Women, Piety, and Patronage in Reformation England, *c*. 1530-1558

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines laywomen's responses to and participation in the early English Reformation, through a consideration of their religious patronage. For more than two decades, scholars of English religion have recognised that the laity exhibited a wide range of responses to religious change, and that in negotiating and accommodating themselves to these changes they performed an integral role in shaping the spiritual landscape of their communities. As a corollary, there has been a retreat from framing religious identities in terms of a Catholic/Protestant binary, in favour of the recognition of a broad spectrum of belief. However, historians have been rather slow to apply these insights to the study of women. Although scholarly interest in women and the Reformation has been extensive, most existing studies have maintained a distinctly confessional focus. Similarly, although patronage has long been acknowledged as both integral to the various religious movements of the Reformation period, and as an arena in which early modern women might exercise considerable agency, it is only recently that the scope and significance of women's religious patronage has begun to be accorded sustained attention.

Building upon this work, this thesis presents a large-scale, cross-confessional study of the religious patronage of gentry and noblewomen in the turbulent period between Henry VIII's opening of the "Reformation Parliament" in 1529, and the death of Mary I in 1558. It focuses on three key forms of patronage: women's role in the religious book trade as patrons of texts, authors and publishers; their ecclesiastical patronage, in the form of presentations to benefices; and the end-of-life provisions they made in their wills and testaments. Throughout, the thesis is concerned with exploring the relationship between women's patronage, religious identity,

and shifting religious policy. It also addresses the ways in which this patronage was inflected by gender, kinship, and other personal, social and political concerns. It finds that women's patronal activities were extensive, both in terms of their spatial breadth – taking in the contexts of court, household, parish and intellectual culture – and their volume. Through these activities, laywomen were able to make statements about their religious allegiance. However, this thesis also identifies elements of substantial continuity, over time and across the spectrum of religious affiliation, even as successive regimes reshaped the boundaries of permitted spiritual expression. In addition, it is argued that while literary patronage could readily be used to pursue specific religious agendas, in other spheres patrons necessarily had to take other, more secular commitments into account. The result, this thesis demonstrates, was a complex relationship between patronage and belief, as laywomen negotiated the altered spiritual climate of early Reformation England and, in doing so, left their mark on the expression of the faith.

DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Signed:

Date: 25 August 2020

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I am grateful to the staff of the Barr Smith Library, especially the ILL department, for their assistance in accessing even the most obscure resources. Thanks are also due to the archivists at the London Metropolitan Archives, National Archives, British Library, Somerset Heritage Centre, Worcester Archives, Lincolnshire Archives, Northamptonshire Record Office, Herefordshire Archives, Borthwick Institute, and Cambridge University Library. I am incredibly thankful for the financial support I have received from the generous donors of the University of Adelaide, in the form of the E. W. Benham Scholarship, George Fraser Scholarship, and the L. F. and D. Denholm Scholarship.

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LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

BI	The Borthwick Institute, York
BL	The British Library, London
CCCC	Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
CCEd	The Clergy of the Church of England Database, 1540-1835
CUL	Cambridge University Library
HARC	Herefordshire Archives
Letters & Papers	*Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*. Edited by J. S. Brewer, James Gairdner and R. H. Brodie. 21 vols. 1862-1932. Reprint. Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1965.
LIRO	Lichfield Record Office
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LRO	Lincolnshire Record Office
NRO	Northamptonshire Record Office
ODNB	The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
STC	*A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640*. Compiled by A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave. Revised by W. A. Jackson, F. S. Ferguson and K. F. Pantzer. 2nd ed. 3 vols. London: The Bibliographical Society, 1976-1991.
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
WRO	Worcestershire Archives

A NOTE ON THE TEXT

The original spelling has been retained in all quotations from manuscript sources and early printed books, though abbreviations have been silently expanded. Dates are given in Old Style, but the year is taken to begin on 1 January. All contemporary printed texts were accessed via Early English Books Online. Although not conventional, publishers have been included in citations of early printed texts, as they are frequently pertinent to the discussion.

INTRODUCTION

> '[H]is Grace cannot a little marvel to hear of the papistical fashion that is maintained in that town, and by you chiefly that be of his Grace's Council … It is thought against all reason that the prayers of women and their fond flickerings should move any of you to do that thing that should in any wise displease your prince and sovereign lord or offend his just laws.'[1]

So wrote Thomas Cromwell to the Council of Calais in July 1537. The issue at hand was the effort of the Lord Deputy's wife, Honor Grenville, Viscountess Lisle, to protect two priests accused of supporting papal authority and maintaining abrogated practices. Cromwell dismissed Lady Lisle's intercessions as trivial and unimportant – a passing fancy – and ridiculed the suggestion that they might sway the Council. But, as Jasmine Nicholsfigueiredo has pointed out, in so publicly repudiating the Viscountess's 'fond flickerings' and threatening dire consequences for any who might be swayed by them, Cromwell in fact marked them out as politically significant.[2]

Grenville was certainly not deterred by the statesman's warning, and she showed that her interest was far from fleeting. Over the following months, she continued to advocate for one of these priests in particular, William Richardson.[3] In this instance, she was unsuccessful: Richardson was ultimately executed for treason in May 1540.[4] But it was far from her only

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[1] Muriel St. Clare Byrne, ed. *The Lisle Letters*, 6 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 4:349.
[2] Jasmine Nicholsfigueiredo, '*The Lisle Letters*: Lady Lisle's Epistolary Influence' (Ph.D. diss., Simon Fraser University, 2014), 105.
[3] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 4: 153, 156, 157, 159, 161-163, 167.
[4] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 4:402; *Letters & Papers*, vol. 12, part 2, no. 697; Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors*, ed. William Douglas Hamilton (London: Camden Society, 1875), 115.

foray into the world of religious patronage and religious controversy. Despite facing increasing scrutiny for her 'papisch' ways, Lady Lisle remained a staunch and overt conservative.[5] She maintained a close connection with several English religious houses up to the Dissolution.[6] Afterwards, she continued an intimate spiritual and economic relationship with a French convent in nearby Dunkirk, which included providing material support for the nuns' Catholic devotion.[7] Richardson was, moreover, not the only controversial priest with which she would be associated.[8]

Yet Lady Lisle's patronage also had other dimensions. She took her role as deputy's wife seriously, acting as a gracious host to the stream of official guests who passed through her household. This included preachers who were actively working to cleanse Calais of its alleged popish errors.[9] As we will see in the second part of this thesis, her ecclesiastical preferment was guided as much, if not more, by concerns of kinship and patronal loyalty as by her deeply felt spiritual convictions.[10] Grenville's activism is therefore suggestive of women's capacity to exercise considerable agency through religious patronage, and of the manifold forms this patronage might take. It is suggestive, too, of the various and at times competing motivations which underpinned its exercise, and accordingly of the complex relationship between religious patronage and the spiritual landscape of Reformation England. Cromwell's comments are also indicative of the way in which this activism might be inflected by gender.

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[5] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 4:408. See also *idem*, 5:62, 66, 79-80.
[6] See e.g. Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 1: 500, 504, 617; 3: 82, 86, 89, 90-94; 4:239-40; 5: 221.
[7] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 3: 176-7, 181-4, 5: 104-5, 119, 388, 673-4.
[8] See e.g. TNA SP 1/128 f.96, John Butler to Thomas Cranmer, 1538.
[9] A notable example is Richard Hore, one of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's personal chaplains and a 'convinced evangelical', who was sent to preach in Calais during Lent in 1535 and 1536. Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 2: 397, 468, 647, 3: 284, 389, 4: 153, 156; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 140-141.
[10] See Chapter Two, 125-6, 130-1.

Lady Lisle thus neatly encapsulates the key themes of this study, which explores the role of laywomen in promoting, resisting, and adapting to religious change in early Reformation England, through an examination of their religious patronage between c. 1530 and 1558. It seeks to assess the nature of women's patronal activities in this period, and how these both shaped and were shaped by the shifting religious climate. It also seeks to evaluate the influence upon these activities of gender, status, and social, political and familial concerns. In doing so, it works to further illuminate the ways in which the English laity negotiated religious change and left their mark on the expression of their faith.

I. Historiography

In the decades since the publication of Patrick Collinson's pioneering article on the Protestant activist Anne Locke (1965), and particularly within the last twenty-five years, scholarly interest in women, gender and the English Reformation – or rather, *reformations* – has positively flourished.[11] Yet despite the considerable inroads that have been made, there remains much to be done to understand women's experience of and participation in the religious movements of early modern England. In 2004, Susan Wabuda noted that this is a subject that 'is still opening its mysteries.'[12] Sixteen years later, this very much remains the case.

Any study of the laity's role in religious change must engage with the broader debate about the English Reformation. Over the past few decades, the historiography has witnessed a series of interpretative shifts.[13] The once dominant narrative, set forth by A.G. Dickens, of an

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[11] Patrick Collinson, 'The Role of Women in the English Reformation Illustrated by the Life and Friendships of Anne Locke', in *Studies In Church History*, ed. G. J. Cumming, vol. 2 (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1965).
[12] Susan Wabuda, review of *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England*, by Christine Peters, *Continuity and Change* 19, no. 2 (2004): 327.
[13] Due to space constraints, the following summary is necessarily brief. For a more substantive discussion, see Peter Marshall, '(Re)defining the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies* 48 (2009): 564-586.

anticlerical laity disillusioned with the late medieval church, who readily accepted the reforms initiated by Henry VIII, came under increasing scrutiny from the 1980s.[14] 'Revisionist' historians – Christopher Haigh, J. J. Scarisbrick and Eamon Duffy most prominent among them – instead argued that late medieval Catholicism was vibrant and dynamic, and that, to use Scarisbrick's summation, 'on the whole, English men and women did not want the Reformation, and were slow to accept it when it came.'[15] This revisionist conception of the Reformation as a protracted and contested process has now effectively attained the status of orthodoxy. Since the late 1990s, however, scholarship has moved into a 'post-revisionist' phase, as historians have sought to reconcile this popular reluctance with the eventual – if far from inevitable – success of the Reformation. Increasingly, they have shifted their attention to 'the actual process of reform – the ways in which people adapted to reformed ideas, new laws, and general social change.'[16]

This shift, unsurprisingly, has had substantial implications for our understanding of the laity and religious change. Viewed through a post-revisionist lens, the Reformation is less something imposed by the state on an unwilling populace, and more, as Eric Carlson has argued, 'a sort of dialectic process in which a synthesis was shaped over time.'[17] While scholars have differed in their assessment of this process and its outcome, two important points have emerged from this approach. The first is a recognition that the laity (alongside their parish priests) exhibited a wide and diverse range of responses to official reform. The second, that in

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[14] A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1964).

[15] It should be noted, however, that there are also notable differences between the views of revisionist scholars. J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 1; Christopher Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); *idem*, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[16] Norman Jones, 'Negotiating the Reformation', in *Religion and the English People 1500-1640: New Voices, New Perspectives*, ed. Eric Josef Carlson (Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1998), 274.

[17] Eric Josef Carlson, 'Cassandra Banished? New Research on Religion in Tudor and Stuart England', in Carlson, *Religion and the English People*, 6.

negotiating and – with varying degrees of enthusiasm – accommodating themselves to these changes, the laity performed an important role in shaping the religious landscape of their communities, counties, and country.[18] Caroline Litzenberger, for instance, in a study of lay religion in Gloucestershire, has stressed the existence of religious diversity, and argued that 'parishes and parishioners interpreted and implemented official policies in ways which suited their circumstances, religious preferences and past experiences.' As a result, while lay religion certainly changed over the Reformation period, 'it did not necessarily change in the ways desired by authority.'[19]

An important corollary of this has been a retreat from a 'dichotomous model of religious change', which presents conservative/Catholic and evangelical/Protestant in stark opposition, in favour of the recognition of a 'broad continuum and spectrum of degrees and types of Christian profession.'[20] Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie have persuasively argued that the religious situation of the early English Reformation in particular was 'fluid and indeterminate', and religious culture 'many-headed.'[21] Although some historians have used these insights to re-examine particular religious groups, several others have abandoned a confessional lens entirely.[22] Again, Litzenberger's study provides a useful model. Arguing that a focus on either evangelicals or those who cleaved to the old faith risks oversimplifying lay religion, she has

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[18] E.g. Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religion and Cultural Adaptation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002); Caroline Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire, 1540-1580* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Christopher Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth-Century England: Holding their Peace* (Houndmills, Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1998); Muriel McClendon, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[19] Litzenberger, *English Reformation.*

[20] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4.

[21] The quotes are from, respectively: Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie, 'Introduction: Protestantisms and their beginnings', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 6; Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also Peter Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006).

[22] E.g. Marshall and Ryrie, eds. *Beginnings*; Ryrie, *Gospel*.

instead sought to accommodate the 'myriad shades of grey', examining 'all shades of belief against the backdrop of shifting official religious policy.'[23]

Regrettably, however, this broader literature on the English Reformation has 'remained quite separate' from the historiography of women and religious change.[24] Thus, while some studies have sought to integrate women and gender into their analyses, most are primarily concerned with men.[25] In turn, the insights and approaches of 'post-revisionism' are only beginning to filter through into the literature on women.

The literature on women and the Reformation comprises two distinct but overlapping strands: scholarship on the impact of religious change, and scholarship on women's responses to and involvement in this process.[26] The former has been, and remains, the subject of considerable debate. The view prevalent in earlier studies that Protestantism exerted a positive influence upon women's lives, freeing them from monasticism and exalting their roles as wives and mothers, has for some time encountered serious opposition.[27] Most notably, Lyndal Roper, in her 1989 study of Reformation Augsburg, argued that Protestantism's legacy was instead 'deeply ambiguous', and indeed was 'most successful' when it reinforced patriarchal authority and restricted women to the household.[28] Increasingly, however, this very tendency to frame the debate in terms of whether the Reformation was 'good' or a 'bad' for women has been

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[23] Litzenberger, *English Reformation*. See also e.g. Shagan, *Popular Politics*.

[24] The quote is from Amanda Capern, *The Historical Study of Women: England, 1500-1700* (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 196-197. See also Claire S. Schen, *Charity and Lay Piety in Reformation London, 1500-1620* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 9. Merry E. Wiesner, *Gender, Church and State in Early Modern Germany* (London: Longman, 1998), 202.

[25] Studies which integrate women include: Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Litzenberger, *English Reformation*; Schen, *Charity*.

[26] For a historiographical overview of these strands, see Merry Wiesner-Hanks, 'Women, Gender and Sexuality' in *Palgrave Advances in the European Reformations*, ed. Alec Ryrie (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 253-272.

[27] Roland H. Bainton, *Women and the Reformation in Germany and Italy* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1971); Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983).

[28] Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augusburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

challenged, as scholars have highlighted the diversity and complexity of female experience. In her recent study of women in Counter-Reformation Münster, Simone Laqua-O'Donnell has pointed out that the effects of Catholic reform varied considerably between women of different backgrounds; while some found their situation improved, others 'had their freedoms severely curtailed.'[29]

In the English context in particular, this has been coupled with a concern to highlight continuity as well as change. While much of the literature has focused on marital relationships, this debate has also inflected scholarship on Englishwomen's religious practices and position.[30] Some historians have maintained that while the Protestant and Catholic Reformations did not diminish women's ability to participate in religious life, they did decisively alter the ways in which they did so. Claire Schen, for instance, has argued that parish religion became increasingly gendered throughout the Reformation period, as women's opportunities for involvement in this sphere narrowed and their religious influence shifted to the household.[31] In contrast, Christine Peters – in one of the few 'post-revisionist' studies to look directly at women – has contended that late medieval Christocentric piety offered a 'bridge' between Catholicism and Protestantism, which muted the Reformation's impact on women's 'patterns of piety.' Because this Christocentric piety 'had reduced the significance of gendered patterns of

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[29] Simone Laqua-O'Donnell, *Women and the Counter-Reformation in Early Modern Münster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). See also Wiesner-Hanks, 'Women', 261; Diane Willen, 'Women and Religion in Early Modern England', in *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe*, ed. Sherrin Marshall (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 158.

[30] E.g. Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); Margo Todd, 'Humanists, Puritans and the Spiritualized Household', *Church History* 49, no. 1 (1980): 18-34; Susan Wabuda, 'Sanctified by the Believing Spouse: Women, Men and the Marital Yoke in the Early Reformation', in Marshall and Ryrie, *Beginnings*, 111-128.

[31] Claire S. Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes 1500-1620', in *The Parish in English Life 1400-1600*, ed. Katherine L. French, Gary G. Gibbs, and Beat A. Kümin (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 250-268. See also Katherine L. French, *The Good Women of the Parish: Gender and Religion after the Black Death* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 223-230; Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Claire Cross, 'The Religious Life of Women in Sixteenth-Century Yorkshire', in *Women and the Church*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 307-324.

devotion', Peters argues, aspects of reform often perceived as particularly detrimental to women – such as the diminished prominence of the Virgin Mary – in fact had only limited impact on female religiosity.[32] This question of the impact of doctrinal and institutional change on women's religious expression is further examined in this thesis.

The scholarship on Englishwomen's active participation in the Reformation is characterised by considerably less debate. While scholars have certainly differed in their emphases, there is nevertheless a general agreement that women of all classes performed a substantial, even critical, role in the process of religious change. Problematically, however, although it is widely recognised that this role was not restricted to zealous supporters of the 'new religion', the existing literature is overwhelmingly Protestant-focused. Scholars have, for instance, done much to reveal the spiritual development and religious activism of individual evangelicals, from royal and noblewomen such as Anne Boleyn and the Cooke sisters, to less high-profile supporters such as Anne Locke and Elizabeth Bowes.[33] Particular groups of women, especially those martyred for their reformist beliefs, have also attracted attention.[34] Still other studies have highlighted the significance of women's spiritual relationships and correspondence with reformers such as John Knox and Heinrich Bullinger.[35]

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[32] Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For a more muted argument for continuity, see Willen, 'Women'.

[33] See below, footnotes 56-78. Roland H. Bainton, *Women of the Reformation in France and England* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1973); Collinson, 'Role of Women'; Christine M. Newman, 'The Reformation and Elizabeth Bowes: A Study of a Sixteenth-Century Northern Gentlewoman', in Shiels and Wood, *Women in the Church*, 325-333.

[34] E.g. Mary Prior, 'Reviled and Crucified Marriages: The Position of Tudor Bishops' Wives', in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (London and New York: Metheun, 1985); Gabrielle S. Sanders, 'The Gendering of Martyrdom: Sixteenth-Century English Martyrology and the Defense of the Protestant Church' (PhD., University of Rochester, 2006); Patrick Collinson, 'What are the Women Doing in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'?', in *Women and Religion in the Atlantic Age, 1550-1900*, ed. Emily Clark and Mary Laven (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 15-32; Muriel McClendon, 'Women, Religious Dissent, and Urban Authority in Early Reformation Norwich', in *Violence, Politics and Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Joseph P. Ward (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 125-146.

[35] Patrick Collinson, 'John Knox, the Church of England and the Women of England', in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 75-96; A. Daniel Frankforter, 'Elizabeth

For the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries this evangelical focus is increasingly being balanced, as scholars explore the 'vital' role of Catholic laywomen, and particularly recusant women, in the 'maintenance of Catholic ritual and tradition.'[36] As yet, however, less interest has been shown in non-evangelical women of the early English Reformation. Although female resistance to, or at least lack of enthusiasm for, the religious changes of Henry VIII and Edward VI has long been recognised, it is primarily nuns – not laywomen – who have received more sustained attention.[37] Sharon Jansen has examined female opposition to the Henrician reforms, but explicitly focuses on those who were more concerned with 'legitimate authority and right rule' than 'doctrine or dogma.'[38] Substantive discussions of the spiritual concerns and religious activism of 'conservative' or Catholic laywomen have typically been dispersed among larger studies of individual women, although the growing number of such studies does indicate an increasing interest in this topic.[39]

Bowes and John Knox: A Woman and Reformation Theology' *Church History* 56, no. 3 (1987): 333-347; Thomas Freeman, '"The Good Ministrye of Godlye and Vertuouse Women": The Elizabethan Martyrologists and the Female Supporters of the Marian Martyrs', *Journal of British Studies*, 39, no. 1 (2000): 8-33; Rebecca A. Giselbrecht 'Religious Intent and the Art of Courteous Pleasantry: A Few Letters from Englishwomen to Heinrich Bullinger (1543-1562)', in *Women during the English Reformations: Renegotiating Gender and Religious History*, ed. Julie A. Chappell and Kaley A. Kramer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 45-61.

[36] Colleen Marie Seguin, ''Addicted unto piety': Catholic Women in England, 1590-1690' (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1997); *idem*, 'Ambiguous Liaisons: Catholic Women's Relationships with their Confessors in Early Modern England', *Archiv Reformationsgeschichte* 95 (2004): 156-185; Sarah L. Bastow, '"Worth nothing but very wilful": Catholic Recusant Women of Yorkshire, 1536-1642', *Recusant History* 25 (2001): 591-603 Marie B. Rowlands, 'Recusant women 1560-1640', in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), 149-80; Jennifer Ashley Binczewski, 'Solitary Sparrows: Widowhood and the Catholic Community in Post-Reformation England, 1580-1630' (Ph.D. diss, Washington State University, 2017).

[37] E.g. Roseanne Michalek Desilets, 'The Nuns of Tudor England: Feminine Responses to the Dissolution of the Monasteries' (PhD., University of California, Irvine, 1995); Mary Erler, 'Religious Women after the Dissolution: Continuing Community', in *London and the Kingdom: Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron*, ed. Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008), 135-145.

[38] Sharon L. Jansen, *Dangerous Talk and Strange Behaviour: Women and Popular Resistance to the Reforms of Henry VIII* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

[39] E.g. Nicola Clark, 'A 'Conservative' Family? The Howard Women and Responses to Religious Change during the Early Reformation, c. 1530-1558', *Historical Research*, 90, no. 248 (2017): 328-333; Janice Liedl, '"Rather a strong and constant man": Margaret Pole and the Problem of Women's Independence', in *Women during the English Reformations: Renegotiating Gender and Religious Identity*, ed. Julie A. Chappell and Kaley A. Kramer (New York: Palgrave Macmilla, 2014), 29-43; E. E. Reynolds, *Margaret Roper: Eldest Daughter of St. Thomas More* (London: Burns & Oates, 1960).

A few of the more recent studies of Englishwomen and religious change have fruitfully acknowledged the diversity of female responses and activism, and the fluidity of religious identities. Notably, Melissa Franklin Harkrider has examined Katherine Willoughby, duchess of Suffolk's gradual and complex transition from devout Catholic to the 'hotter sort' of Protestant, as well as the similarly complex relationship between Willoughby's religious affiliation and her religious activism.[40] Yet these studies have maintained a distinctly confessional focus; Harkrider, for example, is chiefly concerned with aristocratic evangelicalism. To date, general surveys of women and the English Reformation by scholars such as Diane Willen, Patricia Crawford, and Amanda Capern have done the best job of spanning the full breath of female religious experience and affiliation.[41] However, with the notable exception of Capern's study, they have tended to depict Protestantism and Catholicism as fairly rigid categories. Their brevity and typically vast chronological scope, moreover, mean that the depth of analysis is necessarily limited. Accordingly, there is a definite need for further research which encompasses the full spectrum of religious belief, and, in doing so, provides a more nuanced and comprehensive account of how English laywomen negotiated the Reformation.

A consideration of patronage and patronage networks offers one means of widening the lens on laywomen's responses and contributions to the shifting religious climate of sixteenth-century England. Patronage relations permeated early modern society, and religion was no exception. Indeed, historians have long recognised their importance in the various religious movements of this period. Since the 1970s, several studies have drawn attention to the notable

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[40] Melissa Franklin Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England: Katherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk, and Lincolnshire's Godly Aristocracy, 1519-1580* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008). See also Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), 167-201

[41] Willen, 'Women'; Crawford, *Women*; Capern, *Historical Study*. See also Cross, 'Religious Life'; Retha M. Warnicke, *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983).

role which the activities of elite male patrons performed in the promotion of evangelical reform at court, in the localities, and via the printing press.[42] In recent years, scholars such as Michael Questier and Susan Cogan have also begun to highlight the crucial significance of patronage networks in shaping and sustaining late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Catholicism.[43] Given its inextricability from the social and political fabric of English society, patronage offers an ideal prism through which to assess how religious beliefs interacted with other concerns to shape lay involvement in religious change. To date, scholars have differed in their assessment of this issue. Whereas some, such as John King, Joseph Block, and Claire Cross have implied a relatively straightforward correlation between religious affiliation and patronage, others have perceived a more complex relationship.[44] Rosemary O'Day, for instance, in a study of Puritan patronage, has argued that while the ecclesiastical patronage in the hands of active Puritans was 'extremely important', in the majority of cases presentations to parish livings were not 'governed consciously by a desire to further a religious movement.' Competing obligations to family, friends, and clients must be taken into consideration.[45] Cogan, meanwhile, has demonstrated that political expediency and social status could trump religion when it came to

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[42] E.g. Joseph Block, 'Thomas Cromwell's Patronage of Preaching', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 8, no. 1 (1977: 37-50); John N. King, 'Protector Somerset, Patron of the English Renaissance', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 70 (1976): 307–31; Rosemary O'Day, *The English Clergy : The Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession, 1558-1642* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979); W. J. Sheils, *The Puritans in the Diocese of Peterborough, 1558-1610* (Northampton : Northamptonshire Record Society, 1979); Patricia C. Swensen, 'Patronage from the Privy Chamber: Sir Anthony Denny and Religious Reform', *Journal of British Studies* 27, no. 1 (1988): 25-44.

[43] Susan Cogan, 'Reputation, Credit and Patronage: Throckmorton Men and Women, c. 1560-1620', in *Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation*, ed. Peter Marshall and Geoffrey Scott (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 69-91; *idem*, 'Catholic Gentry, Family networks and Patronage in the English Midlands, C. 1570--1630' (Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder, 2012); Michael Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c. 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[44] Block, 'Patronage of Preaching'; King, 'Protector Somerset'; M. Claire Cross, 'Noble Patronage in the Elizabethan Church', *The Historical Journal* 3, no. 1 (1960): 1-16; *idem*, 'An Example of Lay Intervention in the Elizabethan Church', in *Studies in Church History, Volume II*, ed. G. J. Cuming (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1965), 273-282.

[45] O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86-112.

the patronage networks of Catholic gentry.[46] This rich and growing literature has, accordingly, established patronage as a key concern for scholars of the English Reformation, and as a site for continuing debate.[47]

Increasingly, patronage has also become established as a facet of early modern society in which gentry and noble women were extensively and integrally involved. Prior to the later 1980s, scholarship on female patronage was limited, and focused narrowly upon the activities of certain high-profile women in the cultural sphere.[48] In the years since, however, the literature has expanded exponentially. While one strand of this scholarship has remained concerned with women's cultural, and particularly literary, patronage – demonstrating that this was more complex, widespread and diverse than previously thought – a second strand has developed out of recent scholarship on women and politics.[49] In her pioneering 1990 article on 'Women and politics in early Tudor England', Barbara Harris persuasively demonstrated that the turn in English political studies towards a focus on the court and great households allowed for a reconceptualisation of elite women as important political actors. Patronage is central to this more informal definition of politics, in which the 'personal' and 'political' overlap, and Harris concluded that there is 'overwhelming evidence' that women participated 'in all the activities connected to forming, maintaining, and exploiting patronage networks.'[50] A number of

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[46] Cogan, 'Catholic Gentry'.

[47] The currency of this debate is demonstrated by Melissa Harkrider's recent call for further research on the relationship between religious beliefs and patronage concerns: *Women, Reform and Community*, 11.

[48] E.g. Franklin B. Williams, 'The Literary Patronesses of Renaissance England', *Notes & Queries* 29, no. 10 (1962): 364-366; James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[49] The literature on women's cultural patronage is extensive, but examples include: June Hall McCash, ed., *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press), 1996; C. M. Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature: The Women of the Russell Family 1520-1617' (Ph.D., University of Reading, 1992); Valerie Schutte, *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications: Royal Women, Power and Persuasion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

[50] Barbara Harris, 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England', *The Historical Journal* 33, no. 2 (1990): 259-281. Other studies published around the same time also noted women's participation in politics through patronage: Barbara A. Hanawalt, 'Lady Honor Lisle's Networks of Influence', in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Maryanne Kowaleski and Mary C. Erler (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 188–212; Sharon

subsequent studies have reinforced this conclusion.[51] Helen Payne, for example, has argued that while their power was indirect and 'contingent on their relationships with powerful men', Jacobean aristocratic women were nevertheless 'integral' to court patronage networks, particularly as they related to familial connections.[52] Recent work on women's letter writing has similarly drawn attention to women's extensive participation in this arena. James Daybell, for instance, has noted that women skilfully deployed letters of petition in a 'broad range of patronage suits' related to crown, ecclesiastical and 'more local forms of patronage.'[53]

Yet despite the demonstrable importance of patronage to the study of both aristocratic women and the English Reformation, rather less attention has been directed at the nexus of these two concerns. Although scholars have identified religious patronage as a sphere in which women – considered 'to piety more prone' – could exercise particular agency, for the most part studies of Englishwomen's patronage have concentrated on their activities at court and on behalf of family.[54] In turn, the broader literature on patronage and the Reformation has focused principally on men.[55] This is not to suggest that women's Reformation-era religious patronage has been entirely ignored; indeed, recent years have seen an increasing interest in this topic.

Kettering, 'The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Noblewomen', *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 4 (1989): 817-841.

[51] E.g. Barbara Harris, *English Aristocratic Women: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers 1450-1550* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002); Joanne Hocking, 'Aristocratic Women at the Late Elizabethan Court: Politics, Patronage and Power' (Ph.D., University of Adelaide, 2015); Margaret Keenan, 'Women and Politics in England, 1558--1625: Patronage, Petition and Protest' (Ph.D., Tulane University, 2000); Helen Payne, 'Aristocratic Women, Power, Patronage and Family Networks at the Jacobean Court, 1603-1635', in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700*, ed. James Daybell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 164-180.

[52] Payne, 'Aristocratic Women'.

[53] James Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 229-264.

[54] E.g. Hanawalt, 'Lady Honor', 199-200, 207; Mary Ann Lyons, 'Lay Female Piety and Church Patronage in Late Medieval Ireland', in *Christianity in Ireland: Revisiting the Story*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and Dáire Keogh (Blackrock: The Columba Press, 2002), 57-75; Karen Stöber, 'Female Patrons of Late Medieval English Monasteries', *Medieval Prosopography* 31 (2016): 115-136. Other studies which consider women's religious patronage include: Mary Erler, 'Widows in retirement: region, patronage, spirituality, reading at the Gaunts, Bristol', *Religion & Literature* 37, no. 2 (2005): 51-75; Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[55] Of the studies cited above, only Cogan, 'Catholic Gentry', discusses women at any length.

However, existing scholarship is largely fragmented in focus, and has left certain key aspects underexplored.

To date, the patronage of queens Anne Boleyn and Katherine Parr has received the bulk of scholarly attention. As early as 1965, James Kelsey McConica positioned Parr as an influential supporter of humanists at Henry's court, and singled out her sponsorship of the English translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrases upon the New Testament* as particularly significant.[56] A number of subsequent studies have further explored Parr's patronage, transferring the emphasis from humanism to more discernibly evangelical reform. Not all have agreed with McConica's assessment. Maria Dowling, in a 1987 essay, concluded that McConica had 'grossly exaggerate[ed]' Parr's importance in the English Reformation.[57] However, other scholars – including Parr's biographer, Susan James – have argued that while her influence was perhaps more constrained than McConica allowed, Parr was nevertheless a crucial patron of evangelicalism.[58] Anne Boleyn's patronage has received comparable attention, and has likewise been subject to divergent interpretations. Whereas Dowling questioned Parr's influence, she accorded to her predecessor the place of 'prime patron of the gospel at court.'[59] This assessment has been reinforced by other historians, most prominently Eric Ives.[60] Yet although dominant, this narrative has not been unchallenged. While not

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[56] McConica, *English Humanists*, 200-234. For another early study, see: Bainton, *France and England*, 161-179.
[57] Maria Dowling, 'The Gospel and the Court: Reformation under Henry VIII', in *Protestantism and the National Church in Sixteenth-Century England*, ed. Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (London and New York: Croom Helm, 1987), 60-71.
[58] Susan E. James, *Kateryn Parr: The Making of a Queen* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999); John N. King, 'Patronage and Piety: the Influence of Catherine Parr', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret Patterson Hannay (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1985), 43-60; Patricia Pender, 'Dispensing Quails, Mincemeat, Leaven: Katherine Parr's Patronage of the Paraphrases of Erasmus', in *Material Cultures of Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. Patricia Pender and Rosalind Smith (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 36–54.
[59] Maria Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn and Reform', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35, no. 1 (1984): 46. See also *idem*, ' The Gospel and the Court'; *idem*, 'Anne Boleyn as Patron', in *Henry VIII: A European Court in England*, ed. David Starkey (London: Collins & Brown, 1991), 107-111.
[60] Eric W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: 'The Most Happy'* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); *idem*, 'Anne Boleyn and the Early Reformation in England: The Contemporary Evidence', *The Historical Journal*

disputing Anne's influence, George Bernard has suggested that her exercise of ecclesiastical patronage owed less to her evangelical sympathies (which he questions) than to political concerns, and benefited conservatives as well as reformers.[61]

This scholarship, and the debates it involves, raises vital questions about the significance of women's religious patronage, and – in parallel with the broader literature on Reformation patronage – about the extent to which it was motivated by religious concerns. As queens, however, the experience of Parr and Boleyn is only partially representative of women from outside the royal family, with which this project is chiefly concerned. Markedly less has been written about the latter, and much of what has concentrates on the patronage of Protestant, and especially 'godly' (or 'Puritan') women of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[62] Charlotte Merton, for instance, has considered the religious patronage of Protestant women at the Elizabethan court, in the context of a broader examination of the ladies of the Privy Chamber.[63] Merton highlights the range of undertakings in which court women were involved, from the protection of 'godly' clerics to the sale of advowsons, and the range of motivations which prompted them; she suggests, in particular, that even the most fervent were not immune to the allure of financial gain.[64] While Merton does not engage directly with the issue of the Reformation, she is certainly of the opinion that the patronage of the Privy Chamber women could have an impact upon the English Church. Indeed, she goes so far as to argue that women such as the Cooke sisters 'were at the forefront of religious life both at Court and, by

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37, no. 2 (1994): 389-400. Other studies have also noted Boleyn's religious patronage, e.g. Bainton, *France and England*, 153-158; Brigden, *London and the Reformation*, 127-128, 221-222.

[61] G. W. Bernard, 'Anne Boleyn's Religion', *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 1 (1993): 1-20.

[62] Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 167-201; Hocking, 'Aristocratic Women', 18-19, 116-121, 149, 169; Charlotte Merton, 'The Women who Served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth: Ladies, Gentlewomen and Maids of the Privy Chamber, 1553-1603' (PhD., University of Cambridge, 1991), 203-230; Diane Willen, 'Godly Women in Early Modern England: Puritanism and Gender', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 43, no. 4 (1992): 561-80.

[63] Merton, 'Women.' While Merton's study covers the reigns of both Mary and Elizabeth, her discussion of religion is almost entirely concerned with the latter's reign.

[64] Merton, 'Women', 219-220.

their patronage, throughout the country.'[65] Gemma Allen's recent monograph on these same Cooke sisters has similarly argued for their extensive involvement in religious patronage, and has presented a particularly nuanced assessment of the intertwined factors which shaped its exercise.[66] In a clear demonstration of the value of this approach, Allen has demonstrated the influence not only of the differing shades of Puritanism to which the sisters subscribed, but of friendship, familial networks, education, and shifts in marital status.

With the notable exception of Melissa Harkrider's recent work on Katherine Willoughby (discussed below), the patronage of non-royal women during the early English Reformation has not been subject to comparably wide-ranging and incisive examination. John N. King's pioneering 1985 essay on the role of Katherine Parr's circle in the 'popularization of Protestant humanism' during the late 1540s and early 1550s remains the most oft-cited study.[67] Alongside Parr herself, King examines the activities of Anne Seymour (née Stanhope), Duchess of Somerset, Katherine Brandon (née Willoughby), Duchess of Suffolk, and Mary Fitzroy (née Howard), Duchess of Richmond, arguing that they played a notable role in the 'institution of a Protestant religious settlement.'[68] However King, a literary scholar, is almost exclusively concerned with their sponsorship of religious literature and its authors, publishers, and translators. Subsequent studies have tended to replicate this narrow focus on the women of Parr's circle, and on dedications of devotional and theological texts. This is true, for example, of Dakota Hamilton's treatment of a slightly larger group of Parr's women, although – unlike King – Hamilton at least allows for the influence of political, as well as religious, concerns.[69]

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[65] Merton, 'Women', 243.
[66] Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 167-201.
[67] King, 'Piety and Patronage'.
[68] King, 'Piety and Patronage', 59-60.
[69] Dakota L. Hamilton, 'The Household of Queen Katherine Parr' (D.Phil., University of Oxford, 1992), 334-363. See also Retha M. Warnicke, *Wicked Women of Tudor England: Queens, Aristocrats, Commoners* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 88-99.

