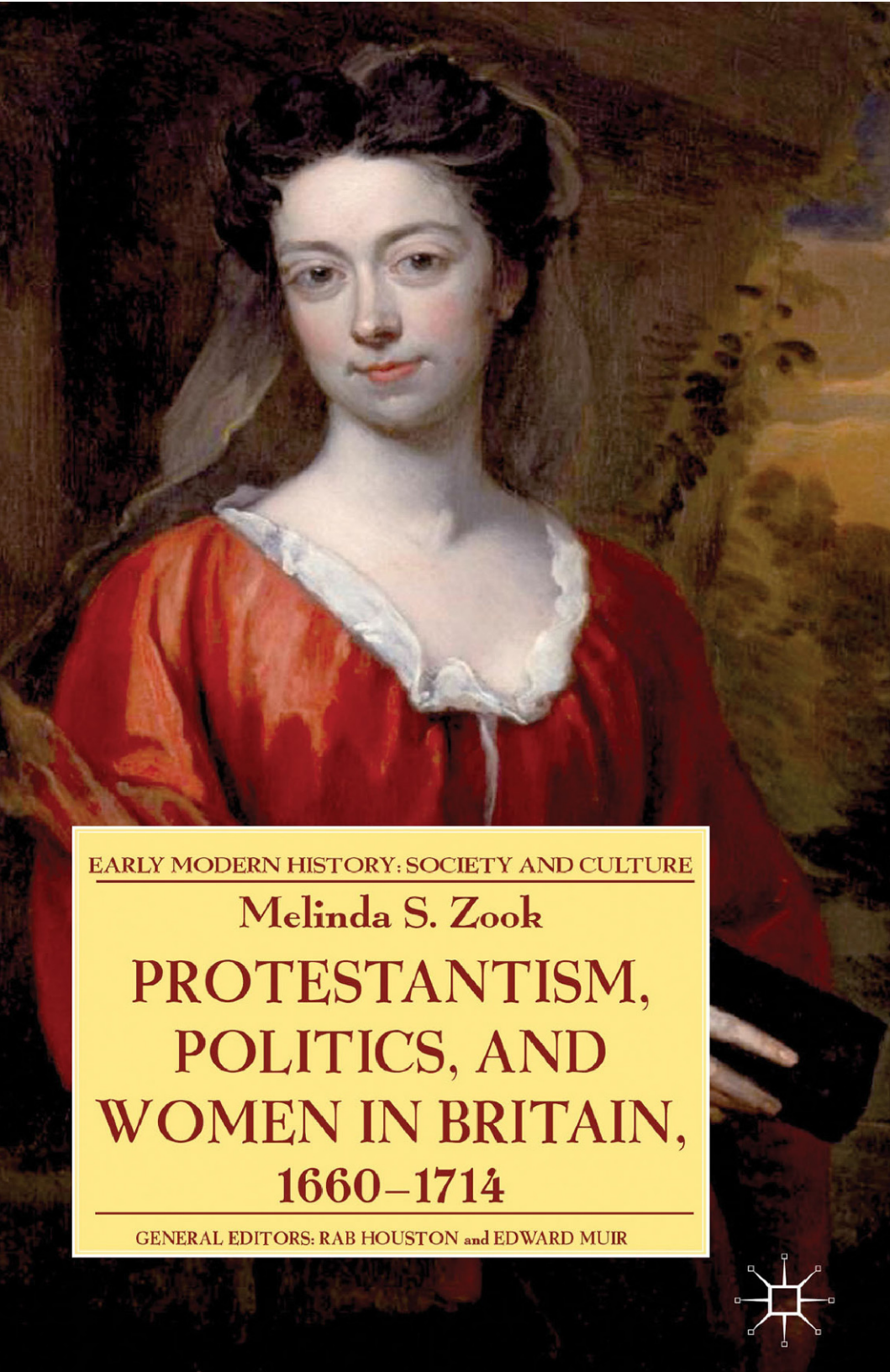

EARLY MODERN HISTORY: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Melinda S. Zook

PROTESTANTISM, POLITICS, AND WOMEN IN BRITAIN, 1660–1714

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For Mike and Lucy

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Acknowledgements

This work is the outgrowth of several impulses. The first was my desire to examine patterns of women's behavior within the context of oppositional politics between 1660 and 1688 that I had noticed while researching my book on Whig politics. The sources were thin but intimated that women were clearly enmeshed in the thick of seditious plotting and publication. They also suggested that one could not with confidence connect the actions of these women to political ideologies but that which motivated their behavior was their religiosity. I felt very strongly then that this was a story that deserved to be told. The importance of religious fervor in seventeenth-century women's lives and the degree to which I felt that I had not given religion the full weight of its significance in my first book, was also a driving force behind this book. *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* was written initially as a dissertation in the context of life in Washington, DC, and particularly, the influence of the Centre for Political Thought at the Folger Shakespeare Library, which was then under the direction John Pocock, Lois Schwoerer, and Gordon Schochet. Given that atmosphere, it is little wonder that my focus was driven by interest, first and foremost, in political culture and discourse. This present work derives from another context entirely, one both personal and political. The impact of religious fanaticism on ordinary lives since September 2001 has certainly been cause for thought. On a more intimate level, this project is the work of a more mature woman, living a more settled life, and one who is far more appreciative of the role of spirituality in day-to-day existence.

It took me long time to write this book so I have many people to thank. I am grateful to the Center for Humanistic Studies at Purdue University for their support as well as my colleagues in the Department of History. Several of my graduate students helped me over the years with the research end of this project; they include Suzanne Calkins, Christian Griggs, and Karen Sonnelitter. My wonderful gang of female friends – Lois G. Schwoerer, Hilda L. Smith, Janelle Greenberg, and Linda Peck – all of whom I have known me since my graduate school days, have long been a tremendous source of strength and encouragement for me. Janet Todd and Derek Hughes have been dear friends for many years, and

anyone who works on Aphra Behn and Restoration drama owes them a debt of gratitude. Warren Johnson has also been a close confidant, and I am grateful to him for his help with locating seventeenth-century funeral sermons, and his insights on such topics as latitudinarianism and Anglican orthodoxy. I have benefitted from my many conversations with Gary De Krey, Robert Bucholz, and Newton Key. Maureen Bell helped me to better understand the activities of seditious booksellers. Julie Farguson helped me identify several of Mary II's charities. Stephen Taylor, Mark Goldie, Molly McClain, and Tim Harris have been kind and encouraging friends. Closer to home, Larry Mykytuik, Purdue's history biographer, has been especially wonderful at assisting with biblical texts. The Inter-Library Loan office in our Humanities Library has been unfailing in their efforts to support my research. But above all, I am grateful to the support and understanding of my dear daughter, Lucy, and my true and loyal friend, Michael G. Smith.

West Lafayette, Indiana, 2013

List of Abbreviations

Add	Additional Manuscripts, British Library, London
AHR	*American Historical Journal*
BDBR	*Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century*. 3 vols. Eds. Richard L. Greaves and Robert Zaller. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982–84
BIHR	*Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research*
Behn, *Works*	Aphra Behn, *The Works of Aphra Behn*. 5 vols. Ed. Janet Todd. London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995
Birch, *Life*	Thomas Birch, *The Life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* London, 1753
BL	British Library
Burnet, *HOHOT*	Gilbert Burnet, *History of His Own Time*. 6 vols. Oxford, 1833
Burnet, *A Supplement*	*A Supplement to Burnet's History of His Own Times*. Ed. H.C. Foxcroft. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902
Calamy Revised	A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised: Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660–2*. Oxford, 1934
CHJ	*Cambridge Historical Journal*
CSPD	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*
Dalrymple, *Memoirs*	John Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*. 2 vols. London and Edinburgh, 1771–73
Doebner, *Memoirs*	*Memoirs of Mary, Queen of England*. Ed. R. Doebner. Leipzig, 1886
DHC	Dorset History Centre
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
EHR	*English Historical Review*

Evelyn, *Diary*	*The Diary of John Evelyn*. Ed. E.S. de Beer, 6 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HMC	*Historical Manuscripts Commission*
House of Commons	*The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1660–1690*. 3 vols. Ed. B. D. Henning. London: The History of Parliament Trust, 1983
JBS	*Journal of British Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
Locke Correspondence	*The Correspondence of John Locke*. 8 vols. Ed. E.S. de Beer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978–82
Luttrell	Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State of Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714*. 6 vols. Oxford, 1857
Morrice, *EB*	*The Entering Book of Roger Morrice*. 6 vols. Gen. Ed. Mark Goldie. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007
NA	National Archives, London
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004
P & P	*Past and Present*
Rawl.	Rawlinson Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Strickland	Agnes Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of Scotland and England and English Princesses Connected with the Regal Succession of Great Britain*, 12 vols. New York, 1851–59
SEL	*Studies in English Literature*
State Trials	*A Complete Collection of State Trials*. 22 vols. Ed. T. B. Howell. London, 1816
TCHS	*Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*

Note on the Text

For the most part, I have modernized the spelling and grammar of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, including manuscript sources. However, for Aphra Behn's plays, novels, and poems cited in Chapter 3, I have followed Janet Todd's edition of *The Works of Aphra Behn*. Similarly, in Chapter 5, I have followed the spelling in Patricia Springborg's edition of Mary Astell's *Political Writings*.

I am certainly aware that the terms "Anglicanism" and "Anglican" are basically anachronistic to the seventeenth century in the way that we use them today, but I have chosen nonetheless to retain them for reasons of clarity and simplicity.

"Brothers and Sisters: Greet Prisca and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life . . . Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first fruits in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary who has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and my fellow prisoners; they are prominent among the Apostles and they were in Christ before me. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet one another with a holy kiss."

Saint Paul to the Romans, 16:3–9

Introduction

Nursing Mothers and Sanctified Sisters: Women's Political Behavior after the Restoration

After many weeks of listening to the "strong opinions" of Tabitha Smith, an Oxford glover named Richard Crutch decided to go to the authorities. In February 1686, he traveled to London and out of his "duty to his majesty" accused Smith of treasonable activity. She had come from the West Country to live with Richard and his wife, Katherine, about a month ago. Loquacious and opinionated, Smith had told them a fraught tale of daring and escape. Her husband, James, had joined the rebel leader, the Duke of Monmouth, at Lyme and had sent word to her in Taunton that she and their servants should prepare to provide horses and provisions for the rebellion. Tabitha Smith joined Monmouth's army and saw action at Phillips-Norton where she herself commanded a company of horse. After the rebels' defeat at Sedgemoor, Smith escaped back to Taunton "wearing men's clothes" to secure what goods she had left. Colonel Kirke's regiment came "speedily after." Smith hid what she could, borrowed money from a shopkeeper in Bristol and made it to Oxford. Since Smith practiced the same trade as the Crutches, they had taken her into their home. But her bold talk soon made Richard apprehensive, and he regretted it. Smith swore that the Duke of Monmouth was still alive and would come again with 40,000 men. She boasted of having been entertained by a kinsman of the Earl of Derby's in Lancashire, where they were raising money in preparation for Monmouth's return.[1] She refused to call James II, "king," and declared that the Queen was "as arrogant a whore as any in England" and kept

[1] BL, Add. 41,804, ff. 257–257v. Tabitha Smith was probably referring to William Stanley, ninth Earl of Derby (c. 1655–1702) who was lord lieutenant for Cheshire and Lancashire.

"five or six gallants" to please herself. Smith hoped to one day "drink a draft of the Queen's blood."[2]

Is Tabitha Smith's story true? Possibly. The authorities in London certainly took Richard Clutch seriously. Smith was arrested and questioned. Naturally, she denied Clutch's allegations. She was promptly imprisoned anyway. Interestingly, rather than support her husband, Katherine Crutch softened the story, reporting that although Tabitha spoke "very kindly of the Duke of Monmouth, wishing God to bless him where ever he was," she never said anything "treasonable."[3] Oxford authorities were not convinced and were more inclined to believe her husband. What happened to Smith, how long she was confined, or whether she was ever reunited with her husband, James, remains a mystery. She never resurfaces among the sources. Her story is but a sliver, a small chard of evidence, among the numerous informants' reports on, and interrogations of, suspected Monmouth supporters following the failed Rebellion.[4] We may find parts of the story that Tabitha Smith told the Clutches suspicious, particularly her boast of having led a troop of horse. But parts of it also mirror the activities of many women throughout history in times of war and rebellion: supplying horses, arms, food, and money or cross-dressing and even joining men in battle.[5] Even if Smith exaggerated, she certainly had "strong opinions," as Richard Clutch put it, it is reasonable to assume that she took some action to assist Monmouth, especially since she was on the run.

However slender the evidence, the tale of Tabitha Smith is revealing, and it supports the conclusion that women in former times, including common women, were both politically alert and active. This is nothing new. Historians of women's history and gender history have reiterated this time and again, yet somehow it fails to breach the bulwarks around

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[2] BL, Add. 41,804, ff. 258–9.

[3] Ibid., ff. 260, 262, 263.

[4] The story of Tabitha Smith was reported to Secretary of State, Charles Middleton (BL, Add. 41, 804, ff. 257–63). There were at least two "James Smiths" in the Rebellion. One, a cloth worker, was tried in Taunton and sent to Jamaica. The other, a yeoman, was still at large. While neither of them fit Richard's information, it is possible that one of them was Tabitha's husband. W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebels, 1685* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 157; *CSPD*, James II, 1: 428, 430.

[5] Chapter 2 describes women who helped supply Monmouth's army. On the tradition of women cross-dressing and joining armies, see Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, eds., *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave, 1997).

political history. Tabitha Smith was also very likely a Protestant Dissenter. She certainly had all the hallmarks of one: a tradesperson from Taunton who had supported Monmouth. Motivated, it would seem, by "the Protestant Cause," the desire on the part of Whig exclusionists and Protestant Dissenters to deny the crown to the Catholic James, Duke of York, by law or by force, Smith went into action. It is also likely that the shopkeeper in Bristol and the Crutches of Oxford were Smith's confessional brethren, which explains their willingness to help her. They belonged to the same Dissenting network, possibility Quakers, who felt a particularly strong sense of group identity. Only Tabitha's big talk began to frighten her host.[6]

This book begins with this little story to make a point about a much larger story and one that remains untold: the contributions of women, at all social levels, to the political culture of Restoration and Revolution England. Certainly, over the last fifty years, women's and gender history has transformed our understanding of family, kinship, household order, honor codes, constructions of femininity and masculinity, work and the craft industry, scientific traditions, magic and witchcraft, gossip, lay religiosity and more. But there is a gap. Explorations into the social, economic, and cultural lives of women dominate. Political history lags behind. This is not to say that studies of women and politics in the early modern era do not exist. The final chapter, "Politics," in Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford's *Women in Early Modern England*; Bernard Capp's chapter, "Women as Citizens: Public and Political Life" in *When Gossips Meet*; and Hilda Smith's discussion of "Commercialism, Politics and Gender in the Eighteenth Century" in *All Men and Both Sexes* – certainly advance our understanding of the political roles and personas played by early modern English women.[7] But they are also tucked away, bound in books on women's and gender history, not political history, and thereby unlikely to be sought out by the student of early modern politics. Literary critics, Susan Wiseman and Katharine

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[6] Richard L. Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688/89* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 335.

[7] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighborhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Hilda L. Smith, *All Men and Both Sexes: Gender, Politics and the False Universal in England, 1640–1832* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2002). Also see, James Daybell, ed., *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450–1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Gillespie, have written important books on women writers and politics in the seventeenth century.[8] But both are far more concerned with political ideology, theory, and representation than the actual political activities of women. Thus it is that specialized studies, many of them seminal, on women writers and political thought, queenship and aristocratic women, exist but tend to garner audiences of feminist and literary scholars or court historians.[9]

The problem is worse still for the second half of the seventeenth century. In part, this is due to the traditionally lopsided nature of English historiography which has found the early Stuart politics, the run up to the Civil War, and the political radicalism of the Interregnum more worthy of attention than the anti-climatic Restoration with its bloodless revolution. True, in recent times, the Restoration has attracted more scholarly attention.[10] Still the religio-political responses of women to sectarianism, party politics, rebellion, revolution, and the post-revolution Church lag behind the great outpouring of studies on women's political behavior during the first half of the seventeenth century. This is certainly the case insofar as England's mid-century crisis is concerned. Numerous studies on women as petitioners, prophets, preachers, visionaries and Levellers have significantly influenced our vision of plebian politics during the Interregnum.[11] The accumulative impact of this scholarship has been profound. It has slowly penetrated

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[8] Katharine Gillespie, *Domesticity and Dissent in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) examines Dissenting women writers during the mid-century crisis; Susan Wiseman, *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, Writing, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) discusses women writers from 1620 to 1688.

[9] See, for example, Mary Lyndon Shanley and Carole Pateman, eds., *Feminist Interpretations and Political Theory* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1977); C. Levin, D. Barrett-Graves, J. Elderidge Carney, eds., *High and Mighty Queens in Early Modern England: Realities and Representations* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture and Dynastic Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, reprint, 2010).

[10] Gary De Krey speaks to this in "Between Revolutions: Re-Appraising the Restoration in Britain," *History Compass* 6/3 (2008): 738–73. http://history-compass.com/. Accessed 9/6/12.

[11] See, for example, Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," *P&P* 13 (1958): 42–62; Claire Cross, "'He-Goats before the Flocks:' A Note on the Part Played by Women in the Founding of Some Civil War Churches," *Studies in Church History* 8 (1972): 195–202; Patricia Higgins, "The Reactions of Women, with Special Reference to Women Petitioners," in *Politics, Religion, and the English Civil War*, ed. Brian Manning (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), pp. 179–222; Anne

the grand political narratives of the Civil Wars and Revolution and made its way down the avenues of knowledge to those great distributors of historical learning: college textbooks.[12]

The subject of women and politics in the eighteenth century, particularly in the second half, has also received some significant attention by feminist historians. The work of Elaine Chalus, Hannah Barker, and others has uncovered the highly politicized society that women among the elite and upper middle class inhabited and participated.[13] This scholarship has pointed to a far larger, diverse, and vibrant political domain than was ever imagined in the work of those formidable political historians like J.H. Plumb and Jonathan Clark.[14] Feminist scholars have explored the wide range of political activities in which

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Laurence, "A Priesthood of She-Believers: Women and Congregations in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England," in *Women in the Church*, eds. W.J. Shields and Diana Woods (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Sharon Achinstein, "Women on Top in the Pamphlet Literature of the English Revolution," *Women's Studies* 24 (1994): 131–63; Ann Hughes, "Gender and Politics in Leveller Literature," in *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in England*, eds. Susan Amussen and Mark Kishlansky (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 162–88; Stevie Davies, *Unbridled Spirits: Women of the English Revolution, 1640–1660* (London: The Women's Press, 1998); Hilary Hinds, *God's Englishwomen: Seventeenth-century Radical Sectarian Writing and Feminist Criticism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Elaine Hobby, "'Come Live a Preaching Life:' Female Community in the Seventeenth- Century Radical Sects," in *Female Communities, 1600–1800*, eds. Rebecca D'Monte and Nicole Pohl (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 76–91; Marcus Nevitt, *Women and the Pamphlet Culture of Revolutionary England, 1640–1660* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Ann Hughes, *Gender and the English Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2012) and for popular consumption, Alison Plowden, *Women All on Fire: The Women of the English Civil War* (Stroud, UK: Sutton Publishing, 1998).

[12] For example, Barry Coward, *The Stuart Age: England, 1603–1714*, 3rd Ed. (New York: Longman, 2003), p. 241.

[13] In addition to those works cited below, see Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representation and Responsibilities* (London: Longman, 1997); Amanda Vickery, ed., *Women, Privilege, and Power in British Politics, 1750 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Anne K. Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writings in England, 1780–1830* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2000); Elizabeth Egar, Charlotte Grant, Cliona O'Gallchoir and Penny Warburton, eds., *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001).

[14] J.H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century (1714–1815)* (London: Penguin, 1959); J.D.C. Clark, *English Society, Religion, Ideology, and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Of more recent vintage

eighteenth-century women engaged: from writing, publishing, and debating; to membership in joint stock companies and reform societies; to patronage and electoral politics. Much of this work has concentrated on the politicking of elite women, particularly within the context of powerful families. Nonetheless, this scholarship has reached conclusions similar to those of this current work on women of a wider array of social groups, namely that historians need to apply a broader and more inclusive understanding of what constituted politics in the early modern era and that theoretical assumptions about separate spheres of gendered activity do not fit the realities of the social and political worlds of early modern women. "The boundaries between public and private worlds overlapped," as Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson so aptly put it.[15] The scholarship of Elaine Chalus on the political lives of women in the eighteenth century supports both of these points. She has sought to incorporate politics into social history and has situated her work at the point where gender history, political history, and social history intersect.[16] The present work is similar insofar as it seeks to combine political history, gender history, and the history of religion in the second half of the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century.

Sandwiched between the well served mid-century crisis and the reinvigorated latter eighteenth century, the late Stuart era hosts no such similarly groundbreaking concentration of studies on women and politics. While there is certainly fine work on women and the Popish Plot and the Glorious Revolution, any accumulative impact and power to

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is Linda Colley's *Britons: Forging a Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) which speaks to both eighteenth-century politics and national identity and includes an important chapter on women and nationalism.

[15] Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson, eds., *Women in British Politics, 1760–1860: The Power of the Petticoat* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), Introduction, p. 9.

[16] Elaine Chalus, *Women in English Political Life, c. 1754–1790* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 6, 12. Also see her: "Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England," *HJ* 43/3 (2000): 669–707; "My Minerva at my Elbow:" The Political Roles of Women in Eighteenth-Century England" in *Hanoverian Britain and Empire: Essays in Memory of Philip Lawson*, eds. Stephen Taylor, Richard Connors, and Clyve Jones (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 1998). Chalus has also spoken to the importance of understanding the political roles of women in Augustan England; see " 'Ladies Are often Very Good Scaffoldings:' Women and Politics in the Age of Anne," *Parliamentary History* 28/1 (2009): 150–65.

inform the political narratives of the late Stuart era is still wanting.[17] Work on aristocratic women and queens, in particular, Queen Anne and Sarah Churchill, has been more successful at capturing the attention of political historians.[18] Yet, in great part, the political narratives of the Restoration and Revolution read as if women – other than a handful at court, the queens and mistresses – did not exist, never mind play any political roles.[19]

How then do scholars successfully integrate the contributions of women to Restoration and Revolution politics in such a fashion as to catch the attention and imagination of students of political culture? How do historians, in the words of Mendelson and Crawford, "restore women to politics, and politics to women"? "What happens," writes Susan Wiseman, "when we begin to consider seventeenth-century women's relationship to the political sphere from which they were theoretically excluded?"[20] Most political historians would concede that politics cannot simply be reduced to the institutions of law and government or the public world of men. Or that as often as men advised women that "silence becomes your sex," especially in matters "so much above your reach," their admonitions were generally unheeded.[21] Not only is it clear that women had a public voice and participated in various forms of political behavior, it is equally plain that most men expected as much and even depended on women's support and participation in public arenas. Thus, James Smith sent word to Tabitha to make ready the provisions for the Duke of Monmouth's army. So the wives and daughters of booksellers helped print and distribute political newssheets and pamphlets; often doing so, as in the case of Elizabeth Calvert in 1661,

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[17] Rachel Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and Political Argument in England, 1680–1714* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Lois G. Schwoerer, "Women and the Glorious Revolution," *Albion* 18 (1986): 195–218.
[18] Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1984); Frances Harris, *A Passion for Government: The Life of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Robert Bucholz, *The Augustan Court of Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
[19] In older accounts of the period, such as J.R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972) the absence of women other than queens and mistresses is predictable enough. But newer surveys of the era are little better. For example, in Tim Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts* (New York: Longman, 1993) "women" are mentioned twice.
[20] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women*, p. 345; Wiseman, *Conspiracy*, p. 2.
[21] *Letter to a Gentlewomen Concerning Government* (London, 1697), p. 27.

while their husbands languished in prison for seditious publishing.[22] At the other end of the social scale, women of influence and reputation, like the zealous Whigs, Lady Rachel Russell and Elizabeth Burnet, lent political advice and support to men.[23] Regardless of what contemporary men said or wrote about how women *should* behave, the political realities of the later Stuart era with its expanding political culture, saw women petitioning, oath-taking, joining mass gatherings, printing and distributing political ideas, news and slogans, dispensing patronage and philanthropy, and influencing law-makers.[24] Still more, women were fined, imprisoned, and even executed for seditious behavior.

Not only is it important that scholars expand their vision of all that accounts for political culture, it is equally vital for them to recognize that religion, a domain in which female agency has always been more readily acceptable, was also a highly politicized space in early modern England. Religious authority and practice were contested sites throughout the seventeenth century. During the Restoration, disputes over the royal succession, popery, religious toleration, the influence of the clergy over the laity; and the practice of occasional conformity by Protestant nonconformists, were all issues of both a civil and religious magnitude. Even after the Act of Toleration (1689) these issues continued to be hotly debated in the press and in parliament. Religious controversy was rarely about private devotion and almost always about public policy and practice. This is what Mark Knights aptly terms "politicized religion."[25] The debates, crises, and controversies of the Restoration and Revolution were neither simply political nor simply religious but intrinsically both.

Thus the actions of women who sheltered Dissenting preachers, held conventicles in their homes and on their estates, cared for their brethren in prison, hawked anti-Catholic broadsides, or shuttled outlaws and rebels from London to Amsterdam, cannot be simply bracketed off as

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[22] NA SP29/44, 93.

[23] On Lady Russell's influence after the Revolution, see Lois G. Schwoerer, *Lady Rachel Russell: "One of the Best of Women"* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), p. 190; Elizabeth Burnet's activities are explored in Chapter 5.

[24] On late Stuart political culture, see Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); on women and political culture, see Lois G. Schwoerer, "Women's Public Political Voice in England, 1640–1740," in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 56–74; and Capp, *When Gossips*, pp. 288–319.

[25] Knights, *Representation*, p. 18.

"religious behavior." Similarly, women who supported the civil and ecclesiastical structures entered the political arena, lampooning the opposition, participating in backdoor parliamentary politics, defending the established Church. Female activism may well have been motivated by spiritual concerns, but it translated into public action. Women (and men) understood this reality. They knew the consequences of their actions. The Baptist and Whig courier, Elizabeth Gaunt, had successfully avoided authorities on numerous occasions, but in October of 1685 her luck ran out. Sentenced to death for harboring a rebel, Gaunt wrote a virulent dying speech which admitted her crime, but asserted that it was "but a little one and might become a prince to forgive . . . I did but taste a little honey, and lo I must dye for it." She was burnt at the stake.[26] In 1681, the Quaker poet, Mary Mollineux stood before the Bishop of Chester and boldly explained why, "for conscience sake," she and her husband, Henry, refused to pay the tithe. Their defiance had landed them in prison on numerous occasions, and Mary knew first-hand the debilitating effects of prison sitting. Nonetheless, she decried a Church that "God ne'ver set up, and makes its merchants rich." She would far rather sacrifice herself for "the precious truth (plac'd in her heart)."[27]

The goal, then, of this study is to illustrate the religio-political actions and utterances of women of various social groups and confessions, between the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the death of Queen Anne in 1714. Time and again, religious devotion thrust women into political action, regardless of whether these women were daughters of the Church of England or sister sectarians. This study does not pretend to give the sweeping coverage of a synthetic narrative. Rather the case studies offered here of a diverse range of women should help to convince political historians of the vital roles women played at various points of crisis and contention throughout the late Stuart era; and that the words and actions of women enrich our narratives, broaden our scope and add complexity and nuance to our understanding of the period. How might "the experience of defeat," following the collapse of

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[26] Elizabeth Gaunt, *Mrs. Elizabeth Gaunt's Last Speech who Was Burnt at London October 23, 1685, as Was Written by her own Hand* (London, 1685), broadside. After admitting her crime, she cleverly quotes 1 Samuel 14:43 wherein Jonathan explains to King Saul that he ate a bit of honey not knowing that it was forbidden. Her story is fully explored in Chapter 1.

[27] Mary Mollineux, *The Fruits of Retirement: or, Miscellaneous Poems, Moral and Divine* (London, 1702), see Henry Mollineux, "A few Words more, in Remembrance of my dear Wife, M.M," pages unnumbered.

the Republic and restoration of the monarchy, be reconceived if viewed from the perspective of the wives and female supporters of the regicides and republicans on the run in the 1660s? How might such traditional paradigms of Restoration historiography, such as the Exclusion Crisis, the Revolution of 1688/89, and the crisis of "the Church in Danger" during the late 1690s and early 1700s, be newly illuminated if our focus shifts from the thoroughly picked over deeds and writings of some men to those of women? This monograph not only demonstrates just how immersed many women were in the political controversies of the first age of party, it also illuminates just how dangerous some women were perceived to be by the government as well as by other women. It also sheds light on what might seem a rather mundane but oft-forgotten fact – that the activities of men were often heavily dependent upon the assistance of women. Women were hardly holed up in little domestic spheres of influence. Like Tabitha Smith, they were expected to assist the political machinations of men, and this was especially true when the activities of their men folk and brethren went sour.

This study also strives to bring balance to the way political and feminist historians understand the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Too often specialized studies focus simply on one political party or the other, Whigs or Tories, or one side of the religious divide or the other, Protestant Dissenters or Anglicans. This tendency leaves readers with an understanding and hence sympathy for merely one side of these political and religious loyalties.[28] Thus we find that scholarship on the politics of Aphra Behn's writing is often superb at describing her Toryism, but does little to enhance our knowledge of exactly what Behn found so disturbing about political Whiggism and particularly Protestant Dissent, especially among women. Studies of Mary Astell's political ideas and religiosity often suffer from similar one-sidedness, resulting in the unintended effect of narrowing our vision and biasing our understanding.[29] By studying both Dissenting women committed to

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[28] One of the few exceptions is Susan Wiseman's *Conspiracy and Virtue* which examines both royalist and sectarian cultures.

[29] On Behn, see, for example, Arlen Feldwick, "Wits, Whigs, and Women: Domestic Politics as Anti-Whig Rhetoric in Aphra Behn's Town Comedies," in *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*, eds. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1955) and Anita Pacheco, "Reading Toryism in Aphra Behn's Cit-Cuckolding Comedies," *The Review of English Studies*, 55/22 (2004): 690–708. On Astell, see for example, Van C. Hartman, "Tory Feminism in Mary Astell's *Bart'lemy Fair*," 28 (Fall 1998) *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 28 (1998): 243–65.

oppositional/Whig politics and Anglican women devoted to the Church of England and the Stuart monarchy, we gain a more balanced and inclusive understanding of the tempestuous issues that divided these women as well as any common ground between them. After all, both the devoted daughters of the Church of England and the holy sisters of the conventicles were passionate about the preservation of Protestantism in England, Scotland, and Ireland as well as throughout Europe and the New World.

Catholics and, after 1688, Jacobites, offer an important third dimension to the political and religious controversies of the era and are addressed in this study when appropriate, but the focus of this monograph is on the much larger groups of conforming, partially conforming, and nonconforming Protestants. Furthermore, since they have been adequately treated in the historiography, this study is not concerned with Dissenting women writers, but rather with those women for whom there are far fewer sources, Dissenting women activists.[30] Unlike nonconformists, women loyal to the Church of England are particularly ill served in the historiography of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In part, this is a result of the fact that Church history has been traditionally written by churchmen who have had little or nothing to say about women and, in part, because feminist historians have been more attracted to Dissenting and free-thinking women than to Anglican women.[31] Conforming women not only illuminate the ways these women imagined their sectarian sisters, but also the widening variety of Anglican belief and practice in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

Chapter 1 focuses on the ways in which Protestant nonconformity compelled women in London to political action, particularly during the turbulent 1660s and 1680s. These women, the "nursing mothers" of the "Protestant Cause," often from the lower and middling rungs

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[30] In addition to those works cited in note 10, see Diane Willen, "Religion and the Construction of the Feminine," in *A Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed., Anita Pacheco (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 22–39; Judith Scheffler, "Prison Writings of Early Quaker Women," *Quaker History* 73 (1984): 25–37; Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650–1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Curtis W. Freeman, *A Company of Women Preachers: Baptist Prophetesses* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011).

[31] There are, of course, exceptions, Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500–1720* (New York: Routledge, 1993) addresses Anglican women; also see W.J. Sheils and D. Wood, eds., *Women in the Church* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

of society, participated in radical and often risky political behavior. While the men engaged in oppositional politics are often described by historians as participating in "out-of-doors" politics, the Dissenting women in this chapter played a very stealthy game of what we might term, "back door" politics, aiding and abetting their men-folk, while seeking to escape notice.[32] This was *not* synonymous with what historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have sometimes called "boudoir" or "behind the scenes" politics, which is often associated with aristocratic women and political meddling, corruption, and unaccountability.[33] Rather, due to the high degree of danger involved, these Dissenting women sought to promote radical politics while avoiding official surveillance and punishment. This is why the sources for their activities are often fragmentary. Nonetheless, it is clear that women acted as agents of news and information, sheltered and patronized religious and political radicals as well as helped to supply the needs of preachers, rebels, and conspirators on the run and sometimes followed them to the gaol and scaffold.

Moving out from the metropolis to the West Country, Chapter 2 is also concerned with those who were alienated by the Restoration settlement and increasingly hostile to the Stuart court. Among the many Puritan gentry families of Somerset, the Spekes of Whitelackington in Illminster were the most notorious for their daring and often reckless opposition politics. This chapter focuses around the matriarch of the Speke family and her influence over her husband, children, and neighbors. The formidable Mary Speke was a "nursing mother" in both the figurative and literal sense, as a fomenter of Whig radicalism and nonconformity and as a mother of a brood of seditious sons and daughters. Like the "nursing mothers" in Chapter 1, Mary Speke also presents the historian with something of a source problem; she did not author tracts, her correspondence is missing. But enough evidence exists to suggest a fairly fascinating, if tragic story and one that confirms the argument that nonconformists women like Mary Speke, inspired by their religiosity, actively promoted seditious politics and nurtured it in their children.

Thus it is not surprising that Puritan women like Mary Speke were often the target of Aphra Behn's devastating satire. Behn's hostility

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[32] Tim Harris is fond of talking about "out-of-doors" politics, see, for example, his *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), p. 6, 13–14.

[33] Chalus, *Women in English Political Life*, pp. 1–3.

toward the culture of Protestant nonconformity is the subject of Chapter 3. While Behn was profoundly antagonistic to the Whig and Dissenting brethren, her harshest images were often reserved for the "sanctified sisters" of the conventicles. Behn's poetry and political comedies provide scholars with a wholly alternative vantage point from which to view Dissenting culture: to see it as it was seen by its opponents. Chapter 3 links Behn's travels abroad, to Europe and the New World, where she made contact with remnants of the Good Old Cause, godly soldiers and politicians, with her abiding distaste for the Protestant Cause as it was later portrayed in her imaginative writings. Behn's adventures in Antwerp also showed her another world (one of opulence, triumph, and beauty) that of the Catholic baroque. Nothing, perhaps, could have been more directly opposite to the grimy world of fanatics and republicans on the run. These two disparate images later informed Behn's political loyalties and writings.

In the spring of 1689, as her health and prospects faded, Behn addressed the new Queen, Mary II, reminding her how much she resembled her father, James II, in her "gracious sweetness, affability . . . and true piety."[34] Queen Mary was indeed a pious woman, as historians of the Williamite court often repeat. But beyond this, and Mary's penchant for the domestic arts, the Queen is often dismissed as a political nonentity in the narratives of the late Stuart era. Yet Mary II had a profound influence over the Established Church, informed by her experiences with international Protestantism. Chapter 4 explores the shaping of Mary's religiosity during her time in the Netherlands as Princess of Orange, arguing that Mary sought to experience a wide range of Protestantism(s) while in Europe, bringing her into contact with many of the leaders of the Dutch Enlightenment. Mary's appreciation for Protestantism abroad, both its sufferings and vagaries, imbued her churchmanship as Queen. As both a regnant and as a consort queen, Mary II reached out to Dissenters in England and was a generous patron of Protestants in Ireland, Europe, and America. She also sought to reshape the Church of England, and with Archbishop John Tillotson, set the Church on a new course, one that emphasized a practical, rational Christianity, concerned more with daily morality and less with theological hair-splitting.

Queen Mary's broad, irenic vision of the Church was certainly appealing to those with Low Churchmen sympathies, including the devotional

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[34] "A Congratulatory Poem to her Sacred Majesty Queen Mary, upon Her Arrival in England" (1689), in Behn, *Works*, 1:306.

writer, Elizabeth Burnet.[35] Elizabeth was the third wife of the historian and Williamite bishop, Gilbert Burnet. Like Mary Speke, she is one of the lesser known women in this study. Yet in her own time, she was quite the political operator and well immersed in the political and cultural landscape of London in the early eighteenth century. Chapter 5 explores Elizabeth Burnet's Low Church Anglicanism, her correspondence with John Locke over issues of Anglican orthodoxy, and her Whig politicking in association with Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough. Both well-educated and well-traveled, Elizabeth Burnet was a diehard Whig and a latitudinarian Christian; she exemplifies the life of a devout Anglican women living in an enlightened, Lockean world. Burnet was a contemporary to Mary Astell, a far more familiar figure among scholars. Astell was also a sophisticated Christian philosopher and Tory propagandist. She despised the moderate churchmanship of so many of the clergy raised to the episcopate by Mary II and William III in the 1690s, believing that they imperiled the Established Church by their attempts to comprehend and appease nonconforming Protestants, whom she considered responsible for the rebellion and regicide of the 1640s.[36] Like Elizabeth Burnet, Astell was a participant in the political tussles in the years known as the "Age of the Church in Danger," publishing ardent Tory political tracts as well as a work of feminist High Church theology, *The Christian Religion as Professed by a Daughter of the Church of England* (1705). Thus, despite the fact that both Burnet and Astell were staunch supporters of the Church of England, the very kind of Anglican devotion that each advocated represented the opposite ends of the Anglican spectrum in the early eighteenth century. Thus readers of this book will find that its focus moves from women on the margins to women in the center; from the sanctified sisters of the conventicles and the nursing mothers of sedition, to the ultimate nursing mother of the Protestant world after the Revolution, Mary II; and finally to the daughters of the contested Church at the outset of the High Enlightenment.

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[35] Irenicism in Christian theology is rooted in Renaissance humanist ideals and aimed at unifying Christian systems though reason.

[36] Patricia Springborg has done a great service to Astell scholarship with her edition of three of Astell's Tory tracts; see Mary Astell, *Political Writings*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); also see Springborg, *Mary Astell: Theorist of Freedom from Domination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and the edited collection, *Mary Astell: Reason, Gender, Faith*, eds. William Kolbrener and Michal Michelson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

Figure 1.1 Elizabeth Gaunt – permission to publish from the National Portrait Gallery, London

1
Nursing Mothers: Dissenting Women and Opposition Politics

It was the hopes of a Reformation that we fought and suffered . . .
Richard Baxter[1]

Between 1663 and 1665, informants to Secretary of State, Sir Joseph Williamson, reported on one Mrs. Holmes, living at St. Lawrence Lane, London. Jane Holmes was reputed to be a "great patroness of the worst sort of people." She consorted with regicides and Rump MPs. She frequented prisons and encouraged those that were in "greatest opposition to the government." A widow of "great estate," she spent her money liberally among "those that lie in wait to disturb the peace of the kingdom . . . and gains with her money from the Church daily and under the pretense of charity corrupts many and wanting people."[2] She was hardly alone. Spy reports in the 1660s are filled with stories about women of various social groups who were thought to be aiding and abetting political opposition to the government. How so? What exactly were these women doing and what made them so dangerous that the government paid informants to spy on their travels, haunts, friends, and neighbors? Not surprisingly, they were doing what women in persecutory societies have often done throughout Western history. They were nurturing the faith and fortifying the faithful by acting as missionaries and organizers, working for the reprieve and release of political and religious prisoners, publishing and distributing sectarian literature, patronizing preachers, supporting nonconformist families in trouble, and more.

[1] Richard Baxter, *Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor* (London, 1656), p. 380.
[2] G. Lyon Turner, ed., "Williamson's Spy Book," *TCHS* 5 (1911–12): 250. Mrs. Holmes (also spelled "Homes") was a friend of the Rumper republican and regicide, Cornelius Holland, and one of her servants was reportedly a former MP in the Rump Parliament.

Their activities were almost always tied to the care of their confessional brethren and the furtherance of nonconforming churches and sects. In the 1660s especially, this brought them into the Cromwellian orbit of former politicians, officers, and soldiers. Many of these women were themselves married to or were the widows of Republicans and regicides. Their acts of charity and daring, and their sheer tenacity in the face of persecution were politically charged. Like Shaftesbury's famous image of popery and slavery as two sisters going hand in hand, so Protestant Dissent and opposition politics became joined, even if most nonconformists desired nothing more than to live in peace and worship freely.[3] The linkage between religious and political opposition that came out of the Civil Wars and the Protectorate endured during the Restoration as did concerns over disorderly women venturing beyond the domain of hearth and distaff. Little wonder that Mrs. Holmes was thought to be encouraging the underground of political desperadoes and radicals in London; that was a world that shared her zeal for godliness and the gospel ministry. The experience of defeat, following the demise of the Commonwealth and the return of the monarchy, had left many men – politicians, soldiers, and preachers – forlorn and desperate, lost in a political wilderness. Where was Christ's kingdom now? For women the experience was similar; only they outnumbered men among the nonconformist varieties of Protestantism under attack during the Restoration, and they were fundamental to the preservation of these sects. True enough, women were not likely to carry guns or boldly plot risings in taverns over pots and pipes, but they were conduits of communication, money, and inflammatory literature. They were also there to pick up the pieces in the end, tending to their brethren in the gaol and at the gallows.

Nonconformity and Persecution

> *The people of God are sad, not knowing what to do or where to go*
> William Hooke[4]

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[3] "Popery and slavery like two sisters go hand in hand and sometimes one goes first, sometimes the other . . ." B. Martyn, A. Kippis, and G. Wingrove Cooke, *The Life of the First Earl of Shaftesbury from Original Documents in the Possession of the Family*, 2 vols. (London, 1836), 2: 202.

[4] "Letters and Papers Relating to the Regicides," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 38: *The Mather Papers*, 4th ser., vol. 8 (Boston, 1868), 8:125.

For three days in January 1661, a small armed group of between thirty-five and fifty men terrorized London. Led by a wine-cooper, Thomas Venner, these Fifth Monarchists sought to overthrow the recently restored monarchy and initiate the reign of "King Jesus" on earth.[5] Their sudden, if abortive, riot brought a swift end to any illusion about the nation's universal joy at the return of the Stuarts. At first glance, the Venner rising would seem insignificant enough; it was characteristic of so much of the zealous plotting of the early Restoration that did not have the slightest chance of success. But the specter of a resurgent republicanism coupled with fanatical sectarianism that Venner's men represented, panicked the restored regime and trigged a cycle of royalist repression and opposition plotting. Within days, a royal proclamation banned all gatherings of Fifth Monarchists, Quakers, and Baptists, and shortly thereafter, over 4,000 Quakers were rounded up and imprisoned.[6] What followed was the establishment of a secret service through the Secretary of State's office that constructed an elaborate network of informants to spy on former Cromwellians and Protestant Dissenters. These spies went into the streets, the prisons, the churches, the taverns, and the bookshops. The government's informants were paid to seek out evidence of conspiracy and that is what they did, whether baseless or not. They read the mail, followed suspicious persons, and flooded the Secretary of State's office with reports of secret meetings, conspiracies, night ridings, rumors of risings and plots, and hundreds of intercepted letters, warnings, and informations – all of which contributed to a climate of fear and suspicion and conspiracy.[7]

The plots and risings of Restoration England, Ireland, and Scotland, some real, some fabricated, most fantastical and utterly incapable of success, had an extraordinarily negative impact on Protestant nonconformists.[8] For whatever accommodations that Charles II might

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[5] Champlin Burrage, "The Fifth Monarchy Insurrections," *EHR* 25 (1910): 722–47; Richard L. Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660–1663* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 49–57.

[6] *By the King, A Proclamation Prohibiting all Seditious Meetings and Conventicles under the Pretence of Religious Worship* (10 January 1661); Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 223.

[7] W.C. Abbott, "English Conspiracy and Dissent, 1660–1674," *AHR* 14 (1909): 503–28; J. Walker, "The Secret Service under Charles II and James II," *TRHS* 4th ser., 15 (1932): 211–35; Alan Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the Reign of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 28–37.

[8] For a narrative account of the plots and risings between 1660 and 1688 see Richard Greaves' trilogy, *Deliver Us from Evil*; *Enemies under his Feet: Radicals and*

have wished to allow the "tender consciences" of his sectarian subjects, the practice of religious liberty was muted by the forces of royalist and Anglican reaction.[9] The government's insecurity led to a host of persecutory legislation, targeting all believers outside the Church Established and making curious bedfellows of once mutually hostile groups. Presbyterians and Muggletonians, Independents and Quakers, Fifth Monarchy Men and Baptists were "counted all alike and declared enemies to the state," so the Independent minister, William Hooke, put it. "The people of God and the late ministry of the Gospel are (generally) in a low estate and, under their severe exercises, suffering under the name of fanatics from the Presbyterian downward."[10] The result of this coercive legislation was that by 1662 these groups forged a common identity. Writes Neil Keeble, "they faced a common foe and endured a common plight . . . It was the shared experience of persecution which created Dissent out of the various nonconformities of 1660."[11] "The Independents and Presbyterians, who could scarcely give each other a good word," as one London informant reports, "on the publishing of the Act of Uniformity, held a great meeting at Great St. Bartholomew's, Thames Street, received the sacrament together, and have appointed a fast."[12] Their newfound unity would only increase as the government continued to treat all Dissenters alike and as the culture of the Court appeared increasingly alien to a godly worldview.

Charles II's administration had numerous Elizabethan and Jacobean statutes at their disposal with which to harass nonconformists, including laws against conventicles and vagrancy, the latter of which could be deployed against iterant preachers.[13] But the royalist and episcopal party within the Cavalier Parliament sought a deeper level of security

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Nonconformists in Britain, 1664–1677 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Glorious Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[9] Charles II's Declaration of Breda (4 April 1660) declares "a liberty for tender consciences." Reprinted in *The Stuart Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, ed. J.P. Kenyon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 358.

[10] "Letters and Papers Relating to the Regicides," *Collections*, 8: 172, 177.

[11] N.H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Athens, GA: University of George Press, 1987), p. 44. Also see, Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659–1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 87–90.

[12] *CSPD*, Charles II, 2:396.

[13] Neil Keeble, *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 140–1.

for the government and a more painful price for Dissent. The Act of Uniformity of April 1662, which was designed to keep all positions in the church, schools, and universities firmly in the hands of Anglicans, ultimately created a narrow, exclusive Established Church.[14] This act fell most heavily on Presbyterian ministers still hoping for accommodation within the Church. They were required to undergo a re-ordination by an Anglican bishop, invalidating their first ordination by a presbyter, and to consent to everything in the revised Book of Common Prayer of 1662, which many of those living outside of London had never had a chance to review. Those who did not take the necessary oaths by St. Bartholomew's Day (24 August 1662) were deprived of their livings. Roughly 1,909 men, predominantly Presbyterians, were ejected.[15] Still more penal laws followed. The Conventicle Act (1664) banned any meeting of five persons or more where the Prayer Book was not used. The Five Mile Act (1665) forbade all preachers outside the Established Church from coming within five miles of any town or place where they had once ministered.[16] Known together as the Clarendon Code, the penal laws were utterly unable to compel conformity to the Church of England or eradicate nonconformity. In fact, they endowed these groups with a history of persecution that emboldened many and strengthened their unity and determination. It also forced the most audacious among them to join that soup that made up oppositional politics.

The opposition to the restored regime in the 1660s was indeed a strange cocktail of Protestant Dissenters (including the militant Fifth Monarchy Men and millenarians of various shades), republicans and former Levellers, and Cromwellian officers and soldiers. According to Alan Marshall, who has done invaluable work on the secret service, this amalgamation of various hostile groups posed the gravest threat to the government between 1660 and 1665. The problem all nonconformist

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[14] "Charles II, 1662: An Act for the Uniformity of Publique Prayers and Administration of the Sacraments" in John Raithby, ed., *Statutes of the Realm*, 11 vols. (London, 1819), 5: 364–70.

[15] A.G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. xi–xiii. Also see David Appleby, *Black Bartholomew's Day: Preaching, Polemic and Restoration Nonconformity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).

[16] John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1649–1689* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 49–52; Ronald Hutton, *The Restoration: A Political and Religious History of England and Wales, 1658–1667* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 157–80; Paul Seaward, *The Cavalier Parliament and the Reconstruction of the Old Regime, 1661–1667* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 162–95.

Protestants faced was the government's inability to distinguish between those who were loyal (only desirous for freedom of worship) and those zealots who were willing to bear arms for their beliefs. Even before the most severe penal legislation went into effect, the government received report after report of "preachers [who] go about from county to county and blow the flames of rebellion." "The wild [or Weald] of Kent is a receptacle for distressed running parsons," reads a typical report to Secretary Nicholas in October 1661, "who vent abundance of sedition on their new-created lecture days."[17] The hunger for liberty of conscience and the vicissitudes of suffering often compelled Dissenters into the murky underground of disgruntled soldiers and fanatical plotters. A second period in which Charles II's administration felt acutely imperiled by plots, both real and fantastic, occurred between 1679 and 1685. This time the opposition was more organized by Whig politicians and their operatives in the streets and conventicles. Once again the opponents of the government were composed of various groups, including old Cromwellians and commonwealthmen, with a wide array of agendas. But the majority of those active in the Whig cause, or more accurately, "the Protestant Cause," as they themselves called it, were simply Dissenting Protestants. They joined the opposition in parliament and in Whig clubs, processions, petition-drives, and plots in the early 1680s in an effort to stem the tide of encroaching popery and, above all, in search of a liberty of conscience.[18]

While Restoration Britain was undoubtedly a persecutory society, the impact of the penal laws differed from region to region and their enforcement, according to John Spurr, "waxed and waned according to the political fears of the day."[19] Official harassment usually targeted Baptists and Quakers more than Presbyterians and Independents; but in times of real insecurity within the government, such as in the early 1660s and again in the early 1680s, even moderate Presbyterians could be subject to the ferocity of zealous authorities.[20] The enforcement of

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[17] *CSPD*, Charles II, 2: 161, 107. "The Weald of Kent" was once a vast forest in South East England and is still a place of great natural beauty.

[18] Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage,* pp. 7–17; also see, Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[19] John Spurr, "From Puritanism to Dissent, 1660–1700," in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700*, eds. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 248.

[20] Baptists and Quakers were more readily associated with radicals and republicans. Spurr, *The Restoration Church*, p. 31.

this legislation at the local level was usually in the hands of the country gentry, which meant that it was dependent upon their pleasure. Local sheriffs and JPs might be zealous enforcers of the penal code or they might be sympathetic to their Dissenting neighbors and partial conformists themselves.[21] Or they might simply be indifferent and lackadaisical in their duties. Quite naturally, Dissenters learned how to evade the authorities. They met in hidden rooms, caves or forests; they disguised their meetings as banquets and their preachers as peddlers. They wrote their letters in ciphers. They used look-outs and escape routes.[22] All this they did and more, given the very simple reality that the cost of being caught could be ruinous or even deadly.

Sectarians ran the risk of suffering both financially and physically for their faith. They might be fined, roughed up, whipped, transported, or imprisoned. Their meeting houses might be ransacked or burnt to the ground. Their personal wealth might be confiscated down to their cattle, tools, books and blankets. Worse still, they might languish in prison for years on end. The most famous example is John Bunyan, imprisoned in Bedford for twelve years for his continual refusal to stop preaching. But others suffered worse. The Quaker, William Dewsbury, was imprisoned in the Warwick gaol for nineteen years.[23] While Bunyan enjoyed a fairly liberal imprisonment many, especially Friends, died in prison or had their health impaired. Prison sitting was often a horrid experience; cells were filthy, crowded, dark, wet, and dens of disease, including the plague, small pox, and typhus (known as "gaol fever"). The radical bookseller, Elizabeth Calvert, lost her son to gaol fever.[24] William Hooke described the situation shortly after the passage of the Act of Uniformity: "Multitudes have been surprised and forthwith carried to prisons, the gaols filled, as the Gatehouse, Newgate, Tower, White-Lion, and some in the Fleet and in the King's Bench. Many have died in imprisonment and have been stifled through thronging together and want of air."[25] Long periods of incarceration could also leave families destitute,

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[21] Anthony Fletcher, "The Enforcement of the Conventicle Act, 1664–1679," *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984): 235–45.

[22] Gerald R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 41–3; Watts, *The Dissenters*, pp. 230–1.

[23] Cragg, *Puritanism*, p. 90.

[24] NA, SP 29/95/98; SP 29/96/64.

[25] Hooke's letter is printed in A.G. Matthews, "A Censored Letter: William Hooke in England to John Davenport in New England, 1663," *TCHS* 9 (1924–26): 266.

depriving them of their means of support. In all this, the anger and frustration, the suffering and subterfuge, Dissenting women were full participants.

Women were the mainstay of Dissent in Restoration England, outnumbering men among the more conservative Presbyterians as well as within the gathered churches and the Quakers. Clive Field estimates that 62 percent of all Baptists between 1651 and 1700 were women, and that women were 61 percent of all Independents. Women made up 68 percent of both churches in London.[26] The composition of the Reverend John Owen's Independent congregation at Bury Street in London was typical: throughout the 1660s and 1670s, there were usually twice as many women as men.[27] Officials reported that women were prominent in all the sects, whether Quakers or Presbyterians. Women outnumbered men at conventicles by as much as two or three to one male listener. Many women of various social groups held conventicles in their homes. Time and again, the sources speak of conventicles dominated by "women and children" – widows and mothers, surrounded by their offspring. Typical was a report of June 1661, where an informant came across a meeting in London of thirty women and ten men.[28] Roger Morrice, the Puritan diarist, reports a service being disturbed at Queen Street with forty women and ten men in 1684.[29] During the Civil Wars and Interregnum, women had played highly visible roles within the sects, evangelizing their faith, preaching and prophesying.[30] But the prominence of popular female preachers had declined after the Restoration as Dissenting ministries became more wary of ecstatic women and less conducive to having them preach and teach. By 1662, the penal

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[26] Clive D. Field, "'Adam and Eve:' Gender in the English Free Church Constituency," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44/1 (1993): 63–79; Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500–1720* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 189.

[27] T.G. Crippen, "Dr.Watts's Church-Book," *TCHS* 1 (April 1901): 26–38.

[28] G. Lyon Turner, *Original Records of Early Nonconformity under Persecution and Indulgence*, 2 vols. (London, 1911), 2: 5–11, 77–83, 90; Dorothy Ludlow, "Shaking Patriarchy's Foundations: Sectarian Women in England, 1641–1700," in *Triumphant Over Silence: Women in Protestant History*, ed. Richard L. Greaves (London: Greenwood Press, 1985), pp. 108–9.

[29] *CSPD,* Charles II, 2: 70: Morrice, *EB*, 2: 482.

[30] Phyllis Mack, "Women as Prophets during the Civil Wars," *Feminist Studies* 8/1 (Spring 1982): 19–45; Diane Purkiss, "Producing the Voice, Consuming the Body: Women Prophets of the Seventeenth Century," in *Women, Writing, History 1640–1740*, eds. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992).

laws had forced all male and female evangelists to adopt "low visibility strategies."[31] Pressures from within these churches and outside from local authorities were still not enough to prevent some women, especially Quakers, from preaching and missionary work. Nor did they stop women from partaking in other defiant activities from refusing to pay the tithe to hiding itinerant preachers and political outlaws. Women broke the law and were imprisoned, and they assisted their imprisoned brethren and political prisoners. Women partook in the print culture that disseminated sectarian and oppositional books, broadsides, and tracts. And, Dissenting women were involved in covert and dangerous political activities during the Restoration. If these sectarian women of the Restoration differ in one dramatic way from their sisters of the mid-century crisis, it is that in the topsy turvy world of the wars and the Republic, women often cultivated publicity through open air preaching or spectacular stunts.[32] After 1660, their work became far more treacherous, requiring them to operate as much as possible beneath the official radar. Thus, as we shall see, women provided the kind of "back door" political support that often helped to make the much vaunted "out-of-doors" politics possible.

Women and the Opposition in the 1660s

> *And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.*
>
> Luke 23: 27–8

That the years of the early Restoration were a time of despair for the godly is hardly surprising. What historians perhaps underestimate is the sense of confusion that accompanied the experience of defeat. What would the restored regime bring to God's people? Would the bishops

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[31] Ludlow, "Shaking Patriarchy's Foundations," p. 94.

[32] Such as the Quaker practice, among both women and men, of "going naked as a sign," or as in the case of the attention Quaker women paid to James Nayler, spreading their garments before him and singing "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Israel," as he rode into London in 1656 in imitation of Christ entering Jerusalem. Kenneth L. Carroll, "Early Quakers and 'Going Naked as a Sign,'" *Quaker History* 62/2 (1978): 69–87; Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 210; Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 266.

return, and with them, slowly but surely, popery? And who would suffer for their participation in the Good Old Cause? Women, like men, watched for signs of times to come, not simply from Whitehall and Westminster, but from the heavens as well. Little wonder that in 1662, the bookseller, Elizabeth Calvert, knew she would find a ready and eager audience for the highly inflammatory tract, *Mirabilis Annus*, a "collection of many strange signs of apparitions."[33] The government immediately understood its significance and arrested Calvert for "instilling into the hearts of subjects a superstitious belief . . . and dislike and hatred of His Majesty's person and government and preparing them to effect a damnable design for his destruction and a change of government."[34] When the preacher, William Hooke, described a frightening scene in London to the regicide and millenarian, William Goffe, hiding in New England, he knew that Goffe would appreciate its meaning. Out of a black cloud "appeared two perfect arms and hands, in the right hand was grasped a great broad sword and in the left a cup . . . full of blood." These "prodigious apparitions" astonished those present. Next a loud voice was heard to say, "Woe, woe to the land and to the inhabitants thereof, for he cometh that is to come and you shall all see him."[35] The millenarian message of such signs (armies seen fighting in the heavens, talking infants, heads appearing out of the sky, blood-red suns or twin suns) were interpreted by the godly as proof of God's wrath and willingness to intervene in human affairs. The appearance of the plague in London in 1665 was further evidence of God's displeasure and confirmed that the City "hath rebell'd and sinned grievously," having "spilled the blood o' the just."[36]

For many Dissenters the "blood of the just" was spilled in the first years of the Restoration. In August of 1660, a mere three months after the return of the King, the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion passed the Convention Parliament and pardoned most of the crimes committed against the monarchy during the Civil Wars. But it exempted thirty-three men, most of whom were the "regicides" or judges at the trial

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[33] *Mirabilis Annus: Or, the Year of Prodigies and Wonders* was originally published in 1661; a second installment was issued in 1662.

