's contention that Felton owed the crown was a malicious *canard*, for as she argued, Thomas's heirs were actually due £1,771 1*s* from the exchequer, and this figure furthermore did not include 'the 6 parte of other greater somes paid into the receipte, as maie apeere upon a vewe and accompt cast up by Mr. Bingley and others . . . sence Mr. Felton's death'. Self-indulgent though the Jacobean regime plainly was, it was not completely heartless, and in February 1615, Eleanor Felton achieved what had so long eluded her husband when the exchequer paid £300 as a partial compensation for Thomas's services.[37]

Celebrations were brief, for this payment, while welcome, represented only a portion of what the family reckoned the crown owed them. Again Eleanor barraged Whitehall with 'sondry petitions', all stressing Thomas's former labours and his family's current misery, and in 1616, after the 'due examination of her husbands clayme and demaund and the merits of her said husbands service', James issued a privy seal for a further £100. He also commanded the lord treasurer to settle the Felton claims with 'such further somme or sommes of money as should in their wisdomes and discretions be found fitt and equall in full satisfaction of and for the said pretended services and demands'. A year later, Eleanor was scrutinizing the details of a royal patent, not as lavish as the 1603 grant, but a patent nonetheless. 'For a finiall conclusion and satisfaction of all further claymes and demaunds', James proposed paying Eleanor, 'an aged and sickly gentlewoman', and 'her fatherles children' £100 a year as long as Eleanor lived. Further, he offered Edmond Felton, the eldest son, a pension for a further £20.[38] James's offer left the family uncertain. Although Eleanor lived another two decades, ultimately draining over £2,000 out of the exchequer, the government was obviously gambling on her health. And if she soon joined her husband in the grave, Edmond's scant pension would be a bitter reminder of a bad wager.

[36] GL, MS 6538, 3 March 1611/12.
[37] Edinburgh University Library, Laing MSS, La II 636/32; TNA, SP 14/28/144; *CSPD 1611–18*, 222.
[38] TNA, E 403/2562, fos 6v, 8.

Therefore, Eleanor accepted her pension, while Edmond did not. The annual £100 allowed her children some degree of comfort in her lifetime, while Edmond's refusal left open the possibility of further claims. However peculiar treasury officials may have found this reasoning, they promptly confirmed the settlement with a series of patents.

III

Bitter indeed was Thomas Felton's legacy to his children. At the end of Elizabeth's reign, they had revelled in his sudden rise, and around the house they heard the frequent mention of his prominent patrons. Yet with the accession of James, Thomas's position swiftly eroded, and by 1607, his descent culminated in an extended residence in the Fleet. In this nightmarish period from 1608 to 1612, Eleanor struggled to keep the family together, ransacking their dwellings for anything of value, even the Fawkenor's door locks. Fortunately James's pension abruptly brought the family back to the edge of respectability where Eleanor and her children could brood over the fundamental injustice done to the family patriarch by Thomas's *bêtes noire*, 'evill affected inferioure clarkes' like Spiller and a legion of Catholics desperate to evade laws that Thomas Felton had struggled to enforce. In essence, outrage and paranoia were effectively institutionalized within the family.

Edmond Felton inherited his father's struggle against Spiller, which he waged relentlessly, arguing not only that the crown still owed the family at least £10,000 but that Spiller had embezzled in excess of £100,000. For decades after Thomas's death, his son barraged the parliament-house with his grievances, and it is perhaps not entirely coincidental that practically the last act of the 1629 session before it slipped into chaos was to hear Edmond and a dozen witnesses. Privy councillors, bishops and even Charles I himself likewise came to regard his petitions as an unavoidable fact of life, petitions that invariably highlighted that in his service to the crown, Thomas Felton had 'spent a great estate of lands of inheritance of his own, in Suffolke', and left 'wife and children in great necessitie'. Like his father, Edmond too bounced in and out of prison so frequently that he seemed intent on writing the rough guide to penal institutions. For instance, in March 1626 when his brother John was in Ireland recovering his troops from the Cadiz expedition, Edmond was in king's bench prison. Nevertheless in spite of a tongue-lashing from Archbishop Neile and a privy council resolution in 1630 that 'they would not be any further troubled with the said Felton', Edmond persisted. Three decades after Thomas's death, Edmond was still lamenting he 'could not obtain justice against my adversary, so powerfull he was in friends and purse, by whose wicked doings my late father and my self have been ruin'd'. Four decades later when he himself was almost seventy, he was still cranking out these petitions.[39]

39 Edmond Felton, *Engine Invented to Save Much Blood and Moneyes* (1644), 5. See *APC 1628–9*, 265–7;

In contrast, Thomas Felton's younger son sought a more stable, albeit more modest, existence as a professional soldier, and John, as Edmond later noted, 'did much estrange himselfe' from his brother. Nevertheless even if he shut his ears to Edmond's travails, he cannot have missed Spiller's seemingly inexorable rise. Having pioneered the use of recusant compositions early in James's reign, Sir Henry became the indispensable bureaucrat when the state experimented with quasi-tolerations in the early and mid-1620s and when it openly marketed compositions later in the decade. His rising favour could be seen in his apparent parliamentary immunity; in 1626 the members fingered him for being a Catholic, and the only result was his translation from the Sussex pocket-boroughs, where he had usually sat, to Middlesex where he found himself the knight of the shire in 1628. Indeed since John then lived off Fleet Street, Sir Henry was *his* representative. Given that the government owed him substantial arrears in his military pay, John understandably followed the session with great care. He eventually reached the tipping point in mid-June after the commons passed a remonstrance. He secured a copy, carefully read it over with a friend, purchased a tenpenny knife and carried the remonstrance as a talisman in his pocket where royal agents found it two months later after he had murdered the duke.[40]

Contemporaries and later scholars have long noticed the importance that the remonstrance played in Felton's deed, and while they have rightly stressed the general point that it allowed the frustrated soldier to place his own professional grievances within a national context, they have not appreciated the particular aspects of the remonstrance that would have transfixed Thomas Felton's son. It denounced Buckingham's mismanagement of the war and his baleful support for Arminians at home. But the remonstrance gave pride of place to 'a general fear conceived in your people of secret working and combination to introduce into this kingdom innovation and change into our holy religion', and this dire development took place 'notwithstanding the many good and wholesome laws and provisions made to prevent the increase of popery'. After registering their alarm at the conversion of the duke's mother to Catholicism and at Henrietta Maria's influence on the king, they confessed

> that which strikes the greatest terror into the hearts of your loyal subjects concerning this is that letters of stay of legal proceedings against them have been procured from your majesty (by what means we know not), and commissions under the great seal granted and executed for compositions to be made with popish recusants, with inhibitions and restraints both to the ecclesiastical and temporal courts and officers to intermeddle

CJ, I. 932; HLRO, Main Papers, 23 March 1626 [2 items], 21 and 30 Nov. 1640 and 1 Jan. 1641; Felton, *Humble Petition*, sig. A2–A2v; ibid., *An Out-Cry for Justice* (1653); *The Humble Proposals of Edmund Felton Gentleman* (1653).

[40] TNA, SP 16/114/31; and W.B. Bidwell and M. Jansson, eds. *Proceedings in Parliament 1626, Volume 4* (1996), 214.

> with them, which is conceived to amount to no less than a toleration odious to God, full of dishonor and extreme disprofit to your majesty.[41]

Plainly many motives and grievances were swirling inside John Felton when he approached the duke on 23 August 1628, but in any assessment of these factors it logically follows that we should privilege the ones that would have resonated with the son of Thomas Felton. After all, lamentations about how 'compositions to be made with popish recusants' effectively evaded 'the many good and wholesome laws and provisions made to prevent the increase of popery', and all to the exchequer's 'extreme disprofit', represented vintage Felton rhetoric. Spiller, so the family believed, had murdered Thomas for trumpeting such complaints, and Edmond seemed destined for a similar fate for maintaining the struggle. Therefore parliament's public adoption of the Felton family crusade ineluctably led Thomas Felton's youngest son to begin fingering cheap knifes in the summer of 1628.

In addition to sharpening our understanding of the duke's assassination, the Feltons' prolonged struggle also reveals a significant historiographical lacuna. Armed as they were with formidable axes to grind, Thomas and Edmond are now somewhat hard to take seriously. Nevertheless they were undeniably on to something; thanks to Catholics like Spiller, the income from recusants plummeted in the first few years in James's reign, never to recover, and the notion of Catholic compositions moved from a quiet informal practice to an open policy of the early Stuart state. Yet scholars are only dimly aware of such a fundamental administrative shift away from Elizabethan practice. To be sure, it did not take much to inflame anti-Catholic susceptibilities among godly protestants, the results of which periodically scarred the seventeenth century and horrified later historians. Nevertheless notwithstanding modern uneasiness with such virulent intolerance, recent work has revealed that contemporary upticks in anti-Catholicism in the early 1620s and early 1640s were preceded by Catholics revivals.[42] The study of Thomas Felton's career allows us to see that this powerful anxiety had much deeper roots, some of which are intertwined in Jacobean administrative practice. Belatedly we now must uncover this long account of how the Stuart regime dramatically altered the Elizabethan status quo with the penal laws. In the process, we can more fully appreciate why an increasing number of contemporaries listened as first Thomas and then Edmond Felton argued that Spiller sought nothing less than 'to give them whom the wholsoome lawes of this realme have provided good meanes of enfeebling and keeping in due obedience and subiection, power and strength'.[43]

[41] M.F. Keeler, M. Jansson Cole, W.B. Bidwell, ed. *Commons Debates 1628, Volume 4* (1978), 312.

[42] C. Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1983); P. Lake, 'Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice' in R. Cust and A. Hughes, eds. *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (1989), 72–106.

[43] BL, Lansdowne MS 153, fo. 169.

12

Charles I and Providence

RICHARD CUST

Royalist providentialism is not a topic that has received a great deal of attention from historians. In the most authoritative recent accounts of providence, both Alexandra Walsham and Blair Worden acknowledge its existence; but neither devotes much space to exploring what it meant.[1] The guiding assumption is that insofar as providential ideas were applied to politics this was mainly done by puritans. The godly believed that they were uniquely equipped to interpret the sovereign decrees of an all-controlling Calvinist God, and indeed that it was their duty to do so. Through an understanding of God's judgments, they were convinced that they could discern something of God's purposes for mankind. Hence the angst-ridden soul of puritan diaries and autobiographies as the authors strove to gain an insight into the meanings of the various 'mercies' or 'afflictions' that they encountered, and also secure some measure of assurance that they were numbered among his elect saints. Worden has demonstrated that these concerns had a profound influence on the ministers and politicians of the puritan revolution. The clearest example of this was Oliver Cromwell, who oscillated between elation and self-confidence when military victory seemed to confirm that he was doing God's will, and doubt and indecision when – particularly with the failure of the Hispaniola expedition of 1655 – God's purposes appeared unclear. For Worden providence was a crucial dynamic of the revolutionary changes of the late 1640s and 1650s. It gave radical politicians the courage and flexibility to push forward, confident that the Lord was on their side; and it furnished them with a language with which to justify the most dramatic breaks with the past, notably in the trial and execution of the king. At the heart of radical decision-making, Worden argued, there was 'one perception which dwarfed all others: that to disobey God's will was to invite the likelihood of retribution and disaster'.[2]

1 A. Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999); B. Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *PP*, CIX (1985), 55–99. Worden relegates discussion of the topic to a single, albeit very informative, footnote: 88, fn. 157.

2 Worden, 'Providence', 99. On Cromwell and providence, see also B. Worden, 'Oliver Cromwell and

If providence played such an important role in the thinking of puritan politicians what impact did it have on royalists? Walsham has demonstrated that the belief in an interventionist deity whose judgments were visited on those who sinned was never confined to the godly. It was part of the mental furniture of people at all levels of society and in all protestants.[3] The impact of such a powerful set of ideas was felt across the political spectrum, and can be exemplified in the attitudes of Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon. Dezelzainis and Finlayson have shown that Hyde, far from being the *politique* of Brian Wormald's classic study, was profoundly influenced by a belief in providence. During the 1640s he became convinced that the royalist cause was being punished not only for its political failings, but also because of a catalogue of sins that had offended God, such as the king's willingness to negotiate with Catholic Irish rebels. The only way to recover from defeat, he believed, was to abandon political expediency, fix upon 'honest principles', take a stand on preserving the Church of England and trust to divine deliverance. This was a central theme of the *History of the Rebellion*, which he began writing in 1646, and also of advice he was giving to the king at the time.[4]

In an important and hitherto unpublished study, Dr Geoff Browell has mapped out the providentialism of the royalists as a whole. He shows that royalists and Anglicans tended to adopt a more restrained, less improvised, approach than the godly, placing greater emphasis on the ultimate inscrutability of God's decrees and stressing the need to stand firm on fixed principles and forms of worship. Nevertheless, they shared the conviction that God visited his judgments on those who sinned and, particularly in the aftermath of military defeat in 1644 and 1645, devoted much time and energy to analysing and remedying their failings. This led to preaching and regulation designed to curb swearing and sinfulness in the ranks of their supporters, and also triggered an extensive debate about the particular sins of rebellion, iconoclasm and attacking the Church of England. Congregations were constantly reminded that rebellion was 'as the sin of witchcraft' and that God would never allow it to prosper; the grisly judgments visited on iconoclasts or opponents of episcopacy were recorded in newsbooks and pamphlets; and in 1646–7 there was a concerted campaign to expose the consequences of the sin of sacrilege. Lancelot Andrewes's *Sacrilege a Snare* was republished and a new edition of Sir Henry Spelman's *De non Temerandis Ecclesiis* appeared with an introductory epistle, which anticipated the main theme of his more famous *History of Sacrilege* by setting out the judgments of those who had violated or plundered church property. As Browell and Dezelzainis demonstrate, these issues served to define a distinctive royalist providentialism that shaped the character of

the sin of Achan', *History, Society and the Churches*, eds. D. Beales and G. Best (Cambridge, 1985), 125–45.

3 Walsham, *Providence*, 1–7.

4 M. Dzelzainis, ' "Undouted Realities": Clarendon and Sacrilege', *HJ*, XXXIII (1990), 515–40; M. Finlayson, 'Clarendon, Providence and the Historical Revolution', *Albion*, XXII (1990), 607–32.

royalist politics.[5] The aim of this essay is to take their discussion a stage further by looking specifically at Charles I and exploring how far his own politics and decision-making were influenced by a belief in providence.

Charles's habit of thinking in providential terms can probably be traced back to his early religious upbringing which, as Peter McCullough has demonstrated, was distinctly Calvinist. The Careys, his first guardians, had a reputation for puritanism and his Scottish tutor from the age of six, Thomas Murray, was a Presbyterian. It was predictable, therefore that when Charles established a household at court in 1613, it was dominated by evangelical Calvinists. His first chaplains, George Hakewill and Richard Milborne, were appointed with express instructions to act as what McCullough calls 'anti-Catholic bodyguards'; and they were joined by others with similar credentials, such as George Carleton, John Preston and the prince's puritan clerk of the closet, Henry Burton. All the indications are that during his teens Charles was brought up in the same way as his elder brother and sister had been, as a zealous Calvinist. The court sermons surviving from the period suggest that the prince was treated to a rich diet of protestant moralizing, warning him of the dire consequences of sinfulness and reminding him of the godly example that a prince should set his people. It does not appear to have been until Lancelot Andrewes took over responsibility for his religious instruction, after 1619, that Charles became a confirmed anti-Calvinist.[6] The experience of his early years established a powerful legacy.

When Charles reflected on the forces at work shaping events in the world he did so in very similar terms to Hakewill, who wrote one of the early seventeenth century's best-selling justifications for the doctrine of providence, an *Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World* (1627).[7] The king's prayers and proclamations for fasts were full of the language of providence, referring to a 'just and powerful God to whome vengeance belongeth', or the ways in which 'we by our ingratitude [have] pulled downe upon us those judgements which threaten desolation to this late flourishing kingdom'.[8] When he stood on the scaffold on 30 January 1649 he took it as read that he was irredeemably tainted by sin and deserving of God's wrath: 'God forbid that I should be so ill a Christian as not to say God's judgements are just upon me.' When he penned his final advice to his son he recognized that his misfortunes were all part of the divine plan of the 'king of kings, the sovereign disposer of the kingdoms of the world who pulleth down one and setteth up another'; but also that

[5] G.C. Browell, 'The Politics of Providentialism in England, c.1640–1660' (Ph.D thesis, University of Kent, 2000), esp. ch. 2; Dzelzainis, 'Clarendon', 515–20, 527–9, 538–40.

[6] P.E. McCullough, *Sermons at Court* (Cambridge, 1998), 194–204; R. Cust, *Charles I* (Harlow, 2005), 14–16.

[7] Walsham, *Providence*, 23–4.

[8] Quotations from BL, Thomason Tracts E.27(4), *A Forme of Common Prayer to be used upon the Solemne Fast Appoynted by his Majestie's Proclamation upon 5 February* [1644/5], 4; see also Browell, 'Politics', 52–4.

'divine providence to whom no difficulties are insuperable' would 'in his due time' restore the young Charles to his 'rightful inheritance'.[9]

For Charles, providence was always closely linked to conscience. It was through his conscience, he believed, that he could come to an understanding of God's purposes for him, both as an individual Christian and as a king. It was, he told his son, something infinitely precious, 'dearer to me than a thousand kingdoms', because it was only through following his conscience that he could save his soul.[10] If he failed to follow his conscience in carrying out his duty as a king, it was not only he who would suffer, but his people as well. This tying together of public duty and private devotion, conscience and providence was illustrated in a letter to the queen in November 1646. At the time he was agonizing over whether to consent to the establishment of a Presbyterian Church in England, which was the price for Scottish support against the parliamentarians. He explained how he took a view of the whole matter in the longer perspective of decisions he had made since 1641, but also in relation to the prospects for his own salvation.