Only Nicola Clark's brief but useful discussion of Mary Fitzroy's patronage, in the course of her recent monograph on the women of the Howard family, has so far sought to properly situate this support for religious literature within broader religious and patronage networks.[70]

Outside Parr's circle, a very few studies have pointed to the importance of other, less formal forms of patronage, but have likewise considered these in isolation. In an essay focusing on Mary Glover, niece of the prominent reformer Hugh Latimer, Susan Wabuda has drawn attention to women's provision of hospitality to itinerant preachers, a form of patronage which she identifies as having 'important local and national implications.'[71] Other historians, most notably Thomas Freeman, have commented upon the 'physical, financial, moral, and emotional support' offered to the Marian martyrs by their female 'sustainers.'[72] The relationships between the imprisoned reformers and these women, Freeman argues, 'had a decisive influence on the development of English Protestantism.'[73]

Whereas most research has concentrated on the court, the work of Wabuda and Freeman has highlighted the significance of women's activities in other spaces. However, it is only recently that historians have begun to examine the full 'spatial breadth' of female religious patronage, and, in particular, to explore its manifestations in the parish context.[74] The most comprehensive study to date is Melissa Harkrider's 2008 monograph on Katherine Willoughby Brandon and Lincolnshire's 'godly aristocracy.'[75] Harkrider examines the 'myriad ways' in which Willoughby and her female associates promoted religious reform 'at court, in their

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[70] Nicola Clark, *Gender, Family, and Politics: The Howard Women, 1485-1558* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 145-8.
[71] Susan Wabuda, 'Shunamites and Nurses of the English Reformation: The Activities of Mary Glover, Niece of Hugh Latimer', in *Women and the Church*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 335-344.
[72] Freeman 'Good Ministrye.'
[73] Freeman, 'Good Minstrye', 9.
[74] The phrase is Gemma Allen's: *Cooke Sisters*, 168.
[75] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*.

households, and in their local communities', and, importantly, explores how their patronage in these spaces fit within broader religious networks. Perhaps most significantly, she considers the 'neglected' role of female patrons in the parish context, in the form of presentations to benefices. No doubt because advowsons (the right to present a candidate to a church living) were property rights, this form of patronage has been primarily associated with men.[76] Harkrider argues, however, that at least seventeen Lincolnshire women – Willoughby most prominent among them – presented to benefices during the sixteenth century, and were thus able to influence 'the religious atmosphere of their local communities.'[77] So far, only Allen's study of the Cooke sisters during Elizabeth's reign has similarly incorporated women's activism in the parish setting.[78] As such, further research in this area is much needed. Harkrider's research, moreover, begs expansion in other ways. While her work has done much to reveal the scope of women's Reformation-era religious patronage, and to indicate its complexities, the broader focus of her monograph on Willoughby's personal religious development and experience means that many aspects are covered rather superficially. In light of Willoughby's well-known patronage of religious literature, Harkrider also accords remarkably little attention to the topic of print.

Most significantly, however, Harkrider's work, in common with all aforementioned studies, remains focused on a small group of evangelical women. Although scholarship on Catholic laywomen elsewhere in Europe has indicated they were active religious patrons during the Reformation period, the patronage of non-evangelical Englishwomen has, as yet, received little attention.[79] There are signs that this is beginning to change. Most notably, Susannah Brietz

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[76] It should be acknowledged that this form of patronage was at least mentioned in some earlier studies, e.g. Merton, 'Women', 216.
[77] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 20, 84-91, 125-132.
[78] Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 167-201.
[79] E.g. Barbara B. Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); *idem*, 'Rethinking the Catholic Reformation: The Role

Monta has recently highlighted the role of Anne Dacre Howard, Countess of Arundel (1557-1630) as a sponsor of the clandestine Catholic book trade, benefactor of the Jesuits, and helper of both lay Catholics and missionary priests.[80] Her nuanced assessment of these activities takes into account the impact of both official policy – in the form of the 'increasingly harsh' recusancy laws – as well as the 'fault lines' within late sixteenth and early seventeenth English Catholicism. Comparable attention has largely not, however, been accorded to the Countess's early Reformation counterparts. Barbara Hanawalt has noted the influence of Honor, Lady Lisle in the sphere of religious patronage, in an essay on her 'networks of influence' during the 1530s.[81] In contrast to the positive tone of most research, she also makes the bold claim that the religious changes of this period increasingly diminished women's agency in this area. Unfortunately, however, Hanawalt provides no evidence to substantiate this, and devotes just a few paragraphs to Lady Lisle's activities as a provider of preferment and aid. More encouragingly, Nicola Clark's recent study of the Howard women incorporates an extended discussion of the ecclesiastical patronage of Anne de Vere (née Howard), Countess of Oxford, which she identifies as broadly conformist.[82] However, there remains a considerable need for further research into the patronage activities of conservative and conformist Englishwomen in the first half of the sixteenth century.[83]

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of Women', in *Women, Religion and the Atlantic World (1600-1800)*, ed. Daniella Kostroun and Lisa Vollendorf (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2009), 31-59.

[80] Susannah Brietz Monta, 'Anne Dacre Howard, Countess of Arundel, and Catholic Patronage', in *English Women, Religion, and Textual Production, 1500–1625*, ed. Micheline White (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 59-81. See also Cogan, 'Catholic Gentry'; Jessie Childs, *God's Traitors: Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), esp. ch. 4.

[81] Hanawalt, 'Lady Honor'.

[82] Clark, *Gender, Family, and Politics*, 142-60. See also Clark, 'A 'conservative' Family?', 328-333.

[83] The religious patronage of other conservative or conformist women has occasionally been mentioned in the scholarship but has received only cursory attention. See e.g. Hazel Pierce, *Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, 1473-1541: Loyalty, Lineage and Leadership* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2003), 62, 104-105.

This thesis will substantially build upon the existing scholarship to present the first large-scale, cross-confessional analysis of women's religious patronage in Reformation England. Taking in the contexts of the court, household, parish, and intellectual culture, it expands upon the work of Allen and Harkrider in examining the 'spatial breadth' of women's patronage. In doing so, this study presents a markedly more comprehensive and nuanced assessment of the relationship between these activities and the shifting religious landscape than has thus far been undertaken. Accordingly, it augments our understanding of the ways in which the English laity, and laywomen in particular, responded to and negotiated religious change.

II. Early Modern Patronage

Patronage, to quote Rosemary O'Day, 'made the early modern world turn round.'[84] It underpinned and permeated the structures of European society, and England was no exception. Despite, or perhaps because of, its ubiquity, scholars have differed in their precise definition of the term. Broadly speaking, however, patronage can be described as 'the action of one person with some sort of power or influence using that influence to aid another party.'[85] This aid might be material, or take the form of protection, endorsement, or preferment. It was a system fundamentally built on reciprocity.[86] The client received assistance, of whatever kind, and in

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[84] Rosemary O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage: Who Controlled the Church?', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. Felicity Heal and Rosemary O'Day (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1977), 137.

[85] O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage', 137. For good summaries of patronage in early modern England, see Wallace MacCaffrey, 'Patronage and Politics under the Tudors', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 21-35; Catherine F. Patterson, *Urban Patronage in Early Modern England: Corporate Boroughs, the Landed Elite, and the Crown, 1580-1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 2-4; Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage in Early Stuart England* (1990. Reprint, London: Routledge, 1993), 3-4.

[86] Patronage was embedded in wider practices of gift exchange and obligation. See e.g. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *The Culture of Giving: Informal Support and Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England*

return the patron gained social, political and/or spiritual capital, bolstering their prestige and gaining (or maintaining) the loyalty of those they sponsored. Crucially, patronage also offered the patron opportunities to shape, variously, the political, social, economic, cultural and religious life of their communities.

The patronage system also depended on the efforts of intermediaries, often referred to as brokers. A 'broker brought together individuals with patronage and those seeking it, and arranged an exchange'; typically, they were individuals with marked influence in their own right.[87] The hierarchical nature of English society, with the monarch at its apex, meant that many individuals simultaneously functioned as patrons, brokers and clients in a complex network of personal relationships.[88] Members of the aristocracy exercised patronage using their own resources. But they were also valued for their ability to (ideally) influence their fellows among the upper gentry and nobility, as well as the Crown and the ecclesiastical establishment.[89]

This thesis looks at patronage through two, overlapping lenses: religion and gender. Separating 'religious' patronage from other forms of support is not always a straightforward task, in a climate in which spiritual, political and personal concerns were so closely related. In this study, the term is used to refer to those forms of patronage which related to religious practices and intellectual culture, clergy and professed religious, and ecclesiastical institutions and offices.

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Sharon Kettering, 'Gift-giving and Patronage in Early Modern France', *French History* 2, no. 2 (1988): 131-51.

[87] Kettering, 'Patronage Power', 818.

[88] For a useful discussion of the interconnections between patrons, brokers and clients, in the comparable context of early modern France, see Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), esp.

[89] Dowling, 'The Gospel and the Court', 48-9; Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients*, 4-5.

The use of gender as a frame of analysis also requires some explanation. Gender is fundamental to our understanding of early-modern religion and, by extension, the European reformations. As Amanda Capern has noted, '[e]arly-modern religion was articulated through a gendered discourse.'[90] The idea that women were 'to piety more prone' implied, in theory if not always in practice, 'a distinct gender division in religious roles.'[91] As a result, the institutional and doctrinal changes wrought by the Catholic and Protestant reformations inevitably had gendered implications. Historians have also recognised the importance of gender in determining 'a woman's ability and avenues to respond to the Reformations.'[92] An examination of *religious* patronage thus necessitates an attentiveness to gender. But employing gender as a lens also allows for a more nuanced understanding of the workings of the broader patronage system and women's participation therein.

'Patron' and 'patronage' are inherently gendered terms, stemming as they do from the Latin word *pater* (father). They connote a role and activity that is 'clearly masculine.'[93] Yet, as we have seen, early modern women might nevertheless exercise a considerable degree of patronage power; indeed, the often 'informal, fluid, [and] non-institutional' nature of patron-client relationships made them particularly 'well suited to the exercise of indirect power through personal relationships by women.'[94] A gendered analysis is critical for examining women's navigation of this theoretically male space, especially in more formal, institutional contexts like ecclesiastical patronage. This is not least because patron-client relationships involved, by definition, an 'asymmetry in power.'[95] In important respects these relationships

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[90] Capern, *The Historical Study of Women*, 196.
[91] Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 5, 15.
[92] Kirsi Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 217.
[93] Ralph Hanna III, 'Some Norfolk Women and Their Books, ca. 1390-1440', in McCash, *Cultural Patronage*, 288.
[94] Kettering, 'Patronage Power', 818.
[95] S. N. Eisenstadt and Louis Roniger, 'Patron-Client Relations as a Model of Structuring Social Exchange', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 1 (1980): 49-50.

mirrored, and indeed were in part constituted by, the patriarchal structures of early modern European society.[96] As Joan Scott argued in her influential 1986 essay, gender can be framed as 'a primary way of signifying relationships of power': because 'concepts of gender structure perception and the concrete and symbolic organization of all social life', gender becomes implicated in the conception and construction of power itself.'[97] Employing the lens of gender to the study of patronage thus helps us to untangle the lines of power and agency in these complex and dynamic social relationships, and to address the tension inherent in women's adoption of the role of patron.

Recognising that gender is 'socially- and culturally-constructed, historically-changing, and unstable', this thesis approaches it not as a 'fixed analytical category' but instead – to quote Jeanne Boydston – as a 'series of questions about [historical] process.'[98] Crucially, this includes asking '*were* male and female important social/cultural markers for the subjects for our work (individuals, communities or events) and, if so, how were they structured, what valences did they carry and how important were they?'[99] This approach acknowledges that 'in different contexts, other factors … might have greater primacy in shaping experience and identity than one's gender'; as such, it allows for, and indeed effectively requires, a consideration of the interrelationship between gender and 'other forms of perceived difference.'[100] This is critical for the study of early modern patronage, since participation

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[96] For an interesting case study addressing the intersection of patronage and patriarchy (and women's negotiation of this space), see Barbara K. Lewalski, 'Re-writing Patriarchy and Patronage: Margaret Clifford, Anne Clifford, and Aemilia Lanyer', *The Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991): 87-106. For an excellent discussion of power and patriarchy in an early modern context, see Katie Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), esp. 5-9.

[97] Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1067, 1069.

[98] Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, 'Adjusting Our Lenses to Make Gender Visible', *Early Modern Women* 12, no. 2 (2018), 7; Jeanne Boydston, 'Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis', *Gender & History* 20, no. 3 (2008): 558-553, qtd. 576.

[99] Boydston, 'Gender as a Question', 576.

[100] Katie Barclay, Tanya Cheadle and Eleanor Gordon, 'The State of Scottish History: Gender', *The Scottish Historical Review* 92, no. 234 (2013): 86.

therein was heavily modulated not just by gender, but by class, social position, and – for women – by marital status. The ensuing analysis seeks to make visible these intersecting threads and their influence on women's agency.

III. Sources, Methodology and Scope

This thesis moves beyond the 'case study' approach ubiquitous in the current literature, and instead looks broadly at women's activities across the spectrum of religious belief. To do so, it examines a wide range of sources, including wills, ecclesiastical records, correspondence, household accounts, and religious texts in both print and manuscript formats. This material is scattered widely throughout state, ecclesiastical, and family collections in the National Archives, London Metropolitan Archives, the British Library, and a number of county record offices. The sources were variously accessed in the original manuscript, in the form of printed transcripts and calendars, and via online databases such as *Early English Books Online* and *State Papers Online*.

The increasing digitisation of archival material has benefits which extend beyond ease of access, particularly when it comes to the study of women. The priorities and 'ideological biases' of nineteenth- and twentieth-century archivists produced catalogues and calendars which often give only cursory attention to, and in some cases overlook, documents produced by or about women.[101] The ability to search full collections by name or keyword makes such documents far easier to uncover. Some databases are also now integrating gender as a search

[101] See e.g. Kim McLean-Fiander and James Daybell, 'New Directions in Early Modern Women's Letters: *WEMLO*'s Challenges and Possibilities', in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450-1690*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), esp. 225-27.

category. The *Clergy of the Church of England Database*, for instance, allows users to search by the gender of the patron.

However, researching the activities of early modern women, not least in terms of their religious patronage, still brings with it a number of obstacles. Women might be known by several names and titles throughout their lives, which can make it difficult to trace individuals through the historical record. The issue is compounded by their legal and social position, which mean that any patronal agency they may have exercised during marriage is hard to separate from the actions of their husbands; in many cases, it is undoubtedly obscured entirely. These considerations add an additional layer of complexity to the already challenging process of evaluating women's connections to the people and places they patronised, and their reasons for doing so. The often-fragmentary glimpses provided by the sources are mediated by the contexts in which they were created, by scribal and/or epistolary conventions, and by the priorities of their creators, who were often men. Nevertheless, by reading sources with an awareness of their limitations, and by combining different forms of evidence, it is possible to build up a picture of women's piety and patronage in Reformation England. The problems and possibilities associated with the various sources used in this thesis will be discussed in further depth in each chapter.

This thesis takes a primarily qualitative approach, drawing conclusions from the close analysis and contextualisation of the archival and printed material. However, this is supplemented by the inclusion of quantitative data where appropriate. Although the inevitable gaps in the documentary record problematise any attempt at statistical analysis, this data – used cautiously and with an awareness of its limitations – can nevertheless provide a useful indication of larger patterns, when analysed through the lenses of gender, religion and patronage.

The study concentrates on the period of the early English Reformation. It covers the roughly thirty-year period between Henry VIII's (r.1509-1547) opening of the 'Reformation Parliament' in 1529, which initiated a series of attacks on papal authority, and the death of Mary I in November 1558. This was a time of particular religious and political ferment. Henry VIII broke from Rome, dissolved the monasteries, and promulgated certain aspects of reformist doctrine and practice. In many ways, however, the fluctuating and theologically idiosyncratic religious policy of his government remained embedded in the doctrine and rituals of late-medieval Catholicism. The reign of his young son, Edward VI (r. 1547-1553), witnessed far more radical change, as the regime worked to implement a truly reformist church in England. However, this was soon reversed, as Edward's sister and successor, Mary I (r. 1553-1558), embarked on an equally short-lived Catholic restoration. Only in 1559, during the reign of Elizabeth I was a lasting – and Protestant – religious settlement established in England; even then, to use Patrick Collinson's memorable phrase, 'it is only with the 1570s that the historically minded insomniac goes to sleep counting Catholics rather than Protestants.'[102] While the issues addressed in this thesis are, accordingly, ones that extend beyond its chronological bounds, the decision to limit the study to a three-decade period was made for several reasons. The first is practical: the constraints on length necessitated some restrictions of scope, and a narrower chronology allows for greater depth and breadth of analysis. However, the decision also makes sense on other grounds. As the foregoing historiographical overview has demonstrated, it is the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which have already been the focus of much of the most innovative research. Moreover, as a period of fluidity and frequent shifts in religious policy, the early English Reformation provides particularly fertile

[102] Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1988), ix.

ground for an assessment of the relationship between patronage, identity, and the religious landscape.

This thesis inevitably focuses on women of the upper gentry and nobility. Women who fell elsewhere in the social hierarchy did participate in religious patronage of various kinds and have been included where appropriate. However, it was members of these classes who possessed the greatest patronage power, and who thus receive the majority of the attention here. Geographically, the study examines the activities of women throughout England. A conscious effort was made to draw material from both the northern and southern ecclesiastical provinces, and from both urban and rural settings, in order to ensure that the conclusions drawn are sufficiently representative.

In line with the accepted practice in English Reformation scholarship, this thesis preferences the terms 'evangelical' and 'reformist' over the label 'Protestant.' The latter term was not applied to religious reformers in England until after the death of Henry VIII, and is suggestive of a far more unified and rigid doctrinal identity than existed in the first half of the sixteenth century.[103] The term 'conservative' is used as a comparably generic category to encompass those who were largely unsupportive of religious change, even as many of them accepted the break from Rome.[104]

IV. Chapter Summary

This study is divided into three parts, each of which concentrates on a different form of religious patronage. The first chapter examines women's role in the religious book trade as patrons of texts, authors, publishers and translators. It undertakes a comparative analysis of

[103] See e.g. Ryrie, *Gospel*, xv-xvi; Marshall, *Religious Identities*, 5-6.
[104] Ryrie, *Gospel*, xv.

evangelical and conservative texts associated with both male and female patrons, in order to evaluate the influence of religious affiliation, religious policy, and gender on literary patronage. Although this was an avenue of patronage open to relatively few, it was nevertheless one which offered women from across the spectrum of belief scope for considerable agency in the promotion and dissemination of religious ideas.

In Chapters Two and Three, the thesis moves from the world of print and intellectual culture to the parish and local community. Chapter Two considers laywomen's ecclesiastical preferment, in the form of presentations to church benefices. It examines the presentations they made in their own right and in conjunction with others, as well as their efforts to intervene in the process through petitions to patrons or government officials. The chapter first discusses the overarching trends in ecclesiastical patronage, using data compiled from the records of a number of English dioceses. It then explores the various concerns – not only spiritual, but also social, familial, and political – which shaped women's exercise of ecclesiastical patronage, as well as its implications for both the religious life of their local communities and the character of the wider English Church.

The third and final chapter considers religious patronage at the end of life. It is based on the close analysis of a large corpus of last wills and testaments composed by both male and female testators, proved in the Prerogative Courts of Canterbury and York. The chapter maps the ruptures and continuities in post-mortem religious provision during the early Reformation, and the impact thereof. By paying particular attention to the social embeddedness of testamentary provisions and the ways in which they were inflected by gender, it offers a new perspective on the ways in which laywomen – as both testators and executors – used their wills to negotiate the altered spiritual landscape.

In a society undergirded by patronage relationships, religious patronage offers a valuable window into the laity's experience of the English Reformation. It can tell us a great

deal about how individuals negotiated, contributed to, and were impacted by the religio-political changes of this period. As this thesis will demonstrate, laywomen's involvement in religious patronage was markedly more widespread and consequential than has thus far been acknowledged. It offered members of the moneyed and landed classes a crucial means both of expressing their faith and of fulfilling wider obligations to their kin, friends and clients. The Reformation influenced, and in some respects substantially altered, patterns of pious benefaction and preferment. Yet by taking a holistic approach which looks beyond the prominent evangelicals and conservatives who have received much of the scholarly attention, this study reveals a surprising degree of continuity, and a more complex relationship between faith, patronage, gender, and the religious landscape of sixteenth-century England.

CHAPTER ONE

Female Patronage and the Religious Book Trade

> …I suppose that either the Pope must abolishe printyng, or hee must seke a new worlde to reigne ouer: for els, as this worlde standeth, printyng, doubtles, will abolishe hym … God hath opened the presse to preache, whose voyce the pope is neuer able to stoppe with all the puissance of his triple crowne. By this printyng, as by the gifte of tongues, & as by the singulare organe of the holy Ghost, the doctrine of the Gospell soundeth to all nations & countreys vnder heauen: and what God reueleth to one man, is dispersed to many, and what is knowne in one nation, is opened to all.[1]

John Foxe's triumphalist vision, set forth in his *Acts and Monuments*, exemplifies the pervasive – and longstanding – perception of the printing press as an instrument of religious reform, fundamentally tied to the success of the Protestant cause. This narrative of a 'natural affinity between print and Protestantism' has increasingly been tempered by modern historians, who have emphasised the differences between regional print cultures and their contribution to the dissemination of radical religious ideas.[2] Yet these qualifications have not negated the significance of the printed book to the religious movements of sixteenth-century England. Instead, this disruption of the perceived evangelical dominance of print has arguably only accorded it greater importance, as historians have demonstrated that the press was similarly 'essential' to English

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[1] John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1576 edition), Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2011, http//www.johnfoxe.org, book 6, 858.

[2] Andrew Pettegree and Matthew Hall, 'The Reformation and the Book: A Reconsideration', *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 4 (2004): 785-808. See also Andrew Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation: The English Exception', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 157–79.

Catholicism, utilised to good effect in the promotion and defence of 'traditional' religion, as well as in the advancement of evangelical reform.[3]

As one of the most visible, public, and potentially influential vehicles for the transmission of religious ideas and ideology, the book has loomed large in existing studies of Englishwomen's Reformation-era religious patronage. To date, however, little effort has been made to reassess our understandings of this patronage in light of the revisionist tendencies outlined above. The dominant narrative, exemplified by John N. King's pioneering (and still oft-cited) 1985 essay on the circle of Katherine Parr, remains overwhelmingly evangelical-focused. From the 1540s, aristocratic women 'broke with traditional modes of patronage and devotion', and, 'by actively patroniz[ing] reformist authors, preachers, and translators', instead sought to promote Protestant humanism to the English people. In doing so, they performed 'an unprecedented role in the … institution of a Protestant religious settlement.'[4] In this narrative, religious conservatism functions merely as a foil to these activities. King mentions the Marian Restoration, for example, only to note that it 'effectively muzzled the Protestant patronesses.'[5] Subsequent studies have drawn attention to a wider range of reform-minded female patrons, and have refined aspects of King's interpretation; Dakota Hamilton, for instance, in her study of Parr's household, pointed to the role of ambition and socio-political concerns *as well as* religious belief in motivating both literary producers and their patrons.[6] Yet the broad outlines

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[3] Lucy Wooding, 'Catholicism, the Printed Book and the Marian Restoration', in *A Companion to the Early Printed Book in Britain 1476-1558*, ed. Vincent Gillespie and Susan Powell (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2014), 307-324. See also Jennifer Loach, 'The Marian Establishment and the Printing Press', *The English Historical Review*, 101, no. 398 (1986):135-148; Alexandra Walsham, ''Domme Preachers'? Post-Reformation Catholicism and the Culture of Print', *Past & Present* 168 (2000): 72-123; William Wizeman, 'The Marian Counter-Reformation in Print', in *Catholic Renewal and Protestant Resistance in Marian England*, ed. Elizabeth Evenden and Vivienne Westbrook (2015. Reprint, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), 143-164.

[4] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 43-60.

[5] *Ibid*., 57.

[6] Hamilton, 'Household', 334-363, 380. See also Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn as Patron', 107-111; James, *Kateryn Parr*, esp. 200-234; Pender, 'Dispensing Quails', 36-54; Warnicke, *Wicked Women*, 98-99.

of this narrative have remained largely the same.[7] There is some evidence that this is beginning to change. Valerie Schutte's recent monograph on book dedications to Mary I has shed new light on the involvement of the Catholic queen in the early Reformation book trade. Susannah Monta's study of Anne Dacre Howard, Countess of Arundel, meanwhile, has pointed to the vibrancy of Catholic literary patronage in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and – importantly – to the 'blurry boundaries' between 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' literature and its audiences.[8] Yet this work is still in its infancy. No comprehensive study of conservative or 'Catholic' literary patronage has yet been undertaken, and certainly not one which places their activities alongside their evangelical counterparts. For the most part, we remain reliant on brief discussions of individual conservative female patrons and/or texts scattered throughout the literature.[9] The time is thus ripe for a reappraisal of Englishwomen's patronage of religious literature across the tumultuous first decades of the English Reformation, and particularly of the perceived 'break' – in King's view – between 'traditional' (read: conservative) patronage, and that of an emergent evangelical coterie.

It is ripe, too, for a more nuanced assessment of the extent to which this was a gendered enterprise. Scholars of women and early modern literature have long been sensitive to the ways in which women's activity was inflected by their gender.[10] Catherine Clarke, for instance, in a

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[7] For a particularly clear statement of this narrative, see Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 164-6.

[8] Schutte, *Mary* I; Monta, 'Anne Dacre Howard', 59-81. See also Jaime Goodrich, 'The Dedicatory Preface to Mary Roper Clarke Basset's Translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*', *English Literary Renaissance* 40, no. 3 (2010): 301-328.

[9] E.g. Mary C. Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 85-99; Jaime Goodrich, *Faithful Translators: Authorship, Gender, and Religion in Early Modern England* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2014), 58; Brenda M. Hosington, 'Translating Devotion: Mary Roper Basset's English Rendering of Thomas More's *De tristia…Christi*' *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 35, no. 4 (2012): 69; Pierce, *Margaret Pole*, 44-45; Helen Smith, *'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 83-84.

[10] This is true not just of women's literary patronage, but of their role as authors. See e.g. Micheline White, ed., *English Women, Religion, and Textual Production, 1500–1625* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011); Micheline White, ed. *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700*, Vol. 3, *Anne Lock,*

1992 study, explored the complex interaction between status, capacity for socio-political influence, and gender in the literary patronage of six women of the Russell family. She concluded that while 'rank, access to the court, and traditional patronage loyalties' were of greater significance than gender in the selection of a dedicatee, the latter did influence the nature of works dedicated to women, as well as the relationship (both actual and constructed) between dedicator and dedicatee.[11] These lines of analysis have been persistently developed – in increasingly sophisticated directions – by others scholars.[12]

The decided lack of gender analysis in the most extensive studies of women's Reformation-era literary patronage to date is thus all the more glaring. King makes the occasional cursory nod to the role of gender, for instance in his (largely undeveloped) claim that many of the texts dedicated to women 'specifically addressed the requirements of a female readership', but he does not follow this up with any kind of sustained analysis. Hamilton's attention to gender is even more limited.[13] Both consider women's patronage entirely in isolation, thus preventing an adequate understanding of its place within both the broader print trade and the English Reformation. Encouragingly, recent studies have made far more thorough use of the lens of gender, affirming its importance to our understanding of Reformation print.[14] They have, however, uniformly focused on narrow case studies, and – with very few exceptions – on the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.

Isabella Whitney and Aemilia Lanyer (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), esp. the section on 'Lanyer and the Patronage System', 333-422.

[11] Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 16-17.

[12] This trend is exemplified by Smith, *'Grossly Material Things'*, esp. 53-86.

[13] King, 'Patronage and Piety', (qtd. 43); Hamilton, 'Household', 334-363.

[14] E.g. Monta, 'Anne Dacre Howard'; Pender, 'Dispensing Quails'; Valerie Schutte, '"To the Illustrious Queen": Katherine of Aragon and Early Modern Book Dedications', in *Women during the English Reformations: Renegotiating Gender and Religious Identity*, ed. Julie A. Chappell and Kaley A. Kramer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 15-28; Micheline White, 'The Perils and Possibilities of Book Dedication: Anne Lock, John Knox, John Calvin, Queen Elizabeth, and the Duchess of Suffolk', *Parergon* 29, no. 2 (2012): 9-27.

This chapter thus re-examines women's patronage of religious literature and its authors, publishers and translators during the first three decades of the English Reformation. By taking a cross-confessional approach, and by situating women's patronage within the context of English book trade and shifts in religious policy, it provides a more nuanced assessment of this patronage and its relationship to the contemporary religious climate. The first section outlines the evidence for women's literary patronage and provides a general overview of both the mechanisms of this patronage and the women involved. It then gives quantitative data on printed texts and the dedications which preface them. In doing so, it begins to place claims for the significance of women's patronage on a firmer foundation. This provides the groundwork for the ensuing discussion of the ways in which this patronage was shaped by religious affiliation, religious policy, and gender. It is argued that there was less of a 'radical shift' in female literary patronage in the 1540s than scholars have suggested.[15] The boundaries between evangelical and conservative patronage in the early English Reformation were far more blurry than existing accounts have allowed, and both had a crucial role to play in the advancement of their respective religious agendas. A third section highlights the similar commonalities between the literary patronage of men and women, via a comparative analysis of the efforts of Anne Seymour and her husband, Edward, Duke of Somerset. The fourth and final section shifts the focus from the actual mechanisms of patronage, to the ways in which patrons were presented or 'constructed' in book dedications. It contends that it is here that gender and religious divides are most evident, as dedications reflected and promoted contrasting ideals of Christian womanhood.

[15] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 59.

I. The Evidence for Women's Literary Patronage

What do we mean when we talk about 'literary patronage', and what means do scholars have of uncovering it? Both questions require some discussion. This thesis is framed by a broad definition of patronage as 'the *action* of one person with some sort of power or influence using that influence to aid another party.'[16] Literary patronage stretches the boundaries of even this expansive definition.[17] This is largely the result of the complexities of its most visible manifestation: the sometimes lengthy dedicatory epistles or verses, addressed to one or more individuals, which graced the pages of a number of early modern books. Book dedications are far from unproblematic or straightforward indicators of 'patronage' in the sense of active support. There were, as the mid-sixteenth century translator Nicholas Lesse made clear in one of his own dedicatory epistles, various possible motivations behind an author's choice of dedicatee:

> [Men] have used to dedicate their workes…some to obteine fauoure: some to have there workes and writings by their authoritie defended and mainteined…and finally some that their workes might be the better regarded for those mens sakes under whose name they were putte furth.[18]

Dedications, then, could constitute *requests* for patronage and protection, or attempts to lend legitimacy and prestige to a publication through the appearance of high-profile endorsement,

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[16] O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage', 137.

[17] For the need for a 'capacious' definition of patronage see Smith, *'Grossly Material Things'*, 54. For a discussion of problems of defining literary patronage and patrons, see Richard McCabe, *'Ungainefull Arte': Poetry, Patronage, and Print in the Early Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 4, 15-28.

[18] Nicholas Lesse, 'To the right vertuous and gracious Lady Katerin Dowches of Suffoke', in Johann Aepinus, *A very fruitful & godly exposition vpo[n] the. xv. Psalme of Dauid called Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle*, trans. Nicholas Lesse (London: John Day, 1548), sigs. Aiii^{v}-Aiiii^{r}.

as often as acknowledgements of an existing patron-client relationship.[19] The resultant need for caution in using them to infer patronage has become a common refrain in the literature. Yet, as Helen Smith has suggested, the very flexibility of these paratexts can tell us a great deal about the varied and variable functions performed by the patron, including but also *beyond* the conventional 'author-patron dyad': she could be 'the ideal reader whose imagined response informs composition; the commissioner who sets the initial parameters of a given text; an agent in the process of publication; a guide to other readers; an unwitting advertising tool; or some complex combination of those functions.'[20] In line with this thinking, this chapter takes an encompassing approach which allows for both the tangible and imagined actions of the female patron.[21] Regardless of the actual nature of their involvement, through the act of dedication they were recognised as significant political actors. This chapter also acknowledges that dedications cannot, in themselves, provide the full story. The texts they preface, letters, and other documents are also drawn upon for evidence of women's association with the book trade.

With that said, it bears saying something further about the function of literary patronage, and the motivations which governed its exercise. In particular, it is worth noting how deeply this patronage was embedded within wider social, political and religious networks, and bound up with other forms of support. While a patron may commission a text, or provide financial backing for its publication, often (in those cases where a concrete relationship can be established) patronage took other forms, centred upon literary producers, rather than the book itself. These included, for instance, preferment, protection, and the provision of positions

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[19] Arthur F. Marotti, 'Patronage, Poetry and Print', *The Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1999): 1-2; Clarke. 'Literature and Patronage', 4, 8-9, 14-17, 381-2.
[20] Smith, *'Grossly Material Things'*, 53-86.
[21] The only study to have applied this kind of approach to women's patronage of Reformation texts to date is Pender, 'Dispensing Quails'.

within their own households, at court, or in the Church.[22] Indeed, as Catherine Clarke has noted in relation to the Russell women, literary dedications often functioned to acknowledge their wider (that is, non-literary) patronage activities.[23]

This does not, however, infer a divorce between patrons and the texts associated with them. Clarke also found that, 'more than anything else', dedications responded to and reflected the dedicatee's 'reputation for literary interests.'[24] This certainly seems to have applied to the religious texts of the early English Reformation – a point illustrated by a 1548 manuscript dedicated by the young Yorkist-blooded nobleman Edward Courtenay, to Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset. Courtenay was at that time imprisoned in the Tower of London, due to the threat he represented to the security of the Tudor dynasty. He dedicated his translation of *Il Beneficio di Cristo* – a highly influential product of Italian evangelicalism – in the hope of persuading Anne to intercede with her husband, then Lord Protector of England, to secure his release.[25] It was thus a product of eminently personal, secular concerns. Yet Courtenay's decision to use a text with evangelical undertones to convey his plea was undoubtedly calculated to play on Anne's well-known reputation for sympathy towards reform, and its dissemination in writing.[26] Indeed, he beseeched her to assist him 'for the love of christe (wose glorye this litle boke most playnely declarethe and settithe out)'.[27]

While it thus seems reasonable to conclude that dedicators' recurrent mentions of their dedicatees' personal interest in religious literature were not just the product of rhetorical fancy,

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[22] John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 103; Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 15-16.
[23] Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 380.
[24] *Ibid*.
[25] CUL MS Nn 4.43, 1^{v}-4^{r}. For discussions of this translation and *Il Beneficio di Cristo*, see Anne Overell, *Italian Reform and English Reformations, c. 1535-c. 1585* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 61-80; McConica, *English Humanists*, 256-8; Ruth Ahnert, *The Rise of Prison Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 114-5.
[26] CUL MS Nn 4.43, esp. 2^{v}-3^{v}; Overell, *Italian Reform*, 62.
[27] CUL MS Nn 4.43, 3^{r}.

some question of motivation still remains. Scholars such as Jennifer Loach have argued that it was 'their position rather than their beliefs' which caused high-profile figures such as the Duchess of Somerset to attract dedications.[28] Yet, while the former undoubtedly played a significant role in prompting dedications (as will become clear below), the two – as even the decidedly politically-motivated Courtenay dedication suggests – were not mutually exclusive. Indeed, in many cases dedicatees seem to have been selected precisely *because* they were perceived to be influential representatives of a particular religious and thereby political position. The same insight can be applied to the question of patrons' motivations. As will become a common refrain throughout this thesis, patronage can rarely be reduced to a single cause; instead, it was driven by a combination of religious, personal, and political concerns, though one or more of these might predominate in a given instance.[29] A patron may have extended support to an author, printer, or publisher with an eye on their personal ambitions, while also possessing a genuine commitment to spiritual edification or religious reform. In any case, whatever the intent behind their publication, in the turbulent climate of the English Reformation religious texts (taken broadly to mean those which dealt with spiritual, theological, or ecclesiastical concerns) inevitably intervened in contemporary religious politics.

These issues will be touched upon further in the ensuing discussion. First, though, it is worth outlining some general trends in dedications across the roughly thirty-year period considered by this study.[30] Thanks to Franklin B. Williams' invaluable *Index of Dedications*

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[28] Jennifer Loach, *Edward VI* (1999. Reprint, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 45.

[29] This is in line with recent scholarship, which, as Lisa Celovsky has noted, has 'looked beyond a client's motivations for economic support and a patron's desire for fame to recognize a broader range of shared and competing socio-political incentives to participate in patronage transactions': 'The Sidneys and Literary Patronage', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to The Sidneys, 1500–1700*, Vol. 1, *Lives*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Michael G. Brennan and Mary Ellen Lamb (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 264.

[30] These trends refer only to printed texts, as these are both easily traced and had the widest reach. However, manuscript material is incorporated where relevant in the ensuing discussion.

and Commendatory Verses, identifying female dedicatees of printed texts is a relatively straightforward task.[31] The texts associated with them can then be traced, located and analysed using Early English Books Online (EEBO), in conjunction with the *Revised Short Title Catalogue* (STC). To provide a basis for comparison, a list of all books published in a set of ten sample years was also compiled, using Philip Rider's chronological index to the STC.[32] These texts were then studied using EEBO and the STC, to identify any dedicatory material, assess the content of the book, and to distinguish between reprints and new publications. Basic statistics were compiled from the resulting data (as illustrated in figures 1-5). For this purpose, all works containing explicit dedications were included, as were those addressed to specific individuals, and those which contain other marks of patronage (such as the inclusion of heraldic arms). Dedications associated with more than one individual were counted twice in the few instances where they fell into different categories.

The English printing industry in the first half of the sixteenth century was, in comparison to many Continental markets, relatively modest, averaging around 124 publications per year between 1525 and 1558.[33] Only a small percentage of these texts contained dedications to named individuals. While this number steadily increased as the century progressed, it rarely reached beyond *c.*16 percent up to 1558 (figure 1).[34] When considered in this light, the eighty-one publications dedicated or addressed to twenty-nine

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[31] Franklin B. Williams, Jr., *Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses in English Books before 1641* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1962).

[32] Rider's index can be found in vol. 3 of the revised STC, pages 325-405. Sample years for Henry's reign were selected at five-year intervals for the lengthy period of Henry's reign. For Mary's, 1554 and 1557 were selected as the first and last full years of the reign. All full years of Edward's reign (1548-1552) were analysed, due to the prolific publication in this period.

[33] Figure obtained using statistics from John Bernard and Maureen Bell, 'Appendix 1: Statistical Tables', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 4, *1557-1695*, ed. John Bernard and D. F. McKenzie, with Maureen Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 780-1 and Peter W. M. Blayney, 'STC Publication Statistics: Some Caveats', *The Library*, 7th ser., 8, no. 4 (2007): 392. Again, this should be taken as indicative rather than exact.