[34] *CSPD, Charles II*, 2: 106. *Mirabilis Annus* was spread throughout the British Isles; its frightening images supposedly scared the people of Ulster "out of their wits," and it was quickly deemed treasonous. Greaves, *Deliver Us*, p. 139.

[35] "Letters and Papers Relating to the Regicides," *Collections*, p. 176.

[36] *The Plague Checkt; or Piety will either prevent or Alter the Property of the Plague* (London, 1665), within which see "London's Lamentation," pages unnumbered.

of Charles I and signers of his death warrant in 1649.[37] Thirteen of those men were executed between 1660 and 1662; another nineteen were imprisoned for life. Many others went into hiding and escaped to the continent or America. Certainly, many nonconformists, especially Presbyterians whose representatives were excluded from the proceedings of the Long Parliament after Pride's Purge in 1648, saw the actions of the regicides as abhorrent. But for many others, including Independents with their strong ties to Cromwell's army, the actions of the King's judges and those of the rousing preacher of regicide, Hugh Peters, were absolutely justified in eschatological terms. Thus Venner's men had used the slogan, "The King Jesus and their heads upon the gates" in 1661, referring to their outrage over the recently executed regicides whose heads were on display.[38] Fifth Monarchists might have been the only sectarian group that believed the reign of "King Jesus" could be brought in through the force of arms, but they were certainly not the only ones willing to participate in political violence for spiritual ends.

In the early years of the Restoration, uncertain as they were, Dissenting women aided and abetted radicals, outlaws, ejected preachers, seditious propagandists, and the regicides in hiding. Time and again, the sources record women at the side of men in trouble, beginning with those at the scaffold. The first ten regicides drawn on sledges to the gallows at Charing Cross or Tyburn were executed between October 13 and 19, 1660. Their scaffold speeches, filled with godly justifications for their actions and faith in their cause, were published soon after. The speeches were certainly meant to fortify the saints in their time of suffering and fashion the regicides into martyrs. They seem to have been successful at both, and the government sought to extract and punish their publishers. The preface to the first edition speaks of the speeches of the regicides as a "great treasury," published to "satisfy those many in city and country who have desired it" and so all might "see the riches of grace magnified in those servants of Christ."[39] In part, these speeches were fairly authentic renderings of some of what the condemned men said. Justice John

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[37] *An Act of a Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion* (1660) in *The Stuart Constitution*, pp. 365–74. The radical preacher, Hugh Peters, was also exempted from the general pardon. While he did not participate in Charles I's trial, his inflammatory preaching was seen as an incitement to regicide.

[38] *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 2: 11.

[39] *The Speeches and Prayers of Major General Harrison, October, 13; Mr. John Carew, October 15; Mr. Justice Cooke, Mr. Hugh Peters, October 16, Mr. Tho. Scott* . . . (London, 1660), "To the Reader," pages unnumbered. The speeches of the regicides were a

Cooke's obsessive worrying about the loss of his estate and his "poor, tender, loving wife and child," does little to add to his aura as a saintly martyr and hero of the Republic, but it is included nonetheless. On the other hand, the compiler of the speeches certainly presented them in ways that evoked sympathy and vindicated the Good Old Cause. None of the regicides repented. "I have not one temptation to desert the Good Old Cause," so Cromwell's intelligencer, Thomas Scott, asserts shortly before his particularly grisly death. So too Justice Cook makes several powerful political statements: "we are not traitors, nor murderers, nor phanaticks, but true Christians and commonwealthmen, fixed and constant to the principles of sanctity, truth, justice, and mercy which the Parliament and the Army declared and engaged . . ."[40]

The most notorious speech was certainly that of Major General Thomas Harrison. A religious zealot and millenarian with ties to the Fifth Monarchists, Harrison had a fearsome reputation as both a soldier and a saint. Charles Firth believed that no man was "personally more responsible for the trial and execution of the King" than Harrison.[41] But what made him truly frightening to the restored regime was that he shared the Fifth Monarchist belief that the Second Coming was at hand and could be ushered in through violence. Stalwart and stoic, Harrison made no effort to flee or hide following the return of Charles II, and at his trial he was unrepentant. He was the first regicide to be executed and his "occasional speeches and memorable passages" are the most powerful and poignant. Women play significant roles in the narrative of Harrison's final hours, testifying to his saintliness, and following him on the way to the cross.

The first woman witness in Harrison's "memorable passages" is the one who prepared his cell at Newgate prison and is asked by many how

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hot commodity in November 1660, sold "up and down the streets" shortly after the executions. In 1663, Giles and Elizabeth Calvert, Simon Dover, and Thomas Brewster sought to bring out another edition but were caught and imprisoned. "The Trial of John Twyn, Printer, for high treason; also of Thomas Brewster, bookseller, Simon Dover, printer, and Nathan Brooks, bookbinder, for misdemeanors, at the Old Bailey, 15 Charles II, 1663," *State Trials*, 6: 544.

[40] *The Speeches and Prayers*, pp. 47, 57, 49. Justice Cooke also baldly states that he "cannot confess any guilt, it is such a [good old] cause that the martyrs would gladly come again from heaven to suffer for." This line really rankled authorities and is cited in the case against the booksellers that tried to republish the *Speeches and Prayers* in 1663. "The Trial of John Twyn, Printer . . .," *State Trials*, 7: 544.

[41] C.H. Firth, "A Memoir of Major-General Thomas Harrison," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, new ser., 8 (1893), p. 398.

the General behaves himself and what he says. She "knew not what he has done to deserve to be there, but sure she was that he was a good man, and that never such a man was there before for he was full of God, there was nothing but God in his mouth." On the day of his execution, Harrison bid his wife farewell, telling her that he has nothing to leave her but his Bible and "assuring her that God would make up her losses in due time." This line, coupled with Harrison's later assertion that he would rise again, sounded very much like a threat against the government. As Harrison is being led from his cell to his sledge, a woman grabs his hand, saying, "blessed be the great God of Hosts, that hath enabled you and called you forth to bear your testimony, the God of all grace, and peace be with you, and keep you faithful to the death that you may receive a crown of life." A soldier pulls her away, but Harrison gently chides him, "be not offended with her, she speaks Scripture-language." A third woman, a friend, approaches Harrison, now bound with a rope around his neck. She is weeping, but Harrison is stoic. "Hinder me not," he tells her, "for I am going about the work for my master." At the scaffold, Harrison is jeered and mocked by some in the crowd. One bystander asks him where his Good Old Cause is now. But Harrison is impassive and simply smiles, claps his hand on his breast and replies, "Here it is, and I am going to seal it with my blood." But most amazingly, in his speech from the ladder, Harrison tells the crowd that he will rise from the dead on the third day, sit at the right hand of God, and sentence those who judged against him.[42]

How much of the Harrison narrative in *The Speeches and Prayers* is authentic and how much of it is tailored to evoke Christ's Passion is unanswerable. It is, undoubtedly, a mixture of both.[43] Sectarian women were drawn to the plight of the regicides not because they had condoned the execution of Charles I, although some certainly did, but because many of these men had robust reputations for godliness. Women could also serve as powerful witnesses to male saintliness. Nor was it uncommon to find women at the side of dangerous men in dire circumstances: on the run, in prison, and at the scaffold. The prevalence of female sympathizers and fellow travelers to the enemies of the restored regime

[42] *Speeches and Prayers*, pp. 1, 4, 5, 6–7.

[43] The speeches of the regicides also contain some echoes of John Foxe's depictions of the Marian martyrs, particularly in their presentations of wives and children and of the crowds, sometimes jeering and sometimes weeping. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments of Matters Most Special and Memorable* (London, 1610 edition).

was certainly something of which royalists were well aware. Thus they sought information about them, sending out informants to observe and gather news about them, intercepting correspondence, tracking their movements. Royalists outside the government were certainly aware of such women and sufficiently anxious enough to ridicule them. The licentious "holy sisters" in one anonymous 1661 tract are inspired by "brother Venner" to kill their husbands who they liken to "kinglings."[44] Abraham Cowley's character, Tabitha, who is of the "Fifth Monarchist faith," in his play, *Cutter of Coleman Street* (1663), is seduced by the royalist Cutter's mock Puritan prophecies. Cutter's visions tell him that he will

> return upon a purple dromedary which signifies magistracy with an axe in my hand that is called Reformation and I am to strike with that axe upon the gate of Westminster-Hall and cry down Babylon, and the building called Westminster-Hall is to run away and cast itself into the river and then Major General Harrison is to come in green sleeves from the North upon a sky-colored mule.[45]

While Cowley's imitation of godly cant, millenarianism, and its power over women was certainly meant to be humorous, the conspicuous nature of some saintly women's actions was a lot less amusing, especially to the Secretaries of State trying to secure the safety of the restored monarchy.

Keeping tabs on the wives of the regicides as well as those of other notorious parliamentary soldiers and politicians, men who had absconded, or were imprisoned, executed, or assassinated kept the government's network of informants busy in the 1660s. Naturally, these women were of interest, first and foremost, because their movements and communications might lead authorities to their husbands or his friends who were in hiding. Sir Archibald Johnston, Lord Wariston, was only found and later executed after royalist agents tracked the movements of Lady Wariston when she traveled abroad to meet him.[46] But the

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[44] *The Holy Sisters Conspiracy against their Husbands* (London, 1661), p. 8. Anti-Puritan satire is discussed in Chapter 3.

[45] Abraham Cowley, *Essays, Plays and Sundry Verses*, ed. A.R. Waller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), pp. 302, 308. "Green sleeves" were associated with Roundheads in Royalist ballads and satire.

[46] Robert Wodrow, *The Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution*, 4 vols. (Glasgow, 1838), 1: 356.

activities of these women could also be worrisome in and of themselves. Many of them consorted with men considered highly dangerous: Fifth Monarchists, former Cromwellian soldiers, and newly ejected ministers. In the minds of the Secretaries of State, the potential of these wives, widows, and friends of the government's enemies to foment sedition necessitated their surveillance.

Because these women were trying to keep their exploits and information from prying eyes, our sources are necessarily limited. We do not know the depth of their involvement in seditious activity. We only know that they were watched, reported on, and, when possible, their letters were intercepted. What is clear, however, is that these women formed networks, sharing information, news and consolation. Their sociability seems to have had political, spiritual and psychological ends; they were bonded by the experience of defeat and by their desire to maintain their political and religious identity and goals.

Frances, Lady Vane, wife of parliamentarian, writer, and millenarian, Sir Henry Vane, the younger, kept in touch with Lady Wariston, among others.[47] Lady Vane had long had a reputation for godliness, winning the praise of the Puritan minister, Roger Williams of Providence, New England, in 1652.[48] After the Restoration, she began employing Independent ministers in her home. Letters to her and by her were often intercepted. In July 1663, she received one from an unknown correspondent filled with oblique political references: "All is in safety, though not without alarms and warnings . . . all things grow darker, but at evening time it will be light."[49] If such ambiguous talk was designed to give the government pause, it certainly worked. Authorities were also concerned by the fact that Lady Vane employed men whom they saw as highly suspect. Her steward at Raby Castle in Durham was one John Cock, "a very dangerous person," who had been corrupted by Sir Henry Vane's "leaven" and was beloved by all fanatics. But Lady Vane entrusted Cock with the management of several estates and even traveled with him.[50]

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[47] After two years of imprisonment, Sir Henry Vane was charged with high treason for his services to the Commonwealth, tried and beheaded at Tower Hill on June 14, 1662. He was the only parliamentarian executed who had not participated in the trial of Charles I. His prison writings were published by radical publisher, Hannah Chapman, discussed below.

[48] Roger Williams, *Experiments of Spiritual Life & Health* (London, 1652), see his dedication to Lady Vane.

[49] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 199.

[50] *CSPD*, Charles II, 5: 377; 6: 243, 495. Vane's political principles and abstruse theology are described as a "leaven," meaning they are a toxic mixture which changed people's minds.

Lady Vane's friend, Helen Hay, Lady Johnston of Wariston, had a harder time finding loyal staff. One of her household servants kept the government abreast of her travels and activities. The government learned from this servant that Lady Johnston was sending her husband news and books from Scotland including a book by Independent minister, John Owen. The informant also thought that "the five boxes alluded to in one of her letters meant the five speeches of the men [the regicides] who suffered." The role of provider of news and information to her husband was nothing new for Lady Wariston. As Lord Wariston's diary clearly demonstrates, she had been an active partner throughout his long and troubled political career. Her letters, as well as those of their daughters, supplied him with political news from Scotland when the family was separated. When she was in London, Lady Wariston would appeal in person to Commonwealth and Protectorate politicians on her husband's behalf.[51] With the Restoration, Wariston went into hiding and eventually escaped abroad. Lady Wariston's letters to her husband were written in a cipher, but they were nonetheless intercepted and translated by the government. They contained news of the Kirk in Scotland, the Covenant, and the ongoing dispute between Lords Lauderdale and Middleton.[52] After Lady Wariston's fatal visit to Germany, authorities located and eventually arrested Wariston in Rouen. In May 1663 Lady Wariston and her fourth daughter, Margaret, attended to Lord Wariston in the Tower and Margaret, though only a child, remained as her father's companion. Wariston was later transferred to the Tolbooth in Edinburgh. He was hanged and beheaded at the Mercat Cross in July 1663.[53]

Lord and Lady Wariston produced twelve children together and, not surprisingly, the religious and political leanings of the parents infected their offspring, especially their daughters. In 1674, Margaret Johnston was imprisoned along with other Covenanting women for presenting a petition for the liberty of their ministers. She was later banished from Edinburgh. More remarkable was another daughter, Helen Johnston, who married Sir George Hume of Graden in 1659. Both she and her husband were staunch Covenanters. Sir George was imprisoned, at least briefly, for nonconformity in 1678. In June 1679, he fought with Covenanter rebels at Bothwell Bridge. A year later, following her husband's death, Lady Graden was fined an exorbitant £26,000

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[51] *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, ed. James D. Ogilvie, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1940), 3: 88, 174–5.
[52] *CSPD*, Charles II, 2: 593; 3: 12, 27.
[53] Wodrow, *The Sufferings*, 1: 355–62; John Nicoll, *A Diary of Public Transactions and Occurrences, Chiefly in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1836), pp. 394–6.

for frequenting field conventicles and harboring rebels. The excessive fine was almost certainly in part because she was Wariston's daughter, Hume's widow, and Robert Baillie of Jerviswood's sister-in-law. Robert Baillie was Lord Wariston's nephew and married to another one of his daughters, Rachel. In London in 1683, Baillie became mixed up in Whig plans to launch an insurrection. A year later, he was charged with high treason, tried, and sentenced to be hanged, quartered, and beheaded for his complicity in the Rye House Plot to assassinate the royal brothers, Charles II and the Duke of York. Baillie was in poor health and Lady Graden attended to him throughout his trial. During his imprisonment in the Tolbooth, she remained his companion, reading to him from the Bible, comforting him, and tending to his needs. She followed him to the scaffold and stayed by him throughout the entire ordeal, retrieved his limbs, and like Christ's body, she wrapped them in "linen cloth" and buried them.[54]

In addition to Lady Wariston, Lady Vane also corresponded with Anne Danvers, wife of Henry Danvers, who served Cromwell's regime and became imbued with Fifth Monarchist militancy. Anne and Henry, both Baptists, were married in 1662. Anne Danvers was part of a network of correspondents among dissidents. One informant asserted that, "Women are employed about letters which are sent for Lady Danvers to be communicated to Lady Vane."[55] Among Anne Danvers' circle of friends and fellow travelers, with whom she communicated, were the Hartopps and the Fleetwoods. Anne's sister, Mary, was married firstly to Sir Edward Hartopp and secondly, to Charles Fleetwood, an army officer under Cromwell and part of the triumvirate (along with Generals John Lambert and Samuel Desborough) during the last days of the Commonwealth. Although Fleetwood was spared by the restored regime, both the Fleetwood and Hartopp families, who resided together at the Fleetwood manor, Stoke Newington in Middlesex, were closely watched. Charles Fleetwood's daughter, Elizabeth, was married to Sir John Hartopp, Edward Hartopp's son. Both generations attended Dr. John Owen's Independent congregation on Bury Street in the parish of St. Mary Axe, London.[56] Spy reports indicated that Elizabeth, Lady Hartopp,

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[54] Mark 15: 46; Wodrow, *The Sufferings*, 3: 52, 106; 4: 112; William Morison, *Johnston of Warriston* (New York: C. Scribner, 1901), p. 151. Baillie's limbs and head were dug up and displayed.

[55] *BDBR*, s. v., "Danvers, Henry (c. 1622–1687);" *CSPD*, Charles II, 5:24.

[56] A.J. Shirren, *The Chronicles of Fleetwood House* (London: Barnes & Printers, 1951), pp. 78–109.

had connections with Fifth Monarchists, attended conventicles at Moorfields, and retained the services of Independent ministers in her home.[57] Elizabeth Hartopp was a close friend and correspondent of Mary Berry, the wife of Colonel James Berry, a former parliamentarian army officer and Major General who was imprisoned in Scarborough Castle until 1672. Mary was also member of Dr. Owen's Bury Street congregation and was reported to be living near Stoke Newington.[58]

John Owen's Bury Street congregation also attracted Bridget Bendish, who was the daughter of General Henry Ireton and Cromwell's eldest daughter, Bridget. In 1652, Bridget Ireton, then a widow, married Charles Fleetwood (she was his second wife). When she died, her daughter, also named Bridget, went to live with her stepfather at Stoke Newington. In 1669, she married Thomas Bendish of Gray's Inn but nonetheless remained extraordinarily independent and was described as strong-willed, feisty, and intemperate. Several character sketches of Bridget Bendish were written after her death, the authors of which all agreed that she was a woman of great contradictions who was generous to a fault as well as suspicious, dishonest, and jealous with both friends and servants alike. There was "something in her countenance, however, that both attracts and commands respect." She resembled Oliver Cromwell more than any of his descendants both in her appearance and temperament. According to the Dissenting minister, Samuel Say, she was "a person of great presence and majesty, heroic courage, and unflagging industry." She was notorious for visiting friends late at night and was a hardy drinker. Her piety was strongly tinged with enthusiasm. She was known to retire to her closet and through fasting, meditation, and prayer "the vapors were raised" and she fell into a kind of rapture.[59] She adhered to the political views of her grandfather and spoke of him as a great saint. She was also a staunch defender of his reputation. "Once when travelling by coach she heard a gentleman abuse Oliver's character in the grossest terms. At the first stop she drew another passenger's sword, called the other a poltroon and a coward and challenged him to show himself a man, and pay no attention to her sex."[60] Bridget

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[57] "Williamson's Spy Book," pp. 248, 250, 251, 254, 257.

[58] There is little information on Mary but her attendance at Owen's congregation and association with the Hartopps and Fleetwoods placed her under suspicion. Christopher Durston, "Berry, James (d. 1691)," *ODNB*; *CSPD,* Charles II, 3: 110.

[59] BL, Add. 19,118, ff. 60–1.

[60] BL, Add. 19,118, ff. 60–2. This story is also told in Mark Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell*, 2 vols. (London, 1784), 2:336–7. According

Bendish's activities were monitored by the restored regime. She raised alarms in 1683 when aided her brother, Henry Ireton the younger's escape from prison after he was accused of complicity in the Rye House Plot. Later when Ireton was recaptured, she attended him in the Tower.[61] In the late 1680s, she distributed literature in support of the Prince of Orange, going into shops and dropping "bundles of papers to prepare the minds of the people." In 1694, she was presented to Mary II by Archbishop Tillotson in order that a pension might be settled on her.[62]

Another circle of Independents, also wives of regicides, included Mary Cawley, Frances Goffe, and Mary Whalley. Informants reported that these women met often and corresponded. Their activities were tracked not only in hope of locating their husbands, but also because informants asserted that these women knew the whereabouts of Edmund Ludlow, one of the most sought after regicides. Mary Cawley's husband, William, had fled to Switzerland after the Restoration. William Cawley, Edmund Ludlow, John Lisle, and Nicholas Love – all of whom were sought for their roles in the trial and execution of Charles I – resided in Lausanne and Vevey in the1660s. Mary Cawley moved into her brother's house in London. Spy reports speak of her as being intimately acquainted with Ludlow's wife, Elizabeth, who later left London to join her husband in 1663.[63] Mary Cawley was also intimate with Frances Goffe and Mary Whalley, whose husbands had fled to New England (although informants were never sure where they were and thought they might still be in England or with Ludlow).[64] Frances Goffe was the daughter of Edward Whalley and the wife of William Goffe. Both Whalley and Goffe were regicides and Major Generals under Cromwell. They were also "both godly men," as John Davenport put it, imbued with

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to Gilbert Burnet, it was said of Cromwell's children that "those who wore the breeches deserved petticoats better, but if those in petticoats had been in breeches they would have held faster." Apparently, strong women ran in the family. Burnet, *HOHOT*, 1: 152.

[61] Young Ireton was storing muskets at the time of the Oxford Parliament in 1681. In 1682–83, he became entangled in the Rye House conspiracy. BL Add. 28,875, f. 257; *CSPD*, James II, 1: 394, 417. After the Revolution, his services in defense of Protestantism were awarded by William III.

[62] Noble, *Memoirs*, 2: 335–7.

[63] "Williamson's Spy Book," 307; *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 13.

[64] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 144, 380. Whalley and Goffe's activities in New England see Lemuel Welles, *The History of the Regicides in New England* (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1971). Their adventures inspired Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story, "The Grey Champion" (1835) and were incorporated in Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Peveril of the Peak* (London, 1823).

a Puritan sensibility and millenarian fervor. They lived in a cave outside New Haven, Connecticut, for a time in an effort to elude royalist agents. Ultimately, they moved to Hadley, Massachusetts, where they "preached and prayed and were looked upon as men dropped down from heaven."[65] Frances Goffe went to live with her aunt Jane and her husband, the Independent minister, William Hooke in London. The Hookes had immigrated to New England in 1637, where William ministered alongside John Davenport in New Haven. They returned to England in the 1650s, and Hooke became one of Cromwell's chaplains and the master of the Savoy Hospital, London.[66]

But the 1660s were difficult times. William Hooke lost his living and was caring for his niece, Frances Goffe and her daughters, in addition to his own large family. Still William and Jane's connections with America remained healthy and the Hooke household was a hub of trans-Atlantic communication among the godly. Both William and Jane Hooke stayed in contact with John Davenport, Increase Mather, and the regicides, Whalley and Goffe. Frances Goffe, using aliases, wrote to her husband, William; and he tried to keep in touch with her as he and his father-in-law, Whalley, moved about New England. William Goffe addressed his wife, Frances, as his "Dear and Honored Mother" and referred to their daughters as his "sisters." In her letters, Frances referred to William as her "Dear Child." It seems unlikely that this little subterfuge of theirs would actually fool the authorities. Their choice of such terms may have had more to do with their status as a godly family, physically separated, but attached through strong bonds of faith and affection. Frances was no longer William's "wife" so much as she was his "mother," mothering him through his time of travail. Their letters exchanged private news, advice, and encouragement. Frances also sent her husband information about England as she tried to fathom God's will: "oh, the many ways God hath taken with poor England . . . sore judgments hath followed one upon the other . . . and yet the heart of the people are not awakened." She concluded this 1671 letter to William with "many friends desire to be remembered to you and pray for you daily. The churches enjoy much peace in London, but are sorely persecuted in the country; [may] the Lord appear for [their] deliverance."[67]

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[65] *Letters of John Davenport, Puritan Divine*, ed. I.M. Calder (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 174; *CSP, Colonial*, 5: 54.

[66] *Calamy Revised*, p. 274; Susan Hardman Moore, "Hooke [Hook], William (1600/01–1678)," *ODNB*.

[67] "Letters and Papers Relating to the Regicides," *Collections*, 8: 133, 134.

William Hooke's letters to Goffe, Davenport, and Mather were far more incendiary, containing news about the penal laws, the trials and executions of the regicides, the strange misfortunes that befell conforming ministers, and signs from the heavens foretelling God's displeasure with the restored regime. In 1663, he reported news about a plot "begun by Anabaptists, hatched by Fifth Monarchy men, fostered in Congregated Churches . . . supported by soldiers of Oliver's old army and, in fine, carried on by the concurrence of all Dissenting sects against the royal interests."[68] Hooke's wife, Jane, shared his religious and political commitments. Sending news to Goffe and Whalley in 1672, she wrote, "as for O.[ld] E.[ngland], we are in expectation daily when the Lord will visit us for our sins and horrid blasphemy . . . for the contempt of the Gospel by parliament and higher powers."[69] Jane Hooke continued to write to key members of the godly community in New England after her husband's death in 1678. Throughout the 1670s, she took up collections of money and old clothing for the poor and "distressed ministers" of New England and sent them to Davenport and Increase Mather. She sent Mather pairs of gloves and thanked him for the books he had sent her. She was a willing benefactor to those in real need, but if they were "of a loose frame, not a penny."[70]

Other women, for whom there are far fewer sources, were reported on by the spies of the Secretaries of State in the 1660s, including many who supported the most violent sect, the Fifth Monarchy Men. The Widow Harding, residing at Little Wood Street in London, was reputed a "Fifth Monarchist" and a "very violent woman." She had been entrusted with the letters and papers of Thomas Venner, who had led the Fifth Monarchy rising in 1661. The Widow Brome held Fifth Monarchy conventicles at her house at Tuttle Street, Westminster. Mary Winch, also a widow, hosted Fifth Monarchists meetings at her house in St. Giles's, Cripplegate, from 1662 to 1665.[71] The widow Jane

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[68] Ibid., 213–14. Hooke's seditious newsletters to Goffe and Davenport were often intercepted; see *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 63–5, 98, 117; A.G. Matthews, "A Censored Letter," pp. 262–83.

[69] "Letters of Jane Hooke," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 8: 260. Jane Hooke was the youngest daughter of Richard Whalley (father of the regicide). As a young woman she had refused the hand of Roger Williams, the theologian and founder of the first Baptist church in America. A.G. Matthews, "A Censored Letter," p. 263.

[70] *Letters of John Davenport*, 257; "Letters of Jane Hooke," *Collections*, 8: 261–5.

[71] NA SP 29/44/39. f. 1; *Middlesex County Records (Old Series)*, ed. John Cordy Jeaffreson, 4 vols. (London, 1972, reproduced from the original 1886 edition), 3: 343; NA SP 29/67, f. 7.

Holmes, mentioned at the outset of this chapter, not only sheltered dissidents hostile to the restored regime, she acted as an intermediary through whom the Presbyterian ministers, Edmund Calamy and William Jenkins, could exchange communications with Colonel Joseph Bampfield, the former Cromwellian intelligencer turned Dutch spy in the early 1660s.[72] But much of the information collected by agents working for the government was even more cryptic. One report from January 1663 speaks of "dangerous" ejected ministers who are "the people's idols" and ends with "some ladies encourage the meetings and ministers."[73] This could be a pointed reference to the network of Ladies Vane and Danvers or simply an acknowledgment of the numerous wealthy women both in London and the countryside who "encouraged" religious and political nonconformity.

Elite women, for whom the sources are richer, also frequented conventicles, patronized ejected clergy, and associated with old soldiers. Succeeding generations have often remembered these women as respectable paragons of Puritan virtue, but in their own time the government cast a wary and watchful eye on their activities. Elizabeth, Countess of Anglesey and her husband, Arthur Annesley, were Dissenters who retained the services of a nonconformist chaplain in their home from 1661 to 1684. But the Countess went further than her more prudent and politic husband, she was known to visit the residence of the Independent and Fifth Monarchist, George Cockayne. In 1684, she was arrested at a conventicle conducted by the Independent leader, John Owen.[74] Most of the titled women who were under surveillance favored the Presbyterians. Anne Carr, Countess of Bedford, was known to frequent both of Richard Baxter's conventicles at Covent Garden and Holborn. In March of 1675, she was arrested at a meeting in which John Manton was preaching. Like so many men in his position, her husband, William Russell, first Duke of Bedford, attended his parish church, but

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[72] NA SP 29/172, f. 18; *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 146. Col. Bampfield, Jenkins, and Calamy were involved in the Presbyterian conspiracy in 1651. See Leland H. Carlson, "A History of the Presbyterian Party from Pride's Purge to the Dissolution of the Long Parliament," *Church History* 11 (1942), pp. 116–17. Bampfield is discussed in Chapter 3.

[73] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 12.

[74] George Cockayne was the minister of an Independent/Fifth Monarchist congregation at St. Pancras, Soper Lane, between 1648 and 1660. He applied for a license to preach after the 1672 Declaration of Indulgence and established a church between White Cross and Red Cross Streets. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, p. 205; Watts, *The Dissenters*, p. 251.

he also maintained a Presbyterian minister.[75] Elizabeth Vere, Countess Dowager of Clare, also attended the conventicles at Covent Garden and Westminster in the 1660s and allowed the Presbyterian preacher, Thomas Manton, to conduct meetings at her home. Her daughter, Anne Holles, Lady Clinton, also met with Covent Garden conventicle and was a friend and patron of Baxter's.[76] During the Interregnum, the London home of Katherine Jones, Viscountess Ranelagh, in Pall Mall had been a gathering place for parliamentarians and Puritan intellectuals, including Lady Ranelagh's brother, Robert Boyle, as well as John Milton and Sir Henry Vane.[77] Quite naturally, after the Restoration, Lady Ranelagh's associations came under the scrutiny of the government. In 1661, informants reported that she conducted meetings with Presbyterian leaders and former "dangerous" soldiers who "highly extolled" her.[78] Lady Ranelagh was separated from her husband, and many of the women under surveillance were widows, allowing them a certain amount of freedom that they may not have had otherwise.

While in no way immune from persecution, elite women, whether married or widowed, might have also felt a certain amount of boldness due to their social status. Thus in 1673, even after Charles II's grant of some religious liberty was revoked, Lady Mary Stanley continued to hold Presbyterian services at her residence, Bickerstaffe Hall in Lancashire. In one instance, soldiers burst into her chapel when Nathaniel Heywood was about to preach. Lady Stanley "came out of her gallery and placed herself near the pulpit-door hoping to over-awe their spirits and obstruct their designs."[79] The husbands of gentle and aristocratic women often shared their confessional zeal but were much less willing to acknowledge publicly their nonconformity, particularly after the passage of the Test Act in 1672 which confined public offices to conforming Anglicans. Thus while the arrest of elite women at Dissenting meetings after the 1660s was still common, elite men were rarely caught. They would not risk their political personas by going as far as their wives. Far from

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[75] HMC: *11th Report, Leeds Manuscripts* (1888), p. 15; Watts, *The Dissenters*, pp. 250–1; Victor Slater, "Russell, William, First Duke of Bedford (1616–1700)," *ODNB*.

[76] HMC: *Leeds*, p. 15.

[77] Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626–1660* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1975), pp. 62–3.

[78] *CSPD*, Charles II, 2: 71.

[79] Henry Ashurst, *Some Remarks upon the Life of that Painful Servant of God Mr Nathaniel Heywood* (London, 1695), p. 30.

simply being paragons of Puritanism, godly women could be audacious patronesses and protectors of men whom the government considered troublesome, if not menacing.

Women, Sedition, and the Press

> *Dispersing seditious books is very near akin to raising of tumults; they are as like as brother and sister: raising tumults is the more masculine; and printing and dispersing seditious books is the feminine part of every rebellion.*
>
> "The Trial of John Twyn," *State Trials*, 7: 549.

But perhaps the women who engaged in the most dangerous and significant work in support of religious fanaticism and political radicalism were the publishers and booksellers, active throughout the era of Restoration and Revolution.[80] These women have attracted the attention of scholars. Among them, Maureen Bell, in particular, has written a series of important articles on women booksellers.[81] While there is no need to reprise her findings here, no study on women, religion, and politics would be complete without mentioning the importance of the press and the notoriety that several female booksellers achieved. These women certainly differ in at least one important aspect from those explored so far in this chapter. Unlike the women who colluded with the Fifth Monarchists and the wives and widows of the regicides, booksellers were motivated by profit as well as by any religious zeal and political convictions they might have felt. This then begs the question: did Elizabeth Calvert publish and sell *Mirabilis Annus* because she sought

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[80] Maureen Bell identifies 300 women connected to the book trade between 1540 and 1730. The majority of these women were active after 1640. "A Dictionary of Women in the London Book Trade, 1540–1730" (Master's Dissertation, Loughborough University of Technology, 1983).

[81] Maureen Bell, "Hannah Allen and the Development of a Puritan Publishing Business, 1646–51," *Publishing History* 26 (1989): 5–66; "Elizabeth Calvert and the 'Confederates," *Publishing History* 32 (1992): 5–49; "'Her Usual Practices:' The Later Career of Elizabeth Calvert, 1664–75," *Publishing History* 35 (1994): 5–64; "Women and the Opposition Press after the Restoration," in *Writing and Radicalism*, ed. John Lucas (London and New York: Longman,1996), pp. 39–60; also see Margaret Hunt, "Hawkers, Bawlers, and Mercuries: Women and the London Press in the Early Enlightenment," in *Women and the Enlightenment*, eds. Margaret Hunt, Ruth Perry, Phyllis Mack (New York: Haworth, 1984), pp. 48–68; Paula McDowell, The *Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

to fortify the godly in their time of despair or because she knew it was sure to sell prodigiously? Did these women subscribe to the religious enthusiasm and political sedition that saturated the texts which they sold? While a complete answer is impossible since the sources are simply inadequate, what is certainly clear is that publishing such literature was dangerous and yet women like Calvert continued to take risk after risk to do so. As Margaret Hunt has pointed out, "opposition publishing could be quite lucrative," but it was also "extremely risky," and this was especially true since the government found it easier to punish printers, publishers, and sellers than the anonymous authors of the texts themselves.[82]

In August 1663, Roger L'Estrange became "surveyor of the imprimery" or printing presses; a post he retained until the Revolution in 1688/89. As a monarchist and virulent opponent of Republicanism and Dissent, L'Estrange was eager to sniff out and extirpate radical booksellers. In 1663 he identified a group of seditious publishers and booksellers he labeled the "Confederate Stationers." "The most dangerous people of all are the Confederate Stationers, and the breaking of that knot would do the work [of suppressing radical literature] alone."[83] That group included the printer, Simon Dover, the publishers and booksellers, Thomas Brewster, Thomas Creake, Livewell Chapman, and Giles and Elizabeth Calvert, and the book-binder, Nathan Brookes. This cohort was responsible for compiling, printing, binding, and distributing much of the most seditious tracts published between 1660 and 1663, among them were the various editions of the *Speeches and Prayers* of the regicides and the series of tracts known as *Mirabilis Annus: Or, the Year of Prodigies and Wonders*. There was also *A Phoenix: Or, The Solemn League and Covenant* (1661) which reprinted the Presbyterian Covenant and included documents such as Charles II's promise in 1650 to abide by the Covenant. The "Confederate Stationers" were also responsible for publishing *The Panther-Prophesy* (1662), written by a Fifth Monarchist, Owen Lloyd. It sketches a frightening scene of God's judgment raining down on a clergyman with "a surplice and the Book of Common Prayer" under his arm; a lawyer with the "great charter in his hand;" and a "citizen with a bag of gold." Unwilling to heed Christ's call, these three are shot with arrows by Christ appearing among the clouds; then the poor people come out, the prison doors are opened, and London is set

[82] Margaret Hunt, "Hawkers, Bawlers, and Mercuries," p. 44.
[83] Roger L'Estrange, *Considerations and Proposals in Order to the Regulation of the Press* (London,1663), p. 6.

ablaze.[84] But perhaps most keenly political of all the seditious literature that this group published was *Mene Tekel: Or, The Downfall of Tyranny* (1663). This "scriptural description of magistracy" asserts that kings are the people's servants, set up by the people, and to be removed by the people at will. *Mene Tekel* is an angry, aggressive tract which continually harkens back to the injustice of the penal laws against Dissent:

> What cursed laws are now in force, to persecute the faithful ministers of Christ . . . [and] murder the Lord's people by stifling them in prisons and dungeons where hundreds have within these three years perished for no other cause but praying, preaching, and bearing the Word of God and all this and much more because wicked men are put in authority.[85]

Of the radical nature of these tracts, there can be no doubt. There was certainly some truth to the royalist accusation that the press was fueling the same spirit of "hypocrisy, scandal, malice, error, and illusion that actuated the late Rebellion."[86]

Members of the cohort of radical publishers suffered from frequent arrests, fines, and imprisonments following the return of Charles II. But even after Giles Calvert's incarceration in 1661 for his role in publishing *The Phoenix* and *Mirabilis Annus*, *Or, the Year of Prodigies*, his wife, Elizabeth Calvert, "went on with the Prodigies" and she too was jailed for a time. Giles was released in November 1662 only to be taken up again in December for "dangerous and seditious designs."[87] Then in 1663, L'Estrange struck a near fatal blow to this group with the arrests and trials of John Twyn, Thomas Brewster, Simon Dover, and Nathan Brookes. Livewell Chapman, the most prominent publisher of the Fifth Monarchists, was also sought by L'Estrange, but had already fled abroad. The printer, Twyn, was caught red-handed by L'Estrange printing a tract entitled, *The Execution of Justice*, early one morning. The tract, among other things, advocated a people's rebellion against the monarchy. He was charged with high treason, found guilty, and executed in April

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[84] [Owen Lloyd], *The Panther-Prophesy, A Premonition to all People* (London, 1662), pp. 3, 6.
[85] *Mene Tekel; or, the Downfall of Tyranny* (London, 1663), p. 26.
[86] L'Estrange, *Considerations and Proposals*, "The Epistle Dedicatory," pages unnumbered.
[87] Roger L'Estrange, *Truth and Loyalty Vindicated from the Reproaches and Clamours of Mr. Edward Bagshaw* (London, 1662), 57; *CSPD*, Charles II, 2: 592.

1664. Tried the same day as Twyn were Brewster, Dover, and Brookes for printing and selling *The Speeches and Prayers* of the regicides and *The Phoenix*. They were found guilty of a lesser charge, fined, and sentenced to the pillory.[88] Simon Dover and Thomas Brewster both died in prison in April 1664. Giles and Elizabeth Calvert, who were both named throughout the trials, had gone into hiding, but Giles was caught and arrested shortly thereafter and died in August 1663, debilitated by his frequent imprisonments. After her capture, Elizabeth obtained her freedom by paying a fine of £600 and promising not to print, publish, or sell seditious books.[89] Her word was worthless.

True enough, L'Estrange had decimated the leading male members of the "confederate knot," but he had apparently not foreseen their widows' willingness to carry on the business of seditious publishing. Not only did the daring and intrepid Elizabeth Calvert continue her "usual practices," but Joan Dover and Anna Brewster also resumed their late husbands' work. In part, they probably did so out of sheer necessity; they were left with children, servants, apprentices, shops, the tools of the trade, and old stock. Yet given the risks and pitfalls of seditious publishing, it is also fair to surmise that these women were committed to the preservation of nonconformity and the Good Old Cause. Women were, as Maureen Bell has pointed out, "instrumental" in the "difficult business of opposition printing and publishing" after 1664.[90]

Hannah Chapman, Livewell's wife, had been intimately involved in radical publishing along with her first husband, Benjamin Allen, since the years of the Civil Wars and Protectorate. Between 1646, when Benjamin died, and 1651, she ran the shop herself, publishing Fifth Monarchists and other critics of Cromwell's regime.[91] In 1651, Hannah married Livewell, Benjamin's former apprentice, and the two continued to publish Dissenting and millenarian titles. Livewell had absconded during the Twyn trial but was apprehended in March 1663 and briefly imprisoned, though in failing health. He died the following year. Hannah continued in the trade, publishing (among other titles) the prison writings of the regicide, Sir Henry Vane. Eventually her business was ruined by official harassment, and she seems to have ceased

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[88] *A Treatise of the Execution of Justice* (London, 1660); "The Trials of John Twyn, Printer, for high treason; also of Thomas Brewster, bookseller, Simon Dover, printer, and Nathan Brooks, bookbinder, for misdemeanors, at the Old Bailey, 15 Charles II, 1663," *State Trials*, 7: 513–64.

[89] *CSPD,* Charles II, 3:216.

[90] *CSPD,* Charles II, 3: 456; Bell, " 'Her Usual Practices," p. 5.

[91] Bell, "Hannah Allen," pp. 47–51.

publishing by 1665. Joan Dover, the widow of Simon, was more successful. L'Estrange called her "one of the most craftiest and most obstinate of the trade."[92] In 1666 she married John Darby who had worked in her husband's shop. Together they printed numerous millenarian and Quaker texts. Consequently, their shop was often searched, John arrested, and their presses confiscated. But they remained indomitable and continued printing nonconformist and oppositional titles into the 1680s. Joan and John Darby often worked in tandem with Anna Brewster and Elizabeth Calvert. These four were probably responsible for the highly incendiary, *A Trumpet Blown in Sion* (1666) and libelous broadside, *The Poor Whore's Petition* (1668).[93]

Anna Brewster's career is more difficult to follow. She may have been primarily responsible for simply dispersing seditious literature. In 1677, she was reported to be selling *The Long Parliament Dissolved* to booksellers, a piece that argued that the current government was trampling on England's ancient liberties. "Widow Brewster" went into hiding but was said to be "of Cocking's [George Cockyne, the Fifth Monarchist] conventicle."[94] She seems to have been working with the bookseller, writer, and Baptist preacher, Francis Smith in 1679. That year he wrote and printed an anti-paptist satire that became known as *Tom Ticklefoot* with Anna Brewster's name in it, intending to "save her harmless." Smith probably used Anna as a distributor and she was called in as a witness at his trial.[95] She was also arrested in October 1679 in connection with dispersing the notorious Whig tract, *An Appeal from the Country to the City*, which advocated the succession of Charles II's illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth.[96] Her career seems to have come to an end around 1680.

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[92] Quoted in Beth Lynch, "Darby, John (d. 1704), printer," *ODNB*.

[93] [Benjamin Keach] *A Trumpet Blown in Sion, Sounding an Alarm in God's Holy Mountain* (London, 1666); *The Poor Whore's Petition* (London, 1668).

[94] HMC: *Ninth Report, part II*, p. 70; *Lords Journal*, 13: 60.

[95] *Clod-pate's Ghost: Or, a Dialogue between Justice Clodpate and his [quondam] Clerk, Honest Tom Ticklefoot* (London, 1679), p. 12; *An Impartial Account of the Tryal of Francis Smith* (London, 1680), p. 4. The practice of "saving harmless" meant that if Brewster were fined or imprisoned, Francis Smith would come to her aid so long as she refused to name anyone to the authorities. By "saving harmless," publishers protected hawkers and others who distributed their wares.

[96] Timothy Crist, "Government Control of the Press after the Extirpation of the Printing Act in 1679," *Publishing History* 5 (1979), p. 55; [Charles Blount] *An Appeal from the Country to the City* (London, 1679); the 1679 edition of *Appeal* was probably published by Langley and Jane Curtis.

Immediately following Giles Calvert's death, Elizabeth relied heavily on their old stock and on disseminating books to sellers in Bristol. But by 1666 she was firmly back in business, specializing in books by sectarians and tracts on popular astrology. The return of the plague to London in 1665 and the Great Fire in 1666 led to a host of apocalyptic books, published and distributed by Elizabeth Calvert, along with the Darbys. Many of these works were similar to *Mirabilis Annus* and blamed Catholics, the ungodly, and backsliders for God's wrath. Calvert "ignored licensing regulations with impunity" was arrested and questioned in 1667, 1668, 1670.[97] Finally, in 1671 she was arrested and tried for publishing *Nehushtan, Or, A Sober and Peaceable Discourse* (1668) which argued that the liturgy and ceremonies of the Church of England were "prejudicial" to the "true religion" and should be abandoned.[98] While she was only fined and released, her publishing output declined steadily in the early 1670s. She probably died around 1674. Nonetheless, the tradition of high profile women booksellers like herself as well as Anna Brewster, Joan Dover/Darby and Hannah Chapman continued into the eighteenth century. Jane Curtis, Elinore Smith, Abigail Baldwin – whether side by side with their husbands, sons, daughters, or alone – continued to print and sell a steady stream of nonconformist and oppositional works in the 1680s and 1690s.

Nursing Mothers and the Protestant Cause in the 1680s

> *I do not find in my heart the least regret for anything that I have done in the service of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ*
> *The Dying Speech of Mrs. Elizabeth Gaunt*

By the early 1680s, oppositional politics, that strange amalgamation of religious dissent and millenarianism, country Puritanism and political radicalism, had become blended together into Whig politics. Dissenting women remained active supporters of their ministers, husbands, sons, and brothers engaged in the opposition during the turbulent years leading up to the Glorious Revolution. Sometimes too these women acted on their own accord; often they were wealthy widows with an income at their disposal. All of them sought to oppose the persecutory policies

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[97] Bell, "Her Usual Practices," p. 21.

[98] [Joseph Wilson] *Nehushtan: Or, A Sober and Peaceable Discourse Concerning the Abolishing of Things Abused to Superstition and Idolatry* (London, 1668), see "To the Sober and Ingenuous Reader," pages unnumbered.

of the restored regime and reverse the inroads of popery at Court and within English culture as a whole. The Whig women of the early 1680s were active in the effort to bar the "popish successor," James, Duke of York, and aid the would-be Protestant heir, the Duke of Monmouth. They were often referred to by the men they aided, as "nurses" or "nursing mothers." The term "nursing mothers" is found most frequently in the reports of English informants on the activities of the Whig and Dissenter refugee communities in Amsterdam and Utrecht. These "nursing mothers" were also called "titular mothers" or "nominal mothers" by those they served. But "nursing mother" and "nurse" were the most commonly used terms. One of the most frequently discussed "nursing mothers" in these spy reports was Elizabeth Gaunt, who was burnt at the stake in 1685 for allegedly harboring a Monmouth rebel. While the information on her Holland activities, connections, and haunts is often sketchy, it is still possible to surmise this much: that Elizabeth Gaunt was part of a ring of women, known to the men they assisted as their "mothers." These women were Dissenters, usually from London's merchant and trading caste. The men whom they "nursed" were political radicals and nonconformists, often preachers, but also barristers, soldiers, and gentlemen running for their lives in the 1680s.[99]

The term "nursing mother" resonated with numerous political and religious implications in the seventeenth century. The biblical passage from Isaiah 49:23, "And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their Queens, nursing mothers," was often employed to remind monarchs of their duty to the Established Church or Protestantism as a whole. Charles and James might be lauded as "nursing fathers" when they sought to relieve their nonconforming subjects through their Declarations of Indulgence.[100] But only after the Revolution of 1688/89 and the ascension of a King and Queen without popish sympathies, could nonconformist Protestants comfortably apply it to the Stuart monarchy. Mary II was commonly seen as a nursing mother to the Church of England as well as other Protestant churches in Scotland, Ireland, Europe

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[99] This section draws from my chapter, "Nursing Sedition: Women, Dissent, and the Whig Struggle," in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*," ed. Jason McElligot (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 189–204.

[100] Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence: *His Majesty's Declaration to all his Loving Subjects* (15 March 1672); James II's Declaration of Indulgence: *James the Second, his Gracious Declaration to all his Loving Subjects for Liberty of Conscience* (4 April 1687). Both are reprinted in Kenyon, ed., *The Stuart Constitution*, pp. 407–8, 410–13.

and the New World.[101] With Queen Anne, and subsequently Queen Caroline, the image of the queen as a nursing mother became so common place that Handel used it in his coronation anthem, "My Heart is Inditing," and poets parodied it, most famously in the *Dunciad*, wherein Alexander Pope refers to "A nursing mother, born to rock the throne."[102]

But the image of the nursing mother, protecting, suckling, and bonding with the faithful, was not one that necessarily had to be connected to queens. During the Restoration, the term "nursing mother" was democratized and frequently applied to nonconformist women actively serving, shielding, and spreading the faith. Missionaries were often styled "nursing mothers" whose maternal care went beyond their immediate family. The notion of the family itself was expanded in sectarian literature wherein all brethren became the "brothers and sisters" and "sons and daughters" of these mothers. Nursing mothers nourish the hungry congregation of the new, enlarged family. Thus the Quaker missionary, Joan Vokins, "tender care of the Church of Christ" made her "a nursing mother over the young convinced." The anonymous author, celebrating Vokins in this 1691 tract, goes on to cry out, "oh Lord do thou thy power, rise up more such faithful laborers and such nursing mothers in thy Israel."[103] Not surprisingly, given the highly visible role of many female Friends, Quakers often adopted maternal metaphors. Margaret Fell Fox was regarded by many contemporaries as a "mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7) who, like the prophet Deborah, sang to celebrate her people. Fox was not only the mother of her children in faith, she was also a bountiful biological mother of eight children and often appeared in public surrounded by her offspring.[104] This maternal discourse framed

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[101] The image of Mary II as a "nursing mother" is discussed in Chapter 4. Abraham Kick, *A Brief Relation of the State of New England* (London, 1689); Joan Whitrow, *To King William and Queen Mary, Grace and Peace* (London, 1692), pp. 8–9.

[102] *The Dunciad* (London, 1728), 1: 256. Many scholars believe that Pope is alluding to Queen Anne in the first edition of the *Dunciad*, quoted above. In the 1742 edition, he seems to be referring to Magna Mater, Dullness herself. See Catherine Ingrassia, "Women Writing/Writing Women: Pope, Dullness, and 'Feminization' in the *Dunciad*," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 14 (November 1990): 40–58. Toni Bowers discusses Queen Anne and the trope of the "nursing mother" in *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 50–65.

[103] *God's Mighty Power Magnified: As Manifested and Revealed in His Faithful Handmaid Joan Vokins* (London, 1691), pp. 8, 6.

[104] Judith Kegan Gardiner, "Margaret Fell Fox and Feminist Literary History: A 'Mother of Israel' Calls to the Jews," in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing*,

active women whose exploits went far beyond the hearth within acceptable, non-threatening familial roles and made what was unfamiliar and potentially unsettling, familiar and harmless.

Yet the activities of those Dissenting women styled "nursing mothers" of the Protestant Cause in the 1680s were not harmless and were certainly thought to be threatening by the government which nervously watched them. Calling these women "nurses" or "nursing mothers" may well have made them acceptable to the men they assisted, but their activities went well beyond what authorities saw as acceptable behavior for anyone. For the Secretaries of State tracking these women, they were nothing more than nurturers of sedition. The "nursery" as the breeding house of sedition, irreligion, popery, or sectarianism was a common trope in Restoration literature. Playhouses were "nurseries of license and atheism." "Drunken clubs" in London were "the very nurseries of atheism, popery, and rebellion." In *The Second Part of Absalom and Achitophel*, John Dryden accuses the Independent preacher and Whig propagandist, Robert Ferguson, of establishing a "nursery of sects" in London.[105] In July 1686, James II complained to the Dutch ambassador that the Netherlands still harbored English rebels (including some "nursing mothers") and was thus "the source and nursery of all the obstacles which counter him in the point of religion."[106] Thus the term was not without multi-valence. But for the Whigs and Dissenters who claimed to have a "nurse," the context in which they used the term was that of female participant in the nurturing of the Protestant Cause. But unlike so many sectarian women, preachers and missionaries who have garnered scholarly attention, the tasks of these Whig "mothers" was, with great caution and stealth, to assist, support, and relieve the men whose goal was to bar the succession of the Duke of York to the throne – by force if necessary – and after 1685, to overthrow the government of James II. The men they aided were themselves Dissenters, or partial conformists to the Church of England, of all social castes. What bound them together was the Protestant Cause, or what we may simply term by the 1680s, Whig politics. Thus the men these women nursed were Whig radicals. The "nursing mothers" of the 1680s were made to sound harmless, but they were far from it.

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eds. Thomas N. Corns and David Loewenstein (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 42–55; Mack, *Visionary Women*, pp. 245–6.

[105] *Mr. Colliers Dissuasive from the Play-House* (London, 1703), p. 3; BL, Add. 29,910, f. 100; *The Second Part of Absalom and Achitophel* (London, 1682), II: 325.

[106] BL, Add. 34,512, ff. 41v-43.

Anne Smith and Constance Ward, both described as "nursing mothers," provided safe houses and money to Whig fugitives. Anna Smith and her husband lived just outside London. In 1681 she provided safe harbor for Archibald Campbell, the ninth Earl of Argyle. The Highland Earl was under a death sentence in Scotland for refusing to take the so-called Test, an oath intended to bind powerful elites to the succession of the Duke of York. Argyle had been rescued from an Edinburgh prison cell by his stepdaughter, Lady Sophia Lindsay, and conveyed to the Smith residence by one of Cromwell's former officers, Captain Nicholas Lockyer.[107] In 1682, Anne Smith helped Argyle escape to Holland, and she and her husband joined him there soon after.[108] By 1683, Smith had become a wealthy widow, well established in Utrecht and at liberty to use her fortune to assist Dissenting preachers and fund both Monmouth's and Argyle's rebellions in June of 1685. In addition to Argyle, whom Smith "long entertained" and to whom she gave 8,000 sterling, numerous other refugees stayed at the Smith residence, including another "mother," Elizabeth Gaunt.[109] Richard Ashcraft believes that "the most important colony of Scottish radicals" was gathered around Argyle and "the widow Smith."[110] She also had enough clout within the refugee community to order the text (Psalm 34) of the sermon to be said upon the landing of Monmouth and his tiny army at Lyme Regis in June 1685. The disastrous results of Argyle's and Monmouth's invasions led to another exodus of radicals to the continent. Numerous Whig dissidents and rebels met in Cleves to discuss their precarious situation. Among them were the one time Leveller, John Wildman, the former Whig Mayor of London, Patience Ward, and the Independent preachers, John Howe and Walter Cross. They sent for Anne Smith to join in their consultations, but this is the last notice of her in the sources. She probably died before the Revolution.[111]

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[107] Alexander Lindsay Crawford, *A Memoir of Lady Mackenzie, Countess of Balcarres and afterward of Argyll* (Edinburgh, 1868), p. 116.

[108] William Veitch maintains the Mr. Smith did not know about his wife's intrigues and that Argyle was passed off to him as simply a "Scots gentleman." But informants in Holland asserted that Smith was as "ill a man" as those he and his wife served. *Memoirs of Mr. William Veitch and George Brysson Written by Themselves* (London, 1825), p. 139; BL, Add. 41,810, f. 64.

[109] *The Journal of the Hon. John Erskine of Carnock, 1683–1687* (Edinburgh, 1893), p. 180; BL, Add. 41,810, f. 64; BL, Add 41,818, f. 77.

[110] Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and John Locke's Two Treatises of Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 429.

[111] BL, Add. 41,817, f. 219; BL, Add. 41,812, f. 224.

Much of the information about the nursing mothers gathered by English informants in the Netherlands in the 1680s was obtained from the loose tongue of the preacher, Walter Cross. Cross was educated in Scotland. He moved to London and in the early 1680s had became the pastor of an Independent congregation in Rope-maker's Alley, Moorfields. A perpetual busybody, he involved himself in the Rye House Plot machinations in 1682–83 and soon after found it prudent to make his way to Utrecht, where he preached at the English Church.[112] He continued to associate with various Scots and English Whig refugees, including John Locke. He knew Elizabeth Gaunt, Anne Smith, and Constance Ward, all of whom he referred to as his "mothers." Cross was particularly close to Constance Ward of East Smithfield, and he eulogized her following her death in 1697. Ward was a Baptist and a courier of messages, who, along with her husband, was particularly active in the Scottish dimension of Whig plotting between 1682 and 1685.[113] In his funeral sermon for Ward, Cross praised the "many good deeds of this woman, her pains and travel at night and day for many years together, sheltering the exil'd, relieving the distressed, hiding them in danger, supplying them in want . . . She was a true Phoebe, a succourer of many and myself also." He concluded with an elegy bemoaning her death as a great loss to "poor surviving Saints,/ Who when distress did unto her complain,/ And were hid by her, and reliev'd in Wants . . . Scots Exiles were/ Equal to English, Objects of her Care."[114] Numerous other women were active in the Netherlands, but the information about them gathered by English spies was often little more than a name. Suzanne Burger and Jane Hall were both referred to as "nursing mothers" who assisted the Protestant Cause as messenger-carriers. Susannah Nelthorp (wife of Richard Nelthop, a Rye House conspirator who was captured and executed following Monmouth's defeat) lodged with Anne Smith for a time and carried messengers to and from England.[115] The "Widow Browning" of Amsterdam was mentioned several times as a "phanatick bookseller" who printed seditious papers and sold Francis Smith's Whig *Domestick*

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[112] Walter Wilson, *The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches and Meeting Houses*, 4 vols. (London, 1808), 2: 535–6; Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics*, p. 436; *A Copy of a Letter Sent by a Person that Was Present at the Apprehension of Mr. Meade and Five More* (London, 1683); BL, Add. 41,812, f. 222; BL, Add. 41,818, f. 108v.
[113] Howell, *State Trials,* 9: 451, 454; *CSPD*, Charles II, 1683, 25: 56–7.
[114] Walter Cross, *Caleb's Spirit Parallel'd, in a Sermon Preach'd at the Funeral of the late Mrs. Constancy Ward of East-Smithfield, London* (London, 1697), pp. 6–7, 47–8.
[115] BL, Add. 41,818, f.77v; BL, Add. 14,817, f. 225.