> I made that base sinful concession concerning the earl of Strafford for which – and also that great injustice to the Church in taking away the bishops votes in parliament – though I have been justly punished, yet I hope God will accept of my hearty (however weak) repentance and my constant adhering to my conscience, that, at the least, his mercy will take place of his justice. But a new relapse, as my abjuration of episcopacy, or my promise without reserve for the establishing of Presbyterian government will both procure God's further wrath upon me, as also make me inconstant in all my other grounds.[11]

Here was a king poised on a knife-edge of uncertainty about the fate of his soul, facing the excruciating anxiety that so often beset the godly.

Through the 1640s Charles consistently identified a group of sins that he saw as particularly likely to bring down God's wrath. These coincided with the sins which Browell recognizes as the main concerns of royalists more generally. Rebellion was something that Charles firmly believed God would never allow to prosper. Through all his trials and tribulations he clung to a belief that God would deliver his cause in the end, even if he was not necessarily to be the instrument of that deliverance. 'As a Christian, I must tell you', he wrote to Prince Rupert in 1645, 'that God will not suffer rebels to prosper or this cause to be overthrown; and whatever personal punishment it shall please him to inflict upon me must not make me repine, much less give over this quarrel.'[12] At a more personal level,

9 P. Knachel, ed. *Eikon Basilike* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), 159, 164. The *Eikon Basilike* as a whole, but particularly ch. 27, which appears to be entirely in Charles's own words (Cust, *Charles I*, 12 fn. 25), is saturated with references to God's providential interventions in the world.

10 Ibid., 170; K. Sharpe, 'Private Conscience and Public Duty in the Writings of Charles I', *HJ*, XL (1997), 643–65.

11 J. Bruce, ed. *Charles I in 1646* (Camden Society, 1st series, LXIII, 1856), 80–1.

12 Edward, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion*, ed. W.D. MacRay (6 vols., Oxford, 1888), IV. 74.

there were three things that, in conscience, Charles insisted he could never agree to. 'Remember', he told his confidant Will Murray in 1646, 'I will not abjure episcopacy, take or establish the covenant, nor consent to that undoubted sacrilege of alienating the Church lands.'[13] The need to stand by the bishops, whom he firmly believed were ordained by God, was a constant theme of his correspondence in the aftermath of the civil war. To abandon them, as his enemies required, would be 'a sin of the highest nature', and he confided to the French envoy Bellièvre during the negotiations with the Scots in 1646 a belief that he was now 'being justly punished' by God for allowing Presbyterianism to become established in Scotland in the wake of the covenanter rebellion.[14] Taking an oath for Charles represented a similarly sacred trust. He always had a very strong sense of its binding nature, telling the queen in 1646 that 'beside the obligation of mine oath, I know nothing to be a higher point of conscience'. This helps to explain why he was always quick to insist that he was bound by the terms of his coronation oath, one of the principal clauses of which was an undertaking to 'protect and defend' the bishops to the uttermost of his power. It also explains his abhorrence of taking the solemn league and covenant, which he described as 'the child of rebellion'.[15] The third sin that preoccupied Charles, particularly in 1646–7, was sacrilege. His religious mentor, Andrewes, believed that sacrilege had caused the thirty years' war and for Charles it had become firmly linked with the judgments meted out by God.[16] As he was preparing to abandon Oxford in April 1646 he made a vow that,

> if it shall please his divine Majestie of his infinite goodness to restore me to my just, kingly rights, and to re-establish mee on my throne, I will wholly give back to his Church all those impropriations which are now held by the crowne.[17]

A providential view of history and politics helped to shape Charles's attitudes throughout his life; however, it was not until the 1640s – with the traumas and disappointments of the civil war (and perhaps also with the onset of middle age and the anxieties that accompany it) – that it became an obvious and constant element in his thinking. Most of the evidence we have for Charles's reflections on providence belong to the period 1645–6. He spent much of this time separated from his wife and principal advisers, which led him to write a particularly full and reflective set of letters. The working out of God's providential scheme for him was never far from his thoughts.

The source of much of the king's agonizing can be traced back to a single incident in 1641 – his consenting to the execution of the earl of Strafford. When Charles made his own scaffold speech in 1649 it was Strafford that he called to

[13] *State Papers Collected by Edward Earl of Clarendon* (2 vols., Oxford, 1767), II. 276.
[14] Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 7; D. Stevenson, *Revolution and Counter Revolution in Scotland 1644–1651* (1977), 78.
[15] Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 7, 86; *Clarendon State Papers*, II. 243.
[16] Dzelzainis, 'Clarendon', 524.
[17] V. Staley, *The Life and Times of Gilbert Sheldon* (1913), 40–3.

mind as he reflected on the workings of providence in his own life: 'Many times [God] does pay justice by an unjust sentence; that is ordinary. I will only say that an unjust sentence that I suffered for to take effect is punished now by an unjust sentence on me.'[18] The events of Strafford's final days took a heavy psychological toll on the king. Once the bill of attainder for the earl's execution had been passed in the Lords on 7 May, he faced a very uncomfortable decision. The lords and the privy council urged him to give it his assent and crowds of Londoners calling for Strafford's blood besieged him and his family at Whitehall. But political pressure was not the only consideration. He regarded the decision as very much a test of personal good faith and went through agonies wrestling with his conscience. In his last-ditch plea to parliament to spare Strafford, he had made a good deal of this, declaring 'in my conscience I cannot condemn him of high treason' and urging them to 'find a way to satisfy justice and your own fears and not to press upon my conscience'.[19] Strafford attempted to release him from his dilemma by urging him to agree to the passage of the bill as the best means of healing the division between king and people.[20] But Charles was clearly still uneasy on Sunday 9 May, when he summoned four of the bishops for advice about how to square his conscience. Eventually he gave his assent that evening, telling his privy councillors that if it had just been a matter of the safety of his own person 'I would gladly venture it to save my Lord Strafford's life; but seeing my wife, children and all my kingdom are concerned in it I am forced to give way.'[21]

It was a decision he never ceased to regret. He ascribed all his later misfortunes to his sin in agreeing to it and thereafter held a weekly service every Tuesday, apparently in an effort to atone.[22] The psychological impact of his surrender was apparent in a letter he wrote to one of his closest personal friends, the marquis of Hamilton, a few months into the civil war.

> I have set up my rest upon the justice of my cause being resolved that no extremity or misfortune shall make me yield; for I will either be a glorious king or a patient martyr . . . the failing to one friend has, indeed, gone very near me, wherefore I am resolved that no consideration whatsoever shall ever make me do the like. Upon this ground I am certain that God has either so totally forgiven me that he will still bless this good cause in my hands, or that all my punishment shall be in this world which, without performing what I have resolved, I cannot flatter myself will end here.[23]

The whole episode had a profound effect on his political stance from this point onwards. Unity and settlement were no longer the priority. He appears to have felt

[18] J.G. Muddiman, *The Trial of Charles I* (1928), 261.
[19] J. Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (7 vols., 1659–1701), IV. 239; Sharpe, 'Conscience', 657.
[20] S.R. Gardiner, *The History of England 1603–1642* (10 vols., 1883–4), IX. 361–2.
[21] Ibid., 366–71.
[22] Browell, 'Politics', 57.
[23] National Archives of Scotland, GD 406/1/167/1 & 2.

more strongly than ever before that compromise with his enemies could only bring down God's judgments.

He carried this conviction through much of the negotiation to avert a civil war in late 1641 and early 1642, and indeed into the peace treaties during the war itself. He knew that a good king strove for unity and reconciliation, and consistently proclaimed his desire to achieve peace. This gave his moderate councillors opportunities to push for settlement. However, at the same time his will to compromise was consistently undermined by his deep-seated sense of grievance against his enemies. He felt dishonoured and humiliated by the surrenders they had forced on him, and was deeply alarmed by the 'popular' conspiracy to overthrow monarchy that apparently lay at the root of their actions. But, overlapping all of this was his sense of guilt over Strafford's execution. He feared that if he ever again made concessions that so blatantly conflicted with his conscience he would be punished not just in this world, but the next as well.[24]

Charles's sense of providence also had a powerful impact on his military decisions. There seems little doubt – in spite of remarks he was credited with making to the marquis of Worcester in July 1645[25] – that he believed that the one of the clearest and most conspicuous signs of God's approval was victory in battle.[26] This was manifest in the declaration that Hyde drew up on his behalf in July 1643, announcing that in the recent royalist victories at Adwalton Moor, Roundway Down and the capture of Bristol God 'hath wonderfully manifested his care of us and his defence of his and our most just cause'.[27]

One of the most significant consequences of this belief was his disastrous decision to give battle at Naseby on 14 June 1645. Charles went into the summer campaigning season of 1645 with grounds for optimism. The earl of Montrose had carried all before him in recent offensives in Scotland and was threatening to reverse the advantage in the north that the parliamentarians had gained after their victory at Marston Moor. His own field army finished the 1644 campaign strongly, defeating Essex at Lostwithiel in August, and gaining in strength over the winter months. And the recently formed new model army was still untested in battle and seemingly vulnerable. Charles also held the strategic initiative.[28] But just as important for the king's state of mind was his sense that at last the weight of guilt over Strafford's execution was being lifted. What persuaded him of this – apparently at the instigation of Lord Digby – was parliament's execution of Archbishop Laud in January 1645. 'This last crying blood being totally theirs,' he

[24] Cust, *Charles I*, ch. 5, pts iii–iv, 6, pt i.

[25] In response to the marquis's suggestion that the king's recent defeats at Marston Moor and Naseby were a judgment against him for not giving more of a welcome to the support he had received from Catholics, Charles was said to have remarked that 'the soundness of religion is not to be judged by dint of sword, nor must we judge of her truths by the prosperity of events': BL, Thomason Tracts, E.1355(1), *Certamen Religiosum, or Conference Between his late Majestie . . . and Henry late Marquess and Earl of Worcester . . . at his Majestie's being at Raglan Castle, 1646* (1649), 24–6.

[26] Worden, 'Providence', 81.

[27] Clarendon, *History*, III. 118–20.

[28] For the Naseby campaign, see Cust, *Charles I*, 398–405.

informed the queen, 'I believe it is no presumption hereafter to hope that his hand of justice must be heavier upon them and lighter on us.'[29] From this point onwards, his confidence in divine deliverance soared. He knew that the royalist cause was bound to triumph in the end. It was simply a matter of when and how. In late May and early June 1645, with continuing good news from Montrose in Scotland and Rupert's dramatic capture of Leicester, the time seemed imminent. 'Since this rebellion', he informed the queen on 8 June, 'my affairs were never in so hopeful a way.'[30]

Charles's new-found sense of confidence would appear to be part of the explanation for the decision that he and Rupert took in the small hours of the morning of 14 June to fight the new model army rather than continue with the strategic withdrawal that they had been planning the previous evening. The traditional view has been that this decision was made after a council of war meeting at which Digby and Ashburnham, the king's principal civilian counsellors, persuaded him that to withdraw in the face of the enemy would be both demoralizing and humiliating. I have argued elsewhere that the surviving evidence strongly suggests that no such meeting ever took place, and that the decision to give battle was made by Charles and Rupert on their own.[31] But why they chose to fight against a force that outnumbered the royalists by 15,000 to 9,000–10,000 remains unclear. One factor was probably a certain amount of panic and confusion, perhaps inevitable after the king was roused from his bed at 2 a.m. with news that the new model forces were close at hand. It is also apparent that royalist intelligence was deficient. The king seems to have assumed throughout the campaign that his own forces were a match for the new model in strength and numbers, and greatly superior in morale and organization. None of this was true. However, what may have tipped the balance was Charles's sense that now was his moment, that at last God was about to deliver the final victory against the rebels. The 'battle of all for all' that members of his entourage had been anticipating, seemed about to happen. We cannot know with any certainty why he chose to fight at Naseby. Probably the best guide to his thinking is his letters to the queen during the lead-up to the battle, and they suggest that it was a decision grounded in a mixture of confusion, wishful thinking and his personal reading of divine providence. If this was indeed the case then it would have been entirely in keeping with much of the decision-making of the civil war period.

Charles's defeat at Naseby and subsequent battles in 1645 did not, however, cause him to lose faith in the workings of providence. Far from it. In the short term, he appears to have clung more firmly than ever to a belief that his fate lay in God's hands. This is reflected in the correspondence of Lord Digby who during the autumn campaigning of 1645 became the king's closest adviser. Digby was not someone who normally set much store by providence. He fell into the

[29] *The King's Cabinet Opened* (1645), 24.
[30] Ibid., 14.
[31] R.P. Cust, 'Why did Charles I fight at Naseby?', *History Today*, LV (Oct. 2005), 10–14.

category of those politicians whom Hyde castigated as opportunists, lost in the 'wilderness of prudential motives and expedients'.[32] But in September 1645 he was prepared to confess that he had been won over by recent events. 'I must confess for my part', he wrote to his old friend Lord Byron,

> these miracles [the relief of Hereford and Montrose's continuing success in Scotland] besides the worldy joy they give me have made me a better Christian by begetting in me a stronger faith and reliance upon God almighty than before, having manifested that it is wholly his work, and that he will bring his intended blessings upon this just cause by ways the most impossible to human understanding, and consequently teaching us to cast off all reliance upon our own strength.[33]

Charles's own views at the time appear to have accorded closely with Digby's, and this led him to adopt an uncompromising stance over peace negotiations. The letter to Rupert in August 1645, cited earlier, expressed his mood of fatalistic determination. He was resolved to carry on the fight, come what may,

> for I know my obligation to be, both in conscience and honour, neither to abandon God's cause, injure my successors nor forsake my friends. Indeed, I cannot flatter myself with expectation of good success more than this, to end my days with honour and a good conscience which obliges me to continue my endeavours, as not despairing that God may in due time avenge his own cause.[34]

It was around the same time that Charles also began seriously to anticipate the possibility of his own martyrdom. Writing to Prince Charles in June he had emphasized that 'the saving of my life by complying with them would make me end my days with torture and disquiet of mind . . . But your constancy will make me die cheerfully.'[35] His role, as he now saw it, was to remain constant and trust to God's purposes. To do otherwise would be simply to invite further judgments against him.

This was the frame of mind in which Charles approached negotiations during the closing months of the civil war. His best chance of rescuing his cause was to do a deal with the Scottish covenanters who were becoming seriously disenchanted with their English parliamentarian allies. The French had negotiated an agreement whereby if Charles accepted a Presbyterian Church settlement, the Scots would press the English parliament to reinstate him and, if they refused, would take his side against them. Henrietta Maria, in Paris, accepted the conditions on Charles's behalf in November 1645 and then set about persuading him to agree. However, she found herself running up against the seemingly immovable obstacle of her husband's conscience.[36]

32 Dzelzainis, 'Clarendon', 517.
33 *CSPD 1645–6*, 122. See Digby expressing similar sentiments in a letter to Prince Charles: ibid., 118.
34 Clarendon, *History*, IV. 74–5.
35 Ibid., IV. 168–9.
36 Cust, *Charles I*, 411–12.

The sticking point in the whole negotiation was Charles's unwillingness to give up the bishops and accept Presbyterianism. He spelt out his reasons in a lengthy correspondence with the queen during January and February 1646, from which it emerged that the main consideration was his conscience. Abandoning the bishops and the Church of England, he insisted, was clean contrary to his coronation oath. It would be a denial of his very faith, comparable to asking the queen 'to leave the communion of the Roman Church'. It would also 'ruin' his crown since the 'chief maxim' of the Presbyterians was 'that all kings must submit to Christ's kingdom, of which they are the sole governors'.[37] Seen in the light of his past failings and future prospects, to concede on these points now would be to reject the destiny that he believed God had mapped out for him.

> I must confess (to my shame and grief) that heretofore I have for public respects . . . yielded unto those things which were no less against my conscience than this, for which I have been so deservedly punished that a relapse now would be insufferable; and I am most confident that God hath so favoured my hearty (though weak) repentance that he will be glorified either by relieving me out of these distresses . . . or in my gallant sufferings for so good a cause, which to eschew by any mean submission cannot but draw God's further justice upon me, both in this and the next world.[38]

These arguments went to the core of Charles's psychological make-up and sense of self. In the last resort, he clung to the belief that as long as he remained a true defender of the Church of England God would deliver him, in this world or the next. Faced with a husband who was so firm in his convictions that he would face death rather than compromise, there was little that even the queen could do.

Charles's obduracy wrecked any chance of an alliance with Scots while he was still in a position to benefit militarily. But in the months following the end of the first civil war their support remained central to his strategy. I have argued elsewhere that the king's main objective during this period was not to achieve peace or reconciliation, but to start a second civil war. The obvious way to do this was to form an alliance with the covenanters whose distaste for the Independents on the parliamentarian side was increasingly apparent. Charles surrendered to the Scots in May 1646, and remained in their custody at Newcastle, which gave him every opportunity of brokering a deal; however, in the negotiations that followed he again blew his chance.[39]

There were several reasons for this. The king overestimated his ability to divide his enemies and played his hand badly. He also overdid the tactical manoeuvring and earned a reputation for duplicity. But more important than anything else, he was once again hemmed in by the constraints of his conscience. The two things that really mattered to the Scots were that he should take the

37 Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 7, 19, 22–3.
38 Ibid., 19.
39 Cust, *Charles I*, 420–9.

solemn league and covenant and agree to establish Presbyterianism in England. But as we have seen, these were issues on which Charles believed that he could not afford to compromise. The whole matter became the subject of a lengthy correspondence with the queen and her principal advisers, Jermyn, Culpepper and Ashburnham.