[34] For the rise in dedications, and a discussion of the kinds of texts most likely to be dedicated, see Williams, *Index*, ix-xi.

different women across this period seem rather more significant. While almost always outstripped by dedications to men, those to women came to account for a significant proportion of total dedications: 33.4 percent and 22.5 percent, for instance, in the peak publishing years of 1548 and 1550 respectively, reaching a high of 64.3 percent in 1554 (figure 1). Literary patronage – or at least the appearance of it – was clearly a pursuit in which women were heavily involved.

English Book Dedications, c. 1530-1558[35]

Year	Total no. of books printed	No. dedicated to specific individuals	Dedications as a % of total	No. dedicated to women	No. dedicated to women as a % of total dedications
1533	117	6	5.1%	3	50%
1538	134	4	3%	0	0%
1543	116	17	14.7%	1	5.9%
1548	249	39	15.7%	13	33.4%
1549	157	22	14%	8	36.4%
1550	229	40	17.5%	9	22.5%
1551	120	28	23.3%	5	17.9%
1552	117	17	14.5%	2	11.8%
1554	120	14	11.7%	9	64.3%
1557	102	16	15.7%	4	25%

Figure 1

[35] The figures for total numbers of books for 1533, 1538, and 1543 are taken from Bernard and Bell, 'Statistical Tables', 780. The remaining totals are derived from Blayney's revision of Bernard and Bell's figures: 'STC', 392. The unrevised figures for 1533, 1538 and 1543 should be regarded as only approximate.

It was, however, a pursuit that was very much the domain of the elite. Of the twenty-nine women who received dedications of printed texts in this period, all bar five were royalty or members of the aristocracy.[36] Indeed, as figure 2 indicates, for stretches of this period the former – and in particular Henry VIII's wives and two daughters – dominated this practice. Only in Edward's reign, in the absence of a queen regnant or consort, was this situation reversed. Non-royal women account for 80 percent of dedications to women between 1547 and 1552. That this shift is largely attributable to changes in the monarchy, rather than in religious policy, is confirmed through a comparison with dedications to men over this same period: the proportion addressed to male royalty remained relatively stable until the accession of Queen Mary I (figure 3).[37] Perhaps more importantly, this comparison also sheds some light on the influence of gender on dedicatory practices. While male dedicatees were similarly overwhelmingly elite, a markedly greater proportion were aristocratic, rather than royal, pointing to the material advantages (and corresponding desirability as patrons) that men possessed over their female counterparts. As we will see, however, this hardly prevented non-royal women from exercising considerable agency as literary patrons. Notably, this included wives, not just economically independent widows.[38]

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[36] Here I am following Barbara Harris's use of 'aristocracy' to refer to both the nobility and the knightly class. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 6.

[37] All of the texts dedicated to Mary I's husband, Philip II, before her death were addressed to both monarchs jointly. Schutte, *Mary I*, 103-5.

[38] Scholars of female patronage across early modern Europe have found, as Susan Broomhall notes, that 'most commissioning women in secular society were not wives but widows, because of their position of increased financial independence': Susan Broomhall, *Women and the Book Trade in Sixteenth-Century France* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 32. Catherine Clarke, for example, has noted this in relation to literary patronage in Elizabethan England: Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 380.

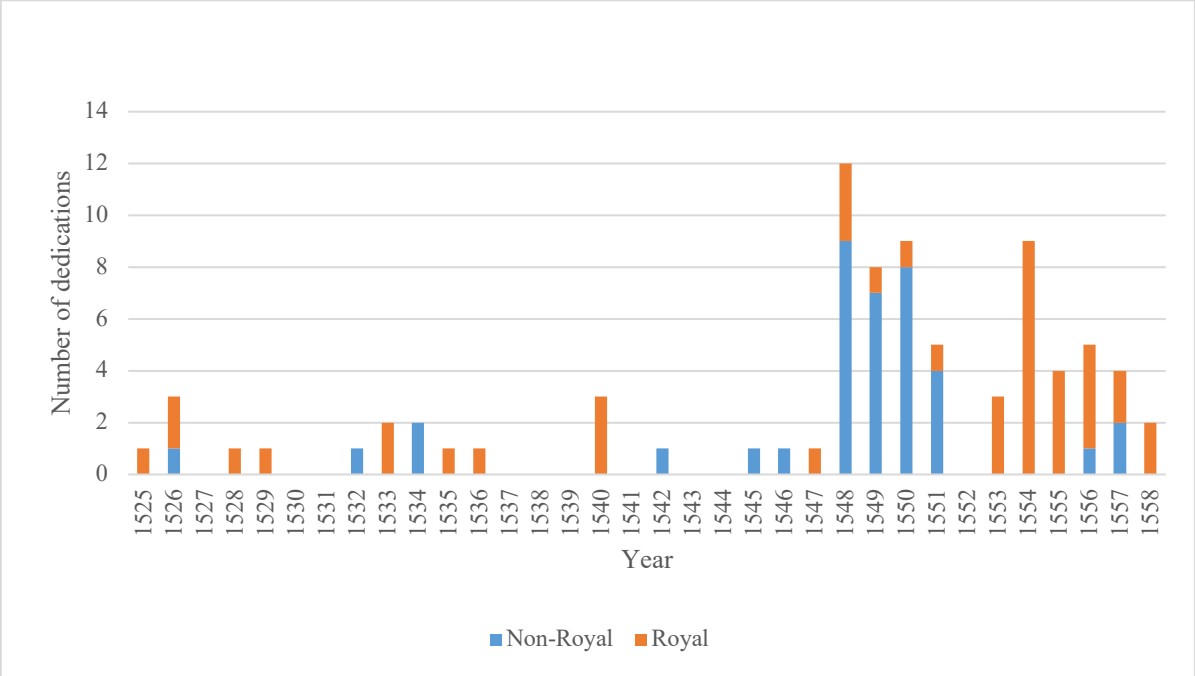

Figure 2. Female Dedicatees of Printed Texts 1525-1558

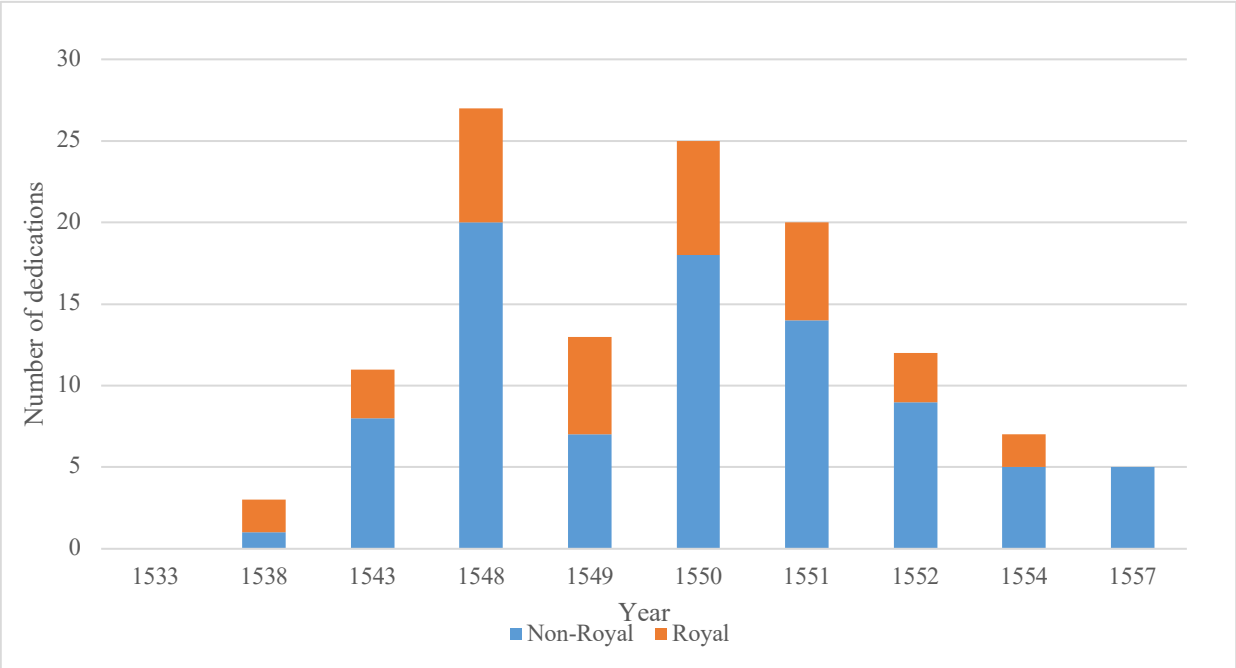

Figure 3. Male Dedicatees of Printed Texts 1525-1558

While women were regularly presented with publications on a range of secular topics, from education to childbirth, the majority (71.6 percent) of dedications to women were attached to religious texts (see figure 4). Just over half of these (55 percent) were addressed to women outside the royal family. This accords with scholars' observations on the overwhelming religiosity of female literary patronage.[39] Yet although there was clearly a gendered dimension here, we should be careful of pushing this too far: over the ten sample years analysed, 65.3 percent of publications addressed to men were also religious in nature (see figure 5). This should not be surprising, given that religious works always made up a large (albeit variable) proportion of the texts printed in any given year. What is more interesting is the considerable variations in the both the number and proportion of dedications which prefaced religious works, illustrated in figures 4 and 5. After a period of relatively few religious dedications in Henry's reign, a significant spike after Edward VI's accession saw the proportion rise to an enormous 88.6 percent for women, and 73.4 percent for men. The majority prefaced reformist texts. While the proportion dipped again in Mary's reign, it remained (at least for women) markedly higher than it had been in the Henrician period. This complicates what, at first glance, seems to be a clear illustration of the relationship between Protestantism and literary patronage. As will be argued below, this is indicative of the crucial role print, and its patrons, also played in sustaining and promoting English Catholicism.

[39] E.g. Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 92, 97, 169, 231 (though see caveats at 169); Karen K. Jambeck, 'Patterns of Women's Literary Patronage: England, 1200-ca. 1475', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 229. This trend is not unique to England. See e.g. Nieves Baranda Leturio, 'Women's Reading Habits: Book Dedications to Female Patrons in Early Modern Spain', in *Women's Literacy in Early Modern Spain and the New World,* ed. Anne J. Cruz and Rosilie Hernández (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 25.

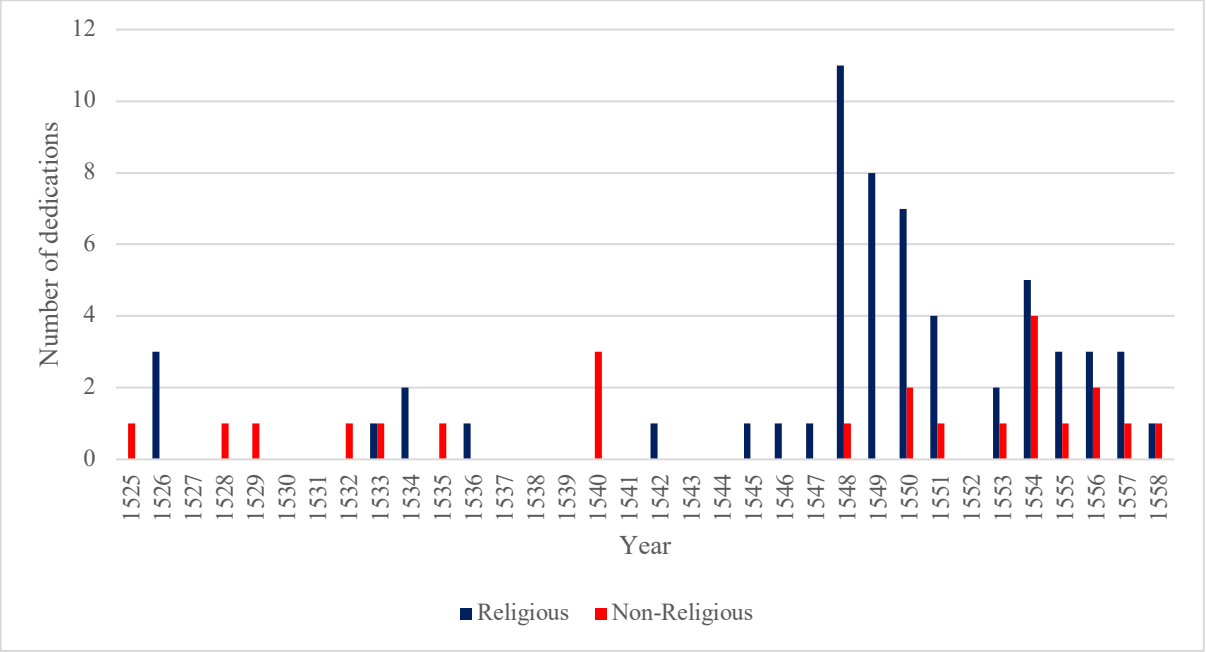

Figure 4. Genre of Printed Texts Associated with Women, 1525-1558

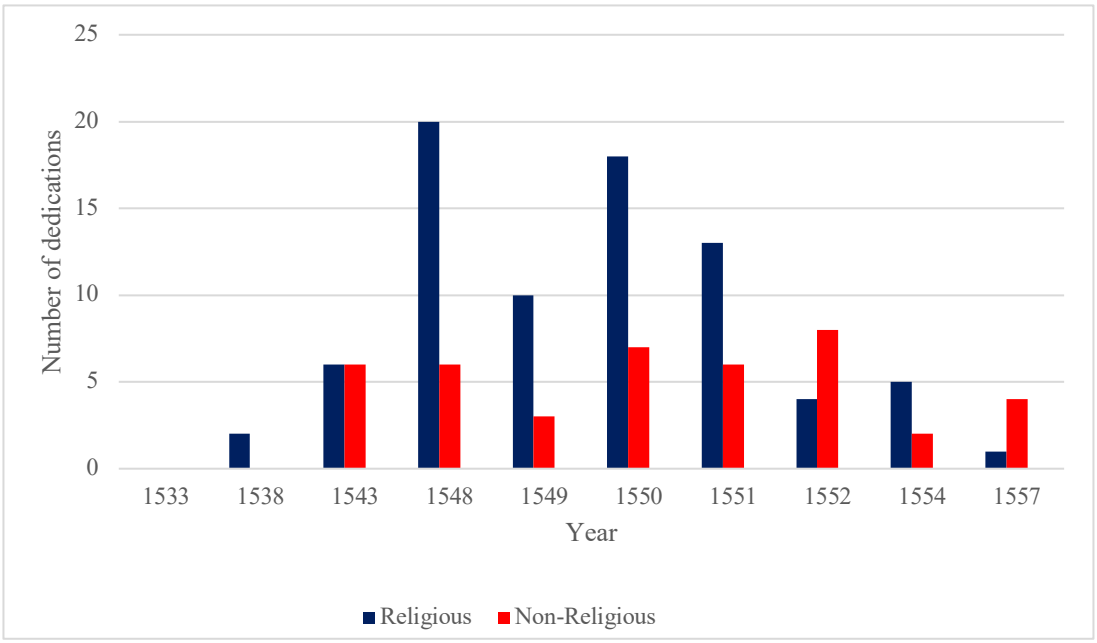

Figure 5. Genre of Printed Texts Associated with Men, 1525-1558

Both historians and literary scholars have recurrently made claims for the importance of women's literary patronage in the context of the English Reformation. However, little effort has been made to support these claims through a holistic examination of the English book trade. The quantitative data presented here reveals that women's literary patronage, as measured by dedications, was numerically as well as anecdotally significant. Most books printed in this period do not contain dedicatory epistles or any other obvious marks by which to identify possible patronage relationships. Those that do, however, were addressed with some regularity to women of the nobility and upper gentry, as well as to those who were either born or married into the royal family. The figures are also suggestive of a more complex relationship between literary patronage and religious affiliation than has so far been recognised. The following section thus moves beyond quantitative data to draw out these complexities, and to assess the extent to which these trends were a product of religious change.

II. 'Fervent zeale in the furtherynge of goddis trueth': Patronage, Politics, and the Religious 'Divide'

Statistics can provide us with some sense of the magnitude of women's involvement in the English book trade. However, understanding the forms and functions of literary patronage, and its relationship to the English reformation(s), requires a close analysis of individual texts and the circumstances of their creation. This section examines the nature of women's participation in the production and dissemination of religious literature, and, crucially, the relationship between this participation and religious affiliation.

John King, as noted above, has argued that a female 'Protestant salon' emerged in the late 1540s, whose aristocratic members conducted a new kind of literary patronage. Under the leadership of Katherine Parr, they diverged from the 'traditional modes of patronage and

devotion' characteristic of earlier female patrons such as Lady Margaret Beaufort and Katherine of Aragon. Whereas these patrons had sponsored 'the publication of medieval literature, works of monastic piety, and scholastic learning for an elite aristocratic readership', the younger generation instead promoted more accessible, scripturally-grounded texts. 'Their profound innovation', according to King, 'was the popularization of Protestant humanism through patronage of devotional manuals and theological translations for the edification of a mixed audience of elite and ordinary readers'.[40]

Not all scholars have perceived such a divergence. James Kelsey McConica, in his much earlier *English Humanists and Reformation Politics* (1965), argued that Parr's circle in fact '*revive[d]* the traditions' of Margaret Beaufort and Katherine of Aragon in its humanistic pietism.[41] Yet the recurrent claim that evangelical female patrons made a 'significant contribution' to the success of the English Reformation – especially when coupled with an emphasis on the perceived special relationship between Protestantism and print – has cemented the impression that there was something revolutionary about their enterprise: primarily in terms of female practice, but also in terms of the theological imperatives which underpinned it. Hamilton, for instance, has linked the development of reformist beliefs with the trend for 'significant numbers of women' to patronise religious works. Through this activity, she argues, these women 'made a significant contribution to the establishment of the English church under Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth.'[42]

In light of more than two decades of post-revisionism, which has positioned the English Reformation not as a decisive break with the past but a gradual and piecemeal process, this impression is long overdue for recalibration. This is the aim of this section. It does not seek to

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[40] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 43.
[41] McConica, *English Humanists*, 201. Emphasis added.
[42] Hamilton, 'Household', 334, 280. Catherine Clarke makes similar claims: 'Patronage and Literature', 164-166.

challenge the significance of this evangelical activism; indeed, in many ways it affirms it. However, it does undermine its distinctiveness. By expanding the focus both chronologically and confessionally, it shows that there were as many commonalities as differences between evangelical and conservative literary patronage, and that this patronage was shaped as much by policy as by religion. In doing so, it also emphasises that, despite being less voluminous, conservative patronage, too, made a tangible contribution to the early English Reformation.

The Regulation of the Book Trade

Before moving into an analysis of female patronage, it is necessary to say something about the regulation of the book trade. As mentioned previously, the English printing industry was comparatively small, and was overwhelmingly concentrated in London. This, coupled with publishers' reliance for their sustenance on the printing of official and 'quasi-official' texts, rendered the industry relatively easy to control, whilst simultaneously discouraging the production of dissenting texts.[43] Regulatory measures helped to ensure that this remained the case. In Henry's reign, state-approved Catholic apologetic gave way, in the mid-1530s, to the proscription of 'papist' literature, and a somewhat more permissive approach to the publication of evangelical works.[44] This was, however, short-lived: the 1540s witnessed a concerted 'crackdown' on evangelical publishing, which effectively incapacitated the domestic trade in these texts.[45]

The accession of Edward VI in January 1547 brought with it a marked change in the government's attitude towards the religious book trade. The former controls were removed in

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[43] Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation', 167.

[44] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, vol. 1, *The Early Tudors (1485-1553)* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964), 235-7; Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmilla, 2006), 95, 105; Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation', 167.

[45] For an outline of this campaign, see Ryrie, *Gospel*, 46-7.

a general repeal of Henrician religious statutes, initiating a period of substantially greater freedom of the press. Indeed, the volume of texts printed effectively doubled, a significant proportion of which promoted previously 'heretical' practices and ideas.[46] The reimposition of certain censorship measures from late 1549 slowed, but did not stem this veritable flood of publications.[47] This comparative freedom was not universal, however, for the regime actively (and successfully) sought to supress the publication of overtly Catholic works.[48] The Marian regime naturally reversed the trend yet again, via efforts to prohibit the publication of 'seditious and heretical' evangelical books, and to expel foreign book workers.[49] As a result of these measures, the texts published domestically tend to correlate reasonably closely with the regime's religio-political stance at a given time. Those published abroad, which often do not, are typically without any explicit (and thus potentially damning) marks of patronage.[50] Shifts in policy and regulation thus go a long way towards explaining the considerable variations in the numbers of dedications outlined in the previous section, as well as in the kinds of works sponsored.

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[46] Act for the repeale of certaine Statutes concerninge treasons felonyes &c, 1547, 1 Edw. VI, c. 12; John N. King, 'Freedom of the Press, Protestant Propaganda, and Protector Somerset', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1976): 1-3.

[47] For the regulatory measures imposed under Edward VI, see Patricia Took, 'Government and the Printing Trade, 1540-1560' (Ph.D., King's College, University of London, 1978), 134-223.

[48] Took, 'Government and the Printing Trade', 139-142, 174, 178; John N. King, 'The Book-trade under Edward VI and Mary I', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3, *1400-1557*, ed. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 166.

[49] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, vol. 2, *The Later Tudors (1553-1587)* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), 6-7, 31-2, 57-60. For a nuanced overview of regulatory efforts under Mary, see Ian A. Gadd, ''A Suitable Remedy'? Regulating the Printing Press, 1553-1558', in *Catholic Renewal and Protestant Resistance in Marian England*, ed. Elizabeth Evenden and Vivienne Westbrook (2015. Reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 127-142.

[50] For a discussion of the various exile presses, see Marshall, *Religious*, 255-6; Took, 'Government and the Printing Trade', 114-6; 175-178; Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation' 171, 177. The observation regarding the frequent absence of dedicatory material in texts printed abroad is based on my own analysis of texts, as outlined in the previous section.

Evangelical Literary Patronage

These shifts, as we will see, certainly do much to explain the flourishing of evangelical literary patronage in the reign of Edward VI. Prior to this, the sponsorship of reformist literature had been a decidedly risky endeavour. The potential hazards involved are made eminently clear in Queen Anne Boleyn's refusal, in 1536, to 'trouble herself' with a translation of the French reformer Francis Lambert's *The summe of christianitie*, presented to her by Tristram Revel, because it was considered to be too 'extreme' in the views it expressed.[51] This applied to male patrons, as well as female. It is no coincidence that very few of the evangelical works published in 1538 contain dedications, and those that do are almost solely addressed to the King – a common authorising strategy.[52]

However, this is not to suggest that the Edwardian female patrons represented something entirely new. Despite the constraints, certain laywomen did provide active support to reformist authors in the latter years of Henry's reign. In 1542, the reformist clergyman and prolific author Thomas Becon addressed his moderately evangelical guide to the 'true maner of praienge', *A newe pathway vnto praier*, to Lady Anne Grey.[53] Grey was almost certainly the widowed second wife of the prominent Kentish gentleman Sir Robert Clement of Ightham, and thus part of the network of gentry patrons who supported Becon during his self-imposed exile in Kent, following his first recantation in 1541.[54] Becon offered *A newe pathway* 'as a

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[51] *Letters & Papers*, vol 10, no. 371, 147; Francis Lambert, *The summe of christianitie gatheryd out almoste of al placis of scripture*, trans. Tristram Revel (London: R. Redman, 1536) [STC 15179]; Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn and Reform', 44.

[52] Based on an analysis of the texts listed in Rider's Chronological Index to the STC using *EEBO*. The following evangelical works were identified: STC2815; STC 2616.5; STC 2817; STC 4054; STC 16979.7; STC 17000; STC 20193; STC 20841; STC 23407; STC 24237; STC 24444. Rex, *Henry VIII*, 94.

[53] Theodore Basille [Thomas Becon], *A newe pathway vnto praier ful of much godly frute and christe[n] knowledge* (London: John Mayler for John Gough, 1542), Biii^{v}-Biiii^{r} [STC 1734].

[54] It was to these gentry patrons that Becon dedicated most of his works during this period. Works dedicated to individuals with Kent connections: STC 1713; STC 1717; STC 1718; STC 1730.5; STC 1735; STC 1738; STC 1743; STC 1749; STC 1776. H. B. Thomas, 'Thomas Becon, Canon of Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 69 (1955): 161. For Clement, see Malcolm Mercer, 'Sir Richard Clement, Ightham Mote and Local Disorder in the Early Tudor Period', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 115 (1995): 155-75.

tesimonye of his obsequious wyll' towards Anne, suggesting that she may have provided him with some material aid.[55]

More notably, female patronage was essential to the publication of one of the few discernibly evangelical texts printed in the tightly-controlled publishing environment of the mid-1540s. This was William Hugh's *A swete consolation* (June 1546), dedicated to Lady Joan Denny, wife of the courtier Sir Anthony.[56] Denny had appointed Hugh as her chaplain sometime after 1543, and her support likely extended to his intellectual activities. Hugh referenced her 'loue and good mynde…toward good letters', which he claimed had been evidenced through 'many most beneficial deeds.'[57] Undoubtedly, as Alec Ryrie has suggested, it was Hugh's connection with Lady Denny, and thus 'one of the most influential evangelical households in the realm', which enabled the publication of the text.[58] For while Hugh's work – positioned as providing consolation to the dying – was largely doctrinally innocuous, its espousal of a view of justification close to Luther's own belies an underlying evangelicalism.[59] Both of these works fit into King's category of 'devotional manuals' aimed at the edification of a mixed audience of elite and ordinary readers; indeed, the latter seems to have succeeded in gaining a broad readership, for it was reprinted in 1543.[60]

Nevertheless, it is true that female patrons exploited the opportunity presented by the comparatively lax controls of Edward's reign to sponsor evangelical texts and their producers

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[55] Becon, *A newe pathway*, Biii^{v}-Biiii$^{r.}$ While such language could be employed as a strategy for seeking patronage, Anne Grey's relative obscurity, as well as Becon's tendency in this period to dedicate texts to known connections, militates against this conclusion.

[56] William Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine* (London: John Hereford, 1546) [STC 13910]. *A swete consolation* was the second part of this text, with its own title page and colophon.

[57] Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine*, Aiiiv-Aiiiir. For Hugh's life and career, see Swensen, 'Patronage from the Privy Chamber', 39.

[58] Ryrie, *Gospel*, 118.

[59] Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine*, Ev^{r}. This was in direct contravention of official doctrine, as set out in *The King's Book*: 'A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man', in *Formularies of Faith Put Forth by Authority During the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. Charles Lloyd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1825), 365.

[60] STC 1734.5

on an unprecedented scale. As noted above, 88.6 percent (31) of the printed texts dedicated to women in this period may be defined as 'religious'; of these, 93.5 percent (29) displayed a distinctly reformist emphasis. Five were addressed to royalty, namely Princess Elizabeth and Katherine Parr.[61] The remainder were associated with ten different noble and gentry women. Anne Herbert (née Parr), Countess of Pembroke; Jane Seymour, daughter to the Duke and Duchess of Somerset; Lady Elizabeth Fane (née Brydges); and Lady Anne Cooke (née Fitzwilliam) received one dedication each.[62] Mary Fitzroy (née Howard), dowager Duchess of Richmond, received two, while Anne Seymour (née Stanhope), Duchess of Somerset, was presented with eight (alongside an additional three texts in manuscript).[63] Finally, Katherine Brandon (née Willoughby), dowager Duchess of Suffolk, was addressed in two religious texts, and her coat of arms prefaced a further eight.[64]

All bar one of these texts were in English. The sole exception was an edition of Heinrich Bullinger's Latin tract on reformist sacramental theology, dedicated to the humanist-educated Princess Elizabeth.[65] They included both translations – of Scripture, patristic works, and the writings of various Continental reformers – and vernacular compositions. Biblical commentaries and aids, collections of scriptural quotations, and partial Bible translations featured prominently, as did works designed for the spiritual and moral edification of the laity; the latter included works of catechesis, guides to Christian living, collections of prayers, and editions of sermons preached by Hugh Latimer and Bernardino Ochino. Others forayed more

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[61] Katherine Parr: STC 5717, STC 2854; Elizabeth: STC 4042.4, STC 17320, STC 16982.
[62] Herbert: STC 24023; Seymour: STC 1725.7 (the edition available on EEBO, printed in 1560, is STC 1726); Fane: STC 6090; Fitzwilliam: STC 18767.
[63] Fitzroy: STC 84, STC 1712; Seymour: STC 920, STC 1720, STC 2854.6, STC 17117, STC 15178, STC 17119, STC 24223.5, STC 21690.2. The three manuscripts are: BL Royal MS 17 B XVIII; BL Royal MS 17 A VI; CUL MS Nn. 4.43.
[64] STC 166.5, STC 1544, STC 2087.5, STC 2087.2, STC 2853, STC 13214, STC 15272.5, STC 15291, STC 24441a, STC 24784.
[65] Heinrich Bullinger, *Absoluta de Christi domini et Catholicae eius ecclesiae sacramentis tractatio*, ed. Jan Łaski (London: Stephen Mierdman, 1551) [STC 4042.4]. The dedication was written by Łaski, who was then superintendent of the London Stranger Church.

directly into the mire of religious controversy, repudiating, for example, Roman Catholic views on absolution, free will, and the 'abomination of the popyshe Masse.'[66] A few of the publications were very likely aimed at a more specialised audience.[67] Yet the majority were directed towards a wide range of readers, and literary producers sought to make their contents accessible to ordinary laypeople. William Samuel, for instance, composed *The abridgemente of goddes statutes in myter* (1551) – a metrical, English version of the Pentateuch – hoping that the verse form would encourage fellow Englishmen to learn the contents of the Bible.[68] With very few exceptions, the texts were printed in cheap octavo format.[69] While most of these texts only saw one edition, some proved immensely popular. Thomas Some's edition of one of Hugh Latimer's 1549 Lenten sermons, dedicated to Katherine Brandon, ran through at least four editions within a year. Thomas Becon's *Flower of Godly Prayers* (1550), dedicated to Anne Seymour, was reprinted at least four times before 1570.[70]

While the precise relationship between these texts, their producers, and their female dedicatees is often difficult to establish, in most cases there does seem to have been some kind of tangible patronal connection. Admittedly, certain of the dedications evidently stemmed from familial loyalties. Anne Fitzwilliam was addressed in a collection of sermons by the Italian reformer Bernardino Ochino, translated by her daughter Anne Cooke (later Bacon), while a

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[66] This quote is from the title of George Bancrafte, trans., *The answere that the preachers of the Gospel at Basile made, for the defence of the true administration, and vse of the holy Supper of our Lord Agaynst the abhominatio[n], of the popyshe Masse* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548) [STC 2853].

[67] E.g Hermann von Wied, *A simple, and religious consultatio[n] … by what meanes a Christian reformation … may be begon among men committed to our pastorall charge* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548) [STC 13214]. The text was prefaced with Katherine Brandon's coat of arms.

[68] The text was dedicated to his mistress, Anne Seymour. William Samuel, *The abridgemente of goddes statutes in myter* (London: Robert Crowley for Robert Soughton, 1551), Aii^{r}-Aii^{v} [STC 21690.2].

[69] The exceptions were STC 5717, printed in quarto, and the two volumes of the state-sponsored English *Paraphrases* (STC 2854 and 2854.6), printed in folio.

[70] Latimer: STC 15270.5, STC 15270.7, STC 15272, STC 15272.5; Becon: STC 1719.5, STC 1720, STC 1720.3, STC 1720.5, STC 1720.7. Ian Green includes the latter, as well as Becon's *Gouernans of Vertue* (a revised edition of which was dedicated to Anne's daughter Jane) on his list of 'best sellers and steady sellers first printed in England': Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 599.

then nine-year old Jane Seymour was the recipient of a work by Thomas Becon, who was a chaplain in the Seymour household.[71] A few others read solely as attempts to *obtain* support, or to capitalise on a dedicatee's name and reputation. William Thomas, for instance, appropriated Anne Herbert, the dedicatee of his devotional and moralistic treatise *The vanitee of this world* (1549), as a didactic tool. He hoped that the example of her virtue might encourage his readers to 'refourme theim selfes.'[72] Nicholas Lesse's dedications to Katherine Brandon and Anne Seymour the previous year were similarly speculative.[73] Even these dedications, however, are often also suggestive of their dedicatee's active influence over literary culture. Brandon had connections to John Day, who published the works by Lesse and Becon, while Lesse's dedication of a second work to Seymour in 1550 suggests that his earlier petition had met with some success.[74]

Women's active participation in literary patronage took various forms. In some cases, women were instrumental in a text's composition. The most obvious example is Katherine Parr's role as 'commissioner, financial backer, and general manager' of the first volume of the state-sponsored translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrases upon the New Testament*.[75] Yet women also contributed to more modest projects. Bishop Nicholas Shaxton's repudiated wife provided the printer Robert Crowley with a poem Shaxton had written to her 'agaynst the griefe of

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[71] Bernardino Ochino, *Fouretene sermons of Barnardine Ochyne, concernyng the predestinacion and eleccion of god*, trans. Anne Cooke (London: John Day and William Seres, 1551) [STC 18767]; Thomas Becon, *The gouernaunce of virtue* (London: John Day, 1560), unpaginated [STC 1726]. The first edition dedicated to Jane Seymour is possibly STC 1725.7. Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 22-3, 58-9; Jonathan Mark Reimer, 'The Life and Writings of Thomas Becon, 1512-1567' (Ph.D., University of Cambridge, 2016), 130-1, 160-70.

[72] William Thomas, *The vanitee of this world* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1549), Aii^{r}-Aiii^{r}. [STC 24023].

[73] Francis Lambert, *The minde and iudgement of maister Frau[n]ces Lambert of Auenna of the wyll of man*, trans. Nicholas Lesse (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548) [STC 15178]; Aepinus, *A very fruitful & godly exposition*. See also e.g. Thomas Becon, *The castell of comforte* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1549[?]) [STC 1712], Avii^{v}-Aviii^{r};

[74] St. Augustine, *A worke of the predestination of saints*, trans. Nicholas Lesse (London: The widow of John Hereford for Gwalter Lynne, 1550) [STC 920]. That Lesse mentioned 'beinge so bold under your graces favour' to dedicate the text to her certainly indicates that he was a recipient of her patronage (Av^{r}-Av^{v}).

[75] For which see Pender, 'Dispensing Quails.'

incontinence.' Crowley appended this to his scathing 'confutation' of Shaxton's recantation of his evangelicalism.[76] More often, these evangelical patrons seem to have provided more general support to literary producers. William Samuel and Thomas Becon, for instance, were both resident in Anne Seymour's household when they presented her with publications; the latter used his to thank her for the 'lyberalytye' she 'hathe mooste bounteouslye shewed' him since he came into her service.[77] Mary Fitzroy similarly lodged both the polemicist John Bale and John Foxe at her residence – the latter as tutor to the children of her late brother, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; indeed, it was here that Foxe, with Bale's aid, began the composition of his first martyrology.[78]

Moreover, women's support was not restricted to authors, but also extended to reformist publishers and printers. The appearance of Katherine Brandon's arms in numerous works printed by John Day and William Seres advertised her endorsement and, very probably, her financial backing of their enterprise.[79] Anne Seymour was one of the patrons of the Dutch émigré, publisher and translator Walter Lynne, as his three dedications to her attest, while Lady Elizabeth Fane can plausibly be linked with Crowley.[80] It is undeniable, then, that evangelical

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[76] Robert Crowley, *The confutation of the. xiii. articles, wherunto Nicolas Shaxton, late byshop of Salilburye subscribed and caused to be set forth in print* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548), Aiiii^{r}-Aiiii^{v} [STC 6083]. For Mrs Shaxton, see Prior, 'Reviled and Crucified Marriages', 123, 125.

[77] Samuel identified himself as 'seruaunt to the Duke of Somerset'. Samuel, *The abridgemente of goddes statutes*, Aii^{r}-Aii^{v} [STC 21690.2]; Thomas Becon, *The flour of godly praiers* (London: John Day, 1550), dedicatory epistle (unpaginated) [STC 1720].

[78] Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas S. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 36-45; John N. King, 'Bale, John (1495–1563)', in *ODNB*; Thomas S. Freeman, 'Foxe, John (1516/17–1587)', in *ODNB*.

[79] Brandon's support for Day has long been recognised. See for example: Elizabeth Evenden, *Patents, Pictures and Patronage: John Day and the Tudor Book Trade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 18, 23; King, *English Reformation Literature*, 105-6. For these works, see n. 64.

[80] Lynne: Walter Lynne, *A briefe collection of all such textes of the scripture…* (London: [S. Mierdman] for Gwalter Lynne, 1549) [STC 17119]; Heinrich Bullinger, Leo Jud and Conrad Pellican et al., *A brief and compendiouse table, in a maner of a concordaunce openyng the waye to the principall histories of the whole Bible,* trans. Walter Lynne (London: [S. Mierdman] for Gwalter Lynne, 1550) [STC 17117]; Wolfgang Capito, *The true beliefe in Christ and his sacramentes set forth in a dialoge betwene a Christen father and his sonne, verye necessary to be learned of all men, of what estate soeuer they be*, trans. William Roye (London: [S. Mierdman] for Gwalter Lynne, 1551) [STC 24223.5]. While Crowley's dedication does not in itself provide any

women were closely involved in the sponsorship of religious literature, and of the careers of some of the leading lights of the Edwardian Reformation. As such, we can rightly accord them an integral role in the transmission of reformist ideology to the English people.

Indeed, the significance of their contribution is arguably greater than existing studies have allowed. While King noted that these patrons 'encourage[d] the radical activities of a tightly knit school of professional authors and translators, as well as the printers and publishers … who issued their works', neither he, nor any other scholar, has acknowledged the extent to which they were central to the 'spidery network of authors, translators, and printers' which made up the reformist printing community of Edwardian London.[81] A few examples should prove illustrative.