Intelligencer. Her shop was a haven for "English phanaticks and Dutch merchants." Even the Prince of Orange knew about her business, assuring the English envoy that he would have her shop searched for a libel called the Duke of Monmouth's last speech in 1685.[116]

The most notorious "nursing mother" was Elizabeth Gaunt, executed by James II's government in 1685. Historians think they know her story. According to Bishop Burnet, Gaunt spent "her life in acts of charity, visiting the gaols, and looking after the poor of what persuasion soever they were." In 1685, she ran afoul of the authorities when her compassionate disposition led her to aid a desperate renegade, James Burton, who had fled Monmouth's army. Burton "delivered himself" to the government and turned king's evidence against Gaunt. She was arrested, tried, and burnt alive at Tyburn.[117] Burnet's vision of Gaunt as a charity worker was repeated in the histories of David Hume and Thomas Macaulay, and it is also found in modern studies on Monmouth's rebellion and the aftermath.[118] Despite the fact that Burnet and Gaunt may well have crossed paths, his account is not first-hand. Rather, he relied upon William Penn's description of her execution as well as the idealized portrait of her found in the Whig hagiography that rapidly formed around the victims of the Tory Reaction and the Bloody Assizes. The Whigs republished Gaunt's dying speech numerous times, and she was pictured along with greatest Whig martyrs, William, Lord Russell, Colonel Algernon Sidney and others on the covers of the Whig martyrologies published in 1689, 1693, and 1705. The principal author of the martyrologies, John Tutchin, described Gaunt as a "good, honest, charitable woman;" a victim of the "implacable fury of bloody papists and those blind tools who co-operated to promote their accursed designs."[119]

But was Gaunt simply a victim? Her burning has always seemed especially heinous. Thomas Macaulay thought it wondrous. "Even after all the horrors of that year," he wrote, "many thought it impossible that these judgments [against Gaunt and John Fernley, also convicted of

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[116] BL, Add. 37,981, f 2v, f. 58. Whether the Prince actually had Browning's shop searched is another matter. BL, Add. 41,812, f. 232.
[117] *HOHOT*, 3: 61–2.
[118] Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England*, ed. Charles Harding Firth, 6 vols. (New York: Ams Press,1968), 2: 656–8; David Hume, *The History of England*, 6 vols. (Indianapolis: The Liberty Fund, 1983), 6: 464. Also see, Edward Parry, *The Bloody Assize* (New York: Dobb, Mead & Co., 1929), pp. 273–9.
[119] [John Tutchin], *The Western Martyrology* (London, 1705), pp. 136–7.

helping Burton] should be carried into execution."[120] Unlike the case against Alice Lisle, wherein two Monmouth rebels were found in her residence, Gaunt had never actually concealed Burton in 1685.[121] Moreover, in the course of her trial, the evidence pointed to the culpability of Gaunt's husband far more than herself. Why then was she burnt alive? Perhaps her beneficence extended to more than charity work. Restoring Gaunt's role as a "nursing mother" provides new meaning to her story. No longer simply the passive recipient of James II's awful fury, Gaunt now becomes a player in the events that shaped politics in the early 1680s.

Gaunt and her husband, William, were Baptists and "Wappingers," well known around the Dissenting, Whig-infested, wharfs, docks, and public houses of Wapping in east London.[122] They were deeply involved in London Whig politics. William Gaunt signed both the May 1679 and January 1680 Whig-sponsored petitions, affirming belief in the Popish Plot and calling for a Parliament to redress the nation's grievances.[123] He was part of the lower circle of Whig conspirators who were plotting to overthrow the government of Charles II in 1682 and 1683. In early 1683, he went with Captain Thomas Walcot to inspect the strength of the guards at the Tower of London in preparation to seize it following the assassination of the royal brothers.[124] William and Elizabeth knew many former soldiers, Levellers, and Fifth Monarchists, including Henry Danvers, John Wildman, and the owner of the infamous Rye House Mill, Richard Rumbold.[125] They were also associated with Independent preacher, Whig scribbler and plotter, Robert Ferguson. It was probably Ferguson who connected the Earl of Shaftesbury, with the Gaunts in November 1682 when he needed to flee the country. London authorities were certain that the Gaunts had acted as Shaftesbury's "brokers," enabling him to abscond to Holland.[126]

In fact, arranging passage for fleeing outlaws, conspirators, and rebels seems to have been the Gaunts' primary contribution to the Protestant

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[120] Macaulay, *The History of England*, 2: 657.
[121] The Treason Trial of Lady Alice Lisle, *State Trials*, 11: 298–382.
[122] *The Western Martyrology*, p. 136.
[123] Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678–81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 227–56.
[124] Walcot was a Baptist and former captain-lieutenant in Ludlow's troop. *State Trials*, 11: 415–16.
[125] Trials of John Fernley, William Ring, Eliz. Gaunt and Henry Cornish, esq. at the Old Bailey for High Treason, 1685, *State Trials*, 11: 403, 414–16, 418.
[126] *State Trials*, 11: 414.

Cause in the early 1680s. In June 1683, Elizabeth Gaunt came to the aid of James Burton who had been outlawed for his role in the Rye House conspiracy. She gave him money and arranged for his safe passage to Amsterdam. In June 1685 Burton was again on the run after the Battle of Sedgemoor and was hiding in Wapping. On August 2, while waiting for the Gaunts to arrange his passage to Holland, Burton was arrested.[127] Shortly thereafter, Elizabeth Gaunt was incarcerated and charged with conspiring with others to rebel against the government and kill the King, although the heart of her offence was harboring a traitor. Either her husband William had escaped or the authorities were simply uninterested in him. He was sighted in Amsterdam in November 1685 and was exempted from James II's General Pardon of March 1686 but later pardoned on March 31, 1686.[128] The government's chief witness against Elizabeth Gaunt was Burton, who turned king's evidence and won himself a pardon.

Gaunt's trial took place on October 19, 1685, in the Old Bailey. James Burton, his wife and his daughter, testified against her. The prosecution claimed that Gaunt had given aid and comfort to Burton knowing full well that he was an outlaw. Burton recalled his first encounters with Gaunt, when, in 1683, following the discovery of the Rye House Plot, she had arranged for his escape to Holland. Burton claimed that she was anxious to assist his flight overseas because he knew about her husband's role in the Rye House conspiracy.[129] In his discussion of more recent events, Burton, as well as other witnesses, implicated the absent William Gaunt far more than Elizabeth. The best the prosecution could do was to establish that Burton had been in Elizabeth Gaunt's company. Burton's daughter, witnessed Elizabeth with her father: "we . . . met them in Houndsditch, and my father had Mrs. Gaunt under the arm." Gaunt did not deny knowing Burton, but she swore that she did not "contrive to send him away."[130] Regardless of the fact that two witnesses were needed to convict Gaunt of treason and that no one could substantiate whether Gaunt knew Burton was a traitor or not, the judge charged the jury to bring in a guilty verdict. She was convicted of high treason.

On October 23, Gaunt was taken to Tyburn where she was burnt to death, the penalty for treason inflicted upon common women. John

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[127] *State Trials*, 11: 399–402.
[128] BL, Add. 41,812, f. 248; Wigfield, *Monmouth Rebellion*, Appendix I; *CSPD*, James II, 2: 440.
[129] *State Trials* vol. 11: 415.
[130] *State Trials*, vol. 11: 403, 417, 419.

Beattie points out that it was "generally believed in the eighteenth century that as an act of mercy executioners strangled women ordered to be burnt," but Gaunt was not so fortunate and was literally burned alive as ordered.[131] Many witnessed her death. Roger Morrice wrote that she died without "terror or dread" and that she took up one of the faggots and kissed it, saying that she "had a great while longed and desired to go hence, and now God by his providence had called her, though in an unexpected way." The ordinary told her that she should confess and bewail her sins. She replied that it was her duty to relieve Burton's wife and children: "I did it in obedience to the words of our Lord, 'ye have clothed the naked, fed the hungry.' " Gaunt held up the Bible and claimed that she had aided Burton's wife and children "in obedience to the contents of this book." William Penn told Burnet that she "died with a constancy, even to a cheerfulness, that struck all that saw it," calmly arranging the straw around her to hasten her burning. The spectators were "melted to tears."[132]

While the details of Gaunt's trial and death are provocative, they lend few clues as to why the authorities were so interested in Gaunt and why they gave her the harshest of sentences. The injustice perpetrated against Gaunt at her trial was hardly unique among the treason trials of the 1680s. Perjuring witnesses, impaneled juries, browbeaten juries, questionable evidence, judicial rule-bending and tyrannical judges were far from unusual. The Alderman Henry Cornish, who was truly innocent, also lost his life on the testimony of former Whig friends who perjured themselves for pardons. The treason trial of the elderly Alice Lisle for harboring Monmouth rebels in Winchester a month earlier was a complete judicial farce, wherein the notorious Judge George Jeffreys harangued and bullied the principal witness and finally ordered a reluctant jury to bring the defendant in guilty.[133] But what is truly startling in the case of Elizabeth Gaunt is not her guilt or innocence, for she was most certainly guilty of treason although not necessarily for harboring Burton, but rather why James II's administration pursued her so. Why was it more interested in her than her husband? William Gaunt was a Rye House plotter and Monmouth rebel. Why did they not pursue James

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[131] J.M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England, 1660–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 79n.
[132] Roger Morrice, *EB*, 3: 47; Burnet, *HOHOT*, 3: 62.
[133] Lisle's sentence was reversed by an Act of Parliament in 1689. *State Trials*, 11: 298–380.

Burton himself? He had been outlawed for his part in the Rye House Plot and had fought at Sedgemoor.

The answer probably has to do with Gaunt's role as a "nursing mother." In the early 1680s, the Secretaries of State were receiving information about Gaunt's activities in the Netherlands. These spy reports indicate that while both Elizabeth and William were immersed in radical politics, she probably knew more than he. That spring, as the preparations for the Duke of Monmouth's invasion began, Elizabeth Gaunt was in Amsterdam and active among the Whigs and Dissenters preparing for Argyle and Monmouth's invasions. At one point, Monmouth sent her back to England to instruct the Earl of Macclesfield to be ready to act in Cheshire. A few weeks later, Gaunt returned to Amsterdam to find out why Monmouth was so delayed. English agents in Utrecht and Amsterdam reported her movements and repeatedly pressed for her capture. They stated time and again that "if she be brought to confession," "Mother Gaunt" could reveal much about several "eminent persons" both in exile and in England.[134] Yet these agents also believed that she might prove obstinate and be less than forthcoming in her testimony. Perhaps she needed to be threatened.

Burton's arrest brought Gaunt's whereabouts to the attention of the government and provided a reason to arrest and to interrogate her. James II's officials may well have promised her leniency if she would name some grandees. His administration had pardoned far more incendiary characters, many with longer track records of sedition than Elizabeth Gaunt. If her initial interrogation and trial failed to frighten her into compliance, authorities surely thought a death sentence might bring her around. Facing torture following his capture in Scotland, the Earl of Arygle named his "nursing mother," Anne Smith.[135] Lord Grey of Werk, Monmouth's boon companion, nabbed after Sedgemoor, wrote a long melodramatic confession, naming everyone involved.[136] He was fully pardoned and went hunting with the King soon after. Gaunt was given pen, ink, and paper in her cell while awaiting her execution. Surely, she could have still won a reprieve or have her sentence commuted. But she revealed nothing. She failed to write a confession and was thus treated without mercy. Instead she wrote a stirring dying

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[134] BL Add. 41,818, f.77v.

[135] John Willock, *A Scot's Earl in Covenanting Times: Being the Life and Times of Archibald, the Ninth Earl of Argyle* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1907), p. 406.

[136] Grey's confession was later published as *The Secret History Rye of the House Plot and Monmouth's Rebellion* (London, 1754).

speech which was published immediately in both English and Dutch and republished numerous times after the Revolution. The speech was clearly addressed to fellow travelers, Dissenters and Whig radicals. "I do not find it in my heart the least regret of anything I have done in the service of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in favoring and succoring any of his poor sufferers, that have shewn favor to his righteous cause; which cause, though it be now fallen and trampled on . . . yet it shall revive." She quoted Scripture throughout and stated that her sole offence was to "relieve a poor, unworthy, and distressed family, and lo, I must die for it." She ended her speech by laying her blood at the door of the "furious judge and unrighteous jury . . . together with the great[est] one of all (James II) by whose power all these, and multitudes of more cruelties are done."[137]

Religious activism and seditious politics readily converged during the Restoration, particularly amid the most turbulent decades, the 1660s and 1680s. Women who nursed their spiritual brethren and women who nursed political radials found a space for female agency and personal power. Their activities allowed them to venture far from home and hearth; to form relationships beyond the immediate family; to protect, patronize, and to "mother" men, who were sometimes their own husbands, sons or brothers and sometimes not. These women were not feminists; they were not seeking to transgress gender norms or threaten domestic patriarchy. But they were clearly activists engaged in opposition politics. Men depended upon these women and expected them to help them, hide them, relieve their wants, send them news, stand by them at the cross and bury their broken bodies. The "back door" political support that these women provided helped to make the conspiratorial politics of the 1660s and 1680s possible. Scholars have explored the writings of Dissenting women, Quakers foremost among them, as well as the attraction between women writers and royalist politics.[138] But they have

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[137] *Mrs. Elizabeth Gaunt's Last Speech Who Was Burnt at London, October 23, 1685* (London, 1685).

[138] The historiography on Dissent and women writers is noted in the Introduction (notes 10 and 30). On the connection between royalism and women, see Gwendolyn B. Needham, "Mary de la Riviere Manley, Tory Defender," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 12 (1949): 253–88; Joan K. Kinnaird, "Mary Astell and the Conservative Contribution to English Feminism," *Journal of British Studies* 19 (1975): 53–75; Catherine Gallagher, "Embracing the Absolute: The Politics of the Female Subject in Seventeenth-Century England," *Genders* 1 (1988): 24–39; Van C. Hartman, "Tory Feminism in Mary Astell's *Bart'lemy Fair*," *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 28 (1998): 243–65.

had very little say about politically active women who were not published writers and who were attracted to republicanism and Whiggism. Yet there was a very real affinity between Dissenting women and opposition/Whig politics from the outset of the Restoration to the Glorious Revolution. For the godly women explored in this chapter, the appeal of oppositional politics was obvious. It alone offered hope for liberty of conscience; opposed the formalism and exclusivity of the Church of England; decried the immorality of the Stuart Court; and clearly saw the encroaching papist threat. This is why these women helped desperate men and why they stood on or by the scaffold. And this is why so many of them agreed with the regicide, General Thomas Harrison, when he declared in his dying speech that, "God is a law-maker; he is our King and he will save us, [and] judge the cause of this people."[139]

[139] *Speeches and Prayers*, p. 7.

Figure 2.1 Whitelackington House – George Roberts, *The Life, Progresses, and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth* (London, 1844)

2

A Dangerous Woman: Mary Speke, her Family, and the Puritan Gentry

And bless thy Saints in the West, oh bless thy sons and daughters
Dying Prayer of Regicide, John Carew[1]

The Bishop of Bath and Wells, Peter Mews, kept a careful watch over the Speke family of Whitelackington in Somerset. A thorough-going royalist, Mews was no friend to the many Puritan gentry families in the West Country about whose activities he made regular reports to the authorities in London. But of all the wealthy nonconformist families within his diocese, the Spekes rankled him the most. In early July 1683, Mews informed Secretary Leoline Jenkins that "Mrs. Speak, the wife of Mr. Speak of Whitelackington in this county is now in London and hath been there for some time. There is not a more dangerous woman in the West, and what her sons are I need not tell you." A couple weeks later, the Bishop wrote to Jenkins again, imploring him to have Whitelackington house searched for arms and papers. "I need give no character of their family. I suppose it is sufficiently known how actively of late years they have all appeared against his Majesty's interest, especially the mother and her son, Hugh . . ."[2]

[1] *The Speeches and Prayers of Major General Harrison, October 13; Mr. John Carew, October 15; Mr. Justice Cooke, Mr. Hugh Peters, October 16* . . . (London, 1660), p. 22.
[2] The original letter is in the National Archives, SP 29/427, part 1, f. 20; it is transcribed in *CSPD,* Charles II, 25: 8, 178. The transcriptions of the intercepted Speke letters in the *Calendar of State Papers* follow the original letters word for word. Henceforth, I have chosen to cite those in the *Calendar* and follow their modernization of the spelling.

That the matriarch of the large and politically active Speke brood, Mary Speke, should be so targeted by Mews as particularly dangerous is curious. Why was she such a threat? As a woman, Mary could not join the Green Ribbon Club or sign either the 1679 or 1680 Whig petitions calling for a parliament.[3] Unlike her menfolk, there is no evidence that she was friendly with the perpetrator of the Popish Plot, Titus Oates, or the leading Whig Lords, such as Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, or with William, Lord Russell.[4] Mary did not author or sponsor treasonous writings as did her son, Hugh. And she seems to have been far better at holding her tongue than her boisterous and pugnacious husband, George, who was well known about Somerset for calling the King an ass and the Queen a whore. The Bishop was well aware of all this, as were the many Speke enemies and government informants in Somerset monitoring the goings-on at Whitelackington. Still, Mews thought that she was the most dangerous, the worst of the lot.

Certainly, Mary Speke was not innocent, particularly by contemporary standards. She had an arrest record and had engaged, insofar as both authorities in London and royalists in Somerset were concerned, in a worrisome pattern of behavior. Her frequent trips to London and her wide circle of correspondents seem to be part of what made Mary Speke the object of their suspicions. She may have been a "nursing mother" to Whig radicals in the 1680s, and was perhaps no less active or dangerous than Elizabeth Gaunt. Only Mary Speke, unlike Gaunt, was born in a manor house and married to a one time defender of the King's cause. Above all, she was a stalwart godly gentlewoman, bravely practicing her faith, undaunted by the Restoration Settlement of the Church and the penal laws against nonconformity. Mary Speke had grown up in

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[3] The Green Ribbon Club was a Whig club that met at the King's Head Tavern, London. It orchestrated anti-papist propaganda, pope-burning processions, and petition drives. The 1679 and 1680 Whig petitions called for a parliament to redress the nation's grievances. J.R. Jones, "The Green Ribbon Club," *Durham University Journal*, 49 (1956): 17–20; Mark Knights, "London Petitions and Parliamentary Politics in 1679," *Parliamentary History* 12 (1993): 29–46; "London's 'Monster' Petition of 1680," *HJ* 36 (1993): 39–67.

[4] Titus Oates (1649–1705) supposedly uncovered a Catholic plot to murder Charles II in 1678, the so-called Popish Plot, resulting in waves of anti-papist hysteria. Nonetheless, Oates was hero to "true Protestants" like the Spekes, who never doubted the veracity of his wild tales. On the Popish Plot, see J.P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1974); Jonathan Scott, "England's Troubles: Exhuming the Popish Plot," in *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England*, eds. Tim Harris, Paul Seaward, and Mark Goldie (Oxford: Basil Blackwood, 1990), pp. 108–31.

a Puritan household, and she remained steadfast in her faith in the true reformed religion, come what may. Although she was indicted for keeping conventicles in 1663, she continued to hold nonconformist meetings at the Speke family residences of Whitelackington and Dillington as well as support iterant preachers, travel to conventicles throughout the West and, most consequential of all, raise her children as ardent believers and defenders of godliness. Her once royalist husband, George, was now a suspected fanatic and fomenter of sedition. Her daughters were married to other nonconformists. Her sons, with the exception of one, were notorious propagators of the Protestant Cause and consorters with the enemies of the Court. As far as loyalists in the West Country and London were concerned, Mary Speke had infected her entire family. A breeder of sedition and a nurturer of Dissent, she was at the heart of this turbulent and factious family.

The story of Mary Speke and the Speke family of Ilminster, Somerset, offers the Restoration historian numerous vantage points. The Spekes were like one of Tolstoy's "happy families," insofar as they were very similar to numerous other Puritan gentry, while at the same time like "each unhappy family," peculiar in their own way. Like many of their gentry neighbors, the Spekes were large landowners who held numerous estates. Their menfolk served in local offices and were members of Parliament. Like many of their Puritan neighbors, they patronized nonconformist preachers, employed them in their homes, and carefully selected the beneficed clergy at their family parish. They socialized with their Puritan neighbors; their sons and daughters married into these same families; and they suffered at the hands of the same enemies as did these families. But the Spekes were unique as well. Other landed nonconformist families suffered during the Restoration on account of their religion. But none achieved the notoriety like the Speke family of Whitelackington. It was no doubt the consistency and depth of Speke involvement in all the major crises that began in the late 1670s and continued to the Revolution of 1688/89 that finds them so frequently in the sources. The Spekes were connected with the Popish Plot, the Exclusion Crisis, the Rye House Plot and treason trials, Monmouth's Rebellion and aftermath, and the Glorious Revolution. Speke houses were frequently searched for arms; George was summoned before the royal Court and Privy Council on several occasions to answer for his behavior and that of his wife; he was severely fined; his daughters went into hiding; his wife was arrested; his eldest son took refuge abroad; one son was imprisoned; and another was hanged.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells blamed Mary. Mews may have known more than we do. In 1683, he reported that Mary kept "a great correspondence." But these papers are lost to us now.[5] What sources that are available, however, sketch the portrait of a woman, a wife, and mother, who both significantly influenced her husband, sons, and daughters and, above all, practiced her faith openly and defiantly. Her audacity in the face of mounting scrutiny as well as her influence over others seems to be what authorities found most disturbing. They looked to Mary as to the eye of the storm that was the Speke family. The story of Mary and her family demonstrates just how unsettling the defiant practice of nonconformity was to guardians of the monarchy and the Church established, and, from the perspective of the Spekes themselves, just how intertwined nonconformity was with Whig politics. What did the Spekes want? Why were they so actively agitating against the Stuart monarchy? What did Mary's sons and daughters imbibe at her feet and at the conventicles? Royalist propaganda envisioned nightmare scenarios: chaos and regicide, republicanism and fanaticism. But in the traditional world of the country gentry such wild imaginings would have had little resonance. What Whig politics meant for the Spekes had everything to do with fear of popery and a desperate desire for liberty of conscience. Their piety lay at the heart of their activism.

The Puritan Gentry

> *Ilmestre . . . withyn a mile of Whitelackington where Master Spek dwellith*
>
> John Leland[6]

The Spekes were part of a large, amorphous social group known as the gentry. Their men were "not borne but made," unlike their superiors, the peerage. In his chapter, "Of Gentlemen," Sir Thomas Smith spoke of "whosoever studieth the lawes of the realme, who studieth in the universities, who professeth liberall sciences . . . [and] who can live idly and without manuall labour, and will beare the port, charge and

[5] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 178. I have searched for Mary Speke's correspondence in local and national archives to no avail and suspect that she destroyed it.
[6] Quoted in James Street, *The Mynster of the Ile or, The Story of the Ancient Parish of Ilminster* (Taunton: Chapple & Son, 1904), dedication.

countenance of gentleman . . . shall be taken for a gentleman."[7] Certainly the Spekes, who could trace their ancestors to the twelfth-century knight and founder of three Cistercian abbeys, Sir Walter Espec, did not till their own lands.[8] Further, George and his sons were educated and his wife and daughters, literate. The Spekes and their gentry neighbors described in this chapter were fairly wealthy and powerful within their own communities. Most of these Puritan families held landed estates worth £1,000 a year or more.[9] While it has been difficult to gage exactly how much the Spekes were worth, when George Speke filed his will in 1692, he listed seven manors that valued over £1,000 per year.[10] Secondly, the Spekes and their West Country gentry neighbors exercised authority within their local community and held public offices in the counties where they were seated. As captains of the militias, justices of the peace, deputy lieutenants, sheriffs, and representatives in the House of Commons, they performed the duties that traditionally belonged to the gentry.

We know very little about the material and mental worlds of the Spekes. They were wealthy; and their children married into families of similar, sometimes superior, circumstances. The Spekes could entertain lavishly and employ numerous servants. They frequently traveled to London and Mary went to Richmond to drink the mineral waters.[11]

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[7] Thomas Smith, *De republica Anglorum: The Manner of Government or Policy of the Realm of England (1583)*, ed. L. Aston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), pp. 33, 39–40.

[8] John Collinson, *The History and Antiquities of Somerset*, 3 vols. (Taunton, 1791), 1: 67; *DNB*, s.v. "Espec, Walter."

[9] In the Appendix of J.T. Cliffe's *Puritans in Conflict: The Puritan Gentry During and after the Civil Wars* (New York: Routledge, 1988), he lists gentry families with estate revenues of a £1,000 or more at the time of the mid-century crisis. Among those discussed in this chapter are: the Hampdens of Great Hampden, Buckinghamshire; the Pyes of Faringdon, Berkshire; the Pynes of Curry Mallet, Somerset; the Strodes of Barrington Court, Somerset; the Trenchards of Wolfeton House, Dorset. The Spekes are not listed in Cliffe's book on Puritans because George Speke supported the royalists during the Civil Wars. Mary's family, the Pyes of Faringdon, is listed.

[10] George Speke's estate was valued at £ 1,410 p.a. in 1641; it seems to have been kept intake for the most part by the time of his death. J.A. Hawkins, ed., *Sales of Wards in Somerset, 1603–1641* (Frome: Butler & Tanner, 1965), pp. 57–8; Speke's will is in the NA, PROB 28/1249. The hearth tax for 1664–65 lists George Speke as having 22 chimneys which is far more than most of his Somerset neighbors. R. Holworthy, *Hearth Tax for Somerset, 1664–5* (Taunton: E. Dwelly, 1916), p. 205.

[11] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 176.

George and his sons frequented coffee houses and taverns both in London and the West. Sociability, visits to and from cousins, friends, neighbors, and in-laws, played a large and important role in their lives. But access to their mental world remains particularly difficult. Their letters make references to farming, horses, gaming, and legal disputes, but only very rarely to books and never to plays.[12] They probably had a library similar to that of their neighbor, William Strode of Barrington Court that contained popular works like Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.[13] The letters of John and Hugh, the two eldest sons, do speak of London politics, newsletters, and propaganda sheets, but make no references to political ideologies or to the great thinkers of the early modern era. Searches of the Speke family homes would uncover pistols, a blunderbuss, and "a keeper's gun to kill deer," but never mention finding any seditious pamphlets or books like those burnt at Oxford in 1683.[14]

We can imagine, however, that Mary's day-to-day existence, like that of other gentlewomen, was a hectic one. Married in 1641, the first twenty-five years of her married life were consumed with pregnancies, infants, and small children in addition to her duties as the female head of household. Starting in 1642, Mary had ten live births, at intervals varying between two and five years.[15] By 1681, she had already buried four of her children and would bury one more before she died in 1697.

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[12] *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 121; 21:185–6: The eldest son, John, who was educated at Wadham College, does mention two books, an enchiridion (possibly Erasmus's *Enchiridion militis Christiani* or Francis Quarles's popular *Enchiridion, containing institutions divine, contemplative, practical, moral, ethical ,etc.,* which went into thirteen editions in the seventeenth century) and Moses Pitt's *English Atlas* (London, 1680).

[13] See Strode's will, NA, PROB 11/323/2.

[14] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 175–6; *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 316, 399; *The Judgment and Decree of the University of Oxford, Pass'd in their Convocation, July 21, 1683, against certain Pernicious Books and Damnable Doctrines* (London, 1683).

[15] Since most couples married late in the seventeenth century, married women would normally only bear four or five children of whom only two or three reached adulthood. Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction, 1300–1840* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p. 62. Even Lawrence Stone's class-based analysis of marriage has elite women marrying around age 26. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), abridged edition, p. 42. Mary's fecundity speaks to both her youth when first married (age sixteen) and general good health. Nor were large numbers of children entirely unusual among similarly wealthy seventeenth-century families. Alexander Popham of Wellington, Somerset, had eight children; six of whom

The first child, Joan, baptized at St. Margaret's Westminster, died in infancy. Their eldest son, George, born in 1644, died at age twenty-four. Another son, Thomas, died at age twenty and a daughter, Elizabeth, died unmarried in 1681 at age twenty-four.[16] What circumstances lay behind the deaths of these young adults is unknown. Dying young was far from uncommon. George's mother, Joan Portman, lost three of her brothers, all in their early twenties and one sister in her thirties.[17] Yet, regardless of the frequency with which death haunted large families, the grief over losing so many adult children, in particular, was surely devastating. "The death of young Miss Speke," wrote John Trenchard, referring to Elizabeth, "has much afflicted" that family.[18] Mary undoubtedly found consolation in her deep devotion, and perhaps the demise of so many of her children deepened her religious zeal. When Mary was not birthing or burying her children, or later in the 1680s, running up to London to scold her second son, Hugh, for his dissolute behavior, she managed the household economy. Manors, as Mark Goldie has aptly put it, were like "small rural factories."[19] Great households were porous places with servants, neighbors, sons, daughters and their spouses, cousins and clergy, constantly coming and going. Food and drink needed to be processed and provided. Cider and ale were brewed; cheese and butter, churned. Vegetable and herb gardens needed tending. Animals were everywhere: large dogs lounging on the carpets and under the tables, looking for handouts; cocks and hens strutting about the yard; horses in the stables needing to be groomed, shod, and exercised. All of this and more would have fallen under the purview of the female head of household. She directed the servants, oversaw the production and consumption of food, ordered the linen and needlework, and paid the bills.

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survived to adulthood. Sir Wadham Wyndlam of Orchard Wyndlam, Somerset, had twelve children, of whom ten survived.

[16] Bernard Burke, *A Genealogy and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland*, 3 vols. (London, 1939), 3: 2103.

[17] A.W. Vivian-Neal, "Materials for the History of Orchard Portman," *Somersetshire Archeological and Natural History Society*, 89 (1943): 35–53. On child mortality, see E.A. Wrighley and R.S. Shofield, "English Population History from Family Reconstitution: Summary Results, 1600–1799," *Population Studies* 37 (1983): 177–83.

[18] DHC, BLX/D60, f. 56. Letter to Henry Trenchard by John Trenchard (October 1681).

[19] Mark Goldie, *John Locke and the Masham at Oates* (Cambridge: Churchill College, University of Cambridge, 2004), p. 16.

Women like Mary were also responsible for maintaining a godly household, one that was well ordered, wherein parents, children, and servants participated in communal worship usually twice a day. Godly families met together for prayers, often accompanied by scriptural readings and the singing of the psalms. Household worship might include fasting and special days of prayer. Although the practice of strict Sabbatarianism was waning in the late Stuart era, many Puritan families still honored it.[20] Mary probably led her family in prayer and catechized the children and servants. She maintained at least eight different nonconformist ministers at various times, and both Whitelackington and Dillington (the two main Speke residents) were places of meeting for Presbyterian services. One report by an informant speaks of a conventicle at Dillington of 1,000 people; another speaks of 200 people gathered at Whitelackington to hear James Strong, an ejected Presbyterian minister and long time Speke friend.[21] When Strong dedicated a book of sermons to Mary, he noted her "constant and diligent attendance in worship."[22] Mary would have also practiced private devotions. Numerous funeral sermons speak of Puritan gentry women who were assiduous in their daily devotions. Dorothy, Lady Drake of Buckland Abbey, Devon, "spent much time, day by day, in her closet devotions. Praying, reading of the Scriptures and other good books took up some hours of her time every day . . . She knew closet prayer is as much a duty as Church prayer."[23] Anne, Lady Burgoyne of Sutton, Bedfordshire, read the Old Testament once and the New Testament three times every year. These women often copied out passages from the Bible and other edifying books. Mary Speke would have practiced similar devotions. The activities of Puritan gentlewomen often

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[20] J.T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry Besieged*, 1650–1700 (New York: Routledge, 1993), Chapter 11: "The Godly Household," pp. 136–46.

[21] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 116; G. Lyon Turner, *Original Records of Early Nonconformity under Persecution and Indulgence*, 2 vols. (London, 1911), 2: 1111–12, 1: 7. On Strong, see John D. Ramsbotton, "Presbyterians and 'Partial Conformity' in the Restoration Church of England," *JEH* 43 (1992): 260.

[22] James Strong, *Lydia's Heart Opened: or, Divine Mercy Magnified in the Conversion of a Sinner by the Gospel* (London, 1675), dedicated "To the Religious Mrs. Mary Speke of Whitelackington," pages unnumbered.

[23] This sermon was delivered by Joseph Rowe, an Anglican cleric of Puritan sympathies. Thomas Hervey, ed., *Some Unpublished Papers Relating to the Family of Sir Francis Drake* (Colmber, 1887), p. 50. Many women (and men) practiced "closet devotions." A closet was like a small, private office which could be used for solitary prayer and meditation as well as a place to hold private audiences.

extended beyond the household as well to charity work among their neighbors and confessional community.

What was certainly true of Mary, as it was of numerous godly women, was that she took care to raise her children in her faith. Mary probably did this alone. While she undoubtedly influenced her husband, it is far from clear whether George, a royalist during the Civil Wars, was ever fully converted to Presbyterianism.[24] Religion in the Speke family was clearly the mother's domain. Thus we can imagine that she, like Puritan gentlewomen for whom there are better sources, strove to instruct her children, and probably the household servants as well, in the foundations of their religion. Mary, Lady Langham charged her children with "reading and committing to memory both Scripture and catechism." Edward Harley describes his mother, Abigail, as taking every occasion to instruct her children in the "principles of religion, virtue and honour."[25] That Mary Speke successfully immersed her children in the culture of nonconformity there can be no doubt. Perhaps the only surprise was the depth of their commitment as demonstrated by their defiance in the face of persecution and their aggressive Whig activism. R.C. Richardson has argued that the godly household with its daily family devotions fostered family solidarity and led to considerable intermarriage among Puritan families.[26] The Speke children, under their mother's guidance, bear this out. Speke daughters, Mary and Philipa, and Speke sons, John, Hugh, and Charles, all connected themselves to other nonconformists.[27]

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[24] The evidence suggests that George tolerated and tried to protect his wife and his children's nonconformity, but did not partake in it. For example, a description of a conventicle in Otterton speaks of John, the eldest surviving son, participating while his father waits "in the hall." Emanuel Green, *The March of William of Orange through Somerset* (London, 1892), p. 53. In 1682, amid a heated political argument, a neighbor asked George whether he had "turned Presbyterian." George replied merely, "The Presbyterians are the honestest [*sic*] men and the preservers of the country's rights." *CSPD*, Charles II, 26: 1.

[25] These and other Puritan mothers are described in Cliff, *The Puritan Gentry*, pp. 143–6.

[26] R.C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North-west England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), pp. 93–5.

[27] There is very little information on William Speke, the youngest son, probably because he was only around 14 at the time of Monmouth's Rebellion, the apogee of the Speke family activism. The second youngest brother, Charles, executed in 1685, left William the bulk of his inheritance and Mary, his mother, left all of her estate to William when she died in 1697. Charles's will is recorded in Matilda Pine-Coffin, *The Speke Family History* (Exeter, 1914), p. 21. Mary's will is in the National Archives, PROB11/491, f. 133r.

These were their spouses and in-laws, their friends, their political allies, and their business partners. When they sought or gave advice, borrowed money, or sold a horse, it was with another nonconformist. Like their mother, they attended conventicles, and sometimes they were arrested for doing so.[28] As much as they could, they surrounded themselves with people like themselves, stridently anti-papist and distressed over their inability to worship according to their beliefs.

The Speke Family Network

> *My Mother and my Brethren are these which hear the Word of God, and do it*
>
> Luke 8:21

That the Speke children were nourished on nonconformity by their mother's instruction and example is clear. But from whom did Mary learn her Puritanism? Mary was the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Pye of Faringdon, Berkshire.[29] Her father was an auditor of the exchequer and a client of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.[30] Pye was in the rather awkward position of defending his master, Buckingham, at the turbulent Parliament of 1628. Despite this and his diligent work as an executor for the Villiers family following Buckingham's assassination, Pye sided with Parliament in the 1640s, though his support was at best lukewarm, and he was often suspected of royalist sympathies. He represented Woodstock at the Long Parliament and was secluded at Pride's Purge in December 1648. Although Pye seems to have been a merely moderate Presbyterian and parliamentarian (he sat on the committee that oversaw the destruction of Catholic images in the captured royal regalia), he did link his family through marriage to the so-called Great Patriot, John Hampden. His eldest son and heir, Robert Pye, married Hampden's daughter, Anne. Of young Robert's support for Parliament there could be no doubt, at least during the war. Robert Pye, the younger,

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[28] Philipa was apprehended at a conventicle at Taunton in 1683; John was spotted at one in Otterton in 1685; *CSPD*, Charles II, 26: 229; Green, *The March of William of Orange*, p. 53.

[29] She was probably the Mary Pye who was baptized at Richmond, Surrey in 1625. M. Zook, "Speke, Mary (fl. 1641–1697)," *ODNB*.

[30] He was knighted in 1621 and purchased the estate at Faringdon sometime in the 1620s. He married Mary Croker of Battisford, Gloucestershire, and they raised six children. G.E. Aylmer, "Pye, Sir Robert (bap. 1585, d. 1662)," *ODNB*.

Mary's brother, raised a troop of horse for the Earl of Essex at the outset of the war; he was wounded at Cirencester in 1643; he commanded a cavalry regiment in 1644; and in 1645 he was appointed colonel of a regiment of horse in the New Model Army. Colonel Pye heroically defended Leicester against the King's forces and published an account of the siege.[31] Yet despite his military bravery, Colonel Pye was no zealot and that became clear during peacetime, climaxing in January 1660 when he presented a petition from Berkshire requesting the return of the secluded members of the Long Parliament, many of whom were believed to be royalists. His actions landed him in prison, only to be released a month later by General Monck. This incident won Colonel Pye the gratitude of Charles II following the Restoration, and Pye was issued a baronetcy in December 1662.[32] The Pye family seems to have lived out the tumultuous 1680s in relative quiet, unlike their cousins, the Spekes. Still the Bishop of Bath and Wells was suspicious and reported in 1683 that the Pyes of Faringdon were in league with all "the fanatic families in that part of Berkshire."[33]

The rather tepid stance of Mary's father during the hostilities between King and Parliament was further displayed in his choice of a husband for his eldest daughter. In May 1641, Mary Pye married George Speke of Whitelackington, Ilminster. George was only thirteen when his father died and his wardship was sold to Sir Robert Pye for £1,800.[34] Although it was a marriage arranged for primarily financial reasons, the elder Pye might still have been dismayed by his young son-in-law's eager exertion for the King's cause. Youthful though he was, George raised regiments of foot and horse for the King's army and lent Prince Rupert 1,000 crowns during the siege of Bridgwater. After the fall of Bridgwater in 1645, George was one of six hostages selected by General Fairfax and imprisoned. Only after the intervention of his brother-in-law, Colonel Pye, was George liberated, though he paid a heavy fine.[35] Speke remained under

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[31] Aylmer, *Ibid*; C.H. Firth, "Pye, Sir Robert (c. 1622–1701);" *ODNB*; Robert Pye, *A More Exact Relation of the Siege Laid to the Town of Leicester . . . Delivered to the House of Commons by Sir Robert Pye* (London, 1645).

[32] Mary Frear Keeler, *The Long Parliament, 1640–41* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1954), p. 317; HMC*: Report on the Manuscripts of F. W. Leyborne-Popham, Esq*. (Norwich, 1899), p. 144.

[33] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 338.

[34] F.N. MacNamara and A. Story-Maskelyne, eds., *The Parish Register of Kensington, 1559–1675* (London, 1890), p. 71; Hawkins, ed., *Sales of Wards*, pp. 57–9.

[35] Speke paid £2,390. The six hostages were all prominent West Country gentlemen, many of whom would later become the Speke's royalist enemies.

suspicion during the 1650s. He was imprisoned again in 1655 for complicity in a royalist conspiracy, and in 1657 he was ordered to rebuild a hospital demolished during the war out of his own funds. In April of 1660, George was among the eager Somerset gentry that sent Charles II a declaration of their happiness at his return. In the years that followed, George claimed, more than once, that he had been a "great sufferer" for the royal cause and this appeal to his past record would, more than once, save him and his wife from the full wrath of the Court.[36]

If Mary followed her father and brother in their political and religious persuasions, moderate though they may have been, were she and George at odds during the Interregnum? Or was there far more common ground among affluent gentry families like the Pyes and the Spekes than our vision of a divided society allows? Certainly, Colonel Pye used his influence with Parliament to rescue his young and perhaps impetuous Cavalier brother-in-law in 1645. Still further, there is no indication that George and Mary's marriage was ever extraordinarily unhappy or that the couple disagreed about Mary's deepening religiosity or their children's political activities. They began having babies almost immediately, and Mary's long series of pregnancies only ceased when she was in her mid-forties. George and Mary were young by contemporary standards when they married.[37] He was seventeen; she was sixteen. It seems highly probable that they grew together in love and respect and that certainly by the 1660s, George, in his prime, had come to admire his wife's devotion. He certainly tried to protect her. By the 1680s, "old Mr. Speke," now in his fifties, had become a thorough-going political radical, willing to see the Stuarts displaced by force if necessary.

George Speke may well have been jubilant in1660 with the return of the monarchy as was most of the nation. The Pyes were pleased, as were George's other cousins, the Portmans of Orchard Portman, Somerset.

P.F. Campbell, "Two Generations of Walronds," *The Journal of Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 38 (1989): 268, 271; On George Speke's Cavalier days, see Hugh Speke, *Some Memoirs of Most Remarkable Passages and Transactions on the Late Happy Revolution in 1688* (Dublin, 1709), p. 34.

[36] M. Zook, "George Speke (1623–1689)," *ODNB*; *The Diurnal of Thomas Rugg, 1659–1661*, ed. W.L. Sashse (London: Royal Historical Society, 1961), pp. 70–1; Letter from George Speke to Middleton (August 1685), BL, Add. 41, 804, f. 31.

[37] See above, note 15. The mean age of first marriage for English women in the seventeenth century was around 26 and around 27 for men. While there was a low legal threshold, a minimum age for valid marriage of 12 for girls and 14 for boys, early marriage was clearly frowned upon in the prescriptive literature of the time. Macfarlane, *Marriage*, pp. 24–6, 211–15.

Joan Speke (née Portman) was George's mother. Her father, Sir William Portman, a strident royalist, was taken prisoner at Naseby and died in the Tower in 1645. His son, Joan's brother, also named Sir William Portman, was a political maverick, who never quite fit in either the Cavalier or Roundhead, Tory, or Whig camps. He was an early member of the Royal Society; he sat for Taunton in the Cavalier Parliament; and he was famous for his "boundless charity." Portman was one of the most affluent and influential men in the West of England.[38] Orchard Portman, like Whitelackington, lay just a few miles outside Taunton and the Spekes and Portmans often visited one another. In the late 1670s and early 1680s, their politics seemed to match. They both believed in the Popish Plot and supported the bill in Parliament to bar the Duke of York from the royal succession. They both entertained the so-called Protestant successor, James, Duke of Monmouth, on his western progress in 1680. But thereafter their political stances began to diverge as the Spekes became ever more radicalized, and Sir William began to regret his former opposition to the Duke of York. In 1680, Portman along with Speke enemies, Bishop Mews and Sir William Wyndham, tried to organize royalists during the parliamentary elections, mainly to prevent John Speke from becoming elected. A year later, much to the Spekes' dismay, it was reported that Portman had begun to drink to the Duke of York's health.[39]

But prior to Portman's open defection from the Protestant Cause, so dear to Speke hearts, the two families had been close and George and Mary's grown children often stayed at Orchard Portman, and they wrote to their uncle. They also spent time at the great houses of other like-minded gentry families in the West Country with whom they had much in common. Most of these landed families had supported Parliament during the Civil War, and most had welcomed the restoration of the monarchy, but had become disillusioned by the 1670s and increasingly worried about the growth of popery at Court. They were usually Presbyterians and occasional conformists in order that they might continue to provide the kind of local authority and national leadership to which gentry families were traditionally entrusted and entitled. Typical were families like the Pynes of Curry Mallet, Somerset. John Pyne had actively supported Parliament in the 1640s and had become part of a radical faction within the Somerset country committee. In the early

[38] Robin Clifton, "Sir William Portman, sixth baronet (1643–1690)," *ODNB*; *House of Commons*, 3:265–7.
[39] Bodleian Library, Wood MS. F. 40, f. 293; *CSPD*, Charles II, 22: 515.

1660s he was often arrested on suspicion of plotting. He kept a private conventicle in his house for his family and a few neighbors, openly declaring that he "cannot conform to the discipline of the Church of England." After John Pyne's death in 1678, his wife and sons were often spotted at the same conventicles as were the Speke children.[40]

The lives of the Spekes were particularly intertwined with the Prideaux of Forde Abbey, at Thorncombe on the Devon-Dorset border, and the Strodes of Barrington Court, Ilchester, Somerset. Edmund Prideaux married his daughter, Katherine, to George Speke's eldest son and heir, John, and when John was not in residence at Dillington, he was often at Forde Abbey. The Presbyterian Prideauxs and the Spekes had much in common and were close friends and allies. Edmund Prideaux's wife, Margaret, who died in 1683, named John the executor of her will; and she generously remembered not only "my friend Mrs. Mary Speke," but all of Mary's children, except for the black sheep, Hugh.[41] Edmund Prideaux patronized nonconforming preachers and made his house a great "receptacle of all fanatics."[42] A supporter of the Exclusion Bill and marked "honest" by Shaftesbury, he famously declared that it was "better to live in slavery under the Turk" than to live under popery in England. Prideaux, along with his son-in-law, John Speke, was reported to have had some involvement in the Whig conspiracy, known as the Rye House Plot.[43] But what was more apparent was that Prideaux, like the Spekes, placed his hope with the Protestant Duke, Monmouth, and like the Spekes again, he suffered for it.

So did the Strodes of Barrington Court, whose house lay just three miles north of Whitelackington. When William Strode's father, a colonel in the parliamentarian army, was arrested by his royalist enemies in Somerset in 1661, he proudly expressed what most Puritan families felt at the Restoration, "that indeed he was a presbyter and ever was so since he knew what religion was but . . . [nonetheless] . . . was as good a subject and much rejoicing in His Majesty's Government as any man."[44] Yet like so many of their neighbors, the Strodes became increasingly

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[40] *House of Commons, 1660–1700*, 3: 643–4; Keeler, *Long Parliament*, p. 319; Cliffe, *Gentry Besieged*, p. 85; Green, *March*, p. 53.

[41] Frederick Brown, *Abstracts of Somersetshire Wills*, 4 vols. (London, 1889), 4: 10.

[42] There were numerous reports of conventicles held at Forde Abbey. Turner, *Original Records,* 1: 44.

[43] *House of Commons, 1660–1700*, 3: 288; *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 26.

[44] Quoted in H.A. Helyar, "The Arrest of Col. William Strode of Barrington, in 1661," *Somerset Archeological & Natural History Society* 37 (1891): 33.

alienated by the direction of the Court. William Strode, the younger, was considered by royalists to be a leader of the fanatics and disaffected in Somerset. In 1679, he and John Speke sat for Ilchester and supported the first Exclusion Bill.[45] In preparation for the Oxford Parliament of 1681, Strode entertained lavishly, with "great treats in town and large invitations of his party to his house in Barrington."[46] And he too, along with his brother, Edmund Strode of Shepton Mallet, supported Monmouth's unfortunate rebellion.

However, no man had more influence over the Spekes, for good or for ill, than Sir John Trenchard of Bloxworth. He "managed" their son, John, and married their youngest daughter, Philipa, and he was showered with praise and affection by George and Mary. Trenchard hailed from an old Dorset family that had intermarried with the Speke family throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nursed on Roundhead politics and religious nonconformity as a child, John was knee-deep in the most extreme Whig conspiracies of the 1680s. Wealthy, popular, and outspoken, he was known as the "movement man of the West" for his supposed, though never tried, ability to raise hundreds of men at a moment's notice. An Exclusionist MP, Trenchard was the chairman of the Green Ribbon Club that George Speke and three of his sons joined.[47] Even before his marriage to Philipa in 1681, Trenchard was a regular at Whitelackington. In 1683, Bishop Mews referred to him as Mary Speke's "darling." George was no less enamored with him and when queried by a neighbor as to why he would marry his daughter to Trenchard, George replied, "My son Trenchard is so brave and forward a man that I do not question but see him Lord Chancellor in a little time."[48] Trenchard, like his father-in-law, was not one to mince words and reports of his declaring that, "a Trenchard had as much right to the crown as any Stuart," were used against him during the Rye House Plot trials in the heady summer of 1683.[49] Trenchard may have had the Spekes in his thrall, but he was also a loyal friend and did all that

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[45] The election was contested by Tory candidates, but Speke and Strode prevailed. *The Case of the Petitioners, William Strode and John Speke, Esquires* (London, 1681).
[46] *CSPD*, Charles II, 22: 514. Also see, Thomas Serel, "On the Strodes of Somersetshire," *Somerset Journal* 13 (1856–66): 6–20.
[47] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 356; John Burke, ed., *Royal Families of England, Scotland and Wales*, 2 vols. (London, 1851), 2: pedigree CIX; Alan J. Miller, "Sir John Trenchard – The Movement Man of the West," *The Dorset Year Book* (1996), pp. 17–20; Robin Clifton, "Trenchard, Sir John (1649–1995)," *ODNB*.
[48] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 178, 430.
[49] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 227, 252.

he could to aid his in-laws following their disastrous participation in Monmouth's Rebellion.

Whig Politics in the 1680s

> *the greatest fanatick of a fool this day in England, one Speke, esquire*[50]

How and why did the Spekes become involved in Whig politics? Why did they feel it was necessary to join the forces of opposition to the Court? Was there a turning point in which they felt they must join the fray in London rather than live a sedate country existence? The sources do not always tell us a simple or straightforward story. There are gaps and silences. The government intercepted some of the Speke correspondence, but by no means all. Mary's letters are lost though we know she kept up a "great correspondence." There are no Speke family diaries. Hugh's partisan memoir of his family's suffering was written long after the events and motivated by his penury.[51] The story of Speke's growing entanglement with radical Whig politics in the 1680s that follows, then, is based necessarily on some guess work, verified as closely as possible by the sources.

George Speke welcomed the restored monarchy in 1660. But disappointment must have set in rather quickly. Charles II's Declaration from Breda (April 1660) in which he promised "a liberty to tender consciences" proved meaningless.[52] Instead, the Cavalier Parliament's series of penal laws against any kind of religious nonconformity from the episcopal Church of England crushed Puritan hopes for any kind of comprehension. The Speke family's first real taste of the new regime came in 1663 when Mary was indicted for keeping a conventicle. George, as High Sheriff of Somerset, sought to protect his wife and was highly incensed when he was unable. Nonetheless, Mary continued to host and attend Presbyterian services. In April 1663, Sir John Warre reported to Secretary Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington, that the "chief person at this conventicle [in Ilminster] being George Speke's wife who, though indicted for it at last assizes, still keeps up the conventicles, and her husband, a deputy lieutenant and justice of the peace, permits it and

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[50] Letter to Anthony Wood in 1680 referring to George Speke. Bodleian Library, Wood MS. F. 40, f. 293.
[51] Hugh Speke, *Some Memoirs of the Late Happy Revolution* (London, 1715).
[52] See below, Chapter 1, n9.

threatened the constables and church wardens who indicted her." Speke not only permitted his wife's highly visible nonconformity, he refused to do anything in his official capacity to disturb Presbyterian meetings in Taunton and Bridgewater "though much importuned to do something by those who live near and fear to be destroyed."[53] One wonders if this was George Speke's turning point: his inability to shield Mary followed by his own dismissal from the commission of the peace soon after. By May 1663, George began speaking of the "malice of his enemies," wondering "under what colour they work, [he] having always deserved well from the King."[54] Was this, he wondered, the monarchy that he suffered for in his youth?

We know very little about Speke affairs in the early 1670s. No sources record how they reacted to Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence of March 1672 or the passing of the Test Act by Parliament in 1673, which made it difficult for nonconformists to hold office without at least occasionally attending services in the Established Church. Nor do we know how they felt about the Duke of York's subsequent acknowledgement of his Catholicism. After 1673, George Speke and his sons must have become, like most Puritan gentlemen, "occasional conformists." This would hardly have been a terrible burden, although it was probably resented nonetheless. The Speke family controlled the rectory at Whitelackington church, and it would certainly have been easy for them to install puritanical clerics fairly agreeable to their own principles.

The Spekes resurface in the sources in the late 1670s just as the crises over popery and the royal succession began to capture the nation's attention. By 1680, the five eldest Speke children, ranging from around age fifteen to thirty, were all keenly politically conscious. Unfortunately, we know the least about the Speke daughters, Mary and Philipa. The evidence that exists does suggest that they shared the religious and political sentiments of their parents and brothers. Even after Mary and Philipa married, they stayed at Whitelackington regularly and moved within their parents' orbit of friends and family. The eldest daughter, Mary, married fellow Presbyterian, Thomas Jennings of Burton Pynsent in Curry Rivel, Somerset sometime in the 1670s.[55] They had a son and

[53] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 116. The royalist, Sir John Warre of Kingston, Somerset, was a member of the commission of peace and profoundly hostile to nonconformists.
[54] *CSPD*, Charles II, 3: 138.
[55] There is little information on Thomas Jennings. The Hearth tax list for 1664–65 lists him as an "esquire" with thirteen chimneys. He seems to have been fairly wealthy. Holworthy, *Hearth Tax*, 1: 13.

two daughters before Thomas died in 1680. In the 1680s, the "Widow Jennings" maintained a strong presence at Whitelackington where her opinion was valued. The government considered her an outspoken critic and an admirer of the Duke of Monmouth. Mary Jennings was also a friend of Thomas Dare, the radical goldsmith who was Monmouth's paymaster during the Rebellion, and the Quaker writer, John Whiting.[56] Philipa, the youngest daughter, sealed her parent's love and admiration for John Trenchard by marrying him in 1682. She was only eighteen whereas he was thirty-three and already a man of some standing, complete with a history of political opposition. Trenchard was also a regular fixture at Whitelackington where he kept a study. Philipa shared John's hazards throughout the 1680s: staying close prisoner with him in the Tower following the Rye House Plot revelations and following him into exile in Europe at the outset of Monmouth's invasion.[57]

Of the Speke brothers, the sources are richer, especially for the eldest brothers, John and Hugh, who frequently corresponded. Their lives intersected with the affairs of state at all the crucial points in the 1680s. The eldest son and heir, John, had studied at Wadham College, Oxford, and Lincoln's Inn, toured Europe, and married.[58] The second son, Hugh, who also studied law at Lincoln's Inn, had a growing reputation for political meddling, gaming, and extravagant living. By the late 1670s, John was immersed in local and national politics. Like his father before him he held various local offices, and both he and his father sat at the 1679 Exclusion Parliament where, not surprisingly, they voted to bar the so-called "popish successor," the Duke of York, from the throne. As his letters to his brother, Hugh, and others reveal, John was also deeply involved in the propagation of Whig plots. "I was with Mr. [Titus] Oates this morning," John wrote to Hugh from London in June 1680. There he gathered more information about the trials of the popish priests, named by Oates as conspiring to burn London and murder the King, which John then passed on to Hugh and which Hugh, a great rumor-monger,

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[56] *Somersetshire Wills*, 2: 10; *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 121; 25: 247; John Whiting, *Persecution Exposed in Some Memoirs Relating to the Suffering of John Whiting, and Many Others Called Quakers* (London, 1715), p. 141.

[57] To avoid gender confusion, I have added an "a" to Philip Trenchard's first name. However, her name was really "Philip." This is how she herself spelled it and how the sources of the era spell it. Nineteenth-century historians and genealogists could not accept the fact that her name was "Philip" and always added an "a," but this is actually incorrect. *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 16, 25. BL, Add. 41,817, f. 274v.

[58] Wadham had a strong West Country connection. Joseph Wells, *Wadham College* (London, 1898), p. 30.

passed on to others. John sent Hugh more news a week later concerning narratives of the Popish Plot and recommending anti-Catholic literature.[59]

Both John and Hugh kept a wide circle of correspondents, and both were in the business of spreading anti-Court and anti-papist news, gossip, and rumor. But they were being watched, as were their father and mother back in Somerset. The Spekes' very public show of affection for the opposition leader, John Trenchard, and their conventicle-going as well as George Speke's own outrageous remarks to friend and foe alike were observed and recorded. The Spekes garnered numerous enemies, the most diligent of whom were their own neighbors. Among those who spied on Speke activity and reported to London were: the Walronds of Sea, Ilminster, the Wyndhams of Orchard Wyndham, St. Decuman's, and above all, Peter Mews, Bishop of Bath of Wells. Henry Walrond was a die-hard royalist. His family's estate was within a few miles of Whitelackington, making the Walronds especially troublesome to the Spekes. Sir William Wyndham was somewhat more circumspect. Considered a tepid royalist during the 1670s, he later threw his support behind the Duke of York and voted against tampering with the royal succession. But what made Wyndham and Walrond most threatening to the Spekes was their readiness to disrupt conventicles in and around Taunton.[60]

The Spekes were certainly warned by friends that they were being watched. In August 1679, Hugh wrote a highly flammable anti-Court letter to his uncle, Sir William Portman. Portman was incensed and worried about how such a letter, if intercepted, could damage both his and young Speke's reputation. "Take care," wrote one of Hugh's friends, and do not take "false measure of Sir William for though he is against Popery and the Duke of York, yet he is firm to King and Church."[61] But the Spekes did not take care and were impervious to repeated warnings. The Bishop of Bath and Wells made sure that the King and the Duke of York were kept abreast of their behavior. Mews caught the Court's attention in the spring of 1680 when he reported that George Speke declared that the King was a papist and Monmouth was the true heir of the throne. Secretary Jenkins wrote back to Mews, telling him that both Charles II and his brother, James, had read his letter and were "very sensible of your watchfulness and zeal."[62]

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[59] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 176, 185–6.
[60] On Walrond's violence against conventicles, see Street, *Mynster of Ile*, pp. 205–7.
[61] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 207.
[62] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 471, 488.