The queen's line throughout remained as it had been since late 1645. Charles should give up episcopacy, at least for the time being, since this was the only way to get the Scots on his side and put himself 'at the head of an army' again. Otherwise she was determined that he should concede nothing.[40] Jermyn, Culpepper and Ashburnham supported her with a carefully reasoned case for making concessions on episcopacy. Their basic argument was that Charles had no alternative. His 'piety, courage and constancy' in standing by the bishops were to be applauded; but he had now reached the point where he could only save them by saving himself. 'Presbytery or something worse will be forced upon you whether you will or no.' He was not obliged 'to perish in company with bishops merely out of pity'; rather it was his duty to rescue his own authority and then use it to relieve the Church. 'A disease', they insisted, 'is to be preferred before dissolution: the one may in time admit of a remedy, the other is past cure.'[41] This was a powerful case, cogently argued, but Charles appeared unmoved.

The arguments he countered with were twofold. First of all, abandoning episcopacy was against his conscience; and secondly, it would lead inevitably to the 'destruction of monarchy'. As we have seen, Charles felt a powerful sense of obligation towards the bishops that was enshrined in his coronation oath. His sense of the binding nature of promissory oaths was probably reinforced at this time by his close reading of Robert Sanderson's great work, *De Juramento.*[42] To abjure an oath would be to invite eternal damnation, he explained to Alexander Henderson, the Scottish Presbyterian with whom he was disputing the nature of Church government.[43] But it would also, he believed, undermine his credibility as a monarch since no ruler could be trusted by his people unless he remained true to God. So when Jermyn, Culpepper and Ashburnham argued that it would be political wisdom to give way on episcopacy, he retorted furiously that 'conscience and policy' were inseparable: 'the prudential part of any consideration will never be found opposite to the conscientious; nay here they go hand in hand'.[44]

The proof he offered for this maxim was that if he were to allow Presbyterianism to be established he would be opening the way to the destruction of his kingship. This was a view that he appears to have held for at least as long as he had been on the throne; but he was given the opportunity to refine his thinking in the exchanges with Henderson. The basis for his case was that, whereas

40 M.A.E. Green, ed. *Letters of Queen Henrietta Maria* (1857), 326, 327, 329, 330, 335.
41 *Clarendon State Papers*, II. 263.
42 Sharpe, 'Conscience', 653, 659.
43 *The Papers which Passed at Newcastle betwixt his Sacred Majestie and Mr. Al. Henderson concerning the Change of Church Government in 1646* (1649), 3–4.
44 *Clarendon State Papers*, II. 260, 274.

bishops were part of the primitive Church and dated from apostolic times, Presbyterianism was a recent innovation, the product of 'a popular reformation' and therefore inherently threatening to royal power. He reiterated his father's maxim, 'no bishop, no king', glossing it as a statement of the fact that 'Presbyterian doctrine' was 'incompatible with monarchy'.[45]

The inflexible attitude that Charles presented in these letters was, however, deceptive. While announcing his resolute determination not to give ground, he was in fact preparing to make some very significant concessions. This became possible with the arrival at Newcastle in September 1646 of one of his oldest friends, the groom of the royal bedchamber, Will Murray. At last he had a counsellor on the spot whom he felt he could trust, and he informed the queen that 'he and I are consulting for the best means how to accommodate [the religious differences] without going directly against my conscience'.[46] The scheme they came up with involved accepting the status quo in England – with Presbyterian Church government and use of the directory in place of the prayer book – for a period of three years, while an assembly of divines came up with recommendations about the future structure of the Church that could be put to both king and parliament. To make absolutely sure that he could propose this 'with a safe conscience' he communicated the whole scheme to Bishops Juxon and Duppa. They pronounced that it would not be a breach of his coronation oath to allow 'a temporary compliance' with the status quo in order 'to recover and maintain that doctrine and discipline wherein [he had] been bred'. An 'absolute' allowance of Presbyterianism on the other hand, even if he had no intention of abiding by it, would constitute 'a sin against . . . conscience' and would bring down God's judgments.[47] On this basis Murray was dispatched to London and spent much of October and November in negotiation with the Scots' leadership. However, Charles's concessions were not enough. The covenanter leaders refused to accept anything less than full compliance with their demands. His earlier obduracy had pushed them beyond the limits of their patience, and in January 1647 they took the drastic step of handing him over to the custody of the English parliament.

Charles had demonstrated that when it came to compromising over matters that affected his conscience he was not totally inflexible. He was prepared to negotiate up to the limits of what he felt his conscience would permit and, as he put it, try 'to find such a present compliance as may stand with conscience *and* policy'.[48] In the longer term, the scheme worked out with Murray did provide the basis for the engagement under which the Scots entered the second civil war. But in the short term his conscience had stymied the best prospect of an immediate resumption of the war.

After his defeat in the second civil war of 1648, Charles's political options

[45] Ibid., II. 243, 247, 254, 274; Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 71.
[46] Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 45–6, 63, 65.
[47] *Clarendon State Papers*, II. 265–8.
[48] Bruce, ed. *Charles in 1646*, 65; my italics.

narrowed considerably. The Scots were now out of the game and he was having to deal with the English Presbyterians (who were still eager to pursue a negotiated restoration of his kingship, but not to the point of fighting about it) and the Independent/army coalition (which from April 1648 was contemplating putting him on trial). The Presbyterians remained in the majority at Westminster, but their cause had been weakened by association with royalism in the second civil war and it was the Independent/army junto that held the initiative. In spite of his difficulties, however, Charles still had a certain amount of room for manoeuvre and his first objective remained to divide his opponents and restart the war. In the negotiations that followed the priority was to buy time until something turned up.[49]

During the Treaty of Newport (September–November 1648) Charles persisted with the approach that had characterized most of his earlier negotiations. He professed his desire for peace, talked about his readiness to make concessions and looked for ways of splitting the forces ranged against him. But when push came to shove he was not prepared to concede on what he called his 'grounds'. The critical point came on 25 September when the commissioners at Newport presented their ecclesiastical demands, which included the abolition of episcopacy, the sale of bishops' lands and the compulsory taking of the covenant. These had been the sticking points for Charles in 1646 and, again, he was not prepared to yield. He responded with an offer to allow Presbyterianism to be established for three years and proposed a 99-year lease on bishops' lands; but further than this he would not go. Nor would he give in to the demand that he exempt thirty-seven of his leading supporters from a post-war general pardon. He was still facing the burden of guilt he felt as a consequence of abandoning Strafford in 1641 and was not prepared to abandon others who had stood by him. As he said, these were matters on which 'I durst not dissemble in point of conscience'.[50] Again, however, this destroyed his best chance of building bridges with his most obvious allies on the parliamentarian side. During October his proposals were rejected by the Presbyterian majority in the house of commons.

In November and December 1648 the political situation closed in to reduce Charles's options still further. The remonstrance of the army in November called for him to be brought to justice and Pride's purge on 6 December removed the Presbyterian majority from the commons. He was left with no choice but to try to work with elements of the Independent/army junto. It was during this period that he began seriously to face up to the possibility of his trial and martyrdom. His letters and asides were now strewn with references to his impending fate, and he told his servant Philip Warwick that he felt like a commander in a besieged town who in spite of being given permission by his superiors to surrender felt he must 'hold it out till I make some stone of this building my tombstone'.[51] At the same

49 Cust, *Charles I*, 442–9.
50 C.W. Firebrace, *Honest Harry. Sir Henry Firebrace 1619–1691* (1932), 343.
51 Sir Philip Warwick, *Memoirs of the Reign of King Charles I* (1813), 363.

time he began a concerted effort to fashion an image of himself for posterity. The most plausible reconstruction of the authorship of *Eikon Basilike* suggests that it was during this period that the marquis of Hertford presented him with John Gauden's manuscript, based on a vindication of his actions that he himself had been working on since 1642. Having corrected and revised it Charles then apparently authorized publication in his name.[52] He also worked on a series of lengthy letters to the prince of Wales that served both as a justification of his actions and a guide to kingship.[53] All this did not mean, however, that he had given up hope of dividing his enemies and starting a third civil war.

His best chance now seemed to lie with Ireland where, after years of frustration, the marquis of Ormond was apparently on the threshold of putting together an army to fight for him. In October 1648 news reached Charles that the marquis had come to an agreement with Lord Inchiquin who had defected from the parliamentarians and commanded a considerable force in Munster. Ormond was also hopeful of, at last, forming an alliance with the confederation of Kilkenny, the governing body of the Irish Catholics. It was reported in London that he would soon have an army of 16,000 with which to invade England. Deliverance from Ireland must have looked to Charles like just the sort of semi-miraculous working out of God's providence that might be anticipated in the circumstances. But to make it possible he needed to buy time, stay alive and divide his enemies.[54]

As on previous occasions, his freedom of manoeuvre was seriously constrained by his conscience. In the period between Pride's purge and his execution on 30 January 1649 Charles had two major opportunities to spin out proceedings and drive a wedge between the leadership of the Independent/army junto, who still saw settlement as preferable to the alternatives, and the radical officers and MPs who were bent on bringing him to account. The first of these was the Denbigh mission on Christmas Day 1648, when the earl offered Charles a way out of facing a trial, and the second was at the trial itself (20–27 January 1649). In the first instance, the king was required to surrender his 'negative voice', that is to say his power to reject parliamentary legislation; in the second he simply had to agree to plead, which would have constituted an acceptance of the authority of the court and thus of the recent measures sanctioned by parliament. In neither case, however, would he give ground. His obstinacy was partly based on miscalculation. He seems to have believed that his opponents would never dare to take the ultimate step of executing him and misjudged the extent to which he could go on playing them off against each other.[55] But it was also a matter of conscience. At the final trial hearing on 27 January he insisted that he had refused to plead because he was determined to preserve that which 'is much dearer to me than my

52 Knachel, ed. *Eikon Basilike*, xxx–xxxii; S. Kelsey, 'The King's Book. *Eikon Basilike* and the English Revolution of 1649', in N. Tyacke, ed. *The English Revolution and its Legacies* (forthcoming).

53 Cust, *Charles I*, 446–7.

54 J.S.A. Adamson, 'The Frighted Junto: Perceptions of Ireland, and the Last Attempts at Settlement with Charles I', *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. J. Peacey (2001), 36–70.

55 S. Kelsey, 'The Death of Charles I', *HJ*, XLV (2002), 727–54; Cust, *Charles I*, 450–9.

life which is my conscience and my honour'.[56] This goes to the heart of Charles's inner motivation. He was always acutely sensitive on matters of honour and he seems to have regarded giving in at this point as a humiliation too far. One royalist commentator made the point at the time of the Denbigh mission that surrendering his 'negative voice' would leave him with no more power than 'a duke of Venice', which had always been too much for him to stomach in the past. But, even more importantly, in the circumstances, he saw not pleading as a matter of conscience and therefore closely linked to his providential interpretation of events. He remained firm in the belief that, given the justness of his cause, God was bound to ensure final victory; however, if it turned out that he was not to be the instrument of this, he was determined to avoid God's further wrath by standing firm on matters of conscience. To surrender his 'negative voice', which all along he regarded as an essential, God-given, component of his sovereignty, would be to undo all the benefits of his perseverance elsewhere.[57] Charles, then, refused to give the junto leadership what it wanted because, in the final analysis, he was more afraid of God's judgment than he was of death.

Having made the decision not to concede, Charles faced the prospect of death with extraordinary serenity. Throughout his final days he displayed none of the anguish and uncertainty that tended to surface when he was confronting difficult choices. He was clear in his own mind what he must do and buoyed up by a sense that he had persevered to the end and was about to receive his final reward. He woke on the morning of his execution and cheerfully announced to an attendant that 'this is my second marriage day . . . for before night I hope to be espoused to my blessed Jesus'.[58] This was not mere bravado. He really did believe that he was about to attain salvation. He was able to draw on this, and on all the reserves of stoical self-control that he had built up over the years, to deliver a remarkably assured final performance. He spent much of his last morning in prayer with Bishop Juxon and drew considerable solace from the lesson for the day, Matthew xxvii, on the passion of Christ. On the scaffold he emphasized his willingness to die in charity, going out of his way to forgive his enemies and once again underlining his commitment to peace. Finally he affirmed that he was dying 'in the profession of the Church of England as I find it left me by my father'.[59] Thus he provided Anglican apologists with the raw materials to fashion an image of Charles the martyr, the Church of England saint. He also discharged his conscience and remained true to the destiny that he believed that God had mapped out for him.

Belief in providence was a thread running though Charles's life from his early religious upbringing to the day of his execution. Its impact on him was at its most

[56] Muddiman, *Trial of Charles I*, 107–8.

[57] One account of the proceedings on 20 January has him remarking that on this point it would be sinful for him 'to lay down that power wherewith he was entrusted': S. Kelsey, 'The Trial of Charles I', *EHR*, CXVIII (2003), 613.

[58] Muddiman, *Trial of Charles I*, 144.

[59] Ibid., 145, 262–3.

pronounced during the 1640s when the dramatic unfolding of the events of the civil war and his sense of guilt over the fate of Strafford repeatedly reminded him that not only in this world, but in the next as well, his fate depended on his readiness to abide by God's purposes. And he was guided in his understanding of what these purposes were by a strong sense of conscience that spurred him on to stand firm on particular principles. On some occasions his belief in providence imbued him with a confidence – often an overconfidence – that his cause must triumph in the end and that God was about to deliver a decisive military victory; on others it filled him with a determination not to shift from his 'grounds', which severely restricted his freedom for manoeuvre in negotiation. But overall it would, perhaps, not be claiming too much to say that it was as important an influence on his decision-making during and after the civil war as it was on Oliver Cromwell's.

13

John Shawe and Edward Bowles: Civic Preachers at Peace and War

WILLIAM SHEILS

As the writings of the dedicatee of this volume amply demonstrate, the suppression of godly preaching, the prosecution of the preachers by the Laudians during the 1630s, and the assault by the crown on the upholders of godly rule in the provinces, the puritan magistracy, were recognized by contemporaries as among the chief grievances of those who opposed Charles I in both parliament and the country after 1640.[1] Thereafter, the significance of that preaching, both in preparing the people for war and in justifying events once war broke out, was a matter for comment as early as the 1650s and has been the subject of recent historiographical debate.[2] This essay will consider the response of such preaching to the breakdown of civil order through the careers of two friends, John Shawe and Edward Bowles. At different times each was employed as civic preacher at York, as preacher, and in Bowles's case as chaplain, to the parliamentary forces, and as chaplain to the Fairfaxes, and eventually, albeit briefly, as the recipient of royal patronage following the Restoration. The careers of both and their surviving sermons, printed and in manuscript, provide us with the opportunity to examine the shifting priorities of those godly puritan clergy of a broadly Presbyterian persuasion as they faced the changing circumstances of the mid-century while occupying pulpits in major provincial cities in Yorkshire, a region of intense

1 N. Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism c.1530–1700* (Manchester, 2001), 116–55, 203–21; idem, *Anti-Calvinists* (Oxford, 1987), 224–6; C. Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies 1637–1642* (Oxford, 1991), 182–3.

2 H.R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament' in his *Religion, Reformation and Social Change* (1967), 294–334; and S. Baskerville, *Not Peace but a Sword: The Political Theology of the English Revolution* (1992), discuss the parliamentary sermons. Provincial preaching is examined in W. Sheils, 'Provincial Preaching on the eve of the Civil War: some West Riding Fast Sermons' in P. Roberts and A. Fletcher, eds. *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), 290–313, and J. Eales, 'Provincial Preaching and Allegiance in the First English Civil War', in T. Cogswell, R. Cust, P. Lake, eds. *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain* (Cambridge, 2002), 185–210.

military activity. How was godly rule perceived and implemented in such circumstances, away from parliament and the centre of government?[3]

John Shawe, the elder of the two, was from Yorkshire, born in 1608 in Bradfield in the west riding, the only child of a modestly prosperous farming family. He entered the puritan Christ's College, Cambridge in 1623, where he fell under the spell of William Chappell, who he accounted 'a very acute and learned man, and a most vigilant tutor', a view not universally held among the godly.[4] It was not Chappell, however, but the preaching of Thomas Weld, later to emigrate to New England, that determined Shawe on a clerical career, and he was ordained in 1629, proceeding MA the following year.[5] By that date Edward Bowles, born in 1613 the son of a puritan minister in Bedfordshire, had also arrived at Cambridge, entering St Catharine's College in 1628, then under its celebrated master, the notable puritan preacher Richard Sibbes, who was to suffer under Laud. Bowles also proceeded MA, remaining at Cambridge until 1636,[6] by which time Shawe had already had his first confrontation with ecclesiastical authority.

Following his ordination Shawe returned north in 1630 to take up the post of lecturer at Brampton in Derbyshire, just across the county boundary from his home parish. This post did not require him to subscribe to the articles and, notwithstanding his scruples on this matter, he was granted a licence to preach throughout the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield by the Calvinist bishop Thomas Morton. Shawe soon attracted attention as an effective preacher and, following a sermon delivered during a visit to London, was invited by the feoffees for impropriations to move to Devon as lecturer at the market town of Chumleigh in 1633. It was while there that his preaching fell foul of Laud, no lover of the feoffees, and in 1636 he withdrew from the active ministry to his family property in Sykehouse, ostensibly to sort out his deceased father's affairs. By that date he had been appointed chaplain to the Calvinist courtier Philip Herbert, earl of Montgomery and Pembroke, and it was probably through these godly connections that Shawe came to the notice of the corporation of York.[7]

The corporation, in common with those in many other cities, had established a

[3] The sources used here are the printed sermons, and those in manuscript, BL, Add. MSS 4929, 51054 for Bowles, and for Shawe his York sermon is among a collection of 1642 sermons preached around Otley, formerly among the Philippes MSS, which is currently held at All Saints Church, Otley. A volume of sermon notes, including ones from both Bowles and Shawe, was known to exist in 1855, but has not been located: C. Metcalfe, ed. *Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Surtees Society, LXV, 1855), 413–14. Shawe wrote a memorial for his son, the MS of which is at Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborne Shelves b 310, and selections have been edited: J. Broadley, ed. *Memoirs of Master John Shawe, late Vicar of Rotherham* (Hull, 1824) and by J.R. Boyle (Hull, 1823) under the same title. A shorter version, based on a digest by Ralph Thoresby, was published with extracts from some of his sermons in *Yorkshire Diaries*, 121–63, 358–439. The author is mindful of Dr Tyacke's suspicion of the biographical approach to history, *Aspects of Protestantism*, 20.