The first involves one of the most important publishing projects of Edward's reign: the aforementioned English translation of the *Paraphrases*. This two-volume text, printed in imposing (and expensive) folio format, was intended to have a key place in the Edwardian Reformation. The 1547 Royal Injunctions ordered that a copy be placed in every church, alongside an English Bible, for the scriptural edification of the parishioners.[82] In respect to the first volume, at least, many churches seemed to have obliged, although the second shows evidence of a smaller circulation.[83] The first, as noted, was sponsored by Katherine Parr. The second, published in 1549, was also brought forth under the aegis a female patron: Parr's sometime sister-in-law Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, who was the dedicatee of the

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concrete evidence of an existing patron-client relationship, he had published a (now lost) compilation of psalms and proverbs written by her the previous year. Robert Crowley, *Pleasure and payne, heauen and hell: Remembre these foure, and all shall be well* (London: [R. Grafton for] Robert Crowley, 1551) [STC 6090]; Andrew Maunsell, *The first part of the catalogue of English printed bookes…* (London: John Windet [and James Roberts] for Andrew Maunsell, 1595), 85r [STC 17669]; Cathy Shrank, 'Fane, Elizabeth, Lady Fane (*d.* 1568)', in *ODNB*.

[81] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 50. Emphasis added. This description of the book trade is Stephen Alford's: *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 117.

[82] W. H. Frere and W. P. M. Kennedy, eds., *Visitation Articles and Injunctions*, vol. 2, *1536-1557* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), 117-118.

[83] E. J. Devereux, 'The Publication of the English *Paraphrases* of Erasmus', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 51, no. 2 (1969): 359, 362-5.

translator John Olde's substantial contribution to the volume.[84] Although Seymour's involvement was less extensive than Parr's, it is clear that she did have a role in seeing the volume through translation and publication. Olde claimed that he had only taken the task in hand at the request of its printer, Edward Whitchurch – a former client of Katherine Parr's – whom he pointedly referred to as the Duchess's 'humble servant.'[85] We can perhaps discern something of her influence, too, in the markedly more reformist direction of the second volume.[86]

Yet what is perhaps more interesting about Anne's connection with this volume is what it reveals of the embeddedness of women's association with religious literature in broader networks of patronage and reform. Olde's dedication also reflects her direct patronage of the translator: he offered his contribution as an acknowledgement of his 'moste bounden duetie of humble thankes gevinge' to her, for causing him to be presented to the vicarage of Cubbington in Warwickshire, which was then in the patronage of the Crown.[87] Significantly, Olde claims that Anne did so at the suit of his 'singular friend', Hugh Latimer.[88] Latimer was an old client of the Seymours, having more than once been extended hospitality by them after he had resigned his bishopric in protest against the conservative Act of Six Articles (1539).[89] Both he

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[84] Desiderius Erasmus, *The seconde tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Newe Testament* (London: Edward Whitchurch, 1549), unpaginated [STC 2854.6]. Olde's dedication is located after the Epistle to the Hebrews. The volume as a whole was dedicated to Edward VI.
[85] *Ibid*.
[86] For the 'Protestant tone' of the second volume, see King, *English Reformation Literature*, 131, 365; McConica, *English Humanists*, 240-8.
[87] Erasmus, *The second tome*, Olde's dedication; *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward VI*, 6 vols. (1914-1926. Reprint, Nendeln, Lichtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1970), 3:56.
[88] Erasmus, *The second tome*, Olde's dedication.
[89] Susan Brigden, 'Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and the 'Conjured League', *The Historical Journal* 37, no. 3 (1994): 516; M. L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 102.

and Olde, moreover, enjoyed a longstanding friendship with the Seymour's chaplain, Thomas Becon – a connection which perhaps further explains Anne's support for Olde's suit. [90]

Becon and Latimer were also associated with Katherine Brandon. Between 1550 and 1553, Latimer preached at least thirty-seven sermons at residence of Grimsthorpe, Lincolnshire.[91] More importantly, during his earlier tenure as court preacher, she had also aided the dissemination of his sermons in print. Her coat of arms featured prominently in an edition of Latimer's famed 'Sermon on the Plough' (1548), printed by Day and Seres, suggesting that she had underwritten its publication.[92] The following year saw the printing of Thomas Some's aforementioned edition of one of Latimer's sermons, dedicated to the Duchess and, tellingly, again prefaced by her arms.[93] Some was the sometime client of another female patron, and close associate of Brandon, Mary Fitzroy. In 1550, she petitioned the secretary of state, Thomas Smith, to grant Some a preaching license.[94]

The patronage of all three duchesses – Seymour, Brandon, and Fitzroy – coalesced in the figure of the translator Nicholas Lesse. He was, as mentioned, apparently the recipient of the former's support; certainly, it was very likely through her mediation that the second work he addressed to her – a translation of St Augustine's discourse on predestination – was published by another Seymour client, Walter Lynne.[95] It has also been noted that his dedication to Brandon likely stemmed from their mutual association with John Day. Likewise, it is probably Fitzroy's own connection with Day which accounts for Lesse's dedication to her, in

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[90] Thomas Becon, *The iewel of ioye* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1550?), Cvi^{r}-Cvi^{v} [STC 1733]; John Ayre, ed. *The Early Works of Thomas Becon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), ix; Seymour Baker House, 'Becon, Thomas (1512/13–1567)', in *ODNB*.

[91] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community,* 1, 50-1.

[92] Hugh Latimer, *A notable sermo[n] of ye reuerende father Maister Hughe Latemer whiche he preached in ye Shrouds at paules churche in Londo[n], on the. xviii. daye of Ianuary. 1548* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1548) [STC 15291].

[93] Hugh Latimer, *The fyrste sermon of Mayster Hughe Latimer whiche he preached before the Kynges Maiest.,* ed. Thomas Some (London: John Day and William Seres, 1549) [STC 15272.5].

[94] TNA SP 10/7 fols. 1-2, 5.

[95] Augustine, *predestination of saints.*

1550, of his *The twelfe steppes of abuses*.[96] Lesse's dedication, as he claimed, functioned as a petitionary strategy. He sought to gain Fitzroy's attention, in order to remind her that she had 'promised' to have published a translation of Martin Luther's exposition on the Petrine Epistles, which he had earlier presented to her. He states that he had been informed by her 'lovyng seruaunte' John Bale that she had 'often times … commoned wyth *your* Printer therein', and urged her, as such, to complete the undertaking.[97] The 'Printer' here, as Elizabeth Evenden has argued, is almost certainly the publisher of Lesse's pseudo-Augustinian translation, John Day, suggesting that Fitzroy was also a sponsor of his publishing activities.[98] While it is impossible to untangle the precise set of circumstances which led to the mutual acquaintance of Lesse, Bale, Day and Fitzroy, the apparent publication of works by Bale under Day's imprint early in Edward's reign encourages speculation that it was perhaps through Mary that the two men first came into contact (or, alternatively, that it was via Bale that the Duchess and Day were introduced).[99] It was perhaps also through Mary that her other lodger, Foxe, became acquainted with the man who would later print his *Acts and Monuments*.[100] Whatever the case, Lesse's attempt to secure the publication of his Luther translation – though apparently unsuccessful – provides particularly rich evidence of the important place of these female patrons in the reformist literary community. Via their backing of some of England's most active authors, printers and translators, as well as the cultural capital they offered as dedicatees, they performed a very tangible role in the success and vibrancy of the evangelical book trade.

It is significant that this close collaboration between evangelical literary producers and female patrons continued in the markedly more hazardous circumstances of Mary's reign.

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[96] 'St Augustine' [attributed], *The twelfe steppes of abuses*, trans. Nicholas Lesse (London: John Day and William Seres, 1550) [STC 84].
[97] *Ibid*., Aiii^{r}-Aiv^{r}. Emphasis added.
[98] Evenden, *Patents, Pictures and Patronage*, 24.
[99] For the first interpretation, see Evenden, *Patents*, 24.
[100] *Ibid*., 24.

King's contention that Mary's accession 'effectively muzzled the Protestant patronesses' certainly applies, by and large, to the English print trade. Only one evangelical publication was openly associated with an Englishwoman in Mary's reign, and it reflected a familial, rather than a patronal, connection. Bartholomew Traheron's *An exposition of a parte of S. Johannes gospel* (1557) – positioned as an attack against the 'new sterte vp Arians in Englande' – was dedicated, from his exile in Wesel, to his 'most dere sister' Elisabeth Palmel.[101] Yet women continued to support and facilitate the dissemination of evangelical writings covertly. Elizabeth Young, for instance, was involved in peddling reformist texts smuggled from abroad. Foxe records that 'commyng from Emden to England, [she] brought with her diuers bookes & sparsed them abroad in London' – an offence for which she was arrested and examined, but ultimately not prosecuted.[102] Moreover, as Thomas Freeman has shown, women were integral to the composition and circulation, in manuscript, of the writings of imprisoned reformers.[103] John Bradford, for example, wrote treatises on various theological and devotional issues in answer to questions posed by Joyce Hales and Elizabeth Fane, and in at least some cases his letters were disseminated by his female correspondents. An epistle written in 1553 to Joan Wilkinson and the Warcups survives in four separate manuscript copies.[104] In like manner, Hales is known to have circulated the predestinarian writings of John Careless among fellow

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[101] Bartholomew Traheron, *An exposition of a parte of S. Johannes gospel made in sondrie readinges in the English congregation at Wesel by Bartho. Trahero[n], & now published against the wicked enterprises of new sterte vp Arians in Englande* (Wesel?: P.A. de Zuttere?, 1557).

[102] Foxe, *TAMO* (1570 edition), book 12, 2308. For the circulation of evangelical texts in London during this period, see Philippa Tudor, 'Protestant Books in London in Mary Tudor's Reign', *The London Journal* 15, no. 1 (1990): 19-28.

[103] Freeman, 'Good Ministrye', 11.

[104] Freeman, 'Good Ministrye', 11; Mark Greengrass, 'Scribal Networks and Sustainers in Protestant Martyrology', in *Debating the Faith: Religion and Letter Writing in Great Britain, 1550-1800*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page and Clotilde Prunier (Dordrecht: Springer, 2012), 24. Bradford clearly expected at least some of his letters to women to be passed on or copied. A 1553 letter to Joan Wilkinson, for example, is addressed also to unspecified 'others': Aubrey Townsend, ed., *The Writings of John Bradford: Containing letters, treatises, remains* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), 39-41. For the centrality of women to Protestant letter networks in Mary's reign, see Ruth Ahnert and Sebastian E. Ahnert, 'Protestant Letter Networks in the Reign of Mary I: A Quantitative Approach', *ELH* 82, no. 1 (2015): 15-17.

evangelicals.[105] In this way, they helped sustain the intellectual culture of English evangelicalism. We should thus not underestimate the centrality of female patronage to the written transmission and promotion of reformist belief and practice.

Conservative Efforts

The continued effort by laywomen to disseminate evangelical ideas in written form, despite the looming threat of prosecution, might seem to reaffirm suggestions of a particularly close association between evangelical women and literary patronage. However, we should be extremely cautious of making too much of this association. For one thing, this would be to discount the remarkably similar activities of Catholic patrons in the later sixteenth century, when English Protestantism was again on the ascendant. In the Catholic underground, like its evangelical counterpart, women pedlars transported illicit texts into and across the country, and female patrons helped facilitate their production.[106] An Elizabethan manuscript miscellany compiled by the recusant scribe Peter Mowle, for example, contains a number of dedications to prominent East Anglian women, while Anne Dacre Howard, Countess of Arundel, went so far as to house a clandestine press at one of her residences, on which the Jesuit Robert Southwell printed a number of works, including his *Epistle of Comfort* (1587).[107]

To an extent, this activity was the product of the particular challenges faced by the English Catholic minority in the later sixteenth century. As Alexandra Walsham and Earle Havens have both argued, in the absence of a strong and accessible priesthood, books became

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[105] Freeman, 'Good Ministrye', 22.

[106] Walsham, 'Domme Preachers', 86-7; Earle Ashcroft Havens, 'Printers, Papists, and Priests: Roman Catholic Print Culture and the Religious Underground in Elizabethan England' (Ph.D., Yale University, 2010), 238.

[107] Nancy Pollard Brown, 'Paperchase: The Dissemination of Catholic Texts in Elizabethan England', in *English Manuscript Studies, 1100-1700*, vol. 1, ed. Peter Beal and Jeremy Griffith (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 122-3, 128-9; Monta, 'Anne Dacre Howard', 63-8.

increasingly important as an instrument of 'confessional communication and solidarity.'[108] However, even before this, 'traditional' religion was far from inimical to literary culture: as Walsham points out, '[t]he burgeoning of a religious book-culture *predated* the Protestant schism.'[109] This 'conservative vernacular theology' continued alongside early evangelical print, and, though increasingly hindered by governmental censorship measures, experienced a resurgence in Mary's reign. Contrary to earlier perceptions of the Marian regime's 'failure to understand the importance of the printing press', historians such as William Wizeman have demonstrated that print was one of the 'cornerstones' of efforts to re-inculcate and reinforce belief in Catholic doctrine.[110] As the remainder of this section will demonstrate, female patrons, like their Elizabethan and Jacobean counterparts, were firmly associated with these literary efforts. Perhaps more importantly, in many ways the texts published under their names and/or with their backing set the scene for the 'Protestant patronesses.' To paraphrase Walsham, in sponsoring devotional and scriptural works for a wide readership, the latter were largely 'hijacking and channelling a pre-existing fashion.'[111]

The Henrician roots of this fashion are evident in the three conservative publications associated with non-royal women in the 1520s and 1530s.[112] These were Gentian Hervet's translation of Erasmus's *De immensa dei Misericordia* (1526), dedicated to the Catholic matriarch Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury; Thomas Elyot's *A svvete and deuoute sermon*

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[108] Walsham, 'Domme Preachers', 80-1; Havens, 'Printers, Papists, and Priests', qtd. 137.
[109] Walsham, 'Domme Preachers', 77. Emphasis added. See also e.g. E. A. Jones and Alexandra Walsham, eds., *Syon Abbey and its Books: Reading, Writing and Religion, c. 1400-1700* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010).
[110] Alexandra Da Costa, *Reforming Printing: Syon Abbey's Defence of Orthodoxy 1525-1534* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), qtd. 3; William Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality in Mary Tudor's Church* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), esp. Introduction, Ch. 1; *idem*, 'Marian Counter-Reformation', 143-164; Wooding, 'Catholicism', 307-324. For the older view of Mary's reign, see e.g. J. W. Martin, *Religious Radicals in Tudor England* (London and Ronceverte: The Hambledon Press, 1989), Ch. 6.
[111] Walsham, 'Domme Preachers', 78. Walsham was comparing pre-Reformation and reformist print.
[112] Women's involvement in the circulation of devotional texts in manuscript had, of course, commenced even earlier. See e.g. Virginia R. Bainbridge, 'Syon Abbey: Women and Learning c.1415-1600', in Jones and Walsham, eds., *Syon Abbey and Its Books*, 82-103.

(1534) – a translation of St. Cyprian addressed to his step-sister, Susan Kingston (née Fettyplace); and the scholar-monk of Syon Richard Whitford's *A dayly exercice and experyence of dethe* (1534), originally commissioned by Elizabeth Gibbes, sometime Abbess of the dual monastery.[113] Each of these publications were explicitly intended to be accessible to a popular audience. Each dealt with themes that had the potential to appeal to readers of diverse theological views, whilst nevertheless being firmly associated with English Catholicism. And in each case women were crucial to their creation and/or to the communication of their conservative message.

The precise nature of their female patrons' involvement in the composition and publication of these texts differed. In each case, however, it must be reckoned as significant. Elizabeth Gibbs, as mentioned, was responsible for the initial commissioning of Whitford's *A dayly exercise*, intending it for use in her cloistered community.[114] Hervet similarly translated *De immensa* at the request of the Countess of Salisbury.[115] It is very unlikely that Gibbs ever foresaw the publication of her commission: she had requested it more than twenty years earlier, and had died in 1518.[116] Margaret Pole's role in the printing of *De immensa* is more ambiguous. Although Hervet suggests that the publication was his own initiative, he claims that it was 'for your ladyshssips pleasure'; given that he was at that time a tutor in the Pole household, the Countess would undoubtedly have at least been aware of Hervet's intention.[117]

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[113] Desiderius Erasmus, *De immensa misericordia*, trans. Gentian Hervet (London: Thomas Berthelet, c.1526) [STC 10474]; Thomas Elyot, trans., *A svvete and deuoute sermon of holy saynt Ciprian of mortalitie of man. The rules of a christian lyfe made by Picus erle of Mirandula* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1534) [STC 6157]; Richard Whitford, *A dayly exercice and experience of dethe* (London: R. Redman, 1534?) [STC 25413.7].

[114] I have used the 1537 Wayland edition: Richard Whitford, *A dayly exercyse and experyence of dethe* (London: John Wayland, 1537) [STC 25414], Ai^{v}.

[115] Erasmus, *De immensa,* title page.

[116] Whitford, *A dayly exercyse*, Ai^{v}; Erler, *Reading and Writing*, 130.

[117] Erasmus, *De immensa,* Aii^{r}. See also Smith, *'Grossly Material Things*', 66-7.

By contrast, there is no evidence that Kingston, despite her interest in intellectual pursuits, was in any way an active sponsor of *A svvete and deuoute sermon*.[118] However, Elyot's dedication to his step-sister was integral to his translation's function as an implicit criticism of the religio-political changes of the Crown. The precise target of Elyot's censure has been debated, but the epistle to Kingston strongly indicates that his rendering of this Cyprianic sermon – a mediation on the necessity of pious resolve in the face of affliction – can be read as a comment on the difficulties then faced by the religious orders in England. Kingston had become a vowess at Syon upon her widowhood, and Elyot asked that she also share the text with her 'two susters religiouse', Dorothy and Eleanor Fettyplace, who were both nuns of Syon.[119] Elyot certainly used Kingston's example to press forth his text's core message of the need for 'a pure and constante faythe'. The vowess was exemplary, he claimed, in her 'perseuerance in vertu & warkes of true faith'.[120]

Like the works later sponsored by later evangelical patrons, these texts were published with a wide readership in mind. Elyot directed *A svvete and deuoute sermon* towards the instruction of 'men and women of euery astate.'[121] Hervet, similarly, intended that his translation should be accessible to 'euery man as wel rude as lerned.'[122] In these efforts, both men were successful. *A svvete and deuoute sermon* was reprinted in 1539, while *De immensa* was reprinted at least three times in the two decades after its publication in 1526.[123] Richard Whitford's *ars moriendi* was, as noted, originally designed for cloistered contemplation at

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[118] For Kingston and her intellectual interests, see Erler, 'Books and Lives'; Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety*, 85-99.

[119] For a summary of this debate, see Mary Erler, 'The Books and Lives of Three Tudor Women', in *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Jean R. Brink (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1993), 8. For this interpretation, see Pearl Hogrefe, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Elyot, Englishman* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967), 210-214. For the two other Fettyplace sisters, see Erler, 'Books and Lives'; Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety*, 85-99.

[120] Elyot, *A svvete and deuoute sermon*, Aiii^{v}.

[121] *Ibid.*, Aiii^{r}.

[122] Erasmus, *De immensa,* Aii^{r}.

[123] *De immensa:* STC 10474.5; STC 10475; STC 10476. *A svvete and deuoute sermon:* STC 6158.

Syon. However, in preparing the work for print, he adapted Gibbes' commission for a wider, lay audience – something he made clear in addressing the short work to his 'deuout readers.' The reprinting of *A dayly exercice* twice in 1537 alongside *A werke for householders*, Whitford's immensely popular handbook of household religion, cemented the new orientation of its orthodox, contemplative piety towards the laity.[124]

By directing their works to lay readers, the authors could hope to more widely disseminate their conservative message, and thus contribute to defence of traditional religion in England. Like Elyot's translation, *A dayly exercice* was intimately associated with the plight of the religious orders in England, and specifically that of Syon Abbey. In its printed guise, as scholars such as Amy Appleford have argued, the text functioned as part of Syon's – and Whitford's – larger 'battle … against evangelical theology.'[125] The Abbey's *modus operandi* in this battle was the use of vernacular print to 'augment inferior parochial instruction; bolster orthodox faith and contradict evangelical argument; resist Henry VIII's desire for ecclesiastical supremacy; and defend the monastic way of life.'[126] *A dayly exercise* certainly served at least the first two of these functions and, obliquely – not least in its references to Gibbes – served the last as well. In comparison, there was little explicitly controversial about Hervet's rendering of *De immensa*, despite the translator's later reputation as a Catholic polemicist. However, the dedication to Margaret Pole ensured that it, too, was yoked to the conservative cause. This was undoubtedly especially the case for the reprintings of 1531 and 1533, when the religio-political

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[124] Whitford, *A dayly exercyse* (STC has this as part 2 of 25413.5); Richard Whitford, *A werke of preparacion, or of ordinaunce vnto communion, or howselyng The golden pystle, an alphabete or a crosrowe called an .A.B.C. and the werke for housholders with a dayly exercyce and experience of dethe* (London: Robert Redman, 1537) [STC 25413]. For a discussion of this compilation, see Amy Appleford, *Learning to Die in London, 1380-1540* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 189-196; *idem*, 'Asceticism, Dissent, and the Tudor State: Richard Whitford's Rule for Lay Householders', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 46, no. 2 (2016): 381-404.

[125] Appleford, *Learning to Die*, qtd. 193; Appleford, 'Asceticism', 382-3, 400.

[126] Da Costa, *Reforming Printing*, 1-2.

situation in England was becoming more complex. The Countess was a close supporter of Katherine of Aragon and displayed a clear intolerance for the even the moderate religious changes of the Henrician regime.[127] She is said, for instance, to have prohibited her tenants from possessing '[books of] the Newe Testament yn Englych or any other new [books] which the Kynges Hynes hathe pryvelyged.'[128]

However, while each of these texts pursued a conservative agenda, they were nevertheless all characterised by a certain theological flexibility. This undoubtedly aided their appeal to a broad readership. It also helps to account for the marked similarities between this literature and that which emerged in association with evangelical women in the following decades. The Christian humanism of Erasmus was appropriated by individuals from across the spectrum of early modern belief. By some, as we have seen with the *Paraphrases* project, he was 'transform[ed] … into a Protestant authority'; by others, such as Hervet, he was equated with 'pious Catholic criticism.'[129] Indeed, Hervet's translation was readily rebadged to suit the new, more evangelical climate of Edward VI's reign when it was republished for a final time in 1547. The only change was the removal of any mention of the by then attainted and executed Countess of Salisbury.[130] Patristic texts were likewise common fodder for the English book trade in the sixteenth century regardless of the monarch on the throne. For instance, very little except their paratexts separated Elyot's translation of Cyprian from Mildred Cecil's (née Cooke) c. 1550 rendering of a sermon by St. Basil; the latter was both an evangelical and peculiarly female project, dedicated to Cecil's 'right good lady and mistress', the Duchess of

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[127] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 237-8; Liedl, 'Margaret Pole', 29-43.
[128] *Letters & Papers*, vol. 13, part 2, no. 817, 324.
[129] Karl Enenkel, 'Introduction – Manifold Reader Responses: The Reception of Erasmus in Early Modern Europe', in *The Reception of Erasmus in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Karl A. E. Enenkel (Leiden: Koninklije Brill NV, 2013), qtd. 2; King, *English Reformation Literature*, 365.
[130] STC 10476. This edition was also published by Thomas Berthelet.

Somerset.[131] Even Whitford's guides to Christian piety, despite being so firmly a product of monastic culture, were – in both tone and intent – not far removed from the devotional manuals which King has cited as the particular preserve of evangelical patronesses.[132] As Merridee Bailey has argued, many of Whitford's arguments in *A werke for householders*, with which *A dayly exercise* was published, 'were not antithetical to Protestant authorities and readers.'[133] Nor was this the only work emanating from Syon which had the potential to appeal to a mixed audience. Mary I's copy of the Bridgettine monk William Bonde's *Pylgrimage of Perfection* had previously been owned by Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset.[134] It is also worth pointing out that this trend worked both ways. Certain works later set forth by reformers, under the aegis of evangelical women, similarly found favour with even eminently conservative readers. Mary Tudor, for instance, possessed a copy, embossed with the letters 'MR' (Maria Regina), of *A brief and compendiouse table, in a maner of a concordaunce...* (1550). This was a Bible concordance compiled by Zurich Protestants, translated by Walter Lynne and dedicated to the Duchess of Somerset.[135] It was a trend, moreover, which extended well into the seventeenth century.[136] It is not only with the benefit of hindsight, then, that we can discern continuities between 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' devotional literature, and the actions of their patrons; there was also a lack of clear distinction between the two at the time these texts were circulating in England. The works associated with the Edwardian women patrons were thus much less a 'break' with the past than the adaptation of an existing trend.

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[131] BL Royal MS 17 B XVIII, fols. 2^{r}-^{v}; Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 1, 46, 60, 62. For Cyprian's citation as an authority by evangelical reformers, see e.g. Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*, 4th ed. (Malden, Mass. and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 157.

[132] Walsham, 'Domme Preachers', 168.

[133] Merridee L. Bailey, 'Reconsidering Religious Vitality in Catholic England: Household Aspirations and Educating the Laity in Richard Whitford's *A werke for householders*', *Viator* 47, no. 2 (2016): 348.

[134] James P. Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives* (London: The British Library, 2004), 144-145.

[135] Bullinger et al., *A brief and compendiouse table*; Schutte, *Mary I*, 127.

[136] See e.g. Monta, 'Anne Dacre Howard'.

It is also in the fluid religious climate of the Henrician period that we can find early evidence of women's sponsorship of works of religious controversy. In 1536, Anne de Vere (née Howard), Countess of Oxford sent one of her chaplains, William Cutler, to Thomas Cromwell, with orders that Cutler present him with a book he had written against the Pope 'for the instruction of ignorant people.'[137] De Vere was no supporter of evangelical theology. That same year, she is alleged to have written – along with the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Essex – to the bishops of Canterbury, Worcester, and Salisbury in an effort to suppress the preaching of 'one Lambert' (John Lambert, martyred in 1538) who had claimed that it 'was sin to pray to saints'.[138] However, whether out of pragmatism or genuine conviction, she was willing to countenance the moderate reforms promulgated by the Crown, and in particular the Supremacy. If Cutler's text ever made it to print, it has left no trace. Yet de Vere's involvement nevertheless demonstrates that that it was not just committed evangelical women who were prepared to lend their support to overtly polemical texts.

The trends in conservative patronage outlined here continued in subsequent decades, in parallel with – if surpassed by – developments in the reformist book trade. The controls on publishing meant that very little explicitly pro-Catholic literature circulated in print during the later Henrician period and the reign of Edward VI. John King, for instance, has identified just six extant polemical pamphlets printed in England between 1547 and 1553.[139] These, unsurprisingly, bear no open marks of patronage. However, some of the more subtly conservative Edwardian publications did include dedicatory epistles. Two of these were

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[137] TNA SP. 1/113, f. 151, William Cutler to Thomas Cromwell, 1536. See also Clark, *Gender, Family, and Politics*, 150-1.
[137] TNA SP 1/113, f. 151.
[138] BL Cotton Cleopatra E.IV, ff. 131-2, Thomas Dorset to Mr Horsewell, Mayor of Plymouth, and others, 13 March 1536.
[139] King, 'Book-trade', 166.

addressed to the Princess Mary.[140] Although her role as patron was probably entirely symbolic in at least one, if not both cases, the dedications served as a crucial signal of the texts' conservative agenda in the face of the regime's increasingly radical reforms.

John Proctor's *The fal of the late Arrian* (1549), in which he refutes the antitrinitarian beliefs of an unnamed Englishman (likely John Assheton), has much in common with the antisectarian sentiments espoused by evangelical authors like the aforementioned Bartholomew Traheron.[141] Yet the subtext of the work was a critique of the Edwardian Reformation. Proctor was no hard-line Catholic – he was vocally anti-papal – but he was dismayed by evangelical measures promulgated under the young king.[142] In a lengthy preface addressed to his fellow Englishmen, he despaired that now 'we exceed in all hereticall and blasphemous opinions.'[143] The dedication to Mary served to hammer home his message. The Princess's determined refusal to cease celebrating the Mass rendered her an obvious 'rallying point for English Catholicism', and it is clear that Proctor had her position as such in mind.[144] He perceived that by setting the work forth 'under the support and recognisaunce of your Graces title and name', 'the honest & godly sort would like it better: the cankered and envious shal haue lesse force to endomage or hynder.'[145]

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[140] Mary also received dedications of texts in manuscript during this period, including one written by a woman, Mary Clarke (née Roper, later Bassett): BL Harley MS 1860. For an overview of the manuscripts dedicated to Mary, see Schutte, *Mary I,* Ch. 4.

[141] John Proctor, *The fal of the late Arrian* (London: William Powell, 1549) [STC 20406].

[142] Proctor, *The fal*, Bii^{v}-Biii^{v}; Alan Bryson, 'Order and Disorder: John Proctor's *History of Wyatt's Rebellion* (1554)', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature: 1485-1603*, ed. Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 325-6.

[143] Proctor, *The fal*, Bv^{r}.

[144] For Mary's refusal to conform see e.g., 'The Chronicle of Edward VI', in *The Chronicle and Political Papers of Edward VI*, ed. W. K. Jordan (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), 55. The quote is from Goodrich, 'Dedicatory Preface', 318.

[145] Proctor, *The fal*, Aiiii^{r-v}.

Thomas Paynell's *The piththy and most notable sayinges of al scripture* (1550) was, by contrast, studiously undogmatic.[146] His aim, like that of so many of his reformist counterparts, was to disseminate scriptural knowledge to the English people in an accessible form.[147] However, like Proctor, Paynell linked his publication to the conservative cause by dedicating it to Mary. The author, a former Augustinian monk, had been a chaplain to Henry VIII. While proving adaptive to each of the Tudor regimes, he developed a particular affinity for the future Catholic queen.[148] He had sought Mary's favour via the dedication of a religious translation as early as 1545; later, during her queenship, Paynell's works were set forth by her royal printer John Cawood.[149]

Proctor and Paynell's publications thus owed much of their subversive force to their appropriation of Mary's name. As such, as well as further pointing to the chronological and confessional continuities in religious literature, they also begin to complicate the Protestant-focused narrative of post-1530s literary patronage. The link between female patronage and conservative print only solidified in the less hazardous circumstances of the Marian Restoration.

Before discussing this patronage, it is important to reiterate that dedications to women – and, indeed, dedications in general – undoubtedly did decline during Mary's reign. This can be attributed to certain fundamental differences in the output of the Marian press. In particular, partly as a result of the earlier destruction or defacement of traditional texts, there was an emphasis on the production of 'publications unique to Catholicism', such as missals, breviaries,

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[146] Thomas Paynell, *The piththy and moost notable sayinges of al scripture* (London: Thomas Gaultier, 1550) [STC 19494].
[147] The work achieved some commercial success under evangelical regimes, being republished in 1552 and 1560: STC 19495, STC 19495.3, STC 19495.7, STC 19496.
[148] Geoffrey Eatough, 'Paynell, Thomas (*d.* 1564?)', in *ODNB*.
[149] Bernard of Clairvaux, *A compe[n]dius [and] a moche fruytefull treatyse of well liuynge co[n]taynyng the hole su[m]me and effect of al vertue*, trans. Thomas Paynell (London: Thomas Petyt, c. 1545) [STC 1908]; Eatough, 'Paynell'; Schutte, *Mary I*, 42-45, 70.

and Books of Hours, as well as on conservative primers and other devotional aids.[150] A corollary of this was a substantial decrease in the number of *new* works printed. According to Wizeman's analysis, just eighteen new works or new editions of non-primer material were produced in 1554, and just eight in 1557.[151] Catholics, of course, also had a range of other media – both visual and aural – through which to convey their message.[152] In this light, it is unsurprising that the volume of texts sponsored by women (and men) in the previous reign went unmatched.[153]

Indeed, one of only two texts associated with a non-royal laywoman in Mary's reign owed nothing to patronage. In 1556, the sometime bishop of Bristol, Paul Bush addressed *A brefe exhortation* to Margaret Burges, the wife of a Wiltshire clothier. He sought to sway her – and, by extension, others who shared her views – from her 'wicked and damnable' beliefs. He reserved particular ire for her rejection of transubstantiation.[154] Bush also poured derision on Burges' reading of 'Englyshe Pamphlettes' and encouraged her to rely on the Church alone to instruct her in the truth of the Scriptures.[155]

Bush's sentiments here might seem to lend credence to the suggestion that Marian churchmen 'placed greater weight upon the instruction of the laity by the clergy than they did on lay self-education', with the 'vast majority' of religious publications aimed at the instruction of the clergy.[156] Yet, by its very nature as a vernacular publication addressed to a layperson – and a lay*woman*, at that – Bush's exhortation rather points to the value of literature as an educative medium. Nor was he alone in his view of 'English books' as simultaneously

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[150] Wooding, 'Catholicism', 317.
[151] Wizeman, 'Marian Counter-Reformation', 146.
[152] Wooding, 'Catholicism', 317; Loach, 'Marian Establishment', 141.
[153] Across the two sample years of 1554 and 1557, for example, the only male dedicatees aside from King Phillip were Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon; Bishop Stephen Gardiner; and Archbishop Reginald Pole.
[154] Paul Bush, *A brefe exhortation … to one Margarete Burges* (London: John Cawood, 1556) [STC 4184]
[155] Bush, *A brefe exhortation*, Av^{v}-Avii^{v}.
[156] Loach, 'Marian Establishment', 139-40.

corruptive and edifying: Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury, affirmed that 'just as people here have been corrupted even more by writings, than by words, so they must be recalled to reason by writings.'[157]

Thus, while the Marian press was characterised by different concerns and emphases, there was nevertheless a continued acknowledgement of the importance of religious literature for a mixed audience. This blend of Catholic distinctiveness and a cross-confessional emphasis on vernacular publications is reflected in the limited but nonetheless significant activities of women patrons. It is particularly evident in perhaps the most enduringly influential text published in Mary's reign: the Dominican prior William Peryn's *Spirituall exercyses* (1557).[158] This collection of meditations was strongly influenced by Flemish and Ignatian spirituality, comprising, in part, a translation and adaptation of Nicholas Van Ess's *Exercitia theologiae mysticae*, and played a key role in transmitting this brand of Counter-Reformation piety to an English audience.[159] It was dedicated to two English nuns in exile, whom Peryn had likely met during his own time on the Continent: the Bridgettine Katherine Palmer, and the Poor Clare Dorothy Clement, who was the daughter of Sir Thomas More's foster daughter Margaret Giggs.[160] Reigniting a long trend of literary patronage by women religious, these nuns were apparently the cause of the text's production. Peryn claims that he was motivated by a wish to 'satisfie' the sisters' 'most earnest & most importune desire', suggesting that they had requested, or at least encouraged, the work.[161] As a product of conventual patronage, the text

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[157] '*… quemadmodum scriptis magis etiam, quam verbis hic homines corrupti fuerunt, ita scriptis ad sanitatem revocari oportere …*' My translation. Reginald Pole, *Epistolarum Reginaldi Poli S.R.E. Cardinalis et aliorum ad ipsum*, vol. 5 (Brescia: Joannes-Maria Rizzardi, 1757), 74.

[158] William Peryn, *Spirituall exercyses and goostly meditacions …* (London: [John Kingston for] John Whaley, 1557) [STC 19784]. For the significance of this text, see Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 217; Mary C. Erler, 'The Effects of Exile on English Monastic Spirituality: William Peryn's Spirituall Exercyses', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2012): 522-23.

[159] Erler, 'Effects of Exile', 520-22, 531; Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 209-17.

[160] Peryn, *Spirituall exercyses,* dedicatory epistle (unpaginated); Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 46. On these nuns, see Erler, 'Effects of Exile', 525-29.

[161] Peryn, *Spirituall exercyses*, dedicatory epistle (unpaginated).

was thus aimed first and foremost at a religious audience. However, in setting it forth in print, Peryn and his publisher, John Whaley, clearly envisioned that it would appeal also to devout members of the laity. The title page explicitly proclaimed that it was 'very profytable for religyous, and generally *for al other* that desyre to come to the perfecte loue of god.'[162] The text was certainly successful in gaining a lay audience. The Elizabethan martyr, Margaret Clitherow, for example, is known to have 'valued the *Exercyses* highly.'[163]

Other Marian texts associated with women patrons were aimed more directly at lay readers. This is true, for instance, of many of the twenty-five publications dedicated to Mary I.[164] While the majority of these were likely solely a product of her position, rather than her active sponsorship, in certain instances Mary can be securely linked to the authors and their enterprise. John Angel, for instance, intended his *The agrement of the holye fathers* (c. 1555) to be for 'the diligent reading and folowinge of all true Christian people.'[165] Drawing upon patristic texts, he sought to catechise his readers on contentious issues such as the Eucharist and prayers for the dead. His position as chaplain to Mary suggests that his dedication of the text to her was not a plea for patronage, but an acknowledgement of it.[166] The same can be said for the works addressed to her by the aforementioned Thomas Paynell, set forth by her printer, and by her hosier, the prolific polemicist Miles Huggarde, whose influential anti-Protestant tracts seem to have been endorsed by Mary and her regime.[167]

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[162] Peryn, *Spirituall exercyses*. Emphasis added.
[163] Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 217.
[164] For an overview of dedications to Mary as Queen, see Schutte, *Mary I*, 49-101.
[165] John Angel, *The agrement of the holye fathers, and doctors of the churche, vpon the cheifest articles of Christian religion as appeareth on the nexte syde folowinge, very necessary for all curates.* (London: William Harford for William Seres, 1555?), Avi[r] [STC 634].
[166] *Ibid.,* Aii[r].
[167] St. Augustine, *Twelue sermons of Saynt Augustine*, trans Thomas Paynell (London: John Cawood, 1553); Cuthbert Tunstall, *Certaine godly and deuout prayers*, trans. Thomas Paynell (London: John Cawood, 1558); Miles Huggarde, *The assault of the sacrame[n]t of the altar …* (London: Robert Caly, 1554) [STC 13556]; *idem*, *A mirrour of loue, which such light doth giue, that all men may learne, how to loue and liue.*(London: Robert Caly, 1555) [STC 13559]; *idem*, *The displaying of the Protestantes and sondry their practises, with a description of diuers their abuses of late frequented within their malignaunte churche* (London: Robert Caly, 1556) [STC

Most notably, female patronage was seemingly crucial to the production of what William Wizeman has referred to as 'one of the most important books published in Mary's reign, and in English or any other language in the sixteenth century': the 1557 edition of the English works of Sir Thomas More.[168] This weighty folio edition was compiled and edited by More's nephew, William Rastell, and printed 'at the costes and charges' of the printers John Cawood, John Waly, and Richard Tottell. It bore a dedication from Rastell to Queen Mary, in which he implored her to be 'the patrone and defendour' of the work – not least because it would likely be of 'muche helpe' to Mary in 'purging this youre realme of all wicked heresies.'[169] There is no evidence that the Queen lent her backing to the text's production. Yet, in a further salutary reminder that dedications alone reveal only part of the story of literary patronage, the volume had another, more active patron: Mary Bassett (née Roper, formerly Clarke), More's granddaughter. Bassett's contribution to this defence of Catholic orthodoxy (and of More himself) was twofold. She placed her authorial mark on the volume in the form of an English translation of More's *De tristia Christi* – noteworthy in itself as the only female-authored translation to appear in print during Mary's reign.[170] Yet she also provided financial support for the project. A Latin chronicle on Henry VIII's first divorce, dating from the mid-1550s, records that the volume was published 'with the aid and at the expense of the most noble and at the same time most learned woman [Mary], granddaughter of Thomas More by his daughter.'[171] While the author of this text was anonymous, he appears to have been a member

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13558]; Schutte, *Mary I*, 72-5. In at least one instance, Mary rewarded Huggarde for a book he presented to her: 'The New Year Gift List of 1557', in David Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 367.