The Court signaled its readiness to move against the Spekes in the spring of 1680 when a warrant for George Speke's arrest, ostensibly for pledging his support for the Duke of Monmouth, arrived at Whitelackington while the family was entertaining numerous gentlemen, including John Trenchard.[63] George rallied his friends and appeared before the Court with a train of no less than forty prominent West Country men. He was in luck. Prince Rupert was with the King and remembered Speke's contributions to the royalist cause during the Civil Wars. Naturally, Speke himself reminded Charles II as well. Charles was generous, and Speke was released. He dined with the Prince that evening and came home emboldened rather than chastened.[64] But George's friends and his eldest son, John, himself fresh from a run-in with the law, were worried. John wrote to Hugh, "since his [George's] return he has been encouraged to be silent and not concern himself with public affairs, instead he gives himself more liberty and talks more at random and dangerous than formerly, which is a great affliction to all his friends."[65] George ranted and raved against Henry Walrond, Bishop Mews, William Portman, the King, the Queen, the Duke of York and all the bishops.[66] His language was colorful; his meaning, indisputable.

Three months later, in August 1680, James, Duke of Monmouth, and his handlers decided to display just how truly popular he was among the Puritan gentry and the common folk of the West, many of whom were Dissenters. Thus Monmouth, the so-called Protestant Duke, went on an extended progress through the West Country. From Wiltshire, the Duke passed into Ilchester, his destination, Whitelackington. His progress was celebrated in a Whig broadside. Ten miles off from Whitelackington, "he was met by 2,000 on horse," and the numbers increased as he drew closer. The roads were strewn with flowers; people shouting, "God Bless King Charles and the Protestant Duke." At Whitelackington, the crowd was supposedly 20,000 strong. The park's palings were thrown down to admit them. The Duke and his attendants took refreshments under an old chestnut tree that stood before the house. George Speke "set out several hog heads and vessels of beer, ale and cider to entertain the people." The Spekes' excitement is easy to imagine. Monmouth knew George, the

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[63] George Roberts, *The Life, Progresses and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth Life of Monmouth*, 2 vols. (London, 1844; reprint, Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, LCC 2007), 2: 318; Street, *Mynster of Ile*, p. 217.
[64] *CSPD*, Charles II, 22: 690–1.
[65] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 471.
[66] *CSPD*, Charles II, 21: 471, 505; 25: 430–1; 26: 1–2.

three eldest Speke sons (John, Hugh, and Charles), and John Trenchard. Perhaps this was the first time the Duke met the Speke women, Mary and her daughters and the youngest son, William. The tract goes on in true Whig style to assert that George Speke is "an example to all gentry for his loyalty to the King, and his love of his country, for being an orthodox Protestant and a true hospitable lover of our dear true Protestant Englishman," meaning Monmouth.[67]

The stops on Monmouth's tour were like a roll call of the Puritan gentry in Somerset: Brympton, the seat of the stridently antipapist, Sir John Sydenham; Barrington Court, seat of the Speke's friend, Sir William Strode; Ford Abbey, home of John Speke's father-in-law, Edmund Prideaux; Colyton House, the "fanatic," Sir Walter Yonge's residence, and others. George Speke and his sons probably accompanied Monmouth. On the third day of his progress, Monmouth came back to Whitelackington to spend the night. The next day, Sunday, Monmouth attended divine service at Ilminster Church. The Speke family was undoubtedly there as well, and the Duke might have sat with them at "Mr. Speke's Ile."[68] Monmouth returned to Whitelackington once more before passing into Dorset and returning to London. The Spekes alone, among the gentry families on Monmouth's junket, had received him three times. It was a jubilant time for the Speke family, enamored as they were of the Protestant Duke.[69]

Their happiness was short-lived. Sometime in 1680, the eldest daughter, Mary, was widowed. The following year, the youngest daughter, Elizabeth died. George and Mary were also troubled by the increasing outlandish behavior of their second eldest son, Hugh, a barrister at Lincoln's Inn. Hugh was not only in the thick of Whig politics, plotting, and pamphleteering in Exclusion-era London, he was also addicted to gambling and women. At one point, a "coffee-woman" was pretending

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[67] *A Narrative of the Duke of Monmouth's Late Journey into the West* (London, 1680), pp. 2–3.

[68] The Speke's pew was probably near the chancel. Although Mary and her children were committed Presbyterians, it is hardly surprising that they would attend Sunday services. The Spekes had a controlling interest in the churches at Ilminster, Whitelackington, and Dowlish Wake (where one can still see monuments to the Speke family) and they would have needed to maintain their authority, in part, through public appearances like Sunday services. Street, *Mynster of Ile*, p. 218.

[69] Monmouth's progress is described in Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 1: 89–105; also see, H. St. George Gray, "Whitelackington and the Duke of Monmouth," *Somersetshire Archeological & Natural History Society* 73 (1927): 35–9.

to be his wife and tried to blackmail George and Mary. Hugh was constantly in debt as well. At first, it was for small sums that the family could cover. But in May 1680, John informed Hugh that his letter, begging for money, had "enraged father. He as good as cursed you and called you names . . . now he must sell his land . . . You know his temper."[70] Two years later the situation was much worse. Hugh had incurred extraordinary debts and entangled himself with one Lady Dorrell, "half-mad, extravagant, expensive, and drunken." John, as always, pleaded with Hugh to "avoid dangerous courses and bad company." "I pity your condition and would do you any kindness you can reasonably expect of me." But the rest of the family did not pity Hugh. John Trenchard found Hugh's predicaments amusing, so John reported to his brother, but "my sister [Mary] Jennings and my Lady [John's wife] Prideaux" are "no friends of yours." Yet their dismay at Hugh's behavior was nothing compared to his mother's shame and distress. In 1680, Mary traveled to London to take control of her wayward son. She was furious, and Hugh declared that she scolded him into a "swoon." John condemned his "mother's violent reproving" of Hugh, but the rest of the family supported her. "Keep out of debauched company," John warned Hugh, "though Whigs and great men."[71] Mary Speke was such a formidable figure that when Hugh tried to "please" her, family and friends commended him.[72]

Then in June of 1683, authorities learned of a Whig plot to assassinate Charles II and his brother, the Duke of York, at Rye House mill as the royal brothers returned from the races at Newmarket. The discovery of the so-called Rye House Plot led to numerous arrests, imprisonments, and trials.[73] The threat that the Plot represented to the security of the government heightened the already politically charged atmosphere of London. The Court and its Tory allies were quick to react against any perceived challenge. The "Tory Reaction" against Whigs and Dissenters soon engulfed several of the Spekes. In the spring of 1683, one of Hugh

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[70] *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 605–6; 21: 471.
[71] *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 121–2.
[72] *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 122; *CSPD*, Charles II, 24: 294.
[73] Among the leaders arrested in connection with the plot were William, Lord Russell, Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex, Algernon Sidney and John Trenchard. On the Rye House Plot, see Richard Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 206–50; Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics: Locke's Two Treatises of Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 332–98.

Speke's fellow gamblers reported to authorities that Hugh had supported Thomas Pilkington's assertion that the Duke of York had set fire to London in 1666 and had further declared that the King was as "great a papist as the Duke."[74] John was dismayed, telling Hugh that he was the talk of the West Country with folks wondering whether he would be fined or sent to the gallows,

> the latter mostly suspected. It has not been surprising news to me considering the persons you have to buckle with and [having] no friends to assist you, and if willing, not able, for you often mar your own and others' concerns… It's thought you will not be long out of prison…not only your relations but all your friends wish that you were gone out of London and come into the West.[75]

But Hugh was hardly the only family member in trouble. John Trenchard was apprehended on June 28 for his alleged role in the Rye House Plot. Soon after "old Mr. Speke" along with William Strode were sent for in connection with the plot. In early July, Mary traveled to London. Bishop Mews warned London authorities that the most "dangerous woman in the West" was on her way. Later that month, Mews asserted that "the father, the mother and the two brothers are much suspected," though they managed to avoid prosecution for the plot, and only Trenchard languished in the Tower.[76] That summer Hugh busied himself with the defense of several of the Rye House Plotters, including William, Lord Russell. He gave Sir Richard Atkyns (Russell's defense attorney) legal advice and visited the Whig conspirator, Francis Charlton, in the Tower.[77] By the end of July, Hugh himself was arrested for helping to spread tall tales about the death of Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex. Essex was supposedly one of the "council of six," along with Lord Russell, John Trenchard, and others who were charged with conspiring to assassinate the royal brothers at Rye House Mill. On July 13, amid Lord Russell's trial, Essex was found dead in the Tower with his neck slashed in an apparent suicide. Royalists saw Essex's suicide, supposedly out of guilt, as proof of the plot's reality. But Whig gossips

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[74] In 1682, Thomas Pilkington was sued by the Duke of York for supposedly exclaiming two years earlier that the Duke "hath burnt the city and is come to cut our throats." Morrice, *EB*, 2: 318.
[75] *CSPD*, Charles II, 24: 337–88.
[76] *CSPD*, Charles II, 24: 362; *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 8; *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 228.
[77] *CSPD*, Charles II, 24: 108–9, 127, 304.

and propagandists were determined to cast suspicions on the Court for Essex's death.[78] Hugh was in the thick of it. Following Hugh's arrest, John wrote, "My mother is much concerned for you and is much ashamed to hear of your wickedness." Yet Mary seemed to be more troubled by his gambling, for being "a cheat at play," than his political entanglements. Hugh's bail was set at £8,000, an exorbitant sum which he could not pay nor was anyone willing to help. Mary appeared before the Privy Council on Hugh's behalf. She tried to cover his political connections with Whig partisans by explaining that her son had simply lost "great sums at play and borrowed money of Sir Atkyns and Mr. Charlton."[79] Considering the suspicions authorities had against Mary herself, her appearance before them was audacious to say the least. Nor were they impressed by her attempts to minimize her son's activities, and Hugh was tried for sedition in February 1684 before the soon-to-be notorious Judge George Jeffreys. Fined £1,000, he could not pay and was moved to King's Bench prison. His imprisonment during Monmouth's Rebellion probably saved his life.

In the course of the heady summer of 1683, Mary Speke travelled to and from London and Ilminster on several occasions. Authorities kept a watchful eye on her movements. But why? John's letters only indicate that she was trying to control Hugh's bad behavior. Was she of interest merely as the mother and mother-in-law of seditious sons? Or was she herself a "nursing mother" of the radical politics for men like Trenchard, Monmouth, and Lord Russell? Did she carry messages and money between the metropolis and the West Country? It is a possible scenario. Like the nursing mothers, Elizabeth Gaunt and Constance Ward, Mary Speke's name does surface in the course of the Rye House Plot interrogations. But whereas Gaunt and Ward are mentioned in connection with the Plot on several occasions, Mary is only mentioned once. Yet on this slender evidence she is mentioned as a "nurse." Zachariah Bourne, a London brewer, who turned King's evidence against his fellow Whig plotters, drops Mary's name while informing his interrogators of several "correspondents" with leading conspirators. "Lady Row told me," Bourne states, "of one that would part with many pounds for the nurse, who was, I think Lady Speke." The "one" with the money

[78] Hugh was trying to help Laurence Braddon investigate Essex's "murder" and the Court's supposed cover-up. Some historians have attributed *An Enquiry into and Detection of the Barbarous Murther of the Late Earl of Essex* (London, 1689) to Hugh Speke, but it was written by Robert Ferguson.
[79] *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 342.

is an unnamed leading conspirator, someone like the Earl of Argyle, who Bourne was speaking of in the preceding sentence. The "nurse" was, he thinks, "Lady Speke."[80] This would confirm the Bishop of Bath and Wells' assertion that Mary Speke kept a "great correspondence." It also helps explain why later, in November of 1685, when George Speke was arrested and appeared before the bar, "many foul imputations were laid upon Mrs. Speke," according to Roger Morrice.[81] Yet our sources are extremely limited and what those "foul imputations" were remain hidden. Like so many of the nursing mothers, Mary Speke was an extremely stealth operator. Yet when the defense of the Protestant cause in concert with radical Whig politics erupted into open rebellion in 1685, Mary (along with her husband and sons) abandoned all caution. This proved their undoing.

Monmouth's Rebellion and the Aftermath

> *He [Charles Speke] came from a pious family, which always have been opposers to popery and suffered deeply for their courage*
> John Tutchin, *The Western Martyrology*

After being held a close prisoner in the Tower for six months, John Trenchard, the so-called "movement man" of the West, was released. According to the confessions of several Rye House plotters, it was Trenchard's task to lead a rising in Taunton, but he failed to translate his bold talk into action and was later dubbed a coward by his fellow conspirators.[82] Trenchard's case never came to trial, and he was released for want of a second witness. In December of 1683, Trenchard returned to a hero's welcome in the West Country, attended in his progress to Whitelackington by crowds of Dissenters, congratulating him on his liberty. Trenchard, however, was something of a new man. He had been cowed by his imprisonment and wanted to stay out of trouble. In February 1685, James II ascended the throne. The new King had old scores to settle, and three months later Trenchard was accused of new plots and stirrings. Officers were sent to Whitelackington to arrest him, but George

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[80] Howell, *State Trials*, 9: 419; also transcribed in the *CSPD*, 25: 57.
[81] Morrice, *EB*, 2:16.
[82] Information of John Rumsey, *CSPD*, Charles II, 25: 188. Also see Robert Ferguson's reproof of Trenchard's failure to act in his, *A Letter to Mr. Secretary Trenchard* (London, 1694), p. 3.

Speke, in a daring and reckless move, led a riot that allowed Trenchard to escape.[83] Shortly thereafter, news of the Duke of Monmouth's invasion sent Trenchard scurrying abroad to avoid any suspicion of complicity with the rebellion. He took his wife, Philipa, with him and warned his in-laws. But the Spekes were determined to support their great Protestant hope and so the tragedy of their participation in Monmouth's Rebellion played itself out.

James, Duke of Monmouth, and eighty-two men made landfall on June 11 at Lyme Regis. Thomas Dare, the Taunton goldsmith and Monmouth's paymaster, was dispatched to Whitelackington. Monmouth hoped that the Spekes would rally the great families of the West Country in whose adoration he had basked five years ago to his standard and bring men, horses, arms, and money.[84] But 1685 was hardly 1680. The Rye House Plot trials and the Tory backlash against Whigs and religious nonconformity had decimated radical Whig leadership and weakened the resolve of many others. Furthermore, King James had been warned of Monmouth's impending invasion and his messengers had had time enough to swoop down and incarcerate many of Monmouth's potential supporters, particularly disaffected gentlemen and Dissenting preachers in the West. Sir Walter Yonge of Colyton House had been arrested briefly in May and was unwilling to join the rebellion.[85] William Strode and his brother, Edward Strode of Shepton Mallet, had hurriedly sent Monmouth money shortly before their arrests. Edmund Prideaux was arrested and sent to the Tower.[86] Intimidated or incarcerated, none of these great men were willing or able to join Monmouth's army.

Not so the Spekes. The mood at Whitelackington at the news of Monmouth's landing must have been one of alarm, mixed with

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[83] Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 1: 211; on the riot, HMC*: Downshire*, vol. 2, part 1, p. 64.

[84] Robin Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion: The Western Rising of 1685* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 158–9; Street, *Mynster of Ile*, p. 223.

[85] Yonge was arrested on May 19. *House of Commons, 1660–1690*, 3: 789–90. Monmouth's envoy to the West found him "very cool in the matter." Quoted in Mark Goldie, "John Locke's Circle and James II," *HJ* 35/3 (1992): 563.

[86] On the Strodes, see Serel, "On the Strodes," p. 15. In some accounts, Prideaux was able to send money and horses to Monmouth before his arrest, while others report that he was arrested two days before Monmouth landed. Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 2: 293; Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion*, p. 245; *House of Commons, 1660–90*, 3: 287–8.

exhilaration. Was this what they had hoped and prayed for? Did they see Monmouth as their Protestant savior? Probably, yes. Mary Jennings, the Speke's eldest daughter, was "all afloat about the Duke, thinking the day was their own," and she promptly sent him money and horses.[87] But for George and Mary the situation was more complex. George, along with William Strode, had just been presented at the 1684 Wells Assize as a person "dangerous and disaffected," and he was still wanted for raising a riot to rescue John Trenchard. Evidence against Mary's activities was also mounting.[88] It would be difficult to believe that George and Mary were not aware of the dangers this rebellion posed for their family. Nonetheless, Mary sent "cart loads of bread and cheese and other great quantities of provisions," along with a mare, to the Duke's army.[89] Worst still, George and Mary allowed their son and heir, John, with a motley crew of forty "raged horse," to join Monmouth. No member of the Speke family was more unfit for such a task than John. Gentle, perhaps even bookish, John was not the bold, rash man his father was, nor did he have the kind of "heat" of which he accused his brother Hugh. Monmouth's disappointment at the sight of merely one Speke brother with a few "ordinary fellows" must have been profound. Still "young Speke" was the only gentlemen who appeared, and Monmouth made him a colonel with his own regiment.[90] John soon proved himself worthless. He had no stomach for battle and became an object of ridicule among the other rebels. During one skirmish, John, described as "a silly insignificant man," gave orders to his men "from the top of a steeple with his handkerchief." Still worse, when battle broke out at Frome, John "rode into a church porch as supposed for mediation . . . when they were fighting in the long lane." His peculiar behavior was observed. Monmouth sent for young Speke and "seeing his courage failed" allowed him to depart the army. John fled and eventually made his way to the Netherlands to join Trenchard and his sister.[91] In doing so, he had saved his own life, but his younger brother, Charles, was far less fortunate.

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[87] Whiting, *Persecution Exposed*, p. 297; BL, Lansdowne 1152A, f. 240v.

[88] Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion*, p. 71; George was eventually fined 2,000 marks for his riot. John Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence, 1686–1688*, ed. G.A. Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1831), 1: 194; Morrice, *EB*, 3: 635.

[89] John Tremaine, *Pleas of the Crown in Matters Criminal and Civil: Containing a Large Collection of Modern Precedents* (Dublin, 1793), p. 4.

[90] BL, Lansdowne, 1152A, f. 238, 240; BL, Add. 41,818, ff. 206–7; BL, Add. 41,819, f. 51.

[91] BL. Add. 14,819, f. 58; Morrice, *EB*, 1: 635. Roberts states that John Speke was the most "influential gentleman" to join Monmouth and does not believe he

Some scholars have maintained that Charles Speke was not interested or active in politics thereby making him into an innocent and poignant victim of Judge Jeffreys' "Bloody Assizes."[92] But Charles was every inch a Speke. He was a Green Ribbon brother and Popish Plot rumor-monger just like his older brothers. In 1681, he gave the Anglican minister at Whitelackington parish a tract supposedly proving that the Duke of Monmouth was Charles II's legitimate son. That same year, Hugh warned Charles that he might be called to the next Assize as Henry Walrond and other Somerset royalists were rounding up all those "active against popery."[93] Like John and Hugh, Charles was admitted to Lincoln's Inn where he kept an office and chambers. He had also purchased the office of filazer (filing writs at the Court of Common Pleas) for several western counties for £3,000. He seems to have some head for business. John reported to Hugh that Trenchard had a "kindness for my brother, Charles, but none for you. Perhaps Charles can help him to business."[94] It is unclear whether Charles actually joined Monmouth's army or not. George Roberts, the great nineteenth-century historian of the rebellion, following the story told in the Whig martyrologies that were published shortly after the Revolution, maintained that Charles did not join Monmouth, but simply rode into Ilminster to pay obeisance to Monmouth as his army passed. There is probably some truth to this because Charles was not at the Battle of Sedgemoor nor did he flee to Holland like John. Perhaps George and Mary forbid their younger sons, Charles and William, from joining the rebel army, although they were rarely so prudent. After Monmouth's defeat on July 6, the merciless rounding up of rebels, as well as all those who had assisted Monmouth or hid his fleeing soldiers, began. Charles was arrested on the road to London. He was tried at Wells Assize (September 23) for "aiding and assisting the rebels" by Judge Jeffreys. Jeffreys was apparently told at least twice that there were "two Spekes" (John and Charles) and that this was not the one who had joined the rebel army. But Jeffreys is supposed

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deserted the Duke. But John himself admitted to leaving Monmouth when he petitioned the King for a pardon. Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 2: 32.

[92] Gray, "Whitelackington," p. 38; J.G. Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes* (London: William Hodge & Co., 1929), p. 100. Both of these historians seem to be following John Dunton, *The Merciful Assizes: or, a Panegyric on the Late Lord Jeffreys Hanging so Many in the West* (London, 1701), p. 235.

[93] The tract about Monmouth's legitimacy was probably Robert Ferguson's *A Letter to a Person of Honour Concerning the Black Box* (London, 1680); *CSPD*, Charles II, 26: 2; 22: 260.

[94] *CSPD*, Charles II, 23: 121.

to have replied merely that, "his family owes a life; he shall die for his namesake."[95]

Charles Speke was hanged from a large tree in the market-square at Ilminster. The Whig martyrologies described Charles's death. He prayed for nearly an hour and sang a psalm. The huge crowd that gathered around him were weeping and wailing, and some supposedly volunteered to take the young man's place. Did Charles receive the full penalty for treason? Was he really hanged until nearly dead, cut down, and disemboweled? Or, as the son of a gentleman, was he spared such indignities? The sources are silent on the question. Charles did have time to write his will, and a dying speech in which he styled himself a Protestant martyr who, though innocent, was "contended to drink this bitter cup."[96] A reprieve was issued, but it arrived too late.

The Speke fortunes were now at their lowest ebb. George, Mary, and their eldest daughter, Mary Jennings, went into hiding after Monmouth's defeat. Trenchard, Philipa, and John Speke were refugees in Amsterdam. Hugh was in prison; Charles was dead; and only young William remained at Whitelackington. In August, George surrendered himself and pleaded with Secretary of State, Charles Middleton, to intercede with the King on his behalf and that of his wife's. "I hope his majesty will be so gracious to me who all the first part of my life, was a great sufferer for him however misrepresented . . . I am his unfortunate loyal subject."[97] George was not fooling anyone. James II knew the full extent to which George and his family had agitated against him. In November, George appeared before the bar where "many foul imputations were laid upon Mrs. Speke."[98] He was fined 2,000 marks for his ill-considered riot that rescued Trenchard. Mary Speke was eventually arrested as well and indicted for aiding Monmouth. In March 1686, James II issued a General Pardon to all those who sought refuge abroad or were still in hiding. Among those excluded were George and Mary Speke, Mary Jennings, John Speke, and John Trenchard.[99]

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[95] Wiltshire Quarter Session Rolls assert that Charles Speke was indicted "for marching in the late Duke of Monmouth's army," probably because he was confused with John Speke. Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 2: 223; Street, *Mynster of Ile*, p. 234.

[96] Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes*, p. 101; Roberts, *Life of Monmouth*, 2: 222–3.

[97] BL, Add. 41,804, f. 31.

[98] Morrice, *EB*, 2: 16.

[99] Mary Jennings was found and placed under house arrest; she eventually secured her release by paying a fine supposedly over £200. Charles Chenevix Trench, *The Western Rising* (New York: Longmans, 1969), p. 241.

In Amsterdam, John Trenchard's life was a series of contradictions. At first, he boldly kept company with a group of Whigs, rowdy rebels and radicals, and even inherited Monmouth's former bodyguard, Captain Edward Mathews, who became his "bully and pensioner."[100] Trenchard was reported to have toasted James II's destruction. A month later he was singing the praises of the Prince of Orange and thinking of buying an estate in Switzerland.[101] But shortly thereafter, he began distancing himself from his hard drinking rebel friends and confessing his hopes and fears to the Court informant, Edmond Everard. Trenchard wanted to return home; he wanted to be a good man and live in peace. He worried about his in-laws and hoped the Court would take pity on them. "I told him," wrote Everard, "he was very inconsistent."[102] In the spring of 1686, Trenchard approached another English spy: "he seemed extremely sorrowful and wept," saying that, "he could not hope for his Majesty's pardon." "He was very sensible of his past miscarriages . . . [and] hoped the King would have pity on his wife's brother Mr. [John] Speke, who had not been so great a sinner and was only drawn in." Upon learning that George and Mary had been convicted of treason, Trenchard blamed himself: "He is all out of hope of being able to do anything that might merit his pardon; knowing that this trouble comes upon his wife's relations for his sake."[103] But Trenchard did, after a time, prove useful to the Court, persuading fellow refugees to "submit and sue for pardon" by telling them that James II had promised to protect Protestantism. He also reminded them that James's eldest daughter, the very Protestant, Mary, Princess of Orange, would succeed the Catholic King. That was good enough for John Speke, who applied for a pardon in August 1686.[104]

Both John Trenchard and John Speke won pardons through the auspices of William Penn. In 1687, as part of James II's new liberal policies towards Protestant nonconformists, George, Mary, and Mary Jennings, were able to obtain pardons for the hefty sum of £5,000. Hugh, as well, was released from prison. Still, it seems unlikely that the Spekes would have been seduced by James II's Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 and

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[100] BL, Add. 41,818, ff. 206–7; 79, 98–9. Captain Matthews was Sir Thomas Armstrong's son-in-law. Armstrong had been executed for his role in Rye House Plot. The "fraternity" of rebels included, Major John Manley and his son, as well as John Starkey, and the printer, Awnsham Churchill.

[101] BL, Add. 41,818, f. 98v, ff. 136–7, ff. 206–7.

[102] BL, Add. 41,804, f. 158.

[103] BL, Add. 41,813, ff. 113–14; BL, Add. 41,804, f. 158v.

[104] BL, Add. 41,819, f. 58, 219.

become Whig collaborators. John Speke, master of Dillington house, did remain active in local affairs, and John Trenchard tried to advise James II, with little success. But all was quiet at Whitelackington. It is easy to imagine that George and Mary were numbed by their experiences. They were both in their fifties and George was ailing. They had been publicly humiliated, severely fined, and seen their son hanged from a tree. In August of 1686, John Trenchard informed his brother that he should allow Mary Jennings "£300 upon her mortgage," if she could make use of it. However, he was not to press the matter, "I think it best not to say much to them till they have an opportunity to get thinking clear and time has lessened the impositions of their sorrow."[105] Then in the fall of 1688, the Prince of Orange marched through Somerset. In the West, John Trenchard began raising money for him, and old George Speke saddled up and rode out to greet the Prince.[106]

In the spring of 1689, George Speke petitioned Parliament hoping to recover some of the fines levied against himself and his wife for high treason during the reign of James II.[107] He died three years later.[108] Mary's "darling," John Trenchard, had a brief stint as William III's Secretary of State of the Northern Department, but his health was impaired by tuberculosis, and he died in 1695.[109] Mary's will was made in 1697, leaving her estate to young William, and it was proved in 1706.[110] John's son, George, inherited Whitelackington and carried on the Speke tradition of Whig partisanship in Parliament in the early eighteenth century. Neither Mary nor George left Hugh anything in their wills, and the black sheep seems to have had little contact with his family after the Revolution. Hugh was briefly employed by John Trenchard as

[105] DHC, BLX/D60, f 57. Letter from John Trenchard to Henry Trenchard (August 26, 1686).
[106] H.C. Foxcroft, *The Life and Letters of Sir George Savile*, 2 vols. (London, 1898), 2: 13.
[107] *Journals of the House of Commons*, 10: 128.
[108] George's will made Mary the executor and transferred several manors to his youngest son, William, for the security of William over debts amounting to £10,000 for which George and William stood jointly engaged. Once the debts were paid, the manors were to be returned to the rightful heir, John. John contested the will, but the court found it valid. NA PROB 28/1249.
[109] Trenchard was honored as a great defender of the nation in the Nahum Tate's poem celebrating Williamite appointees, "A Poem on the Promotion of Several Eminent Persons in Church and State," collected in *An Essay on Poetry* (London, 1697), pp. 5–6.
[110] Mary's will is NA, PROB 11/491, f. 133r.

a "witness-monger" against suspected Jacobites in the early 1690s and for a short time, lived lavishly and, as usual, beyond his means.[111] But by the early 1700s, he had married a "wicked woman" and lived in poverty, eking out a living by petitioning the government and notables for money in compensation for his family's suffering in the 1680s and his own great service to the Revolution.[112]

The story of Mary Speke and her family during the Restoration is certainly not a happy one, but it is instructive. First and foremost, it demonstrates the intricate connection between nonconformity and Whig activism. What propelled the Speke children to act out, first and foremost, was their Puritanism imbibed from their mother. Their Whig politicking was an offshoot of their commitment to Presbyterianism. For the Spekes, the struggles of the 1680s were not so much about Whig and Tory, as they were about the "true" and "false" religion. George Speke's troubles started when he tried to defend his wife's desire to worship with her brethren. The old Cavalier was shocked when he found he could not protect her. His rash statements – that the King is an ass, the Queen a whore, all bishops are popish – speak to a man who was angry and resentful. Their father's wrath and their mother's devotion inspired the children. The sons did all they could to propagate the Popish Plot tales of Catholic blood lust and Protestant suffering. Their goal was to discredit the Duke of York and to ensure a Protestant succession through the Duke of Monmouth. And when Monmouth came in 1685, the eldest Speke daughter was "all afloat," thinking that this was "their day," a day of liberation for all true Protestants. While the sources are limited, it seems fairly clear that the Spekes of Whitelackington were not republicans. They might have been Whig constitutionalists; but they certainly never spoke of limiting the monarchy, never mentioned the

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[111] According to Robert Ferguson, "Mr [Hugh] Speak . . . hath been looked upon by reason of his folly, accompanied by his vanity, as the sport of society and the buffoon of the town . . . God hath denied him of understanding and good sense." *Letter to John Holt* (London, 1694), p. 14.

[112] Hugh claimed to be the author of the spurious "Third Declaration" of William of Orange which supposedly ignited Irish Night (the backlash against Catholics in London) during the Revolution. In 1703, Hugh petitioned Parliament for monetary compensation in consideration of all that his family had paid in fines under James II. He also had an account of his mighty deeds during the Revolution (*Some Memoirs of Most Remarkable Passages and Transactions on the Late Happy Revolution in 1688*) translated into French for George I. He also sent copies of his book to Archbishop Thomas Tenison and the Countess of Shaftesbury. See his letters in NA, PRO 30/24/28, ff. 4–5.

ancient constitution or used terms like "contract" or "rights."[113] What we know for sure is that their mother's commitment to Presbyterianism left them outside the exclusive Restoration Church and that, like their Puritan neighbors, they felt threatened by what they saw as a corrupt and popish Court. What they fought for was the freedom to worship as they wished.

Clearly, Mary Speke was at the center of this factious family. She was in the thick of radical politicking of the early 1680s, perhaps no less than Elizabeth Gaunt, although the extent of her activities remains unknown. Perhaps too her social status as a gentlewoman and as the wife of the one-time royalist saved her from the full wrath of the Court. Yet Bishop Mews thought she was the "the most dangerous woman in the West," not simply, it would seem, because she herself was a political incendiary, but because she had converted her family into fanatics. Such was the power of mothers.

[113] Their support for the Duke of Monmouth suggests their willingness to alter the royal succession; yet they also spread the claim that Monmouth was Charles II's legitimate heir and they might have believed him to be so.

Figure 3.1 Aphra Behn – permission to publish from the National Portrait Gallery, London

3
Sanctified Sisters: Aphra Behn and the Culture of Nonconformity

Behold the race, whence England's woes proceed,
The Viper's nest, where all our Mischiefs breed,
There, guided, by Inspiration, Treason speaks,
And through the Holy Bag-pipe Legion squeaks.

The Nation's Curse, Religion's ridicule,
The Rabble's God, the Politician's tool,
Scorn of the Wise, and Scandal of the Just,
The Villain's Refuge, and the Women's Lust.

Aphra Behn, "On a Conventicle"[1]

Unlike the "religious Mrs. Mary Speke,"[2] who sought out conventicles in her native Somerset, the cosmopolitan poet and playwright in London, Aphra Behn was unlikely to have ever attended or observed a Dissenting meeting. Her poem, "On a Conventicle," derives, it seems, from her own fertile imagination as well as from the rich stock of satiric images of Puritans that harkened back to the time of Elizabeth I. Behn's poetic pairing of Dissent with treason and civil strife was, of course, very much an outgrowth of the Civil Wars when religious dissidents in large numbers sided with Parliament against the King. Sour memories of the violence and chaos of those years were still fresh during the Restoration and, as we have seen, oppositional politics and religious nonconformity were still intertwined in the years following Charles II's return. While this

[1] Published for the first time as "Verses by Madam Behn" in *Miscellany Poems upon Several Occasions* (London, 1692); also in Behn, *Works*, 1: 355–6.
[2] James Strong, *Lydia's Heart Opened: or, Divine Mercy Magnified in the Conversion of a Sinner by the Gospel* (London, 1675), dedication.

linkage was exaggerated in royalist propaganda, it existed nonetheless, and in the very heady years of the 1680s, the visibility of Dissenting politicians and preachers involved in Whig politics, often in its most radical forms, was right before all eyes. Parliamentary politics, street demonstrations, coffee house and tavern talk as well as the press, the pulpit, the court room, and the stage were all filled with the noise of partisan politics.

Women were consumers and producers of the rancorous political culture in the first age of party. Opportunities made possible through street politics and the press allowed women, just as they did men of the middling and plebian ranks, the possibility to engage in the political dramas unfolding in the era of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis. While those women who were knee-deep in seditious politics did their best to stay beneath the radar, they were not always successful, as we have seen. The fact that these women were Dissenters certainly did not escape notice either. The image of Baptist, Elizabeth Gaunt, clutching her Bible as she was slowly burnt to death at Tyburn in October of 1685 was part of the public consciousness. It was a chilling spectacle attended by hundreds and, even if Aphra Behn was not among the crowd that day (although who is to say that she was not) she certainly would have known the grisly details of Gaunt's death, seen her dying speech sold on the streets and in bookshops, and heard about the Baptist woman's last words. Elizabeth Gaunt's story would undoubtedly have confirmed for Behn what she already believed: that Protestant Dissent seduced and corrupted women, making them the pawns of self-interested and conniving men whose ambitions were purely worldly.

Certainly, much has been written about Aphra Behn in the last thirty odd years. Much has been written about the political images and allusions in her writings, particularly for the stage, and much has been written about Behn's portrayal of women and about her own supposed feminist consciousness.[3] So too scholars have also tried to understand

[3] On the political context and contents of Behn's writings, see Janet Todd, ed., *Aphra Behn Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Susan Owen, *Restoration Theater in Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Melinda Zook, "Contextualizing Aphra Behn: Plays, Politics, and Party, 1679–1689," in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Anita Pacheco, "Reading Toryism in Aphra Behn's Cit-Cuckolding Comedies," *The Review of English Studies* 55/22 (2004): 690–708; Susan Wiseman, *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, Writing, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 349–63. On Behn's portrayal of women and her feminism,

Behn's religious faith, if she had any.[4] What needs attending, for our purposes, is simply this: Behn's record on Dissent and particularly her portrayal of Dissenting women. Behn had much to say about the corrosive nature of Protestant nonconformity. On the one hand, her own brand of ardent royalism certainly came shining through her work. She was unrelenting and unforgiving to those that she saw as the enemies of the Stuart state and, more particularly, to a culture that the Stuart monarchy represented to her, one that was artistically, intellectually, and sexually liberal. On the other hand, Behn wrote for profit. She knew what her audience desired and she delivered. She both exploited popular fears and anxieties about Dissenting Protestants and she advanced those same fears and anxieties. This makes her a valuable gauge of royalist opinion. Behn's poetry and plays offer a lens through which we can see Dissenting women as they were seen by many English in the era of Restoration and Revolution. This chapter examines the shaping of Behn's political outlook during her time abroad as well as how her own imaginative writing shaped Dissent, Dissenting women, and their relationship to politics.

For Aphra Behn, women like the radical bookseller Elizabeth Calvert, the Baptist Elizabeth Gaunt, and the Presbyterian Mary Speke were a direct threat to the social and sexual order as well as to the monarchy and the Established Church. First and foremost, Behn was repelled by what she saw as the hypocrisy and dissimulation of Protestant nonconformity. The sectarians' dissembling, both in public and in private, corrupted the nation, pushing the traditional order to the brink of collapse. Their religious cant was corrosive. It might seem harmless enough to some lax gentry in the countryside, half-heartedly executing the penal laws, or those accommodating churchmen, who spoke of "moderation," but if sectarianism were allowed to grow unfettered it could infiltrate and sicken the entire polity. Whig slogans and godly

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see the first two chapters in Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Ros Ballaster, "'Pretences of State:' Aphra Behn and the Female Plot," in *Reading Aphra Behn: History, Theory and Criticism*, ed. H. Hunter (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press,1993); Donald Wehrs, "*Eros*, Ethics, Identity: Royalist Feminism and the Politics of Desire in Aphra Behn's *Love Letters*," *SEL* 32 (1992): 461–78; Dolors Altaba-Artal, *Aphra Behn's English Feminism: Wit and Satire* (Selingsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1999).

[4] On Behn's religion, Sara Mendelson, *The Mental World of Stuart Women* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), passim; Alison Shell, "Popish Plots: *The Feign'd Curtizans* in context," in *Aphra Behn Studies*, pp. 30–49.

drivel might seem liberating to some silly women and ignorant artisans and tradesmen. But ultimately, it was merely a tool used by deceitful men, grasping for power and wealth and bent on the destruction of the old order. Tory politics and culture, on the other hand, were transparent. The rules of political, social, and sexual behavior were not hidden in a coded language but plainly visible in the common currency of English traditions.

Behn Abroad: Adventures in the New World and Europe

To the great part of the Main, I myself was an Eye-witness . . .
Behn[5]

In the 1660s, Aphra Behn was in her twenties, a handsome woman, lively, witty, and flirtatious, of indeterminate origins and social class. She spent approximately eighteen months abroad: first, in the New World, and secondly, in the medieval city of Antwerp. Her adventures in Surinam and Antwerp may not have been her first experiences beyond English shores. Behn's superior knowledge of the continent, the French language, and particularly of the institutions of Roman Catholicism, suggest some extended stay in Europe, perhaps in the Low Countries or France. Perhaps she even spent time in a convent.[6] But as with much of Behn's biography, all this remains conjecture. Her trips to Surinam and Antwerp, on the other hand, can be traced through the sources, however limited. In both cases, she came into contact with that sometimes stealthy, sometimes downright desperate and forlorn world of English republicans on the run. In Europe, she also crossed paths with what was, in many ways, its polar opposite: the lush and ornate world of the Catholic baroque. It would be hard to imagine that these two worlds did not influence Behn's later writings and particularly her sentiments on the topic of religion.

Behn, her mother and siblings, lived in the English colony of Surinam in South America, located between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers, for approximately six months, from August 1663 to February 1664. Surinam was a tumultuous place in the early 1660s, divided by factions and competing interests. The royalist governor, Major William Bynam, was

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[5] Behn, *The Fair Jilt*, in Behn, *Works*, 2: 381.

[6] In her short story, *The History of the Nun or the Fair Vow-Breaker*, Behn claimed that she was "design'd an humble Votary in the House of Devotion." Behn, *Works*, 3: 212.

trying to gain the upper hand, and his tactics were seen as ruthless, especially by a nest of political dissidents.[7] Traditionally, scholars following Behn's own story in her novella, *Oroonoko*, have asserted that Behn's father was sent to Surinam to assume an administrative post. His death on the passage over would account for the brevity of their stay.[8] More recently, Behn's biographer, Janet Todd, supposes that Behn herself was sent to the colony as an agent working for Charles II's government on a mission to ferret out information on republicans in Surinam, including William Scott and George Marten.[9] Either way, it is clear that Behn became acquainted with these men and received her first taste of the hapless world of defeated soldiers and former Cromwellian office-holders.

Among the men that Behn came into contact with in Surinam was George Marten. George and his brother, Henry, were the sons of a Puritan father and, perhaps as a consequence, they were both hedonistic playboys, who lavished what money they had on wine and women. John Aubrey says that Henry was "as far from a Puritan as light from darkness."[10] Nonetheless, he was one of the most popular and fanatical anti-monarchists in the years leading up to the King's execution in 1649. A witty man of many contradictions (he both despoiled the Westminster Abbey of popish "toys and trifles" and argued for religious toleration, Catholics included), Marten had served as one the King's judges and signed the death warrant.[11] He was instrumental in the formation of the new Republic but grew increasingly suspicious of Cromwell's ambitions. Behn describes Henry Marten in *Oroonoko* as "the Great Oliverian." But Marten was at odds with Cromwell, and he held no positions during the Protectorate. In 1658, when the Long Parliament was recalled, he had to be retrieved from prison, where he was languishing for debt. With the return of the monarchy,

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[7] *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623–1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925), letters on Surinam, pp. 184–7; Henry Adis, *A Letter Sent from Syrranam* (London, 1664), pp. 4–5.

[8] *Oroonoko* in Behn, *Works*, 3: 95; also see "The History of the Life and Memoirs of Mrs. Behn," in *All the Histories and Novels Written by the Late Ingenious Mrs. Behn, Entire in One Volume* (London, 1698), pp. 2–3.

[9] Janet Todd, *Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1996), pp. 40–2.

[10] John Aubrey, *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 354.

[11] *Commons Journals*, 3: 24; "Henry Marten," *DNB*, s. v; Sarah Barber, *A Revolutionary Rogue: Henry Marten and the English Republic* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2000), passim.

Marten, a regicide, submitted himself according to royal order and was imprisoned. Ultimately, through a combination of wit and luck, he saved his neck from the halter, although he remained in prison until his death in 1680.[12]

While scholars know quite a bit about Henry, thanks in part to the colorful portrait drawn of him by Aubrey, they know far less about his younger brother, George. According to Sarah Barber's biography of Henry Marten, George captained his brother's ship, *Marten*, and saw some action during the first Civil War.[13] Although he had married well, he was constantly in debt and in search of an easy fortune. He sailed to Barbados in 1646. Once there, he seems to have abandoned his interests in England and established himself as a plantation and slave owner, living openly with a woman he called "butter-box."[14] While royalists maintained control of the island, there was a significant group of republicans and nonconformists vying for power. Political life was turbulent and trade uncertain. Marten was part of the faction of men described collectively as "old, overgrown, desperate malignants."[15] By 1658, Martin was bankrupt. He fled Barbados, escaping his creditors and setting his sights on sugar in Surinam, where he once again became a plantation owner.[16] Enter the young, flirtatious, and inquisitive Aphra Behn: she seems to have been duly impressed by George Marten. She describes him as a man of "great gallantry, wit, and goodness . . . he was wise and eloquent and from the fineness of his parts bore a great sway over the hearts of the colony." In *Oroonoko*, he nobly refuses to display the quarters of the slaughtered hero, an African prince, saying he could "govern his negroes without terrifying and grieving them with frightful spectacles of a mangled King."[17] There must have been some intimacy or at least a meeting of the minds between Behn and Marten. She later wrote about both George and Henry and their parsimonious father in

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[12] *Oroonoko*, 3: 97; Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, p. 193; Mark Noble, *The Lives of the English Regicides*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1798), 2: 39; Sarah Barber, "Marten, Henry (1601/1–1680)," *ODNB*.

[13] Barber, *A Revolutionary Rogue,* see Chapter VI, "Trade and the Sea."

[14] Marten's plantation consisted of 259 acres; he owned 60 slaves. Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* (New York: Norton & Co., 1973), p. 68; Barber, *A Revolutionary Rogue*, pp. 122–33.

[15] [E.M. Shilstone], "Some Records of the House of Assembly of Barbados," *Journal of Barbados Museum and History Society* X (1943), p. 175.

[16] *Colonising Expeditions*, pp. 194, 195.

[17] *Oroonoko*, 3: 111, 118.

her play, *The Younger Brother* (1696).[18] Behn seems to have been attracted to bold, adventurous men with healthy appetites for sex and alcohol.

But George Marten was hardly the only middle-aged republican swaggering about Surinam. Behn was also intrigued, at least at first, by Colonel William Scott.

He was the son of Thomas Scott, one of the regicides executed in October 1660. Thomas Scott had sat in the Long Parliament and was a commissioner at the trial of Charles I and signed his death warrant. For a time, he served as an intelligence gatherer for Cromwell, employing spies both at home and abroad.[19] An ardent republican, Scott opposed the increasingly dictatorial powers of Cromwell and any limitations of the freedoms of the people. "Shall I," he declared in Parliament in 1658, "that sat in a parliament that brought a king to the bar, and to the block, not speak my mind freely here?" Even as the Republic began to collapse, following the intervention of General George Monck, Scott remained steadfast in his principles, asserting that he could have no better epitaph than, "here lieth one who had a hand and a heart in the execution of Charles Stuart."[20] His bold statements, coupled with his role in Charles's execution, compounded his doom. Following the restoration of the monarchy, Scott fled to Flanders. But in Brussels he was recognized by royalist agents, arrested, and returned to England in June 1660. He tried but failed to obtain a pardon and was executed. He was stoic and unapologetic on the scaffold.[21] Thomas Scott had two sons who also wore the "green sleeves" of the Good Old Cause, but lacked both their father's administrative talents and his bravery. His namesake, Colonel Thomas Scott, became entangled with republican activity in Ireland after the Restoration. He was arrested in 1663 but saved himself by turning King's evidence against his restless friends.[22] Thomas Scott's other son, his impecunious and "improvident son," as he called William, was probably a lawyer, who seems only to have been successful

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[18] *The Younger Brother, or, the Amorous Jilt* (London, 1696). Marten was later carried off by a pestilence that swept through Surinam sometime before 1668. HMC*: Fourteenth Report, Manuscripts of the Duke of Portland* (London, 1894), 3: 310.

[19] *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds., Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 1:14.

[20] "Thomas Scott," *DNB,* s. v; North, *Regicides*, 2: 172.

[21] *CSPD*, Charles II, 10: 649; *The Speeches and Prayers of Major General Harrison, October 13; Mr. John Carew, October 15; Mr. Justice Cooke, Mr. Hugh Peters, October 16, Mr. Tho. Scott* (London, 1660).

[22] Pepys, *Diary*, 4: 168; Richard Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660–1663* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 145, 148.

in life so long as his father could hoist him to lucrative places within the Commonwealth.[23] In the early 1660s, William could see by his father's sad experience in Brussels that Europe was simply not far enough away from the prying eyes of the royalist government and so he dispatched himself to Surinam.

The relationship between Scott and Behn in Surinam is far from clear. In addition to being quite a bit older than Behn, he was also married, and while that might not have been an impediment to Scott, it probably made Behn think twice. Behn might have been his mistress; they might have been simply friends. Behn might have been sent to Surinam to make contact with Scott and his ilk in the first place, as Janet Todd supposes. But the evidence is thin. All that is known for sure is that she was sufficiently enough acquainted with him to warrant the government's interest in using her to further worm information from him in 1665. While perhaps over-rating her services, Behn declared to Secretary Arlington that, "No person in the world but herself could have drawn him [Scott] to service."[24]

Not long after Behn and her entourage left Surinam, Scott made his way to Rotterdam. There he made contact with English dissidents, including an old operative of his father's, Colonel Joseph Bampfield. Bampfield had organized a troop of horse in the service of the Dutch. This cavalry unit was composed of numerous English radicals, desperate for employment abroad and more than willing to work for foreign hire. Bampfield befriended Scott, but the two men remained wary of each other and not without good reason. Bampfield was the more experienced of the two. He had already had a long and colorful career in espionage by 1665. He had served as a royalist colonel during the Civil War and famously helped the Duke of York escape from St. James's Palace in 1648, accompanying him to the Netherlands. Once in Europe, however, Bampfield was unable to gain the trust of the King in exile, Charles II. In need of employment, he switched allegiances in the 1650s and worked for Cromwell's regime as an agent in Europe, keeping watch over royalists and gathering information on foreign governments. He also made frequent trips to England and maintained a network of Presbyterian contacts. With the Restoration, he assumed that he would be included in Charles II's general pardon. Instead he was imprisoned in the Tower. Seen as untrustworthy, which was probably not an unfair

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[23] Thomas Scott quoted in Todd, *Secret Life*, p. 43.
[24] *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 236.

assessment, Bampfield left England as soon as he was able and worked as an intelligencer for the Dutch from 1665 to 1672. He also maintained contact with ejected preachers and radicals in England like Jane Holmes, discussed in Chapter 1. But not unlike many English abroad in those years, he was still continually trying to obtain a pardon from London.[25]

A royal pardon was certainly what William Scott sought. Proclamations from London on the eve of the first Anglo-Dutch war ordered disgruntled English abroad to return home and face trial. Should they remain in foreign lands, they risked losing everything if they were captured.[26] Scott may well have seen his choices in terms of the fate of his executed father and his turncoat, but very much alive, brother. In 1666, Scott contacted the Secretary of State, Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington, looking to be rehabilitated. He promised information on Dutch defenses in return for a pardon. He was probably desperately frightened of being seized by the royalist agents in search of His Majesties' rebellious subjects. But the restored regime was suspicious of Scott's claims to knowledge; desperate men often promised more than they could deliver. Thus they sent Behn (code name: Astrea) to have Scott (code name: Celadon) answer a series of questions and judge his sincerity. In the meantime, Scott did not sit on his hands awaiting rescue. Not unlike Bampfield, he was also playing a double game. Making overtures to London while at the same time helping the Dutch Republic of John de Witt capture English spies.[27]

It was into this bleak and uncertain world of espionage and counter-espionage, code names and ciphers, invisible ink and secrets for sale to which Behn sought access in the summer of 1666. With her brother and several servants, Behn sailed to Flanders.[28] Antwerp was her destination. It was still part of the Spanish Netherlands, and far safer for royalist agents like herself than Holland. Ship board on the voyage

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[25] *Colonel Joseph Bampfield's Apology*, eds. John Clyde Loftis and Paul H. Hardacre (London: Associated University Presses,1993), passim; *CSPD*, Charles II, 1: 171, 2:391; James Walker, "The Secret Service under Charles II and James II," *TRHS* 15 (1932): 225–6.

[26] See *By the King, A Proclamation Requiring some of His Majesties Subjects in the Parts beyond the Seas to Return to England* (London, 1666), naming Scott and Bampfield.

[27] *CSPD*, Charles II, 4: 500; Herbert H. Rowan, *John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625–1672* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 160–1.

[28] Aphra was briefly married to one "Mr. Behn," a merchant after she returned from Surinam. Janet Todd believes that Behn's husband was one "Jonas Behn," a merchant sailor and probably a slaver. Todd, *Secret Life*, pp. 67–70. He was dead by 1666, perhaps having succumbed to the plague that ravaged London in 1665.

was the Catholic Lord Stafford, going to visit relatives in a convent in Lorrain. Behn made his acquaintance and through him began a journey into another world completely opposed to that of Marten, Scott, and Bampfield. William Howard, Viscount Stafford, was a polished and widely traveled man in his early fifties when Behn met him. On the one hand, he was reputed to be haughty and was generally unpopular in fashionable London society and even among his own family. On the other, as a cosmopolitan man and member of the Royal Society, along with his status as a peer of the realm, Strafford attracted the curious and social climbing Behn. Their party visited a convent in Bruges and from there made their way to Antwerp where Stafford's daughter was a nun.[29]

In the sixteenth century, the port town of Antwerp was the second largest city in Europe and the richest. While the city's golden age was a thing of the past by the second half of the seventeenth century, it was still a marvelous place to behold. It had become a centre of the Catholic Counter Reformation (Jesuits, along with Dominican and Augustinian friars, had all settled there) and was still "an artistic and cultural metropolis where famous personalities such as Rubens and Van Dijk were active."[30] Visitors described the streets as "clean and beautiful;" and the townhouses, "sumptuous." But most impressive were its many Catholic churches and cloisters. The fourteenth-century Gothic Cathedral, "Onze Lieve Vrouwkathedral" (Church of our Blessed Lady), dominated Antwerp's skyline then as it does now. Built between 1351 and 1521, it was the largest structure in the Netherlands. Although seriously damaged by fire and iconoclastic furies in 1566 and again in 1581, the cathedral could not have failed to make an impression on Behn. It was, according to one seventeenth-century travel account, "a magnificent pile of building and of a prodigious extent." "The steeple is the fairest in the world, five hundred foot high." The cathedral contained "sixty-six chapels, with a great number of marble pillars, paintings, and other rich ornaments." "The vestry is wonderfully stored with rich church-stuff, shining with gold, silver, diamonds, pearls, rubies, and

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[29] "My Lord Stafford was not a man beloved, especially by his own family." Evelyn, *Diary*, 4: 234; *DNB*, s. v., "William Howard, Viscount Stafford;" Todd, *Secret Life*, pp. 90–1.

[30] Michael Limberger, " 'No Town in the World Provides More Advantages:' Economics of Agglomeration and Golden Age of Antwerp," in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*, eds. Patrick O'Brien, Derek Keene, Marjolein t'Hart and Herman van der Wee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 49.

other precious stones."[31] In addition to the cathedral, convents, and monasteries was the Jesuit Church built between 1615 and 1621. The baroque church of St. Ignatius (now the St. Charles Borromeo church) was also an imposing structure. John Evelyn visited it in 1641. "I exceedingly admired that sumptuous and most magnificent church of the Jesuits," he wrote, "being a very glorious fabric without and within wholly encrusted with marble and polished into divers representations of histories, landscapes, and flowers."[32] Rubens played an important part in the decoration of the Church's façade, the pinnacle of the tower, and especially the interior. Visitors were greeted in the front of the Church by a statue of Ignatius Loyola and the powerful religious images and sumptuous decoration on the baroque façade. The Jesuit Church was an inspiring monument, representative of a fusion of humanist and Roman Catholic principles. This rich and splendiferous world of Catholic beauty impressed the imaginative Behn.

Regardless of whether or not this was Behn's first acquaintance with European Catholicism, it is easy to understand how the churches and convents of Antwerp may have been the inspiration behind her descriptions of Catholic ceremonies in her epistolary novel, *Love Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684–87) and her short story, set entirely in Antwerp, *The Fair Jilt* (1688). Both works suggest a thorough acquaintance and appreciation of the various monastic orders. It is possible that Behn herself had been born into the Catholic Church or converted to Catholicism at some point in her life. She seemed to find Catholic ritual dazzling, sensual, and even erotic: "sure there is nothing gives an Idea of real Heaven, like a Church all adorned with rare Pictures, and the other Ornaments of it, which what even Charm the Eyes; and Musick, and voices to Ravish the Ear."[33] Janet Todd surmises that Behn was drawn to the elegant, the extravagant, "the sensuous drench," and that she might have found the Catholic baroque a religious experience akin to the kind of aristocratic excess that she found so attractive in men like Stafford and later the Earl of Rochester.[34] It is equally possible

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[31] Edward Brown, *A Brief Account of Some Travels in Divers Parts of Europe* (London, 1685), pp. 108–9; E. Veryard, *An Account of Diver Choice Remarks . . . Taken in a Journey through the Low Countries, France, Italy* (London, 1701), pp. 38–9.

[32] Evelyn, *Diary*, 2: 63–4; Piet Lombarde, "Antwerp in its Golden Age: 'One of the Largest Cities in the Low Countries' and 'One of the Best Fortified,' " in *Urban Achievement*, p. 115.

[33] *Love Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*, Behn, *Works*, 2: 381.

[34] Todd, *Secret Life*, p. 109; Sara Mendelson makes the case that Behn was most Catholic at the end of her life, see *The Mental World*, pp. 117–20, 148–50.

that Behn, always interested in turning a profit with her writing, was playing on English fears of popery as superstitious religion that seduces the worshipper with its music, candles, artwork, and incense. Nonetheless, even if she remained a member of the Church of England, she certainly retained strong sympathies for the sheer beauty of Counter Reformation Catholicism.

But Behn's business in Antwerp was not to wander among the chapels and gardens of its Catholic institutions. She opened communication with Scott shortly after her arrival.[35] He was nervous about leaving the safety of the Netherlands. He had good reason. Scott had recently betrayed two agents, working for the English, to the Dutch, one of which they had promptly executed. The other, Thomas Corney, had managed to escape after being held prisoner for six months. Corney was in Flanders and vowing to kill Scott. Bampfield also made Scott nervous, watching his every move.[36] Naturally, under such conditions, Scott was eager to find an avenue back to England, and in a rather cloak and dagger scenario, he met Behn in a closed carriage for their first conversation. Behn paid his expenses and soon found herself in financial difficulty. She dutifully wrote to her contacts in London; she needed money and a pardon for Scott. While her missives went unanswered, she continued to communicate with Scott. Behn's arrival in Antwerp had also raised the suspicions of Thomas Corney. He was a most unwanted guest at her abode, where he visited frequently. Behn found him arrogant and full of bluster.[37] She sent on what information Scott gave her but received little encouragement from the English government. Over time, Behn must have felt abused by all sides. Scott continued to milk her for money; London rarely answered her pleas for funds and direction; and Corney darkened her door daily. Secretary Arlington's office did finally send Behn fifty pounds, but it was not nearly enough to cover her expenses. In November, Scott's double game finally landed him in prison when Bampfield betrayed his activities to the Dutch. No longer able to provide Behn with information, he was useless. Money from London only

[35] The story of Behn's spying mission in Antwerp has been told by her biographers, although some details differ. The fullest account is in Todd, *Secret Life*, pp. 86–106; but also see, Maureen Duffy, *Passionate Shepherdess: Aphra Behn 1640–89* (London: Methuen, 1989), pp. 69–77. I have stayed close to the primary sources on Behn's mission in the State Papers and *Colonel Joseph Bampfield's Apology*.

[36] *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 44, 72.