[4] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 123, 416–17; *ODNB*, 'William Chappell'.

[5] *ODNB*, 'Thomas Weld'.

[6] *ODNB*, 'Edward Bowles'. His father, Oliver, preached a fast sermon before the long parliament on 7 July 1643: *Zeal for God's House Quickened* (1643).

[7] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 125–6; for Morton's churchmanship, see K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), 253–6, and for his later disagreements with Neile, see A. Foster, 'Archbishop Neile Revisited' in

civic lectureship in the later years of Elizabeth's reign, and had steadily increased its support so that by the 1630s there were four preachers distributed around the city parishes, supported directly by the aldermen and common council and by the income from some of the parochial livings. The arrival of Richard Neile as archbishop in 1632, and his vigorous imposition of Laudian church order at the metropolitan visitation that year, aggravated an already uneasy relationship between city and cathedral, where disputes over civic administration and procedure had led to public disagreement and, occasionally, disturbance. Neile quickly made York minster, which had maintained a balanced personnel between Calvinists and others under Tobie Matthew, into a stronghold of Laudianism and, in order to stiffen the sinews of the disrupted ecclesiastical courts, introduced the lawyers William Easdall, a former associate at Durham, and Edward Mottershed, as chancellor of the diocese and advocate-general in the north respectively.[8] Following the visitation, Neile immediately set about challenging the authority of the preachers in the city, citing them before the court for not replacing their Sunday afternoon sermons with catechizing according to the royal instructions of 1629. The senior preacher at that time was Henry Aiscough, who had served in parishes adjacent to the city since 1610 and been lecturer and vicar at All Saints Pavement since 1624, and he and a younger colleague, John Whittakers, appeared before Easdall on 8 December 1632. The major confrontation, however, came two years later, over the book of sports, when Aiscough was prosecuted for failing to read the book, along with two of his fellow preachers: John Birchall of St Martin cum Gregory on Micklegate, the main street south of the river, and Miles White of St Michael Spurriergate, located at the heart of the city on northern end of Ousebridge.[9]

No further action was taken against Aiscough and White, but Birchall's prosecution revealed the strength of the godly among the corporation, and also the extent to which the preachers had penetrated other groups in the city. Not only did Birchall preach, but he also held conventicles, one of which met 'together with many others in Dr Scott's the deane of Yorkes house unknowne to him, who being addicted to cards minded none of those puritanicall matters. Mrs Scott the deans wife, being very much inclined to conventicles, that place was chosen because in those perilous times they might keep them there with the greatest security.'[10] Conventicles notwithstanding, it was the public activities of the preachers that produced the greatest confrontation. St Martin's had a well-

P. Lake and M. Questier, eds. *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c.1560–1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), 170–1.

8 R.A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560–1642* (1960), 52–67; M.C. Cross, 'From Reformation to Restoration' in G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant, eds. *A History of York Minster* (Oxford, 1979), 210–13; Foster, 'Neile Revisited', 159–78.

9 C. Cross, 'Conflict and Confrontation: the York Dean and Chapter and the Corporation in the 1630s', in D. Marcombe and C.S. Knighton, eds. *Close Encounters: English Cathedrals and Society since 1450* (Nottingham, 1991), 62–71. K. Fincham, ed. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (CERS, I and V, 1994–8), II. 37–8, article V.1.

10 Quoted in Marchant, *Puritans and Church Courts*, 81.

established record for godly nonconformity and in 1632, on the death of the incumbent, a number of local aldermen, including three former lord mayors, Thomas Hoyle, John Vaux and Samuel Breary, established a trust, which included themselves, William Gouge, the celebrated London minister and author, and Walter Price, principal agent to the feoffees for impropriations, to secure the patronage of the living, to which Birchall was appointed in April 1633. The new vicar took up residence in Alderman Hoyle's house and, almost immediately, there followed a war of attrition in the courts between the archbishop and his officers, and the aldermen, parishioners and Birchall, which continued for the rest of the decade.[11]

It was into this increasingly contentious environment that Shawe stepped, as lecturer at All Saints Pavement, early in 1637. He was soon made aware of the depth of feeling between the archbishop and the godly for, as he subsequently recorded, after preaching his first sermon

> the archbishop Neal (sic) sent his apparitor, one Mr Yorke, to summon me to appear before him; upon my appearance he read me some frivolous articles (not worth the naming) and gave me very terrible threatening language, but, perceiving that I was chaplain to Philip, earl of Pembroke, the lord chamberlain, to the king, he confessed to me that he had no real fault to charge me withal; he then gave me very good words, and said, 'I will now tell you the whole truth; I have' he said, 'nothing against you, but I heard that you are a very rich man and that you are brought in by the Lord Mayor of York (Vaux) to head the puritan party against me, but I tell you . . . I will break Vaux and the Puritan party.'[12]

In the face of this threat Shawe remained unabashed, continuing to preach in the city, and enjoying the protection of his aristocratic and aldermanic patrons until he accepted the wealthy vicarage at Rotherham in 1639. This removal did not severe his connections with the city; he continued to keep in touch with his fellow preachers and was present when Charles I arrived in the spring of 1642, preaching a sermon in his old church of All Saints on 1 May. Shawe chose as his text the epistle to the Colossians, chapter 3 verse 5, in which he linked the contemporary tensions in England with those addressed by Paul at Colossus. Shawe declared that, in a living body the hand could not be at war with the foot, and placed the immediate cause of the nation's troubles with the king and his advisers, whose idolatry and intemperate actions against God's people made communication between parties difficult. The message was couched in the language of counsel, but the references to Jehu's overthrow of the Omri dynasty, as a king who removed tyrants, and his massacre of the priests of Baal not only reinforced the Pauline references to contemporary divisions in the nation, but also underlined

[11] Ibid., 81–92, 227–9; C. Cross, 'A Man of Conscience in Seventeenth-Century Urban Politics: Alderman Hoyle of York' in J. Morrill, P. Slack, D. Woolf, eds. *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), 212–17.
[12] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 129.

the crucial role played by preachers and prophets (in this case Elisha) in moving others to carry out God's will, even to encouraging a change of power.[13]

Vivid as the biblical example was, the change of power sought by most godly ministers in the months leading up to war was not regime change but a change in the balance of power, and this was especially true of the Fairfaxes, who had assumed the leadership of the gentry opposition to Charles in Yorkshire and into whose ambit Shawe had now moved. By 1630 Ferdinando Fairfax was among the most active of the west riding JPs and was so much the living embodiment of the godly magistrate that he was recognized, by fellow gentry and puritan clergy alike, as their chief protector against the policies of the Arminians, whose views he described in 1629 as 'an insensible subversion of the religion now established'. Throughout the 1630s Fairfax sought to protect local clergy against prosecution in the archbishop's courts and found himself in opposition to Neile on a variety of local issues, from the appointment of a schoolmaster at Otley to the rights of copyholders in the forest of Knaresborough. By the time the king raised his standard in August 1642 Fairfax was the dominant presence in the parliamentary cause in the county, his only rival for the leadership being Sir Thomas Hotham, governor of Hull, and it was with Hotham that Shawe soon fell out.[14] Following his failure to secure a preaching post at York, Shawe removed to Hull late in 1642, but was soon in trouble. He was excluded from the city by the governor on account of his preaching, and withdrew to Beverley, preaching a fast sermon there on 28 December, later published as *A Broken Heart* and dedicated to the mayor and aldermen of Hull, in which he justified his actions. The text was unexceptional, but well grounded in a providential view of English history that he owed to Foxe's *Acts and Monuments.* Taking that as his starting point, Shawe was careful to locate himself in direct line to the Marian martyrs as the defender of true religion; he likened the royalist army, with its preponderance of northern Catholic gentry, to the rebels of 1569, and provided an essentially millenarian account of the previous century of English history, noting that, despite the present difficulties the gospel was preached more thoroughly in England than ever before, and taking the present troubles as a sign that Antichrist was soon to be defeated.[15]

Shawe then made his way back to Rotherham, stopping to preach to Fairfax's forces on the occasion of a special fast called by the general at Selby on 5 February 1643. Having distinguished between spiritual and temporal soldiers

13 Otley parish church, MS volume of sermons, fos 130–5; the volume is discussed in Sheils, 'Provincial Preaching', 294–5; for contemporary references to Jehu, see C. Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (1993), 59, 67–8. For another example of preaching in a cathedral city on the eve of war, see M. Stoyle, *From Deliverance to Destruction* (Exeter, 1996), 59–60, 75, 168–73.

14 *Yorkshire Diaries*, 135; J.T. Cliffe, *The Yorkshire Gentry: from the Reformation to the Civil War* (1969), 299, 327–30; A. Hopper, ' "Fitted for Desperation": Honour and Treachery in Parliament's Yorkshire Command, 1642–3', *History*, LXXXVI (2001), 138–54; G.W. Johnson, ed. *The Fairfax Correspondence* (1848), 155–6.

15 John Shawe, *A Broken Heart* (1643), extracts printed in *Yorkshire Diaries*, 358–66; A. Hopper, ' "The Popish Army of the North": Anti-Catholicism and Allegiance in Civil War Yorkshire, 1642–46', *Recusant History*, XXV (2000–1), 12–27.

Shawe, using Leviticus 14 as his text, addressed the social impact of violence directly. He warned against the lack of civil order that war brought, reminding his hearers that 'plundering, for your own private gaine; without either just and publique command and authority, or publique good . . . was called stealing the last year, and deserved hanging and damning'. The only safe way to remove the disease that disfigured the country, that sinfulness that manifested itself in 'the hatred of pietie and opposition of goodness', was to follow the path of sacrifice, for a sinful people were the enemies not just of God but of the king, as 'an ill stomack can make a good head ake'. The legitimacy of the parliamentarian cause, founded securely in the scriptures, nevertheless had to be demonstrated by the actions of its soldiers if the nation was to be healed.[16]

Shawe was soon to experience that anticipated breakdown in civil order when, on his return to Rotherham, the town was taken by the royalist army under Newcastle in May 1643. Notwithstanding the promises of the royalists, the chief inhabitants were taken prisoner, and Shawe himself forced to flee. He went to Manchester where, for the following year, he took his turn in delivering the daily lectures, on Fridays in his case, and preaching on Sundays at the nearby living of Lymm, which he had secured through the patronage of the parliamentary commander Sir William Brereton. Manchester was at the centre of the Presbyterian organization in the north and Shawe extended his clerical contacts while there, advancing his reputation among both fellow ministers and the leading puritan gentry, but perhaps the most formative experience of his stay was a preaching mission undertaken in the Cartmel area in the spring of 1644. It was following a meeting with a parishioner there that he realized, rather in the manner of Richard Baxter, the depth of ignorance that remained among many of even the churchgoing laity. This encounter heightened his pastoral commitment and led to a recognition that catechizing was critical to salvation, and common prayer in itself worthless.[17]

Shawe's departure from Cartmel was precipitated by the arrival of members of Prince Rupert's army prior to the royalist attempt to relieve the besieged city of York, and it was in the aftermath of the royalist failure there, and at Marston Moor in July 1644, that Shawe and Edward Bowles became aware of each other. Bowles had already been involved with the army, serving as a chaplain to Meldrum's regiment from as early as November 1642. From the first he was a vigorous opponent of any attempt to treat with the king, publishing a tract in January 1643 critical of parliamentary approaches to Charles, which he saw as responsible for loss of morale among the soldiery, and advocating an association of the counties for the maintenance of religion and the army. This tract was followed towards the end of the year by *The Mysterie of Iniquity*, in which he characterized the forces of the king in terms similar to those used by Shawe, as being comprised of 'papists,

[16] John Shawe, *Two Clean Birds* (York, 1644), extracts in *Yorkshire Diaries*, 366–76, esp. 375.
[17] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 138–9; for a discussion of Baxter's categories, see E. Duffy, 'The Godly and the Multitude in Stuart England', *The Seventeenth Century*, I (1986), 31–55.

prelates, courtiers, superstitious clergy-men, dissolute gentry and a herd of prophane, ignorant people' drawn from the dark corners of the land. The similarity ended there; Bowles's view of the events leading up to war was starker than that of Shawe, and there was no suggestion of the early downfall of the enemy. He had no doubt that England's troubles were the result of a Jesuit conspiracy hatched in Rome to which James I had been something of an unwitting accomplice but to which Charles was himself committed, and there was no future in trying to treat with such a man, as events in Scotland and Ireland had revealed. The Stuart kings had proved disastrous for England and Bowles, sharing the selective amnesia of many godly preachers, saw the solution to the present dilemma in a return to the watchful policy of Elizabeth's reign when the papist threat was kept at bay.[18] Bowles's less compromising attitude to the king was reflected in his early association with the army, and reinforced by his continuing close involvement. He travelled north early in 1644, from where he produced one of the earliest series of newsletters reporting on affairs to parliament, before being appointed chaplain to the English commissioners to the Scots army in May. The following year he was with Fairfax's army in the west, producing newsbooks that contributed to the myth that increasingly surrounded Sir Thomas and characterizing the successes of the army as 'the instruments of God's justice'.[19]

Shawe returned to York after the parliamentary success in July 1644, and renewed his preaching there, having secured a nearby parochial living through Ferdinando Fairfax. Also with Fairfax's support he was appointed secretary and chaplain to the nascent county committee and a member of the committee for scandalous ministers, also acting as secretary to that body. On 20 September he was chosen to preach the sermon, later published with a dedication to Fairfax, on the occasion of the taking of the solemn league and covenant in York minster by the general, the army officers and the leading gentry of the county and aldermen of the city. It is not clear whether the affirmation of Presbyterian government that Shawe laid out in the sermon had any immediate practical consequences in the city, for by that time he had removed to Hull, although he continued to serve the committees at York. In his memoir Shawe referred to a weekly meeting of ministers in the minster at which he wrote down all the orders and votes of the Westminster assembly, but it is not clear how formal its decisions were, or how they were implemented.[20] The work that he had begun was continued when the corporation successfully petitioned parliament in March 1645 for the support of four preachers from the sequestered capitular estates, and it was this ordinance that brought Bowles to York as one of the preachers. He and his fellow preachers were

[18] Edward Bowles, *The Mysterie of Iniquity* (1643), 5–15; for more on Bowles's view at this time, see P. Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005), 209–10, 233–7.

[19] A. Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains, 1642–1651* (Woodbridge, 1990), 101–2; J. Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper* (Oxford, 1996), 41, 199–200.

[20] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 140; it may be significant that, following the Restoration, Shawe burnt the papers of this body. For a discussion of Presbyterian organization in the county at this time, see G. Yule, *Puritans in Politics* (Sutton Courtenay, 1976), 272–3.

charged with approving the choice of ministers to preach in the city, but there is no evidence of any further discipline being exercised by that body. For some citizens this scheme was merely the first step on the way to a formal presbytery and, later that year, the corporation ensured that every parish was provided with copies of *The directory*, a book of the national covenant, and ordinances for the better observance of the sabbath and the taking down of organs and pictures. In the following year all such offending items were ordered to be removed from the churches, and even the carvings on Thursday market cross were defaced. On 30 October 1646 the corporation received a petition from the gentry and ministers of the county for 'setling the Presbetarian government', to which it agreed, *nem. con*. but which proved abortive.[21]

Shawe's efforts at Hull proved more contentious and, although he reported some success for his preaching there and in Holderness, his attempt in 1645 to regulate the administration of the Lord's supper provoked opposition from both the profane, as he saw them, and more radical sectaries. For many godly ministers, faced with the disruption of normal parochial institutions and the rather ad hoc regulatory regimes that had, or had failed, to replace them, the administration of the Lord's supper became a central element in the search for discipline, but one with very divisive potential.[22] Faced with opposition to his ministry Shawe, preaching at a public fast at the end of 1645 when plague was threatening the city, concluded with a stark providential warning to his hearers, drawing from the history of Israel and from the successive invasions of the country, from Vortigern to the present wars. In explaining those wars on a nation professing true religion, Shawe identified the conventional spiritual analysis, decribing the sins and iniquities of the people as the 'procuring and meritorious cause', and concluding by asking 'can we not see our native country spoiled, torn in pieces by its own sons, and not mourn?' But responsibility also lay elsewhere, and Shawe quickly moved on to a political analysis, identifying those around the king, courtiers, councillors and clergy, as well as the ambition of some army commanders and even the common soldiery as sources of the present ills. The somewhat surprising addition of the last two elements owed something to local circumstances, for one of the main sources of opposition to his work in Hull came from the garrison there.

In addition to the catalogue of ills, Shawe's political analysis also created a space for a more optimistic understanding of recent events, for the experience of war had brought good as well as evil in its wake:

[21] C. Cross, 'Achieving the Millennium: the Church in York during the Commonwealth', *SCH*, IV (1969), 122–42; D. Scott, 'Politics and Government in York 1640–1662' in R.C. Richardson, ed. *Town and Countryside in the English Revolution* (Manchester, 1992), 50–3, and his 'Politics, Dissent and Quakerism in York, 1640–1700' (D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 1990), 121–3.

[22] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 141–2. On admission to the sacrament, see A. Hunt, 'The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England', *PP*, CLXI (1998), 39–83; for its divisive potential, see D. Hirst, 'The Failure of Godly Rule in the English Revolution', *PP*, CXXXII (1991), 33–66; A. Hughes, 'The Tribulations of the Godly' in J. Morrill, ed. *Revolution and Restoration in England in the 1650s* (1992), 81. Shawe's early mentor, Thomas Weld, also found himself at the centre of such a controversy at Gateshead in the late 1650s: R. Howell, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1967), 263–7.