[168] Thomas More, *The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England, wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge.* (London: John Cawood, John Whaley, and Richard Tottell, 1557) [STC 18076]; Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 163.

[169] More, *workes*, Cii^{r}-Cii^{v}.

[170] More, *workes*, 1350-1404; Hosington, 'Translating Devotion', 63-95.

[171] '*ope et impensis nobilissimae simul ac doctissimae feminae [Mariae], Thomae Mori ex filia neptis*': *Le Premier Divorce de Henry VIII et la Schisme d'Angleterre: Fragment d'une Chronique Anonyme en Latin,* ed. Charles Bémont (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1917), 68. My translation. See also Hosington, 'Translating Devotion' 69; Goodrich, 'Dedicatory Preface', 308-9.

of Bassett's circle, and thus in a position to provide accurate information.[172] Seemingly, then, Mary added her own funds to those of Cawood, Waly, and Tottell. The author's reference to her 'aid' (*ops*), moreover, may refer to more than just her efforts in translation. It is likely that Bassett provided Rastell with some of the works he included in the compilation, since many of More's writings had been preserved by her late mother, More's daughter Margaret Roper.[173]

Thus, in parallel with what we now know about the English book trade more broadly, women's patronage of religious literature was significant to *both* evangelical and conservative reform efforts during the early English Reformation. The lines between their publishing enterprises were also far from clear-cut. To be sure, there certainly were differences between conservative and evangelical patronage. As well as the latter's association with a demonstrably greater number of texts, the presence of women religious – both as patrons and intended readers of texts – was naturally unique to Catholicism. Yet it is undeniable that evangelical women did not have a monopoly on the sponsorship of 'devotional manuals and theological translations for the edification of a mixed audience of elite and ordinary readers.'[174] Nor were they alone in being occasionally associated with polemical texts. Rather, key aspects of this trend were already in existence prior to the late 1540s, and continued to be developed by their more conservative contemporaries as the century progressed.

III. A Gendered Enterprise? The Case of the Seymours

This chapter has demonstrated, in contradistinction to much of the current literature, that the boundaries between conservative and evangelical literary patronage in sixteenth-century

[172] Jaime Goodrich, 'Early Modern Englishwomen as Translators of Religious and Political Literature, 1500–1641' (Ph.D., Boston College, 2008), 234.
[173] Goodrich, 'Dedicatory Preface', 308; Hosington, 'Translating Devotion', 69.
[174] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 43.

England were permeable and often indistinct. However, it is not just evangelical literature, but specifically that sponsored by women, that has been set apart in this scholarship. This thus raises a corollary question about the extent to which literary patronage was, in fact, a gendered activity. This section argues that the distinctions between male and female patronage were similarly blurry – both in terms of the kinds of texts sponsored, and in the forms this sponsorship took.

Again, this should not be taken too far. It is not without reason that scholars such as Ronald Surtz have spoken of the particular 'constellation of female patronage, religious texts, and the use of the vernacular.' [175] As we have already seen, the majority of texts associated with women were religious in nature.[176] Unsurprisingly, given that a humanist education was still only rarely extended to women, they were also primarily written in or translated into English. Only one non-vernacular text – a collection of Latin poetry on the death of Henry and Charles Brandon – was addressed to a woman from outside the royal family.[177] Yet these distinctions were in some ways less significant than they might at first appear. This can be illustrated through a comparison of the texts addressed to Anne Seymour (née Stanhope) and her husband, Edward, Duke of Somerset.

As Lord Protector, Somerset made a particularly attractive target for book dedications. During Edward's reign, he was associated with sixteen different publications – double the eight

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[175] Ronald E. Surtz, 'Female Patronage of Vernacular Religious Works in Fifteenth-Century Castile: Aristocratic Women and their Confessors', in *The Vernacular Spirit: Essays on Medieval Religious* Literature, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Duncan Robertson, and Nancy Warren (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 264. See also e.g. Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 32, 92, 97; Smith, *'Grossly material things'*, 67; Leturio, 'Women's Reading Habits', 25.

[176] Just five non-religious texts were dedicated to non-royal women, though these covered diverse topics such as education, medicine, and childbirth: STC 5276; STC 14651.5; STC 20056.7; STC 21739.5; STC 25816.

[177] Thomas Wilson, ed., *Vita et obitus duorum fratrum Suffolciensium Henrici et Caroli Brandoni* (London: Richard Grafton, 1551). The collection was addressed to Henry and Frances Grey, Duke and Duchess of Suffolk – the latter being the deceased's half-sister. Katherine of Aragon, and Elizabeth and Mary Tudor were presented with a handful of printed Latin texts between them: STC 4042.4; STC 24728; STC 15636; STC 25388; STC 24729.

which were dedicated to his wife.[178] Whereas those presented to Anne were uniformly religious in nature, the texts set forth under Somerset's name treated a broader range of subject matter. He was the dedicatee, for instance, of two herbals by his physician, the evangelical William Turner, and of James Harrison's *An exhortacion to the Scottes*.[179] However, eleven of the sixteen texts (69 percent) did deal with more spiritual concerns. Of the sixteen, moreover, only Turner's herbals were not wholly in English. Nor was Somerset unique in this regard. A study of Rider's chronological index reveals that just six non-vernacular religious texts were addressed to named men between 1548 and 1552, and just one in the Marian sample years of 1554 and 1557.[180] In this light, the vernacular character of women's literary patronage becomes somewhat less conspicuous. The same can be said of the perceived affinity between female patrons and translations. 63 percent (5) of the texts dedicated to Anne Seymour were translations, and if we look at the Edwardian texts dedicated to women more broadly, the figure drops to 58.6 percent (17). In comparison, 56 percent (9) of those associated with Somerset were translations – a figure which jumps to 82 percent if we consider only those of a religious character.

There are, admittedly, some noticeable differences in the *content* of the religious works associated with the Duke and Duchess. Those dedicated to Anne were predominantly devotional or scriptural in nature. Among those presented to Somerset, meanwhile, works of

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[178] Based on Williams' *Index of Dedications*. STC 4059; STC 4407; STC 11220; STC 12857; STC 13745; STC 15205; STC 15217; STC 17115 (jointly with King Edward VI); STC 17317; STC 17792; STC 18765; STC 24359; STC 24365; STC 24666; STC 26142; STC 25255. No books were dedicated to Seymour before Edward's accession. The classic study of Seymour's patronage is King, 'Protector Somerset', 307-331, though later scholars have tended to downplay the extent of Seymour's direct involvement.

[179] William Turner, *The names of herbes in Greke, Latin, Englishe, Duche [and] Frenche with the commune names that herbaries and apotecaries vse* (London: S. Mierdman for John Day and William Seres, 1548) [STC 24359]; *idem*, *A new herball wherein are conteyned the names of herbes in Greke, Latin, Englysh, Duch, Frenche* (London: Steven Mierdman, 1551) [STC 24365]; James Harrison, *An exhortacion to the Scottes…* (London: Richard Grafton, 1547) [STC 12857].

[180] STC 165.5; STC 6085; STC 11235; STC 15263; STC 15259; STC and 17112.5; STC 24673. Three of these were dedicated to Edward VI.

open polemic feature prominently, as do texts of a more distinctly political bent; these included, respectively, John Veron's translation of Bullinger's *An holsome antidotus or counter-poysen, agaynst the pestylent heresye and secte of the Anabaptistes*, and Henry, Lord Stafford's translation of Bishop Edward Foxe's *The true dyffere[n]s betwen ye regall power and the ecclesiasticall power*.[181] Yet even this distinction should not be overplayed. Somerset was also associated with works of spiritual guidance and consolation.[182] A number of those dedicated to his wife, on the other hand, did not shy away from religious controversy. Nicholas Lesse, for instance, used his dedications to Anne to rail against the heresies of Anabaptism.[183]

Indeed, in some respects the Duke and Duchess of Somerset's literary patronage was closely interrelated. This is best seen in the figure of Walter Lynne. Lynne, as has already been noted, received the particular support of Anne Seymour, dedicating three works to her between 1549 and 1551. These were a collection of scriptural texts designed to comfort the sick; a translation of a Bible concordance compiled by the Zurich reformers Henrich Bullinger, Leo Jud, and Conrad Pellican; and, finally, a Protestant catechism set forth as *The true beliefe in Christ and his sacramentes*.[184] The latter is an edition of William Roye's much earlier translation of Wolfgang Capito's *De pueris instutituendis*, which had been suppressed in the

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[181] Heinrich Bullinger, *An holsome antidotus or counter-poysen, agaynst the pestylent heresye and secte of the Anabaptistes*, trans. John Veron (London: Humfrey Powell, 1548) [STC 4059]; Edward Fox, trans. Henry Stafford, *The true dyffere[n]s betwen ye regall power and the ecclesiasticall power* (London: William Copland, 1548) [STC 11220].

[182] E.g. Otto Werdmüller, *A spyrytuall and moost precyouse pearle Teachyng all men to loue and imbrace the crosse, as a mooste swete and necessary thyng,* trans. Thomas Norton (London: S. Mierdman for Gwalter Lynne, 1550) [STC 25255]; Berardino Ochino, *Sermons of the ryght famous a[n]d excellent clerke Master Bernardine Ochine*, trans. Richard Argentine (London: Anthony Scoloker, 1548) [STC 18765].

[183] Lambert, *The minde and iudgement*, dedicatory epistle (unpaginated); St. Augustine, *A worke of the predestination of saints*, Aii^{r}-Av^{v}.

[184] Lynne, *A briefe collection*; Bullinger, et al., *A brief and compendiouse table*; Capito, *true beliefe*. Lynne also received the support of the regime, as well as Thomas Cranmer. See: *Calender of Patent Rolls, Edward VI*, 1: 62, 2:238; T.A. Birrell, *English monarchs and their books: from Henry VII to Charles II* (London: The British Library, 1987), 16; Alford, *Kingship and Politics*, pp. 102-103. Anne's presentation copy of *The true belief*, embossed with her initials, is now in the British Library: BL C.46.a.7; Birrell, *English Monarchs*, 16.

late 1520s by the Henrician regime.[185] It is probable that the Seymours personally facilitated its publication. Lynne, in his dedicatory epistle to the text, was circumspect about its origins; he claimed that he had simply 'chanced' upon it, and that he did not know the author.[186] Yet we know that his edition consisted of the original sheets of Roye's translation, printed in Strasbourg by Johann Schott.[187] In 1528, one Hermann von Rinck had been charged with suppressing Roye's books, perceived to be 'crammed full of heresy'. By the October of that year he had succeeded (or so he informed Cardinal Wolsey) in buying up almost all of the printed sheets.[188] The copies were apparently then sent to Wolsey, and later came into the possession of the State.[189] Given that, by the time Lynne's edition was published, his association with Anne was well established, it is likely that he gained access to the sheets through her husband.[190]

Certainly, the Duke and Duchess seem to have been jointly involved with two other works published by Lynne at around the same time. In 1550, Lynne published an epistle written by Pietro Martire Vermigli (Peter Martyr) to the Duke of Somerset after his first imprisonment in 1549, and translated into English by Thomson Norton, who was at that time tutor to the Seymours' eldest sons.[191] It could hardly have been printed without the Duke's approval, and likely backing. That same year, Lynne published Miles Coverdale's translation of the Swiss

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[185] Douglas H. Parker and Bruce Krajewski, 'Introduction', in *A Brefe Dialoge bitwene a Christen Father and his stobborne Sonne: The First Protestant Catechism Published in English,* ed. Douglas H. Parker and Bruce Krajewski (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 3-4, 19-21.
[186] Capito, *true beliefe*, Aiir.
[187] Robert Steele, 'Notes on English Books Printed Abroad, 1525-48', *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 11 (1912): 195, 197.
[188] Hermann Rinck to Wolsey, 4 October 1528, in *The First Printed English New Testament*, ed. Edward Arber (London: n.p., 1871), 32-6.
[189] Birrell, *English Monarchs*, 17.
[190] *Ibid*., 17.
[191] Pietro Martire Vermigli, *An epistle vnto the right honorable and christian prince, the Duke of Somerset written vnto him in Latin, awhile after hys deliueraunce out of trouble*, trans. Thomas Norton (London: [N. Hill] for Gwalter Lynne, 1550) [STC 24666]; Hastings Robinson, ed. *Original letters relative to the English Reformation: written during the reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary, chiefly from the archives of Zurich*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846-7), 1:341.

reformer Otto Werdmüller's *A spyrytyuall and moost precyouse pearle*.[192] This English edition was explicitly commissioned and financed by the Duke, who cited, in his preface to the text, the 'greate comforte' it had provided him during his own 'greate trouble.'[193] That, in both cases, a publisher sponsored by Anne Seymour was employed suggests that she also had some influence over these projects.

Accordingly, just as we should be careful not to overemphasise distinctions based on religious affiliation, so we should not exaggerate the gendered quality of literary patronage. Here, too, there was a marked overlap in the kinds of works involved, and in certain cases both male and female patrons were engaged in bringing a project to fruition. This underscores the necessity of contextualising women's literary patronage. Focusing on women's efforts alone obscures these kinds of collaborative endeavours, and, as much of the existing scholarship exemplifies, gives a flawed sense of a uniquely feminine enterprise. As the following section will address, it is in the literary strategies employed in dedicatory epistles, rather than in the actual mechanisms of patronage, that gender – and religious – divides come to the fore.

IV. 'A goodly & a bright spectacle to womanhood': The Construction of the Female Patron

So far, this chapter has been concerned with the nature and quantity of the works dedicated to or otherwise associated with women, and with the forms that this association took. But – as has already been indicated – the role of dedicatee as 'patron' was also always, in part, a constructed or imagined one. It is for this reason, as Richard McCabe has recently reminded us, that scholars of early modern literary patronage need to be attentive to the 'rhetoric of dedication':

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[192] Werdmüller, *A spyrytuall and moost precyouse pearle*.
[193] *Ibid*., Av^{r}-Avii^{v}.

the language used to discuss the dedicatee and their relationship to both author and text.[194] This rhetoric was largely formulaic, with certain 'images, tropes, and themes' recurring 'relentlessly' across early modern English texts. Dedications are frequently represented as 'gifts', made as a ''token' of love, service, friendship, respect or gratitude.' In return, the author seeks the favour or protection of the patron; in fulfilling this request, the dedicatee is often portrayed as performing a public, as well as a private, service.[195] The intended purpose of the dedication, McCabe argues, was to 'flatter, cajole, or shame prospective patrons into a sense of 'obligation''; to entice the reader; and to 'implicate dedicator, dedicatee, and 'reader' in an enterprise of mutual validation' and the obtainment of 'cultural capital.'[196]

Yet, when it comes to religious texts, the character and function of dedicatory rhetoric was also more complex (and perhaps somewhat less mercenary) than it might initially appear. While many of the aforementioned tropes recur consistently across early Reformation dedications to men and women, conservatives and evangelicals, it is also possible to track patterns of variance, which are suggestive of the influence of gender and religious allegiance on dedicatory practices. These rhetorical variances also served a practical purpose. Nieves Baranda Leturio has shown that female dedicatees of early modern Spanish texts were deployed as 'essential link[s] in the chain of transmission to other readers', deliberately framed as exemplars or models in order to transmit social values, and – in the case of religious texts – 'consciously orient [the reader's] devotion.'[197] It is argued here that sixteenth-century English dedications to women performed a similar function. In particular, consciously or otherwise, these dedications expressed and promoted shifting ideals of Christian womanhood.

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[194] McCabe, *'Ungainefull Arte'*, 4, 85.
[195] *Ibid*., 4, 73.
[196] McCabe, '*Ungainefull Arte'*, 4, 25, 65, 81, 85.
[197] Leturio, 'Women's Reading Habits', 33-35.

Dedications of religious texts to men also worked to transmit particular ideas and ideologies. Often, they functioned as exhortations to advance, uphold, or restore 'true religion', of whatever brand. Almost universally, this was achieved by appealing to the political position and authority of the dedicatee, both as a means of encouraging them to use this authority to fulfil the author's vision for the English Church, and of (theoretically) appropriating it to attract readers. Dedications to Protector Somerset, for instance, inevitably address him as a 'myghtie and victorious' or 'redoubted' prince, and stress his dual role in safeguarding both the civil and religious health of the kingdom: 'not onely hygh protector & defendour of this noble contrey of England, but also a faithfull ouerseer, of the building of this spirituall temple.'[198] The imagery used to frame the male patron's role was also often inherently masculine. Militaristic metaphors, for example, are not uncommon. William Salesbury positioned the dedicatee of his 1550 polemic against the Mass, the Lord Chancellor Richard Rich, as his 'buckeler and shylde of defence', while John Veron used a dedicatory epistle to Sir John Gates to appeal to Christian magistrates to 'take righteousnes for your shield, & weapon yourselfes with upright and uncorrupted iudgemente.'[199] Somerset's military efforts in Scotland, meanwhile, were paralleled with his efforts against God's enemies.[200]

Dedications to women, with the unique exception of queens regnant, naturally required a different approach. Women were likewise recognised as performing an active role in upholding and promoting the faith. Walter Lynne, for example, cited the Duchess of Somerset's

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[198] Phillip Melanchthon, *The iustification of man by faith only,* trans. Nicholas Lesse (London: William Powell, 1548), Aii^{r} [STC 17792]; Heinrich Bullinger, *An holsome antidotus*, Aii^{r}-Bii^{r}, qtd. Avii^{r}-Avii^{v} [STC 4059]. See also John Mardeley, *A declaration of thee power of Gods worde concerning the holy supper of the Lord…* (London: Thomas Raynald, 1548), Aiii^{v}-Av^{r} [STC 17317].

[199] William Salesbury, *The baterie of the Popes Botereulx, commonly called the high* altare (London: [R. Grafton for] Robert Crowley, 1550), Aiii^{r} [STC 21613]; Heinrich Bullinger, *A most necessary & frutefull dialogue, betwene [the] seditious libertin or rebel Anabaptist, & the true obedient christia[n]*, trans. John Veron (Worcester: John Oswen, 1551), Bviii^{v} [STC 4068].

[200] E.g. John Hooper, *A declaration of Christe and of his offyce compylyd* (Zurich: Augustine Fries, 1547), Aii^{r}-Av^{v}. [STC 13745].

'fervent zeale in the furtherynge of goddis trueth', while Nicholas Udall acknowledged Katherine Parr's diligent efforts in aid of the spiritual education 'of al good English people.'[201] However, in place of an emphasis on political authority, we find a consistent framing of female patrons as exemplars of virtue and godliness. Nicholas Lesse's dedication to Katherine Brandon is characteristic. Brandon is described recurrently as a 'right vertuous and gracious' and 'godli and vertuous' lady, endowed with 'heavenly gifts' and 'so great gentleness and lowliness of spirite'; she is, indeed, 'a goodly & a bright spectacle to womanhod: and no small reproch to a great meany of men.'[202] This language permeated conservative dedications as much as evangelical ones. Thomas Paynell, for instance, lauded Princess Mary in 1545 as the 'very mirour & glasse of all good nesse, of all virtue, of all devocion, and perfet fayth'; he cited, in particular, her charity, patience, 'lowly countenance', and her 'wyse and chaste' communication. Mary's mother, Katherine of Aragon, was similarly positioned in Alphonsus de Villa Sancta's 1523 anti-Lutheran tract as '*decus foeminarum et exemplar splendissimum*' ('the ornament of women and most illustrious exemplar').[203] It was (so authors claimed) on account of their 'worthy example' and 'Godly fame' – that is, their spiritual, rather than political authority – that readers (both male and female) would be encouraged to receive and absorb the text's contents.[204] William Thomas's dedication to Anne Herbert makes this particularly explicit: he states that he determined to dedicate the text to a woman – and more especially one who excelled in 'in vertue and bountee' – 'to the entent that men ashamed, thoroughe the vertuouse examples of women, maie be provoked therby to refourme

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[201] Bullinger, et al., *A brief and compendiouse table*, Aii^{v}; Desiderius Erasmus, *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Newe Testamente* (London: Edward Whitchurch, 1548), Aii^{v}.
[202] Aepinus, *A very fruitful & godly exposition*, Aii^{v}-Avi^{v}.
[203] Bernard of Clairvaux, *A compe[n]dius [and] a moche fruytefull treatyse of well liuynge,* ✠iv^{v}; Alphonsus de Villa Sancta, *Problema indulgentiarum quo Lutheri errata dissoluuntur, et theologoru[m] de eisde opinio hactenus apud eruditos uulgata astruitur.* (London: Richard Pynson, 1523), A1^{v} [STC 24729]
[204] Capito, *true beliefe*, Aiii^{r}.

themselves.'[205] In this role, then, female dedicatees were framed as moral and pious exemplars not just to other women, but to men as well.[206] It is perhaps for this reason that, aside from a consistent emphasis on their spiritual devotion, many authors were decidedly vague about the precise virtues embodied by their dedicatees, thus allowing their example to more easily apply to both sexes.

The female dedicatee was also recurrently called upon to perform the role of ideal reader, as authors stressed their 'love and good mind' toward 'good letters', and – in the case of evangelical texts – their 'zeal' for the Word of God. [207] This trope was not uniquely applied to female patrons. Miles Coverdale, for instance, cited Thomas Cromwell's 'studye and pleasure' in the Bible as one reason behind his presentation to the minister of his 1538 New Testament.[208] Yet it received particular stress in dedications to women, as authors drew on the 'ideological and practical link between elite women and vernacular literacy' for rhetorical effect – a link which retained considerable potency, despite the fact that, as we have seen, men were also frequent targets as 'patrons' of translations and vernacular compositions.[209] This link, as Helen Smith has pointed out, could provide authors with a 'convenient motive for textual production', as the female dedicatee's perceived personal interest in devotional literature was positioned as a means by which the text could be brought into the hands of the people.[210] This strategy was deployed with particular effect in cases where a female patron had explicitly requested the initial translation. Gentian Hervet's translation of Erasmus is (as indeed Smith notes) a case in point. Hervet opens his dedication by positioning the project as a product of

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[205] Thomas, *The vanitee of this world*, Aii^{r}-Aiii^{r}.
[206] For a similar argument, see Pender, 'Dispensing Quails', 46.
[207] Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine*, Aiii^{v}-Aiv^{r}; Capito, *true beliefe*, Aii^{r}; Aepinus, *A very fruitful & godly exposition*, Av^{r}; Becon, *The castell of comforte*, Avii^{v}.
[208] Miles Coverdale, trans., *The New Testamen both in Latin and English after the vulgare texte* (Paris: Francis Regnault for Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, 1538) ✠ii^{v} [STC 2817].
[209] Smith, *'Grossly Material Things'*, 67.
[210] *Ibid*., 67-8.

the Countess of Salisbury's 'greatte minde & depe affection' toward learning, especially that 'whiche either excitethe or teachethe vertue and gooddes and concerneth the waye of our saluation'; having been translated *for* her, however, it could now be 'printed and spread abroode' for the benefit of 'euery man.'[211] But the trope was also employed more widely. Walter Lynne, for instance, claimed that he translated the Zurich Bible concordance so that Anne, Duchess of Somerset 'myghte not be destytute of so necessarye an instrumente' in her 'godlye studie.'; as a corollary, her reputation for scriptural study would function as a spur to 'all other whych be studyouse of godly knowledge.' [212]

These gendered elements of dedications are, perhaps, hardly surprising, chiming as they do with what we already understand of early modern gender conceptions, and the practical differences between male and female authority. What is more notable is the way in which this gendered language shifted in line with the religious preoccupations of their composers. While such a shift was hinted at by King, who cursorily linked the 'formulaic praise' of evangelical female dedicatees with the 'emergence of the Reformation iconographical tradition of the "true Christian woman"', it has yet to be adequately explored.[213]

It is now generally accepted that there was little especially new about Protestant conceptions of women, marriage, and the family.[214] Yet it is clear that evangelicals did seek to 'consciously rais[e] the role of wife and mother to a new level of importance', while simultaneously diminishing the value of celibacy (and removing the option of celibate conventual life).[215] Luther was emphatic that the ideal woman was the 'godly mother of the

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[211] Erasmus, *De immensa,* A2^{r}-A2^{v}; Smith, *'Grossly Material Things*', 66-7.
[212] Capito, *true beliefe*, Aii^{v}.
[213] King, 'Patronage and Piety', 52.
[214] Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 40; Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation*, 32-9, 213-22.
[215] Charmarie Jenkins Blaisdell, quoted in Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation*, 38; Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 39. See also Amanda L. Capern, 'Protestant Theology, Spirituality and Evangelicalism', in *The Routledge History of Women in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Amanda L. Capern (London: Routledge, 2019), 263-86.

household', for 'God so created her body that she should be with a man and bear and raise children.'[216] Her particular calling lay in the spiritual education of her offspring: mothers and fathers were as 'apostles, priests, and bishops to their children.'[217] Similar sentiments were expressed by English reformers such as Thomas Becon.[218] In his *Catechism*, for instance, Becon argued that 'it is not only not forbidden, but also most straitly commanded' for women 'to preach and teach in their houses.'[219] These pervasive evangelical ideals filtered, too, into dedicatory epistles.

From at least the 1540s, evangelical authors, translators and publishers began to deploy the imagery of wives and mothers in their dedications to women, not least as analogies for their (real or desired) actions as patrons. William Hugh, in his 1546 dedicatory epistle to Joan Denny, was careful to highlight his patroness's matronly virtues, lauding her as a 'wyfe not unworthye of hym whom god the maker of al honest marriages, hathe gyuen you for youre husbande.' Her patronage of Hugh himself, meanwhile, was equated with motherhood: he claimed that he had 'founde your ladyshyppe…a mother in dede rather than a maystris.'[220] This kind of imagery became increasingly prominent after Edward's accession. Nicholas Lesse, in particular, recurrently positioned his female dedicatees as 'mothers' to his translation projects. He named Anne Seymour, for instance, 'a most Godly mother & setter forth' of his *The minde and iudgement* (1548), 'under whose name it comethe abrode into the handes of the people', thus linking her (as yet only hoped for) patronage to the educative role of the Christian

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[216] Martin Luther, *Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel*, ed. and trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1960), 271; Martin Luther, quoted in Merry Wiesner, 'Luther and Women: The Death of Two Marys', in *Feminist Theology: A Reader*, ed. Ann Loades (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 126.
[217] Martin Luther, 'The Estate of Marriage, 1522', in *Luther on Women: A Sourcebook*, ed. and trans. Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 108.
[218] Thomas Becon, *The Catechism of Thomas Becon*, ed. John Ayre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 340-6.
[219] Becon, *Catechism*, 376.
[220] Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine*, Aiii^{v}-Aiv^{r}.

mother – a role which received particular emphasis in the writings of evangelical reformers.[221] Lesse took this analogy even further in his 1550 dedicatory epistle to Mary Fitzroy: speaking of his unpublished translation of Luther, he noted that 'for like wise as a good mother thynketh it not sufficient to bring forth an infant into thys world, except she norysheth it also, & bryngeth it up to be a man', so a book, once translated, must then be printed in order to be made accessible to 'oure common people'; he claimed that the translation in question was likely to 'perishe…excepte your grace be a good mother to it.'[222]

In other instances, this maternal and uxorial imagery was developed in different directions. More than one author connected female patronage with the act of providing nourishment. Lynne, for example, claimed in his *A briefe collection* (1549) that the 'sycke' would be 'more styred up to taste this comfortable fode and nourishment of theyr soules' if it was sent forth under Anne Seymour's name.[223] Similarly, Lesse, having lauded Katherine Brandon's commitment to spreading the Word of God, claimed that readers 'woulde fech this swete morsel of mete the more gladde & redier at the handes which have ben wont to fede and norishe them…'[224] John Olde's 1549 dedication to Seymour, meanwhile, is positively replete with images of Christian domesticity. The godly woman, he states, 'like a dyligent skilfull *housewife*', employs the 'whole substaunce of her qualities' in the 'dooinges' which 'make to the *furniture* of true religion and the glory of God, suppressing of vice, aduauncement of Christian virtue, and the reliefe of the nedy, especially those of the *householde* of faith…'[225]

Catherine Clarke, locating comparable maternal imagery in dedications to women of the Russell family during Elizabeth's reign, has suggested that it was possibly 'a consequence

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[221] Lambert, The *minde and iudgement*, dedicatory epistle (unpaginated). Similarly: Augustine, *predestination of saints*, Av[v].
[222] St Augustine', *The twelfe steppes of abuses*, Aii[v]-Aiv[r].
[223] Lynne, *A briefe collection*, Aiii[r].
[224]Aepinus, *A very fruitful & godly exposition*, Avi[r].
[225] Erasmus, *The second tome*, Olde's dedication (unpaginated). Emphasis added.

of the male writer's anxiety at the disruption of the gender status quo' that female patronage entailed. By 'invoking the maternal or nursing role of the female dedicatee', authors were thus relegating her to a position as a 'kind of servant', and thus downplaying her contribution.[226] The flourishing of this imagery in the religious turmoil of the mid-Tudor period, however, suggests that we need to look instead to changes in doctrinal emphasis. Positioning female patrons as 'mothers' was not, in itself, an entirely new trope. In his 1509 sermon for Margaret Beaufort's month's mind, for example, Bishop John Fisher spoke of her as a 'moder' to the students of Oxford and Cambridge, both of which she patronised.[227] Yet it is only from the 1540s that it takes its place among the formulaic language of dedicatory epistles, and only then in evangelical texts. Thus it seems clear that we can attribute this shift to the Protestant 'veneration of maternity' outlined above.[228] Similarly, while the 'figurative physiology of reading as eating' was something of a commonplace in early modern literature, and hardly restricted to women, this trope, too, developed additional significance in this period.[229] In line with the examples that have been discussed here, Patricia Pender's study of Katherine Parr and the English *Paraphrases* indicates that this trope took on decidedly gendered implications in Reformation texts, being yoked to feminine virtue, and thus conjuring images of domesticity and the 'holy household'.[230]

That such dedicatory imagery was both the product and promoter of particularly evangelical ideas of Christian womanhood becomes even clearer when we look more closely at dedications appended to conservative texts. These dedications tend to be markedly more sparing in their use of imagery, focusing, as we have seen, on the general praise of feminine

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[226] Clarke, 'Patronage and Literature', 83, 97, 133.
[227] John Fisher, *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester: Part I*, ed. John E.B. Mayor (London: Early English Text Society, 1876), 301.
[228] Capern, *Historical Study of Women*, 220.
[229] Smith, *Grossly Material Things*, 203.
[230] Pender, 'Dispensing Quails', 47-8.

virtue common across dedications to women. Where they do go beyond this, however, it is telling that they often single out for emphasis an ideal conspicuously absent from early evangelical epistles: that of the chaste woman. Chastity, as 'a state…of sexual integrity', was of course not inimical to Protestant conceptions of womanhood; indeed, as the writings of reformers such as Calvin and Becon reveal, it remained pivotal to them.[231] It is doubtful that such writers would have quibbled much with Juan Luis Vives' statement, in his dedication to Katherine of Aragon of *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1523), that 'a woman's only care is chastity' (*pudicitia*).[232] Yet, in the first decades of the Reformation at least, evangelical writers largely shied away from explicitly attributing this virtue to their female dedicatees, perhaps on account of the potential for it to be conflated with the far more problematic issue of celibacy.[233] Certainly, it was this very link which conservative writers showed themselves eager to exploit. This is particularly marked in dedications to Mary prior to her marriage to Philip of Spain. Writers recurrently lauded Mary's pure and chaste existence, often likening her to her divine counterpart, the Virgin Mary.[234] John Proctor, for example, claimed that she approached the 'perfection' of her 'celestiall paterne, the holye Virgin Marye.'[235] In more than one instance, by doing so these authors were clearly advocating the value of celibacy as an alternative to marriage (though they undoubtedly did not seek for Mary herself to maintain this state indefinitely). Thomas Paynell, as Valerie Schutte has shown, used his 1545 translation of (pseudo) Bernard of Clairvaux's *Modus bene vivendi in christianam religionem* to obliquely

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[231] Becon, *Catechism*, 370-7; John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Louis Battles (1960. Reprint, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 407-8; Bonnie Lander Johnson, *Chastity in Early Stuart Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), qtd. 2.
[232] Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, trans. and ed. Charles Fantazzi (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 50.
[233] It is mentioned in just two dedications, and in only one of these is it attributed explicitly to the patron. Hugh, *The troubled mans medicine*, Aiii^{r}; Erasmus, *The first tome,* Aii^{v}.
[234] Schutte, *Mary I*, 87-8; Wizeman, *Theology and Spirituality*, 232-4.
[235] Proctor, *The fal*, Aiii^{v}-Aiv^{r}.

advocate for the religious life, citing Mary as a model of 'pure and virtuous living', and praising her 'long contynuance' in a 'clene' (that is, virginal) life.[236] Thomas Martin, in 1554, similarly used his dedication to Mary to push forth his text's argument against clerical marriage and in 'defense of virginitie': her continued virginity, he argued, countered the 'brutish opinion' that 'no wight can live chast.'[237] Unsurprisingly, after Mary's marriage the emphasis on chastity mostly gave way to a more generic focus on her virtue.[238] Importantly, however, it did not abate entirely. In the dedicatory epistle of his *The agreement of the holye fathers* (1555), John Angel refers to Mary more than once as 'this noble Judith.'[239] The biblical figure was a widow, not a virgin. However, she had been held up as an example of chastity since at least the fourth century.[240] St. Jerome, in the Vulgate, stressed that Judith's 'chastity was joined to her virtue, so that she knew no man all the days of her life, after the death of Manasses her husband.'[241] Indeed, a number of medieval and early modern commentators positioned Judith as a 'precursor' to the Virgin Mary.[242] Thus while Mary's marriage put an end to the image of her as an exemplar of virginity, she could still be effectively framed by conservative authors as a model of chaste womanhood.

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[236] Bernard of Clairvaux, *A compe[n]dius [and] a moche fruytefull treatyse of well liuynge,* ✠v^{r}- ✠v^{v}; Schutte, *Mary I*, 44.

[237] Thomas Martin, *A traictise declaryng and plainly prouyng, that the pretensed marriage of priestes, and professed persones, is no mariage, but altogether vnlawful, and in all ages, and al countreies of Christendome, bothe forbidden, and also punished* (London: Robert Caly, 1554), Aiv^{r}-Aiv^{v} [STC 17517]. This tract has also been attributed to Stephen Gardiner.

[238] E.g. Huggarde, *A mirrour of loue*, Aii^{r}; *idem*, *The displaying of the Protestantes*, unpaginated; Tunstall, *Certaine godly and deuout prayers*, unpaginated.

[239] Angel, *The agrement of the holye fathers*, Aiii^{r}, Av^{v}.

[240] See e.g. Kelley Harness, *Echoes of Women's Voices: Music, Art, and Female Patronage in Early Modern Florence* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), esp. 114; Elena Ciletti, 'Patriarchal Ideology in the Renaissance Iconography of Judith', in *Refiguring Women: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 35-70.

[241] Jth. 16:26 Vulgate. '*Erat enim virtuti castitas adjuncta, ita ut non cognosceret virum omnibus diebus vitæ suæ, ex quo defunctus est Manasses vir eius*.'

[242] See e.g. Kathleen M. Llewellyn, *Representing Judith in Early Modern French Literature* (2014. Reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 121-2; Harness, *Echoes*, 114.

Dedications to Elizabeth I, while undoubtedly a special case, provide further support for this view of an evangelical/conservative divide in the depiction of female dedicatees. As Tara Wood has pointed out, images of Elizabeth as the 'Virgin Queen' are scarce in book dedications until the final years of her reign – when it became evident that she would not marry – and even then are typically interposed with the more common images of her as nurse and/or mother.[243] It hardly seems coincidental that '[o]ne of the few early examples praising Elizabeth's virginity comes from a *Catholic* propagandist'. Addressing his *Hatchet of Heresies* to her from exile in 1565, Richard Shacklock praised the Queen as 'a most cleare, bright, and unspotted virgin.'[244]

What this suggests, then, is that – in marked contrast to the actual mechanisms of literary patronage – the way in which the female patron was fashioned in the dedications of early Reformation texts was fundamentally shaped by both their femininity, and by the religious leanings and agendas of the epistle's author. While tropes of affection, humility, patronal worth, and so on recur regardless of the dedicatee's gender, in other respects presentations to men and women called for different strategies. For the latter, it was primarily their Christian virtue and pious commitment to (vernacular) learning which were framed as providing a conduit between text and audience. In this way, the female dedicatee was enlisted as a model for the reader. While such aspects were not absent from dedications to men, in these it was, unsurprisingly, the prestige and authority arising from their socio-political position which tended to take centre stage. Perhaps more importantly, as literary producers sought to lend their voice to the shaping of English religion, the didactic function performed by the female patron was increasingly channelled along distinct doctrinal lines. In this climate of

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[243] Tara Sue Wood, '"To the Most Godlye, Virtuos, and Mightye Princes Elizabeth": Identity and Gender in the Dedications to Elizabeth I' (Ph.D., University of Arizona, 2008), 117-152, esp. 146-49.
[244] Wood, 'Dedications to Elizabeth I', 147-148. Emphasis added.

religious flux, dedications to women became a site at which ideas about Christian womanhood could be contested.