[37] Behn calls Corney an "insufferable, scandalous, lying, prating fellow." *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 145.

came with results and with Scott out of commission, Behn too became obsolete. She sold what valuables she had left and returned to London in December 1666. She found herself threatened with debtors' prison soon thereafter.[38]

Behn's short career in espionage was far from glamorous. The life of the spy, writes Alan Marshall, was "often dangerous, dirty, and humiliating." Nor were Behn's experiences terribly unique. English spies were always underpaid. In fact, Behn was given more money at the outset of her journey than were most. She was probably not very savvy about her expenses and was certainly "ruthlessly pillaged by Scott."[39] Corney found Behn "indiscreet;" and true enough, she seems to have been unable to keep her mission a secret. Both Lord Strafford and Sir Anthony Desmarces, with whom Behn had sailed, saw Behn in Scott's company. Behn openly discussed her assignment with Desmarces.[40] In contrast to Marshall's rather dim view of Behn's spying career, Behn's defenders have envisioned her as a victim of a careless and misogynist government that "laughed at" her information about Dutch forces to their own peril. Andrew Barnaby, Lisa Schnell, and Ros Ballaster, unfortunately, base this reading on a secondary account and one which is highly problematic.[41] There is no reason to suppose that Behn's information was treated any differently than that of any other spy. There is also no reason to assert that from this experience, Behn had learned to distrust the restored regime, as Schnell and Barnaby suppose, when they write that from her spying mission Behn "discovers in the community of truth-gatherers by which she is commissioned in the 1660s, a reverse ethic of distrust, deceit, and betrayal, a situation that was made particularly, and painfully, clear to her when she found herself in debtor's prison upon her return from Antwerp, the government having reneged on its

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[38] *CSPD*, Charles II, 9: 127; *Bampfield's Apology*, p. 204.

[39] Alan Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the Reign of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 139–41.

[40] NA SP 77/35, ff. 91–2; *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 44.

[41] Barnaby, Schnell, and Ballaster base this assertion on the anonymous biography written shortly after Behn's death in *All the Histories and Novels Written by the Late Ingenious Mrs. Behn* (London, 1689), p. 8. It is unfortunate that these scholars treat this highly improbably statement (that Behn's dispatches were "laughed at") as though it were fact. Ballaster,"'Pretences of State:' Aphra Behn and the Female Plot," in *Rereading Aphra Behn*, p. 191; Andrew Barnaby and Lisa J. Schnell, *Literate Experience: The Work of Knowing in Seventeenth-Century English Writing* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 161–2.

contract by refusing to pay her for her services."[42] This is a speculation that the sources simply do not support.

A far more likely scenario for which there is evidence is that what the thoroughly royalist Behn learned from her travels abroad was that the world of English republicans and Dissenters in exile was shallow, grimy, unstable, and deceptive. This milieu of back-stabbing, bribery, and poverty stood in sharp contrast to the steady, sumptuous, and lavish world of the Catholic baroque. Certainly, Behn in her days in Surinam might have found the drunken swaggering of men like George Marten attractive. But, older and wiser in Antwerp, she soon found the coterie of ever plotting and bold-talking Cromwellian exiles nauseating. "All the rogues from Holland [English and Scottish dissidents] flock thither," she reported, "and talk such treason about the King as would make one mad." Nor was she fooled by Scott. She knew that he was playing a double game with both the English and the Dutch and she referred to him in her missives home as a "rogue."[43] Certainly, considering the ardent royalism of Behn's plays and poems in the 1670s and 1680s and her antipathy towards Whigs and Dissenters, it is hard to imagine that she held Charles II's government in contempt for her unprofitable spying mission. Rather, the Stuart Court's growing sympathy for Catholicism and fashionable obsession with all things French as well as the calm beauty of Catholic ritual and the lush and sumptuous lifestyle of aristocratic men like Stafford, were the things that attracted Behn's bright spirit. Against such a background, the world of conspiratorial street politics and back stairs conventicles must have looked tawdry and cheap.

A Tradition of Anti-Puritan Satire

> *Frippery: Can you carry yourself cunningly and seem most holy?*
> *Novice: O, fear not that, sir! My friends were all Puritans*[44]
>
> Thomas Middleton

It is with little wonder that the themes of deceit, dissimulation, and equivocation should so often appear in Behn's writing. She had certainly seen all three in action during her time in Antwerp. But the connection

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[42] Schnell and Barnaby, *Literate Experience*, p. 162.
[43] *CSPD*, Charles II, 6: 135, 72.
[44] Thomas Middleton, *Your Five Gallants* (London, 1627), Act 1, sc. 1.

between deception and religious and political dissidents within English literature was hardly a new one, and Behn's writings resonated, reinforced, and built on a long and rich tradition of anti-Puritan satire. Behn made it clear, time and again, that she acquainted Protestant Dissenters with Whigs in the 1680s and both with the republicans, Puritans, and sectarians whom loyalists like herself held responsible for the bloodshed and chaos of the Civil Wars and the execution of Charles I. Whether their treason lay in their political machinations or in their subversive religious gatherings, or both, Behn depicted them as the enemies of all that was transparent, ordered, stable, honest, and magnanimous.

Puritans, from the age of Queen Elizabeth onwards, were certainly vulnerable to the charges of being revolutionary. They did, after all, seek change. They were advocates of reformation, the transforming of the church and society into something more pure, godly, and based on gospel truths. Calvinist churches in France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Scotland were their models. They attacked the ecclesiastical structure of the Church of England, asserting, among other things, that the office of the bishop had no forerunner in the gospel, whereas presbytery was a truly biblical form of order. The mitre also smacked of Rome. So too the elaborate liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer, the collects, and traditional merrymaking such as church ales and maypoles were seen by Puritans as corruptions, sordid leftovers from the country's Catholic past. That Puritans were not simply spoilers, that they honestly sought to elevate the people through good preaching, reading of Scripture, and a personal prayer life rather than one dictated by rote, did not matter. To their detractors, they were scheming, self-serving disturbers of the traditional order.[45] In *A Satyre: The Puritan and the Papist* (1643), Abraham Cowley compares Puritans to Catholics, pointing out that whereas papists "blind obedience and blind duty teach," Puritans "blind rebellion and blind faction preach."[46]

Thus many Anglicans mistrusted the Puritan desire for reform. Sir Francis Bacon voiced the opinion of many conformists when he asserted that making religious changes based on minor qualms was unwise and dangerous. What reason was there to believe that presbyters would govern any better than bishops? And what reason, as James I reflected in his

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[45] William P. Holden, *Anti-Puritan Satire, 1572–1641* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 32–6; Patrick Collinson, *The Puritan Character: Polemics and Polarities in Early Seventeenth-Century English Culture* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1989), pp. 1–6.

[46] Abraham Cowley, *A Satyre: The Puritan and the Papist* (London, 1643), p. 4.

"no bishop, no king" remark, was there to believe that Puritans would cease with their demands once the bishops were eradicated? Might they aim higher? For many, the ecclesiastical establishment was not only that which preserved the accustomed order of society, it was also a bulwark against new fangled and untested ideas. Queen Elizabeth had fought the Puritans to a draw; James I had tried to engage them, only to find their leaders, to his mind, both insufferable and uncompromising. The Caroline Church, however, posed a new threat to Puritan sensibilities. Since the Elizabethan settlement, both Puritans and Anglicans had preached the core doctrines of John Calvin, including predestination, election, and the inherent vileness of mankind. But the early Stuart Church began to soften and even ignore the grimmer aspects of Calvinism. The growth of Arminianism, with its emphasis on free will over predestination, within the Church pushed Puritans into further opposition. Whereas they had once merely disputed ritual and forms, Puritans now found themselves disagreeing with traditional clergy and even fellow parishioners over fundamental doctrine.[47] By the 1630s Puritans openly opposed Charles I's religious policies, and by the 1640s they were not merely reformers trying to work within the Church, they were revolutionaries demanding a completely new order. They also fragmented among themselves as sectarian groups, each one seemingly more radical than the last, gained increasing prominence.

Both the Puritans within the Church, and the sectarians outside it, were easy to mock. In Jacobean literature, Puritans are portrayed as biblical literalists, able to find a justification for any minutia by thumbing through the good book. Because they were often seen as scrupling over minor details of the Church service (such as the bowing at the name of Jesus), they were often called "precisarians;" malcontents who busied themselves splitting hairs over insignificant rites, words, and services. But Puritans and sectarians were also accused of more secular shortcomings. They were killjoys. After Ben Jonson's archetype Puritan, Busy Zeal-for-the-Land, is placed in stocks for tipping a basket of gingerbreadmen that he declared were popish images, he modestly describes himself as "one that rejoiceth in his affliction, and sit here to prophesy the destruction of fairs and maypoles, wakes and Whitsun ales, and doth

[47] John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603–1689* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1998), pp. 54–61; Holden, *Anti-Puritan Satire*, pp. 36–8; Nicholas Tyacke, "The 'Rise of Puritanism' and the Legalization of Dissent, 1571–1719," in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, eds. J. Walsh, C. Haydon, and S. Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 27.

sigh and groan for reformation of abuses."[48] But, above all, Puritans were hypocrites who acted the part of saints, but were secretly sinners, extraordinarily well versed in disguising and dissembling their all-too-human foibles. Since many of them were merchants and tradesmen, they were open to charges of greed and miserliness. Puritan shopkeepers were swindlers, who talked a great deal about heaven while they cheated their customers' blind. Since so many Puritans were from the lower echelons of society, they were mocked as ignorant fools who pretended to be learned as they preached long-winded nonsense.[49]

The "foreignness" of Puritans and sectarians, deriving from the influence of Geneva as well as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, where a profusion of sects flourished, was also ripe for satire. Dutch cities were seen as spreading outlandish modes of worship as well as confusion and falsehoods. Anti-Puritan satire consistently portrayed Holland as a place where strange cults multiplied like rabbits; a place where cunning men could set up their own religion, profiting from the ignorance of the common folk. Typical is the exchange between Pedant and Forobosco in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Fair Maid of the Inn* (1626). Pedant states, "I am a schoolmaster sir, and would fain confer with you about erecting a new sect of religion at Amsterdam." "What the Devil should new sects of religion do there," Forobosco asks. "I assure you," Pedant replies, "I would get a great deal of money by it."[50] In James Shirley's *The Gentlemen of Venice* (1639), Malipiero declares, "I will live to Amsterdam,/ And add another schism to the two hundred/ Fourscore and odd;/ I am resolved/ . . . To cry down all things/ That hang on wit, truth, or religion."[51]

If the Puritans were easy targets of ridicule, so much more so were the sectarians. Amid the turmoil of the mid-century crisis, they had gained significant followings among ordinary tradesmen and soldiers, dock workers and journeymen, and women of all stations: domestics, market women, shopkeepers, as well as the wives of merchants and country

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[48] Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair* (1619) in *The Alchemist and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 408. See also Patrick Collinson, "Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*: The Theater constructs Puritanism," in *The Theatrical City: Culture, Theatre and Politics in London, 1576–1649*, eds. D. Smith, R. Strier, and D. Bevington (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[49] On Puritanism and the "middling sort," see Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), ch. 4.

[50] *The Dramatic Works in Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, gen. ed. Fredson Bower, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 10: 617.

[51] James Shirley, *The Gentlemen of Venice: A Tragi-Comedie* (London, 1655), p. 31.

gentlemen. Schismatic preachers, who seemed so obsessed with all manner of vice and sin, were easily satirized by their detractors as pious frauds and hypocritical lechers who used their pulpit-tubs to seduce unlearned simpletons and hysterical women. They were drunks and fornicators who lie, cheat, and dissemble. "They'll have no Common Prayer, but do abhor," so they declare, "All that is common but a common whore."[52] Female preachers were a particularly rich topic for satire, accused of ignorance, derangement, hysteria, and, above all, sexual license. Among John Taylor's 1642 list of all the "distempers of the Commonwealth" is the "dangerous disease of feminine divinity:" "These [who] would reform the Church, and under that pretence, deform it." Female preachers and "zealous ladies" were typically portrayed as highly amorous, only they seek their satisfaction under cover. The holy sisters preach and pray, "but I must not now say/ What they do when the candles are out."[53] The sectarian woman's pursuit of godliness, her traipsing off to meetings and seeking time alone for prayer and meditation, were seen by royalists as mere ruses, used to cover opportunities for intrigue and seduction. The frenzy of a rapturous religious meeting was acquainted with sexual arousal and ecstasy as well as leveling politics. The satiric poem, "The Character of a Roundhead," (1641) speaks to the likely outcome of when two pious brethren meet:

> What's he that met a holy-sister,
> And in the haycock gently kist her,
> Oh! Then his zeal abounded,
> Close beneath a shady willow,
> Her Bible served her for her pillow,
> And there they got a Roundhead.[54]

The Puritan fop and the lusty, sanctified sister, then, were stock characters in Restoration literature. The association of opposition politics with Dissent was also a commonplace; certainly, there was no effort

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[52] "A Vindication of a Cheapside Cross against the Roundheads," in *Rump: Or an Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs Relations to the Late Times* (London, 1662), p. 141. On the sexualized image of the Puritan see Kristen Poole, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton: Figures of Nonconformity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[53] John Taylor, *The Diseases of the Times* (London, 1642), pp. 3–4; "A Song in Defense of Christmas," in *Rump: Or an Exact Collection*, p. 143.

[54] "The Character of a Roundhead," in *Rump: Or an Exact Collection*, p. 43.

to distinguish between republicans and sectarians, Whigs and Dissenters in either literary or political discourse. But the sanctified sisters and "she-divines" were potentially even more troubling than the tradesmen-turned-preacher sermonizing from a tipped over tub. By stepping into a role traditionally reserved for men, female preachers "wear the breeches," which, in turn, puts "petticoats" on men.[55] But perhaps even more alarming was the procreative power of women. They breed and, so their critics claimed, women were responsible for a kind of "spiritual whoredom," wherein new sects multiplied and darkened the air like locust. Writes the royalist, Henry Ferne, it is the "she-divines that hath *procreated* these monsters in religion that hath *engendered* this vaporous brood of schismatical tenets."[56] It was abundantly clear that holy sisters beget, not merely figuratively but literally, Roundheads, as in the poem cited above. This was a seventeenth-century reality of which contemporaries were well aware; Puritan and Dissenting mothers raised broods of Puritan and Dissenting offspring. The Presbyterian Mary Speke, though married to a sometime royalist, had certainly done a magnificent job of educating her children in the ways of nonconformity and Whig politics. Godly women could inspire whole communities. So the rector of Somerford Magna in Wiltshire reported that the matriarch, Rebecca Mayo, was "the main fomenter of fanaticism in the parish and if reclaimed [to the Church of England] would have many followers."[57] True enough the trope of the over-sexed sectarian woman was, in part, a byproduct of the usual misogynist arsenal of stratagems used against women throughout the medieval and early modern eras. But it is also fairly clear that it was bred out of a frightening realization about potential of maternal power: the power of mothers to breed, nurture, shape, and inform future generations.

Behn at Home: Staging Dissent

> *The Poetess Afra though she's damned today*
> *Tomorrow will put up another play*
> *The Tory Poets: A Satyr* (London, 1682)

Upon her return to London, Behn was once again responsible for her own livelihood. She had already established connections with the

[55] Taylor, *The Diseases of the Time*, p. 5.
[56] [Henry Ferne], *The Sovereignty of Kings* (London, 1642), A1, italics mine.
[57] Nathaniel Aske quoted in Donald A. Spaeth, *The Church in Danger: Parsons and Parishioners, 1660–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 160.

theater and so she turned her hand to drama, transforming "the spy Astrea into the playwright Astrea," as Janet Todd puts it.[58] Whereas many other women writers of her era circulated their manuscripts among friends or wrote apologetic prefaces to their published works, Behn not only owned the fruits of her labor, she proudly announced to the world that she made her living by her pen.[59] Traditional feminine virtues such as modesty and silent subservience to the public world of men were alien to her. Behn may not have always been perfectly forthright about her own origins or activities, but she was not a mealy-mouthed charlatan or hypocrite. She valued transparency, frank liberality, and bold-faced openness, and what she despised, above all, was sneaky, small-minded dissembling, that which could be so easily acquainted with Dissent.

Most of Behn's plays in the 1670s were tragicomedies which garnered moderate success. Her first play, *The Forced Marriage*, debuted in September 1670, lasting six days, only to be replaced by a reproduction of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. This was a decent beginning.[60] A mere five months later, Behn's *The Amorous Prince* (1671) was staged. The following year, Behn contributed four poems to the *Covent Garden Drollery*.[61] She was becoming a known quantity in the fashionable world of poets and playwrights. She had a sometime lover in the sexually ambiguous lawyer, John Hoyle, and a circle of witty friends whom she later celebrated in her poem "Our Cabal."[62] She also became acquainted with the racy, John Wilmot, the Earl of Rochester, who she found fascinating. Like the Viscount Stafford, Rochester was nobly born and exuded continental breeding and style. But unlike the upright Catholic Stafford, Rochester was also a profane drunkard, the author of lewd squibs and lampoons.[63] Still he was charming, gifted, and rich. That Behn was attracted to him and to the world of aristocratic liberality and license is easy to imagine.

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[58] Todd, *Secret Life*, p. 130.

[59] *Sir Patient Fancy*, "To the Reader," in Behn, *Works*, 6: 5.

[60] Playwrights received the ticket fares beginning on the third day of a play's run. A full house might amount to around £70, although, after expenses, the playwright might only clear a third of that. Judith Milhous, "The Duke's Company Profits, 1675–1677," *Theatre Notebooks* 32 (1978): 76–88.

[61] Behn may have also edited the *Covent Garden Drollery*. Paul Salzman, *Reading Early Modern Women's Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 200.

[62] "Our Cabal," originally published in *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1684).

[63] On the relationship between Behn and Rochester, see Todd, *Secret Life*, pp. 262–5; Salzman, *Reading*, pp. 204–6.

With Behn's third play, she suffered a setback and something of a personal humiliation. *The Dutch Lover*, a comedy, flopped, and she was bitter, particularly because she had overheard a "wretched fop" in the audience exclaim that he "expect[ed] a woeful play . . . for it was a woman's." She wrote a highly defensive prologue to her "Good, Sweet, Honey, Sugar-candied" readers when she published *The Dutch Lover* in 1673.[64] It was one of the few times that Behn betrayed a feminist consciousness. Why shouldn't women write for the stage? After all, "plays have no great room for that which is men's great advantage over women, that is, learning," so Behn declared. Clearly, Behn was rattled; her lack of a formal education was a sore point. A few years later a similar incident occurred when she overheard "a Coxcomb Cry/ Ah, Rott it – 'tis a Woman's Comedy" from the audience. Again Behn defended a woman's right to write "Sense and Sacred Poetrie."[65] In 1682, she celebrated the publication of Thomas Creech's translation of Lucretius that allowed "the Female sex to tread/ The Mighty Paths of Learned Heroes Dead," whereas she had formerly "curst my sex and education/ And more the scanted Customs of the Nation."[66] But Behn never went on to make any great defense of women writers. She never advocated female access to any kind of formal education. Behn certainly saw the ways in which women were limited in her society, and she took attacks on her own work personally. Yet Behn was no feminist theorist or advocate; she was no Mary Astell. Behn had a certain sense of her own deprivation as a woman in London's masculine literary world, but her growing political partisanship as well as her interest in the marketability of her product limited what feminist impulses she may have had.

Behn rebounded and the plays that followed were, for the most part, moderately profitable. Her greatest success came in 1677 with her adaptation of the Thomas Killigrew's play, *Thomaso* (c. 1654). *The Rover* not only marks the apogee of Behn's success as a playwright, it also registers the beginning of Behn's coming out as a staunch royalist. By the late 1670s, the atmosphere of London had become so politically charged, that Behn felt compelled to make her biases known. The hero of Behn's play, Willmore, epitomizes the destitute Cavalier wandering abroad following the defeat of the royalists and execution of the

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[64] *The Dutch Lover: A Comedy* (1673), "Good, Sweet, Honey, Sugar-candied Reader," in Behn, *Works*, 5: 162.
[65] *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678) in Behn, *Works*, 6: 79.
[66] *To the Unknown Daphnis on his Excellent Translation of Lucretius* (1682) in Behn, *Works*, 1: 26.

King. He is an adventurous rake, poor but proud, a hard drinker and womanizer. In many ways, he resembles George Marten in all but his politics. In Behn's political comedies that followed, she produced a series of robust rake royalist heroes: loyal to the monarchy, their cups, and the never-ending quest for sexual conquest.

Behn may have found it wondrous that every plebian had their nose in the politics of the day, mocking their busybody chattering with her exclamation, "What has the House of Commons done today," in *The Rover* epilogue.[67] But the political jockeying of 1677 was a mere foretaste of the deluge to come. A series of political and religious crises that began with the Popish Plot in 1678 and continued through the controversy over the royal succession, commonly known as the Exclusion Crisis, produced an increasingly divisive political culture. "The devil take this cursed plotting Age," as Behn quipped in 1679, "'T has ruin'd all our Plots upon the Stage."[68] Audiences craved topical plays, filled with allusions to contemporary politics and personalities, spouting Whig and Tory slogans. London's playhouses, as much as the bookshops and coffee houses, became sites of partisan politics. Behn, always eager to fulfill the needs of a ready market, was more than willing to comply with this new "Disease o'th' Age," as she called it.[69] Not unlike other dramatists during the Exclusion Crisis, including John Dryden and Thomas Shadwell, Behn's plays became markedly political from 1678 to 1682. The most keenly partisan were *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), *The Feign'd Curtizans* (1679), *The Roundheads* (1681), and *The City Heiress* (1682), all Tory plays that mocked the opposition in the form of the old, canting, rabble-rousing Dissenter, and celebrated royalism in the form of the young and handsome Cavalier. Naturally, the women in these comedies came in several varieties. There is the Cavalier's love object, to be sure, young, rich, beautiful, sometimes haughty, often witty, and always utterly desirable. But there are also various Dissenting women, all of whom, in one way or another, are merely feigning their loyalty to nonconformist Protestantism.

Much of what Aphra Behn had to say about Dissent, as seen in her Exclusion era comedies, was not terribly unique. Her portrayal of nonconformity resembled satiric images of Dissent in the vast pamphlet

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[67] *The Rover*, 5: 520.
[68] *The Feign'd Curtizans*, Prologue in Behn , *Works*, 6: 89.
[69] *The Second Part of the Rover* (1681), Prologue in Behn, *Works*, 6: 231.

literature of the time as well as in other Tory plays.[70] Certainly, Behn was influenced by the rich tradition of anti-Puritan literature as well. More problematic is the question of whether Behn's time in Surinam and the continent impinged on her vision of the world of conventickling, republican politics, and anti-Catholicism. While, it would be naive to read Behn's plays as simply ideological texts, mere reflections of her own ardent Toryism, it is equally difficult to imagine that her formative experiences abroad did not color her view of Dissent and republicanism as well as Catholicism. Certainly, her visit to Surinam was still vivid in her mind when she wrote *Oroonoko* at the end of her career. So too her time in Antwerp inspired *The Fair Jilt*, *The Younger Brother*, *The Dumb Virgin*, and sections of her long epistolary novel, *Love Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*. Thus, while proceeding with some caution, we can imagine that Behn's time abroad, and particularly her negative experiences within the shadowy world of republicans, impacted her depiction of nonconformity in her plays. Above all, however, what makes Behn's work particularly valuable is not as a mere reflection of her own beliefs, but as they resonate shared cultural images and values. As one who wrote for her bread, Behn aimed to sell a marketable product, not something unique or idiosyncratic, but rather something that many others would appreciate and find entertaining. Behn's comedies fed into the need many royalists felt to disparage and discredit Dissent. They also reflect contemporary fears over the growing influence of nonconformity and oppositional politics among rabble rousing plebeians and women.

Like so much of the satire directed against Puritans and sectarians prior to and during the mid-century crisis, Behn's plays indicate that which was most troubling about Dissent and its political form, the so-called Protestant Cause or Whiggism, was the threat that it posed to order, peace, and stability. Thus the chaotic times of the Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis, when the monarchy and the Church seemed besieged by the Whig politicians and their artisan and tradesmen allies in the streets, revived bleak memories of Civil Wars, with all of its bloodshed and social disorder. If Behn, along with other royalist playwrights and Tory hacks, harped on the theme of "forty-one over again," time again, it was not without reason. Events in the early 1680s may well have seemed to mirror the sequence of events leading to the outbreak

[70] On partisan print culture see, Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

of the Civil War, as Jonathan Scott has argued.[71] Roger L'Estrange saw the circumstances surrounding the Popish Plot as replaying "the history of forty-one over again . . . [it is] the style of One and Forty to a hair." Church of England clergy drew the same parallel, "The same pretenses which are so rife in this age," sermonized Edward Pelling, "were so fatal in that."[72] Behn and others sought to remind their audience just what the political maneuvering of Dissenters and Whigs really meant. We won a commonwealth through "cozenage and pious frauds," Behn has the Dissenting elder, Goggle, declare in *The Roundheads*.[73] And by so doing, they executed the King and overthrew the monarchy, disestablished the Church, confiscated the bishops' lands, sent poor Cavaliers packing abroad, and unleashed social chaos across the land. And if that spectacle was not troubling enough, with every little Londoner injecting their own ill-educated opinion into political domain, there was also the specter of the she-politician: women, infused by religious zealotry, making a mockery of themselves and their entire sex.

First and foremost, Behn portrayed Dissent as pure pretense. There was no heartfelt religiosity about it: no real faith, piety, or true zeal. It was a mask merely, a veil behind which the so-called godly hid their authentic selves as well as their true goals and intentions. It was an affectation; it was all show. The theme of 'Dissent as deceit' was one of which Behn never tired. The old game that the Dissenters' "fore-Fathers [Roundheads] played with such good success" was engineered by "dissimulation and hypocrisy."[74] Behn repeatedly maintained in her comedies that there was absolutely nothing spiritual about Protestant nonconformity. Dissenters only professed piety for the sake of appearance. Like the Pharisees before them, through their haughty displays of zealotry, they sought to flaunt their sanctified status. Thus Lady Fancy in the city comedy, *Sir Patient Fancy*, declares that "a Psalm is not sung so much out of devotion as 'tis to give notice of our Zeal and Pious intentions, 'tis a kind of Proclamation to the Neighbourhood, and cannot be omitted." Although the pieties of Dissent were hollow, yet its practice did signify something. As Lady Fancy flatly states, Sir Patient

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[71] Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 6–7.

[72] Roger L'Estrange, *Observator*, 3 December 1681; Edward Pelling, *A Sermon Preached on the Anniversary of that Most Execrable Murder of K. Charles the First, Royal Martyr* (London, 1682), p. 11.

[73] *The Roundheads*, Act 4, sc.1, in Behn, *Works*, 6: 400.

[74] *The Roundheads*, dedication, 6: 362.

is "vainly proud" of his "Rebellious opinion, for his Religion means nothing but that . . ."[75] Sir Patient's nonconformity means nothing but seditious politics, and sectarian meeting houses were nothing more than nurseries of treason where Dissenters rail against the government, "quoting Scripture for Sedition, Mutiny and Rebellion."[76]

Dissent also provides the godly with a discourse with which to manipulate the masses. In the *Roundheads*, Behn's remake of Nathan Tatham's *The Rump* which satirizes the last days of the Commonwealth, Lady Lambert abruptly tells Lord Fleetwood to stop speaking with the godly twang. Lord Whitlock replies that "this is the Cant we use to delude the Rabble with." "Then let him use it there," quips Lady Lambert, "not amongst us, who so well understand one another."[77] Truth, on the other hand, was bare-faced, plain, without disguise. Behn's Tories and Cavaliers despise dissimulation, hypocrisy, and falseness. "Secresie," declares the roving Cavalier, Willmore in *The Second Part of the Rover*, "is a damn'd ungrateful sin, Child, known only where Religion and Small-beer are current."[78] Behn's aristocratic heroes love mirth, wit, generosity, and maintain the old ethos of chivalry and unwavering loyalty to the monarchy. The Dissenters, on the other hand, practice "Dissimulation, Equivocation, and mental Reservation," outdoing the Jesuits in their capacity to manipulate language.[79]

Dissenters also use religion as camouflage for the practice of all manner of vice, particularly opportunities for sexual encounters. Long hours of prayer and mediation in one's closet and frequent trips to conventicles are all ruses by which the godly disguise their rendezvous with lovers. The pursuit of sexual satisfaction was certainly no sin, as far as Behn was concerned. It was deceit coupled with religious hypocrisy that Behn disdained. What the saints do, they do in secret. When Sir Timothy Treatall hears his Tory nephew, Wilding, speak of his conquests, Sir Timothy recalls the good old days of Cromwell and the Puritan regime: "Oh, that crying sin of Boasting!" Sir Timothy exclaims, "Well

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[75] *Sir Patient Fancy*, Act 4, sc. 2, 6: 54; Act 2, sc. 1, 6: 19.
[76] *The City Heiress*, Act 1, sc. 1 in Behn, *Works*, 7: 15.
[77] *The Roundheads*, Act 1, sc. 1, 6: 375.
[78] *The Second Part of the Rover*, Act 2, sc. 1 in Behn, *Works*, 6: 245. Small beer was less alcoholic and associated with Puritans who were concerned about drunkenness.
[79] Behn has Lord Lambert say, "tis most certain, he that will live in the World, must be indu'd with the three rare Qualities of Dissimulation, Equivocation, and mental Reservation." This line originates from Tatham's *The Rump*, only slightly modified. *The Roundheads*, Act 1, sc. 2, 6: 374.

fare, I say, [in] the days of old Oliver; he by a wholesome Act, made it death of boast; so that then a man might whore his heart out, and no body the wiser."

"Right, Sir," injects Sir Charles Merriwell with a note of irony, "and then the men pass'd for sober religious persons, and the women for as demure Saints." The young Wilding certainly expresses Tory suspicions about Dissent when he berates his old Whig uncle, Sir Timothy. "A Plague upon your damn'd Dissimulation, that never-failing Badge of your Party, there's always mischief at the bottom on't."[80]

Naturally, among the most easily lampooned of the mischief-makers were the nonconformist preachers, whom Behn likens to clowns when she has Isabella ask her suitor, Lodwick, if he has "turn'd Buffoon, Tumbler, or Presbyterian Preacher?"[81] Behn has a good deal of fun at the expense of "the teaching saints" in her comedies, particularly in *The Feign'd Curtizans* and *The Roundheads*, each of which portray the duplicity, stupidity, avarice, and licentiousness of Dissenting preachers through the characters of Timothy Tickletext in the former, and Ananias Goggle in the latter. Tickletext styles himself the "principle holder forth of the Covent Garden Conventicle, Chaplain of Buffoon-Hall in the County of Kent."[82] The conventicle at Covent Garden in London was particularly famous. It was associated with Richard Baxter's ministry and attracted many leading Presbyterian families including several aristocratic women. In the *Feign'd Curitzans*, Behn has Tickletext accompany young Sir Signall to Rome as his tutor and guardian, a common employment for many Presbyterian and Independent preachers. Tickletext is a numbskull and country bumpkin, completely oblivious to the beauties of Rome. "Your buildings are pretty buildings," so Tickletext declares with disdain, "but not comparable to our University-buildings; your Fountains, I confess, our pretty Springs, – and your statues reasonably well-carved – but Sir, they are so ancient they are of no value! then your Churches are the worst I ever saw – that I ever saw!" Behn is not only ridiculing Tickletext's ignorance, but English provincialism and ignorance of the wider world in general, what she calls, "English ill-bred opinion." Worse still, Tickletext's petty godliness blinds him to the splendor of Catholic art at its most magnificent. Asked if he liked St. Peter's, Tickletext replies that he did not because it did not have a

[80] *The City Heiress*, Act 1, sc. 1, 7: 12; Act 3, sc. 1, 7: 37.
[81] *Sir Patient Fancy*, Act 1, sc. 1, 6: 12.
[82] *The Feign'd Curtizans*, Act 3, sc. 1, 6: 121–2.

pew, desk, pulpit or steeple. But what about "the rich alter, and excellent pictures of the greatest Masters of the World," he is asked. "Your Rich Alters," cries Tickletext, "your guegaws and trinkets, and Popish Fopperies! with a deal of sing-song . . . and for Pictures Sir, they are superstition, Idolatrous and flat Popery."[83] The only thing about Rome that excites Tickletext is the opportunity to sneak off to a brothel.

Whereas Tickletext is merely a lascivious buffoon, Ananias Goggle in *The Roundheads* is both a lecher and a political operator. Although Tatham's *The Rump*, upon which *The Roundheads* is based, did not include a "teaching saint" among its dramatis personae, Behn did not lose an opportunity to mock godly preachers. She probably modeled Goggle after the rabble-rousing Hugh Peters, executed as a fomenter of regicide in 1660. In the opening act, Behn's Cavalier heroes, Loveless and Freeman, are standing near a sectarian meeting. The preacher is offstage but is probably Goggle, sermonizing from a "sanctified tub." Loveless is indignant: "To hear a Rascal hold forth for Bodkins and Thimbles . . . [and] carry on the Good Cause, that is, Roguery, Rebellion and Treason."[84] Behn's audience knew that Hugh Peters had famously asked London women to give up their "bodkins and thimbles" in support of the parliamentarian army. But Ananias Goggle is not only wedded to the Good Old Cause, he also services his sanctified sisters in the bedroom as well. While petting Lady Desborough's breasts, he tries to seduce her by explaining how he serves the ladies of the Commonwealth both from the pulpit and in their chambers. But Lady Desborough, who is a Cavalier at heart, is not so easily fooled; she knows exactly what his kind is all about:

> your imprudent and Bloody Principles, your cheats, your Rogueries on honest men through their kind, deluded Wives, whom you cant and goggle into a Belief . . . Ye Locusts of the Land, preach Nonsense, Blasphemy, and Treason, till you sweat again, that the Sanctifi'd Sisters may rub you down . . .[85]

The image of women rubbing down sweaty parsons fresh from working an audience and paying their keep, while being deluded and seduced by godly gibberish seems to have particularly vexed Behn. She may well have satirized the pretended saints as silly ignorant fops, but one detects

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[83] *The Feign'd Curtizans*, Act 1, sc. 2, 6: 100–1.
[84] *The Roundheads*, Act 1, sc, 1, 6: 369.
[85] *The Roundheads*, Act 3, sc. 1, 6: 395–6.

a more serious side to her comedy. Dissenting preachers were a threat. Hugh Peters had cajoled men and women out of their allegiance to their sovereign lord and master, the King. What was to prevent these preachers from turning the social order topsy turvy once again, so long as conniving Whig politicians continued to "Pay all the Pulpit knaves that Treason brew/ And let the zealous Sisters pay 'em too."[86]

The Sanctified Sisters

Nay, even the Women, now, pretend to reign

Behn[87]

It is far from clear whether Behn had the slightest inclination as to why Protestant nonconformity could appeal to women. She may have had no interest in seeking an answer or she may have felt that it had something to do with nonconformity's emphasis on individual conscience and the spiritual equality of all believers, along with Whig slogans about individual rights and privileges. She often had her nonconformist characters spout off the tropes of Whiggism about liberty and property. But she made it clear that these words were just that, words, with no substance or integrity behind them. Some women, like Lady Lambert, know that they are mere cant and some were deluded by their promises. Behn was certainly aware that many women supported the handsome "Protestant Duke," Monmouth, and she herself felt something of an obsession for him.[88] By the summer of 1685, she would also have known that the Dissenting women who had assisted Monmouth and the Protestant Cause paid a heavy price for their treason. Lady Alice Lisle, the wife of the regicide, was beheaded for supposedly harboring two Monmouth rebels on her estate.[89] The Baptist, Elizabeth Gaunt, was burnt alive at Tyburn. And mothers, wives, and daughters – like the Speke women – found themselves forced to flee abroad. Clearly, these women had chosen the wrong portion.

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[86] *The Roundheads*, Prologue, 6: 365.
[87] *Sir Patient Fancy*, Prologue, 6: 7.
[88] I have discussed this in "The Political Poetry," in *Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, eds. Janet Todd and Derek Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 49–55.
[89] The Treason Trial of Lady Alice Lisle, *State Trials*, 11: 298–382.

The seduction of women by what Behn imagined as the hollow promises of Protestant nonconformity was obviously not a trivial matter. It was Behn's genius, following in the tradition of anti-Puritan satire, to turn it into a comedic one. Dissent becomes a mere ruse to achieve, not spiritual ecstasy, but sexual pleasure. Behn's comedies portray nonconformist women as alluring and sexually ravenous. In *The Roundheads*, the Cavalier Loveless sneers at his friend, Freeman, who has a nonconforming mistress. "They are all sanctify'd Jilts," he declares, "Make Love to 'em, they answer you in Scripture." But Freeman responds, "Ay, and lye with you in Scripture too. Of all Whores, give me your zealous Whore; I never heard a Woman talk much of Heaven, but she was much for the Creature too." Loveless, though, is unconvinced, "Damn 'em for signing, groaning Hypocrites."[90] Behn's Dissenting women are not signing and groaning for the gospel ministry, but for sexual satisfaction.

Behn's portrayal of Lady Lambert in *The Roundheads* is particularly illuminating. In Tatham's *The Rump* she is an important character, and he makes much of the rumor that she was Oliver Cromwell's mistress. But Tatham was not nearly as interested as was Behn in slandering sectarianism. Behn expands Lady Lambert's part, often alluding to her godly reputation with which Lady Lambert camouflages her political ambitions and sexual adventures. After all, " 'tis impossible a Lady that goes to a Conventicle twice a day, besides long Prayers and lowd Psalm-singing, shou'd do anything with an Heroick [a Cavalier] against her Honour," declares a deluded Lord Desbro. "Your [Lady Lambert's] known Sanctity preserved you from Scandal." Behn's Lady Lambert is also a political operator, "an absolute States-Woman," boasts Lord Lambert. It was "Old Noll" (Cromwell), declares Lady Lambert, "who first infus'd Politiques," like semen, "into me."[91] In addition, Behn transformed Lady Lambert's maid from the childish and comical Pris in *The Rump*, to an older, wiser woman, Gilliflower, who can teach her mistress about the differences between the ungainly godly and the beautiful Cavaliers. A true saint wears "the Vizor of Sanctity, which is the gadly Sneere, the drawing of the Face to a prodigious length, the formal language, with a certain Twang through the Nose, and the pious Gogle, they are fitter to scare Children than beget love in Ladies." Conversely, a Cavalier is all "Wit, Softness, and Gallantry." At first, Lady Loveless warns

[90] *The Roundheads*, Act 1, sc. 1, 6: 369–70. "Creature" was an alcoholic drink, usually whiskey.
[91] *The Roundheads*, Act 2, sc. 1, 6: 384, 374, 380.

Gilliflower against such talk, "Have a Care what you say."[92] But she soon finds herself seduced by the Cavalier Loveless even though he is one of the "Heathenish Heroicks." After all, a rendezvous with him might save his soul, she declares, and "I'm much inclin'd to Acts of Piety."[93] Little wonder, then, that when their love-making is interrupted, she quickly demands her prayer-books.

The disguising of promiscuous sexuality with religious zealotry by Dissenting women was a ploy that Behn returned to time and again. In *The City Heiress*, Behn portrays two lower-class women, both reputed Dissenters. Mrs. Clackett is a "true Protestant" and killjoy, or as Wilding contemptuously puts it, "You hate any good thing should go by your own nose." She is also a prostitute, "a most devout Baud, a precise procurer; A Saint in the Spirit, and a Whore in the Flesh; A Doer of the Devil's Work in God's Name."[94] The old Whig, Sir Timothy Treatall, also has as a nonconformist maid, Mrs. Sensure. Dreswell catches her coming from Sir Timothy's bed with a book of Richard Baxter's sermons. "Gad a mercy, Sweetheart," says Dreswell with sarcasm, "thou art a hopeful Member of the True Protestant Cause."

> *Senure*: "Alack, how the Saints may be scandaliz'd! I went but to tuck his Worship [Sir Timothy Treatwell] up."
> *Dreswell*: "And comment upon the Text a little, which I suppose may be, increase and multiply."[95]

Religion and sex become confused. The culture of nonconformity is like the love making between a "sanctified jilt" and an old impotent Whig: shabby and perverse. Thus it is hardly surprising that Behn envisions Dissenting meetings as sites of lewdness and promiscuity. In her poem, "On a Conventicle," quoted at the beginning of this chapter, nonconformist services are described as merely places where villains find refuge and women vent their "lust."[96] In *The Roundheads*, Lady Lambert asserts that the first lesson women learn in the conventicles is the importance of "jilting" that they might cuckold their husbands.[97] While it is certainly true that Behn's depiction of Dissenting women was meant to

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[92] *The Roundheads*, Act 2, sc. 1, 6: 380.
[93] *The Roundheads*, Act 2, sc. 1, 6: 383.
[94] *The City Heiress*, Act 4, sc. 1, 7: 47.
[95] *The City Heiress*, Act 5, sc. 1, 7: 62.
[96] Behn, *Works*, 1: 355.
[97] *The Roundheads*, Act 4, sc. 4, 6: 409.

titillate as much as condemn, she is also unrelentingly severe in her handling of these women. She chastises and humiliates them, drawing from both in the tradition of anti-Puritan satire as well as traditional representations of women as fickle, seductive, and sexually insatiable. Behn's agenda was to maximize the audience's pleasure in hopes of maximizing her own profit, while at the same time, disparaging a culture she detested.

Unlike so many of her contemporaries, Behn shows little interest in attacking Catholicism or the See of Rome. This was not simply a matter of her Tory politics. Most Tories, like their opponents, feared the spread of Counter Reformation Catholicism, especially as it was so linked to French absolutism. They often accused Whigs and Dissenters of being closet papists. But Behn had a real sympathy for splendor of Catholic art and ritual and perhaps even Catholic piety. She was contemptuous of those who could not open their minds to the sheer magnificence of Catholic churches, that which Tickletext dismisses as "guegaws and trinkets, and popish fopperies."[98] She also ridicules the absurd and selfish destruction of the beauty of the Laudian Church in *The Roundheads*. At the women's conventicle, the Dissenting women brag about their husband's iconoclastic furies against the Caroline Church: " 'twas my Husband that headed the Rabble . . . [that] broke the Idols in the Windows, and turn'd the Churches into Stables and dens of Thieves; rob'd the Alter of the Cathedral of the twelve pieces of Plate call'd the twelve Apostles, turn'd eleven of 'em into Money, and kept Judas for his own use at home." Another reports that her husband, "pull'd down sumptuous Shrines in Churches and with the golden and Popish Spoils adorn'd his own Houses and Chimney Pieces."[99] Janet Todd believes that Behn was an Anglican to the end. She was, after all, buried at Westminster Abbey.[100] But if she loved the Church of England, it was with little zest. Rarely does she betray any enthusiasm for the Established Church or any form of Protestantism. If she remained true to Anglicanism, it may well have been only because she saw it as bulwark against the worse excesses of Protestant enthusiasm and as a pillar of the established order. In *The City Heiress*, the Tory knight, Sir Anthony, is faithful to the Church of England. He goes to his parish church to hear "good wholesome Doctrine that teaches Obedience to my King and Superiors, without railing at the Government, and quoting Scripture for Sedition, Mutiny, and Rebellion."[101]

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[98] *The Feign'd Curtizans*, Act 1, sc. 2, 6: 100.
[99] *The Roundheads*, Act 5, sc. 1, 6: 414.
[100] Todd, *Secret Life*, p. 435.
[101] *The City Heiress,* Act 1, sc. 1, 7: 15.

By 1683, the craving for political comedies had utterly died. Always the survivor, Behn turned her hand to writing novels, translations, and poems on the affairs of state, particularly in honor of the Catholic James II, to whom she was thoroughly devoted. The last months of her life must have been particularly poignant and sad as she watched James's administration unravel and his son-in-law and daughter, the Prince and Princess of Orange, usurp his throne, albeit with legal dressings. Behn clearly detested Dutch William.[102] Perhaps she equated him with her unsuccessful mission to wrest William Scott from the Dutch secret service while in Antwerp. She may have also associated him with a dogmatic and narrow-minded Calvinist outlook, as well as with the reputation of the United Provinces for allowing a multiplicity of Protestant sects to breed at will. The only saving grace of the Revolution for Behn was the presence of James's elder daughter, Mary, already renowned for her beauty and piety. Mary was a true daughter of the Church of England. But if Behn was hoping for a Queen who would zealously defend the Church against Dissent, she was sadly mistaken, as we shall see in the next chapter.

The suffering of Protestant nonconformists in the age of the "great persecution," as it has been called, easily garners the modern scholars' sympathetic gaze.[103] Intolerance is never pretty. Yet it is illuminating to see the persecuted as they were seen by so many of their contemporaries and to understand why sectarians garnered so much hostility. Indeed, there are always two faces to fanaticism. It may be "august and touching" as well as "hideous," in the words of Victor Hugo, who certainly saw his share of fanaticism over a hundred years later.[104] Religious fervor may well be a matter of the purest conscience as well as an impetus to destruction. For Behn, and many of her like-minded contemporaries, the "phanatick," whether man or woman, was a self-serving destroyer. Behn had seen the remnants of the Good Old Cause in America and Europe. In their new guise, as Whigs and Dissenters in Exclusion-era London, they appeared to her as no less tawdry, grotesque, and frightening.

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[102] This is most clearly evident in her *Congratulatory Poem to Her Most Sacred Majesty . . . the Prince of Wales* (London, 1688), Behn, *Works*, 1: 294–8.

[103] Gerald R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957).

[104] Victor Hugo, *The Toilers of the Sea* (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), p. 47.

Figure 4.1 Mary II – permission to publish from the National Portrait Gallery, London

4

An Incomparable Queen: Mary II, the Protestant International, and the Church of England

The murmuring world till now divided lay,
Vainly debating whom they shou'd Obey
Till you great Caesar's offspring blest our Isle
The differing Multitudes to reconcile

Aphra Behn[1]

On the day that Prince William launched his expedition to England, Mary, Princess of Orange, rose early and spent several hours in prayer and meditation. She then attended services at an English church, a French church, and those at several Dutch congregations. At one of the services, a Presbyterian minister addressed the Princess directly from the pulpit, speaking to the opportunities she should have in England to "serve Lord Jesus Christ and his people" throughout the world. At the hearing of this address, Mary "stood up and let fall a flood of tears."[2]

[1] "A Congratulatory Poem to her Sacred Majesty Queen Mary, upon Her Arrival in England" (London, 1689) in Behn, *Works*, 1: 307.

[2] J.G. Grevius, *A Funeral Oration of J. G. Grevius upon the Death of Mary II* (London, 1695), translated from the Latin, p. 8; quotation from Cotton Mather, *Observanda: The Life and Death of the Late Q. Mary* (Boston, 1695), p. 36. This chapter often employs evidence from the large number of funeral sermons in honor of Queen Mary following her death in the winter of 1694/5. The great plethora of these funeral sermons (thirty-seven in all, listed in Appendix B: Sermons on the Death of Mary II) by Dissenters and Anglicans, as well as clergy on the continent, make them attractive sources. However, I am certainly aware of their limitations. Funeral sermons conform to a certain genre and any bibliographical data they may contain needs to be measured, when possible, against other sources. Nonetheless, I have chosen to use these sources, especially as expressions of how

The Princess rose and accepted her task: to ensure the survival of the reformed religion in Europe and beyond. In short, it was the future Queen's mission to save the Protestant International.

Historians of English history rarely think of Mary II as a woman with a mission. In fact, they rarely think of Mary at all. Traditionally, she has received little attention in the great annals of late Stuart history, and when she has garnered a few sentences, they are usually negative. Lacey Baldwin Smith reproduces the typical description of Mary in his textbook, writing, "Mary was ignorant of history, politics, science, and mathematics. Her spelling was quaint, her grammar faulty. Her mind, her critics maintained, was 'as sluggish as an inland river,' and she always deferred to her husband's judgment."[3] There is nothing in this description that bears any resemblance to the Mary II who contemporaries knew. Smith quotes a critic, almost assuredly a Jacobite, about the "sluggishness" of the Queen's mind; such an obviously hostile source might be balanced by a few more partial sources on the subject of the "most accomplished Princess in Europe," whose "apprehension was quick and lively, her judgment more penetrating and solid, her elocution more ready, more fluent, graceful, and every way more persuading than is usually found in her sex."[4] Or, later in the eighteenth century, John Wesley, whose father knew and loved the Queen, wrote that "Her apprehension was clear, her memory tenacious, and her judgment solid; she was a zealous Protestant, scrupulously exact in all the duties of devotion."[5]

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contemporaries envisioned Mary, her relationship to Dissenters, and her influence on the Church of England. Diane Willen uses funeral sermons extensively in "Godly Women in Early Modern England: Puritanism and Gender," *JEH* 43 (1992): 561–80; as does Retha M. Warnicke in "Eulogies for Women: Public Testimony of Their Godly Example and Leadership," in *Attending to Women in Early Modern England*, eds. Betty S. Travitsky and Adele F. Seeff (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1994), pp. 168–86. Also see Eric Josef Carlson, "English Funeral Sermons as Sources: The Example of Female Piety in Pre-1640 Sermons," *Albion* 32/4 (Winter 2000): 567–97.

[3] Smith's textbook was first published in 1966; although he revised the text numerous times, he never altered his description of Mary. Lacy Baldwin Smith, *This Realm of England, 1399–1688* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2000), 8th ed., p. 339.

[4] Anonymous, *A Funeral Oration on the Most High, Most Excellent, and Most Potent Princess, Marie Stuart* (London, 1695), p. 6; John Finglas, *A Sermon Preached at the Chappel Royal in the Tower, upon Sunday the Sixth day of January, 1694/95* (London, 1695), p. 28.

[5] Quoted in L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley* (London, 1866), p. 187.

Mary II's image in modern scholarship did undergo something of a historiographical makeover in the 1980s. Articles by Lois Schwoerer and William Speck did much to enhance the political importance of Mary during the Revolution and the early 1690s.[6] Yet neither Schwoerer nor Speck imbued her with any significance that transcended her death, and Mary remained little more than a cipher in textbook descriptions. In 1996, Mark Kishlansky described her as "a figurehead regnant, controlled by a Council of Nine and managed by William's detailed directives," and portrayed her religious devotion as a "psychological shelter from the traumas of having rejected her father and fallen out with her sister, Anne."[7] Kishlansky seems unable to conceive of religious zeal as anything other than a mental crutch. John Spurr, on the other hand, certainly takes religiosity seriously but imagines Mary as a weakling, ruled by the clergy, writing that, "Among other influences upon the King was that of Queen Mary, who took the warnings of divine providence and the advice of Bishops Burnet and Lloyd to her timorous heart."[8]

But a new perspective on Mary's significance following the Revolution has begun to emerge in the scholarship on the Church of England and the moral reformation in the 1690s. Historians, Craig Rose and Tony Claydon, led the way. In 1993, Rose spoke of the "distinctly latitudinarian tone" of Mary's churchmanship. A few years later, he wrote admiringly of Mary's "broad Protestant sympathies" as both "deep" and "unaffected." Rose also gave Mary the primary credit for filling the bishoprics left vacant by the non-jurors.[9] In his 1996 book

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[6] Lois G. Schwoerer, "The Queen as Regent and Patron," in *The Age of William III and Mary II: Power, Politics, and Patronage, 1688–1702*, eds. Robert P. MacCubbin and Martha Hamilton-Phillips (Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 1990); Lois G. Schwoerer, "Images of Queen Mary II, 1689–95," *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989): 717–84; W.A. Speck, "William – and Mary?" in *The Revolution of the 1688–89: Changing Perspectives*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); W.A. Speck, "Mary II (1662–1694)," *ODNB*. Speck's article in the *ODNB*, however, relies on several problematic sources, including the Duchess of Marlborough's highly negative account of Mary, discussed in Chapter 5.

[7] Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain, 1603–1714* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), pp. 301–2.

[8] John Spurr, "The Church, the Societies and the Moral Revolution of 1688," in *The Church of England, c. 1689–c.1833, From Toleration to Tractarianism*, eds. J. Walsh, C. Haydon, and S. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 128.

[9] Craig Rose, "Providence, Protestant Union and Godly Reformation in the 1690s," *TRHS* 6th ser. 3 (1993), p. 163; Craig Rose, *England in the 1690s: Revolution, Religion and War* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999), pp. 41, 157.

on the moral reformation that followed the Glorious Revolution, Tony Claydon posits that Mary's support of Bishop Burnet and the entire "Burnetine clergy," as he calls them, was indispensible. For Claydon, all ecclesiastical policies in the early 1690s were delegated to Mary. The Queen also played a "pivotal role" in the development of Court propaganda. "It was she who adopted, organized, and promoted many of the courtly reformation initiatives described below."[10] Finally, in 2002, perhaps the strongest affirmation of Mary's importance to the history of religion in era following the Revolution was made by Mark Goldie. "Calvinist William left the church matters to his Anglican wife," who, in Goldie's estimation, was hardly timorous or traumatized. "She was a woman with decided views, a Latitudinarian queen."[11] What follows in this chapter, while not in complete agreement with every position of Craig, Claydon, and Goldie, does certainly build on their conception of Mary II as a strong woman, deeply pious, politically astute, and more than willing to initiate Court and church policies. To this, I add another dimension to Mary that shaped the kind of Protestant queen that she would become: her very formative experience in the Netherlands amid the early Dutch Enlightenment with its relatively liberal academic atmosphere as well as toleration for a wide variety of sectarian groups. Mary's broad irenic vision of Protestantism was shaped by the very international climate of the Netherlands, by its rich confessional diversity and teeming refugee populations in the 1680s. Mary brought to the throne in 1689 an understanding and deep concern for the survival of the Protestant International in Europe and in the New World. Her European experiences shaped her desire to reform and reinforce the Church of England, accommodate Protestant nonconformity in the three kingdoms, and ensure the perpetuity of the reformed religion in the world beyond. Through Queen Mary's guidance, patronage, and leadership, the Church of England following the Revolution was set on something of a new trajectory. She helped transform it from the church of Archbishop William Sancroft: sacerdotal, coercive, and tightly bound to the Stuart monarchy, to the Church of Archbishops Tillotson and Tenison: conciliatory, pragmatic, and latitudinarian.

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[10] Tony Clayton, *William III and the Godly Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 71.

[11] Mark Goldie, "John Locke, Jonas Proast and religious toleration," in *The Church of England, c. 1689–c.1833*, pp. 143–71.

Latitudinarianism has become something of a contested site for scholars.[12] While not a full-fledged ideology, latitudinarianism did characterize an increasingly strong tone or temper within the post-Revolution Church. Queen Mary's churchmanship was often in line with the latitudinarian mood of men like John Tillotson, Simon Patrick, Gilbert Burnet, Edward Fowler, and others, especially if we characterize latitudinarianism as an alternative to both the rigid Calvinism of some Dissenters and the coercive dogmatism and exclusivity of the Church of England following the Restoration. To say that the Queen and the circle of clergy around her were latitudinarian in their approach to religion and the Church is to say simply that they believed in a practical Christianity that demonstrated itself not through ceremonies or sacerdotalism, but rather through everyday Christian living, including charity to other Protestants. "Moderation" was the watchword of the movement: moderation towards Dissent; moderation towards ritual; and moderation of any kind of rapturous religious behavior.[13] Indeed, Latitudinarians looked askance upon religious "enthusiasm," emphasizing instead an enlightened, sober devotional practice and deportment over ecstatic expression.

With these basic sentiments, Mary aligned herself. But she was hardly a slave to a movement that was Cambridge based and carved out of English experience. As we shall see, she was neither consistently latitudinarian nor even Low Church throughout her reign.[14] Mary's religiosity was molded out of her positive experiences with the great variety of reformed practice that she encountered in the Netherlands. It was also shaped by the close proximity and constant threat of French

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[12] John Spurr, " 'Latitudinarianism' and the Restoration Church," *HJ* 31/1 (1988): 61–82. Also see Richard Kroll, Richard Ashcraft, and Perez Zagorin, eds., *Latitudinarianism and Toleration: Historical Myth versus Political History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). The ideas of the Latitudinarians were first articulated in S. P., *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-men* (London, 1662) which speaks to their repugnance to the rigidities of systematic theology, their rejection of Calvinist theology, and Laudian ecclesiastic policies. *A Brief Account* is usually attributed to Simon Patrick, but John Spurr disputes this point. Spurr, " 'Latitudinarianism,' " p. 70.

[13] It should be noted, however, that their moderation did not extend to Catholics nor were they all consistent advocates of accommodation for nonconformists.

[14] The terms, "High" and "Low" Church, became more prominent after the Revolution and are fully discussed in Chapter 5. In short, High Churchmen emphasized the ritualistic and sacerdotal aspects of Anglicanism while Low Churchmen sought to make the Church more appealing to nonconformists.

Catholicism to the United Provinces. Mary had witnessed the aftermath of Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. She had seen the streams of Huguenot refugees entering the Low Countries, and she had heard of the horrors, some real and some fabricated, inflicted on those Protestants who remained in France. The besieged nature of Protestantism in Europe made a profound impression on her, and she came to believe that she and her husband were God's instruments and that their mission was quite simply to ensure the survival of the Reformation. "I abandon myself entirely to His providence," Mary wrote in 1689 about her support of the Glorious Revolution, "and sacrifice my will to his Divine pleasure."[15]

The Lady Mary at the Court of Charles II

> *Two glorious nymphs of your own godlike line,*
> *Whose morning rays, like moontide, strike and shine;*
> *Whom you to suppliant monarchs shall dispose,*
> *To bind you friends, and to disarm your foes.*
>
> John Dryden, *Epilogue to Calisto*[16]

There was nothing enchanting, admirable, or even very interesting about the childhood of Mary, eldest daughter of James, Duke of York, the brother to Charles II. It was all rather mundane and typical in the sense that Mary was raised like many elite girls of her era: by a governess and tutors with only limited access to her parents. It might be thought that as the eldest child of the heir apparent, a child in line to the royal succession to the thrones of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, Mary might have been prepared to assume, if need be, the duties of a queen. It might be thought that her education would be robust and exacting and her time well spent learning foreign languages, world history, and geography. But this was far from the case and if there are two words that aptly suit the treatment of Lady Mary and her younger sister, Anne, during their years at the Court of Charles II, they are benign neglect. Charles, belatedly, might have come to the conclusion that Mary might

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[15] Doebner, *Memoirs*, p. 4.