> Consider if as great things, and as unlikely have not been done in England within these few years; he that should have told thee but six years agoe, that we should have an indissoluble parliament (save by its own power), that it should last above five years together, that there should never be a monopoly or bishop in England, that the book of common prayer and twenty such things should be removed, would you believe them? May we not say, 'God hath done wonders that we looked not for'.

Among those unlooked-for wonders was a new way of thinking about politics, which encouraged Shawe to place new arguments about government before his congregation. Having challenged divine right theories, he went on to ask,

> Whether this or that kingdom (or any particular nation now) shall be governed by kings, states, or counsels, by a monarchicall, aristocraticall, or democraticall government, this can be but *jure humano*, according as that people at their first union, coalition and fundamentall constitution, did bargain and agree . . .

concluding that, in England, parliament was 'the last judge from which there is no appeal'. Shawe was inviting his congregation at Hull to embrace the distinction between political, or civil, obedience, and spiritual, or heavenly, obedience, which was a regular feature of the parliamentary fast sermons. Encouraged by the continued success of parliament's forces, Shawe had appended an optimistic preface to the text before publication in the following year, in which he noted 'the budding generation coming up' and 'many active and eminent spirits raised up . . . for the work of the Lord in Church and state'.[23]

By the latter half of 1646 the country had entered a period of truce and negotiation, following the defeat of the king's forces and his flight to the Scots army. This provided an environment in which the preachers could reflect on the meanings of recent events, and especially on a problem with which the godly had grappled for generations, the divisive potential of reform. Bowles, who had recently arrived at York as one of the minster preachers,[24] turned to Shawe's theme, in a sermon almost certainly preached at this time. Taking as his text Isaiah xxxii.17, 'And the worke of righteousness shalbe peace', Bowles acknowledged his hearers' thirst for peace 'after the sad experience of war, which is little els but a mixture of sin and misery' but warned them that matters remained unsettled, for 'kings should be not storms but shelters, not rocks but refuges'. Moving on to answer the accusation that the godly were the source of the recent wars he assured them that 'wee acknowledge that reformation occasions trouble in the world, but is not the cause, the cause is corruption in men's hearts that should be removed', and it was 'carnall superstitious people that lays the blame upon reformation, upon parliament'. True peace remained to be achieved, and Bowles warned against what he

23 John Shawe, *The Three Kingdomes Case* (1646), quotations at 13–16, extracts in *Yorkshire Diaries*, 382–90; K.J. Allison, ed. *VCH East Riding*, I (1969), 156.

24 R. Ashton, *The English Civil War* (1978), 288–91. As an army chaplain Bowles had long been associated in negotiations with the Scots army: Edward Bowles, *Manifest Truths* (1646).

termed unsettled peace but, having stressed the link between individual reformation and public peace, he comforted his audience with the knowledge that the nation was, if not yet at peace, at least recovering from its ills, for 'we must not looke of a sickeman while he is taking physicke, but afterwards, and then we shall have cause to commend the physicke'.[25]

The seeds of hope that both of our preachers noted in 1646 lay partly in the prospect of godly rule, which each sought to establish in their respective cities. As a model of the godly magistrate they took their patron Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, the 'Joshua of the north' according to Shawe, and the pattern for others to imitate according to Bowles. In Fairfax's funeral sermon, preached in March 1648, Bowles saw him as the epitome of the puritan ideal of godly rule, and listed among his virtues his work as a JP, drawing particular attention to 'his profesed enmity to alehouses', those particular banes of the godly, and commended the 'favourable respect which he alwayes afforded to the faithfull ministers of the gospell'.[26]

That respect was afforded to Bowles at York, not just by the general but also by the corporation, but it did not always bear fruit. Despite their support, his attempt to reorganize the parochial structure by uniting parishes to provide preaching ministers at eight locations came to nothing. When the aldermen petitioned the committee for plundered ministers in 1648 they were advised that 'because of other public affairs of the kingdom, this request cannot be yet accomplished', and nothing further was done. In consequence of this failure to establish a presbytery, regulation of ecclesiastical discipline fell to the magistrates who, guided by Bowles and his colleagues at the minster, regularly issued orders against profaners of the sabbath and the performance of unreformed church services. These indicate that, despite the activities of Bowles and the magistrates, traditional religious practices and affection for the book of common prayer remained strong, and the evidence from the parishes suggests that their success in creating popular support for godly rule was limited; at Holy Trinity Goodramgate, for example, the traditional sacramental cycle appears to have survived intact throughout the Interregnum, while in other parishes the administration of the sacrament, and other elements of parochial life, appear to have been in abeyance. For the godly preaching filled that gap, but it was not universally welcome and

[25] BL, Add. MS 51054, fos 22v–7v; quotations at fos 24, 25v, 27. This manuscript is undated and contains sermons by other west riding and York preachers, and may be the copied-up notes of sermons at the renowned west riding exercise; one of the preachers was Elkanah Wales, the patriarch of the godly ministers of the region. Although locations are not usually given, Bowles's sermons on Matthew are noted as being given in York, and his sermon at the funeral of Ferdinando Fairfax helps us in identifying the sequence if not the exact chronology of the other sermons. As with Add. MS 4929, which contains one sermon by Bowles, fos 163–7, this volume may have originated from the Fairfax collection. For the idea of an 'interrupted Reformation', see Withington, *Commonwealth*, 235–6.

[26] BL, Add. MS 51054, fos 50v–8; this is transcribed and discussed in A.P. Cambers, 'Print, Manuscript and Godly Cultures in the North of England, c.1600–1650' (D.Phil. thesis, University of York, 2003), 367–86, 295–301; Shawe, *Two Clean Birds*, dedication: on the alehouse as a particular focus for godly condemnation, see Hirst, 'Failure', 56–62 and C. Durston, 'The Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645–1660' in C. Durston and J. Eales, eds. *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700* (1996), 222–30.

Bowles himself was disturbed during a sermon in 1654 by some disaffected townswomen. Nevertheless, the Sunday minster sermons remained well attended throughout the period, but the weekday lectures less so: a fact remarked upon by Bowles in 1655 when he decried 'the paucity of hearers laid as a reproach upon the citie by well disposed persons', and urged the city's governors to 'preserve peace and unity' among themselves.

Despite the divisions hinted at by Bowles in his sermon, the enforcement of godly rule was not publicly challenged at York during the Interregnum, but neither did it establish firm roots in the community and its civic projects remained largely unrealized. For Bowles it was not so much the sinfulness of the people that held back the gospel in York but their lukewarmness, and, recalling his earlier opposition to those who sought what he considered an easy peace with the king, he inveighed against such individuals in a series of sermons on Matthew xxii.4–5. He used the parable in which men failed to accept the invitation of the king's servants to the banquet he had prepared but instead chose to go about their business, 'one to his farme and another to his merchandice'. Bowles warned against 'those that cry up moderation in the practise of religion, they have not a due esteem of the gospel' and those who settled for a quiet life and 'would have peace upon any tearmes in the world, whatsoever become of the gospell, or of the ordinances of the ministers of the gospel this man undervalues the gospel'.[27]

At Hull, in contrast, it was not so much moderation but radicalism with which Shawe had to contend. Shawe began his ministry at St Mary's Lowgate in the autumn of 1644, but was appointed lecturer at Holy Trinity early in 1645. He continued to preach at St Mary's in addition to twice weekly at Holy Trinity, and also at the garrison, for which he claimed to have been promised £150 a year by the corporation, a sum that remained a source of dispute for many years. But it was not just finance that proved troublesome; Shawe fell out with the moderate puritan vicar William Styles over the rights to preach the main Sunday sermon at Holy Trinity. Following a public controversy that disturbed the godly leadership of the city a compromise was reached, but Shawe continued his pursuit of Styles, seeking his removal from the mastership of the Charterhouse. Despite these difficulties, Shawe's influence with the county governors and the army remained unaffected; he attended the commissioners appointed to treat with the king at Newcastle in July 1646, served the county committees, enjoyed the continuing support of parliament, and was the usual preacher at the assize sermons at York.

Some of these sermons, conventional treatments of the responsibilities of godly government, were published. In the summer following the execution of the

27 York City Archives, House Books, 36, fos 111, 131, 149, 200–1, 206, 235; 37, passim; Cross, 'Achieving the Millennium', 139–41; Scott, 'Politics, Dissent and Quakerism', 131–3; Edward Bowles, *The Dutie and Danger of Swearing* (York, 1655), epistle dedicatory; S. Palmer, *The Nonconformist's Memorial* (3 vols., 1802), III. 455–8; BL, Add. MS 51054, fos 104–28, quotations at fo. 120v; Hirst, 'Failure', 47. For a discussion of 'godly rule' at York as a form of 'civic republicanism', see P. Withington, 'Views from the Bridge: Revolution and Restoration in Seventeenth-Century York', *PP*, CLXX (2001), 121–51.

king Shawe entertained the congregation in the minster with word play on Hull's name, 'How much more excellent and honourable is it, to be God's town, to be Christ's town, than king's town upon Hull', and referred to the times as 'the first year of England's freedom, or liberty'. That liberty was not an unmixed good, and in these sermons Shawe also took issue with the radical elements in the Hull garrison, who had emerged as a force locally under its commander Robert Overton. At his invitation John Canne, who had previously been pastor to the separatist congregation at Amsterdam and then with the army, was invited as preacher to the garrison, and his radical views quickly gained a following among the soldiers, so that Holy Trinity church had to be divided, the nave being used by Canne and the radical Independents, and the chancel by Shawe and his Presbyterian followers. The preface to the printed version of Shawe's assize sermon of 1650 revealed his concerns about the growth of what he considered sectarianism or heresy, represented locally by Canne and his followers. Having praised the 'great wonders (if not miracles)' that had been witnessed in England since 1640, Shawe went on to mention the 'many errors in some members of our armies', recalling that Luther had 'foretold above one hundred years ago, that the fantastical errors, which he then in their bud opposed, would hereafter rise up, with more subtilty and danger, in the dayes of more light of the gospel, and sure now Satan is busy sowing tares'. The argument continued in an acrimonious fashion, with Canne publishing a sermon in 1653 in which he referred to Shawe as 'a notable turne coate and time server as lives, [who] hath committed such scandalous actions as seldome are heard of, yet no justice could passé against him, by reason of the corrupt mayor', and accusing him of using his influence with parliament to pack the aldermanic bench with his supporters. In such a heated environment both church and congregations remained divided, physically as well as religiously, throughout the Interregnum. Shawe continued to preach at Holy Trinity, but by the late 1650s had devoted his chief energies to the plight of the poor in the Charterhouse, where he had been master since 1653.[28]

Throughout the 1650s both Bowles and Shawe played a prominent part in county administration in addition to occupying their city pulpits, and were key figures in maintaining the exchange between politics in the locality and in London. Bowles reported on local affairs to Thurloe and preached before parliament, and Shawe preached before Cromwell at Whitehall.[29] Their experiences at York and Hull reflected those of many Presbyterian clergy in the 1650s. Faced with indifference on one side and radicalism on the other, the apparent failure of godly rule moved them in an increasingly conservative direction. The difficulties

[28] John Shawe, *Britannia Rediviva* (1649), 9, 23; idem, *Eikon Basilikae* (1650), preface to the reader, printed in *Yorkshire Diaries*, 401–10; ibid., 144–7; *VCH East Riding*, I. 108–9, 311; *ODNB*, 'John Canne'; B. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (1972), 68, 77–8, 183–5. For Shawe's earlier contacts with Hull MPs, see D. Scott, 'Particular Businesses in the Long Parliament: The Hull Letters 1644–48' in C.R. Kyle, ed. *Parliament, Politics and Elections, 1604–1648* (Camden, 5th series, XVII, 2001), 278, 307, 310, 316, 326.

[29] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 149; Scott 'Politics and Government', 59. Bowles was commonly held by contemporaries to be 'the spring that moved all wheels in the city', Palmer, *Nonconformist's Memorial*, III. 456.

of finding a settlement after Cromwell's death accelerated this and, by 1659, Bowles had come to see the return of the king as the best means of effecting stability. These views were shared by his patron Thomas Fairfax who, prompted by Bowles, now returned to active national political engagement. The Yorkshire rising proved a catalyst to public negotiations with Charles, and Bowles played a key part in its clandestine phase, acting a go-between for Fairfax and Monk and, despite threats to his life, helping to secure the support of the hesitant citizens when Fairfax appeared outside the walls of York on new year's day 1660. With York secured, Monk crossed the border to meet Fairfax near the city where, on 11 January, Bowles was probably one of the two preachers who accompanied the general at his entrance. He was clearly a confidant of both generals, being present at their meetings in the days following and preaching before Monk on Sunday 15. By the end of January he had presided over a meeting of the Presbyterian clergy of Yorkshire called in order to draw up a petition to parliament about religion. By this date, in contrast to his earlier denunciations of moderation, Bowles had established a reputation as a reconciler, seeking to bring Presbyterians and supporters of episcopacy together 'as that ther might be no jarrings, but all agree for publicke good and peace', and was appointed to be one of the preachers in attendance on the returning king. In the months following the Restoration his pre-eminent position among the clergy of the county was recognized by a correspondent of Hyde, who urged the new chancellor to win over Bowles 'at any reasonable rate; for in gaining him, you gain all the Presbyterians, both lay and clergy, of the north'.[30] A godly puritan of the pre-war years could have hardly wished for a more resounding endorsement of the role of the minister in public affairs, the irony lying in the circumstances in which it was given.

At Hull, where Robert Overton remained as governor, the prospect of a return to monarchy was not viewed favourably by those associated with the garrison. Overton's radicalism had been too much for the townsmen ever since his arrival in 1648, and it subsequently proved a thorn in the flesh of the protectorate. He suffered periodic imprisonment, but was restored to his offices by the Rump in the summer of 1659. As the situation in London deteriorated Overton joined his name to a petition, published in September, which demanded liberty of conscience, no state Church and government by godly men. He undertook to secure the peace of Hull and to support whatever settlement was most godly but, faced with Monk's presence in Yorkshire, he declared himself at one with the general against the common enemy. His loyalty, however, did not survive Monk's recall of the excluded members of the Rump, and he was dismissed following a report that he disseminated a letter among his troops expressing the hope that the soldiers would defend the 'good old cause against . . . a king and single person'.[31]

[30] Scott, 'Politics, Dissent and Quakerism', 142–3; A.H. Woolrych, 'Yorkshire and the Restoration', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, XXXIX (1958), 487–90, 496, 499, 506.
[31] ODNB, 'Robert Overton'; Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, 106, 256.

Shawe's position at this time is not so clear: no doubt he shared with many Presbyterians a desire for settlement, but his account of these months, written in 1664, is descriptive to the point of being laconic and displays no enthusiasm for the turn of events. When challenged later by Sheldon, the newly installed bishop of London, as 'no great friend to episcopacy or the common prayer', he replied that, although he had never preached against them, 'had they not come in, he would never have fetched them'.[32] Notwithstanding this ambivalence, and his association with both Oliver and Richard Cromwell, Shawe was appointed a royal chaplain, perhaps through Fairfax's influence, and was in attendance at the coronation in March 1661. His opponents at Hull took the opportunity of his absence there to invite a preacher to Holy Trinity who used the occasion to challenge the sincerity of Shawe's rapid change of allegiance by reference to his namesake and supporter of Richard III, who he described as 'a juggling divine . . . of more fame than learning . . . and of less conscience than either'. Shawe recognized the slight, but also the fact that he had clearly lost the support of both the corporation, which secured his removal from Holy Trinity, and also of the new garrison, whose soldiers prevented his supporters from going to hear him preach at the Charterhouse, where he remained as master under royal protection. In such circumstances, despite his considerable following in the town, he decided that his work at Hull was done and withdrew to his home parish of Rotherham.[33]

Both preachers had reputations and talents that would have been valuable to the new regime, and Shawe's appointment as royal chaplain suggested that this was recognized in its early months. In Bowles's case too the hope was that he would engage with the new Church order; when Richard Baxter turned down the bishopric of Hereford, Bowles's name was among those he recommended in his place, and it is probable that he was offered, and refused, the deanery of York. Unlike the corporation at Hull, the York magistrates were keen to keep their preacher's services, and proposed a voluntary rate to provide the necessary income once the chapter estates were restored to the minster. The scheme proved abortive, and the failure of any attempt at comprehension following the return of the high Church party made such accommodation impossible; in Bowles's case this was never put to the test as he died in 1662 before subscription was required of him, but in Shawe's case he refused to subscribe, remaining at Rotherham where he continued to preach in private houses until his death in 1672.[34]

The careers of Shawe and Bowles tracked the crisis of the godly in mid-seventeenth-century England, as observed by two well-connected and able ministers. From the assault on the preachers in the 1630s through the years running up to war Shawe maintained the view that it was his advisers, not the

[32] *Yorkshire Diaries*, 150–3, 155.

[33] Ibid., 153, 155–6, 437–9.