V. Conclusion

David Bergeron concluded his foundational 1981 essay on 'Women as Patrons in English Renaissance Drama' by asserting that '[w]ithout understanding the role of women as patrons we possess a partial and incomplete picture of theatrical activity in this its richest period.'[245] It is clear from the evidence presented here that the very same applies to the religious book trade during the early English Reformation. The total number of women involved was not large; it was undeniably an avenue of patronage open to relatively few. However, it was nevertheless a sphere in which women – as wives, widows, or professed nuns – were able to exercise quite considerable agency. Through their efforts as patrons, as well as their appropriation as such by authors and printers, they exerted a marked and significant influence on the publication and dissemination of religious literature in England.

Although claims for the importance of women's contribution to evangelical print are not new, this chapter has placed them on a decidedly firmer foundation. By situating the texts associated with women within the context of the broader book trade, it has shown that this contribution was both qualitatively and quantitatively significant. It has shown, too, that women – Anne Seymour, Katherine Brandon and Mary Fitzroy most prominent among them – were integral to the networks which connected members of the reformist printing community during the reign of Edward VI. At the same time, this chapter has also demonstrated that female patronage likewise had a notable part to play in the production of more conservative literature.

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[245] David M. Bergeron, 'Women as Patrons of English Renaissance Drama', in *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 290.

Far from representing a 'radical shift' in patronage practices, the efforts of the 'Protestant patronesses' instead owed much to the patterns established by their Catholic predecessors – and continued by their doctrinally conservative contemporaries. The theological emphases naturally differed, but across the spectrum of religious belief women were intimately involved with the production of vernacular devotional texts aimed at a wide readership. Thus, even as successive Tudor regimes repeatedly disrupted the book trade by redefining the bounds of censorship, women's literary patronage was marked by striking continuities.

We can likewise identify significant parallels between the literary patronage of men and women during this period. Men, as the primary holders of political power, and perceived as more legitimately concerned with worldly matters, were predictably far more likely than women to be addressed in secular texts. However, when it comes to religious literature, the distinctions are considerably less marked. Both sexes were associated with pastoral, devotional texts, and both with works of religious controversy. The mechanisms of patronage also bear similarities. Both men and women offered socio-political capital and material support; both, at times, were direct participants in the process of publication.

It is only when we turn to the rhetoric of dedications – to the constructed roles of the literary patron – that the blurred lines between Catholic/Protestant and male/female patronage really begin to sharpen and become distinct. Women patrons were frequently framed in dedications as exemplars of Christian womanhood and lauded for their commitment to the faith – loaded praise, in the fraught circumstances of the Reformation. These paratexts, too often overlooked or dismissed, thus became a battleground for gender ideology, and for the future of English religion. Women were crucial to the Reformation book trade – and accordingly to the dissemination of religious knowledge – not only in their active sponsorship of texts and their producers, but in the didactic function they so effectively served.

Literary patronage was something of a special case in terms of women's religious activism, both with regard to the comparatively limited participation and in the unique importance of the imaginary. The women involved were also atypical in their often firm and open adherence to a particular idea of what the English Church should look like. To further explore the complex relationship it suggests between gender, faith, and patronage we need to turn to other, more widely exercised forms of support, and to the contexts of the parish and community. These themes will be taken up in the following chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

'At my presentation': Female Patrons and Ecclesiastical Benefices

In the *ODNB* entry for the controversial clergyman John Addison, sometime chaplain to Bishop John Fisher, Richard Rex writes that 'by 1536 [Addison] had received the plum rectory of Loughborough … from the earl of Huntingdon (perhaps at royal instigation).'[1] Here, Rex was undoubtedly following W. G. Dimock Fletcher, who made the same claim in his 1881 account of the rectors of that parish.[2] Yet the earl of Huntingdon was not in possession of the advowson at this time. Rather, it was held by Elizabeth de Vere, Dowager Countess of Oxford, and the register of Bishop John Longland of Lincoln explicitly states that it was her that presented Addison to the benefice.[3] This is not the only act of ecclesiastical patronage in sixteenth-century England which has been misattributed to a man. Anthony Upton, for instance, states in his study of the parochial clergy of Coventry that it is unclear '[w]hether Edward VI presented John Olde to Cubbington in 1549 because of his protestant credentials, or because he was chaplain to earl Ferrers.'[4] As we have seen, however, Olde himself attributed his presentation to the influence of Anne Seymour, Duchess of Somerset.[5]

These misattributions are indicative of a broader failure to adequately integrate women into the history of ecclesiastical patronage in late medieval and early modern England. Indeed, in the existing scholarship on the topic, 'lay patron' is effectively synonymous with 'lay*man*.' Mention of any contribution by laywomen – either as patrons or as intermediaries in patronage

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[1] Richard Rex, 'Addison, John (d. 1540)', in *ODNB*.
[2] William George Dimock Fletcher, *The Rectors of Loughborough* (Loughborough: H. Wills, 1881), 16.
[3] LRO DIOC/Reg/27, f. 161r. de Vere had presented to the benefice before: *idem*, f.149v.
[4] Anthony Arthur Upton, 'Parochial Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry, c. 1500-1600' (Ph.D., University of Leicester, 2003), 134.
[5] See Chapter One, 56.

suits – is, for the most part, passing or entirely absent.[6] Accordingly, the overall impression afforded by this literature is that women intruded only rarely into what was, fundamentally, a male domain. This is not an unreasonable assumption, given that advowsons were regarded as property.[7]

Yet is becoming increasingly clear that gentle and noble women did, in fact, have the capacity to exercise and influence ecclesiastical patronage. This capacity has been recognised in the literature on early modern women for some time. In her 1991 study of the households of Queens Mary and Elizabeth, for instance, Charlotte Merton noted that some women 'did … hold advowsons in their own right', and that, more broadly, those at court 'were involved in the sale or lease of advowsons on a regular basis because of their general role as brokers.'[8] However, it is only in the past decade that scholars have begun to examine women's ecclesiastical patronage and the motivations behind it in any depth. In her 2009 monograph, Melissa Franklin Harkrider pointed out that Katherine Brandon (née Willoughby), Duchess of Suffolk, and several other female members of 'Lincolnshire's godly aristocracy' presented to multiple benefices throughout the sixteenth century, and in doing so helped shape 'the religious atmosphere of their local communities.'[9] Brandon's own presentations, Harkrider suggests, reflect both a continued loyalty to longstanding familial clients, 'even if they did not share her

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[6] E.g. O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage', 137-155; Tim Cooper, *The Last Generation of the English Catholic Clergy* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999); Guy Fitch Lytle, 'Religion and the Lay Patron in Reformation England', in *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 65-114; Nigel Saul*, Lordship and Faith : The English Gentry and the Parish Church in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 245-54; Peter Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1969). Studies which make brief mention of female patrons include: A. K. McHardy, 'Some Patterns of Ecclesiastical Patronage in the Later Middle Ages' in *Studies in Clergy and Ministry in Medieval England*, ed. David M. Smith (York: University of York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1991), 34; Jane Freeman, 'The Distribution and Use of Ecclesiastical Patronage in the Diocese of Durham, 1558-1640', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham , 1494-1660*, ed. David Marcombe (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1987), 152-172.

[7] Cooper, *Last Generation*, 43-5; O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86.

[8] Merton, 'The women who served', 216-221. See also Hanawalt, 'Lady Honor', 206.

[9] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 20, 84-91, 125-132 (qtd. 89).

views', and, increasingly, a desire to advance evangelical clergy.[10] Gemma Allen has similarly highlighted Anne Bacon and Elizabeth Hoby Russell's preferment of learned and godly clergy during their widowhoods, some of whom drew the ire of the Elizabethan ecclesiastical authorities for their nonconformity, as well as Mildred Cecil's attempts to broker clerical presentations for godly clients.[11] Most recently, Nicola Clark has examined the ecclesiastical patronage of the rather more conservative Anne de Vere (née Howard), Countess of Oxford, finding that her presentations 'generally conformed to the religious standards of each given regime.'[12] Other members of the family, Clark notes, acted as intermediaries in patronage suits, petitioning Thomas Cromwell in an attempt to obtain benefices for their clients.[13]

Cumulatively, these studies are suggestive of the significance of laywomen's ecclesiastical patronage, as well as the complex and variable relationship between presentations and religious affiliation. However, their narrow focus on specific individuals, and on the relationship between presentations and religious affiliation, leaves open to question just how widespread and influential laywomen's involvement was, as well as what it suggests, more broadly, about the priorities which governed their presentations. This chapter approaches the topic with a much wider lens, examining English laywomen's engagement in ecclesiastical patronage from a holistic, as opposed to individualistic, perspective. In doing so, it demonstrates that this engagement was considerably more extensive than has previously been recognised. It also provides a salutary caution that clerical presentations were only rarely guided by a consistent religious agenda; preferment was the product of a range of competing pressures and obligations, and for many patrons spiritual concerns were very much secondary.

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[10] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 88.
[11] Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 176-185.
[12] Clark, 'A 'Conservative' Family?', 328-333. See also the (largely similar) account in her book: *Gender, Family, and Politics,* 142-60.
[13] Nicola Clark, 'Dynastic Politics: Five Women of the Howard Family During the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547' (Ph.D., Royal Holloway, University of London, 2013), 46-51.

This chapter also aims to bring some confessional balance to the literature on clerical patronage. Scholars, and not just those working on women, have been primarily concerned with the presentations made by Protestants, particularly those of the 'hotter sort.'[14] With the notable exception of Sarah Bastow's study of the Catholic gentry in Yorkshire, advowsons are rarely mentioned in context of the English laity's efforts to preserve, promote, and reform Catholicism.[15] Via two case studies, this chapter demonstrates that lay patrons with conservative sympathies could be just as active as their evangelical counterparts in using advowsons to promote those who shared their religious views.

This chapter is divided into several parts. The first three are foundational, outlining, respectively, the mechanisms of the ecclesiastical patronage system and women's role therein; the source material and methodology used; and the overarching patterns of patronage which this material reveals. The remaining sections provide a close, qualitative analysis of the data. First, the chapter examines the motivations behind women's ecclesiastical patronage, arguing that kinship, good lordship, religion, and other socio-political concerns all shaped its exercise. It then develops these themes through the aforementioned case studies of two conservative women. The first, on Lady Anne Berkeley (née Savage), shows that – even for the most devout patrons – the pursuit of a religious agenda through ecclesiastical presentations was never and could not be single-minded; nevertheless, these presentations could be employed as part of a broader effort to maintain 'traditional' religion. The second details Jane Wriothesley (née Cheney), Countess of Southampton's similar preferment of conservative priests, and argues that in some respects widows were uniquely well placed to establish and pursue a distinct

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[14] E.g. Cross, 'Noble Patronage'; *idem*, 'An Example of Lay Intervention', 273-282; O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86-104; Sheils, *Puritans.*

[15] Sarah L. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 135-162. There has been some work on the patronage of conservative ecclesiastics, e.g. Margaret Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: The Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1521-1547* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

patronage policy. A final section addresses the implications of laywomen's ecclesiastical patronage in the broader context of the English Reformation. While this task is greatly complicated by the scarcity of evidence, it is nevertheless apparent that women, through the priests they presented, could have a tangible impact on the religious character of local communities, and indeed of the church as a whole.

I. *Jus Patronatus*: The Right of Patronage in Early Modern England

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explain in any detail the legal and technical aspects of ecclesiastical patronage, a brief overview of its workings will aid in situating laywomen's involvement therein.[16] As it pertained to the laity, advowson refers the right of a patron to present to the diocesan ordinary, most often the bishop, a candidate for appointment to a vacant benefice. Despite its spiritual significance, to the lay patron the advowson was first and foremost a 'treasured property right.'[17] This is attested by frequent disputes as to who rightfully held *jus patronatus* for a given benefice.[18] As property, advowsons could be bought or sold, or bequeathed in wills. A patron might also grant to another individual – often for a fee – the right of next presentation to a benefice; that individual became patron *pro hac vice* (for this turn).[19] This practice provided those of somewhat humbler means, such as yeoman, with some access to ecclesiastical patronage. For instance, in 1547 Alice Midgley, the widow

[16] A great deal of research has been devoted to these aspects. See e.g. Rosemary O'Day, 'The Law of Patronage in Early Modern England', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 26, no. 3 (1975): 247-60; Peter M. Smith, 'The Advowson: The History and Development of a Most Peculiar Property', *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 5, no. 26 (2000): 320-339.
[17] O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 260.
[18] O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 256-8.
[19] For a discussion of grants of next presentation, see O'Day, *English Clergy*, 105-112.

of a minor landholder, presented to the vicarage of Aldbrough, East Riding, as patron *per hac vice* by virtue of a grant from Kirkstall Abbey.[20]

The patron formally requested the institution of their candidate in writing. The submission of a deed of presentation did not, however, guarantee institution. Although the patron had the right to nominate, the formal admission of the candidate was at the ordinary's discretion. The bishop was responsible for examining the candidate, and had the right to refuse to institute and induct them if they were found unsuitable, due to age, insufficient learning, simony, moral unfitness and so on.[21] Accordingly, there were limits on the patron's control over the process, though both patron and candidate had legal recourse in the event of refusal, and in any case the minimum standards candidates had to meet were, in practice, relatively low.[22] More pertinently for our purposes, the ordinary also had the right to deprive incumbents of their livings for misconduct or contravention of canon law. This right that was responsible for an enormous wave of vacancies in 1554, as the Marian episcopacy systematically deprived married clergy.[23] Persons other than the bishop might also seek to shape the patron's exercise of patronage. The State Papers, for instance, abound with petitions relating to vacant benefices: from hopeful clerics themselves, or, more commonly, from individuals of some influence attempting to broker preferment for a client or kinsman.[24] Clerical presentations were thus firmly embedded within the wider patronage system, and were entwined with broader social, political and religious concerns.

Laywomen occur in the records of ecclesiastical patronage in a number of contexts. In the episcopal registers, they appear as both patrons *de jure* and patrons *pro hac vice*, alone and

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[20] BI Abp. Reg. 29, f. 24r; BI Prob. Reg. 11, f. 43r.; BI Prob. Reg. 14, f. 117r.
[21] O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 248, 25; Smith, 'Advowson', 335.
[22] O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 253-6; Smith, 'Advowson', 329-330.
[23] O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 248-9, 251; Helen L. Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation: Precedent, Policy and Practice* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 186-191.
[24] See e.g. section IV below.

in conjunction with others. There were two main ways in which a woman might obtain advowsons *de jure*. Most commonly, they were held by widows who had been granted one or more manors – along with their appurtenances, including advowsons – by their late husbands. For example, Sir Robert Clere (d.1529) bequeathed to his wife, Alice, for the duration of her life his 'place in saynte Edmund parrishe in Norwich with the advouson of the churche of the said sainte Edmundes' (St Edmund the King and Martyr of Fisher-Gate). [25] Alice presented to the benefice at least once during the 1530s.[26] Most often, these properties formed part of their jointures and/or dowers, though some men granted their widows lands over and above this entitlement.[27] When Lady Anne Grey presented to Woodford in 1541, it was noted that she was patron as relict of Richard Clement, in right of her dowry (*iure dotis sue*).[28] It was also quite common for women to inherit advowsons in cases where a testator lacked a male heir. Elizabeth and Anne Rodney, for instance, obtained the advowson of Saltford, Somerset, as heiresses of their father, John Rodney of Backwell, esquire; they presented to the benefice in 1554 and 1556.[29] Anne Broughton (later Cheney) and Katherine Broughton Howard inherited several advowsons in the diocese of Lincoln upon the death of their brother. The episcopal registers record a number of presentations made to these benefices in the 1530s by Anne and her brother-in-law, William Howard, '*iure domine katerine uxoris*' (in right of his wife Lady Katherine).[30] A laywoman might also purchase or be granted lands in her own right, and thus obtain the patronage rights of any appendant benefices.[31] For instance, in March 1558, Queen

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[25] TNA PROB 11/24/84.
[26] Francis Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, vol. 4, *The History of the City and County of Norwich, Part II*, 2nd ed. (London: W. Miller, 1806), 406.
[27] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 132.
[28] LRO DIOC/Reg/27, f.144v.
[29] TNA PROB 11/33/82 (written 1548; proved 1550); Henry Maxwell-Lyte, ed., *The Registers of Thomas Wolsey, John Clerke, William Knyght amd Gilbert Bourne* (Frome and London: Somerset Record Society, 1940), 131, 145.
[30] LRO DIOC/Reg/27, ff. 216v, 241v, 243r, 265r, 268v.
[31] For widows' purchase of lands, see e.g. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 150-1.

Mary gifted Anne Seymour, dowager duchess of Somerset, the manor of Hanworth, Middlesex, for the term of her life.[32] Such cases were, however, comparatively rare.

Women were thus fully able to exercise ecclesiastical patronage autonomously and in their own right. Nevertheless, this autonomy was conditional upon their marital status. In accordance with the law of coverture, where heiresses married, or widows remarried, their property – including advowsons – typically came under the administration of their husbands.[33] It is largely for this reason that when laywomen appear in the records of ecclesiastical presentations, it is so frequently alongside their spouse. While women do occasionally appear as joint patrons despite having no personal claim to the benefice,[34] their presence typically signals that the advowson was theirs by right, even when the fact is not made explicit. These spousal presentations take two nominally different forms in the records. Both spouses are either recognised as joint patrons, or the husband – as in the case of William Howard above – is recorded as presenting in right of his wife. However, these distinctions are not necessarily a reliable indicator of the extent of female agency. For example, after Katherine Willoughby Brandon, dowager duchess of Suffolk, remarried in c.1552, her husband Richard Bertie presented several times in her name.[35] Yet as Melissa Harkrider has shown, Willoughby's correspondence indicates that the livings, and the couple's patronage more broadly, were still firmly under her control.[36] Moreover, regardless of the way in which the institutions were

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[32] *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Philip and Mary*, 4 vols (1937-1939. Reprint, Kraus: Nendeln, Lichtenstein, 1970), vol. 4, 298; LMA DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, f. 208r.

[33] Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (Routledge: London and New York, 1993), 24-6.

[34] E.g. Henry, Lord Stafford, and his wife Ursula (née Pole) presented to Worthen in Shropshire in 1545. The manor and advowson had been granted to the Staffords in 1533. A. T. Bannister, *Diocese of Hereford Institutions, etc. (A.D. 1539-1900)* (Hereford: Wilson and Phillips for the Cantilupe Society, 1923), 4; Lancelot John Lee and William Phillips, 'Notes on the Parish of Worthen and Caus Castle', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 3rd ser., 6 (1906): 97.

[35] E.g. LRO DIOC/Reg/28, ff. 39r, 111v, 115r.

[36] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 126.

recorded in the episcopal registers, the signatures of both husband and wife typically appear on the presentation deed.[37]

Laywomen's involvement in ecclesiastical patronage was not restricted to benefices which they held *de jure*. Both wives and widows recurrently appear among the ranks of brokers interceding with contacts at Court or in the localities in an effort to secure livings for their clerical associates.[38] In addition, wives were not uncommonly approached for intercession with their husbands. The priest David Raynold, for instance, having heard that Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle held the advowson of St. James in Dover *pro hac vice*, beseeched his wife, Honor, 'to obtain my said lord's favour to present me to the said parsonage at the next vacation thereof.'[39]

As mentioned, women also appear as *per hac vice* patrons. Typically, this was either jointly with their spouse, or – most often – as the widow and/or executrix of a man who had purchased or been granted the right of next presentation. For instance, in 1542 Joan Tubbe presented to the church of Widcombe, Bath, as relict of her husband, to whom the next presentation had been conveyed by Henry, Earl of Bridgewater.[40] It does not seem to have been at all common for women to engage in such transactions alone; they are far more often found on the other side of the transaction, granting out the right of next presentation to benefices which they held *de jure*.[41]

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[37] E.g. LRO, PD/1532/22, LRO, PD/1532/23, LRO, PD/1552/30; WRO, b 732.4 BA 2337/2, 89; WRO, 732.4 BA 2337/3, 196, 197, 200.
[38] See section IV below.
[39] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 5:101-2.
[40] Maxwell-Lyte, *Registers*, 97.
[41] See section IV below.

II. Sources and Methodology

The vast majority of our information about ecclesiastical patronage in England comes from episcopal registers, which provide the core source material for this chapter. Amongst the eclectic range of ecclesiastical business documented within these registers are records of the institutions made to benefices within the diocese. These entries typically report the date of institution, the reason for the vacancy of the benefice, and the names of the person instituted, the patron/s, and the previous incumbent. The registers are not without their limitations. At times, there are evident gaps within the record, and occasionally entire registers have been lost; pieces of information, such as the cause of vacancy, may also be missing from individual entries.[42] Any figures obtained from an analysis of these registers are thus inevitably only indicative, rather than exact. Nevertheless, they remain the single most important source for ecclesiastical patronage, and are sufficiently complete to allow some assessment of the patterns of patronage within a diocese.

As an examination of all English dioceses is beyond the scope of this thesis, a representative sample was selected. The registers of ten dioceses were analysed, in either original, printed, or calendared form: London, Worcester, York, Lincoln, Peterborough (created from part of the diocese of Lincoln in 1541), Durham, Winchester, Bath and Wells, Hereford, and Ely. Institutions to all of these dioceses *sede vacante* were also examined.[43] These ten dioceses are drawn from across the geographical breadth of England (see figure 6), resulting in a sample that encompasses a range of vastly different environments: from rural to

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[42] For an overview of the material available, see David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales: A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of Episcopacy in 1646* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981).

[43] The two archbishops held the right to administer the spiritualties of a vacant see within their respective provinces. In the case of archiepiscopal vacancies, the chapter of the Canterbury or York cathedral took on this role.

urban; from the small and densely-populated parishes of London to the large and scattered parishes of the north; from the east, with its proximity to the Continent, to the Welsh marches. This diversity both allows for some assessment of regional differences, and ensures that the broader conclusions reached are sufficiently representative of England as a whole. Supplementary material from other dioceses, most notably Norwich, has also been utilised where available. From these records, a database of 548 institutions involving laywomen (excluding queens regnant) was compiled for the period from c.1530 to 1558. Included are 294 cases in which a laywoman was sole patron; and 211 cases where they presented jointly with another individual (most often a spouse), or where a spouse presented in their wife's right. The remaining forty-three entries mention women in other contexts, most commonly as the rightful holders of an advowson who had granted the right of next presentation to another.

The task of determining the specific circumstances surrounding any one of these instances of patronage is fraught with methodological difficulties. As Tim Cooper has noted, 'the most we can usually discern … is that an individual clerk was presented to a particular living by a named patron. The process by which he came to the attention of the patron, and the qualities which might have made him an attractive proposition remain, in all but a minority of cases, elusive.'[44] The religious beliefs of those involved, and their role in shaping patronage decisions, are often particularly obscure. It can be difficult, moreover, to know whether clerical nominees were chosen by the patron alone or on the recommendation of another individual, and to gauge a wife's influence in presentations made while her husband was still alive.[45] Nevertheless, it is possible in a sufficient number of cases to piece together enough information from other sources – including visitation records, presentation deeds, wills, and the State Papers – to reach some tenable conclusions about the impulses which shaped the decisions made by

[44] Cooper, *Last Generation*, 40.
[45] Clark 'A 'Conservative' Family?', 329-330; Allen, *Cooke Sisters*, 168, 176.

particular patrons, about the qualities of the incumbents themselves, and about the relationship between the two parties. In addition, letters from the State Papers and other collections provide insight into the women's involvement in ecclesiastical patronage as brokers and intermediaries in patronage suits. Before discussing these issues, however, something should first be said about the larger patterns of patronage which emerge from an analysis of the episcopal registers.

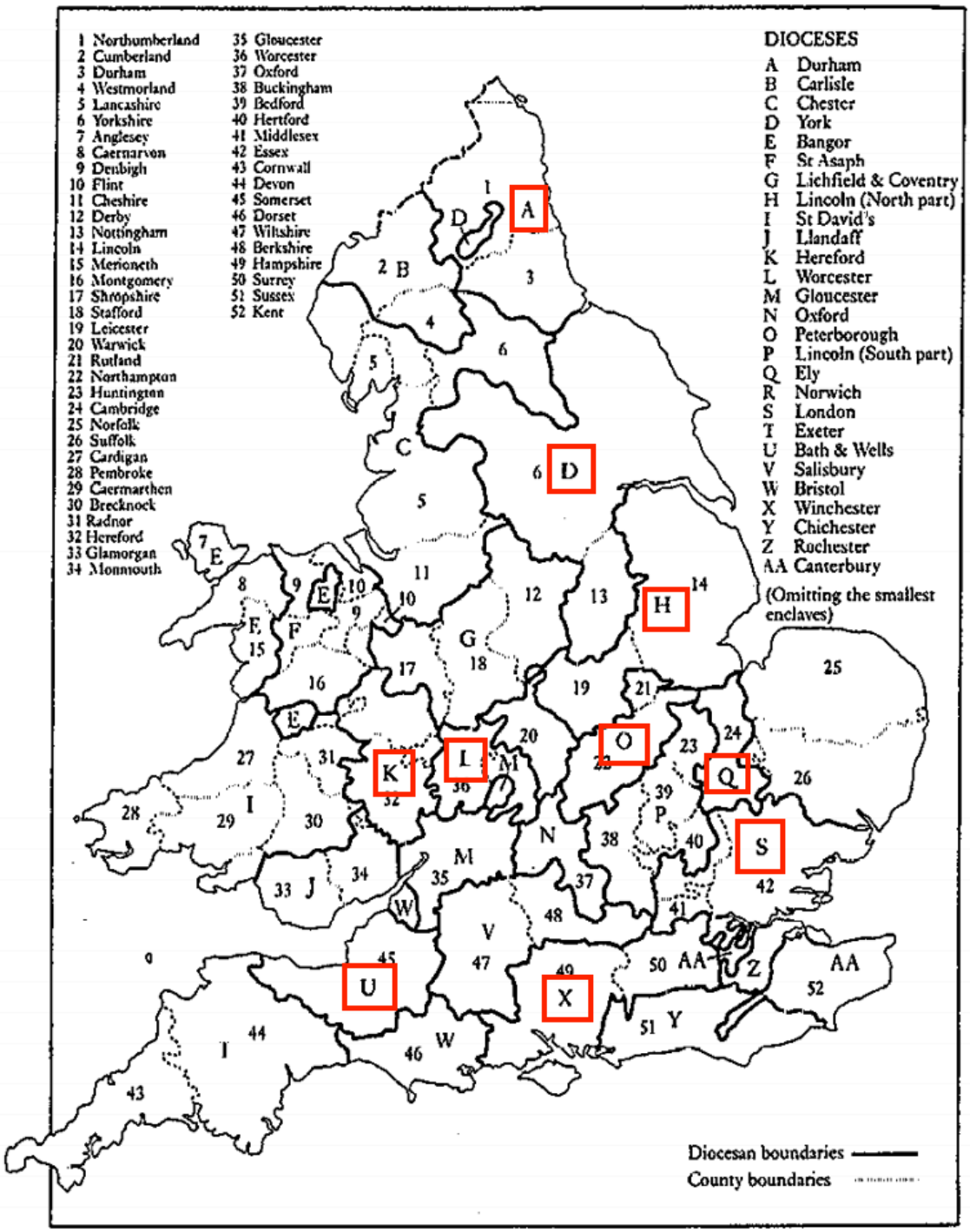

Figure 6

The Dioceses of England and Wales, c. 1550[46]

[46] Image from A. Burns, *The Diocesan Revival in the Church of England, c. 1800-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 158. Dioceses analysed for this chapter are marked in red.

III. Patterns of Patronage

Ecclesiastical patronage was widely distributed in early sixteenth-century England, held – in varying proportions – in the hands of bishops, clergymen, religious orders, corporations and educational colleges, churches, monarchs, and members of the laity.[47] Prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, monasteries and convents collectively held a particularly vast amount of patronage power.[48] Even despite the frequency with which they leased out rights of next presentation, religious houses were responsible for a sizeable proportion of presentations right up to the suppressions.[49] In both the dioceses of Winchester and Durham – at opposite ends of the country – they were behind approximately 25% of presentations between 1531 and 1538. The Dissolution thus had a monumental impact on patterns of patronage across England, as these formerly ecclesiastical advowsons were transferred to the Crown; from there, many of them made their way into the hands to the laity by gift or sale.[50] To quote Richard Rex, 'for the first time' parochial patronage became 'predominantly lay rather than ecclesiastical.'[51] In the diocese of Winchester, for example, the Crown and the laity made 1.8% and 46% of presentations respectively prior to 1539, accounting for just under half of total presentations recorded in the episcopal registers ; after the Dissolution, the percentages rose to 18.3% and 54.2% respectively, representing an enormous 72.5% of total presentations. The Reformation, then, markedly increased the patronage power in lay hands.

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[47] Corporations include the London livery companies and city corporations. Educational colleges include the university colleges and other educational institutions, such as Eton. When compiling figures, collegiate churches which lacked a distinctive educational component were included under 'other ecclesiastical'.

[48] Margaret Bowker, 'The Henrician Reformation and the Parish Clergy', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. Christopher Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 84-5.

[49] For the tendency of monasteries to grant out their patronage rights, see e.g. Upton, 'Parochial Clergy', 146.

[50] Rex, *Henry VIII*, 54; Bowker, 'Henrician Reformation', 84-5; Upton, 'Parochial Clergy', 151; O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage', 140.

[51] Rex, *Henry VIII*, 54.

What, though, of the patronage power held specifically by laywomen? The proportion of presentations made by women could vary quite considerably between dioceses. In the diocese of Durham, for instance, just two presentations involving women (0.9% of the total) appear in the Register of Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall (1530-1559): in 1532 Elizabeth Killinghall presented to Middleton St. George as sole patron, and in 1543 Thomas Wymbyshe presented to Elsden in right of his wife, Elizabeth, who had inherited the advowson.[52] Undoubtedly, this was in part due to the considerable overlap between the diocesan boundaries and the County Palatine of Durham, ruled by the Bishop of Durham as prince-bishop. As Jane Freeman has noted, the 'most striking feature of the distribution of advowsons … in the diocese is the predominance of episcopal patronage.'[53] Tunstall is recorded as collating to benefices or other ecclesiastical positions 104 times during his episcopacy, accounting for 46% of total presentations (see figure 7).[54] This far overshadows the proportion of ecclesiastical patronage exercised by the bishops of other dioceses, and meant that – when presentations by other clerics are taken into account – patronage in Durham remained predominantly ecclesiastical after the Dissolution.[55] While the number of presentations made by individual members of the laity did increase, it remained comparatively small, accounting for 14.3% of total presentations between 1531 and 1538 (10 presentations), and 21.8% between 1539 and 1559 (34 presentations).[56] Even so, however, women's contribution was particularly limited.

The diocese of Durham, however, seems to have been something of an anomaly. Laywomen exercised considerably greater patronage in other sees. In Bath and Wells, for

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[52] Gladys Hinde, ed, *The Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall Bishop of Durham 1530-59 and James Pilkington Bishop of Durham 1561-76* (Durham: Surtees Society, 1952), 12-13, 81.
[53] Freeman, 'Distribution and Use', 154.
[54] Tunstall accounts for 41.4% of presentations made prior to 1539, and 48% of those made thereafter.
[55] See figures 9 and 11.
[56] This figure excludes the four presentations by lay corporations, and the 26 made by the Crown between 1531 and 1559.

instance, women were involved in 4.2% (22) of recorded presentations across the period, accounting for 7.1% of total lay presentations (see figure 10).[57] Just under half of these presentations were made solely by female patrons. In Winchester, meanwhile, laywomen's presence is even more notable: they occur as patrons in 6.2% (37) of the total presentations noted in the registers, and were involved in a rather substantial 11.5% of lay presentations (see figure 12). The figures for Hereford are similar, at 6.6% and 12% respectively (see figure 14). It is particularly notable that, in Winchester, presentations made by women alone outnumber those in which both male and female patrons are recorded: of the thirty-seven presentations involving women, twenty-two (59.4%) were made solely by female patrons. Nor was Winchester the only diocese in which this was the case. In London, where members of the royal family held particular sway, 12.8% (82) of total lay presentations involved women (see figure 16). 64% (46) of the candidates were presented by a laywoman alone; even when royalty are excluded, the percentage remains high at 57%.

A number of women presented multiple times and/or to multiple benefices throughout the period. For example, in London, Elizabeth de Vere, Countess of Oxford presented eight times between 1530 and her death in 1537, and at least a further three times in Norwich diocese from 1527. In Winchester diocese, Jane Wriothesley, Countess of Southampton, presented to five different benefices between December 1552 and March 1558.[58] But advowsons were not merely concentrated in the hands of a few. In Winchester, thirty different women acted as either

[57] It should be noted that the institution records for Bath and Wells in the period considered by this study are incomplete. There are no institutions documented between 1534 and 1541, and the register for the episcopate of William Barlow (February 1548 to autumn 1553) has not survived.

[58] LMA DL/A/A/006/M509531/011, ff. 15r, 18r, 21v, 22r, 35r, 36v, 37r; Herbert Chitty, ed., *Registra Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynet Episcoporum Wintoniensium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930), 136; W. H. Frere, ed., *Registrum Johannis Whyte, Episcopi Wintoniensis* (London: Canterbury and York Society, 1914), 18, 21, 22; Francis Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of Norfolk*, vol. 1, *The Hundreds of Diss, Giltcross and Shropham*, 2nd ed. (London: William Miller, 1805), 100-1; *idem*, vol. 2 (London: William Miller, 1805), 169.

sole or joint patrons in thirty-seven presentations across this period; in London, forty-seven laywomen, with or without their spouses, collectively presented eighty-two times. This confirms the relatively widespread participation of gentle- and noblewomen in ecclesiastical patronage.

Indeed, while these figures represent the actual patronage exercised by women – at least as it is documented in the ecclesiastical records – it is worth noting that their potential patronage power was in fact much greater. The longevity of some incumbents meant that a patron might wait many years before the chance to present arose. Harkrider has noted, for instance, that Katherine Willoughby 'appointed to only half' of the benefices under her control during the 1540s and 1550s.[59] Even where a vacancy did arise, more than one widow temporarily alienated advowsons under her control. In the diocese of Winchester, Alice Polsted and Alice Gorfyn granted the rights of next presentation to the benefices of Wonersh and Warnford respectively to laymen.[60] In other cases, the female patron died before a vacancy occurred or could be filled. Thus John Tamworth, esquire, presented to the benefice of Amwell, Hertfordshire, as executor for Lady Joan Denny very shortly after her death in 1553.[61]

Laywomen's ecclesiastical patronage was, naturally, always markedly more limited than that wielded by their husbands, brothers, and fathers, though the precise ratio differed from diocese to diocese. However, as the figures presented above suggest, collectively laywomen exercised quite substantial influence as patrons of church livings. The significance of their patronage becomes particularly clear when measured not against that of their male counterparts, but against the presentations made by other categories of patron. In the diocese of Winchester, laywomen were involved in more presentations than collegiate institutions, and

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[59] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 88-9.
[60] Frere, *Registrum Johannis Whyte*, 20, 22.
[61] LMA DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, f. 176r (institution dated 13 May 1553); TNA PROB 11/36/157 (proved 27 May 1553).

only slightly fewer than members of the secular clergy (excluding the ruling Bishop), especially after 1538.[62] In London, women *alone* presented as many times as colleges and corporations such as the Livery Companies and the City Corporation – a significant feat, given the substantial patronage held by these groups.[63] Theirs is an involvement, then, which should be hardly be overlooked. The remainder of this chapter will examine the ends to which laywomen exercised their influence in this sphere, and consider its implications for English religion.

Institutions and Collations in the Register of Bishop Tunstall of Durham, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total
Episcopal	104	46%
Monastic	18	8%
Other Ecclesiastical	20	8.8%
Colleges and Corporations	8	3.5%
Crown	26	11.5%
Lay	48	21.2%
None Given	2	0.9%

Figure 7

Institutions Involving Women in the Register of Bishop Tunstall of Durham, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total Lay Institutions	Percentage of Total Institutions
Female only	1	2%	0.44%
Female and male	1	2%	0.44%
	2	**4.2%**	**0.9%**

Figure 8

[62] See figures 2.6 and 2.7.
[63] See figures 2.10 and 2.11.