[16] John Crown's play, *Calisto*, was performed before the Court of Charles II in 1675. Both Princesses, Mary and Anne, took part. Dryden's epilogue was addressed to the Duke of York. *The Dramatic Works of John Crown* (New York, 1874), p. 326.

very well succeed her father, but James held out hope for a son that would survive to adulthood; his daughters were mere spares.

At Richmond Palace in Surrey, Mary and Anne were placed under the supervision of a governess, Lady Frances Villiers. They grew up with eight other little girls, spending their days in idleness: dressing, playing cards, reading and watching plays, and writing extravagant letters to one another. Mary's mother, Anne Hyde, the Duchess of York, who kept a lush and sparkling household at St. James's, had fully converted to Catholicism by 1670. It is said that Anne spoiled her little daughters with treats, but her actual contact with them seems to have been meager.[17] As an adult, Mary rarely referred to her mother. The Duke of York converted to Rome as well, not long after his wife, although this was not public knowledge until the passing of the Test Act in 1673. Some historians have pictured James as a loving father based on merely one shard of evidence: Samuel Pepys' observation of James playing with Mary in 1664.[18] What affection Mary may have felt for her father is difficult to assess. As an adult, she seemed to have had a certain amount of respect for him as the King of England, but little real love. She was, after all, deeply anti-Catholic and could only wonder how anyone could be "induced to leave the bulwark of purest truth," the Church of England.[19] Additionally, James was stingy and never paid the allowance promised to his daughter in Holland and, subsequently, Mary was always short of funds. As Princess of Orange, she wrote that "the only thing I ever asked the King, my father, to do, was to use his influence with the King of France to prevent the seizure of the Principality of Orange. But my father preferred to join with the King of France against my husband." And Mary never took kindly, indeed she was absolutely unforgiving, to those who opposed William.[20]

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[17] Molly McClain, "Love, Friendship, and Power: Queen Mary II's Letters to Frances Apsley," *JBS* 47 (July 2008), p. 508; Frances Harris, *Transformations of Love: The Friendship of John Evelyn and Margaret Godolphin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 93.

[18] "And I saw him with great pleasure play with his little girl – like an ordinary private father of a child." *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 5: 268.

[19] Grevius, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 12.

[20] On Mary's poverty, see "Manuscript Account of Dr. Hooper," in Arthur Trevor, *The Life and Times of William III* (London, 1836), Appendix, pp. 467–8; Mary quoted in F.A.J. Mazure, *Histoire de La Revolution de 1688 in Angleterre*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1825), 3: 44; translated from the French.

After the death of her mother in March 1671, Mary, at age nine became increasingly part of Court life. In 1675, Charles II entrusted her education and that of her sister to Henry Compton, Bishop of London. Compton's ardent anti-Catholicism was well known and by placing him in charge of his brother's children, Charles reassured the Protestant world that despite the Duke of York's religion, Mary and Anne would be brought up as stalwart Anglicans.[21] To varying degrees, Compton achieved the intended result. The girls were imbued with the belief that the Church of England was the one true apostolic Church of Christ. The problem with the Church of Rome was that centuries of impurities had crept in and were maintained by a sinister and corrupt priesthood. Rome had become the anti-Christ personified. The wayward and schismatic Protestant Dissenters were responsible for the chaos and bloodshed of Civil Wars, and worst of all, the execution of the girls' grandfather, Charles I of Blessed Memory. All Dissenters were, potentially at least, rebels and regicides, although this blackened image of Dissent made less of an impression on Mary than upon Anne and, as we shall see, the elder daughter remained open-minded and interested in various forms of reformed practice. Although still quite young, Mary showed a real aptitude for learning and this, coupled with a generous spirit, made her a favorite among her tutors and the clergy.[22] She eagerly debated theological questions and was always ready to "express [herself] against popery," so much so that Charles II called her "Queen Bess."[23]

But other areas of Mary's education were neglected. Compton had the mentality of a soldier rather than a scholar, and Mary and Anne received the education of gentlewomen who might grace drawing rooms rather than Whitehall itself.[24] They were taught French, drawing, music, and dancing, but received nothing of the humanist curriculum of the daughters of Henry VIII. Whereas, Elizabeth I was fluent in six languages by age eleven; Mary knew but two before her marriage and new life in the

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[21] Edward Carpenter, *The Protestant Bishop: Being the Life of Henry Compton, 1632–1713, Bishop of London* (London: Longman, 1956), pp. 33–5.

[22] Strickland, 5: 397; David Gregg, *Queen Anne* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), p. 15.

[23] Edward Fowler, *A Discourse of the . . . Death of Our Gracious Sovereign, Queen Mary* (London, 1695), p. 16.

[24] Because of her childhood experiences with Compton, Mary knew the Bishop of London well. When the opportunity arose to promote him to the See of Canterbury in 1690, Queen Mary was against it, and Compton was passed over in favor of John Tillotson. Clearly, Mary perceived that something was wanting in Compton's character. Carpenter, *The Protestant Bishop*, p. 174.

Netherlands. The daughters of the Duke of York were, in short, pawns of statecraft, used to make European alliances through marriage. Thus in November 1677 Charles II was willing to give Mary, at age fifteen, away to William, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of the United Provinces. Very likely the King still held out hope that his brother, James, would produce a living son with his new young wife, Mary of Modena. Charles also wished to have a greater influence over his difficult and taciturn nephew, William, the son of his sister, Mary Stuart, Princess of Orange. And there was the added bonus that such a Protestant match was highly popular with the people of England who were increasingly nervous by the Catholic direction of the Court.[25] Thus Mary left for her new life. Childish and ill educated though she may have been, she also possessed an open mind and a generous heart. In fact, as her subsequent behavior demonstrated, she eagerly welcomed the opportunity to read, study, observe, and absorb new vistas and experiences and, in short, to be inspired in ways the Stuart Court had failed her.

The Princess of Orange and Protestantism Abroad

> *The lamentable formality and contention which overspread Protestant Churches abroad most sensibly afflicted her; she would with a certain anguish of heart, say upon it, Can such dry bones live?*
>
> Cotton Mather[26]

In Holland, Mary of Orange blossomed. Over time, she rid herself of her former childhood attachments and became a sophisticated and an accomplished young woman.[27] She learned to speak Dutch. In fact, she understood and spoke Dutch so well that when meeting with foreign dignitaries, she could easily move from one language, be it English, French, or Dutch, to another, making all her guests feel welcome. She

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[25] John Miller, *James II: A Study in Kingship* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 83–5.

[26] Mather, *Observanda*, p. 44.

[27] For a time, as Princess of Orange, Mary wrote gushing letters to her childhood friend, Frances Aspley. The letters are indicative of an impressionable adolescent mimicking the language of the sex-infused Court life she had witnessed in London. They became progressively formal as Mary matured. Mary's letters are found at the British Library, Loan 57/69 and are printed in Benjamin Bathurst, *Letters of Two Queens* (London, 1924). Molly McClain discusses them in "Love, Friendship, and Power: Queen Mary II's Letters to Frances Apsley," *JBS* 47 (July 2008): 505–27.

also became "very beautiful withal."[28] She resembled her father: tall, dark eyes, bountiful thick black curls. Contemporaries describe her as buoyant, cheerful, and talkative and as such she was a terrific asset to her sober, uncommunicative husband. The Court at The Hague was "young, sociable, cosmopolitan, and full of familiar company."[29] This was unimaginable without Mary, and although William was perhaps slow to realize it, he was fortunate to have such a vibrant and discerning partner.

They were an odd couple, William and Mary. Twelve years older, four inches shorter, and in imperfect health, William was anything but a dashing lover. A bout with small pox as a child had left its mark; he suffered from asthma and had a nagging deep cough. English observers were sometimes dismayed by William's gruff and unsentimental treatment of his wife and sent reports back to the Stuart Court of a tyrannical and cruel husband. But as anti-Orange propaganda such information is not always credible and was spread, not out of concern for Mary, but to discredit the Prince, who James II detested.[30] Very likely, William was a difficult man, hardened by years of political strife and war. But this did not prevent Mary from loving him, and so much so that she feared that her zeal for the Prince might interfere with her love of God. As Queen, she frequently ended her letters to him with lines like, " 'tis impossible for me to love you more than I do, don't love me less."[31] William, for his part, might have been something of a reluctant husband. For many years, he sought comfort in the arms of Elizabeth Villiers, one of Mary's maids of honor, who was both a politically savvy operator and closer to the Prince in age. Yet, over time, William and Mary's marriage grew into a reliable partnership. His affection for her was certainly less transparent than her abiding adulation for him. William was not a man to show his humor, but he was nonetheless paralyzed by grief, fainting and weeping, when Mary died suddenly in 1694. He refused to consider remarriage.[32]

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[28] Anon., *A Funeral Oration,* p. 13; *The Diary of Dr. Edward Lake, Archdeacon and Prebendary of Exeter* (London, 1846), p. 26.

[29] Harris, *Transformations of Love*, p. 265; *The Royal Diary; or King William's Interior Portraiture* (London, 1702), p. 32.

[30] See, in particular, John Covell's letter about William. BL, Add, 15,892, ff. 264–5.

[31] NA SP 8/7, f. 135v.

[32] "Elizabeth Villiers," s.v., *DNB*; Melinda S. Zook, "The Shocking Death of Mary II: Political and Gender Crisis in Late Stuart England," *The British Scholar* 1/1 (September 2008): 21–36.

While Prince William was certainly cool and unaccommodating of Mary's Anglicanism, he did not thrust his own religious beliefs on her. As a child, the Prince had been tutored by Cornelius Trigland, a standard-bearer of Calvinist orthodoxy. The clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church had long envisioned the House of Orange as the defenders of the true reformed religion, and William was certainly aware of his patrimony. But as an adult, William, who championed religious toleration even for Catholics and Jews, was by no means a doctrinaire Calvinist. Historians disagree as to the degree and nature of his personal piety. Jonathan Israel asserts that William's religiosity was "decidedly tepid," while Hans Bots speaks of William as "a religious, pious man with a rock-solid confidence in God's province."[33] On the other hand, historians are in agreement on William's priorities: that which was politically expedient was more important to him than the upholding of any religious orthodoxy. He was unimpressed by religious disputes over external forms; he despised interfaith wrangling, especially when it interfered with statecraft. He had one mission, one mammoth task, upon which his vision was narrowly focused: the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe in the face of Louis XIV's quest for hegemony.[34]

While William had little inclination to impose his beliefs on the Princess, there were others in Mary's life who certainly did try to shape her devotional practices. Whitehall dutifully sent the Princess a new Anglican chaplain every few years. This was seen as a post of some importance, and Mary's chaplain and tutor in England, Edward Lake, was indignant when in 1677 he was bypassed in favor of the vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, William Lloyd, whose career was on a fast track. An ardent anti-papist with some puritanical tendencies, Lloyd was charged with ensuring that Mary was given an Anglican chapel as was stipulated in her marriage settlement. But Lloyd's time in Holland was short, and instead he accompanied Mary to the services of the English Church at The Hague, which was dominated by Dissenters. While this news troubled some clergy at home, the Princess

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[33] Jonathan I. Israel, "William III and Toleration," in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, eds. O.P. Grell, J.I. Israel, N. Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 131; Hans Bots, "William III and His Fellow Calvinists in the Low Countries," in *Church, Change and Revolution*, eds. J. Van Den Berg and P.G. Hoftijzer (Leiden: Brill, 1991), p. 122.

[34] J. Van Den Berg, "Religion and Politics in the Life of William and Mary," in *Fabrics and Fabrications: The Myth and Making of William and Mary*, eds. P. Hoftijzer and C.C. Barfoot (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1990), pp. 18–22; Israel, "William III and Toleration," pp. 130–5; Bots, "William III and His Fellow Calvinists," pp. 123–5.

herself was quite comfortable with the basically Presbyterian services of the English Church. Lloyd was gone within a year, but Mary continued to attend with services of the English Church, with an entourage that sometimes included the Prince.[35] This made the tasks of Lloyd's immediate successors, the more traditional George Hooper and Thomas Ken, more difficult. Hooper, who had achieved fame as a scholar at home, had some success. When he found the Princess reading the works of Dissenters, he placed Hooker and Eusebius in her hands.[36] He also managed to convert her dining room at Huis ten Bosch into a chapel. But he did all this in the face of some hostility from William, who found the rituals of the Church of England both extraneous and irrelevant. When Hooper voiced his opposition to liberty of conscience for English Dissenters, William, on the presumption that he might one day be King of England, supposedly remarked, "Well, Dr. Hooper you will never be a bishop." The Prince might have foreseen his own regal destiny, but not that of his wife's. Mary enjoyed a cordial and loving relationship with Hooper and, as Queen, she saw to his promotion. Hooper later remarked that during his eighteen months with the Princess, who was but sixteen at the time, he "never saw her do, nor heard her say a thing that he could have wished she had not."[37]

Hooper's close friend, Thomas Ken accepted the post of Mary's new chaplain late in 1679. He hoped to induce the Princess towards stricter adherence to the principles of the Church of England and was dismayed to find that the Princess was still attending Dissenting worship. He was even more aghast by William's gruff treatment of her, telling the English ambassador, Henry Sidney, that the Prince was "not kind" to his wife. Still the ascetic "little Ken," renown for his monastic lifestyle, organ music, hymns, and beautifully crafted sermons, actually had little impact on Mary. She seems to have loved and respected him, but she was undeterred from enjoying her freedom to worship where and

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[35] *The Diary of Dr. Edward Lake, Archdeacon and Prebendary of Exeter* (London, 1846), p. 8, 26; A. Tindal Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627–1717* (London, SPCK, 1952), p. 26; Rosemary Van Wengen-Shute, "The English Church in The Hague during William and Mary's Time," in *Fabrics and Fabrications*, p. 51.

[36] Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Eight Books* (London, 1593) and Eusebius of Caesarea, *The History of the Church* (London, 1663). Both of these classic works went into multi-editions throughout the seventeenth century; they appealed to traditionalists since both spoke of the dangers of religious innovation, heresy, and schism.

[37] "Manuscript Account of Dr. Hooper," in Trevor, *Life and Times*, Appendix, p. 467.

with whom she pleased.[38] And as Mary matured, her faith deepened. She established her own rigorous routine of religious devotion and practice. She rose early every morning and spent two hours in her closet in prayer, readings, and meditation. She attended divine service at 9:00 in the morning and again at 5:00 in the evening. She studied books on theology and read the Bible, start to finish, twice a year.[39] The Anglican chaplains that followed Lloyd, Hooper, and Ken failed to influence her. They were far less distinguished than their predecessors and seem to have been selected based on their ability to spy and sow dissension among the courtiers at The Hague and especially between William and Mary.[40]

Mary's religious freedom was thus greater than ever and what influenced her far more deeply than either her husband or her chaplains was the diverse religious atmosphere of the Netherlands in the 1680s. Mary continued worship at the English Church at The Hague, where she was considered a benefactor and where she had a special suite built for herself and her entourage so that they could attend without disturbing the congregation.[41] She also went to hear popular preachers throughout the Netherlands. She visited churches in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Brielle, Utrecht, Delft, and Leiden. She encountered a wide variety of reformed practice in these cities. A seventeenth-century English travel guide to Amsterdam describes the city as having, in addition to many Dutch Reformed churches, a Lutheran church, a French church, an Arminian church, an English church, along with one Family of Love and three Anabaptist meeting houses which were also used by Socinians and Arians. The city hosted three synagogues and numerous Catholics who worshipped in private residences.[42] Another contemporary, writing in 1680,

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[38] Charles II famously referred to Thomas Ken as "little Ken;" though little in stature, he was known to bravely confront princes with their shortcomings. Strickland, 5: 437; *Diary of the Times of Charles II by the Honourable Henry Sidney (afterwards Earl of Romney)*, ed. R.W. Blencowe, 2 vols. (London, 1843), 2: 19–20; Gareth Bennett, *To the Church of England* (Worthing: Churchmen Publishing, 1988), pp. 63–6.

[39] Grevius, *A Funeral Oration*, pp. 7–9.

[40] This was particularly true of the elderly John Covell who exposed William's affair with Elizabeth Villiers to Mary. BL, Add. 41,812, f. 231; Add. 15,891, ff. 264–5.

[41] After the Revolution, Mary procured from the Exchequer an annuity of thirty pounds for this church. Fred Oudschans Dentz, *History of the English Church at The Hague* (Delft, 1929), p. 22.

[42] William Brereton, *Travels in Holland, the United Provinces, England, Scotland, and Ireland*, ed. Edward Hawkins (London: Chetham Society, 1844), pp. 67–8.

describes the Netherlands as attracting "Roman-Catholics, Lutherans, Brownists, Independents, Arminians, Anabaptists, Socinians, Arians, Enthusiasts, Quakers, Borrelists, Armenians, Muscovites, Libertines, and… Seekers, because they are still seeking out for a religion, …Jews, Turks, Persians, and Mennonites."[43] This plurality of faiths, living in relative harmony, could not have failed to impress the young Princess.

Mary's wide-ranging sermon-going, as well as her position at the Orange Court, brought her into contact with many of the Low Countries' leading intellectuals and theologians. She knew many of the academics, ministers, and journalists at the forefront of the early Dutch Enlightenment, men who historians today consider to be the very architects of the High Enlightenment traditions in both eighteenth-century France and England.[44] Among this intellectual milieu was a French-speaking coterie of Protestant ministers that included Pierre Jurieu. In 1683, Mary took her cousin, James, Duke of Monmouth to hear Jurieu in Rotterdam; he had become one of her favorite preachers. Jurieu had received Anglican ordination but spent most of his career at the Walloon (French Calvinist) Church in Rotterdam. He was an extraordinarily prolific theologian, moral philosopher, and historian who was perhaps most famous in England for his *History of the Council of Trent*, first translated into English in 1684. He was also an ardent supporter of the house of Orange and a millenarian who predicted the overthrow of the anti-Christ, meaning the papacy, in 1689.[45] Jurieu enjoyed the Princess's presence at his fiery sermons. He considered her a "mother and protectoress" of his church. Later, upon the news of her death in 1694, he told his congregation that it was "impossible not to love her."

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[43] *The Religion of the Dutch: Represented in Several Letters from a Protestant Officer in the French Army*. Trans. from French. (London, 1680), pp. 14, 23. Socinianism was an anti-Trinitarian movement. The Borrelists were a sect named after their leader Adam Borrel of Zealand.

[44] Jonathan Israel, "The Early Dutch Enlightenment as a Factor in the Wider European Enlightenment," in *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic, 1560–1750*, ed. Wiep Van Bunge (Leiden: Brill, 2003), p. 215.

[45] Pierre Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement des prophesies* (The Hague, 1686). On Jurieu's life, see F.R.J. Knetsch, *Pierre Jurieu: Theoloog en Politikus der Refuge* (Kampen, 1967); on Jurieu's prophesies, see Ernestine van der Wall, "'AntiChrist Stormed:' The Glorious Revolution and the Dutch Prophetic Tradition," in *The World of William and Mary*, eds. D. Hoak and M. Feingold (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

"None ever went from her presence without being charmed by her."[46] Mary, in turn, defended Jurieu. In the winter of 1686, she coyly baited Gilbert Burnet while he kept her company as she sat knotting a fringe. "What had sharpened the King [James II] so much against Monsieur Jurieu," she asked. Never at a loss for words, Burnet plunged in, but instead of critiquing James, as Mary had hoped, he launched into an attack on Jurieu. "I told her, he mixed all his books with a most virulent acrimony of style, and among other things, he had writ with great indecency of Mary, Queen of Scots, which caste reflections on them that were descended from her; and was not very decent in one that desired to be considered as zealous for the Prince and herself." But Mary was unmoved and found any reference to her great-great-grandmother, both Catholic and scandalous, particularly vexing. Rising to Jurieu's defense, she replied that it was natural that he would "support the cause that he defended, and to expose those that persecuted it in the best way he could." She added, in reference to the Queen of Scots, that "if princes would do ill things, they must expect that the world will take revenges on their memory, since they cannot reach their persons."[47]

But Jurieu was hardly the only leading light with whom Mary was familiar in the 1680s. She was also well acquainted with Friedrich Spanheim, the younger, an orthodox Calvinist professor of divinity at Leiden and "one of the most considerable men of the reformed church," according to Pierre Bayle.[48] She visited his church and admitted him to her private chapel, where she confided in him about her fears for her father's soul. Spanheim, in turn, plainly adored the young Princess and especially appreciated her desire to unite all Protestants.

> How earnestly she wished in my hearing . . . [that] there might be a moderate way found to consolidate the common safety of England

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[46] Pierre Jurieu, *A Pastoral Letter Written on the Occasion of the Death of the Late Queen of England* (London, 1695), pp. 6, 9, 10.

[47] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 3: 134–5. While Jurieu had the admiration of both William and Mary, he was a fanatical polemicist who made many enemies. His attacks on Pierre Bayle were violent and unrelenting. He was also no friend to Burnet. Leo Pierre Courtines, *Bayle's Relations with England and the English* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1938), pp. 104–9; Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 332–8.

[48] Pierre Bayle, *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Pierre Bayle*, 5 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), 5: 194.

> and the universal church by the union of all parties, all offences being removed, all animosity being laid aside, all passion being moderated, and whatsoever on either wise favored too much of human invention, being utterly rejected.

Later as Queen, Mary gave Archbishop John Tillotson one of Spanheim's books concerning a union between the Dissenters and Church of England, a project that remained dear to her heart.[49] The Princess also knew Johannes Georg Graevius, the great classicist and chair of history at the University of Utrecht, someone intimately acquainted with Benedictus de Spinoza. So too, Jacob Perizonius, professor of ancient history at Franeker and Leiden and thought to be the greatest scholar of his generation, was on friendly terms with Princess Mary.[50]

When Mary died in 1694, these men, the preachers and professors of the Dutch Enlightenment, published deeply moving funeral sermons in her honor. Many of them remembered her as one among their flock, praising her with lines like "no person was more attentive to the preacher." Isaac Claude, minister of the Walloon Church at The Hague, reminded his congregation how they had "seen her often at Church . . . You have seen her often attentive to the servants of God."[51] These men found her sudden death a severe blow to the cause of Protestantism in Europe and they themselves were overcome by grief. Joannes Ortwinius, a rector in Delft, warned his congregation during his funeral sermon for the Queen that his "sobs would interrupt my words." Spanheim told his listeners at The Hague to bear with him as "no man can believe that a flood of eloquence should flow from his mouth whose eyes were blubbered [and] checks overflowed with torrents of water continually streaming."[52] These men also described Mary's piety as "enlightened devotion," without superstition or ostentation,

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[49] Francis Spanheim, *A Funeral Oration to the Sacred Memory of the Most Serene and Potent Mary II* (London, 1695), pp. 10, 30; Birch, *Life*, pp. 232–3.

[50] Both men honored the Princess when she died. See Grevius, *A Funeral Oration*; and Jacob Perizonius, *A Funeral Encomium upon the Queen. Most Serene and Potent Princess, Mary II* (London, 1695). On Perizonius' reputation, see Joseph M. Levine, *Dr. Woodward's Shield: History, Science, and Satire in Augustus England* (Berkeley: University of California, 1977), passim.

[51] Peter Francius, *An Oration of Peter Francius upon the Funeral of the Most August Princess, Mary II, Queen of England, etc* (London, 1695), p. 13; Isaac Claude, *Sermon upon the Death of the Queen of England* (London, 1695), p. 14.

[52] Ortwinius, *A Funeral Oration* . . . (Delph, 1694/5), p. 3; Spanheimus, *A Funeral Oration*, pp. 1–2.

nursed by "frequent discourses with learned and able divines." She was, in their words, "generous, charitable, good, liberal, and beneficent beyond expression."[53] They were impressed by her knowledge of divinity and found her articulate and wise. For whatever education the Court of Charles II had failed to provide her, she made up for in Holland. Mary erected her own library at Het Loo Palace, filled with books on history, architecture, geometry, geography, and theology. She read Jurieu's books and works by English Dissenters. She read Gilbert Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, William Cambden's *Annals of Queen Elizabeth*, and Father Paul's *History of the Council of Trent*, which was a favorite among Protestants. She had no interest in "empty romances or frothy plays" and when she found reading difficult because of her poor eyesight, she had her women read aloud to her.[54]

Mary had a highly visible presence in the Netherlands. She was young and elegant, the center of a vibrant Court, and she was often seen by the public: in her carriage, at worship, and taking long promenades or barge trips with her ladies. After 1685, William and Mary made the plight of the Huguenot refugees streaming into Dutch cities one of their particular concerns, and Mary was soon renowned for her charitable giving. Her largesse, along with her frequently observed devotional practices, made her exceedingly popular in the Netherlands and quickly dispelled any lingering memories of her highly unpopular aunt, Mary Stuart, the previous Princess of Orange. In fact, Mary's fame among the Dutch was such that the English envoy, Henry Savile, described the common people as "stark mad, stopping her coach that they might kiss the wheels" even trying to "snatch a piece of the clothes off her back that they might have a piece of something she wore." "People crowded in throngs from distant cities," as another contemporary declared, "they brought their little children to catch a glimpse of her."[55] Thus when the tumultuous political events in England in the 1680s began to intrude on the culture of the Orange Court, Mary was not unprepared. Sophisticated, popular,

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[53] Anon., *A Funeral Oration*, pp. 14–15.

[54] *A Funeral Oration, Pronounc'd upon the Death of the Most Serene and Potent Princess, Mary Stuart* (London, 1695), p. 8; William Payne, *A Sermon upon the Death of the Queen, Preached in the Parish-Church of St. Mary White-Chappel* (London, 1695), p. 24; Gilbert Burnet, *An Essay on the Memory of the Late Queen* (London, 1695), p. 38. Paulo Sarpi's bitter account of the Council of Trent was translated into English in 1620 and influenced generations of Protestants.

[55] NA SP/ 84/ 216, f. 134; also described in *Savile Correspondence: Letters to and from Henry Savile*, ed. W.D. Cooper (London: Camden Society, 1858), p. 182; Anon., *A Funeral Oration*, p. 15.

in love with her husband and all that he stood for, and, above all, trusting in God's providence, the Princess was neither timorous about defying her father, the King of England, nor defending the true religion.

Repercussions from political crises in England were felt at The Hague as droves of English and Scottish political and religious refugees began to pour into Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam, and The Hague after each successive Whig debacle, such as the discovery of the Rye House Plot in the spring of 1683, and again following the catastrophes of Argyle's and Monmouth's invasions in the summer of 1685. William and Mary hosted many of the Dissenters and Whigs who sought to evade authorities in London.[56] Among them were two of the leading Presbyterians in England, William Bates and John Howe. William Bates was one of Mary's favorite Dissenting writers, and they began a hardy friendship that continued after the Revolution. John Howe, who had settled in Utrecht and preached at the English Church there, met with both the Prince and Princess of Orange on several occasions. Mary's repeatedly stated desire to bring about a union of all Protestants in England particularly impressed him. The Church of Scotland minister, Thomas Hog, who preached at The Hague, also knew Mary.[57] Then in May of 1686, Gilbert Burnet came to the Court of William and Mary. Like those before him, he became enchanted by the Princess and was soon her close confidant and advisor. James II believed Burnet was seditious and repeatedly warned Mary not to entertain him. But Mary defied her father; she was charmed by the highly learned and loquacious Scot. Her latest chaplain and spy, William Stanley, reported that Burnet was "perpetually desiring to talk with the Princess in private and too often gets the liberty."[58] Although James's envoy, Marques d'Albeville, did succeed in having the Prince banish Burnet from his Court in 1687, Burnet remained in close contact with William and Mary. The Princess had an altogether different reaction to the Quaker, William Penn, sent to The Hague by the King to

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[56] William and Mary also began to strengthen their ties with leading opposition figures within England. Mary wrote to Lady Rachel Russell, wife of the Whig martyr, William, Lord Russell, and a woman of no small standing, promising to do her "any kindness" should it be in her power. *Letters of Lady Rachel Russell: From the Manuscript in the Library at Woburn Abbey* (London, 1773), p. 81.

[57] On Bates, see *Calamy Revised*, p. 36. On Howe, see Henry Rogers, *The Life and Character of John Howe* (London, 1836), p. 149. On Hog, see Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), pp. 132–3.

[58] Stanley to Compton, August 1686; Oxford: Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS, 983 C.

sound out and, if possible, convince William and Mary of the benefits of lifting the penal laws and the Test Act.[59] Penn made some progress with William, who certainly was not averse to the principle of religious toleration, although he baulked at any attempt to abolish the Test Act. Mary was a harder case, far more adamantly against the removal of any of the Church of England's safeguards. She also took something of a dislike to Penn, who she suspected of being a spy for her father. Burnet, on hand during Penn's visit, described the Quaker as "a talking, vain man," and this seems to have been Mary's reaction as well. At one point, Penn, who was aware of Mary's penchant for good preaching, asked if she would care to hear him preach. She readily declined the offer, saying that she had plenty of "very good preachers." She also told Penn, "If ever she was queen of England, she would do more for the Protestants than even Queen Elizabeth."[60]

Mary's growing opposition to her father's policies, in conjunction with her ardent anti-Catholicism, was now increasingly on display. D'Albeville told James that the Princess spoke with great firmness in all their conferences concerning the lifting of the Test Act; "she was more intractable on those matters than the Prince himself." When it became apparent in 1687 that James would abolish the penal laws, the Princess wrote to Archbishop William Sancroft, stating that she certainly hoped that the English clergy were "as firm to their religion as they have always been to their king." In the winter of 1687, James's made his one and only attempt to convert his eldest child to his religion, sending her a two-page handwritten letter and some books on Catholic apologetics. Mary responded quickly, "without consulting any one person, and in so solid and learned a letter, that she cut short all further treaty."[61] In a politically charged move, she also sent a copy of her reply to Archbishop Sancroft so that he might know of her father's attempt to convert her and of her ardent defense of Protestantism. "The Reformers did not leave the true Catholic Church," she wrote to her father, "but only the errors which

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[59] The Test Act of 1673 (25 Car. II. c. 2) enforced an oath of supremacy and allegiance on all persons in civil or military offices; one also had to subscribe to a declaration against the Catholic notion of transubstantiation and receive the sacrament in the Church of England within three months after admittance to office.

[60] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 3: 139; William Hull, *Eight First Biographies of William Penn* (Swarthmore College Monographs on Quaker History, 1936), pp. 55–6; Mary quoted in Strickland, 5:460.

[61] John Breval, *The History of the House of Nassau* (London, 1734), p. 248; Mary's letter is reprinted in Strickland, 5: 470.

have crept into it."[62] Nor was Mary shy about exhibiting the depth of her disdain for the religious policies of the French government. She let the French ambassador know her feelings on several occasions, including one in which she regaled the ambassador with a story of how two French Protestant girls were boiled alive in a pot. Affronted, the ambassador complained to the Prince to restrain his wife, but William blandly replied, "that he could not."[63]

Then the unthinkable happened. In June of 1688, Mary of Modena gave birth to a healthy baby boy, James Francis Edward. William saw his wife's place in the English royal succession displaced and the prospect of a Catholic alliance between France and England a very real possibility. Nothing less than the independence of the United Provinces and survival of the reformed religion were at risk. Yet all was not lost. William and Mary were receiving overtures from unhappy elements within England itself, and not just from Whigs and Dissenters anymore. Anglicans and Tories despaired at the grim future they saw stretched before them; one in which the Established Church was truly imperiled, and not by nonconformity, but by the very monarchy to which the Church had so tightly bound itself. Mary was also the recipient of innuendo and gossip about the child's legitimacy coming from inside the Stuart Court itself.[64] Was this baby boy really her father's son? If James Edward was a fraud, then Mary was still the next legitimate heir and the Protestant succession was saved. Such a proposition was too rich with possibility to be dismissed out of hand. It offered an avenue of real hope.

The Queen of England and the Established Church

> *The Church, which William sav'd, was Mary's Care,*
> *Taught by Her Life, and guarded by Her Prayer.*
>
> George Stepney[65]

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[62] Mary also informed her sister, Princess Anne, and Henry Compton, Bishop of London. Countess Bentick, ed., *Lettres et Memoires de Marie, reine d'Angleterre* (La Haye, 1880), p. 65.

[63] Recounted in numerous sources including Sanders, *Princess and Queen of England*, p. 163.

[64] See the exchange of letters between Anne and Mary reprinted in Dalrymple, *Memoirs*, 2, appendix, part 1, p. 305.

[65] *A Poem Dedicated to the Blessed Memory of Her Late Gracious Majesty Queen Mary* (London, 1695), p. 2.

Once Mary was convinced that the Prince of Wales was supposititious, a fraud perpetuated by her father that could only lead to the destruction of the Church of England and endanger Protestantism throughout Europe and the New World, she fully supported William's plans to invade England. She ordered that there should be no prayers for the Prince of Wales and retreated to Het Loo, spending her time in meditation. In the days immediately leading up to the invasion, she returned to The Hague so that she could be with William. She ordered prayers for his success to be said four times a day in every church, including the Catholic chapels of the Spanish and Imperial ambassadors. She also forbade the collects for her father.[66] Mary was convinced of the righteousness and necessity of her husband's cause. But it was not simply his cause. It was their cause. It was what God called them to do: to save the sinking state of Britain. She had not chosen her husband over her father; rather she felt that God had made the choice for her. "I bless my God decided between the daughter and the wife, and showed me, when religion was at a stake, I should know no man after the flesh, but wait the Lord's leisure and trust his goodness for the event." Burnet saw Mary right before William's expedition and reported that "she seemed to have a great load on her spirits, but to have no scruple as to the lawfulness of the design."[67]

William and Mary were crowned King and Queen of England on February 13, 1689. Although Mary was considered a regnant queen, all true sovereignty rested in William alone when he was in England. But when the King was abroad, making war on France or tending to his responsibilities in the United Provinces, Mary was invested with executive authority. This occurred on six occasions of varying lengths between 1689 and 1694, for a total of thirty-two months.[68] When William returned, Mary resumed her role as a consort queen. As both a regnant and as a consort queen, Mary II was able to exercise considerable influence, particularly over the Church of England. Mary's ability to guide the Church was made all the more vital after William made several early blunders in his dealings with Anglican churchmen. The prickly sensibilities of the clergy needed to be handled with more acuteness

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[66] Strickland, 5: 498; Speck, "Mary II," *ODNB*.
[67] Doebner, *Memoirs*, 3; Burnet, *HOHOT*, 3: 311.
[68] Mary's regencies were 11 June to 10 September 1690; 6 January to 10 April and 1 May to 19 October 1691; 5 March to 18 October 1692; 24 March to 29 October 1693; and 6 May to 9 November 1694.

than the indelicate Dutchman was capable.[69] Mary, a true daughter of the Church of England, easily filled the breach.

What Mary found in England upon her arrival in February shocked her. "The first thing that surprised me at my coming," wrote Mary II, "was to see so little devotion in a people so lately in such eminent danger."[70] She continued to be dismayed by the Established Church, its ceremonialism, its treatment of Protestant Dissenters, and the general laxity of the clergy. She immediately set out to change things. Inspired by her experiences in the Netherlands, Mary sought to reform the Church from within and seek to accommodate, if not comprehend, nonconformists. Her goal was simply to establish a stronger, purer reformed Church that could lead the Protestant world. Although her time was short, her accomplishments were enough that by the time of her death, Protestants in Europe, America, and the British Isles would come to know her as their "nursing mother" and "protectrix;" "the light of our eyes, and the breath in our nostrils;" "She of whom we said, nations shall rest under her shadow."[71]

As was her practice in Holland, Mary surrounded herself with clergy. Burnet, of course, was in constant attendance and was elevated to the bishopric of Salisbury in March 1689.[72] But the most significant cleric in Mary's life became John Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury, who had already made a highly favorable impression on William. Tillotson was appointed clerk of the King's Closet in April 1689. He was a calm, discreet, urbane man, firm in his beliefs, mild and even-tempered in his deportment. His liberal theology with its emphasis on practical spirituality and ethical behavior appealed to Mary's desire for a moral reformation. Like William and Mary, Tillotson had no interest in the retrenchment of inessential dogmas, of fighting old battles over rituals, signs or formulaic prayer. In this new age, such 'things indifferent' were not worth squabbling over. Tillotson believed in a rational, ethical

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[69] William's mistakes are recounted in G.V. Bennett, "King William and Episcopate," in *Essays in Modern English Church History*, eds. G.V. Bennett and J.D. Walsh (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 113–55; also see Craig, *England in the 1690s*, pp. 162–5; and Birch, *Life*, p. 156.

[70] Doebner, *Memoirs,* p. 11.

[71] Anon., *A Funeral Oration*, p. 22; Richard Allestree, *The Whole Duty of Mourning, And the Great Concern of Preparing Our Selves for Death* (London, 1695), preface; John Finglas, *A Sermon Preach'd at the Chappel Royal*, p. 3.

[72] Burnet waited on the Queen once a week at Whitehall. H.C. Foxcroft and T.E.S. Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), p. 286.

Christianity, one that promoted virtue, prudence, charity, and enlightened self-interest in everyday living. The persecution of Dissent was an abomination to him. Rather, he wished to broaden the Church and, like the Queen, was earnest in his desire for comprehension. In short, Tillotson sought to Christianize the Enlightenment. Thus with Tillotson and Burnet at her side, the Queen sought to lead the Church, promoting moral reform, pastoral care, and moderate clergymen, who, to varying degrees, accepted and supported the Revolution. Although reluctant, Tillotson himself was elevated to the See of Canterbury in October of 1690, replacing the nonjuring Archbishop William Sancroft. "The Queen's extraordinary favour to me, much beyond my expectation, is no small support to me," Tillotson declared to Lady Rachel Russell.[73]

That first spring, speaking on behalf of all nonconformists, the Presbyterian leader, William Bates, with whom Mary was well acquainted, addressed the Queen: "We humbly desire, that your Majesty would be pleased, by your wisdom and goodness, to compose the differences between your Protestant subjects in things of less moment concerning religion." Mary, of course, willingly consented, answering that she would do everything in her power for "obtaining a union that is necessary for the edifying of the church."[74] But the more conservative and jealous elements within the Established Church thwarted all designs to comprehend moderate Dissenters, and the failure of comprehension led to the more radical Act of Toleration passed by Parliament in May 1689.[75] Similarly derailed was an ecclesiastical commission charged by the crown with the task of reviewing the Church's liturgy and canons and with the goal of broadening the Church. High Churchmen, feeling that the passage of the Act of Toleration had already given far too much to nonconformity, would not consent to any reforms and either refused to attend or walked out of the process. Increasingly, the Church bifurcated between the moderates around the Court and Archbishop Tillotson and those High Churchmen bent on preserving the Restoration Church, exclusive and dogmatic. Mary watched these events with

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[73] Walsh and Taylor, "Introduction," *The Church of England*, pp. 35–47; *Letters of Lady Rachel Russell: From the Manuscript at the Library at Woburn Abbey* (London, 1801), p. 282.

[74] Bates' address and Mary's response are reprinted in Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans*, 3 vols. (London, 1837), 3: 315–16.

[75] The Act of Toleration (1689): "An act for exempting Their Majesties' Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from penalties of certain laws." John Raithby, ed., *Statutes of the Realm*. 11 vols. (London, 1810–20), 4: 74–6.

growing consternation. "We were like to have a great division in the Church," she wrote in 1691, "for not only some would stick to their old bishops, but all our High Churchmen and the Bishop of London [Compton] were ready to join with them and form a party."[76]

Still the Court had tremendous control over the direction of the Church, especially through the power of ecclesiastical appointment. The opportunities given to the new regime to shape the character of the church hierarchy were vast due to the number of deaths and deprivations following the Revolution. Four bishops died in 1689 alone and six more, who refused to takes the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary, were deprived in 1691. Between 1689 and 1692, the dual monarchy preferred seventeen new bishops and translated another three in England, and appointed two more in Wales. Thus out of the twenty-seven English and Welsh Sees, twenty-five were filled by bishops who owed their positions to the dual monarchy by 1692. In Ireland the situation was similar. William and Mary had appointed nineteen of the twenty-three bishops in Ireland by 1694.[77] They made several of their most crucial appointments in England in 1689. In addition to promoting Gilbert Burnet, they oversaw Edward Stillingfleet's election to Worcester and Simon Patrick's translation to Chichester. Patrick and Stillingfleet were among the most gifted men in orders. They were closely associated with Tillotson and shared his irenicism.[78]

Among the ecclesiastical matters that fell into the hands of the Queen in the early 1690s was the knotty problem presented by those clergy who refused to accept the Revolution. Mary was extremely eager to prevent a schism within the Church between the swearing and nonswearing clergy. She was also unwilling to allow the nonjurors the slightest chance to the play the part of martyrs. For two years, the nonjuring clergy were left unmolested and in possession of their dioceses, giving them plenty of time to rethink their decision, one that meant losing their incomes. But by the summer of 1691, the government's patience had run out. The nonjurors had to be removed

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[76] Doebner, *Memoirs*, p. 39.

[77] F.M. Powicke, *Handbook of British Chronology* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1939) lists the succession of the bishops in England, Wales, and Ireland, pp. 132–272.

[78] Bennett, "King William and the Episcopate," p. 109; Bennett, *To the Church of England*, p. 89; J. Van Den Berg, "Between Platonism and Enlightenment: Simon Patrick (1625–1707) and his Place in the Latitudinarian Movement," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 68 (1988): 164–79.

and the new bishops appointed. With the King abroad, the Queen oversaw the removal of the nonjuring clergy and began "filling the Bishopricks."[79] It was Mary who ordered Archbishop Sancroft to vacate Lambeth Palace and had apartments outfitted for Tillotson and his wife. The Queen certainly understood the opportunity that had been given her, and she strove to "produce a great change in the church and in the temper of the clergy" through promotion and translation.[80] For the most part, Mary's appointees were "Low Church," insofar as they were men interested in enlightened, practical solutions to the Church's problems rather than theological dogmatism. Among them was Edward Fowler, a long time promoter of accommodation with nonconformists, who Mary preferred to the See of Gloucester in July 1690. In December 1691, she nominated Thomas Tenison to the bishopric of Lincoln. He too had long been known for his moderation towards Dissenters.[81]

But Mary did not always tow a strictly latitudinarian or even Low Church line. On the one hand, the Queen selected men whose learning and piety she admired, such as Edward Stillingfleet. On the other, she made appointments based on political convenience, particularly in her effort to reconcile those clergy having twinges of conscience over the Revolution. As Burnet put it, "The Queen hoped to overcome the peevishness of the leaders of the [High Church] party by preferring them."[82] She tried this tactic with the important bishopric of Bath and Wells. In 1691, she nominated William Beveridge to replace her former chaplain, the nonjuring, Thomas Ken. Mary knew that Ken had "a great desire to be a martyr" and determined that he should not be gratified.[83] Beveridge's monastic lifestyle and acetic piety resembled that of Ken's. The Queen hoped to gain both Beveridge's support and use him to make for an easy transition at Bath and Wells. Beveridge dithered for three weeks, but ultimately refused the appointment on the advice of Sancroft and under pressure from Jacobites. Mary then

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[79] Doebner, *Memoirs*, p. 37.
[80] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 4:212.
[81] On Fowler and Dissent, see Mark Goldie and John Spurr, "Politics and the Restoration Parish: Edward Fowler and the Struggle for St. Giles Cripplegate," *EHR* 109 (June 1994): 572–96. Thomas Tenison's moderate views are made clear in his *Argument for Union, Taken from the True Interest of the Dissenters in England* (London, 1683).
[82] Burnet, *A Supplemen*t, p. 504.
[83] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 4: 11, n.1.

turned to Richard Kidder, another moderate and member of Tillotson's circle. Beveridge would wait another thirteen years before he wore the mitre.[84] Mary and Tillotson were more successful with the promotion of the High Churchman, John Sharp, to the Archbishopric of York in 1691. Although "a warm and zealous man for the church," who had attacked Dissenters in his sermons, Sharp was not a dogmatic militant or even keenly political. He had ultimately supported the new regime, earned Mary's admiration at the pulpit, and proved that he was more interested in pastoral care than politics.[85]

But Mary's bipartisan choices did not always meet with William's approval. Upon Sharp's elevation, the deanery of Canterbury became vacant, and Mary hastily appointed her old friend, George Hooper. Hooper was thoroughly High Church, and William, who had lingering memories of Hooper as Mary's meddling chaplain in Holland, was not amused.[86] William and Mary clashed again following Tillotson's death in November 1694. Mary strongly favored the candidacy of highly intellectual Edward Stillingfleet to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. But the King was more concerned with appeasing his political allies. The Whigs in William's government considered Stillingfleet's "notions and his temper too high," and William chose the more moderate, Thomas Tenison.[87] Tenison was certainly not disagreeable to Mary, and in her last months, she defended the new Archbishop against his detractors.[88] Indeed, Tenison was a good choice. He continued the work of Tillotson and the Queen: patronizing her charities and moral reformation societies and fully supporting the propagation of the faith abroad until his own death in 1715.

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[84] Beveridge was in "all the great questions of Church doctrine and ritual" similar to Ken. E.H. Plumptre, *Life of Thomas Ken, D.D.*, 2 vols. (London, 1890), 2: 51. Also see White Kennett, *Compleat History of England*, 3 vols. (London, 1706), 3: 634.

[85] Burnet had recommended Sharp to William in the winter of 1689. But as Sharp became aligned with Tory and High Church politics, Burnet asserted that Sharp's elevation had been a mistake. Burnet, *A Supplement*, p. 504. Mary, however, clearly admired Sharp, proving that she was more concerned with a clergyman's piety and learning than his political leanings. *DNB* s.v. "Sharp, John."

[86] Appendix in Trevor, *Life and Times*, p. 468.

[87] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 4:244. Stillingfleet was becoming increasingly conservative in the 1690s which seems to be the reason for Whig concern. Stillingfleet is further discussed in Chapter 5.

[88] Thomas Tenison, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Most Reverend Father in God, Dr. Thomas Tenison* (London, 1716), p. 20.

Mary's years in Holland had attuned her to a far more stark approach to worship than she found in the Church of England upon her return. Whereas she had formerly gone to "public prayers four times a day," she complained that, "now I hardly have the leisure to go twice and that in such a crowd with so much formality and little devotion." Mary was particularly offended by the excessive ritualism that she considered "popish." Even before her coronation, Mary had dismissed the violinists at St. James's Chapel and had the singing of the prayers halted.[89] Mary saw to it that the services at the royal chapels were far more frequent and public, and as a great believer in sermons, she had those given before her published by her order as well as many others. More sermons were published by the Queen's command during Mary's short five-year reign than during the entire twenty-five years of Charles II's regime.[90] The Queen could also be critical of what her clergy said and did. She flatly told Burnet to shorten one of his long-winded sermons and reprimanded George Hooper for traveling on Sundays. She pressured clergymen guilty of pluralism and non-residence to abandon those livings where they did not reside and she considered using bishops' revenues for charitable purposes.[91]

The Queen's puritanical sensibilities were especially offended by the Sabbath-breaking she witnessed in and around London. In 1691 she informed her council that she was framing regulations for better observance of the Sabbath, going so far as to forbid all hackney-carriages and horses from working Sundays. That summer she issued a proclamation to the JPs of Middlesex for the suppressing of drunkenness, blasphemy, and debauchery. In 1692, during the King's absence, the Queen sent directives to the magistrates throughout England "to execute the laws against drunkenness, swearing, and profanation of the Lord's Day."[92] Certainly, Mary was well aware that there were those that snickered at her afternoon sermons and ridiculed her moral legislation. Enemies of the Revolution and High Churchmen, such as the disgruntled Henry Compton, Bishop of London, who had expected

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[89] Doebner, *Memoirs*, pp. 11–12, 13.

[90] According to Tony Claydon's figures, 45 sermons were published by the King's command during Charles II's 25-year reign as compared to 101 by command during Mary's 5 year reign. See his, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, pp. 96–7. By my count, those 101 sermons were given by at least 40 different clergymen of varying ranks.

[91] Strickland, 6: 46; Appendix in Trevor, *Life and Times*, p. 473.

[92] *CSPD*, William & Mary, 1: 437–8.

the Archbishopric of Canterbury and was passed over, were forming a party around her alienated sister, Princess Anne.[93] But the Queen was undeterred. She employed Christopher Wren to design a hospital in Greenwich for the care of old and injured seamen. She was planning a college in Virginia for the propagation of the faith. She was particularly concerned with the deplorable state of the Church of Ireland, a topic on which she wrote to William after his success at the Battle of Boyne, telling the King that he was obligated to advance the true religion and promote the gospel among the Irish. To this end, she advised him to keep some of the confiscated estates with which to establish schools to instruct the poor Irish, and she herself established a charity for the maintenance and training of orphans.[94] Mary, with William, continued to support the emigration of French Protestants to Britain and America. The Queen also supported Huguenot and Dutch reformed chapels in the Channel Islands which William maintained after her death.[95] Frederick Spanheim believed that the Queen sent £40,000 abroad annually for the care of orphans, widows, ministers, and distressed families in Germany, Switzerland, and Piedmont.[96] No Stuart monarchy had a more favorable reputation in Protestant Europe than the dual monarchy of William and Mary.

At home, Mary sought to lead by example, setting a model of piety and devotion at Court. Her morning routine of prayer and meditation continued and was widely known and admired. Her closet was a "little oratory [that] was always filled with the sweet incense of fervent and well directed prayer."[97] Mary had the royal chapel at Hampton Court remodeled so that her participation in worship could be viewed. After the service, courtiers could wander through a maze she had had constructed in the gardens so that they might ponder the sermon.[98] She urged her bishops to be exemplars at the local level. To that end, the

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[93] Doebner, *Memoirs*, 24; Burnet, *HOHOT*, 4:128.

[94] Letter (July 1690) from Mary to William, Dalrymple, *Memoirs*, 2, part 3, pp. 140–1.

[95] *By the King and Queen, A Declaration for the Encouraging of French Protestants to Transport Themselves to this Kingdom* (London, 1689); *The Case of the French Protestant Refuges, Settled in and about London, and in the English Plantations in America* (London, 1696); on the Channel Islands, see Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C392, f. 317.

[96] Spanheim, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 27.

[97] William Perse, *A Sermon Preach'd upon the Occasion of the Queen's Death on the 4th Sunday in Lent, Being the 3d of March, 1694/5* (London, 1695), p. 16.

[98] Discussed in Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, p. 95.

Queen and Archbishop Tillotson requested Burnet compose a guidebook on pastoral care. Bishop Burnet's *A Discourse of the Pastoral Care* (1692) details the benefits of vigorous pastoral care, catechetical instruction, and the enforcement of moral discipline. At the heart of it was the notion that by setting an exemplary model, the clergy of the Established Church would win back the Dissenters, "for the manners and the labors of the clergy, are real arguments which all people do both understand and feel." Pious actions were better than dogmatic rules and ritualism.[99]

English Dissenters were well aware that they had a friend in the new Queen. She met with various prominent nonconformists on several occasions.[100] But her days of being carried off in her carriage to hear preachers of various hues were over. She was now, along with William, head of the Church of England. Yet her affection and concern for reformed piety in all its vagaries remained. She ordered a catalog of the most "thoughtful books of the Dissenting ministers," to be sent to her, saying that since, "I am tied up from hearing them preach, I am resolved to make up this loss so far as I can by a careful perusal of their best writings."[101] Mary was never shy about asserting her ultimate goal. She certainly made it clear to the Dissenting as well as the conforming clergy in England; she had pronounced it on numerous occasions to Protestant clergy in Europe, and it was known as well to those in America that she sought to heal "our unhappy differences in religious things," as William Bates put it. Writing after her death, the Presbyterian John Howe asserted that, "She knew some modes of worship differed from hers but said that God stands not on lesser things . . . [all] those that serve Christ are acceptable to God." "She loved and valued the image of God, wherever she found it," wrote John Spademan, another Presbyterian, "this is why our loss is so bitter, because she had the capacity to take away our unhappy differences."[102]

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[99] Burnet, *A Supplement*, p. 507; Burnet, *A Discourse of the Pastoral Care* (London, 1692), p. x.

[100] John Tutchin, *A Poem upon Their Majesties Speeches to the Nonconformist Ministers* (London, 1690); *The Address of Condolence to His Majesty by the Dissenting Ministers* (Edinburgh, 1695).

[101] Robert Fleming, *A Practical Discourse Occasioned by the Death of King William* (London, 1703), p. 142.

[102] Bates, *A Sermon Preached*, pp. 19–20; John Howe, *A Discourse Relating to the Much-lamented Death and Solemn Funeral, of Our Incomparable and Most Gracious Queen Mary* (London, 1695), p. 36; John Spademan, *A Sermon Preach'd at Rotterdam . . . the Day of Her Majesty's Funeral* (London, 1695), pp. 26–7.

So, too, Protestants in Europe and America felt the loss of their champion upon her sudden death in December 1694. In Amsterdam, Peter Francis described how the mourning for the Queen could not be contained within the "the limits of one kingdom; it crosses the sea and ranges through the cities of confederate Belgium; all places are filled with the sounds of mournful knells, with weeping, lamentations and mourning, and every one displays the convictions of grief. In Franeker, Utrecht, Leiden and this city . . . Witness the universal sorrow." Mary's friend, Francis Spanheim, agreed.

> Whatever the English most adored in her, what the Batavian [the Dutch] loved, the German honoured, the Switzer reverenced and the girning [snarling] and reluctant French admired, Fame has also so loudly proclaimed to the utmost limits of the hyperborean, the eastern and western worlds, that she can never have said to have celebrated the same of any other woman.[103]

In New England, the Puritan Cotton Mather described how the Queen "was very concerned and took it upon herself to be well informed about the state of our plantations that we have among the infidels [Indians]. But it was no small grief to her to hear that they were but too generally a reproach to the religion." She had, he asserted, "a special regard" for New England and that her death was a calamity to "our brethren in Scotland," "the navies and armies, and all the plantations of both the Indias, [and] the Courts of Europe, except for one [France]."[104]

Anglican churchmen, especially among the moderates and Latitudinarians that had welcomed the Revolution, agreed with their Dissenting brethren. The Queen was "a true tender nursing mother to the best of Churches," Thomas Bowber told his parishioners at St. Swithin in London, but "her chief care was to support the Protestant interest and religion throughout all Europe." Edward Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, who had waited on the Queen for several years as her chaplain and whose political and religious beliefs were in complete accord with the new regime, declared that Mary was a "second Elizabeth," whose zeal for the Church had not corrupted her with "any sour prejudices against

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[103] *An Oration of Peter Francius upon the Funeral of the Most August Princess, Mary II, Queen of England, etc* (London, 1695), p. 2; Spanheim, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 10.
[104] Mather, *Observanda,* pp. 48–9.

other Protestant churches."[105] Her time in Holland had broadened her scope and endowed her with empathy, understanding, and charity towards all "sober Dissenters." William Payne, a zealous supporter of the Revolution, who had preached before Mary, declared in his funeral sermon for the Queen that "her religion lay not in affected singularities, in pharisaical shows and pretences . . . or in any bigotry and immoderate zeal for little indifferent things of no value or importance in religion; but in wise and regular and decent piety and devotion." Payne's sermon was not merely eulogistic; he sought to defend the latitudinarian principles of Mary's Church. Her task had been "building up and repairing the whole church of England and making it like Mount Sion . . . improving its worship, ordering its discipline, amending its defects, in making up its breaches, and bringing all sober Protestants to worship to one communion, which would have been the greatest blow to popery."[106]

The Death and Legacy of Mary II

> *Lay aside the vehemence of thy grief . . . and if thou hast any love for my people, for the church, for Holland, for all Europe, be more careful than hitherto of thy own preservation.*
>
> Mary to William[107]

Mary's sickness was first observed on December 19, 1694. William returned to Kensington Palace on the second day of her illness and "was struck with this beyond expression," according to Burnet. The King

> called me into his closet and gave a free vent to a most tender passion; he burst out into tears and cried out that there was no hope of the Queen, and that, from being the most happy, he was now going to be the most miserable creature upon earth. He said during the whole

[105] Thomas Bowber, *A Sermon Preached in the Parish-Church of St. Swithin, London, March 10th, 1694/5, Upon the Much Lamented Death of our Most Gracious Queen* (London, 1695), p. 19; Fowler, *A Discourse of the Great Disingenuity and Unreasonableness of Repining at Afflicting Providences* (London, 1695), p. 17.
[106] William Payne, *A Sermon upon the Death of the Queen, Preached in the Parish-Church of St. Mary White-Chappel* (London, 1695), pp. 24, 16.
[107] These were supposedly among Mary's last words, Spanheim, *A Funeral Oration*, p. 38.

> course of their marriage he had never known one single fault in her; there was a worth in her that nobody knew besides himself.[108]

The service at Whitehall Chapel that Christmas Day was gloomy; when prayers were said for the Queen, the King broke into sobs. "The Court is all in tears and the King is drowned in sorrow," wrote one observer.[109] On December 26, Thomas Tenison, the newly installed Archbishop of Canterbury, informed the Queen of the dire nature of her condition, which she took gracefully.[110] She had contracted small pox and died shortly after midnight on December 28, 1694. Londoners awaiting the news learned of her death by the tolling of the bells.

The astounding number of printed and iconic materials on the Queen's death, both in the British Isles and on the European continent, attests to the Protestant world's attraction to Mary II. At least seventy pindarics, elegies, and poems in English, Latin, and Dutch were printed on the death of Mary, as compared to the more normal amount of approximately twenty-five each at the deaths of Charles II, William III, and Queen Anne. Mary was celebrated by Dissenters like John Tutchin and Daniel Defoe, but she was also honored by High Churchmen like Samuel Wesley, whose career she had forwarded.[111] In Rotterdam, the poet and translator of Erasmus, Pieter Rabus lavished praise on the Queen Mary.[112] In addition to the poetry, thirty-six funeral sermons for Mary were published in English, seven of which were originally published in Latin or French on the continent. By comparison, when William died in 1702, nine funeral sermons were published, and in 1714, Queen Anne's death garnered a mere twelve. Nor did

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[108] Burnet, *HOHOT*, 4: 247; on Mary's death, see Zook, "The Shocking Death," pp. 21–36.