[34] A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), 68, 435; Palmer, *Nonconformist's Memorial*, II. 457; N.H. Keeble and G.F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the Correspondence of Richard Baxter*, II. (Oxford, 1991), 9; B. Dale, *A Historical Sketch of Early Nonconformity in York* (York, 1904), 16–17; P.M. Tillott, ed. *VCH, City of York* (1958), 204, 351.

king, who were responsible for the ills of the nation, but was clear that a change in the balance of power was the only way to heal them. On the outbreak of war he feared the prospect of a breakdown in law and order and, like his patron Fairfax, was probably slow to accept the inevitability of arms. Bowles, on the other hand, served with the army from the beginning, seeing the king as the wilful accomplice of a Jesuit plot. The events of the war brought their views closer, both regarded the solemn league and covenant as expressing the culmination of the godly agenda,[35] and the continuing success of the army strengthened their providential understanding of the justice of their cause, and their willingness to accept the execution of the king as the necessary precursor to the establishment of godly rule. Both played key roles regionally in the administration of that rule, but faced very different religious environments in their respective cities. They were as troubled by the outbreak of peace as they had been by the outbreak of war, perhaps even more so in that the enemy, while clear in their minds, was less easy to identify. Their experiences in the 1650s reveal the extent to which puritanism, as it had responded to attack in the 1620s and 1630s, had become increasingly a culture of opposition, better fitted for challenging the priests of Baal than for building the New Jerusalem.[36] Despite the support of leading members of the corporations in both towns, the difficulties of their ministries led each of them to accept, and in one case actively promote, the return of the monarchy and, with it, the return of a Church order in which their consciences would not permit them to participate. The events of 1660 marked the end of the experiment in godly rule and the search for the 'public discipline' that it expressed, and saw it replaced by that other strand of puritanism, individual and personal discipline, which was to become the hallmark of dissent.[37] In 1655, reflecting on his own experience in York, Bowles anticipated the failure to establish godly rule: his conclusion encapsulated the difficulties and contradictions in establishing that form of civic Calvinism, and can stand as ours: 'It is easier to blame then understand the work and weight of magistracy and ministery when they have to deal with a people poor and foolish, and know not the way of the Lord.'[38]

[35] Shawe wrote lengthy notes on the solemn league and covenant: Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborne Shelves, b 310, pp. 272–3. For preaching on the covenant at Canterbury, see Eales, 'Provincial Preaching and Allegiance', 186–7.

[36] P. Lake, ' "A Charitable and Christian Hatred": The Godly and their Enemies in the 1630s' in Durston and Eales, eds. *English Puritanism*, 145–83.

[37] J. Spurr, 'From Puritanism to Dissent, 1660–1700' in ibid., 234–65; M. Watts, *The Dissenters*, I (Oxford, 1987), 237–62.

[38] Bowles, *The Dutie of Swearing*, 4–5; my reading of this sermon suggests a more pessimistic understanding of the problems of the godly by Bowles than that in Withington, 'Views from the Bridge', 150–1; idem, *Commonwealth*, 241–3, 256–8. Bowles's words anticipate the conclusion of Hirst in 'Failure', 67: 'Godly rule and reformation had already proved to be an image to which the world stubbornly refused to be remade.'

14

Material Evidence: The Religious Legacy of the Interregnum at St George Tombland, Norwich*

KENNETH FINCHAM

A struggle in 1673–80 over whether or not to preserve a gallery built across the east end of the chancel in St George Tombland in Norwich seems an unlikely point of entry into the contested religious politics of post-Restoration England. Yet the gallery at St George's became a focal point for conflicting readings of the recent past and the present priorities of English protestantism, exposing tensions within the parish elite and the diocesan administration of Norwich. The eventual demolition of the gallery and its replacement with a railed and beautified altar in 1680 anticipated that broader shift in parish and diocesan affairs nationally as 'high' conformist tories turned on whigs, dissenters, and their Anglican sympathizers in the years 1681–6. Beyond tracing the connections between parish, diocese and nation, the experience of St George Tombland opens up the largely unexplored religious history of Norwich after 1660.[1] Until recently Norwich under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts has been regarded as a citadel of advanced protestantism, but we now know that it was a deeply divided community, and that in the 1630s prominent conformists supported Bishop Wren's drive to impose ceremonialism and curb puritan nonconformity.[2] Here is an opportunity to track some of these divisions into the later seventeenth century. Moreover, the troubles at St George Tombland give an insight into the influence of nonconformists or semi-dissenters within parish affairs. It is well-known that most Presbyterians, and perhaps some Independents, eschewed outright separation from the Restoration Church, serving as parochial officers and attending both Anglican services and conventicles, sometimes out of political and legal prudence, but as often as an

* I am grateful for the invaluable comments on an earlier draft from Andrew Foster, Ludmilla Jordanova, Peter Lake, Matthew Reynolds, Stephen Taylor and David Wykes.

1 For Restoration Norwich, see J.T. Evans, *Seventeenth-Century Norwich* (Oxford, 1979), 222–317; I. Atherton, E. Fernie, C. Harper-Bill, H. Smith, eds. *Norwich Cathedral, City and Diocese, 1096–1996* (1996), 557–70; C. Rawcliffe and R. Wilson, eds. *Norwich Since 1550* (2004), ch. 7.

2 See the important study of M. Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and their Opponents in Early Modern England: Religion in Norwich c.1560–1643* (Woodbridge, 2005).

expression of loyalty to their parish and to the notion of a unified national Church.[3] What is not fully understood is the impact of these semi-dissenters and their allies on parish government, their relations with conformist neighbours, and their contribution to the organization of parish worship and the style of protestantism professed there, especially in strongholds of dissent such as London, Exeter and Norwich.[4] A study of St George Tombland suggests that their influence was profound, at least in the 1660s and 1670s, aided and abetted by a sympathetic diocesan administration headed by the ex-Presbyterian, Bishop Edward Reynolds. The parochial records of St George Tombland are unfortunately thin for this period, with no churchwardens' accounts or vestry minutes, but the richer diocesan records and some personal correspondence allow a remarkable story to be reconstructed.

II

The parish church of St George Tombland lies in the centre of Norwich, opposite the western entrance to the cathedral precinct, and in the seventeenth century was served by a chaplain or curate, appointed by the bishop of Ely.[5] In the early 1630s the parish had become a hotbed of puritan radicalism during the curacy of William Bridge, who established a combination lecture staffed with godly preachers such as Jeremiah Burroughs, and who provoked a major row with John Chappell, minister of St Andrew's, by defending the doctrine of limited atonement. In 1636, as Bishop Matthew Wren conducted his draconian primary visitation against puritan nonconformists, Bridge quit his cure and went overseas to become one of the pastors of the English Reformed Church at Rotterdam, taking with him godly followers including, in all probability, some parishioners from St George Tombland.[6] Bridge had been a divisive figure and other parishioners may have been glad to see him go, including aldermen John Anguish and William Browne, allies of Wren in his clash with puritans on Norwich corporation.[7] Presumably they welcomed Bridge's successor at St George's, Isaac Dobson, who scrupulously observed the new Laudian conformity. Dobson bowed towards the railed altar, now erected at the east end of the chancel, justifying the practice on the grounds that 'he saw God more there then in any other place'. He also

[3] J. Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England 1646–1689* (Yale, 1992), 200–4; J.D. Ramsbottom, 'Presbyterians and "Partial Conformity" in the Restoration Church of England', *JEH*, XLII (1992), 249–70; D.A. Spaeth, *The Church in an Age of Danger* (Cambridge, 2000), 165.

[4] For a fascinating study of religious divisions in one London parish in the 1680s, see M. Goldie and J. Spurr, 'Politics and the Restoration Parish: Edward Fowler and the Struggle for St Giles Cripplegate', *EHR*, CIX (1994).

[5] NRO, DN VAL/2, fo. 70r.

[6] Reynolds, *Reformers*, 162–85, 191–2, 227–32; *ODNB*, 'William Bridge'; K. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism* (Leiden, 1982), 162–72; C.B. Jewson, 'The English Church at Rotterdam and its Norfolk Connections', *NA*, XXX (1952), 324–37.

[7] Reynolds, *Reformers*, 194–207.

refused to administer communion outside the rails and presented sixty parishioners who would not receive there.[8]

Dobson moved on in the early 1640s, and Bridge returned from Rotterdam to become pastor of an Independent congregation at Yarmouth in 1642, followed by some of his flock, first to Yarmouth and then to Norwich. Among them were families that settled in Tombland, such as the Balderstones, Reyners and Howmans.[9] By the late 1640s St George's had become an Independent church and soon afterwards its interior was modified accordingly. In 1652, galleries were constructed at the west end of the nave, and probably at this time another was erected across the narrow east end of the chancel to accommodate auditors from outside the parish.[10] The free-standing pulpit was placed close to the centre of the chancel, rather than its traditional position against one of the arcades in the nave, which emphasized the church's prime function as a preaching house rather than place of prayer, or, as pre-war conformists had formulated it, *auditorium* rather than *oratorium*.[11] The first pastor at St George's was Timothy Armitage, who was memorialized in 1661 as 'a faithful, experimental, powerful and successful labourer in the gospel'. His successor from 1656 was Thomas Allen, who had been deprived of the incumbency of St Edmund's Norwich by Wren in 1636 for refusing to read the book of sports, subsequently migrating to the New World before returning to Norwich in 1651–2.[12]

Allen was a victim of the restoration of episcopalian government, ejected in 1662 for not accepting the act of uniformity. Following his departure, a period of apparent calm descended on parish affairs for a decade under the benign government of Bishop Edward Reynolds, the former Presbyterian who had been the only moderate puritan to accept Charles II's offer of a bishopric in 1660. Galleries placed at the top of the chancel in the Interregnum were usually removed in the 1660s, on the grounds they had been put up without legitimate authority and were incompatible with a properly ordered chancel, in which the communion table stood unobstructed at or close to the east end.[13] That at St George's survived, however, with the communion table placed rather awkwardly underneath it. This unusual arrangement did not go unnoticed. At some stage in the 1660s Sir Justinian Lewyn, commissary in Norwich archdeaconry, ordered its removal but the churchwardens ignored his demand and the gallery remained in place.[14]

[8] Bodl., Tanner MS 220, pp. 122–3; Reynolds, *Reformers*, 212.

[9] Venn, II. 48; NRO, FC 19/1 (Norwich Church Book, 1635–1689), largely transcribed in DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, with extracts printed in B. Cozens Hardy in *A Miscellany* (Norfolk Record Society, XXII, 1951), 1–5; J. Browne, *A History of Congregationalism . . . in Norfolk and Suffolk* (1877), 252–9; G.B. Jay, T.R. Tallack, W. Hudson, *The First Parish Register of St George of Tombland Norwich (AD 1538–1707)* (Norwich, 1891).

[10] NRO, DN FCB/1, fo. 87r; E.A. Tillett, *St George Tombland* (Norwich, 1891), 57.

[11] NRO, DN CON/26/2 [unfol.: interrogatories for William Black *et al.*].

[12] DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, pp. 14, 36, 45; Timothy Armitage, *A Tryall of Faith* (1661), sig. A2v; *ODNB*, 'Timothy Armitage' and 'Thomas Allen'.

[13] For contrasting examples, see J. Scott, *Berwick-upon-Tweed* (1888), 363–4; *Survey of London, Volume XXXVI* (1970), 100, 104, 106.

[14] NRO, ANW/4/14, /21, /22 [all unfol.].

Matters came to a head in 1673 following a reshuffle of diocesan offices. Lewyn died, to be replaced by Dr Owen Hughes as commissary to the bishop in both Norwich and Norfolk archdeaconries and official to the archdeacon of Norwich, while Dr Robert Pepper succeeded Dr John Milles as chancellor and eventually also became official to the archdeacon of Norfolk.[15] Hughes was an abrasive civil lawyer who conducted his first inspection of churches in the city of Norwich in September 1673. Presiding at a session in St George's Tombland, Hughes judged that the chancel gallery was 'indecently placed', since it blocked the sight and light of the communion table, and ordered that it be demolished. However, the churchwardens, William Weston and Stephen Woods, chose to do nothing, as was clear when the court re-assembled in the church on 11 May 1674 with the gallery still in place. When challenged by Hughes, both churchwardens refused to co-operate, 'let the judge do what he can, or order to the contrary', as Weston put it, while Woods stated that he would willingly justify his defiance before the official's 'betters'. Hughes retorted by excommunicating Weston.[16]

Within days of this confrontation, the curate, churchwardens and thirty-eight other parishioners petitioned the bishop to inhibit Hughes from taking further measures to remove the chancel gallery. They alleged it had been built years before with the consent of the parishioners, and was valued for 'its conveniency and necessity' since it helped to house a populous congregation and visitors from other parishes. The petitioners added, quite implausibly, that they could not account for Hughes's hostility to the gallery. On 30 May Chancellor Pepper issued a faculty that safeguarded the gallery from demolition.[17] Thoroughly outmanoeuvred in the Norwich courts, Hughes then appealed to the provincial court of arches and lost the case there too.[18]

How do we explain Hughes's defeat? The churchwardens clearly enjoyed close contacts with Hughes's superiors in the diocesan hierarchy. The curate of St George's who rallied to defend the gallery was Benedict Riveley, domestic chaplain to Bishop Reynolds, who later described him as 'my very good freind'. Indeed, Weston afterwards admitted that he had defied Hughes on 11 May because he was confident that Reynolds wanted the gallery to remain, which suggests he had already made soundings at the palace before his appearance in court.[19] Chancellor Pepper was also a parishioner of St George's, and shared none of Hughes's militant Anglicanism and hostility to nonconformists. The two, indeed, were rivals for diocesan posts in 1673–4 and quickly became implacable

[15] F. Blomefield, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* (11 vols., 1805–11), III. 634–5, 656–60; FSL, V.b.305, no. 31.

[16] NRO, ANW/4/30, /33 [both unfol.]; ANW/2/81 [unfol.]; LPL, Court of Arches MSS, D1097, fos 3r–6r.

[17] NRO, DN FCP 1/2; ANW/4/33 [unfol.]; ANW/2/81 [unfol.: 25 Sept. 1674]; LPL, Court of Arches MSS, D1097, fos 8v–10r.

[18] LPL, Court of Arches MSS, A10, fo. 312r; A11 fo. 173r, D1097, fos 1r–21r.

[19] Benedict Riveley, *A Sermon Preach'd in the Cathedral Church of Norwich, at the Funeral of . . . Edward, Lord Bishop of Norwich* (1677), on the title-page of which he describes himself as 'one of his Lordships Chaplains'; TNA, PROB 11/351, fo. 389v; LPL, Court of Arches MSS, D1097, fo. 6v.

enemies.[20] For, despite his array of offices, Hughes was an outsider in Reynolds's administration, as we learn from a cache of his letters in 1672–5.[21] Hughes was a graduate of Trinity Hall Cambridge, who enjoyed the patronage of Sir Robert Southwell, then one of the clerks of the privy council, from whom he acquired royal letters commendatory addressed to Bishop Reynolds to secure two commissaryships and the officialty of Norwich in January 1673. However Hughes was denied the officialty of Norfolk archdeaconry, which went instead to Pepper.[22] Hughes attributed his failure to his fervour for 'our holy mother the Church of England', which clashed with the conciliatory tone of Reynolds's administration. In Hughes's view, the bishop was 'the man of moderation', and 'moderation' in conformist circles was coming to mean laxity if not outright nonconformity to the canons and rites of the Church.[23]

The rule of the ex-Presbyterian Reynolds as bishop of Norwich between 1661 and 1676 has not received the scholarly scrutiny that it deserves.[24] His emphasis on the ministerial responsibility to preach the gospel, his desire to administer discipline with the assistance of the parochial clergy, and his support for comprehension were all attempts to reconstruct an inclusive national Church in which moderate former nonconformist ministers could find a home. It is striking that Reynolds enticed more clergymen ejected in 1662 back into the Church than any other Restoration bishop, including his son-in-law, the former Presbyterian John Conant, whom he ordained in 1670 and later presented him to the archdeaconry of Norwich.[25] His was a style of episcopal government that drew on the Jacobean model of the preaching prelate and adapted it to the more fractured protestantism of the 1660s. As Benedict Riveley admitted in his sermon at Reynolds's funeral, it was not to the taste of many observers, among them rigid dissenters who would not concede that any bishop could act well, and 'high' or conformist churchmen who criticized him because 'he would not govern by their rules, nor execute censures at their heights, nor interpret canons in their sence'.[26] Certainly the dean and chapter of Norwich disapproved of his choice as chancellor in 1661 of Dr John Milles, another ex-Presbyterian and once judge in the parliamentary army. Throughout the 1660s the chapter refused to confirm Milles's patent, for 'his hand had been in blood, having condemned to death divers of the king's

[20] Jay, *Tombland*, 76, 77n; FSL, V.b.305, nos 3, 16, 24, 31; and see below, n. 22. By 1676 Hughes could refer to Pepper as 'my greatest enemy' and 'one of the falsest men living': BL, Add. MS 36988, fo. 109v.
[21] FSL, V.b.305.
[22] Ibid., nos 2–3, 6–7, 9–12.
[23] Ibid., no. 19; see, for example, William Gould, *Conformity according to the Canon Justified* (1674), 1–4.
[24] The fullest study of Reynolds remains unpublished: J.J. Jeremiah, 'Edward Reynolds (1599–1676), "Pride of the Presbyterian Party" ' (Ph.D. thesis, George Washington University, 1992).
[25] Ibid., 288–9, 320–62. For the primacy he accorded to preaching, see Edward Reynolds, *Preaching of Christ* (1662); idem, *The Pastoral Office* (1663), 22–39, 42–5. In his will, Reynolds thanked God for the 'reformed protestant religion' established in England and prayed for 'a spiritt of unity, peace, love and a sound mind upon all the professors thereof that so those sad devisions which staine the beauty and shake the stability thereof amongst us may be effectually healed' (TNA, PROB 11/351, fos 386v–7r).
[26] Riveley, *Sermon*, 18, 23–4.

friends'.[27] Reynolds's accommodating stance and nonconformist past left him vulnerable to the charge that he was an unsound episcopalian. At some stage between 1663 and 1676 an anonymous opponent informed Archbishop Sheldon that Reynolds welcomed Presbyterian and 'factious' preachers to fill the combination lecture at Norwich cathedral and ignored more conformist clergy. While Reynolds assiduously attended lectures and sermons, it was alleged that he 'seldom or never' came to divine service during the week, even though he had plenty of opportunities.[28] A bishop, no less, was elevating *auditio* over *oratio*.