Institutions and Collations in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions/ Collations	Percentage of Total
Episcopal	60	11.3%
Monastic	21	4%
Other Ecclesiastical	71	13.4%
Colleges and Corporations	7	1.3%
Crown	56	10.6%
Lay	310	58.5%
Mixed	5	1%

Figure 9

Institutions Involving Women in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total Lay Institutions	Percentage of Total Institutions
Female only	10	3.2%	2%
Female and male	12	3.9%	2.3%
	22	**7.1%**	**4.2%**

Figure 10

Institutions and Collations in the Diocese of Winchester, 1531-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions/ Collations	Percentage of Total
Episcopal	74	12.4%
Monastic	28	4.7%
Other Ecclesiastical	48	8%
Colleges and Corporations	30	5%
Crown	91	15.2%
Lay	323	54%
Mixed	1	0.2%
None Given	3	0.5%

Figure 11

Institutions Involving Women in the Diocese of Winchester, 1531-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total Lay Institutions	Percentage of Total Institutions
Female only	22	7%	3.7%
Female and male	15	4.6%	2.5%
	37	**11.5%**	**6.2%**

Figure 12

Institutions and Collations in the Diocese of Hereford, 1530-1558

Patron Type	Number of Institutions/ Collations	Percentage of Total
Episcopal	74	17.3%
Monastic	30	7%
Other Ecclesiastical	25	5.8 %
Crown	58	13.6%
Lay	235	54.9%
Mixed	5	1.2%
None Given	1	0.2%

Figure 13

Institutions Involving Women in the Diocese of Hereford, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total Lay Institutions	Percentage of Total Institutions
Female only	9	3.8%	2.1%
Female and male	18	7.7%	4.2%
	27	**11.5%**	**6.3%**

Figure 14

Institutions and Collations in the Diocese of London, 1530-1558

Patron Type	Number of Institutions/ Collations	Percentage of Total
Episcopal	288	19.2%
Monastic	105	7%
Other Ecclesiastical	132	8.8%
Colleges and Corporations	48	3.2%
Crown	241	16.1%
Lay	643	42.8%
Mixed	43	2.9%

Figure 15

Institutions Involving Women in the Diocese of London, 1530-59

Patron Type	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total Lay Institutions	Percentage of Total Institutions
Female only	49	7.6%	3.3%
Female and male	33	5.1%	2.2%
	82	**12.8%**	**5.5%**

Figure 16

IV. Furthering the Work of God? Examining the Impetus Behind Women's Ecclesiastical Patronage

> There are also another sort of Simoniacall lepers, such as be patrones of benefices, who having power to appoint a godly, learned, and discreete pastor, to the congregation and Church, whereof they ought in deed to be patrons, that is to say, carefull and provident fathers: yet nevertheless seeking after their own private gaine, rather then the gaining of mens soules, do (contrarie to the law of God and man) sell their benefices and donations for money. And so refusing to admit those which be worthie, but preferring those which be unworthie, they call to the inheritance of Gods sanctuarie, Schismatiques, seditious persons, Atheists, ignorant and unlearned Asses, flatterers, and sometime their owne kinsmen and familiars, how unmeete soever.[64]

Such was the Puritan minister Thomas Tymme's condemnatory assessment of lay patronage in 1592. While Tymme was reflecting on the particular circumstances of late-Elizabethan England, he was far from the first or only ecclesiastic to decry lay patrons' apparent lack of concern for the spiritual and educational qualifications of those they presented, and suggest that they were often more interested in promoting their own intimates.[65] In a sermon preached in 1550, Hugh Latimer had similarly targeted unscrupulous patrons: 'But what do you, patrons? Sell your benefices, or give them to your servants for their service … These patrons regard no souls, neither their own nor other men's.'[66] Nor were these concerns shared only by evangelicals. Six years before Latimer, the conservative priest (and later bishop of Chester)

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[64] Thomas Tymme, *A plaine discoverie of ten English lepers…* (London: Peter Short, 1592), sig. D4v.
[65] Lytle, 'Religion and the Lay Patron', 69-71.
[66] George Elwes Corrie, ed., *Sermons by Hugh Latimer*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Parker Society, 1844, 290.

Cuthbert Scott had decried the presence of 'so many naughty preestes' in England – a state of affairs he attributed in considerable part to the laity:

> for yf a preest can flatter smoothly, yf he wyll wynke or rather laugh at your vices, yf he wyl keape you company at bankettynge, disyng and cardynge, runne with you of huntynge and hawkynge, whiche thynges drawe after them al kind of vices, he shall be called a good felowe, & on suche ye wyll bestow your benefices, yf money wyll let you gyve them frely.[67]

These claims, of course, were undoubtedly exaggerated for effect. But they are not without an element of truth. It is very clear that many, even most, patrons were less guided by spiritual and pastoral concerns than the more scrupulous members of the ecclesiastical establishment would have liked. Nor was this entirely a matter of choice. As Guy Fitch Lytle has pointed out, 'whatever the corruption or irresponsibility of some patrons', most had 'enormous obligations … that had to be met with a limited income.'[68] Advowsons, particularly given their nature as property, were simply one of a number of forms of patronage elite individuals had at their disposal, with which they had to fulfil their duties to kin, friends, and those in their service, as well as to the parish and their faith. Thus, 'what ecclesiastical reformers saw as abuses, lay patrons saw as a legal and proper use of their resources, and no affront to either God or Church.'[69]

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[67] William Chedsey and Cuthbert Scott, *Two notable sermons lately preached at Pauls Crosse Anno 1544* (London: John Hereford for Robert Toye,1545), Gv[v].
[68] Lytle, 'Religion and the Lay Patron', 70.
[69] Lytle, 'Religion and the Lay Patron', 70.

Much attention has been paid in the literature on ecclesiastical patronage to the competing motives which governed its exercise.[70] However, this literature has been largely ignored in the few studies which have focused directly on women's clerical patronage. These studies have been overwhelmingly concerned with the relationship between this patronage and the patron's faith, typically in the context of the latter's efforts to promote religious change. [71] As a result – despite Charlotte Merton's warning, in 1992, that 'one should not assume that even the most fervent [women] were wholly exempt from [a] mercenary attitude towards advowsons' – discussion of other contributing factors has remained rather limited.[72] Yet women, like their male counterparts, were guided at least as much by kinship, concerns of 'good lordship', and socio-political pressures as by any sense of pastoral or spiritual duty. In her study of 'Puritan' patronage in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield in Elizabeth's reign and beyond, Rosemary O'Day concluded that it 'seems unlikely that more than a fraction of the patronage exercised was governed consciously by a desire to further a religious movement.'[73] This holds equally true for female patronage in the earlier decades of the sixteenth century.

Kinship

The intersection between women's patronage and their familial networks has been well recognised in other contexts. Work on Englishwomen's letters of petition and their activities

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[70] E.g. Elizabeth Gemmill, *The Nobility and Ecclesiastical Patronage in Thirteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), esp. 68-97; Saul, *Lordship and Faith,* 250-52; O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86-7; Upton, 'Parochial Clergy', 127-170, esp. 150-59; R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 64-70; Cooper, *Last Generation*, 40-5; Bowker, *Henrician Reformation,* 44-5.

[71] Allen, *Cooke sisters*, 167-193; Clark, 'A 'Conservative' Family?'; Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community;* Merton, 'The Women Who Served', 216-221.

[72] Merton, 'The Women Who Served', 219-20.

[73] O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86.

at Court, for example, has repeatedly highlighted women's advocacy for both natal and marital kin.[74] It should therefore not be surprising that this emphasis on the family filtered into their clerical patronage. Yet we should be extremely cautious of labelling this as a particularly *female* predilection. A concern to advance the careers of clerical kin was very much a feature of ecclesiastical patronage more broadly. Tim Cooper, for instance, has estimated that around 20% of lay presentations in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield in the early sixteenth century were of family members.[75] Even clergymen were not immune from nepotism.[76] Indeed, it is clear that kin, both male and female, often collaborated to advance the careers of particular priests.

The State Papers abound with letters petitioning for intercession in matters of ecclesiastical patronage. Both laymen and women sought the aid of prominent ministers like Thomas Cromwell and later William Cecil in obtaining for their clients benefices in the hands of the Crown, Church, or members of the laity. Frequently, they wrote in support of kin. In 1533, for example, Bridget Hogan (later Calibut) wrote to Thomas Cromwell regarding the benefice of Ashill, Norfolk, which had just become vacant. She begged him to intercede with the patron, Sir Henry Wyatt, in her favour, noting that if Cromwell could 'gitt it for me for one of my childryng it wold fynd hyme well at scole.'[77] The child in question was very probably Anthony, a younger son who was then at Trinity Hall, Cambridge.[78] Bridget's petition to Cromwell does not seem to have met with any success, as Wyatt presented another candidate

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[74] E.g. Barbara J. Harris, 'Sisterhood, Friendship and the Power of English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550', in Daybell, *Women and Politics,* 21-50; Vivienne Larminie, 'Fighting for Family in a Patronage Society: the Epistolary Armoury of Anne Newdigate (1574-1618)', in Daybell, *Early Modern Women's Letter-Writing*, 94-108; Payne, 'Aristocratic women'.

[75] Cooper, *Last Generation*, 43.

[76] E.g. TNA, SP 1/21, f. 123, Nicholas, Bishop of Ely, to Wolsey, 20 Oct. 1520; Bowker, *Henrician Reformation*, 44.

[77] TNA, SP 1/75, f. 29.

[78] At least three of Bridget's sons – Thomas, William, and Anthony – attended Trinity Hall. Thomas and William left to enter Lincoln's Inn before taking a degree. S. T. Bindoff, *The House of Commons 1509-1558*, vol. 1 (London: Secker & Warburg for the History of Parliament Trust, 1982), 370-1.

to the living.[79] However, a desire to advance their children evidently continued to guide her and her husband's ecclesiastical patronage. In 1542, her husband Robert presented Anthony to their home parish of East Bradenham; eight years later, he was also instituted as the rector of Necton under the patronage of Bridget herself.[80] Notably, the spiritual welfare of these parishes does not seem to have featured strongly in their decision: while Anthony was well educated, he was recorded in c.1560 as '*nullius ordinis*' – not ordained – despite the time that had passed since his institution.[81]

Several other women also directly presented family members to benefices under their control. Thomas Baynham was presented to Aston Ingham, Herefordshire, in 1542 by Joanna Baynham – the widowed lady of the manor, and probably Thomas' mother.[82] More distant relatives also benefited from familial support. Margaret Capell (née Whittington) nominated her marital relative Giles Capell, M.A. to How Caple, Herefordshire in 1549.[83] In a further sign of the interrelationship between familial and patronage networks, Giles had several years earlier been instituted to the parish church of Duloe, Cornwall, on the patronage of Thomas Whittington – one of Margaret's natal relatives.[84] Occasionally, these familial connections also allow us to perceive the wife's influence in cases of joint presentations. For instance, in 1556 Sir Edmund Pymond was instituted to South Kirkby, West Yorkshire, by Brian Bales and his wife Elizabeth, the widow of Richard Pymond. The precise relationship between Edmund and Elizabeth is not clear, but it is probable that she was the driving force in his presentation.[85]

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[79] Blomefield, *Topographical History*, vol. 2, 350.
[80] Charles Perkin, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of Norfolk*, vol. 6, 2nd ed. (London: William Miller, 1807), 53, 55 141.
[81] CCCC, MS 97 (Parker Certificates), f. 212r. Hogan is recorded as 'Magister'. He was non-resident at Necton, which was served by its vicar, Thomas Briggs, but was resident at East Bradenham.
[82] Bannister, *Hereford Institutions*, 3; John Duncumb, *Collections Towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford*, vol. 2, part 1 (London: E. G. Wright, 1812), 326.
[83] Bannister, *Hereford Institutions*, 7; Charles J. Robinson, *A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire* (London: Longmans and Co., 1873), 150.
[84] *CCEd*, Giles Caple, person I. D. 55913.
[85] BI Abp. Reg. 29, f. 116v.

These presentations and petitions offer the most obvious evidence of the link between kinship and clerical patronage, but the family in fact held still greater sway over ecclesiastical preferment. There are several cases in which individual priests received preferment at the hands of more than one member of the same family, suggesting that patrons also exerted influence upon their familial networks in order to advance the careers of clerics who were not themselves kin. William Barratt, for instance, established his career in Derbyshire through the patronage of at least two female members of the Talbot family. In 1555 he was presented to Eyam by Elizabeth (née Walden), Countess of Shrewsbury, and then to Longford by Frances Talbot in 1558.[86] Here, we can perhaps discern the workings of power relations within the Talbot family: it hardly seems coincidental that Barratt's presentation by Frances was preceded by preferment at the hands of the family matriarch. The career of Clement Burdett, M.A., furnishes another example. Between 1540 and 1541, Burdett was ordained as sub-deacon, deacon, and priest under the title of Francis Englefield, esquire.[87] When the rectory of the family's parish of Englefield, Berkshire became vacant the following year, Burdett was instituted under the patronage of Elizabeth Englefield, Francis' mother.[88]

The task of evaluating the influence of the family upon women's ecclesiastical presentations, beyond the accretion of discrete examples, is fraught with difficulty. This is not least because in the absence of shared names – particularly in cases of women's natal kin – establishing familial connections is frequently a time-consuming and painstaking process: a task which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is evident that kinship could form a crucial consideration in the choice of nominee, both in terms of the direct preferment of clerical kin and, perhaps more significantly (though more research is needed to better establish

[86] *CCEd,* William Barratt, person I.D. 24704
[87] *CCEd*, Clement Burdett, person I.D. 47235.
[88] *CCEd*, Clement Burdett, person I.D. 47235.

this), in terms of the collaboration between, or even coercion of, family members in the sponsorship of individual priests. In many cases, such as those of the Oxford-educated Clement Burdett and Giles Capel, obligations to family were not necessarily incompatible with the spiritual wellbeing of the parish.[89] In others, however – like that of Anthony Hogan – pastoral concerns were clearly very much secondary. This tension between the needs of parish, patron, and priest was a recurrent feature of ecclesiastical presentations.

Good Lordship

As important as kinship was in influencing lay involvement in ecclesiastical presentations, it was ultimately only one of a number of concerns which made up the web of patronage in which patrons of both sexes were enmeshed. It is crucial to acknowledge the ways in which the wider demands of 'good lordship' – that is, the responsibility incumbent upon the elite to look after and reward those in their service or community – also shaped women's exercise of clerical patronage.[90] The influence of regional and patronal loyalties on this patronage has been touched upon by Melissa Harkrider. Despite her increasingly fervent evangelicalism, Katherine Willoughby, alongside her husband Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, presented a number of former monks to Lincolnshire benefices under their control. Several of these men had been part of local religious communities patronised by either the Brandon or Willoughby families, reflecting – Harkrider argues – Willoughby's 'determination to provide for ecclesiastical clients who had longstanding ties to her family, even if they did not share her views.'[91] It is

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[89] 'Burdett, Clement', in Joseph Foster, ed., *Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1891, *British History Online*, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp201-227; 'Capel, Giles (or Capull)', in Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp228-254.

[90] Barry Collett, 'Good Lordship', in *Historical Dictionary of Late Medieval England, 1272-1485*, ed. Ronald H. Fritze and William B. Robison (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 226-27.

[91] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 86-88.

often unfeasible to reach such clear conclusions about the correlation – or lack thereof – between the religious views of parish priests and their patrons. Yet Willoughby was not alone in deciding to privilege the needs of existing clients in her exercise of clerical patronage.

Elite women, particularly those from the nobility, regularly presented clerics in their personal service to benefices under their control. Elizabeth de Vere (née Scrope), dowager Countess of Oxford, for instance presented her almoner Dr Robert Cronkar or Croukar, and one of her chaplains, Master Robert Skynner, to benefices in Buckinghamshire and Essex respectively.[92] Mabel Fitzwilliam (née Clifford), dowager Countess of Southampton, similarly instituted her chaplain, David Owen, to a living in her gift.[93] William Hutton S.T.B., who was in the service of the Manners family until his death until 1559, was instituted to Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire, in 1552 on the presentation of Eleanor Manners (née Paston), dowager Countess of Rutland.[94]

The significant obligation laywomen felt to provide for their clients is further revealed in their epistolary petitions for ecclesiastical preferment. Correspondence often provides a far clearer sense of motivation than the bare details recorded in the episcopal registers. An exchange between Edward Courtenay, earl of Devon, and his mother Gertrude, marchioness of Exeter is particularly revealing. The Marchioness had attempted to prevail upon filial duty to obtain a position for one of her clients: Courtenay recalled that she had 'requested me in the behalf of William Dawbney for a prebend latlie fallen into my handes.' [95] Although the Earl

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[92] LMA DL/A/A/006/M509531/011, ff. 18r, 21v. Both individuals are mentioned in the Countess' will: TNA PROB 11/27/144 (1537).

[93] BI, Abp. Reg. 29, f. 22v; D. S. Chambers, ed., *Faculty Office Registers 1534-1549* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 284.

[94] TNA PROB 11/42B/289 (William Hutton of Bottesford, 1558; proved 1559); LRO Vj 13, f. 166r; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, Preserved at Belvoir Castle*, vol. 1 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888), 62-3; John Edwards, 'The sede vacante Administration of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, 1533-53' (M.Phil. thesis, University of London, 1968), 168. Eleanor must have made the presentation shortly before her death, since she died in c. 1551.

[95] TNA SP 11/6, f. 98, Earl of Devon to Lady Exeter, 1555.

was sympathetic to his mother's desire to 'gratifie your old servaunte', her suit was ultimately unsuccessful. In a clear sign of the constraints patrons faced due to the numerous demands on their resources, Courtenay cited his need to 'mayntayne and recompence' his own servants with whatever limited means he – at that time in exile on the Continent – had available.[96] The letter is also further suggestive of the fact that fitness for ecclesiastical service was often a secondary consideration, for neither of the candidates seem to have been at all promising – even for an office without cure of souls. In a postscript, Courtenay cautioned that Dawbney, 'being an olde unlerned man and without possibillitie to be priest' could not have been admitted to the prebend in any case, before noting that his own nominee was forced to add 'clerke to his name otherwise he might not be hable to receiveth the same.'[97]

Lady Exeter's pragmatic approach to spiritual office was hardly unusual. In 1532, for instance, Margaret Grey (née Wotton), dowager marchioness of Dorset, wrote to Thomas Cromwell concerning the benefice of Great Easton, Essex, which was then in suit between Tilty Abbey and the Bishop of London.[98] She hoped that, through Cromwell's intercession, her son's school master could be placed in 'quyet possession of the seid benefice.' Her motive? To allow the scholar to 'geave dayly attendaunce' to her son at court.[99] Even where patrons promoted clients who were eminently qualified – notably graduates like the aforementioned William Hutton, Robert Skynner, and Robert Cronkar – the needs of the parish were almost inevitably, if not intentionally, subordinate. The attendance of these priests on their patrons necessitated at least partial non-residence in their livings, leaving them to be served by curates. Margaret Grey's desire for 'dayly attendaunce' on her son certainly would not have allowed

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[96] Ian W. Archer, 'Courtenay, Edward, first earl of Devon (1526–1556)', in *ODNB*.
[97] TNA SP 11/6, f. 98.
[98] TNA SP 1/69, f. 216, Margaret, Marchioness of Dorset, to Thomas Cromwell, 1532.
[99] The Marchioness' suit was ultimately unsuccessful: J. E. Oxley, *The Reformation in Essex to the Death of Mary* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), 94-5.

the cleric in question to have served his cure adequately, had the Marchioness' petition been successful: Great Easton lies at least forty miles from central London.

Edward Courtenay's letter to his mother demonstrates very clearly that both men and women experienced a similar sense of duty to advance the careers of those in their service. Nevertheless, there was a gendered element to this patronage. Elite men typically commanded a markedly wider clientele, and were often burdened with the additional demands of political office. As a result – as we will see below – women, in their widowhood, arguably had more freedom in their choice of ecclesiastical presentees. However, in a further indication of the role of the family in shaping clerical patronage, they were also quite commonly faced with residual obligations to clients who had previously been sponsored by a late husband.

Honor Grenville, Lady Lisle's association with the Exeter priest John Rugge provides a potent illustration of these demands. Rugge had been in the service of Grenville's first husband, Sir John Bassett, prior to his death in 1528. Thereafter, Grenville continued to financially support the priest, and had apparently promised to do so until she could provide him with 'some honest living.'[100] Rugge wrote to Grenville at least three times in the mid-1530s to remind her of her promise to provide him with a benefice, when one under her or her second husband, Lord Lisle's control should become vacant.[101] His letters were strategically composed. Rugge appealed to Grenville's sense of patronal obligation and residual marital loyalty by invoking the memory of her late husband's support, and by recurrently stressing (and indeed exaggerating) the precarity of his circumstances:

> For other things that your goodness writeth in your letter to me, ye will be as good to me as my good Master Basset was, whose soul God pardon: when it shall please

[100] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 1:576-77.
[101] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 1: 576-77, 2: 117-18, 144.

you so it must be, for I remit all to God and your goodness: I have never more need of help and succour than now, as knoweth God … [102]

It does not seem that Grenville fulfilled her promise prior to Rugge's death in 1536.[103] Other patrons, however, certainly did meet their obligations. Katherine Henneage, for instance, sustained her husband's patronage of Henry Pigge after Sir Thomas Henneage's death, presenting the priest to Stewton, Lincolnshire, in 1554.[104] To take another example, William Yokesall was ordained to the title of Richard Pymond of Wakefield, West Yorkshire, a merchant tailor in London.[105] Yokesall was witness to Pymond's will in May 1546, suggesting that he held a position in the tailor's service.[106] After Pymond's death, his widow, Elizabeth, continued to advance Yokesall's career. In November that year, she presented the priest to the vicarage of South Kirkby.[107] Elizabeth was still sponsoring him a full decade later: in 1556, she (along with her second husband, Brian Bales) presented Yokesall, who had been deprived from South Kirkby for marriage in 1554, to the vicarage of Batley.[108]

The demands of 'good lordship' thus featured prominently in the exercise of clerical patronage. For patrons of both sexes, ecclesiastical preferment offered one means of fulfilling their obligations to those in their service – and, in the case of widows, to those who had served their husbands. Connections to a prominent patron offered the surest route to a benefice,

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[102] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 2: 144. Rugge by this point already held three benefices, with a combined income of £10 2s. 9¼d., so his situation was rather less desperate than he claimed: Beatrix F. Cresswell, 'John Rugge, Vicar of St. Thomas by Exeter', *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries* 17, no. 4 (1932-3): 163-6.
[103] Cresswell, 'John Rugge', 166.
[104] LRO DIOC/Reg/28, ff. 23r, 98r.
[105] *CCEd*, William Yoxall, Person I.D. 65667.
[106] BI, Prob. Reg., ff.185r-186r.
[107] BI, Abp. Reg. 29, f.20v.
[108] BI, Abp. Reg. 29, f. 116v; A. G. Dickens, *The Marian Reaction in the Diocese of York. Part 1, the Clergy* (London and York: St. Anthony's Press, 1975), 29. Yokesall was later restored to South Kirkby: Richard Watson Dixon, *History of the Church of England: from the abolition of the Roman jurisdiction*, vol. 5, *Elizabeth A.D. 1558-1563* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), 147.

sometimes regardless of personal fitness for the role.[109] Yet it was not only from their own kin and clients that patrons had to field demands. They were also faced with pressures from outside their own (or their family's) clientele.

External Pressures

Patronage was founded on reciprocity: '[the] giving and receiving of favours was at the heart of political and social relationships.'[110] Thus a clerk, as Elizabeth Gemmill has pointed out, 'could benefit, potentially, not only from his own lord's formal patronage rights but from the patronage of those with whom his lord was associated.'[111] Indeed, the far-reaching webs of favour, obligation and loyalty which governed early modern society mean that we can extend this out even further, to the patronage of those with whom *those* associates were connected. At its crux, what this meant for patrons was that the exercise of their right of advowson might be shaped by a variety of external influences and demands.

The pressures on patrons emerge quite clearly in the numerous extant petitions from individuals seeking to have a client or kinsman instituted to a benefice in someone else's gift.[112] These individuals might approach the patron directly, or seek to leverage the socio-political capital of a high-profile intermediary. As we have already seen, women can often be found doing the petitioning. Yet they can also be found on the other side of the process, subject to attempts to influence their selection of nominee. A letter from Annes Upton to Thomas Cromwell, dating from 1534, conveniently illustrates laywomen acting in both roles. Upton wrote concerning a benefice (unnamed) in the hands of Margaret, marchioness of Dorset.

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[109] Swanson, *Church and Society*, 69-70; Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, 32.
[110] Gemmill, *The Nobility and Ecclesiastical Patronage*, 90.
[111] Gemmill, *The Nobility and Ecclesiastical Patronage*, 90, 97.
[112] E.g. TNA SP 1/48, f. 33, Thomas Donyngton to Wolsey, 23 May 1528; TNA SP 1/76, f. 109, Thomas Abbot of Abingdon to Cromwell, 27 May 1533; TNA SP 1/80, Cranmer to Cromwell, 26 Nov. 1533; TNA SP 1/96, f. 190, Anne Hilles to Cromwell, 21 Sept. 1535.

Reminding Cromwell of his obligation to her husband, Annes beseeched him to write to the marchioness 'in the favour of John Upton clerke my husbondes broder for the obteyning of the right presentation of the said parsonage' – the benefice being, apparently, in surety of being forfeited by the existing incumbent.[113]

This kind of manoeuvring is all but invisible in the episcopal registers. For the most part, we simply do not know what kind of negotiations may have taken place concerning any one presentation. However, in some instances it is possible to piece together enough additional information to suggest the probable influences at work. The institution of John Raynford to the parish church of Eynsham, Oxfordshire, in July 1552 provides a case in point. Raynford was presented to the living by Beatrice Russell, in her role as executrix for the testament of John Wappes.[114] It is almost certain that she did so at the instigation of the Stanley family. The Stanley Earls of Derby held Eynsham manor and, accordingly, possessed considerable influence within the locality; indeed, the church was typically under their patronage.[115] It thus hardly seems coincidental that Russell's nominee was a Stanley protégé. Raynford also served in the church of Ormskirk, Lancashire – another Stanley locality – and had been ordained under the title of Peter Stanley of Ormskirk, a member of a cadet branch of the family.[116] In this case, there was a clear power differential between the nominal patron, Russell, and the Stanleys, which can only have helped lubricate the arrangement. But these personal recommendations, as the Upton example suggests, did not only flow in one direction. As we will see later in the case of Anne, Lady Berkeley, the pressure could derive from institutions as well as individuals.

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[113] TNA SP 1/88, f. 92, Annes Upton to Thomas Cromwell, 1534.
[114] *CCEd*, John Raynford, Person ID: 31524.
[115] A. Crossley, 'Eynsham', in *A History of the County of Oxford*, ed. C. R. Elrington, vol. 11, *Wootton Hundred (South) Including Woodstock*, ed. Alan Crossley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 120, 147.
[116] *CCEd*, John Raynford, Person ID: 31524. For the Stanley connection with Ormskirk see. e.g. TNA PROB 11/21/376 (Thomas, Earl of Derby, 1524); TNA PROB 11/54/491 (Edward, Earl of Derby, 1572); William Farrer and J. Brownbill, eds., *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, vol. 3 (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1907), 239, 242-3.

These external influences upon clerical patronage may be difficult to uncover, but they were undoubtedly more significant than the relative silence of the source material would suggest.

Spiritual Concerns

By now, it should be apparent that spiritual concerns were not necessarily at the forefront of laywomen's minds when exercising their right of advowson. Some were downright derelict in their pastoral duty, presenting clergymen who were incapable of adequately serving their cure. Alongside the men without orders cited previously, we can add the unlearned. John Search, presented to Lasborough, Gloucestershire, by Lady Anne Fortescue (later Parry), was recorded in Bishop John Hooper's 1551 visitation of the diocese as '*vir prae caeteris ignarus*': unable to answer even the simple scriptural and doctrinal questions put to him by the examiners.[117] His example is perhaps particularly egregious, but poorly educated priests were not uncommon.[118] Other women displayed little apparent interest in exercising their rights of clerical of patronage at all. Like other patrons, both lay and secular, laywomen might grant out the right of next presentation to another party.[119] Occasionally, a patron simply failed to present a candidate within the requisite six months, leaving the presentation to lapse to the bishop.[120]

However, we cannot necessarily interpret the failure to privilege spiritual interests or advance a particular religious agenda in their clerical patronage as a sign of a patron's general

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[117] James Gairdner, 'Bishop Hooper's Visitation of Gloucester', *The English Historical Review* 19, no. 73 (1904):119; A. R. J. Jurica, 'Westonbirt with Lasborough', in *A History of the County of Gloucester*, ed. N. M. Herbert, vol. 11 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 287-8.

[118] E.g. William Ward, presented by Lady Margaret Shelton: CCCC MS 97, f. 224r; Frances Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of Norfolk*, vol. 5, 2nd ed. (London: William Miller, 1806), 271. Peter Langton, presented Rose Stiward: CCCC MS 97, f. 202r; Charles Perkin, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of Norfolk*, vol. 7 (London: William Miller, 1808), 222. Richard Howis, presented by Lady Anne Stanhope: CCCC MS 97, f. 74r; LRO Reg. 28, 100r.

[119] E.g. LMA DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, ff. 180r, 190r; NRO X956.1, ff. 33v, 36v, 50r, 52r, 55v; Maxwell-Lyte, 94, 129.

[120] E.g. Charles Perkin, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of Norfolk*, vol. 9, 2nd ed. (London: William Miller, 1808), 477. For the process in cases of lapse, see O'Day, 'Law of Patronage', 251-2.

lack of devotion. Not only were patrons frequently burdened by multiple other obligations, but, as Margaret Bowker has pointed out, '[t]he crucial importance of patronage' in promoting a particular vision of the church 'took some time to grasp', even amongst the ecclesiastical establishment.[121] A patron's active commitment to shaping English religion in other arenas did not necessarily translate into their ecclesiastical presentations. Anne Seymour (née Stanhope), duchess of Somerset was – as we saw in Chapter One – heavily involved in the evangelical reformation under Edward VI. Yet although she presented to benefices multiple times after the rehabilitation of her family in the mid-1550s, she did not use her patronage, as we might have expected, to promote prominent evangelicals – even when it was safe to do so under Queen Elizabeth.[122] On the other side of the religious spectrum, Honor Grenville, Lady Lisle, remained firmly and openly wedded to traditional beliefs and practices after the break from Rome.[123] This continued loyalty manifested in her wider patronage activities. For instance, during her time in Calais she maintained a close and long-standing relationship with a house of Carmelite nuns in nearby Dunkirk, and was a persistent advocate for the conservative English priest Sir William Richardson, who was ultimately executed for treason in 1540.[124] However, even she was not immune to more mercenary concerns when it came to clerical patronage. In 1538, Grenville and her husband attempted (unsuccessfully) to obtain license for her son, James Basset, to take up an ecclesiastical benefice in their gift. This was despite Bassett

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[121] Bowker, *Henrician Reformation*, 171, see also 45-6.

[122] At least one presentee, Richard Richardson, does seem to have held clearly evangelical beliefs. On the other hand, at least one presentee, Nicholas Palmer, was also deprived under Elizabeth. Nicholas Palmer: LMA, DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, f. 208r; CCCC, MS 122, 54; Field, *Province*, 194. Robert Richardson: *CCEd*, Appointment of Robert Richardson to Hanworth, record I.D. 140562; Alfred Beaver, *Memorials of Old Chelsea: A New History of the Village of Palaces* (London: Elliot Stock, 1892), 371. John Langlond: Frere, *Registrum Johannis Whyte*, 20. Edward Marshe: *CCEd*, Edward Marshe, 79528. Griffin Vaughan: *CCEd*, Appointment of Griffin Vaughan to Ashstead, record I.D. 191553. John Powell: *CCEd*, Appointment of John Powell to All Cannings, record I.D. 78126.

[123] For Grenville's commitment to traditional religion, see e.g. Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 4:408, 5: 62, 66, 79-80.

[124] For Grenville's relationship with the Carmelite nunnery, see e.g. Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 3: 176-7, 180-4; 5: 104-5, 119, 388, 673-4. For William Richardson, see *idem*, 4: 153, 156-7, 159, 161-3, 167, 402; *Letters & Papers*, vol. 12, part 2, 231, 697; Wriothesley, *Chronicle*, 115; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 394.

being at that time a child of just ten years old and thus – as Archbishop Cranmer pointed out to them – wholly unfit to hold a benefice with cure of souls.[125]

Assessing the relationship between a patron's religious sympathies and their clerical patronage is further complicated by the religio-political turbulence of the period under consideration. Nicola Clark has argued that 'identifying the clergymen whom a patron chose to sponsor can … reveal much about his or her own religious inclinations.'[126] However, while there is some truth to this, the beliefs of both priests and their patrons were not static. Sympathies could change, as could the willingness to act on them in the face of frequent shifts in policy. We must be cautious when extrapolating from earlier or later evidence. In the absence of a larger pattern of behaviour, we can also not assume that the presentation of a priest meant agreement with their beliefs. Simon Southern was deprived from his benefice after Elizabeth's accession, and in 1582 was apprehended as a 'massing prest[e] … of some accompt among our Recusantes.'[127] Yet we can hardly deduce from this that Katherine Chester, who presented Southern to Hinton, Worcestershire much earlier in 1541, would have actively promoted such non-conformity.[128]

Nevertheless, while these are crucial caveats, it would be erroneous to suggest that patrons were entirely uninterested in the religious qualifications and/or inclinations of their nominees. In a number cases, this *does* seem to have been a prominent consideration – if only one among many. Some laywomen, for instance, displayed an evident concern for the quality of the clergy whom they nominated to the benefices under their control. Elizabeth de Vere, dowager Countess of Oxford presented at least twelve different priests between 1527 and 1536,

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[125] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 5:28.
[126] Clark, 'A 'Conservative' Family?', 328-9.
[127] TNA SP 12/156, ff. 46r-48r; C. W. Field, *The Province of Canterbury and the Elizabethan Settlement of Religion* ([Robsertsbridge: C. W. Field, 1972]), 126.
[128] WRO b 716.093 BA 2648/9 (iii), 48.

almost half of whom are known to have been university graduates.[129] Given that graduates were very much a minority among beneficed clergy in this early period, this suggests a deliberate effort to promote learned ministers – particularly Cambridge alumni.[130] Admittedly, parishes would not always have felt the benefit of such a policy: graduates were far more likely than other clergy to be non-resident in their livings.[131] Yet they were also more likely to make their impact felt at higher levels of the church hierarchy, and in some cases might play a role in spiritual edification of a larger body of the faithful. De Vere's almoner, Robert Cronkar, for instance, was active as a licensed preacher in the diocese of London.[132] The Countess was certainly not unmindful of the wellbeing of the parishes under her patronage. In her will, composed in 1537, she requested that her executors distribute 'certen somes of money … to the curates clerkes and pore people of every parishe and parishes … where I am patrones.'[133] The provision was not entirely altruistic, since it would secure her prayers and masses, but it is nevertheless suggestive of de Vere's sense of duty to these communities.

Occasionally, we do also have evidence of a patron's direct interest in parochial education. Notably, in 1535 Queen Anne Boleyn rebuked the prominent evangelical preacher Edward Crome for his delay in taking up the benefice of St Mary Aldermarry in the city of London, which she had obtained for him. Her primary concern, at least ostensibly, was for the spiritual wellbeing of the parish: 'minding nothing more than the furtherance of virtue, truth,

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[129] LRO Reg. 27, ff. 149v, 161r; LMA DL/A/A/006/M509531/011, ff. 15r, 18r, 21v, 22r, 35r, 36v, 37r; Blomefield, *Topographical History*, vol. 1, 100-1; *idem*, vol. 2, 169; John Venn and J. A. Venn, eds., *Alumni Cantabrigienses: A Biographical List of All Known Students, Graduates and Holders of Office at the University of Cambridge, from the Earliest Times to 1900*, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922-54), 2:8, 423; 4: 85, 372.

[130] The proportion varied between dioceses. For some estimates, see Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, 81.

[131] Bowker, *Henrician Reformation*, 119-20; Heath, *English Parish Clergy*, 82.

[132] LMA, DL/C/0330, ff. 132v, 266v.

[133] TNA, PROB 11/27/144.

and godly doctrine, which we trust shall not be a little increased, a right much the better advanced and established, by your better relief and residence there.'[134]

Perhaps most importantly, as Boleyn's letter suggests, even in this early period a small minority of patrons were clearly beginning to recognise the potential of ecclesiastical patronage as a tool for advancing a particular religious viewpoint. The use of advowsons by prominent 'Puritan' laymen such as Sir Francis Hastings and Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon to promote religious reform in the reign of Elizabeth I has long been recognised.[135] Melissa Harkrider and Gemma Allen's recent work on Katherine Willoughby Brandon and the Cooke sisters respectively has shown that godly *women* might also deploy a similar strategy.[136] However, despite receiving the lion's share of scholarly attention, it was not just Elizabethan evangelicals who perceived the potential. An examination of female presentations in the mid-Tudor period reveals that laypeople of more conservative sympathies were also becoming aware of the possibilities.[137] The following case studies of Anne Savage, Baroness Berkeley, and Jane Wriothesley (née Cheney), Countess of Southampton work to demonstrate this. By examining the patronage of these women in depth, we can also better understand the interaction between spiritual and more secular motivations. For even in instances where patrons pursued a discernible religious agenda, it was never an entirely straightforward or single-minded process.

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[134] Mary Anne Everett Wood, ed., *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain, from the Commencement of the Twelfth Century to the Close of the Reign of Queen Mary*, vol. 2 (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), 188-9.

[135] See e.g. Cross, 'Noble Patronage', 1-16; *idem*, 'An Example of Lay Intervention', 273-282; O'Day, *English Clergy*, 86- 104; Sheils, *Puritans*.

[136] Allen, *Cooke sisters*, 167-193; Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community,* 84-91, 125-132.

[137] As noted in the introduction, limited work has been carried out on conservative presentations to benefices. See n. 15.

V. Anne Savage, Lady Berkeley: Catholicism, Family, and Politics

The ecclesiastical patronage of Anne Savage, Baroness Berkeley (c. 1506-1564), is illustrative of both the complex and at times contradictory considerations patrons faced in exercising religious patronage, and of the attempts by some to promote, where they could, clergy who shared their sympathies. Lady Berkeley was the daughter of Sir John Savage, Sheriff of Worcester, and his wife Anne Bostock. She wed Thomas, Baron Berkeley, in April 1533, shortly after the death of his first wife. The marriage was short-lived: Thomas died in September 1534, while Anne was still pregnant with their second child and only son, Henry. However, it left Anne in possession of a number of manors which she enjoyed until her death thirty years later in 1564.[138] Some, though not all, of these manors brought with them the advowson to the local parish church, thus giving Lady Berkeley a moderate degree of patronage power, particularly in Leicestershire. Between 1541 and 1558, she presented at least five times to at least four different benefices in the dioceses of Lincoln and York. What can be inferred of the Baroness's religious opinions and activism might cause us to expect a particularly close relationship between the former and her exercise of her patronage power. In reality, however, the connection was a little more ambiguous.

Prior to her marriage, Lady Berkeley had been a lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn. Their relationship was apparently a close one, as Savage was the sole female attendant at her secret wedding to Henry VIII in January 1533.[139] Savage does not, however, appear to have been

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[138] John Smyth, *The Berkeley Manuscripts: The Lives of the Berkeleys*… 3 vols., ed. John Maclean (Gloucester: John Bellows, 1883-5), 2:253. Anne's efforts to secure her jointure were protracted but eventually successful: Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 139.