[109] *CSPD,* William & Mary, 6: 301.

[110] Mary had read Charles Drelincourt, *The Christian's Defense against the Fears of Death* (London, 1675) and made every effort to die well.

[111] Daniel Defoe, *Threnodium Britannicum, To the Sacred Memory of that Most Excellent Majesty Princess, Mary the Second* (London, 1695); John Tutchin, *An Epistle to Mr. Benjamin Bridgewater Occasioned by the Death of the Late Queen Mary* (London, 1694); Samuel Wesley, "On the Death of her Late Sacred Majesty, Mary, Queen of England," in *Elegies on the Queen and Archbishop* (London, 1695). Wesley, an enthusiastic admirer of the Queen, dedicated his *Life of Christ: An Heroic Poem* (London, 1694) to Mary, comparing her to the Virgin Mary.

[112] Pieter Rabus, *Uitvaart, Van Haar Grootmagtigte, Majesteit Maria, Koninginne van Groot Britanje, Vrankrijk en Yerland* (Rotterdam, 1695); and *Britanje en Neerland in den rouw, over't affterven van Haar Grootmagtigste, Majesteit Maria, Koningine van Groot Britanje, Vrankrijk en Yerland* (Rotterdam, 1695).

any of the sermons honoring William or Anne originate in Europe. Thirty-six medals were also cast to memorialize the Queen.[113] Of the sermons, one-third were by nonconformists, usually either Presbyterians or Independents in England; and another third were originally published on the continent by French Protestants or Dutch reformed clergy. Of the nearly twenty sermons published by Church of England clergy, most were by Latitudinarians and Low Church supporters of the Revolution, as would be expected. Others, like Thomas Dawes, had been outspoken opponents of James II even before the Revolution. Some had formerly supported James and preached the Tory doctrine of passive obedience, like Nicholas Brady and William Payne, but were now outspoken Williamites. And some of the clergy who honored Mary after her death had only accepted the Revolution reluctantly but had nonetheless found themselves attracted to her churchmanship.

One of the most moving funeral sermons for the Queen was by a Church of Ireland priest, John Finglas, whose career Mary was supporting at the time of her death. Finglas was deeply distraught by the Queen's demise and felt that he had lost a mother. She was, he wrote, "the most careful, prudent, and most tender and indulgent Queen, and in all respects my parent."[114] The sermons and elegies written in honor of the Queen compared Mary to Tabitha, Deborah, Queen Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary, but the most typical reference found in nearly every sermon and poem was to Mary as a "nursing mother." In 1689, shortly after the coronation of William and Mary, the Dissenter Abraham Kick, writing from New England, addressed the new Queen, pleading with her as "God's instrument" to be a nursing mother to "the Church of God" in the English colonies and plantations in America, the West India Islands, and among the newly converted Indians. "How many thousands of refugees," exclaimed Cotton Mather also in America, "found her a liberal mother unto them all; and this, without any regard unto their different persuasions…"[115] And so the Queen who had had no children became the mother of the Protestant world.

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[113] See Appendix A: Poems on the Death of Queen Mary, and Appendix B: Sermons on the Death of Queen Mary. On the medals, see Edward Hawkins, *Medallic Illustrations of the History of Great Britain and Ireland to the Death of George II* (London, 1885), 2 vols., 2: 108–10.

[114] Finglas, *A Sermon Preached at the Chappel Royal,* p. 21.

[115] Abraham Kick, *A Brief Relation of the State of New England* (London, 1689); Mather, *Observanda*, pp. 40–1.

Mary's effort to shape and guide the Church of England was not forgotten. In 1715, twenty years after her death, she was still being praised for her charity, her efforts to reach out to "Protestants abroad," her "pushing on a further Reformation," as the vicar of Blewbury put it.[116] The Church that the Queen left behind had been invigorated by her brand of what might be called "puritanical liberalism," a temperament that encompassed both the high-minded morality and Sabbatarianism of Puritanism accompanied by a latitudinarian spirit of irenicism and moderation toward various forms of Protestantism. Mary's Church was, to be sure, rocked by division and controversy in the 1690s and early 1700s, as we shall see in the next chapter. Still she had given liked-minded liberal clergy the upper hand and, when all was said and done, the Church that came out of the so-called "Age of Danger" by the time of the Hanoverian succession was the Latitudinarian Church of the eighteenth century. On the one hand, this was the church of the "Vicar of Bray," Erastian, complacent, detached.[117] On the other, it was the church that withstood both the rationalizing tendencies of the age of the High Enlightenment and enthusiastic frenzies of Methodism and Evangelical Revival.

[116] Joseph Acres, *Great Britain's Jubilee: Or, The Joyful Day. A Sermon Preach'd at Blewbury* (Reading, 1715), pp. 21–2.
[117] See the anonymous satire on the clergy, *The Vicar of Bray* (London, 1714).

Figure 5.1 Image of Elizabeth Burnet – permission to publish from the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC

5
Devoted Daughters of the Church: Elizabeth Burnet and Mary Astell

For each Religion, did its Faith enjoy,
She one defended, but none did destroy[1]

Colley Cibber

Mary II had attracted many admirers. Her gentle ways and cheerful demeanor; her extraordinary generosity; her devotion to her faith and moderation towards nonconforming Protestants; and her ardent belief in her husband and the Protestant Cause certainly recommended her to those of like-minded sensibility. Among her biggest fans was the Bishop of Salisbury, Gilbert Burnet, who was utterly heartbroken by her sudden death. Years later, in 1700, he married a woman whose values were remarkably similar to his own and whose virtues resembled those of the Queen. Yet Burnet's third wife, Elizabeth (formerly, Berkeley) Burnet (1661–1709) was hardly a *tabula rasa* on which the bishop might inscribe his convictions. Gilbert was Elizabeth's second husband. She had been a widow for seven years and was already something of a known entity among the political and cultural elite of London. Prior to the Revolution, she had met Gilbert Burnet, along with other English and Scottish refugees, in the United Provinces. She was acquainted with the Prince and Princess of Orange whose invasion of England she warmly supported. On her return to England after the Revolution, she became a frequent guest at the palace of Edward Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, a place where she was renowned for her piety and charity. She was also friendly with Stillingfleet's philosophical combatant, John Locke;

[1] Colley Cibber, *A Poem on the Death of Our Late Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary* (London, 1695), p. 2.

and by 1701, she was an intimate of Sarah Churchill, later Duchess of Marlborough, with whom she shared a zeal for the success of the Whig agenda in Parliament. Elizabeth Burnet was also the author of a manual on Anglican devotion and practical spirituality, designed primarily for women. In sum, her Whig politics and Low Church Anglicanism were already essential features of her character before she had ever agreed to become Gilbert Burnet's wife.

Elizabeth Burnet's brand of Anglicanism felt perfectly at home in Mary II's Church. But there were many other Anglicans, women and men, who found its latitudinarian leanings an anathema to all that they held dear, including the pamphleteer, Mary Astell (1660–1731). Unlike Elizabeth Burnet, Astell is well known among scholars, particularly for her feminist tracts. But in addition to her Christian feminism, Astell was also an outspoken supporter of High Church principles and Tory politics. She despised the moderation of so many of William and Mary's bishops. She found their tolerant gaze toward Dissenters, their emphasis on a broad, practical Christianity, and their adoration of the very Revolution that had placed them in power, nauseating. The deeply felt and wonderfully articulated High Anglicanism of Mary Astell, with its relish for the rituals and traditions of the Church, represents a strain of Protestantism not yet discussed in this study. Like Aphra Behn, Astell looked upon Dissenting women such as the Baptist, Elizabeth Gaunt, with suspicion and disgust. But the similarities between Astell's and Behn's Anglicanism probably end there. Behn never expounded a truly ardent attachment for the Church of England and, as we have seen, if she had any attraction to religion at all, it would seem to have been in the direction of Rome.

But Mary Astell was, as she called herself, a "daughter" of the Established Church.[2] This she shared with Elizabeth Burnet, who was equally devoted to Anglicanism. Mary Astell and Elizabeth Burnet were also contemporaries. They witnessed many of the same events: the frantic politicking of Exclusion Crisis; the collapse of James II's regime and the Revolutionary Settlement that placed William and Mary on the throne; the passage of the Act of Toleration in 1689; and the death of Mary II in 1694. Both participated in the struggles of the so-called "Age of the Church in Danger" at the outset of the eighteenth century. Both Astell and Burnet warmly welcomed the ascension of Mary II's sister, Queen

[2] Mary Astell, *The Christian Religion as Professed by a Daughter of the Church of England* (London, 1705).

Anne, in 1702. Certainly, Elizabeth Burnet had advantages that came with her superior social class that Mary Astell did not. Burnet was proficient in French and well traveled throughout northwestern Europe. But what Astell lost in social status, she made up for in determination and intellect. Both Astell and Burnet were at home conversing with divines and scholars (something they shared with Mary II). Yet despite their staunch support of the Church of England, their vision of the Church as well as the kind of Anglican devotion that they advocated was, in many respects, worlds apart and consequently, so too were their political positions. Thus, Burnet and Astell represent opposite ends of the Anglican divide between the Low and High Church positions at the beginning of the age of Enlightenment.

A Church Divided: Anglicanism after the Revolution

> *Here lies the widowed Anglican Church,*
> *Half buried, half dead, and left in a lurch*
>
> Anonymous[3]

The political divisions between Whig and Tory that arose to screech and roar amid the Exclusion Crisis of the early 1680s continued unabated after the Revolution of 1688/89. If anything, they were exacerbated by the presence of the followers of James II, the Jacobites. Groupings among the clergy of the Church of England mirrored the nation's political divisions. The nonjurors, who maintained their belief in a divinely ordained royal succession, stubbornly refused to take the oaths of allegiance to the new regime. In the end, some 400 inferior clergy and seven bishops were deprived of their benefices and followed Archbishop William Sancroft into something of an ecclesiastical wilderness.[4] Yet like their political counterparts, the Jacobites, they were not silent, voicing in turns both their discontent and alarm over the direction of the Church and the nation, and lending "massive scholarly and polemical support," in the words of Mark Goldie, to Tory and High Anglican

[3] Anonymous Jacobite epigram attacking Archbishop Tillotson, quoted in Strickland, 6:97.

[4] There is nothing yet written on the nonjuring clergy that is not problematic, but one might consult, Robert D. Cornwall, *Visible and Apostolic: The Constitution of the Church in High Church Anglican and Non-Juror Thought* (Newark: University of Delaware, 1993); Gordon Rupp, *Religion in England , 1688–1791* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), ch. 1.

causes.[5] But the Revolution had also fueled a growing and more significant division, particularly in terms of the history of the Church, among the swearing clergy. Common usage of the terms, "High Church" and "Low Church" materialized after the Revolution. They reflected divisions among the clergy that had begun to appear during the reign of Charles II, particularly over the issue of how best to handle the problem of sectarianism. They fully emerged as pejorative "party-names" in the 1690s and early 1700s.[6] Low Churchmen were often associated with the Whig party and often, though not always, supported Whig policies. High Churchmen were coupled with the Tory Party, and often, though not always, supported Tory policies. Historian William Gibson cautions scholars against viewing these groupings within the Church as "exclusion or homogenous." Clergymen often cut across parties and belied such labels as "Whig," and "Tory," "High Church" and "Low Church." Moreover, in terms of basic theology, both High and Low clergy were, by and large, committed to "core Anglican beliefs:" "Trinitarianism, a strong pastoral ministry, the importance of the Eucharist, moral reform and renewal and even episcopacy."[7] Yet it is also true that Anglican orthodoxy in the early eighteenth century was becoming something increasingly difficult to pinpoint. What Anglicanism was, to any one individual beyond the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, was often more about cultural and ideological predispositions than theological tenets.[8] "High" and "Low" Church principles were usually bound up with an individual's politics rather than their theology. Thus while Low Church and High Church groupings were certainly not monolithic parties, neither were Whigs and Tories. Only like the Whigs and Tories, Low and High Churchmen were identifiable divisions, representing competing interests.

For the most part, William and Mary had favored Low Churchmen of a latitudinarian strain. The willingness of these men to open the Church to some sort of accommodation with nonconformists made them attractive to the new regime. Once comprehension had failed and

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[5] Mark Goldie, "The Non-jurors, Episcopacy, and the Origins of the Convocation Controversy," in *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689–1759,* ed. E. Cruickshanks (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1982), p. 15.

[6] Richard West, *The True Character of a Churchman* (London, 1702), p. 1.

[7] William Gibson, "William Talbot and Church Parties, 1688–1730," *JEH* 58/1 (January 2007): 26, 46.

[8] The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion were devised in 1563 to clarify the Church's doctrinal positions in relation to Catholicism and continental Protestantism.

the Act of Toleration passed in Parliament in 1689, Low Churchmen accepted the new reality of a legally sanctioned religious pluralism. Most of them had never believed that Dissenters could be persecuted out of existence anyway. As a result of the Revolution, many of these moderate or Low clergymen were placed in positions of power, and they sought to make the national Church more appealing, especially to those occasional conformists that might be satisfied with Sunday services at their parish church rather than wandering off to their Dissenting meeting house. Low Churchmen emphasized the doctrine of *adiaphora* which argued that "things indifferent," such as bowing at the name of Jesus in the liturgy, were simply not necessary for salvation. It was Archbishop John Tillotson's wish to make such indifferent rituals (including making the sign of the cross at baptism and taking the Lord's supper kneeling) optional within the Church, although his plans never materialized due to the obstruction of High Church clergy.[9] Men like Tillotson and Bishops Gilbert Burnet, Edward Fowler, Simon Patrick, and Thomas Tenison were also wary of any undue emphasis on sacerdotalism. Tenison, for example, defended the practice of lay baptism.[10] But, above all, what truly separated High and Low Churchmen were the debates carried on within the political arena in print and Parliament. Low Churchmen promoted and defended a Whig vision of the Revolution as both providential and constitutional. They supported the Act of Succession (1701) which ensured the future of the Protestant monarchy. They fought the Bill against Occasional Conformity which sought to end the practice among Whig Dissenters of "occasionally" taking communion in the Church in order to qualify for public office. They defended the Act of Union with Presbyterian Scotland in 1707, and they abhorred the anti-Revolution, anti-Williamite hysterics of Henry Sacheverell in 1710.[11]

High Churchmen, on the other hand, were opposed to religious toleration and, above all, to changing Church ceremonies, rites, and rituals to suit the yearnings of nonconformists. They blocked any attempts by the Latitudinarian bishops installed by William and Mary to transform

[9] Birch, *Life*, pp. 175–6.

[10] Tenison's declaration of the validity of lay baptism is published in Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury: His Life and Times* (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 317.

[11] Henry Sacheverell (1674–1724) was a High Church clergyman whose 1709 sermon, *The Perils of False Brethren, in Church, and State*, was a furious attack on the Revolution, Whigs and Dissenters.

or dilute the liturgy and the rituals of the Church.[12] They also favored an elevated perception of the sacraments and the priesthood and looked back fondly on the exclusive and coercive Church of the Restoration Settlement. They were further concerned that the Act of Toleration had undermined the Church's status. "The days of the authority of the church are over," wrote the nonjuror and pamphleteer, Charles Leslie, "we now seem to be in the height of the Laodicean state."[13] The Established Church no longer stood as the "symbol and guarantor of a unitary state," and High Church polemicists like Mary Astell predicted growing societal divisions and degeneration. If the people were allowed to worship freely, sects would multiply, breeding ever more outlandish modes of worship; and so too irreligion, atheism, licentiousness, and sheer ignorance would flourish as others simply chose not to attend any religious service whatsoever.[14] But, ultimately, the divisions between High and Low Anglicans were most keenly visible amid the debates over the political topics of the day and none more so than that over occasional conformity – an issue that roused the ire of both Elizabeth Burnet and Mary Astell.

The Life of Elizabeth Burnet

> *. . . one of the most extraordinary persons that has lived in this age . . .*
> Gilbert Burnet[15]

The life story of the woman, born Elizabeth Blake, was recorded in 1713 by Timothy Goodwyn, the Archdeacon of Oxford and later Bishop of Cashel. The font of his information was Elizabeth's second husband, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. Mildly hagiographical, Goodwyn's "Account of the Life of the Author" prefaced the second edition of Elizabeth's only published work, *A Method of Devotion*. It is the strongest

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[12] Birch, *Life*, pp. 180–2; Craig Rose, *England in the 1690s: Revolution, Religion and War* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999), p. 166.

[13] Charles Leslie, *Querela Temporum; or, the Danger of the Church of England* (London, 1694), in the *Somers Tracts*, 9: 520. "Laodicean" meaning lukewarm or indifferent in religion; an allusion to the early Christians of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14–16.

[14] John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, "The Church and Anglicanism in the 'Long' Eighteenth Century," in *The Church of England, c. 1689–c.1833, From Toleration to Tractarianism*, eds. J. Walsh, C. Haydon, and S. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 47; Mary Astell, *The Christian Religion*, pp. 59–63.

[15] Burnet, *A Supplement*, p. 509.

biographical source available on her. "I dictated the greatest part," so Bishop Burnet modestly asserts. Dr. Goodwyn only wrote "so much of it as to give him a right to set his name to it at my desire."[16] But the "Account" is not merely composed of Burnet's recollections of his wife. Rather, it is clearly a retelling of stories that Elizabeth herself told Burnet, particularly about her childhood and first marriage, some of which are echoed in Elizabeth's spiritual journal and travel diary housed at the Bodleian Library.[17] This, in addition to *A Method of Devotion* and her correspondence with John Locke and Sarah Churchill, compose the bulk of the sources that tell the tale of this "most extraordinary" woman.

She was the daughter of Sir Richard and Elizabeth Blake of Easterton, Wiltshire.[18] Young Elizabeth was a voracious reader, who developed "philosophical habit of mind." Her godfather was none other than the scholar and staunch royalist, Bishop John Fell of Oxford, who helped to guide her education. It was he who arranged her marriage at age seventeen to Robert Berkeley of Spetchley in Worcestershire.[19] Robert is described as "a good man," but "weak in body and mind," keenly

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[16] Timothy Goodwyn, "Some Account of the Life of the Author," in Elizabeth Burnet, *A Method of Devotion* (London, 1713); Burnet, *A Supplement*, p. 509.

[17] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 1092, ff. 111–203. George Ballard also wrote a short biographical piece on Burnet in *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* which was originally published in 1752 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), pp. 345–52. There are three modern studies of Elizabeth Burnet and her book; they are: C. Kirchberger, "Elizabeth Burnet, 1661–1709," *The Church Quarterly Review* 148 (1949): 17–51; Anne Kelly, "'Her Zeal for the Publick Good:' The Political Agenda in Elizabeth Burnet's *A Method of Devotion* (1708)," *Women's Writing* 13/3 (October 2006): 448–74; and Charles Wallace, Jr., "The Prayer Closet as a "'Room of One's Own:' Two Anglican Women Devotional Writers at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Women's History* 9/2 (Summer 1997): 108–21.

[18] Her mother's father may have been the physician, John Bathurst, (d. 1659) but this is not clear. See Frances Harris, "Burnet [née Blake; other married name Berkeley], Elizabeth (1661–1709)," *ODNB*.

[19] Robert's grandfather, Sir Robert Berkeley, was an eminent lawyer and one of the judges on the Court of King's Bench. He had sided with the royalists during the Civil Wars. He left his estate to his grandson, Robert, rather than his son, Thomas, because Thomas had converted to Catholicism while in exile in Belgium. Thomas also married a Catholic, Anne Darell, Robert's mother. Bernard Burke, *A Genealogy and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland*, 3 vols. (London, 1939), 1: 145. Shelia Doyle, "Berkeley, Sir Robert (1584–1656)," *ODNB*. Bishop Fell was connected to the Berkeley family through his mother who was the niece of Sir Robert Berkeley, senior.

susceptible to the influence of his mother, Anne, "a woman of good life," to be sure, but also "a zealous papist." In order to protect her youthful husband from his mother's religion and defend her own, Elizabeth fortified herself by studying the controversies between the churches of England and Rome. Apparently, though, this was not enough. In 1685 Bishop Fell died, thus removing his good affects on the family, and with the ascension of the Catholic King, James II, Elizabeth felt that she and Robert would have to leave England entirely in order to thwart the sway of Catholicism in her home. They traveled to the United Provinces and lived for a time at The Hague, "where she was soon known and great into the esteem and friendship of persons of the highest rank," including the Prince and Princess of Orange and Gilbert Burnet and his wife, Mary.[20] Elizabeth and Robert also traveled widely through the Low Countries, visiting his family's Catholic friends in Brussels, Ghent, and Liege.

Following the Revolution of 1688/89, the young couple returned to Worcestershire where Robert died a few years later. Elizabeth was left a widow with a fairly sizable income and plenty of freedom.[21] She divided her time between Spetchley and the London house of his sister, Mary, who was married to Justice Robert Dormer. Their neighbor was John Locke and he and Elizabeth became friends and correspondents. Back in Worcester, Elizabeth paid regular visits to the newly installed bishop, Edward Stillingfleet and his wife, Elizabeth. Stillingfleet is reported to have said that "he knew not a more considerable woman in England" than Elizabeth Berkeley. Coming from one of the most intellectual churchmen of his age, this was no small complement. She was also admired by William Talbot, who was then Dean at Worcester and later the Bishop of Oxford. That Elizabeth should attract admirers is certainly understandable. She devoted much of her time to charity, founding a hospital and schools for the poor and helping the country clergy and her less fortunate neighbors. Left childless herself, she became a "mother" to all her husband's Protestant relatives.[22] It was also during this time that she wrote the first draft of her manual on devotion, revised and published in 1708.

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[20] "Account of the Life of the Author," pp. vi–vii, viii–ix; H.C. Foxcroft and T.E.S. Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907), p. 353; C. Kirchberger, "Elizabeth Burnet," p. 20.

[21] Luttrell reports that Elizabeth had an income of around £800; four-fifths of which she devoted to charity. Luttrell, *Diary*, 4: 649.

[22] "Account," pp. ix–x.

The political scene in London was one which Elizabeth readily engaged. She received regular reports of parliamentary news from her brother-in-law, Dormer. She was friendly with the moderate Tory and devout Anglican, Sir William Trumbull. Her acquaintance with one who was very close to the Williamite court was also rekindled. In 1700, after some internal debate, the thirty-nine year old Elizabeth Berkeley married the fifty-seven year old Bishop of Salisbury, Gilbert Burnet. His second wife, Mary, had died of small pox in June 1698, leaving him with five children, the eldest of which was only ten. The match between Elizabeth and Gilbert proved beneficial to both partners. Elizabeth hoped to "have more power to do good in a more public post," and she soon became even more immersed in the affairs of church and state.[23] According to Bishop Burnet, Elizabeth was quick to enter into "friendship with some persons of the greatest quality," including the Duchess of Marlborough. Elizabeth was ambitious, no doubt, for her new husband, but more precisely for the Whig agenda: the continuation of the war in Europe, the Protestant succession, and the defeat of High Church, Tory, and Jacobite schemes. Her politicking did not go unnoticed by her political foes, who sneered at her for having the Bishop maintain six coach horses.[24] Even Bishop Burnet himself admitted that "her zeal for the public good, and that eagerness of spirit which kept her intent upon it, was the single thing he had ever observed in her that looked like excess." Yet the Bishop also benefited from the marriage, writing that "both I and the children were happy in her beyond expression; for she was one of the strictest Christians, and . . . one of the most heavenly minded persons I have ever known."[25]

In the spring of 1707, Elizabeth took three of Burnet's children on an extended excursion in Europe.[26] This journey was said to be in the interest of the children and Elizabeth's health, which was never strong and suffered in the moist climes of England. Their goal was to reach Spa, Belgium, where Elizabeth would take the waters. Elizabeth Burnet

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[23] Elizabeth Burnet wrote that she was generally disinclined to the idea of a second marriage, but she felt that it could help Bishop Burnet navigate Court politics since his free and generous nature made him susceptible to the snares of "designing men." Rawl. D. 1092, f. 136.

[24] HMC: *Downshire Manuscripts*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 908.

[25] Quoted in Foxcroft and Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, p. 380.

[26] She took her stepdaughter, Elizabeth, and two stepsons, William, the eldest son, and Thomas, the youngest. The boys were to spend a year at the University of Leyden. Kirchberger, "Elizabeth Burnet," pp. 222–3.

and the children visited Leyden, The Hague, Amsterdam, and Brussels.[27] Elizabeth often toured Catholic churches and religious houses, conversing with priests and nuns. She is also said to have listened to "preachers everywhere." Burnet's biographer asserts that she was charitable to "those that differed from her in matters of religion," including "papists."[28] But Europe amid the war of the Spanish Succession also confirmed Burnet's Whig prejudices about the continent, particularly the Catholic domains. In her travel journal she blesses God for the "moderation of our government" and pities the oppressed, superstitious, and impoverished in northern Europe.[29]

This was a trip that had political aspirations as well. Conveniently, Spa was just a short sojourn from Hanover, where Burnet was intent on meeting the Dowager Electress Sophia, the British heir presumptive, in hopes of doing "some good," according to Burnet herself.[30] Indeed, but what kind of good might she do? Back home, it was widely believed that Burnet was sent to Hanover as an agent for the Duchess of Marlborough, most likely in an effort to cultivate the good will of the Electress. When the Duke of Marlborough, then at The Hague, received word of Elizabeth's intended journey in April of 1707, he tried to put a stop to it. Marlborough knew that if word of it reached Queen Anne, anxious and jealous as she was of her German successors, it would further sour the already deteriorating relationship between the Queen and the Marlboroughs.[31] Nonetheless, off to Hanover Elizabeth Burnet went and if the Duchess could have prevented Burnet's visit, she chose not to. Elizabeth visited the Sophia's residence, Herrenhausen, in September. She found the Electress to be a politically astute observer of English and European affairs and a pragmatist. They discussed politics, religion, and the possible ascension of Sophia's son, George. Burnet also met the philosopher, Gottfried Leibniz, who discussed the work of Henry Dodwell and John Toland with her. Back home, the garrulous Bishop was bragging about how his wife was "mightily caressed by the Electress."[32]

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[27] Foxcroft and Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, p. 429; Kirchberger, "Elizabeth Burnet," p. 26.
[28] "Account," p. xxix.
[29] Rawl. D. 1092, f. 118.
[30] Rawl. D. 1092, f. 126.
[31] *Private Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, 2 vols. (London, 1838), 1: 68–9.
[32] Rawl. D. 1092, f. 130; HMC: *Downshire*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 854. Henry Dodwell (1641–1711) was a scholar, theologian, and nonjuror. John Toland (1670–1722) a radical free-thinker, is discussed below.

With her tour of Europe complete, Elizabeth traveled back to the United Provinces and met the Duke of Marlborough in Rotterdam, where he sent her home on his yacht, no doubt with a sigh of relief.[33]

Whatever benefits Elizabeth had derived from the waters of Europe proved to be ephemeral and she died of a "chill" in February of 1709. Luttrell reports she was "very much lamented for her charity and piety." Others were not so kind. "Mrs. Burnet with the politics in one end and the Bishop etc had so exhausted her spirits that she is dead," wrote another observer.[34] Elizabeth had borne the Bishop two daughters but they had perished in infancy. She had done her best to nurture and guide Mary Burnet's five children which was not always an easy task, particularly in regard to Gilbert's wayward eldest son, William. Elizabeth also left an important legacy, her manual of Anglican devotional exercises.

The Religiosity of Elizabeth Burnet

> *When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father . . . in secret*
>
> Matthew 6:6[35]

Something happened to Elizabeth Blake when was she was eleven. She had a religious experience, an epiphany of sorts, at which point "she began to have a true sense of religion and read with great application the books that were put into her hand." So she later told her second husband, Gilbert Burnet.[36] She also noted in her religious journal:

> I remember when very young, so soon as I began to think of religious matters, some of these thoughts did as [it] were spring up in my mind, I knew not how; for I found them not then in books; but my mind found rest and quick in them . . . and when I first met with them from men of piety and learning, my heart was glad . . . and I feel as it were their certainty.[37]

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[33] Foxcroft and Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, p. 428.
[34] Luttrell, *Diary*, 6:403; HMC: *Downshire*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 870.
[35] Quoted in *The Method of Devotion*, p. 16. Burnet was strongly opposed to any sort of pharisaical show of one's piety and felt that one's relationship with God should be intimate and private.
[36] "Account," p. v.
[37] Quoted in Foxcroft and Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, p. 381.

Perhaps then, considering her own youthful experience, it is not too surprising that Burnet was attracted, at least for a time, to the writings of Christian mystics as recorded in her spiritual journal.[38] Yet, in the end, she rejected all enthusiasm. The mature, deeply pious woman that composed *A Method of Devotion* was far more influenced by the blossoming culture of latitudinarianism within the Church of England and the Enlightenment within British and Northern European society as a whole. She embraced the "ratio" and yet she was, to twist the words of William Blake, still able to see the "infinite in all things."[39] Burnet's *Method*, as well as the lengthy list of books she recommends to her readers, thoroughly illustrates her brand of Low Church Anglicanism which was one in spirit with the rationalism of men like John Tillotson and his circle.[40]

Burnet's *Method of Devotion* is aimed at women of the "richer sort" with plenty of leisure time, but it also has sections designed for children, the young, and servants.[41] Time again, she stresses a devotional practice which is rational and pragmatic. "The great end of religion and devotion," so she begins her preface, "consists chiefly in being good and doing good, consequently the devotion that is rational and will recommend us to God." We are "all rational beings" and "must behave in accordance to "God's Word and right reason."[42] The liberty which we are given by our reason allows us to pray and to mediate without the need of set forms. The "impartial reasoning of a sincere heart" finds more favor with God than "the bare repeating of well composed forms," which may be eloquent but are, in the end, a "fruitless devotion." "Who can think, that has any rational thought of God, that he does not prefer the sincerity of the heart to the eloquence of the tongue?"[43]

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[38] According to her spiritual journal, Burnet read the Flemish mystic, Antoinette Bourignon, (1616–80) as well as Teresa of Ávila (1515–82). Rawl. D. 1092, f. 139–139v.

[39] "He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only." William Blake, *There Is No Natural Religion* (London, 1788), broadside. Ratio is Latin for reason plus calculation.

[40] See Appendix C: Elizabeth Burnet's Recommended Reading List in *A Method of Devotion*. This list is discussed at the end of this section.

[41] *A Method of Devotion* (London, 1713), p. xxxvii. I have no evidence, however, of who actually read Burnet's work. It did go into several editions (1708, 1709, 1713 and 1738) which would suggest some popularity.

[42] Ibid., pp. vxxii, 34, 88.

[43] Ibid., pp. xxxiv, xxxix.

Burnet values moderation and told her readers to be wary of those who engaged in extravagant forms of religiosity. She does not deny that some few were given the "gifts of prophesy or preaching, a capacity to understand and unfold obscure mysteries." But she was also suspicious. No extraordinary talent is truly a gift from God if it is without an "inward grace of charity" for otherwise it is of "no profit." Only those powers which give unto others are from God. Fasting should be part of one's devotional practices but within limits and never to gain notice or impair one's health. One should only practice "useful acts of self-denial and mortification and not those heathenish and superstitious whimsies." For example, abstaining from "public meals where the company is apt to dissipate the thoughts is of good use." But Burnet was clearly against any practice that sought to raise "fumes and vapours," methods that many sectarian women like Bridget Bendish, discussed in Chapter 1, were known to use. Clouding the reason "rather defeats than answers" the goal of devotion. So she asserts, " 'tis a superstition to think that God is pleased with such unreasonable pieces of will-worship" when none is commanded.[44] Although the targets of Burnet's ire remain unnamed, she clearly has the ascetic exercises of Catholic mystics as well as the practices of some Protestant Dissenters. Always the advocate of reason, utility, and moderation, Burnet tells her readers to "endeavour to suppress all extravagant imagination." Nor should one "indulge a skeptical and perpetually doubting humour; but be modest and content with such a proof as the matter will bear." Make every moment of your life useful; pray when you pass a church, a funeral, hear of a crime, or witness the plight of the poor. Burnet warns against overwrought anxiety, melancholy, introspection, or unreasonable dwelling upon things past remedying. One's goal is to maintain a "cheerful gravity" and "nourish God's Holy Spirit" within. "Abstruse speculation is not necessary to faith and practice." Even those studies that have no obviously useful aim should be rejected.[45]

It would be wrong, however, to surmise that Burnet was either an ardent anti-Catholic or an enemy of Dissent. She is nothing if not moderate in all things. Insofar as the Roman Church is concerned, her strongest words are anti-papal when in a prayer she asks God to deliver "the Western Churches from the miserable yoke of papal usurpation." Indeed she does, like most Protestants, equate Catholicism with

[44] Ibid., pp. 61, 63, 172, 194.
[45] Ibid, pp. 90, 82, 91–6.

"idolatry, superstition, and cruelty," the artifice of a corrupt priesthood. But she also believes that many Catholics are "devout persons" and need only the "light and liberty" to find their way to "thy Word and Spirit."[46] When she critiques her fellow Protestants, it is not always clear whether she is chiding those outside the Anglican communion or within. For example, at one point, she petitions God to rescue his people from the "pernicious evils *in the Church*," listed as "private interpretations, innovations in holy things; from the strange doctrines of the unlearned and unstable; from the pride of novices and from doubting about questions, and making endless strifes; from heresies, schisms, scandals public and private."[47] This litany would seem to be an attack on sectarians who splinter and divide the reformed church throughout Europe, but parts of it could just as easily be aimed at the nonjurors and High Church clergy within the Established Church. Quite possibly it is a critique of both because she immediately links them again. She begins by castigating Dissenters: "To make doubtful speculations the cause of division in the Church, proceeds generally from a proud, contentious spirit, and all such as divide from and stubbornly disobey the laws and institutions of society, civil and ecclesiastical on account of things purely ceremonial, which though liable to objections, they confess are not sinful." Their separation obstructs the "progress of true piety, and improvement of useful truths, taking up and clouding men's minds by the dust of needless contentions." Then she admonishes High Church clergy, "though all dividers in these cases are condemned, *yet the rigid and tyrannical imposers of things justly exceptional*, though not unlawful, are by no means excusable, and must answer to God for such offences, as laying a stumbling block in their brother's way to offend by."[48]

Burnet was clearly agitated by the current state of religion in Britain and abroad. She continually advocates a union of all Christians based on charity, mutual love, and toleration. She condemns schismatics, the superstitious, and the "enthusiastical" because they deny the "government of reason." Burnet's call for a Christian union among reformed churches is a pervasive theme of her work.[49] She certainly had something of a European sensibility; and like Queen Mary, she understood the perils Protestants encountered on the continent. She also conceived of England as special, a place apart from the corruptions and

[46] Ibid., p. 42.
[47] Ibid., p. 146, italics mine.
[48] Ibid., pp. 155–6, italics mine.
[49] Ibid., pp. 165, 170, 43, 184–5.

contentions of Europe. The British Isles were particularly fortunate, separated "from the pollutions of the world" and divinely favored. That Burnet was a keen follower and something of a participant in the political tumults of the Court and Westminster is in evidence throughout the *Method*. She continually displays a strong sense of public-mindedness, remembering throughout her treatise to pray for Queen Anne, her counselors, magistrates, clergy, and "our allies." With the recent Revolution in mind, she reminds her readers to thank God for preserving their "native country, and the liberty of the gospel, and a just and legal government, and rescuing us from the miseries of tyranny and arbitrary power." And, in what is clearly aimed at Jacobites and conniving Tories, she petitions God to "defeat all the designs of wicked and unreasonable men," who seek to undermine the Queen and her government. She uses the Whig device of referring always to the government as "free and legal" or "just and legal," a none too subtle defense of the Glorious Revolution in opposition to Tory doubts and Jacobite threats.[50]

Burnet concludes her 444-page treatise with a lengthy list of books and sermons that she recommends to her readers. Since her days as a young wife at Spechley, books were Elizabeth's chief "delight."[51] Her list of recommended reading, with its forty-eight different authors and seventy-four different books, is certainly testimony to the fact that she was a voracious reader.[52] Burnet's list is tailored to the needs of her audience and echoes and reinforces her own practical Christianity. She was most significantly influenced by the Cambridge Platonists, and their theological offspring, the Latitudinarians.[53] Many of the authors are exactly those expected of someone with Low Church sympathies. Thus it is no surprise that Burnet recommends works by Bishops John Tillotson, John Moore, Gilbert Burnet, John Williams, Thomas Tenison, and Simon Patrick. All of these men were nominated to the episcopal bench by William and Mary or, after 1695, by William alone. Many of them were among Mary II's friends and admirers and many were leading Latitudinarians. They were the same men who often preached

[50] Ibid., pp. 43, 21, 186, 73, 140.

[51] "... books are her delight." Letter to Mary Evelyn (21 December 1689). BL, Add. 78, 435, f. 49.

[52] She was a wide-ranging reader as well since she not only read mystics like Antoinette Bourignon, but according to her spiritual diary, she also read the nonjurors, Henry Dodwell and George Hickes.

[53] Among the Cambridge Platonists, Burnet lists Henry More, Benjamin Whichcote, John Norris, and John Worthington.

before Queen Mary and eulogized her upon her sudden death. Writers that Elizabeth Burnet recommended who subsequently became bishops under Anne or George I, include Richard Willis, William Wake, and Benjamin Hoadly, all of whom were also proponents of the kind of comprehensive Protestantism that was a key feature of Mary II's Church.

Not surprisingly, Burnet's list includes many classic Anglican works, such as *The Whole Duty of Man* (1657). There are also numerous guides to the gospels, creeds, and catechisms, such as William Burkitt's *Expository Notes, with Practical Observations, on the New Testament* (1700) and John Lewis's *Church Catechism Explain'd by way of Questions and Answers* (1700).[54] Burnet listed books about morality and those meant to serve as examples of lives well spent, such as William Hamilton's *The Exemplary Life and Character of James Bonnell, Esq* (1703).[55] She also included a handful of works by High Churchmen. There is one sermon by the moderate Tory, John Sharp, Archbishop of York, and another by the high-flying firebrand Francis Atterbury. A couple of books by nonjurors also make an appearance, such as Charles Leslie's *A Short and Easy Method with a Deist* (1697) and Jeremy Collier's polemics against the stage.[56] But Elizabeth Burnet chose carefully. The sermons by High Churchmen are eloquent and apolitical; Atterbury's sermon on private prayer girds Burnet's own emphasis on an active and personal prayer life. Collier's famous attacks on the theater, including the plays of Aphra Behn, reflected widespread anxieties about the moral order of society, concerns shared by both High and Low clergy.

If Burnet's list of recommended books is indicative of anything it is that of a thoroughly orthodox Anglican. True enough, she leaned in

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[54] Both Burkitt and Lewis were Low Churchmen. Burkitt held puritanical sympathies and had numerous ties to Dissenters while the Whiggish Lewis publicly attacked High Church principles. N. Pankhurst, *The Life of the Rev. W. Burkitt* (London, 1704); J. Shirley, "John Lewis of Margate," *Archaeologia cantiana* 64 (1951): 39–56.

[55] James Bonnell (1653–99) was a deeply pious government official working in Ireland during the Revolution and the 1690s. He supported the comprehension of nonconformists and promoted religious societies in Dublin. Bonnell's life, written by Archdeacon William Armagh, was extremely popular, going through seven editions by 1741. D.W. Hayton, "Bonnell, James (1653–1699)," *ODNB*.

[56] John Sharp, *Government of Thoughts: A Sermon Preached before the King and Queen at Whitehall* (London, 1694); Francis Atterbury, *On the Excellency and Advantage of Private Prayer* (London, 1704); Charles Leslie, *A Short and Easy Method with a Deist* (London, 1697); Jeremy Collier, *Short View of the Immortality and Profaneness of the England Stage* (London, 1698); *A Defense of A Short View* (London, 1699); *A Second Defense of a Short View* (London, 1700).

the direction of Latitudinarians like Tillotson and Patrick, and her list contained the works of maverick rationalists like Samuel Clarke and Edward Synge.[57] But she was no Socianian and was clearly exercised by the debate over the nature of the Holy Trinity and the implausibility of the miraculous in religion. She included a number of works defending orthodox Trinitarianism and attacking John Toland's infamous *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696) which argued that Christianity possessed no mysteries. Thus Burnet's inclusion of Charles Leslie's classic defense of Trinitarian orthodoxy and the centrality of the doctrine of satisfaction, as well as the nonjuror, John Richardson's *The Canon of the New Testament Vindicated: In an Answer to the Objections of J*. [ohn] *T*. [oland] (1701) and Edward Synge's defense of mystery in religion, *A Gentleman's Religion with Grounds and Reasons for it* (1698). What Burnet did not list were any works by English Dissenters. No Richard Baxter, no John Bunyan, nor even William Bates, Mary II's favorite Presbyterian writer. In keeping with her solidly Anglican position, there are merely two continental writers listed, which, considering Burnet's time abroad and appreciation of northern European culture, might seem a tad surprising. But Burnet's list was for the orthodox Anglican reader and not meant to embrace the Protestant International. Hugo Grotius's work of Protestant apologetics, *The Truth of the Christian Religion,* newly translated by Simon Patrick, was recommended, as well as two works by the Swiss Protestant pastor, Jean Frederic Ostervald. Like Grotius's treatise, Ostervald's work was often used by Anglican missionaries.[58] Highly learned and pragmatic, Ostervald's thinking was in line with the Latitudinarians, advocating a more ethical, less rigid Protestantism. In the end, Elizabeth Burnet's *Method* as well as her list of recommended reading illuminates the mind of an Anglican thinker at the outset of the Enlightenment, trying to reconcile reason with religion, daily practicality with something of a yearning for the otherworldly. That Burnet denied her readers of that which she at one time (or perhaps still) was fascinated by – mysticism, enthusiasm, speculative imagining, and

[57] The Whiggish Edward Synge, who was appointed Archbishop of Tuam in 1716, trended toward a Deist position. Edward Clarke, a theologian and philosopher, would come to doubt the divinity of Christ, but Burnet only includes his earliest and uncontroversial work, *Three Practical Essays, viz. On Baptism, Confirmation, and Repentance* (London, 1699).

[58] Hugo Grotius, *The Truth of the Christian Religion: In Six Books*. Trans. Simon Patrick (London, 1683); Jean Frederic Ostervald, *A Treatise Concerning the Causes of the Present Corruptions of Christians* (London, 1702); *The Grounds and Principles of the Christian Religion* (London, 1704).

even doubt – accords well with what we know about the Latitudinarian Church of Queen Mary and Archbishops Tillotson and Tenison. It was nothing if not rational, utilitarian, practical and dull.

Conversations with John Locke

> *I don't indeed conclude Mr. Locke can't err, but am not at all disposed to believe he does.*
>
> Elizabeth Burnet[59]

Between 1696 and 1702, Elizabeth Burnet and the philosopher, John Locke, exchanged letters. They had met in London through Elizabeth's sister, Mary, who lived next door to the author of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.[60] That John Locke and Elizabeth, who in 1696 was a young widow, well traveled and well read, became friends is not surprising. Locke enjoyed the company of intelligent women, and he and Elizabeth had mutual acquaintances and shared political sympathies. While only one of Locke's letters to Elizabeth Burnet has survived, eighteen of Elizabeth's missives have remained and are printed in Locke's collected correspondence. The first two years of their correspondence focused on the polemical skirmish between Edward Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, and Locke over epistemological questions and the certainty of basic Christian tenets. This was a dispute about which Burnet cared deeply. To be sure, it concerned two of her friends, men whom she greatly admired. Additionally, Elizabeth liked still waters and, as she would make clear in her *Method*, abhorred wrangling and divisions among Protestants over doctrinal details and airy speculations. On a deeper level, Burnet was perhaps troubled. Troubled by the implications of the debate for Anglican orthodoxy, and troubled too because, while she sympathized with Stillingfleet's defense of Church doctrine, she wondered if Locke's minimalist Christianity was not closer to the direction of her own thinking.

Elizabeth Burnet first wrote to Locke in July 1696. Perhaps it was a bit brazen of her. Her style oscillates between deference and a wily playfulness. She is a woman aware of both his intellectual authority and her own social status and intelligence. They had met in

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[59] *Locke Correspondence*, 5: 665.

[60] Between 1696 and 1701, Elizabeth's surname was still "Berkeley," but to avoid confusion she is referred to throughout this section as "Burnet," her last husband's surname.

person, and Burnet had yearned to speak to Locke in a "less observable way" that turned out to be impossible at the time. So she wrote. Burnet was familiar with Locke's work, having read many of his "excellent books." It is her opinion, so she tells him, that the duties of a Christian are "very few and simple," suggesting that her conception of Christianity is not far from Locke's position as articulated in his *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695). Still, she found herself "little disquieted by hearing it as your judgment that there was no positive obligation from Scripture or primitive practice for the use of the sacraments."[61] Burnet asks Locke if he would either like to deny such a reading of his work or bring his thinking in line with Anglican orthodoxy. She wonders if he is simply misunderstood and cautions him to take more care in speaking his thoughts as he has "observers," by which she seems to mean both enemies and disciples, who would use his philosophy to forward their own agendas. Undoubtedly, Burnet was referring to John Toland's use of Locke's epistemology in his radical *Christianity not Mysterious*. She was concerned by those that would employ Locke's epistemology to undermine the Church.[62]

Between July 1696 and February 1697, Burnet and Locke were both in London and exchanged visits. Their discussions had centered on Bishop Stillingfleet's *A Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (1696) which argued that Locke's views were antithetical to Christianity as interpreted by the Church of England. When Burnet wrote to Locke in February, she tried to sooth Locke's irritation with the Bishop of Worcester. "I have often heard him [Stillingfleet] speak of you with great esteem and respect."[63] But Locke was far from pacified, and his first response to Stillingfleet was witty, caustic, and highly defensive. The great philosopher did not take critiques of his work kindly, and he was clearly unnerved by Stillingfleet's assertion that his ideas were dangerous to orthodox belief. Locke included Elizabeth Burnet on the distribution list of his reply to Stillingfleet entitled, *A Letter to the Bishop of Worcester* (1697) and enquired after her thoughts on the matter. Elizabeth obliged him, though with characteristic deference, she wondered if he would

[61] *Locke Correspondence*, 5: 664. Burnet is almost certainly referring to Locke's *The Reasonableness of Christianity* which appeared in August 1695.
[62] Ibid., 5: 664–5. Although it is dated 1696, Toland's *Christianity not Mysterious* first appeared in December of 1695.
[63] Ibid., 5: 785. Stillingfleet's *A Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* appeared in November 1696.

not "lose those favorable thoughts you have too hastily entertained of me" once he read her responses.[64]

Then she lets him have it.

> In several places in the book I thought you were a little too critical in observing small faults in the exactness of writing that did not immediately relate to yourself or matter of your complaint, to correct such errors in a friend is kind and allowable, or to expose a vain pretender to knowledge, but my Lord [Stillingfleet's] reputation for learning is so justly established and of so public a benefit, that all needless reflection ought to be avoided.

To enumerate Stillingfleet's mistakes or to accuse him of mistaking the truth could do nothing but harm. It would have been far better, she boldly asserts, for Locke to have simply clarified what "was obscure in my Lord's books" and looked for agreement between them "in interest of Truth." Burnet sought to explain Stillingfleet's position to Locke. The Bishop views your thinking as "the original and foundation of what is called the new way of reasoning," which he believes will be and has been used for ill purposes, contrary to Locke's intention. Stillingfleet posits that Locke's epistemology has the power to "weaken faith." While, she explains, the Bishop has no ill will against Locke or his book, "he thought [his *Vindication*] necessary for the safeguard of the truth he defended, and if a little sharpness sometimes mix'd his ink, he then forgot Mr. Locke and meant only the abusers of his notions."[65]

Burnet proceeds to comb through Locke's reply page by page, often defending Stillingfleet and critiquing Locke for language she feels is "a little harsh" or "too resenting." In the end, she believes that only the test of time will prove Locke's theories of human understanding. "For if your way of proving and knowing is found [to be] a clear and easy method, it will be approved and used when time has smoothed the prejudices and stilled the fears of its opposers." Burnet is attracted to Locke's ideas, only she worries that he makes "the ways of speculation so plain and easy" as to tempt "all unarmed and weak persons" into the realms of theology and philosophy. Naturally, she has John Toland in mind and warns Locke that it would be very harmful if he were thought to favor the

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[64] Ibid., 6:198. Locke's *A Letter to the Bishop of Worcester* was published in January 1697.

[65] Ibid., 6: 199, 200, 201.

"heretical side," meaning heterodox thinkers such as the Socianians and Deists.[66] What Burnet found most troubling about this dispute between her friends was that it might be used by those seeking to weaken Church principles. Burnet made it clear that she was unhappy that Locke felt it necessary to reply to Stillingfleet at all. All things considered, she writes, Locke might have been "content to dispense with your own right" to respond. "I think it would be most charitable and best to be silent . . . I hear the Lord has some thoughts of writing [a response to Locke's *Letter*] but I hope he will not."[67] Clearly, Burnet was aware of the power of Locke's line of thinking and of his reputation. She knew he had the upper hand and that Stillingfleet was the weaker disputant. But she admired Stillingfleet and saw him as a defender of orthodox Anglicanism.

Burnet received a short note from Locke within a month's time. He thanked her for her comments and expected to wait upon her in London shortly, hoping to discuss her objections to his reply to Stillingfleet then. Clearly agitated, however, Locke curtly asserts that if he is thought to favor the "heretical side" that "misfortune" is owing to nobody more than Stillingfleet.[68] Feeling Locke's wrath, Burnet quickly responded, once again trying to smooth over all differences. She had spoken with Bishop Stillingfleet and assures Locke that the Bishop does not think that he is heretical. She too is "fully persuaded as to the integrity of your intentions." But she does not back down and remains concerned about how others will mistake and misuse Locke's ideas. "I conclude your aim is to make people better and wiser, and hope you will remember the world is mostly made up of children in the worst sense."[69] It seems likely that Burnet and Locke met shortly after this exchange. Henceforth their correspondence made fewer references to the debate with Stillingfleet, although Elizabeth notes in November 1698 that she has received and read Locke's second reply to the Bishop. She assures Locke that it did not make her "melancholy," as he thought it might, only she remains unhappy that two of her friends, who are capable of thinking alike, are so opposed.[70]

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[66] Ibid., 6: 201, 202.
[67] Ibid., 6: 198.
[68] *Locke Correspondence*, 6: 216.
[69] Ibid., 6: 226.
[70] Ibid., 6: 509. Locke's second letter to Stillingfleet was entitled, *Mr. Locke's Reply to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Letter*, and appeared in June 1697.

The joust between Locke and Stillingfleet was not over before one more tilt: the Bishop's answer to Locke's second letter and Locke's reply.[71] Perhaps there might have been a fourth round as well save for Stillingfleet's death in March 1699. Although Locke repeatedly denied that his philosophy had any implications for orthodox theology, it clearly did, as John Toland had bravely shown. Locke never budged from his *sola scriptura* position, and Stillingfleet never lured him into admitting or denying the Resurrection, the immateriality of the soul, or the Holy Trinity. Elizabeth Burnet had pleaded for a cessation of the whole dispute. She was wary of its effects on the already suffering Established Church. " 'Tis safer believing with humility, than disputing with niceness," she wrote in her *Method*, "which is often the effect of pride, the cause of divisions, and is an enemy to charity."[72] "Thank God," she wrote to Locke in the spring of 1700, "I am not uneasily curious about what is obscurely revealed either with respect to what is the future or in other matters above our clear and full comprehension; I look on Scripture more as a rule of life . . . and [if I] honestly perform my part, I shall I hope commit my future being to God . . ."[73] Her emphasis on Scripture echoes, whether consciously or not, Locke's rebuttal to Stillingfleet in both his first reply when he asserts that, "The Holy Scripture is to me, and always will be, the constant guide of my assent," as well as his second reply: "I read revelation of the Holy Scriptures with a full assurance that all it delivers is true."[74] She had chided Locke for skirmishing with a true defender of the Church, but she agreed with him just the same.

Burnet and Locke continued to correspond in the early 1700s. They may not have been able to see each other as much as before. Elizabeth was now remarried and was living with Bishop Burnet and his children. The couple probably divided their time between the bishop's residences in Salisbury, Windsor, and London.[75] Elizabeth wanted to visit Locke at

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[71] Stillingfleet's last reply to Locke was entitled, *The Bishop of Worcester's Answer to Mr. Locke's Second Letter* and dated September 1697. Locke's responded with, *Mr. Locke's Reply to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Second Letter* (London, 1699).

[72] *A Method of Devotion*, p. 86.

[73] *Locke Correspondence*, 7: 49.

[74] John Locke, *A Letter to the Right Reverend Edward*, p. 96; *Mr. Locke's Reply*, p. 341.

[75] Elizabeth Burnet had an estate at St. John's Court, Clerkenwell, on the edge of London. This was probably their "London residence" after the Bishop lost his apartments at St. James's upon the ascension of Queen Anne. Elizabeth willed the Clerkenwell house to Gilbert and it became his permanent residence toward the end of his life. NA, PROB 11/50/26.

the Masham estate in Essex where he was residing, writing in the summer of 1701 that, "if I knew Lady [Damaris] Masham, I would come and see both her ladyship and yourself." She also offers to send Locke Bishop Burnet's coach to retrieve him. The following winter, Elizabeth was ill, blaming the political tumults of that season for her bad health. In March of 1702, William III died and the pro-Tory, Queen Anne, ascended to the throne. That winter, High Church Anglicans and their Tory allies in the House of Commons began a campaign against Dissenters and particularly those who practiced "occasional conformity." In typical Whig fashion, Burnet found the demands of the High Church unreasonable and divisive. She tried to persuade Locke to write on the side of "justice, charity" and "truth." "Surely, we have enemies enough abroad, and 'tis madness to quarrel at home, when truth and liberty will fall by it, but I know you'll say, 'tis to no purpose, but you can't be sure of it, I never knew you write without success and conviction and why not now?"[76]

Burnet's last letters to Locke often addressed the plight of Catharine Trotter, who had written a defense of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* as a reply to Thomas Burnet's attack.[77] Apparently seeking patronage, Trotter had sent Elizabeth and the Bishop a copy of her book. Elizabeth liked what she read and told Locke that both Bishop Burnet and the philosopher, John Norris, approved of Trotter's work.[78] Elizabeth knew quite a bit about Catharine Trotter. "Your champion," she wrote to Locke, "is unmarried" and has "more than the common genius." Unfortunately, Trotter was "left in mean circumstances," supporting herself by writing plays, which brought her into ill company, and worse, had "turned papist."[79] Several letters over the fall and summer of 1702 make

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[76] *Locke Correspondence*, 7: 359, 360.

[77] Catharine Trotter, *A Defense of the Essay of Human Understanding* (London, 1702). Thomas Burnet (1635?–1715) was a theologian and master of the Chatterhouse; his tract, *Remarks upon an Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (London, 1697) accused Locke of Deism and Socinianism. On Trotter, see Anne Kelley, *Catharine Trotter: An Early Modern Writer in the Vanguard of Feminism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1988).

[78] It seems likely that Burnet was acquainted with John Norris. He had a circle of female admirers including Lady Damaris Masham and Mary Astell. Burnet recommended two of his books to her readers. She also asked Locke in November of 1702 if he had read Norris's *An Essay towards the Theory of an Ideal and Intelligible World* (which appeared in two parts, the first one in 1701) and to send her his thoughts on it.

[79] *Locke Correspondence*, 7: 638. Two of Elizabeth Burnet's letters to Catharine Trotter have been printed and are found in *The Works of Mrs. Catharine Cockburn*, ed. Thomas Birch, 3 vols., (London, 1751), 1: xvii–xviii, xxxi–xxxii.

it clear that Burnet assisted Trotter. In her new position as wife to the Bishop of Salisbury, Elizabeth was increasingly able to play the role of Whig patron. She was not only a patron, but also a client, and not just any client, but one to the greatest of Whig grandees of the early eighteenth century, Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough.

Whig Politics and Memory

Queen Mary of ever precious memory . . .

Elizabeth Burnet

That Elizabeth Burnet was a Whig, an ardent and an active one is evident in all the sources. That she should become a trusted friend of the great patroness of Whig causes, Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, makes perfect sense. Yet they were by no means twins. The Duchess's friendship with Queen Anne had made her rich and powerful. She could also be haughty and vindictive.[80] Nor was Sarah Churchill particularly pious, although in common with Elizabeth Burnet, she disdained the High Church party.[81] Elizabeth, on the other hand, was by all accounts, modest, discreet, and motivated, first and foremost, by her religiosity. But she did share with the Duchess of Marlborough a passion for what they both believed to be the good of the nation, and that, above all, meant Whig causes such as the vigorous pursuit of the war with France. It also meant a concerted effort to thwart the divisive politics that Tories and High Church Anglicans brought to bear in Parliament.

Just as Elizabeth had hoped, her marriage to Gilbert Burnet gave her further access to the arenas of power in London in the early eighteenth century. In 1698, William III had appointed Bishop Burnet to tutor the eight-year-old William, Duke of Gloucester, who was Princess Anne's sole surviving child and the heir apparent. The Bishop married Elizabeth in May or June of 1700. Though the young duke died that

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[80] The most authoritative study of Sarah Churchill is Frances Harris, *A Passion for Government: The Life of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); see also, Ophelia Field, *Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough: The Queen's Favorite* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003).

[81] In her memoirs, the Duchess of Marlborough wrote: "The word CHURCH had never any charm for me in the mouths of those who make the most noise with it." She castigates those who have a "persecuting zeal against Dissenters, and against those real friends of the Church, who would not admit that persecution was agreeable to its doctrine." Sarah Churchill and Nathaniel Hooke, *An Account of the Conduct of the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough* (London, 1742), p. 134.