All this fits neatly with Hughes's sense of distance from Reynolds and what he once called 'the ingratitude and unkindness of the Presbyterian palace' at Norwich.[29] Reynolds's steward was a particular opponent, whom Hughes believed had turned Pepper against him; Riveley was no friend, either, and Hughes disparagingly dubbed him 'a popular man, and of principles *ad placandum populum*, and not very stedfast'.[30] Such an administration evidently regarded Hughes's moves against the chancel gallery at St George's as needless and divisive, the acts of an ecclesiastical martinet. Although defeated there, Hughes remained an active supporter of uniformity and ritualism. In 1675 we find him congratulating the churchwardens of St Andrew Norwich for enclosing the communion table with rails, and for beautifying both these and the rails around the font. Hughes commended these changes as 'very decent, orderly and necessary and an ornament to the said church' and authorized a general rate to be levied on the parishioners to pay for them. This was a significant endorsement at a time when few churches in Norwich diocese had railed in their communion tables, since it was costly, of uncertain legality and too reminiscent of the controversial policies of Laud and Wren in the 1630s.[31] Unsurprisingly, Bishop Reynolds never showed any enthusiasm for reviving the railing-in of tables.

Hughes also wanted decisive action by Church and state against those he called 'rebels and phanaticks', and as a county JP in 1674 earned the enmity of Lord Townshend, lord lieutenant of Norfolk, and Sir John Hobart for being 'too brisk' at the quarter sessions against dissenters.[32] In two parliamentary by-elections in the spring of 1675 Hughes actively promoted a 'Church' party that opposed the candidature of Simon Taylor and Sir Robert Kemp, both backed by Townshend and Hobart, and branded them as crypto-Presbyterians who championed the interests of dissent. Hughes and his clerical allies, in turn, were labelled 'the loyal hyperprelatical churchmen' and, by Townshend himself, as 'a popish faction'.

27 *CSPD 1673*, 34–5; A.C. Miller, 'Herbert Astley, Dean of Norwich, "A Man of Comfortable Spirit" ', *NA*, XXXVIII (1983), 157; B.D. Henning, ed. *The House of Commons 1660–1690* (3 vols., 1983), III. 125–6.

28 Bodl., MS Add. C 304a, fo. 68r.

29 FSL, V.b.305, no. 31.

30 Ibid., nos 9, 23, 24, 28, 30, 31. Hughes's attempts to win the officialty of Norfolk in 1674 led to a clash with its archdeacon, Edward Reynolds: Bodl., Tanner MS 130, fos 144–5; fo. 145 is an extract from FSL, V.b.305, no. 19.

31 NRO, ANW/4/38 [unfol.].

32 FSL, V.b.305, nos 24–6, 28, 33.

When Bishop Reynolds declared his support for Kemp, Hughes informed the local clergy that they were not bound by their canonical obedience to vote for the bishop's candidate, any more than they were 'obliged not to eat, if he did command them'.[33] In July 1675 Hughes visited Lord Townshend at Raynham Hall to make his peace, but the interview turned into a quarrel. At one point, according to Hughes, Townshend told him that Kemp was 'a sufferer for the king and Church before I was' and 'would be a sonn of the Church of England when I am not', insinuating that Hughes was likely to end in the Roman Church.[34] Although Hughes welcomed the replacement of Townshend by Viscount Yarmouth as lord lieutenant in 1676, and cultivated both him and his wife, Townshend remained dangerously powerful, and prosecuted Hughes for defamation, winning £4,000 in damages and in the process wrecking his career.[35]

The disputes provoked by Hughes in the mid-1670s are a reminder of long-standing and unresolved tensions within Restoration society over religion. Through the spiritual and secular courts Hughes attempted to press a 'Laudian' agenda of persecution of dissent and promotion of religious uniformity and ritualism, in conscious opposition to the practice of Reynolds, Townshend and others of accommodating moderate dissenters within a broad-bottomed, tolerant institution that focused, instead, on advancing knowledge of the gospel and protestant piety. Each side resorted to the conventional polemical language of popery, prelacy and presbytery to discredit and marginalize their opponents. Although Hughes made limited headway against an unsympathetic bishop and lord lieutenant, in a period where political divisions were emergent but not fully developed, he is an instructive example of the ideological material from which militant tory Anglicanism of the early 1680s would be fashioned, when a rather similar programme was to be imposed across the country with decisive results.

III

One of the churchwardens of St Andrew's praised by Hughes in 1675 for erecting communion rails was Anthony Norris. Two or three years later Norris moved to St George Tombland where, at Easter 1680, he and John Houghton were elected churchwardens for the coming year. In June 1680 the two churchwardens, new curate Francis Morley and ten other parishioners petitioned Reynolds's successor, Bishop Sparrow, to overturn the order of his predecessor and have the chancel gallery taken away. They informed Sparrow that 'in the late time of rebellion' Independents had gained possession of the church, destroyed ornaments in

[33] FSL, V.b.305, nos 28, 31, 33–4; NRO, 1601/73; J.M. Rosenheim, *The Townshends of Raynham* (Middletown, CT, 1989), 40–4, 47–8; J. Miller, *After the Civil Wars* (Harlow, 2000), 228–31; Bodl., Tanner MS 42, fo. 148v.
[34] FSL, V.b.305, no. 36; Rosenheim, *Townshends*, 48.
[35] Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 231–2; Rosenheim, *Townshends*, 48–9; BL, Add. MS 36988, fo. 109r; HMC, *6th Report*, 374, 377, 378, 384.

the chancel and erected a gallery over the communion table. The faculty obtained in 1674 had been based on the false claim, or so they alleged, that the gallery was necessary to seat parishioners.[36] Sparrow set up a commission of laymen and clergymen of mixed allegiances including Alderman Francis Gardiner, who was to emerge as a moderate tory by 1683, a more zealous tory, Isaac Mootham, William Cecil, a chaplain to Viscount Yarmouth and ardent conformist, and also Benedict Riveley, late curate of St George's and in 1674 a signatory in favour of the gallery. In the event Riveley chose not to appear, perhaps anticipating the findings of the commission, which quickly reported that the communion table was darkened and obscured by the chancel gallery, which was 'scandalous and indecent and not fitt to be continued'. Their recommendation was accepted by Sparrow and the gallery was immediately demolished.[37] At the same time, the communion table was 'decently railed in' and praised as 'very becoming' at the archdeacon's visitation that July. A group of parishioners, perhaps egged on by the churchwardens, complained that the pulpit's position near the centre of the chancel hindered the sight of the communion table, and the archdeacon ordered that it be relocated to the south side of the nave and 'uniform pews' be built in its place.[38] Given Hughes's earlier, spectacular failure to remove the chancel gallery, how do we best explain this remarkably rapid transformation of the interior of St George's in the summer of 1680?

The change of both bishop and minister clearly counted. In 1676 Bishop Reynolds had died and Anthony Sparrow was transferred from Exeter to Norwich. Sparrow had a distinguished track-record as a Laudian apologist. In the 1630s he had maintained the necessity of confession and the power of priestly absolution of sin, and in the dark days of the 1650s had published a remarkably candid *Rationale* of the prayer book offices, in which he defended minority views such as the primacy of prayer over preaching, and Laudian practices such as the second service being read at the 'altar', which should stand at the top end of the chancel.[39] Later, as bishop of Exeter, Sparrow had urged some parish officials to place their communion tables altarwise at the east end of chancels, protected by communion rails.[40] Thus the new bishop was a natural ally of those keen to create a more seemly setting for divine worship. In about 1679 Benedict Riveley had moved from St George's to St Andrew's and was replaced as curate by Francis Morley, who seems to have been more sympathetic to ritual and uniformity in

36 NRO, DN FCB/1, fo. 87r; DN FCP 1/6; printed in Jay, *Tombland*, 218–19, and elsewhere.

37 NRO, DN FCB/1, fos 87v–9v; FCP 1/6 [unfol.]. For Gardiner, Mootham and Cecil, see Evans, *Norwich,* 262n, 282–3; BL, Add. MS 27448, fos 30r, 168r, 183v; *CSPD 1682*, 54; LPL, Court of Arches MSS, A15, fo. 37v; W. Rye, ed. *Depositions taken before the Mayor and Aldermen of Norwich, 1549–1567. Extracts from the Court Books of the City of Norwich, 1666–1688* (Norwich, 1905), 166.

38 NRO, DN CON/26/2 [unfol.: interrogatories for William Black *et al.*].

39 Anthony Sparrow, *A Sermon concerning Confession of Sinnes, and the Power of Absolution* (1637), 2, 14–18; idem, A *Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England* (2nd edn, 1657), 12–13, 238–45, 384–5 and passim.

40 See, for example, Devon RO, C 768 [unfol.: Penryn, 4 Jan. 1675]; C 770 [unfol.: Offwell and Musbery, 6 Feb. 1671; Ilsington, 7 March 1671].

public worship.[41] Moreover both the new churchwardens, Norris and Houghton, were self-confident and determined proponents of ceremonialism.

Norris was descended from an established family in Norwich politics. His grandfather had been sheriff of the city, and his father Francis (d. 1667) had supported the Arminian teaching of John Chappell against the unyielding predestinarianism of William Bridge in a major confrontation in 1633–4. Francis welcomed the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, made a contribution to the dean and chapter for the refurbishment of the cathedral, and served as a city alderman in the final years of his life.[42] Anthony's elder brother, John, became steward of the city in 1678, and then recorder in 1680, and was described by Bishop Sparrow as 'an able lawyer and a hearty man to the Church'.[43] Anthony Norris himself was not active in city politics but prominent, instead, in parochial government, first at St Andrew's and then at St George's. His commitment to ceremonialism and antipathy to dissent are clear. In about 1681 he was reported as claiming that Chancellor Pepper not only favoured dissenters 'but hath directly stopp'd the prosecution of them in his court and highly rebuked such as presented them therin', including, no doubt, Norris himself.[44]

His fellow churchwarden John Houghton was a central figure in local Norfolk politics, as a county JP and associate of Lord Yarmouth, who had become leader of the tory interest in the county and city from the late 1670s. An anonymous report of 1682 identified Houghton as one of most prominent tories in Norwich, and he and the cleric William Cecil acted as Yarmouth's agents and informers in the city.[45] Typical of his polemical language and polarized vision was his report to Yarmouth in June 1682 that the whig attempt to resist the tory plan to surrender the city charter to the king was being orchestrated by about forty people, among them 'tubbe preachers [and] some old rebels, and all of them notorious phanaticks and conventiclers'.[46]

The change of bishop, curate and churchwardens helps explain the *coup d'état* at St George Tombland in 1680–1. Perhaps most important but certainly least visible of all was the parochial support that Norris and Houghton received. Unspectacular conformity is notoriously hard to trace, but can be inferred here from the support for the election of Norris and Houghton in Easter 1680, and thereafter from the willingness of the admittedly small group of ten parishioners to back the petition to have the gallery removed, and from the unknown number who criticized the centrally placed pulpit. Unfortunately, it is difficult to establish much about the ten signatories who urged that the gallery be removed. At least

41 NRO, ANW/1/35 [unfol.].

42 A.W. Hughes Clarke and A. Campling, *The Visitation of Norfolk Anno Domini 1664* (Harleian Society, LXXXVI, 1934), 148–9; Reynolds, *Reformers*, 175–83; NRO, DCN 12/29.

43 NRO, NCR Case 16a, MCB 25, fo. 23v; Evans, *Norwich*, 265.

44 NRO, DN CON/29 [unfol.: Bishop of Norwich v. Bartholomew Balderstone].

45 V.L. Stater, 'Continuity and Change in English Provincial Politics: Robert Paston in Norfolk, 1675–1683', *Albion* (1993); *CSPD 1682*, 54; BL, Add. MS 27448, passim.

46 BL, Add. MS 27448, fo. 78r; Evans, *Norwich*, 282–5.

one, John Hayward, seems to have been a member of the tory or self-styled 'loyall party' of city councilmen working with Yarmouth in 1682; less predictably, four others had supported the retention of the gallery in 1674, and had evidently changed their minds, and three of these four were subsequently reluctant to pay for the costs incurred in altering the chancel.[47] In the light of anti-puritanism in the parish in the 1630s, it is possible that there was a conformist continuum at St George's through the Interregnum and beyond, which only found its voice again in the changed circumstances of 1680.

Much more demonstrable is the vigorous opposition of other parishioners. They challenged the legality of Houghton and Norris's election as churchwardens through the Norwich consistory court, claiming that the two were ineligible and chosen against the wishes of the majority of parishioners. When their case was rejected, they appealed unsuccessfully to the court of arches.[48] At some point during their year as churchwardens, Norris and Houghton found the church doors locked and the keys removed to prevent them entering the building, a potent gesture of defiance given the refurbishment that they were supervising.[49] In November 1680 a parish meeting agreed to raise £31 15*s* 10*d* through a general rate, in order to cover the cost of the recent alterations to the interior. In April 1681 Houghton and Norris presented to the consistory court the names of no fewer than eighty parishioners who had failed to pay their contributions, as well a list of thirty-five parishioners who had not received communion at St George's over the previous year.[50] All were then prosecuted through the court.[51] In return, later that year Houghton and Norris found themselves double-rated for their contribution to the poor rate and had to appeal against their allocation.[52]

Norris and Houghton were in no doubt about what was happening here: they were orthodox churchmen, exercising their legal authority as churchwardens to impose the law and improve the setting of divine worship, and struggling against 'the vexatious appeales and prosecutions of such of the parishioners as are dissenters from the established service and lawes of the Church'.[53] To test this verdict, in the absence of churchwardens' accounts and vestry minutes, we must draw on the names of the participants in five key moments in 1674–81: the forty-one subscribers to the petition to retain the chancel gallery in 1674, the six who challenged Houghton and Norris's election in 1680, the three who locked the churchwardens out of the church later that year, the eighty who refused to pay for the extraordinary levy to refurbish the chancel in 1680–1, and the thirty-five who failed to attend church regularly and take communion in 1680–1.

47 NRO, DN FCP 1/2, 6; BL, Add. MS 27448, fos 80r, 87r.
48 LPL, Court of Arches MSS, A15, fos 37v, 39, 52r; C1, no. 430.
49 NRO, DN CON/29 [unfol.: presentment of 15 April 1681].
50 Ibid. [unfol.: presentments of 12 and 16 April 1681].
51 NRO, DN DEP/51/55, nos 307–17; DN CON/26/2 [unfol.]; DN CON/29 [unfol.]; DN CON/30 [unfol.: office v. Bartholomew Balderstone, 6 April 1681 and also office v. John Oldham, 7 Dec. 1680].
52 NRO, NCR Case 16a, MCB 25, fo. 100r.
53 NRO, DN CON/26/2 [unfol.: interrogatories for William Black *et al.*].

A comparison of these lists shows that there was never a single, united group of individuals who supported the retention of the chancel gallery in 1674 and then opposed the reforms of Norris and Houghton in 1680–1. Inevitably over the seven years between 1674 and 1681 the composition of the parish somewhat altered as some moved away or died and others migrated to the parish. Thus Thomas Reyner, a supporter of the gallery in 1674, led the legal challenge to the election of Norris and Houghton as churchwardens in 1680, but died later that year, although we might surmise that had he lived he would have refused to pay the levy for the refurbishment of the church.[54] Similarly Bartholomew Balderstone and James Gedney, prominent opponents of Norris and Houghton in 1680–1, were attending another Norwich church, St Michael at Plea, until the mid-1670s and so took no role in the furore over the chancel gallery in 1674.[55] Moreover, some individuals evidently changed their minds or succumbed to pressure from different directions. As we have seen, four of the ten parishioners who asked Sparrow to demolish the chancel gallery in 1680 had six years earlier signed the petition for it to remain, and three of these four then failed to pay the parish rate to beautify the east end after the gallery had been demolished. This indicates that a failure to pay the parish levy of 1680 cannot automatically be equated with opposition to the refurbishment supervised by Norris and Houghton. There were plenty of other reasons why parishioners might be reluctant to pay, such as dislike of extra levies, or the suspicion that the churchwardens had been extravagant in their expenditure, a point that Norris and Houghton anticipated with their claim that they had railed in the communion table ‘in the most frugall manner’. Another reason might be that the churchwardens had not carried the majority with them, which again Norris and Houghton addressed, with their statement that it was (unnamed) parishioners rather than they who had complained to the archdeacon about the inconvenient siting of the pulpit in the chancel, which led to its relocation in the nave.[56]

A comparison with a similar tax strike in 1679–80 at St Peter Mancroft, the principal parish church in Norwich, indicates how mixed the professed motives of parishioners could be. Here the churchwardens spent £120 on a costly redecoration of the east end of the chancel, including £25 for paving the sanctuary around the altar, £19 for painted, gilded and carved communion rails, and another £19 15*s* for a pulpit cloth of velvet, gold and silver. Gravestones had been moved from the east end of the chancel and, intriguingly, even ‘several carved pictures’ commissioned. Some parishioners opposed the rate levied to pay for this on the grounds it was raised without the consent of the majority of the parish, or without the knowledge and authority of the bishop, or levied inequitably among parishioners.[57] Robert Skoulding, a parishioner who had been accused in 1678 of conspiring to

[54] NRO, DN FCP 1/2; LPL, Court of Arches MSS, C1, no. 430, A15, fo. 52r; Jay, *Tombland*, 246.
[55] NRO, DN FCP1/2; ANW 2/83 [unfol.: St Michael at Plea].
[56] NRO, DN CON/26/2 [unfol.: interrogatories for William Black *et al.*].
[57] NRO, ANW 2/87; DN CON/26/2 [unfol.: Francis Wormall v. Augustine Briggs and James Clayton]; PD 26/72, fo. 178v.

kill Bishop Sparrow, particularly objected to the erection of rails. He remained unconvinced by the churchwardens' view that they were merely restoring those illegally removed in the early 1640s as a necessary precaution against acts of profanity.[58] We are less well informed about the reasons why the general rate was opposed at St George's, but no doubt a similar range of objections came into play.