July, it was not before Elizabeth Burnet and Sarah Churchill had become acquainted.[82] Given their mutual interests, they quickly perceived in one another a kindred spirit. They corresponded for the next five years. For the most part, only Burnet's letters to the Duchess have survived. They revolve around two issues, both political and religious and dear to Burnet: Tory politicking in Parliament and the memory and legacy of Mary II. Clearly, both Gilbert and Elizabeth Burnet saw her friendship with Sarah, made Duchess of Marlborough in 1702, as an important one. The Duchess's influence over Queen Anne was still formidable in the first years of the new century.[83] John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, commanded Anne's armies abroad and the Marlboroughs' close ally, Sidney Godolphin, was the Queen's Lord Treasurer. Bishop Burnet, as effusive as ever, openly boasted of his new wife's connection to the Duchess, while Elizabeth, for her part, did all she could to cultivate her role as friend and client to the Queen's favorite. Elizabeth Burnet's letters to the Duchess are deferential and loving, assuring the Duchess of Elizabeth's desire to do her any service and reminding her that Bishop Burnet "is at all times your Ladyships faithful servant." In her role as confidant, Elizabeth Burnet lends an empathic ear to Sarah's irritation over perceived jealousies and malice toward herself and the Duke. Indeed, Burnet writes to the Duchess, "I see the envy of some people at your prosperity." And when the Duchess talks of retirement, Burnet assures her that such a decision would be disastrous for the country. "I am sensible that you would gain quiet and be more happy, but surely now you do more good, and how would the Duke struggle with so many difficulties without your help?" This, no doubt, was exactly the reply that the Duchess anticipated, although she probably had little desire to "assist the distressed" and "defend the innocent," as the ever virtuous Burnet urges her. Burnet is such a good friend to the Marlboroughs that when she learns of the Duke's great victory at Blenheim, she writes to Sarah that it has eased her grief over the loss of her infant daughter.[84]

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[82] Foxcroft and Clark, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, pp. 381–2.

[83] Although, as Frances Harris points out, it was also true that relations between the Queen and her favorite had become strained by 1704 which was something the Duchess hid from her friends. Frances Harris, "Accounts of the Conduct of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, 1704–1742," *The British Library Journal* 8/1 (1982), p. 9.

[84] BL, Add 61,458, ff. 3, 4v, 8, 10. The Burnets' daughter, tellingly named Anna Sophia, was baptized on July 5 and buried on July 31. Foxcroft, *A Supplement*, p. 409.

But she was not just a friendly ear. Elizabeth Burnet strove to provide the Duchess of Marlborough with useful information, particularly about Tory maneuvering in the House of Commons. In November of 1702, and again in 1703 and 1704, Tories in the Commons introduced a bill entitled, *An Act for Preventing Occasional Conformity*. The act was aimed at nonconforming Whigs who occasionally took the sacrament in the Church of England in order to qualify for office. For the Duke of Marlborough and Sidney Godolphin, both moderate Tories, the pursuit of the war on the continent was priority number one. They saw the bill against Occasional Conformity as not only disruptive, displacing more urgent business, but likely to alienate Whigs and Dissenters whose continued support for the war was vital. On the other hand, Marlborough and Godolphin did not dare oppose the bill openly lest they lose their Tory allies. Thus all their maneuvering against the bill had to be done behind closed doors. Each time the bill was introduced, it passed the Commons but was defeated in the Lords, where the moderate bishops of William and Mary's making blocked the measure.[85]

Throughout, Elizabeth Burnet provided the Duchess with information from inside Parliament which she gathered from her brother-in-law, Justice Dormer, and Sir Joseph Jekyll, a Whig MP and ally to John, Lord Somers. She also informed the Duchess that Dormer, Jekyll, and her friend, the moderate Tory Bishop, William Talbot, were all eager to serve her.[86] In November of 1704, Burnet passed information about Tory efforts to reintroduce the bill to the Duchess. "I was told the Tories had a meeting of 61. Sir G[eorge] R[ooke] was one. The debate was about the Occasional Bill."[87] A few days later she described for the Duchess the vote in the Commons,

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[85] On the issue of Occasional Conformity, see John Flaningam, "The Occasional Conformity Controversy: Ideology and Party Politics, 1697–1711," *JBS* 17 (1977): 38–62; George Every, *The High Church Party, 1688–1718* (London, SPCK, 1956), 108–12; Henry L. Snyder, "The Defeat of the Occasional Conformity Bill and the Tack: A Study in the Techniques of Parliamentary Management in the Reign of Queen Anne," *BIHR* 41 (1968): 172–86; Martin Greig, "Bishop Gilbert Burnet and Latitudinarian Episcopal Opposition to the Occasional Conformity Bills, 1702–1704," *Canadian Journal of History* 41/2 (2006): 247–62.

[86] BL, Add. 61,458, ff. 6, 19.

[87] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 30; also quoted in Snyder, "The Defeat," p. 178. The Tory, Admiral Sir George Rooke was a naval commander whose battle with the French at Malaga in August 1704 was compared in the Tory press to Blenheim. Naturally, this was something the Marlboroughs highly resented. W.A. Speck, *The Birth of Britain: A New Nation, 1700–1710* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 73–4.

> It was debated long and, as you say, all the strength of argument ran against it ten to one. Speakers for it were [William] Bromley, Sir Humphrey Mackworth, [John] Hungerford, Ceaser, etc; against it Lord Hartenton, [Henry] Boyle, Smith, [William] Stanhope, Holles, Dormer etc. The decision was 152 for it, amongst whom was How, and [Henry] St. John; . . . against it 126 nos, amongst these was the secretary and controller [Thomas Mansel].[88]

Burnet also sent the Duchess weeklies such as the *Gazette* and *Observator*, marking that which she wished to bring to Sarah's attention.[89] Whether any of Burnet's information was actually useful to the Marlboroughs and Godolphin is difficult to say. But it certainly attests to Burnet's own willingness to engage in the political wrangling of the time.

Burnet had sought to temper her animosity toward High Church partisans in her *Method*. But in her letters to the Duchess, she did not mince words. She told the Duchess, who was certainly receptive to such opinions, that High Church rhetoric was designed as if to "provoke the Dissenters never to come within a church again, a way that no church in the world but ours ever thought on." Castigating the bill against Occasional Conformity, Burnet writes, "if we think we are in the right and the best church, as doubtless we are, why should we fear being liked the worse by being better known; it is much easier to make silly people think our service is half popery if they never came to our churches." No one is "the worse" for going to Church services, if only occasionally, and probably many thousands, "especially children and servants," have gained intimate knowledge of the Church because of this practice among Dissenters.[90] Never, Burnet tells the Duchess, has she heard of anyone leaving the Church to become a Presbyterian, but "many Jacobites have turned to popery and others are very near it."[91]

These things Burnet and Churchill agreed on. But their like-mindedness did not extend to recent royal history. Elizabeth Burnet, like Bishop Burnet, was a great admirer of the late Queen, Mary II. Elizabeth was initially enchanted by Mary when she met her at Het Loo Palace prior to the Revolution. When Burnet visited Loo again in 1708, she recalled her first encounter with Mary and reflected on her death,

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[88] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 30; also quoted in Snyder, "The Defeat," p. 179.
[89] BL, Add. 61,458, ff. 16, 22.
[90] BL, Add. 61,458, ff. 9–11.
[91] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 11.

"We [the English] were not worthy of such a blessing."[92] But the Duchess of Marlborough's memories of the Queen were not so precious. Back in 1692, William and Mary learned that John Churchill was corresponding with James II. William stripped Churchill of his offices. Later, during an invasion scare that spring, the Queen had Churchill arrested and briefly imprisoned. Mary also requested Princess Anne to dismiss Sarah Churchill from her service. Anne refused. The quarrel between the royal sisters became increasingly ugly as William and Mary sought to isolate Princess Anne for her defiance. Anne, in turn, was hardly a passive victim of royal displeasure and, as Mary was well aware, cultivated a party of disaffected Tories and churchmen around her.[93] In the midst of it, Sarah's pride had been wounded, both for herself and her husband. Little wonder, then, that the Duchess found Burnet's "wonderful partiality" for William and Mary challenging and strove to disabuse Elizabeth of such a fallacy by telling her own tale of Queen Mary's behavior. In November of 1704, the Duchess sent Burnet "A True Account of the ill and undeserved treatment of the Princess Anne of Denmark by King William and Queen Mary, her sister, contrived and carried on by the Earl of Rochester."[94] Sarah's "Account" sought to persuade Burnet that Mary was certainly no saint, and that the actions of William and Mary between 1692 and 1694 had been unjust and arbitrary. Naturally, the Duchess also wished to justify her own behavior during the quarrel.

But Elizabeth Burnet was not so easily convinced of any wrong doing on the late Queen's part. Similar to her response to Locke's reply to Stillingfleet, Burnet felt that the Duchess was too harsh and offered to make a list of passages "where I think a little more charity may with reason be admitted."[95] Nor did Burnet retreat from her favorable view of Mary II. She was willing to praise the Duchess for her lively style, but to her mind, if Queen Mary "had lived, there would have been a

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[92] Rawl. D. 1029, f. 132v.

[93] Harris, *A Passion*, pp. 63–5; John Hattendorf, "John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722)," *ODNB*. On Queen Mary's awareness of sister's actions, see Doebner, *Memoirs*, p. 24.

[94] The Duchess of Marlborough's "A True Account" is found in BL, Add. 61,421. She calls Burnet's affection for William and Mary "wonderful partiality" on f. 1. As Frances Harris has pointed out, the Duchess's "A True Account" was written to set Elizabeth Burnet straight and was later transformed into the Duchess's famous, *An Account of the Conduct of the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough* (London, 1742). Harris, "Accounts of the Conduct of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, 1704–1742," *The British Library Journal* 8/1 (1982): 7–35.

[95] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 27. Also quoted in Harris, "Accounts," p. 10.

reconciliation" between the sisters only "the nation were not worthy of such a joy." "The uprightness of her [Mary's] wit and freedom of her humor could not but have endeared her to that Princess." True enough, Mary was "young and inexperienced in such politics" at the time of the Revolution. Perhaps she was misled and the "unhappy breach was made by designing people who widened it on both sides." Still Burnet was adamant that the Queen "had no ill will toward the princess or you," only Mary thought it was "the Princess's duty to oblige" her.[96] Burnet was equally unhappy with the Duchess's treatment of the King in her "account." Armed with her own sources, Burnet defended William III, who was certainly someone the Duchess detested. Burnet reported the following story to the Duchess. On the night of the Queen's death, Lord Somers went to Kensington Palace. The King was in his closet and in "the most dismal way possible." Somers spoke to him about some kind of reconciliation between himself and Princess Anne as "something absolutely necessary." The King told Somers, "do what you will, I can think of no business." Burnet admits that William had something of an "unpleasing sourness of temper," but since both he and Princess Anne were "reserved and silent," they could never please each other. Furthermore, the King had "long felt himself dying."[97]

Elizabeth Burnet's defense of Mary "of ever precious memory" is certainly interesting. In addition to her own first-hand knowledge of Mary II, she had probably read Bishop Burnet's hagiographical essay on the late Queen. It would have reinforced for her what she already believed about the late Queen: that they had much in common, particularly insofar as the Protestant religion was concerned. This went beyond the fact that they were both deeply pious; that each maintained a robust spiritual life; that they both composed prayers and meditations and saw God's providence in the good and ill that befell the nation. This much they would have shared with any number of devout women and men of the era. What would have attracted Burnet to Mary II was the Queen's broad view of the Church; her moderation toward other Protestants; and her rationalism. "She was no enthusiast," wrote Bishop Burnet of the Queen in his essay. Nor was her affection for the Church of England "blind or partial. She saw what finishings we still wanted."[98] So too Elizabeth Burnet, who castigated High Churchmen

[96] BL, Add. 61,458, ff. 98v, 29.
[97] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 29.
[98] Gilbert Burnet, *An Essay on the Memory of the Late Queen* (London, 1705), pp. 94, 74.

for their treatment of Dissenters and who recommended to her readers the writings of the very men preferred by Mary II. Most importantly, both women advocated a religion that promoted domestic peace and stability.

Mary Astell and High Church Anglicanism in the Age of Danger

> *That moderation that the Dissenter desires of the Church is the slacking the reins of discipline, the violation of order and breach of laws so that his moderate church-man must . . . be a good natur'd easy fool, who suffer the foundations to be sapped under his nose . . .*
>
> Mary Astell[99]

If Mary Astell had an opinion of Mary II, it was almost certainly not favorable. Astell never mentions the Queen. But since she had nothing but contempt for William III and the Revolutionary Settlement, she almost certainly was not one of Mary's adoring fans. Additionally, the very kind of Church that Mary II had helped to shape was repugnant to Astell. The famed feminist writer was no less devout than the Queen or Elizabeth Burnet, but her piety stood at the opposite end of the Anglican spectrum. Astell believed that the moderate Anglicanism indicative of the churchmanship of Mary II and Archbishops Tillotson and Tenison represented everything that imperiled the Established Church at the dawn of the new century. The Church was threatened from within by Low Church moderates, whose tepid piety left the Church undefended, and from without by Dissenters, who by their cant and cunning stole the weak and ignorant away from the true religion. Atheists, libertines, Deists, Socinians, freethinkers and "wits" of every sort further undermined the national Church. So, too, "busy" women. Feminist though she was, Mary Astell abhorred women like Elizabeth Burnet and the Duchess of Marlborough, who occupied themselves with Whig politics. Worst still were Dissenting women like the Presbyterian, Mary Speke. Astell described these women as merely the "tools of crafty and designing demagogues."[100] Yet, like all of these women, Astell's religiosity propelled her to political action. Articulate, eloquent, and wise, Mary Astell's political tracts illuminate the mind of a High Church Anglican

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[99] Mary Astell, *Moderation Truly Stated* (London, 1704), p. 13.
[100] Astell, *The Christian Religion*, p. 120.

in the early eighteenth century. Thus, in the same way that Aphra Behn's comedies dissected the cant and hypocrisy of Puritanism and oppositional politics from the perspective of a royalist, Astell deconstructs Queen Mary's moderate Church, Whig politicking, and Dissent in the so-called "age of the Church in danger."

Mary Astell was born into a prosperous North Country mercantile family from whom she seems to have inherited both her ardent attachment to the Stuart monarchy and her devotion for the Church. She received some education from her father's brother, Ralph Astell, the curate of St. Nicholas Cathedral, who had been influenced by the neo-platonists during his time at Cambridge. The death of Mary Astell's father in 1678 left the family in rather dire straits.[101] For a time, Mary Astell lived with her mother and aunt, but sometime in the late 1680s, she did something very brave. With little money and few connections, she moved to London, eventually settling in the fashionable neighborhood of Chelsea. Her first patron was none other than the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, who had refused to take the new oaths of allegiance after the Revolution and was ordered to vacate Lambeth Palace by Mary II in 1691. Astell's publications in the 1690s include her most famous, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (part 1 in 1694 and part II in 1697) and her exchange of philosophical letters with the Cambridge Platonist, John Norris, titled, *Letters Concerning the Love of God* in 1695.[102]

By the early 1700s, Astell was fairly well established in the intellectual and literary milieu of London. She had a circle of female friends and patrons and also acquainted with several prominent nonjurors including George Hickes, an antiquarian and Tory polemicist, and Henry Dodwell, a theologian and professor of history deprived of his position at Oxford in 1691. She was also a neighbor and friend to Dean Francis Atterbury, a High Churchman and politician who would later turn Jacobite conspirator. As Astell's biographer, Ruth Perry, has observed,

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[101] The contours of Astell's life are sufficiently well known. Ruth Perry's biography (and *ODNB* entry) as well as those secondary sources cited below should be consulted by those readers desiring more than is provided here. Ruth Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 29–51, 66–7.

[102] There are modern editions of both of these early works by Astell. *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, parts I and II*, ed. Patricia Springborg (London: Broadview Press, 1985); Mary Astell and John Norris, *Letters Concerning the Love of God*, eds. E. Derek Taylor and Melvyn New (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Astell's "friends and contacts in the capitol were from the ranks of disaffected Stuart sympathizers."[103] Thus it is not surprising that when Astell entered the political tussles of the early 1700s, she supported Tory, or to be more exact, High Church principles. In 1704, Astell published three major political tracts: *Moderation Truly Stated* and *A Fair Way with Dissenters*, both of which deal with the controversy over the bill against Occasional Conformity; and her *Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of the Civil War*, which was a hard-line Tory interpretation of the Civil Wars and execution of Charles I. In all of these tracts, Astell sought to defend what she truly saw as a Church in danger on all sides.

And what was it that so threatened the Church Established? The so-called "Age of the Church in Danger" is a curious one. In the years between the Glorious Revolution and the failure of the first Jacobite Rebellion in 1715, High Church and Tory propagandists increasingly spoke of the Church of England as an endangered institution. At the heart of their anxiety was the new reality of religious pluralism, legally sanctioned, as created by the Act of Toleration of 1689. No longer able to depend on the state to flush out and prosecute its competitors, the Church was forced to compete with Dissenting chapels and academies. This was a contest which High Churchmen among the ecclesiastical hierarchy as well as many lower clergy in the countryside believed the Church was increasingly losing.[104] Quite naturally, they saw this as a consequence of the Revolution Settlement and the supposedly Laodicean churchmanship of so many of Mary and William's bishops, as well as the deprivation of the nonjuring clergy, which had "shorn the Church of some of her finest ornaments."[105] But if Dissenters outside the Church and Latitudinarians within were not enough, there was also the problem of irreligion among the people, as many simply chose not to attend any church; an outbreak of new fangled religions such as the followers of enthusiastic mystic, Jane Leade; and, above all, the spreading cancer of new philosophies, epistemologies, and heresies among the elite. Intellectual questioning of Christ's divinity, the

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[103] Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell*, p. 42. Also on Astell's circle of friends, see Florence M. Smith, *Mary Astell* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), pp. 9–11; Bridget Hill, *The First English Feminist Reflections upon Marriage and other Writings by Mary Astell* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), pp. 7–12.

[104] Donald A. Spaeth, *The Church in an Age of Danger, Parsons and Parishners, 1660–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 14–22.

[105] Rose, *England in the 1690s*, p. 160. Many of the nonjurors were among the ablest scholars, antiquarians, and liturgists of the era.

Trinity, the immortality of the soul, and everything miraculous within Scripture did indeed imperil the authority of the clergy and orthodox doctrine. This is what Edward Stillingfleet saw so clearly and which Locke denied. But whereas Locke's friend, John Tillotson, and even the increasingly conservative Stillingfleet, had tried to engage in a dialogue with proponents of the new philosophies, High Churchmen simply denounced these enemies of orthodoxy. Christ was not a matter of mere conversation, even for the sake of peace among all parties. This is why "No Moderation" became a High Church slogan.[106]

If the age of the Church in danger is a curious one it is because the anxiety among High Churchmen was both real and manufactured. Tory propaganda stirred and seasoned the "Church in Danger" mantra and brought it to a boil during Anne's reign, leading many historians to dismiss the idea of any real threat to the Church. What was in danger, according to Keith Fielding, was "the Church as they had known it – supreme, authoritarian, exclusive."[107] True enough, the Restoration Church had been vanquished and the once privileged clergy found themselves in completely new circumstances. This was no easy adjustment. It was also certainly true that Tory polemicists heightened anxieties for political reasons. But there was also something genuine about High Church trepidations, something sincere about the assertions of people like Mary Astell. Nor was Astell alone. If her anonymous political tracts could be mistaken for someone like the non-juror, Charles Leslie, or the High Churchman turned Jacobite, Francis Atterbury, it is because her portrayal of all the ills that afflicted the Church, along with the depth of her fear and anger, were felt by others as well.

The High Church positions taken in Astell's political tracts also had much in common with those enunciated in Aphra Behn's plays and poetry. This, of course, resulted from the fact that both were Stuart sympathizers and both found Protestant sectarianism repulsive. They both delighted in mocking Puritan cant and both conflated Dissent and Whig politics, at the bottom of which they saw nothing but deceit and hypocrisy. Astell, no doubt, would have found any comparison between herself and the notorious "Madam Behn," a writer of licentious stage

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[106] J.G.A. Pocock, "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment," in *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650–1850*, eds. Lawrence E. Klein and Anthony J. La Vopa (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 1998), p. 15; Walsh and Taylor, "The Church and Anglicanism," p. 53.

[107] Keith Fielding, *A History of the Tory Party, 1640–1714* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 303.

plays, distasteful.[108] Astell belittled the very kind of literature, "poetry, plays, and romances," of which Behn was a master.[109] But Astell also realized that her Age of the Church in Danger had much in common with Behn's era of the Exclusion Crisis; and like the Tories of the 1680s who cried up "41 again," Astell also saw that the conflict between the Church and Dissent had its roots in the Civil Wars. For "'tho' Names of Contempt have been often changed on either side; as Cavalier and Roundhead, Royalist and Rebels, Malignants and Phanaticks, Torys and Whigs, yet the Division has always been barely the Church and the Dissenter, and there it continues to this Day."[110] For Astell, "the pretended saints" who executed Charles I of Blessed Memory were also responsible for the late Revolution in which an anointed King was forcefully removed. Behind every pretended plot and conspiracy, petition, and tumult over the last half century were the self-serving schismatic demagogues. They were not to be accommodated because their demands never ended; besides, they aimed at nothing less than the absolute ruin of the Church and state.[111] "They Bribe, they Threaten, they Solicit, they Fawn, they Dissemble, they Lye, they break through all the Duties of Society, violate all the Laws of God and of Man . . ."[112]

But Astell not only sounded like the "incomparable Astraea," a comparison which scholars today might find pleasant enough.[113] She also

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[108] Behn died in the spring of 1689 but she was not forgotten. A collection of poems which included the notorious libertine John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, together with Behn and others was published in 1694, entitled *Chorus Poetarum: Or Poems on Several Occasions by the Duke of Buckingham, the Late Lord Rochester . . . Madam Behn . . .* (London, 1694). In addition, Behn's prose works were collected and published in *All the Histories and Novels by the Late Ingenious Mrs. Behn* (London, 1698). This collection went into multi-editions throughout the 1690s and early 1700s.

[109] Astell, *Christian Religion*, p. 206.

[110] *A Fair Way with the Dissenters and their Patrons* (London, 1704), in *Political Writings*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 109.

[111] *Moderation Truly Stated*, pp. 63, xxxi.

[112] *An Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of Rebellion and Civil War* (London, 1704) in *Political Writings*, p. 139.

[113] *An Elegy upon the Death of Mrs. A. Behn, the Incomparable Astraea* (London, 1689). Astell and Behn are often bundled together as Tories or early feminists or both; see, for example, Hilda L. Smith, *Reason's Disciples: Seventeen-Century English Feminists* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 3; Joan K. Kinnaird, "Mary Astell and the Conservative Contribution to English Feminism," *JBS* 19/1 (Fall 1979), p. 59, 19n; Bridget Hill, *The First English Feminist*, p. 53.

sounded very much like contemporary male voices that scholars often find a lot less attractive, including the "furious" Jacobite, Charles Leslie, and High churchmen like Francis Atterbury and Henry Sacheverell.[114] It is certainly understandable that modern scholars might find the intolerance of these men distasteful. But as William Kolbrener points out, scholars "too readily endorse the characterization of Jacobite political and theological positions as somehow fanatic, rabid, or simply irrational, and thus place them beyond the pale of scholarly inquiry."[115] Mary Astell's politics and theology had much in common with those of Charles Leslie, though he is often styled as one of the most "rabid" polemicists of the era.[116] Over the course of his prolific career as a controversialist, Leslie, a nonjuring Irish priest, was unsparing in his attacks on Catholicism, Deism, Judaism, latitudinarianism, Socinianism, all Protestant Dissenters, but above all, Quakers. For Leslie as well as Astell (and even those on the other side of the political fence like Daniel Defoe) personal theology determined one's politics. Religious heterodoxy bred political disaffection and radicalism; Socinians and Deists had their political counterparts in Whigs and republicans. On the other hand, the divinely ordered political state was sustained and supported by the divinely ordered episcopal Church. "So closely is religion and government link'd together," Leslie wrote in his weekly, *The Rehearsal*, "that the one supports the other, and corruption in a Christian government cannot come in but by the corruption of religion and overthrowing those principles which it teaches."[117] Leslie blamed the Civil Wars, the Rye House Plot in 1683, and Monmouth's Rebellion on Dissenters. So too the Glorious Revolution which further undermined the patriarchal order of society by sanctioning the violent removal of a divinely appointed monarch.[118] Ruth Perry writes that "Mary Astell was sympathetic to these attitudes."[119] Indeed, contemporaries could not tell

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[114] Astell's first political tract, *Moderation Truly Stated*, was mistaken for the work of Charles Leslie. In the addendum to *A Fair Way*, Astell wrote that her tract was "Not writ by Mr. L-y or any other furious Jacobite."

[115] William Kolbrener, "The Charge of Socinianism: Charles Leslie's High Church Defense of 'True Religion,'" *The Journal of the Historical Society* 3/1 (Winter 2003): 5.

[116] Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell*, p. 186.

[117] [Charles Leslie], *The Rehearsal* 147 (12 October 1706).

[118] None of these charges were uncommon among Tories and High Churchmen. Charles Leslie makes them in several of his publications; see, for example, *The Wolf Stript of his Shepherd's Clothing* (London, 1704), pp. 7–9.

[119] Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell*, p. 187.

the polemics of Leslie and Astell apart. Astell not only sympathized with such views, she espoused them.

Thus it was that the new latitudinarian culture of the Church – that which Elizabeth Burnet found comforting – was deeply troubling to other equally devout Anglicans. Elizabeth's second husband, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, was often targeted by High Church pamphleteers as representing the worse kind of churchmen: a supporter of the Revolution, Maryite church and Williamite state; a propagandist of Tillotsonian religiosity; an accommodator of Dissent. Mocking Daniel Defoe, who had asserted that modern Dissenters no longer called for the abolition of the bishops, Astell asked whether they were reconciled to the office of the Bishop or merely to the person of "my Lord of Salisbury."[120] Astell accused Low Church bishops like Burnet of "Supine indifferency . . . under the specious name of moderation." "To be moderate in religion is the same thing as to be lukewarm, which God so much abhors, that he has threatened to spew such out of his mouth." The Church "knows too well that False Friends who wear her Livery that they may more effectually betray her, and are abundantly more dangerous than open and declared enemies . . ."[121] Or, as Leslie asserted in very similar terms, "that Laodicean latitude and indifferency in religion, which God abhors, and declares that He will spew such a lukewarm Church out of His mouth recommends itself to us at this day, under the specious name of moderation!" They are called "Low Churchmen" because they have "low regard for the preservation of that society of which they are members" and seek to undermine it from within.[122]

In her concern for the Church, Astell's political positions had much more in common with nonjurors like Leslie than accommodating Anglicans like Elizabeth Burnet. Burnet and Astell's politics followed suit. Burnet blessed the great and glorious revolution, adored Mary II, defended William III against his detractors, and most importantly, went so far as to assert the Whig doctrine of the right to resistance.[123] Astell detested William, maintained that kings were instituted by God, and asserted the Tory doctrine of passive obedience, seeing its origins in Christ's resignation in the face of crucifixion. "Love is all the retaliation our religion allows us." "The pacifism of the Gospel," as Mark Goldie points out in his discussion of Astell, "was incompatible with Locke's

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[120] Astell, *A Fair Way*, p. 108.
[121] Astell, *Moderation Truly Stated*, pp. 5, 37.
[122] Leslie, *Wolf Stript*, 1; [Leslie], *The Rehearsal* 82 (19 January 1705/6).
[123] BL, Add. 61,458, f. 30v.

advocacy of political violence."[124] The piety and politics of Elizabeth Burnet were shared by many of her contemporaries, among them men like Gilbert Burnet and John Locke, who are far better known to scholars today. In many respects, she represents the mind of a woman who sought to engage rather than resist the new realities of her world following the Revolution. Astell's political writings, on the other hand, speak to a woman who, not unlike many of her contemporaries as well, such as Charles Leslie and Francis Atterbury, found those same realities deeply troubling and destabilizing. So too, both women, daughters of the Church of England, found their religiosity a comfort as well as an impetus to action.

[124] Astell, *Christian Religion*, p. 167; Mark Goldie, "Mary Astell and John Locke" in *Mary Astell: Reason, Gender, Faith*, eds. William Kolbrener and Michal Michelson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 80.

Conclusion
Stuart Women and Political Culture

Let us consider the following event. Sometime in 1694, Archbishop Tillotson presented Bridget Bendish to Queen Mary II. Bendish was granted a pension, presumably for circulating pro-Williamite propaganda prior to the Prince's invasion in 1688, thereby supporting the Revolution.[1] Bendish seems to have had contacts in the Netherlands among the large Whig and Dissenting refugee communities there. Perhaps she was another "nursing mother." But Bendish was also special for another reason; one that might have prevented her meeting with the Stuart queen, but did not. Bridget Bendish was the granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell and from all accounts, his spitting image. Still further, her father was Henry Ireton, Cromwell's close associate as well as a leading parliamentary officer and regicide. Her exchange of pleasantries with the Queen, whose grandfather, Charles I, Bendish's father and grandfather had brought to the scaffold, provides us with an intriguing, even poignant, image. It certainly has much to say about Mary II, much that John Tillotson already knew. First, that the presence of this living image of Cromwell, she whose ancestors were rebels and regicides, would not unsettle the Queen; and secondly, that the presence of this Dissenting woman, who worshipped with Independents and practiced the kind of enthusiastic religiosity that moderates like Mary and Tillotson found troubling, would not faze her.

Perhaps these two women, so seemingly different, had more in common than we might initially assume. Their meeting reminds us of Mary II's broad sympathies for a wide variety of Protestant worship,

[1] BL, Add. 19,118, ff. 60–2; Mark Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell*, 2 vols. (London, 1784), 2: 335–7. The pension, however, was never paid due to both Tillotson's and the Queen's death shortly after this interview.

and how the Queen had sought to expand the Church of England, to open its doors and windows, to welcome the estranged, wavering, and disenchanted. Nor was she weighed down by the Stuart past; even the French Protestant, Pierre Jurieu's, critiques of her great-great-grandmother Mary, Queen of Scots, did not disturb her. Cromwell's granddaughter was welcomed in her presence and granted a pension. In an age of factionalism and division, Mary sought to unify. For her part, Bendish had supported the Williamite Revolution; and not unlike Elizabeth Burnet, she probably saw William and Mary as the saviors of their sinking nation. "I thank God for the Revolution," wrote an emphatic Burnet to her friend, the Duchess of Marlborough, in 1704.[2] What was at stake in 1688 in the eyes of women like Bendish the Dissenter, and Burnet the Anglican, was nothing less than the survival of the Protestant world. So it was that in 1694, despite their vastly different backgrounds, the granddaughter of Cromwell and the granddaughter of Charles I shared the same devotion to the Protestant Cause and willingness to defend it. It was for that cause that the London Baptist, Elizabeth Gaunt, had died in 1685 and the Presbyterian gentlewoman, Mary Speke, had lost her son that same year. All of these women, nursing mothers in one way or another, Dissenters and Anglicans, had played parts, sometimes covert and sometimes overt, in the public world of power and authority, law and government. They deserve inclusion in our political narratives.

Even as we have ignored or depreciated these women, their contemporaries were certainly well aware of their political and religious pursuits and their ideological opponents sought to deflate their importance by mocking them. The royalist, Aphra Behn, was hardly alone among those who satirized godly women. Behn's desire for royal patronage and profit helps to explain her derogatory portrayal of Dissent, but her royalism was certainly heartfelt as well. Her little squib, "The Conventicle," was not written solely for reasons of profitability; it was a mean-spirited attack on all that she detested: "The Viper's nest, where all our Mischiefs breed," where villains vent their treason and women their "lust."[3] And so too Mary Astell, in the early eighteenth century, wrote in defense of her political and religious beliefs and condemned women who busied themselves with politicking and women in the thrall of schismatic preachers and opportunistic politicians. Behn, the probable Catholic

[2] BL, Add 61,458, f. 30v.
[3] "On a Conventicle" in Behn, *Works*, 1: 355–6.

sympathizer, and Astell, the High Church Anglican, may have been ideologically miles apart from the nursing mothers and sanctified sisters and even moderates like Mary II and Elizabeth Burnet, but all these women shared the same desire to enter the political domain through actions or words and make a difference.

An obvious point? Perhaps. And yet it is one that has failed to inform our political narratives of the era of the Restoration and Revolution which have so often written as though women, if they existed at all, were merely retiring queen consorts and royal whores. In part, this a product of the simple fact that when, in the Anglophone world, women began entering the historical profession in the twentieth century, they so often turned their attention to the socio-economic and cultural history of women, leaving political history in the hands of their male colleagues who, for the most part, perpetuated a traditional male-dominated narrative of the past. In part, the blame lies with women's history itself, which in its early stages was obsessed with finding "first feminists," seeking our sisters in earlier times yearning to be free, obsessively looking for female speech acts which might be construed as feminist, and above all, overestimating women's captivity and underestimating their agency. Additionally, women's and gender history have placed far too much stress on images of women in literature authored by men. Prescriptive literature, in particular, has very little to tell us about the real world of women. In fact, it only accurately reflects male wishes and patterns of conformity that most women were obviously flouting.[4] When the playwright, Delarivier Manley, has Sir Charles Lovemore declare that "Politics is not the business of a woman" in *The Adventures of Rivella* (1714) it is exactly because she knows that women have *made* politics their business, despite the nonsensical bluster of some men (and women) about the proper behavior of women.[5] But perhaps the greatest historiographical fallacy of all has been the imposition of the theory of separate spheres on the early modern era.[6] This has led scholars to presume something about gender relations that did not exist in the first

[4] This point is also made by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus in the Introduction to *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, eds. Hannah Baker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Palgrave, 1997), p. 2; Anne Hughes also discusses the problematic nature of prescriptive writings in *Gender and the English Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 10–17.

[5] Delarivier Manley, *The Adventures of Rivella*, ed. Katherine Zelinsky (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 1999), p. 112.

[6] In British historiography, the "separate spheres" paradigm was first applied to the socio-economic situation of elite Victorian women, but its use has seeped

place and to act surprised when they find evidence of women acting beyond some artificial boundary. In its most absurd extension, it has meant that every woman found to be active in any public domain is labeled a feminist or proto-feminist; a woman who writes is a feminist; a woman who speaks her mind in a court of law is a feminist; a woman who electioneers is a feminist. Forgotten in all this is the simple fact that quite often these same women had absolutely nothing to say about the plight of women and may well have been completely uninterested or even confused by the question of the treatment of women.

Sarah Heller Mendelson argues that early modern women "cultivated the mental or spiritual realm, leaving to men their monopoly of worldly power. Alternatively, they made use of speech to compensate for their lack of physical prowess. From these perspectives, diverse types of Stuart womanhood can be seen as embodiments of a common urge to transcend feminine impotence and win control over a menacing environment."[7] But if the world of the fearless printer, Elizabeth Calvert, or the pugnacious Bridget Bendish, or the wives and widows of the regicides in 1660s, or the nursing mothers in the 1680s was "menacing," it was not because they were women, but because they were Dissenters or seditious or both, as well as active in the world beyond the hearth. As far as we know, Mary Speke never wrote a word about her ardent spirituality; but she was arrested for it. Neither was she helpless or impotent. In fact, as far as loyalists were concerned, she was the most "dangerous woman" in the West and had raised a nest of vipers. My point simply is that women were not powerless nor, as a whole, did they see their environment as inherently hostile simply because they were women. And I suspect that those who did feel depreciated by a "menacing environment" were in the minority.

Finally, we need to place a greater emphasis on the necessary cooperation that took place between women and men in the early modern era. Beyond what we traditionally assume to be "women's work," scholars need to recognize that most men depended on women and expected the women in their lives to be their partners in all things. We have long known that women worked beside their husbands in guilds, shops, and farms, but their cooperation extended to the political world

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down into the earlier eras and lower social classes. See Amanda Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Sphere? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of England Women's History," *HJ* 36/2 (1993): 383–414.

[7] Sarah Heller Mendelson, *The Mental World of Stuart Women: Three Studies* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), p. 189.

as well.[8] Men who participated in "out-of-doors" or cloak-and-dagger conspiratorial politics counted on the support of their womenfolk. Men who participated in parliamentary or ministerial politics counted on women. John Churchill was hardly alone in having an eager helpmate in his Duchess. So also did Elizabeth Burnet seek to guide her husband, the guileless Bishop Burnet, through the political nettles of early eighteenth-century London. So also did Mary, as princess and queen, support William of Orange with a steely resolve, betray her Catholic father and alienate her younger (and, to Mary's mind bull-headed) sister, all in support of her husband and the Protestant Cause. Nor did she forgive anyone who crossed or defamed the King. When in 1693 the Jacobite printer, William Anderton, was seized along with a tract accusing William III of war atrocities, including ordering wounded English soldiers to be buried alive, Mary showed no mercy. Anderton was found guilty of treason and sentenced to death and though many pleaded to the Queen for his life, Mary saw to his execution.[9]

There is a plethora of sources for elite women like Mary II and Sarah Churchill. Much less in the way of written evidence exists for the women who, in the aftermath of the defeat of the Republic, sought to aid and abet the causes for which so many of their men-folk suffered. These women – the wives, widows, and daughters of the regicides, parliamentary politicians and officers, Dissenting preachers and seditious printers – often played a stealthy game of cat and mouse with the informants, spies, and royal authorities who tried to track their activities. They left few traces of themselves. They published nothing of their own or very little and most of their correspondence was destroyed (most likely by themselves). Yet from the fragments that remain we see women operating in back door, often seditious, politics. For the most part, these women do not seem to have been motivated by purely political ideologies or simply socio-economic conditions, but rather by a far more powerful force: faith (and love). Writes Anne Hughes, "Political choices are not made simply through rational adherence to particular manifesto

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[8] This problem has also been pointed out by Susan Wiseman who, writing about the case of Elizabeth Poole and the Levellers in the 1640s, observes that by "isolating women from the men around them" scholars have perpetually underestimated their political impact. *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, Writing, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 168.

[9] This event is discussed in my article, "The Shocking Death of Mary II: Political and Gender Crisis in Late Stuart England," *The British Scholar* 1/1 (September 2008), p. 29.

or lists of policies; they involve less easily defined personal and affective questions of passion, affection and identity."[10] For women in the late Stuart world, religion proved to be a prime motivator for political action, affiliation, and allegiance. In this sense, the inclusion of women in the political narratives of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries manifests what revisionist historians have been asserting for some time: that human behavior in the early modern world is incomprehensible unless we understand the power of confessional commitment and identity. Additionally, scholars of early modern women and politics would do well to have a firmer grasp of theology that they might better understand what the women they study understood.[11]

Instead of envisioning Stuart women as helpless or hindered by cultural stereotypes or set apart in some domestic box, let us see them as they really were and let us then recall Elizabeth Calvert, who though she had lost both her son and husband to the disease and deprivation inherent in prison sitting, boldly carried on the trade in seditious books and pamphlets into the 1670s, come what may. Let us remember the cross-dressing Tabitha Smith, who supposedly rode into battle during Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685. And let us not forget Lord Wariston's daughter, the stalwart Lady Helen Graden, standing beside her brother-in-law, Robert Baillie, on the scaffold as he was dismembered piece by piece for his role in the Rye House Plot. Little wonder Aphra Behn and Mary Astell found such women so menacing.

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[10] Hughes is thinking more about gender identity whereas this study is more concerned with confessional identity, but the point here is similar insofar as it concerns "personal and affective" choices. *Gender and the English Revolution*, p. 149.

[11] Writes John Pocock, "The great discovery which we constantly make and remake as historians is that English political debate is recurrently subordinate to English political theology; and few of us know one-tenth of the theology available to competently trained divines and laymen among our predecessors." And I will add that this is equally true of many women. Quoted in "A Discourse on Sovereignty: Observations on the Work in Progress," in *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain*, eds. Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 381.

Appendix A: Poems on the Death of Mary II

[The place of publication is London unless otherwise indicated]

Albion's Tears on the Death of Her Sacred Majesty Queen Mary: A Pindaric Poem (1695).

Britain's Sorrowful Lamentation, for the Loss of their Gracious Queen Mary (London and Edinburgh, 1695).

The Court and the Kingdom in Tears: Or, the Sorrowful Subjects Lamentation for the Death of Her Majesty Queen Mary (1694). Broadside.

On the Death of the Queen, An Ode (1695).

On the Death of the Queen. A Poem (1694/5).

An Elegy upon the Most Pious and Incomparable Princess, Mary, Queen of England (1694). Broadside.

A Funeral Eclogue Sacred to the Memory of Her Most Serene Majesty, our Late Gracious Queen Mary (1694).

Great Britain's Lamentation (1695). Broadside.

A Kind Congratulation between Queen Elizabeth and the Late Queen Mary II (1695). Broadside.

In luctuosissimum, Mariae, D.G. magnae Britanniae, Franciae, & Hiberniae, &c. Reginae, mulierum praestantissimae, obitum (Edinburgh, 1695). Broadside.

To the Memory of the Queen: A Pindarique Ode (1695).

The Mourning Court Or, The Solemn Representation of the Royal Funeral of that Most Illustrious Princess Mary, Queen of England, Scotland, France and Ireland (1695). Broadside.

In Obitum Mariae (1694).

An Ode Occasion'd by the Death of Her Sacred Majesty. By a Young Lady. (1694/5).

An Ode in Memory of Her Late Majesty, Queen Mary. By a Person of Quality. (1700).

Pietas Universitatis Oxoniensis in obitum augustissimae & desideratissimae Reginae Mariae (1695).

A Pindarick Poem published in *Poems on the Death of the Late Majesty Queen Mary of Blessed Memory* (1710).

A Pindarick Ode published in *Poems on the Death of the Late Majesty Queen Mary of Blessed Memory* (1710).

A Pindarick Ode, on the Death of the Queen. By a Young Gentleman. (1694/5).

To the Pious and Sacred Memory of our Late Dread Sovereign, Mary, Queen of England. Written by a Person of Quality. (1694). Broadside.

A Poem Occasioned by the Death of Her Majesty. By a Person of Honour. (1695).

A Poem upon the Death of the Queen (1695). Broadside.

A Poem on the Death of the Queen by a Gentlewoman of Quality (1694/5).

A Poem, Occasion'd by the Death of Her Late Majesty of Ever Happy and Sacred Memory. By a Private Hand. (1695).

A Poetical Essay Devoted to the Glorious Memory of our Late Queen Occasion'd by a Number of Poems and Sermons on her Death (1695).

The Royal Funeral: Or, the Mourning State and Solemnity of the Funeral of Mary, Queen of England (1695). Broadside ballad.

Urania. A Funeral Elegy on the Death of our Gracious Queen of Ever Blessed Memory (1695).

Urania's Temple; or, A Satyr upon the Silent Poets (1695).

A. B., *An Ode Occasion'd by the Death of the Queen, with a Letter from the Author to Mr. Dryden*. By a Gentleman, A True Lover of his Country. (1695).

Arwaker, Edward. *A Pindaric Ode upon our Late Sovereign Lady of Blessed Memory, Queen Mary* (1695).

Blow, John and Henry Purcell, *Three Elegies upon the Much Lamented Loss of our Late Most Gracious Queen Mary* [Blow and Purcell wrote the music and Mr. Herbert wrote the words] (1695).

Bridgwater, Benjamin. *A Poem upon the Death of Her Late Majesty, Queen Mary, of Blessed Memory Occasioned by the Epistle to the Author from J. Tutchin* (1695).

Cibber, Colley. *A Poem on the Death of our Late Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary* (1695).

Cobb, Samuel. *A Pindarique Ode: Humbly Offer'd to the Ever-Blessed Memory of our Late Gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary* (1694).

Congreve, William. *The Mourning Muse of Alexis. A Pastoral Lamenting the Death of our Late Gracious Queen Mary, of Ever Blessed Memory*. Dedicated to the Honourable Charles Montaque. (1695).

Coward, William. *Uraniae Metamorphosis in Sydus: Or, the Transfiguration of our Late Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary* (1694/5).

Cutts, John. *On the Death of the Queen by* a Person of Honour (1695).

C. D., *An Elegy on the Death of the Queen* by C.D., Rector of K. of S. (1695).

Defoe, Daniel. *Threnodium Britannicum, To the Sacred Memory of that Most Excellent Memory Princess, Mary the Second* (1695).

Dennis, John. *The Court of Death, A Pindarique Poem, Dedicated to the Memory of Her Most Sacred Majesty, Queen Mary* (1695).

Dove, Henry. *Albiana. A Poem Humbly Offered to the Memory of our Late Sovereign Lady, Mary, Queen of England*. Addressed to Her Royal Highness. (1695).

D'Urfey, Thomas. *Gloriana. A Funeral Pindarique Poem: Sacred to the Blessed Memory of that Ever-admir'd and most Excellent Princess, Our Late Gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Mary*. Dedication to the Duke of Gloucester. (1695).

Glanvill, Francis. *A Poem Dedicated to the Memory, and Lamenting the Death of her Late Sacred Majesty of the Small-Pox* (1695).

Gleane, Peter. *An Elegy on the Death of the Queen* (1695).

Gleane, Peter. *A Poem, Occasioned by the Magnificent Proceeding to the Funeral of Her Late Majesty Queen Mary II of Blessed Memory* (1694/5).

Gould, Robert. *A Poem Most Humbly Offered to the Memory of Her Late Sacred Majesty, Queen Mary* (1694/5).

Hog, William. *In Memoriam Illustrissimae Mariae* (1695).

Hume, Patrick. *A Poem Dedicated to the Immortal Memory of Her Late Majesty, The Most Incomparable Q. Mary* (1695).

King, Richard. *A Second Book of Songs Together with a Pastoral Elegy on the Blessed Memory of Her Late Gracious Majesty Queen Mary* (1695).

Laughton, Richard. *Lacrymae Cantabrigienses in obitum serenissimae Reginae Mariae, Cantabrigiae* (1695).

Manning, Francis. *A Pastoral Essay, Lamenting the Death of the Most Gracious Queen Mary of Blessed Memory*. Dedicated to Lord Somers. (1695). [second edition

published as *Sylvana: A Pastoral Essay, Lamenting the Death of the Most Gracious Queen Mary of Blessed Memory* (1695)]

Motteux, Peter Anthony. *Maria. A Poem Occasioned by the Death of Her Majesty, Addrest to Three Persons of Honour* (1695).

T. N., *A Poem on the Queen* (1695).

S. O., *Epicedium, or a Funeral Elegy on the Death of our Late Gracious Sovereign* (1695).

Park, Henry. *Lachrymae Sacerdotis. A Pindarick Poem Occasion'd by the Death of that Most Excellent Princess, our Late Gracious Sovereign Lady, Mary the Second of Glorious Memory* (1695).

Partridge, W. *A Consolatory Poem: Addressed to His Most Sacred Majesty* (1695).

Phillips, John. *In Memory of our Late Most Gracious Lady, Mary Queen of Great-Britain, France, and Ireland. A Poem* (1695).

J. L. R. of S. *An Elegy: On the Death of Her Late Sacred Majesty, Mary the Second, Queen of England* (York, 1695).

Rabus, Pieter. *Uitvaart, Van Haar Grootmagtigte, Majesteit Maria, Koninginne van Groot Britanje, Vrankrijk en Yerland* (Rotterdam, 1695).

Rabus, Pieter. *Britanje en Neerland in den rouw, over't affterven van Haar Grootmagtigste, Majesteit Maria, Koningine van Groot Britanje, Vrankrijk en Yerland* (Rotterdam, 1695).

Rawson, Joseph. *On the Lamented Death of Her Most Excellent Majesty, Queen Mary* (1695).

Segar, Simon. *Threno-Maria. A Rapsodicall Essay on the Death of our Late Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary of Ever-blessed Memory* (1695).

Stepney, George. *A Poem Dedicated to the Blessed Memory of Her Late Gracious Majesty, Queen Mary* (1695).

Steele, Richard. *The Procession. A Poem on Her Majesties Funeral*. By a Gentleman of the Army. (1695).

Strode, S. *A Poem on the Death of Her Most Sacred Majesty, Queen Mary* (1695).

Talbot, J. *Instructions to a Painter upon the Death and Funeral of Her Late Majesty Q. Mary of Blessed Memory* (1695).

Tate, Nahum. *Mausolaeum: A Funeral Poem on our Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary of Blessed Memory* (1695).

Tutchin, John. *An Epistle to Mr. Benjamin Bridgwater, Occasion'd by the Death of the Late Queen Mary* (1694).

Wesley, Samuel. *Elegies on the Queen and Archbishop* (1695).

Walsh, William. *A Funeral Elegy upon the Death of the Queen Addrest to the Marquess of Normanby* (1695).

Appendix B: Sermons on the Death of Mary II

[The place of publication is London unless other indicated; if I was able to determine the author's confessional affiliation, I have noted it]

A Funeral Oration on the Most High, Most Excellent, and Most Potent Princess, Marie Stuart, Queen of England, etc (1695). Translated from the French. Originally printed at The Hague. Recited by the learned author of *The Collection of Canons and New Pieces*.

Allestree, Charles. *The Desire of all Men: A Sermon Preach'd at Daventry in Northamptonshire, March 5, 1694/5* (1695). Dedicated to the Bailiff and Burgesses of Daventry.

Bates, William. *A Sermon Preached upon the Much Lamented Death of our Late Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary* (1695). Presbyterian.

Barnett, Andrew. *A Just Lamentation for the Irrecoverable Loss of the Nation by the Doleful Death of the Late Queen Mary* (1695). By "a minister of the gospel."

Beverley, Thomas. *A Solemn Perswasion to Most Earnest Prayer for the Revival of the Work of God Bringing Forth the Kingdom of Christ . . . Upon Occasion of the Late Stroke of Divine Displeasure in the Death of the Queen* (1695). Independent.

Bowber, Thomas. *A Sermon Preached in the Parish-Church of St. Swithin, London, March 10th, 1694/5, Upon the Much Lamented Death of Our Most Gracious Queen* (1696). Dedicated to Lord Somers. Church of England.

Boyse, Joseph. *Two Sermons Preach't on a Day of Fasting & Humiliation Kept by the Protestant Dissenters in Dublin, on the Sad Death Occasion of the Death of our Late Gracious Queen* (1695). Sermon I. Presbyterian.

Brady, Nicholas. *A Sermon Preach'd at Whitehall, March 3, 1694/5 Upon the Occasion of Her Late Majesties Death* (1695). Church of England.

Claude, Isaac. *Sermon upon the Death of the Queen of England, Preach'd in the Wallon Church at The Hague* (1695).Translated from the French. French Protestant.

Cumming, John. *A Sermon Preached on Occasion of the Death of our Late Gracious & Memorable Sovereign, Queen Mary* (1695). Dissenter.

Dawes, Thomas. *A Sermon Preach'd at the Parish-Church of St. Chad's in Shrewsbury, March 5, 1695, Being the Funeral Day of our Most Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary* (1695). Dedicated to the Mayor of Shrewsbury. Church of England.

Evans, John. *Some Thoughts on the Character of Solomon's Vertuous Woman, Preach'd in a Sermon at the Parish Church of Croydon, on the Occasion of Q. Mary's Death* (1695). Dedicated to Lady Coningsby, wife of Thomas, Lord Coningsby. Church of England.

Finglas, John. *A Sermon Preached at the Chappel Royal in the Tower, upon Sunday the Sixth Day of January, 1694/5 . . . whereon the greatest part of that audience appeared in deep mourning, upon the death of Her Sacred Majesty* (1695). Church of Ireland. Dedicated to Lord Lucas. [this sermon was also published anonymously as

A Sermon Preach'd at the Chappel Royal in the Tower upon the Death of Her Sacred Majesty, our Late Gracious Queen Mary (1695)]

Fleetwood, William. *A Sermon Preach'd on the Death of Q. Mary, at St. Austins in 1694*. Published in *Four Sermons* (1712). Bishop of Ely.

Fowler, Edward. *A Discourse of the Great Disingenuity and Unreasonableness of Repining at Afflicting Providences . . . Published upon the Occasion of the Death of our Gracious Sovereign Queen Mary* (1695). Bishop of Gloucester.

Francius, Peter. *An Oration of Peter Francius upon the Funeral of the Most August Princess, Mary II, Queen of England* (1695). Preached in Amsterdam on the day of her funeral. Translated from the Latin. French Protestant.

Goodwin, Thomas. *Of the Happiness of Princes led by Divine Counsel: A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of that Most Excellent Princess, our late Sovereign, Queen Mary* (1695). Independent.

Graevius, J. G. *A Funeral Oration of J. G. Grevius, Upon the Death of Mary II* (1695). Translated from the Latin. Preached in Utrecht. Dutch Calvinist. Found in a collection of sermons, title page is the first sermon listed here, the anonymous, *A Funeral Oration on the Most High, Most Excellent, and Most Potent Princess, Mary Stuart, Queen of England*.

Howe, John. *A Discourse Relating to the Much-lamented Death and Solemn Funeral, of Our Incomparable and Most Gracious Queen Mary* (1695). Presbyterian. Dedicated to Lady Rachel Russell.

Johnson, Christopher. *On the Death of our Late Most Gracious Sovereign Lady, the Queen of Blessed Memory*. Found in *Three Sermons Preached* (1696). Church of England.

Jurieu, Pierre. *A Pastoral Letter Written on the Occasion of the Death of the Late Queen of England* (1695). French Protestant.

Kennett, White. *The Righteous Taken Away from the Evil to Come. Applied to the Death of the Excellent Queen in a Sermon* (1695). Church of England.

Mannyngham, Thomas. *A Sermon Preached at the Parish-Church of St. Andrew's Holborn* (1695). Church of England.

Ortwinius, John. *A Funeral Oration, Pronounc'd upon the Death of the Most Serene and Potent Princess, Mary Stuart* (1695). Translated from Latin. Originally published in Delph. Dutch Calvinist.

Payne, William. *A Sermon upon the Death of the Queen, Preached in the Parish-Church of St. Mary White-Chappel* (1695). Church of England.

Pead, Deuel. *A Practical Discourse upon the Death of our Late Gracious Queen* (1695). Church of England.

Perse, William. *A Sermon Preach'd upon the Occasion of the Queen's Death on the 4th Sunday in Lent* (1695). Church of England. Dedicated to Lady Palmes.

Perizonius, Jacob. *A Funeral Encomium upon the Queen*. (in *A Collection of the Funeral Oratoins Pronounced by Publick Authority in Holland upon the Death of the Most Serene and Potent Princess, Mary II* (1695). Translated from Latin. Dutch Calvinist.

Powell, Joseph. *The Death of Good Josiah Lamented. A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of our Late Most Gracious Soveraign Queen Mary . . . Preach'd at Balsham in Cambridgshire* (1695). Church of England.

Sherlock, William. *A Sermon Preach'd at the Temple-Church, December 30, 1694, Upon the Sad Occasion of the Death of our Gracious Queen* (1694). Church of England.

Spademan, John. *Of Remembrance and Initiation of Deceas'd Holy Rulers. A Sermon Preach'd at Rotterdam, March the 15th 1695, New Style, the Day of Her Majesty's Funeral* (1695). Minister of the English Church in Rotterdam. Presbyterian.

Spanheimius, Francis. *A Funeral Oration to the Sacred Memory of the Most Serene and Potent Mary II* (1695). Originally given in Holland on the day of her funeral. Dutch Calvinist.

Stanhope, George. *Of Preparation for Death and Judgment a Sermon Preached at Whitehall January 27, 1694/5, Before . . . The Lord Chamberlain, the Ladies of the Bedchamber, and Others of the Household to our Late Gracious Queen Mary of Blessed Memory* (1695). Church of England.

Tenison, Thomas. *A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of Her Late Majesty Queen Mary of Ever Blessed Memory in the Abbey-Church in Westminster* (1695). Archbishop of Canterbury.

Tenison, Thomas. *Sermon Prononce Aux Funerailles De La Reine Marie II* (1695). Archbishop Tenison's sermon translated into French.

Weld, Nathaniel. *Two Sermons Preach't on a Day of Fasting & Humiliation Kept by the Protestant Dissenters in Dublin, on the Sad Death of our Late Gracious Queen* (1695). Sermon II. Presbyterian.

Wake, William. *Of our Obligation to Put our Trust in God, Rather than in Men, and of the Advantages of it. In a Sermon Preached before the Honourable Society of Grayes-Inn, upon the Occasion of the Death of our Late Royal Sovereign Queen Mary* (1695). Church of England.

Appendix C: Elizabeth Burnet's Recommended Reading List

Burnet's list is found at the end of *A Method of Devotion* (1713), pp. 391–5. She often abbreviated titles, mistitled some books, and omitted authors. My re-creation of her list is based on some guesswork.

[The place of publication is London unless otherwise noted. Burnet also recommends the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer.]

Anonymous, *A New Manual of Devotions. In Three Parts*. (2nd ed., 1713).
Anonymous, *The Whole Duty of Man* (1657).
Atterbury, Francis. *On the Excellency and Advantage of Private Prayer* (1704).
Barrow, Isaac. *Of the Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor: In a Sermon* (1671).
Barrow, Isaac. *A Sermon upon the Passion of the Blessed Savoir* (1677).
Beveridge, William. *A Sermon Concerning the Excellency and Usefulness of Common Prayer* (1681).
Brown, Peter. *Letter in Answer to a Book entitled Christianity not Mysterious* (London and Dublin, 1697).
Burkitt, William. *Expository Notes, with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (1700).
Burnet, Gilbert. *The Life of God in the Soul* (1702).
Burnet, Gilbert. *Discourse on Pastoral Care* (1692).
Burnet, Gilbert. *Four Discourses Delivered to the Clergy of Dioceses of Sarum Concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion* (1694).
Burnet, Gilbert. *The Abridgement of the History of Reformation of the Church of England* (1682).
Burton, Hezekiah. *Several Discourses* (1684).
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