With these caveats in mind, it is possible to trace a small group of parishioners at St George Tombland who had opposed first the threat represented by Hughes in 1673–5 and subsequently by Norris and Houghton in 1680–1. They were led by William Weston senior and Stephen Woods. Both were established figures among the parish elite, who had served together as churchwardens in 1673–6, when they had defied Hughes over the chancel gallery, securing a faculty to preserve it; in 1680 they were accused by Norris and Houghton of locking them out of the church and failing to keep proper accounts in 1676. Unsurprisingly, they were among the eighty refusing to pay the parish rate of November 1680. Both had been born in the parish and had lived there ever since. Woods had taken the solemn league and covenant in July 1644, committing himself to Presbyterian government of the Church, while Weston (born in 1635) had been too young to take the oath.[59] Weston, a gunsmith by trade,[60] was an intimate of John Hobart, MP and critic of the protectorate in the 1650s, who resided at the deanery in the cathedral close in the 1670s, as his daughter Barbara was married to Herbert Astley, the dean of Norwich (1670–81).[61] After 1660 'old common wealth Hobart', as he was known, operated in dissenting and 'country' party circles. He was a close associate of John Collinges, the ejected Presbyterian minister who remained active in Norwich politics until the 1680s, and who was regarded as ill-affected to the crown by both Hughes and Yarmouth.[62] Hobart opposed the removal in 1678 of city aldermen who had failed to take the oath against the covenant, protesting that they were sound sons of the Church of England, and supported comprehension for protestant dissenters. His political allies in county politics were Lord Townshend, his namesake and cousin Sir John Hobart of Blickling Hall, and Sir John Holland.[63] Both Hobart and Weston had crossed swords with Owen Hughes in the mid-1670s. In 1676 Hughes had accused Hobart of being the author of a libel against him, circulated by 'your creature Weston'.[64]

[58] NRO, ANW 2/87; NCR Case 16a, MCB 25, fo. 28r; *CSPD 1678*, 306; *CSPD 1682*, 54.

[59] Jay, *Tombland*, 35, 47; NRO, NCR Case 13c, 2/2.

[60] P. Millican, *The Register of the Freemen of Norwich 1548–1713* (Norfolk, 1934), 82; NRO, ANW Will Register 70 (1690), fos 139v–40v.

[61] C.S. Egloff, 'John Hobart of Norwich and the Politics of the Cromwellian Protectorate', *NA*, XLII (1997), 38–56; Miller, 'Astley', 159–60. Hobart also took the solemn league and covenant at St George Tombland in 1644: NRO, NCR Case 13c, 2/2.

[62] HMC, *6th Report*, 384; Bodl., Tanner MS 41, fo. 131r; FSL, V.b.305, no. 28; *CSPD 1678*, 306; *CSPD 1682*, 54; NRO, NCR Case 16a, MCB 25, fo. 28r; A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), 128; *ODNB*, 'John Collinges'.

[63] Bodl., Tanner MS 38, fos 28r, 40r; MS 39, fo. 211r. For Holland, see J. Miller, 'A Moderate in the First Age of Party: the Dilemmas of Sir John Holland, 1675–85', *EHR*, CXIV (1999).

[64] Bodl., Tanner MS 286, fos 27, 28r; NRO, MC 1601/72; see also Tanner MS 95, fo. 121r.

Weston (though not Stephen Woods) was one of nineteen parishioners who in a concerted move in October 1681 took out writs of prohibition from the common law courts to oppose the extraordinary levy to pay for improvements to St George's interior. Just under half of these nineteen had signed the petition of 1674 in favour of keeping the gallery, which suggests strongly that they bitterly resented its eventual removal and the subsequent changes to the interior, rather than the cost, for the sums of money involved were fairly small, Weston's dues of 7*s* 4*d* being fairly typical. Among of these nineteen were Henry Woods, successively a sheriff in the Interregnum and city alderman and mayor after 1660[65] and William Starling, who had backed the attempt to overturn the election of Norris and Houghton as churchwardens in 1680.[66]

Were Norris and Houghton correct to identify these men as dissenters? Although St George Tombland had been an Independent Church in the Interregnum, it was not officially regarded as a haven for dissenters after 1662. Bishop Reynolds in 1669 reported just one Independent conventicle in the parish, a weekly meeting of an unspecified number of women, while the Compton census of 1676 produced figures for St George's of 220 conformists, five Catholics and fifteen nonconformists, a small number of dissenters compared to some other parishes in Norwich.[67] These figures comprise rigid dissenters, rather than those who attended both church and meeting house, and conventicles could be attended elsewhere in the city: thus Thomas Allen, the Independent minister of St George's until 1662, organised the principal Independent meeting close by in St Clement's parish, and was licensed under the declaration of indulgence in 1672, dying the following year.[68]

The records for prosecution of dissenters through the Church and secular courts for the 1660s and 1670s are not very revealing about nonconformity in St George's, so the presentment of fifteen married couples, four men and a woman in April 1681 for failing to receive communion over the previous year is particularly helpful. Among the nineteen men were five who had signed the petition in favour of the chancel gallery in 1674; eighteen of them had refused to pay the extra parish rate of 1680, twelve of whom had then appealed to the common law courts against the rate.

Many of these non-communicants were past or present dissenters, or else linked by ties of kinship or friendship to each other and to a circle of dissenting ministers resident in Norwich. Among them were Thomas and Mary Witherell, admitted as recently as 1674 to the Norwich Independent or Congregational Church.[69] Also presented was James Gedney, a long-standing Independent, who probably served as a beneficed minister in Norfolk from about 1656 until his

65 Evans, *Norwich*, 238 fn. 2, 263; and see below, 237.
66 LPL, Court of Arches MSS, C1, no. 430.
67 C.B. Jewson, 'Return of Conventicles in Norwich Diocese 1669 – Lambeth MS no. 639', *NA*, XXXIII (1965), 14–15; A. Whiteman, ed. *The Compton Census of 1676* (1986), 217.
68 Matthews, *Calamy*, 7; Jewson, 'Return', 13.
69 DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, p. 53; Jay, *Tombland*, 122–3.

removal in 1660, and was licensed as an Independent minister in 1672; another non-communicant was his wife Mary, probably at that time an active Independent.[70] Listed too was Thomas Ashwell the elder, who had provided a room for the Baptist congregation to meet from 1646 until 1669; his son Thomas, presented on other occasions for not receiving communion, was married to Frances, daughter of John Collinges, the ejected minister and prominent Presbyterian.[71] Another non-communicant was Bartholomew Balderstone, a grocer by trade, and son and nephew of Independents, married to Mary, daughter of John Lucas, one of the ejected of 1660 who was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian in St Peter Mancroft parish.[72] Balderstone's brother-in-law was George Wiggett, who was also a non-communicant and formerly an apprentice carpenter to Balderstone's father, and later helped to plan the building of the first Presbyterian meeting-house in Norwich.[73] Another pair was William Starling and his wife Susan, daughter of Nathaniel Michell, a minister ousted in 1660, who by the 1670s lived in the parish.[74] Thomas Snowden, yet another non-communicant, may have been cousin of Benjamin Snowden, born in Tombland and, after his ejection from St Clement's Norwich in 1662–3, one of the leading Presbyterians ministers in the city.[75] The name of Alderman Henry Woods does not appear among these nineteen, although he was earlier prosecuted in 1680–1 on the initiative of Norris and Houghton for absenteeism from church and failing to take communion over the previous two years. In 1682 Woods lost his position as a magistrate after complaints about his nonconformity and his co-operation with 'contentious people' at St George's, who stirred up 'faction and contention' to the encouragement of 'sectaries and other factious persons'. This sounds very much like information supplied by Houghton, Norris or their allies.[76]

Other parishioners who had received communion annually evidently practised partial conformity. When Robert Cooke, whose wife was presented in 1681 for not taking communion, stood as an alderman in 1682, it was alleged that recently

[70] DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, pp. 2–4, 22–3; NRO, FC 19/1, in its list of members in 1675, includes 'S[ister] Gedny' but not James Gedney [unfol.: 9 Sept. 1675]; Matthews, *Calamy*, 219; Jay, *Tombland*, 102, 123; Millican, *Freemen*, 168.

[71] NRO, DN CON/29 [certificates of 2 Feb. and 4 June 1682]; G. Gould, *Open Communion and the Baptists* (1860), xix; Matthews, *Calamy*, 351. Two other non-communicants were John Oldham and his wife Rebeckah, *née* Ashwell, who was presumably a relative. Jay, *Tombland*, 129.

[72] His father Bartholomew (died 1665) and brother John: DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, pp. 2, 14; NRO, FC 19/1 lists 'Br[other] Balderston', probably John; Jay, *Tombland*, 111, 191; Millican, *Freemen*, 80; Matthews, *Calamy*, 330; C.B. Jewson, *Transcripts of Three Registers of Passengers from Great Yarmouth to Holland and New England 1637–1639* (Norfolk Record Society, XXV, 1954), 51; Jewson, 'Return', 15 fn. 5 (which refers to John, not Bartholomew). Bartholomew Balderstone witnessed Weston's will of 1686: Jay, *Tombland*, 193.

[73] Jay, *Tombland*, 77 fn. 7, 191; Millican, *Freemen*, 30, 246.

[74] Matthews, *Calamy*, 351. Starling was a former apprentice to Thomas Reyner: Millican, *Freemen*, 79; for Reyner, see above, 234.

[75] Matthews, *Calamy*, 451; Jay, *Tombland*, 48; Millican, *Freemen*, 261.

[76] NRO, DN CON 26/2 [unfol.: interrogatories for Henry Woods]; NCR Case 16d, AB 8, fos 95r–v. None of the twenty-six signatories was from St George's, since the parish lay outside Woods's ward; Evans, *Norwich*, 276–7; Hughes, *Visitation*, 243.

he had been spotted visiting houses in St Clement's parish where 'conventicles and seditious meetings were held'. Such accusations appear to have some substance, since Cooke apparently admitted that he had ceased to attend such meetings since magistrates had recently forbidden them, a comment on the broad tolerance of dissent in Norwich until the late 1670s.[77] There must have also been a number like William Weston and Stephen Woods, whose outward conformity, in taking communion, concealed an evident sympathy for dissenters.

In short, the parish elite of St George Tombland contained a sizeable number of dissenters or else those broadly tolerant of them who were dominant in parochial politics until the late 1670s. The Ashwells, Starling, Robert Goodwin, Robert Hinde and others held senior offices in the parish in the 1660s/1670s, as churchwardens, overseers or jurats. A significant number were grocers by occupation, which had a strong puritan tradition in seventeenth-century Norwich.[78] Most of these non-communicants and opponents of Norris and Houghton were born between the late 1610s and the early 1640s, so that some could remember the ceremonial excesses of Laudianism, and most had experienced the church as an Independent preaching house. At least two of them – Thomas Reyner (d. 1680) and James Gedney – were the remnant of that godly group that accompanied William Bridge to Rotterdam in 1636–40 to escape from Wren's virulent brand of Laudianism, returning to East Anglia in the 1640s.[79]

Thus it seems evident that Norris and Houghton's election as churchwardens was contested since both were feared for their ceremonialist agenda. The fight over the chancel furnishings was, in part, a political struggle over control of the parish. The dissenting group and their allies who had run parochial affairs since the Restoration, and had seen off the external challenge of Hughes in 1673–5, were confronted by an internal parish *putsch* that they were unable to resist. But the dispute over the gallery and pulpit was also ideological. For Weston and his allies, the return of episcopal government and the prayer book in 1660–2 were moderated by the continuation of the arrangements in the chancel that emphasized the primacy of the preached word over prayer and sacraments, and offered visible continuity with the 1640s and 1650s, and St George's heyday as the official centre of Norwich Independency. Put another way, the chancel gallery and centrally placed pulpit helped to define the distinctive aspects of the parish's recent history, and commemorate a puritan legacy, that could be accommodated within a broadly conceived national Church. Moreover, Houghton and Norris's stance as 'Laudian' revivalists must have been particularly troubling to a dissenting interest

[77] Rye, ed. *Depositions*, 166–7.

[78] Jay, *Tombland*, 233–6; NRO, ANW 4/26 [unfol.]; Evans, *Norwich*, 293–4. Both Hinde and Goodwin refused to pay the extra levy and were presented as non-communicants in 1681; Hinde additionally had supported the petition to keep the gallery in 1674, and may be the same 'Robert Hinde' admitted to the Congregational church at Norwich in 1652: DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, p. 23.

[79] Jewson, *Transcripts*, 34; and see above, 234, 236–7. Others may have been William and Abigail Howman: DWL, Harmer MS 76.I, pp. 2, 12; Jay, *Tombland*, 100, 235; NRO, DN CON/29 [unfol.]. NRO, FC 19/1, in its list of members in 1675, includes 'S[ister] Howman', which may be Abigail [unfol.: 9 Sept. 1675].

with a noted history of entrenched opposition to such ceremonialism, including, for some, the experience of exile in the later 1630s.

The perspective of Norris and Houghton was rather different. The position of the gallery and pulpit was illegal, since it had been set up without episcopal authority, and unacceptable, since the communion table could scarcely be seen behind the pulpit and under the gallery. Here also was unfinished business of 1660–2: alongside the reimposition of a uniform liturgy and a resumption of traditional Church government should have been the reorganisation of church interiors to conform with traditional arrangements resumed elsewhere, of the chancel as a sacred space primarily dedicated to the celebration of holy communion. The retention of the chancel gallery, and its retrospective sanction by Reynolds's regime, was material evidence of the power and connections of the dissenting interest in the restored episcopalian Church. But Houghton and Norris offered their own 'Laudian' spin on the proper layout of the chancel, since they were very early advocates in Norwich of the return of the railed altar. Thus chancel gallery and railed altar vied with each other as the powerful symbols of rival versions of Restoration Anglicanism.

IV

The findings of this essay reach beyond the internal history of one parish. The brief exploration of Bishop Reynolds's rule in Norwich diocese indicates that it closely followed the spirit of contemporary proposals for comprehending moderate nonconformists within a refurbished national Church. Ex-Presbyterians served in the diocesan hierarchy, permission was given to St George Tombland to retain its unusual interior arrangements dating from its days as an Independent Church, conformists such as Owen Hughes were put on a tight leash, and evangelism actively encouraged. Norwich under Reynolds gives us a taste of what the national Church would have looked like had comprehension succeeded.

Conversely, Hughes's hostility to dissent and advocacy of ceremonialism in the mid-1670s highlights the persistence in the Restoration Church of a 'Laudian' agenda that was to come to fruition during the tory reaction of 1681–6 in which Hughes, had he stayed in office, would have surely been a major player. One common element in the tory reaction was the creation of railed altars in parish churches, sometimes sometimes by order by the bishop or archdeacon and sometimes, as at St George Tombland, on the initiative of parochial officials.[80] The altar also appeared rather early (1680) at St George's: Bishop Sparrow and his successor Lloyd waited until 1682 to impose the railed altar first on the city churches, and later across the wider diocese.[81] The fact that three Norwich

[80] K. Fincham, ' "According to Ancient Custom": the Return of Altars in the Restoration Church of England', *TRHS*, 6th series, XIII (2003), 40–9.
[81] NRO, ANW 4/58, /67, /69.

churches – St Andrew (1675), St Peter Mancroft (1679) and St George Tombland (1680) – could anticipate this injunction, the latter two in the midst of the exclusion crisis and all three well before the tory reaction took hold, highlights the relative strength and self-confidence of the conformist party in Norwich city. Notwithstanding the entrenched position of puritans and dissenters there, the appointment of a conformist bishop (Sparrow) and lord lieutenant (Yarmouth) in 1676 evidently encouraged their opponents to push ahead with their political and religious agenda. It is striking that Yarmouth secured the return of six anti-exclusionist MPs in the three city elections of 1679–81, and, as we have seen, both Houghton and Norris (through his brother) had close ties with his circle.[82] Thus the rearrangement of the interior of St George's in 1680, and the accompanying crackdown on absenteeism from church and non-reception of communion, was an affirmation of the growing power and reach of militant religious conformity within the city.

Their opponents in St George's were a mixture of partial conformists, past or present Presbyterians and Independents and their sympathisers, all well-connected beyond the parish to ejected ministers residing in Norwich, to prominent figures such as John Hobart and to key officials within Reynolds's diocesan administration. Nicholas Tyacke's notion of a 'radical puritan continuum'[83] can be usefully applied to those who went to Rotterdam in 1636–7 and returned in the 1640s, and to some others who stayed in East Anglia during the Laudian reformation; both groups then joined the Independent church of St George's in the 1640s/1650s and remained influential in parish affairs after the Restoration, without entirely shedding their nonconformist past or, in some cases, their Presbyterian or Independent allegiances. Theirs was the dominant voice in parish government in St George's until 1680, and their fluctuating fortunes from the 1630s to the 1680s demonstrates the value of studying religious change across the *longue durée*, at the very least across what still remains the Berlin Wall of seventeenth-century England, the 1640s/1650s. St George Tombland in the Restoration Church had to come to terms with its past – puritan, Laudian and Independent – and not until 1680 was perhaps the most tangible aspect of this divided and divisive legacy resolved, with the removal of the chancel gallery. Nevertheless, the influence of partial conformists in the parish remained strong in the 1680s.[84] St George Tombland was unusual, of course, for its puritan history, and elsewhere the respective strength of conformists, partial conformists and dissenters was often rather different. The interaction of these groups, and their distinctive contributions to the character of the Restoration Church of England, deserve further investigation.

82 Evans, *Norwich*, 252–77; Henning, ed. *Commons*, I. 329–31. One of the churchwardens at St Peter Mancroft in 1679 was Augustine Briggs junior, son of the MP (Henning, ed. *Commons*, 719–20).

83 N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603–40* (1990), 20.

84 In 1683–5 Weston again served as churchwarden, assisted by Hinde; in 1682 Balderstone was an overseer of the poor: Jay, *Tombland*, 236–8.

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