[139] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2: 252; Retha M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 120.

influenced by her mistress's nascent evangelicalism.[140] Indeed, where Boleyn was integral to the dismantling of papal authority in England, Lady Berkeley seems to have been complicit in efforts to uphold it. In November 1536, John Barlo, Dean of the College of Westbury, Gloucestershire, wrote to Thomas Cromwell complaining of her conduct. He stated that, on Michaelmas Day, fourteen 'evyll disposed persons' had be found playing tennis during morning service at the church house of Yate, Gloucestershire, 'where the lady Anne barkley dwellith.'[141] Barlo alleged that his attempts to prosecute those involved had failed: in the first instance because the jury was packed with Lady Berkeley's servants, and in the second instance because her servants accused him, in turn, of 'diuerse trespaces.' While, as Caroline Litzenberger has noted, it is uncertain whether Lady Berkeley and her servants 'were motivated by a lack of acceptance of the new religion', the remainder of the letter certainly indicates where the Baroness stood on this issue. Barlo claims that one of the aforementioned 'trespasses' was his attempt the previous year to indict a priest, Sir William Norton, 'for the kepyng of certen prohibited bokes that I found with hym'; these included portable breviaries 'not reformed of the bishop of romes name', as well as a book written by the late Bishop John Fisher in defence of the Pope's 'pretensed supreme ecclesiasticall power.' Barlo claimed that, despite the continued notoriety of the 'matter' and the 'pregnant evidens' of the same, Norton had still not been prosecuted, 'by reson the said priest is retaynyng to the sayd lady Barkley.'[142] By continuing to harbour Norton, Lady Berkeley placed herself in open defiance of royal policy. The erasure of the Pope's name from all service books had been ordered in June 1535, and the possession of Fisher's works had been problematic since his execution for treason that

[140] For a discussion of Boleyn's apparent evangelicalism, see e.g. Dowling, 'Anne Boleyn and Reform'; Ives, 'Anne Boleyn and the Early Reformation in England'.
[141] BL, Cotton Vespasian F/XIII, f. 229,
[142] BL, Cotton Vespasian F/XIII, f. 229.

same month; by the beginning of 1536 the latter, like the former, had become a 'punishable offence.'[143]

Lady Berkeley does not seem to have substantially altered her opinions on religion in subsequent years, as she developed an enduring reputation as a staunch conservative. John Smyth, steward of the Berkeley Estate in the early-seventeenth century, made much of the Baroness's traditionalism in his *Lives of the Berkeleys*.[144] There was, he claimed, 'noe lady more constant to her religion, for from the instruction of her youth wherewith in the ten first years of king Henry the 8th shee was seasonsed, shee never would depart.'[145] She certainly succeeded in inculcating her son Henry, 7th Baron Berkeley, with a strong enthusiasm for traditional religion. In 1556, for instance, Cardinal Reginald Pole granted him permission to hear Mass and receive the Eucharist in the chapel of his manor at Callowden.[146]

In several cases, the Baroness' ecclesiastical presentations appear to have been guided by her persistent conservatism. This is most evident in her earliest known nomination, of Adam Tyler to the perpetual chantry of Fenstanton, Huntingdonshire in May 1540.[147] Tyler had been a monk at Hailes Abbey, Gloucestershire, until just a few months before his institution. He did not leave the religious life willingly, only relinquishing his habit when the monastery finally surrendered to the Crown on Christmas Eve, 1539.[148] Robert Larke, whom Lady Berkeley presented to the rectory of Seagrave, Leciestershire, in 1550, probably also had conservative

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[143] Hughes Larkin, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 1: 235-7; Haigh, *English Reformations*, 123-4; Susan Powell, *The Birgittines of Syon Abbey: Preaching and Print* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 232, 234.

[144] While Smyth did not know Anne Savage directly, having been born after her death, he was a close intimate of her successors, and had free access to the muniment room at Berkeley Castle. Andrew Warmington, 'Smyth, John (1567-1641)', in *ODNB*.

[145] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2: 253.

[146] Isaac Herbert Jeayes, ed., *Descriptive Charter of the Charters and Muniments in the Possession of Lord Fitzhardinge at Berkeley Castle* (Bristol: C. T. Jefferies and Sons, 1892), 215-18. For the Berkeleys' Catholicism, see also Litzenberger, *English Reformation and the Laity*, 126-7.

[147] LRO, DIOC/Reg/27, f. 247r. She presented to the benefice not in her own right, but as guardian of her son, Henry, who was at that time still a minor. Fenstanton is now in Cambridgeshire.

[148] BL, Cotton Cleopatra E.IV, f. 307r; Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers*, 208; Shagan, *Popular Politics*, 174.

leanings.[149] In his will, composed at Seagrave in October 1558, Larke bequeathed his soul both to God, and to 'oure ladie sainct marie' and the saints.[150] While such soul bequests are far from a definitive statement of belief, Larke's wording – especially since, as the parish priest, he would undoubtedly have written his own will – seems to have been the product of choice rather than convention.[151] A third nominee, Richard Smith, was instituted to Hoby, also in Leicestershire, in 1556.[152] Little is known about Smith, other than that he had formerly been a chantry priest in the nearby parish of Stathern, pensioned off when the chantries were abolished in 1547/8.[153] However, the fact that he never married may indicate that he, too, preferred the old religion.[154]

However, Lady Berkeley's presentations were also the product of concerns other than religious affinity. Her presentation of Master John Wyatt to the church of St Michael in Sutton Bonington, Nottinghamshire, in 1541 certainly did nothing to uphold the conservative cause.[155] This was evidently the same John Wyatt as the one presented to the neighbouring parish of Kegworth by Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1539: as we will see, both parishes were closely associated with Christ's and the Berkeley family.[156] Wyatt had been a student and later Fellow of Christ's, and had, until his institution to Kegworth, been heavily involved in the administration of the College. He was also an accomplished preacher, having held the Lady Margaret preachership in 1530, 1532, and 1535.[157] What Wyatt was not, however, was a

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[149] LRO, DIOC/Reg/27, f. 285v.
[150] Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, (1558 G-O)(43), Will of Robert Larke, 1558, accessed via Findmypast, https://www.findmypast.co.uk/.
[151] See Chapter Three for a discussion of will preambles and soul bequests.
[152] Thomas F. Mayer, ed., *The Correspondence of Reginald Pole*, vol. 3, *A Calendar, 1555-1558: Restoring the English Church* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 307.
[153] G. A. J. Hodgett, ed., *The State of the Ex-Religious and Former Chantry Priests in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1547-1574, from Returns in the Exchequer* (Hereford: Lincoln Record Society, 1959), 86, 144.
[154] Hodgett. *State of the Ex-Religious*, 86.
[155] BI, Abp. Reg. 28, f. 61v.
[156] LRO, DIOC/Reg/27, f. 166r.
[157] 'A Catalogue of The Lady Margaret's Preachers at Cambridge', in J. Hymers, ed., *The Funeral Sermon of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1840), 95; John Peile,

committed Catholic. In 1554, he was deprived of at least one, and probably both of his benefices by the Marian regime.[158] No reason is specified in the episcopal registers for Wyatt's deprivation, but given that the vast majority of the Marian deprivations were for marriage, it is reasonable to assume that this was also the justification for Wyatt's dismissal.[159] While clerical marriage was not, in itself, proof of evangelical sympathies, it was nevertheless a clear sign of departure from traditional religion.[160] Moreover, there are other signs that Wyatt likely held evangelical leanings. He was a cousin of John Rogers, the compiler of the Matthew Bible and the first of the Marian martyrs, and the two seem to have been well acquainted: both Wyatt and Rogers had close ties to Deritend, Birmingham, and had attended Cambridge at the same time, albeit at different colleges; in 1540, the men were made co-executor and overseer respectively of the will of Rogers' father.[161] There is also little doubt that Wyatt would have been exposed to reformist ideas at Christ's, which became a particular 'hotbed of Elizabethan Puritanism.'[162]

How, then, can we explain Lady Berkeley's sponsorship of this priest? It is possible, given the lack of definitive evidence, that Wyatt had in fact appeared an entirely traditional candidate when he was initially presented: after all, this was a period of religious flux. However, it is rather more likely that the Baroness's choice of Wyatt as nominee was less a product of her own preference, than the influence of Christ's College. The advowsons of both

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Biographical Register of Christ's College, 1505-1905, vol. 1 *1448-1665* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 10.

[158] BI, Abp. Reg. 5A, f. 697r; Peile, *Biographical Register*, 10, 27.

[159] Thomas S. Freeman, 'Burning Zeal: Mary Tudor and the Marian Persecution', in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 182; Parish, *Clerical Marriage,* 188: 'the possibility that clergy were deprived of their cures for any reason other than marriage is remote.'

[160] Helen Parish, *Clerical Celibacy in the West: c.1100-1700* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 181-3.

[161] David Daniell, 'Rogers, John (c. 1500–1555)' in *ODNB*; Peile, *Biographical Register*, 10; Joseph Hill, *The Book Makers of Old Birmingham: Authors, Printers and Book Sellers* (1907. Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1971), 4, 109-111.

[162] Randall J. Pederson, *Unity in Diversity: English Puritans and the Puritan Reformation, 1603-1689* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2014), 95; Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 122.

of Wyatt's benefices – Sutton Bonington St Michael's and Kegworth – were contested, claimed by both the Berkeley family and by Christ's.[163] The former cited hereditary right; the latter cited the will of Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother to Henry VII, in which she had granted both advowsons to the college.[164] The two parties had come to a compromise in the case of Kegworth in 1515. Maurice, Fifth Baron Berkeley, had granted the rectory to the college, on the condition that when a vacancy occurred, they would present him with two candidates, one of which he would then select to be nominated by the College.[165] While the advowson of Sutton Bonington ostensibly remained under Berkeley control, it is probable that a similarly collaborative arrangement existed for this benefice as well. In practice, the patronage seems to have been shared: the Berkeleys (or their assigns) presented to the benefice in 1536, 1541 and 1581, while Christ's presented in 1554 and 1580.[166] There also seems to have been a similar expectation of mutual assent in cases where Christ's was the named patron. Henry Berkeley successfully challenged Christ's presentation of Edmund Barwell – later master of the college – in 1580; however, he had raised no such objection to their presentation of Thomas Thompson, another fellow of the College, in 1554.[167] The issue, then, was seemingly with the individual, rather than the wider practice of promoting members of the college to the benefice: while this was not the last legal contest, it is significant that two of the three presentations made by the next Berkeley patron were of Christ's graduates.[168] Given this evidence, then, it is very probable that Lady Berkeley presented Wyatt to the parish at the College's request.

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[163] Peile, *Biographical Register*, 39.
[164] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2:189, 216, 377, 410; H. Rackman, 'Christ's College' in *The Victoria History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely*, vol. 3, *The City and University of Cambridge*, ed. J. P. C. Roach (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 430.
[165] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2:377.
[166] BI, Abp. Reg. 28, f. 57r; *CCEd*, Sutton Bonington St Michael's, location I.D. 16442.
[167] BI, Abp. Reg. 5A, f. 197r; Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2: 355; Peile, *Biographical Register*, 39, 83.
[168] The next presentation, in 1620, was made by King James I due to the minority of the heir. George, 9th Lord Berkeley, then presented in 1662, 1664, and 1667, after which time the benefice seems to have passed out of Berkeley hands. *CCEd*, Sutton Bonington St Michael's, location I.D. 16442.

The Baroness was also keenly aware of her obligations to clerical kin. In November 1558, just days before the death of Mary I, George Savage was instituted to Seagrave on her nomination.[169] He was a natal relative of Lady Berkeley, probably her nephew.[170] His relationship to the family was evidently a close one, for Henry Berkeley later continued his mother's support of Savage, employing him as a steward within his own household.[171] At first glance, Savage appears to have been a moderate evangelical, suggesting that Lady Berkeley's strong conservatism had again been subsumed beneath other interests. The priest prospered under the Elizabethan regime, culminating in his institution as Archdeacon of Gloucester in 1575.[172] By the time he wrote his will in 1600, he was married with multiple children.[173] However, a closer look reveals a more ambiguous adherence to the Elizabethan Settlement, and suggests that, in Lady Berkeley's patronage of Savage, familial and spiritual concerns were in fact aligned. In 1555, Savage had been granted a license for non-residence by Cardinal Reginald Pole to pursue further studies in Louvain: a city whose university had both close connections to Oxford – Savage's alma mater – and a strong and enduring English Catholic presence.[174] Savage also owed much of his Elizabethan preferment to Richard Cheyney, bishop of Gloucester, who – while no Catholic – displayed little enthusiasm for Protestant reform, and was temporarily excommunicated in 1571 for his failure to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles.[175] It is notable, too, that Savage remained celibate for many years after clerical

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[169] LRO, DIOC/Reg/28, f. 128r.
[170] Thomas F. Mayer and Courtney B. Walters, eds., *The Correspondence of Reginald Pole*, vol. 4, *A Biographical Companion: The British Isles* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 475-6.
[171] Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys*, 2:365
[172] Mayer and Walters, *Correspondence*, vol. 4, 475-6.
[173] TNA, PROB 11/100/296 (George Savage, proved 1602).
[174] Reginald Pole to George Savage, 1555, in Mayer, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, 161; C. J. Fordyce, 'Louvain and Oxford in the Sixteenth Century', *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 12, no. 3 (1933): 645-52; Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26-7.
[175] *CCEd,* George Savage, person I.D. 47050; Jane Reedy Ladley, 'Cheyney, Richard (d. 1579)', in *ODNB*.

marriage was legalised in England; he was still recorded as unmarried in 1576.[176] Accordingly, while Lady Berkeley's presentation of Savage was undoubtedly first and foremost a family matter, it can also be seen as a furtherance of her conservative agenda.

Anne Savage never abandoned the religion of her youth. This devotion seems to have, in many cases, influenced her selection of nominees to the benefices in her control. However, this was not a policy she pursued unswervingly. External pressures, in the form of a pragmatic arrangement with Christ's College, meant that she lent her support to a candidate who almost certainly held quite different beliefs from her own. Like so many other patrons, she also privileged the careers of relatives. Yet her sponsorship of George Savage highlights the potential interplay of different motives not just in an individual's overall clerical patronage, but in the context of a single presentation. Spiritual and secular concerns were not always at odds.

VI. Jane Cheney, Countess of Southampton: Promoting Conservatism in Hampshire

Jane Wriothesley (née Cheney, c.1509-1574), wife of the administrator and sometime Lord Chancellor Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton (1505-1550), was similarly guided by her religious conservatism in her exercise of ecclesiastical patronage. Indeed, Cheney's example reveals that, in some ways, women were freer than their male counterparts to pursue a patronage policy based on their religious beliefs, and in fact might diverge significantly from the priorities pursued by their husbands. This capacity has not gone unnoticed by historians. Gemma Allen has shown that the Cooke sisters 'did not simply follow the leads of their husbands' when it came to their religious patronage, and indeed in certain cases worked against

[176] Mayer and Walters, *Correspondence*, vol. 4, 475.

them.[177] Widowhood offered even greater opportunities for independent action, since it allowed a woman to 'wield often uncontested power over religious patronage.'[178] It hardly seems coincidental that Katherine Willoughby, as Melissa Harkrider has pointed out, 'increasingly advanced reformers to benefices in her control' after her markedly more conservative husband's death in 1545.[179] An examination of Cheney's presentations, in light of the Earl of Southampton's own patronage efforts, adds further weight to women's particular agency in this sphere.

Through his various position at court during the reigns of Henry and Edward, Thomas Wriothesley was inexorably drawn into the turbulent religio-political situation, and he became adept at navigating the successive changes in policy through well-timed shifts in allegiance. In the late 1530s, he was an active participant in the destruction of shrines and the suppression of monastic houses; by the mid-1540s he had emerged as a 'conservative champion', personally involved in the torture of the evangelical martyr Anne Askew.[180] This pattern would repeat in the years before his death in 1550. It is unsurprising, then, that historians have struggled to pin down Wriothesley's religious position: he has variously been painted as an evangelical and a 'convinced Catholic'.[181] Even his contemporaries questioned his allegiance: Askew apparently asked him 'how longe he wolde halte on both sydes?'[182] Regardless of his personal beliefs,

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[177] Allen, *Cooke sisters*, 169-72, 192.
[178] Allen, *Cooke sisters*, 192.
[179] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 88.
[180] G. N. Gibbons, 'The Political Career of Thomas Wriothesley, First Earl of Southampton, 1505-1550' (Ph.D. diss, University of Warwick, 1999), 33-7, 159-274; Michael A. R. Graves, 'Wriothesley, Thomas, first earl of Southampton, (1505–1550)', in *ODNB*.
[181] Gibbons, 'Political Career', qtd. 271, see also 279-81, 283-8; Graves, 'Wriothesley, Thomas'; Amanda Haberstroh, 'Jane Cheney Wriothesley (b. ca. 1505/9-d.1574)', in *A Biographical Encyclopedia of Early Modern Englishwomen: Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts, 1500-1650*, ed. Carole Levin, Anna Riehl Bertolet, and Jo Eldridge Carney (Routledge: Abingdon and New York, 2017), 414; A. D. K. Hayward, 'WRIOTHESLEY, Thomas (1505-50), of Micheldever and Titchfield, Hants and Lincoln Place, London', *The History of Parliament Online*, http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1509-1558/member/wriothesley-thomas-1505-50.
[182] Anne Askew, *The lattre examinacyon of Anne Askewe latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagoge of Antichrist, with the Elucydacyon of Iohan Bale* ([Wesel: D. van der Straten], 1547), Ciiir.

Wriothesley quite clearly placed pragmatism, politics, and his loyalty to the Crown before his personal convictions.[183]

This comes through quite clearly in Wriothesley's ecclesiastical patronage, which he extended to clerics from across the religious spectrum. Among those he supported was the vocal conservative Dr William Pye, who served Wriothesley as chaplain in the 1540s and was instituted as a canon of Lichfield Cathedral on his nomination.[184] Pye publicly rejected the Reformed position on the Eucharist, and became 'one of Pole's most trusted administrators' during the reign of Mary.[185] Pye and Wriothesley enjoyed a particularly close relationship: the priest was made one of the executors of the Earl's will.[186] But Wriothesley was not averse to also sponsoring priests with evangelical leanings. In 1549, for instance, he presented Martin Tyndale to the vicarage of Titchfield, Hampshire.[187] Although of no clear relation to William Tyndale, Martin seems to have shared something of the translator's enthusiasm for reform.[188] In 1533, Martin had presented a translation of Erasmus' life of John Colet to Thomas Cromwell, thanking the statesman for his 'kindness to my brother, one John Tyndall…in his troubles': John, a London merchant, had earlier drawn the ire of the authorities for his promotion of evangelicalism.[189] Martin himself was an associate of the reformist translators William Marshall and Richard Taverner.[190] Wriothesley also extended his support to the prominent Welsh clergyman and sometime monk John Salisbury, later bishop of Sodor and

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[183] For the impact of 'sheer political necessity' on Wriothesley's actions, see e.g. Gibbons, 'Political Career', 281, 284.
[184]Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers*, 263; *CCEd,* William Pye, person I.D. 28713.
[185] Mayer, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, 189, n. 276; Mayer and Walters, *Correspondence*, vol. 4, 431-2.
[186] TNA PROB 11/34/154 (Thomas Wriothesley, 1550).
[187] Chitty, *Registra Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynet*, 131.
[188] G. R. Elton, *Reform & Renewal: Thomas Cromwell and the Common Weal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 18.
[189] TNA, SP 1/77, f. 132r-v., Martin Tyndall to Cromwell, July 1533; Elton, *Reform & Renewal*, 18; Susan Brigden, 'Thomas Cromwell and the 'brethren'', in *Law and Government under the Tudors: Essays presented to Sir Geoffrey Elton on his retirement*, ed. Claire Cross, David Loades, and J. J. Scarisbrick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 36-7.
[190] Elton, *Reform & Renewal*, 18.

Man, who had had been imprisoned by Thomas Wolsey for suspected evangelical sympathies in 1528.[191] The remainder of Wriothesley's presentees – more than one of whom were, like Pye, in the Earl's personal service – seem to have fallen somewhere in between in terms of their religious position.[192]

Wriothesley acted, in many respects, as his public position dictated. He was far from the only statesman to alter his apparent allegiance with the prevailing winds of religious policy.[193] It also seems hardly coincidental that a number of his clerical clients held or went on to hold higher offices in the Church, and were often backed by other powerful patrons. Dr John Cotterell, whom Wriothelsey presented to Everleigh, Wiltshire, in 1546, was variously prebend of three cathedrals, archdeacon of Dorset, and vicar general of Bath and Wells.[194] William Pye received support from William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke; Queen Mary; and Gilbert Bourne, Bishop of Bath and Wells.[195] While Wriothesley certainly enjoyed close personal relationships with some of these priests, his patronage was nevertheless inherently politicised. His widow, however, was not bound by the same constraints. In the Earl's will, Jane Cheney was granted a number of manors and their appendant advowsons for the term of her life, as per the terms of her jointure. Others also came temporarily into her hands as Wriothesley's chief executor.[196]

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[191] Chitty, *Registra Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynet*, 112; Ian Atherton, 'Salisbury, John (1501/2–1573)', in *ODNB*. As Atherton points out, Salisbury was moderate in his evangelicalism, and in Elizabeth's reign displayed a distinct distaste for the 'hotter sort' of Protestant.

[192] Both William Ibberie (presented to Chiddingfold in 1541) and John Buttery (presented to a prebend of Lincoln Cathedral in 1545) were sometime chaplains to Wriothesley. Wriothesley also presented Dr John Cotterell (d. 1572) to Everleigh in 1546. Cotterell managed to hold his benefices and offices throughout four reigns. Chitty, *Registra Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynet*, 120-1, 132; Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers*, 268, 298; *CCEd*, John Buttrie, person I.D. 141923; *CCEd*, John Cottrell, person I.D. 40475.

[193] William Paulet, for instance, while less involved in religious matters than Wriothesley, was nevertheless clearly adaptable in his apparent convictions. He successfully served Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I: L. L. Ford, Paulet, William, first marquess of Winchester (1474/5?–1572)', in *ODNB*; David Loades, *The Life and Career of William Paulet (c. 1475-1572): Lord Treasurer and First Marquis of Winchester* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[194] *CCEd*, John Cottrell, person I.D. 40475.

[195] *CCEd*, William Pye, person I.D. 28713.

[196] TNA PROB 11/34/154 (Thomas Wriothesley, 1550).

Cheney presented to the parishes of at least six of these before her own death in 1574: North Stoneham, Titchfield, Abbot's Worthy (King's Worthy), Bighton, Dogmersfield, and St. Andrew Holborn. In contrast to the geographically-disparate holdings of many noble patrons, all of Cheney's advowsons, bar St. Andrew Holborn in the City of London, lay in Hampshire, giving her a reasonable amount of patronage power within the county. The Countess took full advantage of these advowsons to pursue a radically different patronage strategy.

In her study of the households of Queens Mary and Elizabeth, Charlotte Merton positioned Jane Cheney – who served both Katherine Parr and Mary – as, like her husband, spiritually ambiguous: '[i]t is not entirely clear whether the Countess of Southampton was a Catholic, a Protestant, or something in between.'[197] However, a closer look at the evidence places Jane very firmly at the conservative end of the spectrum.[198] The Countess had familial ties to Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, via her half-brother, the bishop's nephew and secretary Germaine.[199] Germaine himself was an active opponent of Henrician reform, and was executed in 1544 for denying the Royal Supremacy, and for his alleged earlier contact with Cardinal Reginald Pole.[200] Cheney shared their preference for traditional religion. Importantly, she ensured that her son, Henry, 2nd Earl of Southampton, was brought up in this faith: he remained a staunch, and even militant, Catholic until his death.[201] The recusancy of the Wriothesley family can thus be partly attributed to the Countess's influence.[202] Cheney's commitment to the Catholic faith underpinned and drove her ecclesiastical patronage.

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[197] Merton, 'The Women Who Served', 121.

[198] Jane's Catholicism has not gone unnoticed by other scholars. See e.g. Haberstroh, 'Jane Cheney Wriothesley', 413-4; J. G. Elzinga, 'Wriothesley, Henry, second earl of Southampton (bap. 1545, d. 1581)', in *ODNB.*

[199] Gibbons, 'Political Career', 48-9, esp. n. 169.

[200] Germain also appears to have been involved in the so-called 'Prebendaries Plot' against Thomas Cranmer. C. D. C. Armstrong, 'Gardiner, Stephen (c. 1495x8–1555)', in *ODNB*; MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 318-321.

[201] See e.g. Michael Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c. 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 81; Elzinga, 'Wriothesley, Henry.'

[202] Elzinga, 'Wriothesley, Henry'; Park Honan, 'Wriothesley, Henry, Third Earl of Southampton (1573–1624)', in *ODNB*. The third Earl later converted to Protestantism.

Her most controversial appointment was that of Leonard Bilson, to the rectory of King's Worthy in March 1558.[203] Bilson was an educated and accomplished priest. He had received a BA and MA from Oxford, and had been preferred to a series of livings in the late 1540s and 1550s, including a prebend of Salisbury Cathedral and a canonry in Winchester.[204] He had also acted as chaplain to Bishop Gardiner – a family connection which may have proved influential in Cheney's preferment.[205] Bilson navigated the regimes of Henry, Edward and Mary without issue, but his fortunes changed after Elizabeth's accession – just a few years after his presentation by Cheney. In June 1561, Bilson was brought before the courts on charges of sorcery, and was subsequently pilloried at Westminster.[206] One of his apparent accomplices, the priest and former monk John Coxe, confessed that he had said mass at Bilson's home 'for hallowinge of certeyn coniurations to the use of the sayd Bilson who practised by those meanes to obteyne the love of my Ladye Cotton, the late wife of Sir Richarde Cotton.'[207]

This association between sorcery and the Catholic mass is significant. To many English Protestants, magic and Catholicism – perceived as a 'superstitious' religion – went hand in hand.[208] During Queen Elizabeth I's reign in particular, 'magic was repeatedly associated with

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[203] Frere, *Registrum Johannis Whyte*, 22.

[204] *CCEd*, Leonard Bilson, person I.D. 45395; 'Bilson, Leonard', in Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp106-141; 'Canons: Tenth Prebend', in *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857*, vol. 3, *Canterbury, Rochester and Winchester Dioceses*, ed. Joyce M. Horne, *British History Online,* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/fasti-ecclesiae/1541-1847/vol3/pp102-104.

[205] Francis Young, *Magic as a Political Crime in Medieval and Early Modern England: A History of Sorcery and Treason* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2018), 97.

[206] For discussions of Bilson's alleged sorcery and the broader 'Waldegrave Conspiracy' with which he was linked, see Young, 'Magic as a Political Crime', 95-105; Michael Devine, 'Treasonous Catholic Magic and the 1563 Witchcraft Legislation: The English State's Response to Catholic Conjuring in the Early Years of Elizabeth I's Reign', in *Supernatural and Secular Power in Early Modern England*, ed. Marcus Harmes and Victoria Bladen (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 67-91; Michael J. Devine, 'John Prestall: A Complex Relationship with the Elizabethan Regime' (M.A. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2009); Norman Jones, 'Defining Superstitions: Treasonous Catholics and the Act Against Witchcraft of 1563', in *State, Sovereigns & Society in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of A. J. Slavin*, ed. Charles Carlton with Robert L. Woods, Mary L. Robertson and Joseph S. Block (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998), 187-203.

[207] TNA SP 12/16, f.120r.

[208] Devine, 'Treasonous Catholic Magic', 68.

Catholic malcontents dissatisfied with the Protestant religious settlement.'[209] The love magic associated with Bilson was in itself hardly seditious, but it linked him with a larger group of English Catholics charged with celebrating mass and conspiring against the realm.[210] The alleged actions of this group arguably helped pave the way for the witchcraft legislation of 1563, which 'ensur[ed] an indelible association between Catholicism and magic'.[211] Ultimately, however, it was the former which proved to be Bilson's downfall. In the province-wide clerical survey of the early 1560s, Bilson was recorded as 'imprisoned in London.'[212] By 1563, he had been deprived of all of his parish livings.[213] He remained incarcerated until 1582.[214] But his deprivation and lengthy imprisonment were not a product of the sorcery charges, but – as his repeated inclusion on lists of imprisoned recusants makes clear – of his refusal to abjure his Catholic beliefs.[215]

Merton has cited Cheney's patronage of Bilson as an example of 'the awkwardness which could arise from inadvertently backing a dubious client', positioning Bilson's association with the Catholic Coxe and the Mass as more problematic than the charge of sorcery.[216] Yet there was nothing inadvertent about the Countess's sponsorship of a conservative priest. While the charges of sorcery were unique to Bilson, two of Cheney's other nominees were also deprived from their benefices for their failure to comply with the

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[209] Francis Young, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Book of Magic: A Tudor Necromancer's Manual*, trans. Francis Young (Cambridge: Texts in Early Modern Magic, 2015), xix.
[210] Devine, 'Treasonous Catholic Magic', 77. See also n. 140.
[211] Devine, 'Treasonous Catholic Magic', qtd. 89. See also Jones, 'Treasonous Catholics'. Cf. Francis Young, *English Catholics and the Supernatural, 1553-1829* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 117-137.
[212] '*Londini in carcere*': CCCC, MS 122, 116.
[213] Despite his imprisonment, Bilson held a prebend in the diocese of Salisbury until 1572, when he was deprived for non-compliance with the 1571 Act 'to refourme certayne Dysorders': Field, *Province of Canterbury*, 260.
[214] Catholic Record Society, *Miscellanea II* (London: Catholic Record Society, 1906), 231.
[215] John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion*, vol. 2, part 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1824), 660; Catholic Record Society, *Miscellanea I* (London: Catholic Record Society, 1905), 57, 60, 70; Catholic Record Society, *Miscellanea II,* 231; George Lyman Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929), 556.
[216]Merton, 'The Women Who Served', 221.

Elizabethan Settlement: Thomas Securis, whom Cheney had presented to North Stoneham in 1558, and John Perry, whom she had presented to Titchfield the same year.[217] John Cooke, instituted to Dogmersfield on Cheney's nomination in 1552, seems to have ultimately conformed, as he was still rector there on his death in 1595.[218] However, he clearly also had conservative leanings, as he had been deprived from his other benefice of Cliddesden, Hampshire, for non-compliance in 1562.[219] Indeed – in a clear sign of Cheney's commitment to sponsoring conservative priests – just one of Cheney's Marian nominees made it through the change in religion entirely unscathed by deprivation: this was Robert Brett, instituted to Bighton in 1556.[220]

The Elizabethan Settlement effectively put an end to Cheney's sponsorship of overt Catholics. The men she subsequently presented to the livings under her control all seemed to have conformed. Very little is known about John Cardell or Robert Garnet, instituted to Titchfield in 1563 and 1572 respectively, or Henry Hyde, instituted to North Stoneham in 1563 after serving the parish as curate, but all held their living until their deaths.[221] Richard Addison, instituted to King's Worthy in 1572, was married with children at the time he wrote his will in 1600, while Randulph Wytham, presented to St Andrew Holborn in 1559, was recorded as married in the clerical survey undertaken following year.[222] There are, however, indications that she made some effort to promote religious conservatives where possible. This was certainly the case with Stephen Cheston, Archdeacon of Winchester, whom she presented to

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[217] Frere, *Registrum Johannis Whyte*, 21-22; Field, *Province of Canterbury*, 283.
[218] Chitty, *Registra Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynet*, 136; *CCEd*, John Cooke, person I.D. 45486.
[219] *CCEd*, John Cooke, person I.D. 45486.
[220] Frere, *Registrum Johannis Whyte*, 18. Brett held the benefice until his death in 1580: *CCEd*, Robert Bretst, person I.D. 67889.
[221] *CCEd*, John Cardell, person ID: 45450; *CCEd,* Robert Garnet, person ID: 106940; *CCEd*, Henry Hyde, 45857.
[222] *CCEd*, Richard Addison, person ID: 105795; TNA PROB 11/96/166 (Richard Addison, 1600); LMA, DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, f. 207v; CCCC, MS 122, 78-9.

King's Worthy in 1563.[223] Cheston had been something of a protégé to the late Stephen Gardiner, and had been appointed Archdeacon of Winchester by the (then) bishop in 1554; he also owed his prebend in Winchester Cathedral to the patronage of Queen Mary.[224] In this case, as with Bilson, Cheney's preferment of was likely given additional impetus by a sense of residual loyalty to Gardiner and his former clients .[225]

It seems eminently clear that the Countess of Southampton directed her patronage efforts, first and foremost, towards the promotion of clerics who shared her commitment to Catholicism. Familial loyalties played a role, but notably only in relation to Stephen Gardiner; as such, they never conflicted with her conservatism. This was a strategy she was, for a time, able to pursue very successfully. It was, however, a strategy which was modulated by the policies and priorities of the incumbent regime. While Cheney faced no barriers in preferring conservative priests in the favourable climate of Mary's reign, much of her effort was undone by the Elizabethan deprivations. At least some of her Elizabethan nominees may have retained an enthusiasm for traditional religion, but all seem to have conformed and steered clear of controversy. Cheney's patronage thus provides a salutary reminder that patrons did not have entirely free rein in their clerical patronage. Direct episcopal intervention at the point of presentation was rare, but the deprivation of incumbents was increasingly common. We should not underestimate the impact of religious change on a patron's choice of nominee. However, Cheney's example has also shown that widows might nevertheless have considerably greater freedom in exercising their right of advowson than their elite husbands. The Countess'

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[223] *CCEd*, Stephen Cheston, person I.D. 40929.
[224] *CCEd*, Stephen Cheston, person I.D. 40929; MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 642-3.
[225] Cheston was certainly firmly enmeshed within Gardiner's broader patronage network. In 1559, he had received the benefice of West Meon at the hands of Francis Allen, who had been Gardiner's secretary. Allen had been granted the next presentation by the Bishop. CCEd Record I.D.: 30756.

patronage was far more consistent, and markedly more conservative, than that of the late Earl of Southampton.

VII. The Religious Implications of Women's Ecclesiastical Patronage

The examples of Berkeley and Cheney, when viewed in conjunction with the work of Gemma Allen and Melissa Harkrider, demonstrate that English laywomen from across the spectrum of religious belief might pursue a deliberate spiritual agenda via their ecclesiastical patronage, presenting clerics whose sympathies aligned with their own. But what impact did these decisions actually have on the spiritual character of sixteenth-century England, and in particular the local communities which these priests served? This is a rather thornier question.

In the climate of uncertainty created by the English Reformation, the parish clergy served a crucial role as 'moulders of opinion.'[226] Even as the shifting theological underpinnings of the priesthood diminished their status, they continued to function as an important source of spiritual authority in the local community, mediating their parishioners' response to religious change.[227] By extension, it seems logical that we might also accord the patron/s of these priests a role, albeit typically less direct (and in some cases undoubtedly unintentional), in shaping local religion. Sarah Bastow has gone so far as to contend that 'control of ecclesiastical patronage, benefices and advowsons was all-important in determining the religious nature of the community.'[228] Nicola Clark, similarly, has argued that if a parish priest's response to

[226] D. M. Palliser, 'Popular Reactions to the Reformation during the Years of Uncertainty, 1530-70', in Haigh, *English Reformation Revised*, 111.
[227] See e.g. Marsh, *Popular Religion*, 86-95; Robert Whiting, *Local Responses to the English Reformation* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 167-82.
[228] Bastow, *Catholic Gentry*, 136-7.

religious change could affect the direction of a region, how much more might this be true 'for his patron, who held the rights to other benefices in the locality and further afield?'[229]

However, we cannot thus assume a straightforward link between the religious sympathies of patrons, priests, and parishioners: there are a number of qualifications that need to be offered here. First, the decisions made by the parish were not necessarily in accordance with views of its nominal patron. Irena Larking, for instance, has pointed to the voluntary iconoclasm which occurred at Long Melford in the late 1540s, despite the fact that the advowson was then held by the future Queen Mary.[230] The parish priest, similarly, did not unilaterally determine the religious direction of the community. Indeed, scholars have identified a number of cases in which parishioners actively rebelled against the wishes of their minister. At Harwich in Essex, the congregation had in the 1530s 'informed against their parson for attacking the new learning.'[231] As late as 1573, the parishioners of St Gregory, Norwich were still refusing to remove their rood loft, despite the efforts of their rector Francis Morley.[232] A parish might also, and often did, encompass individuals of vastly different beliefs, problematising generalisations about its character. Not all of the parishioners of the aforementioned Long Melford, for instance, viewed the Edwardian spoliation favourably; under the influence of this segment of the congregation and the conservative members of the local gentry, the church was later 'refurbished with great fervour for Roman Catholic worship.'[233] Finally, the issue of non-residence complicates the question of patronal and ministerial influence further. Parish priests might be absent from their livings due to pluralism,

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[229] Clark, 'A 'Conservative' Family?', 328.
[230] Irena Tina Marie Larking, 'Renovating the Sacred: The Re-formations of the English Parish Church in the Diocese of Norwich, c. 1450-1662' (Ph.D. diss., University of Queensland, 2013), 117.
[231] Whiting, *Local Responses*, 178.
[232] Larking, 'Renovating the Sacred', 172.
[233] Larking, 'Renovating the Sacred', 126-8; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 496-7.

possession of a prebendal stall, university studies, or service as a domestic chaplain.[234] In such cases, the parish was left in the hands of a curate or chaplain, who was 'probably less well educated, less competent and perhaps less conscientious than the fully beneficed priests whom they replaced.'[235] In addition, the religious leanings of these curates are typically entirely obscure. This has significant implications, for instance, for an assessment of the impact of Jane Cheney's ecclesiastical patronage. Of the six of her presentees mentioned in the province-wide clerical survey of *c*.1560, four were recorded as non-resident.[236]

Evaluating the local impact of ecclesiastical patronage thus requires an attentiveness to the specific circumstances of an individual parish. However, the fragmentary nature of the evidence renders this a formidable task. The most incisive studies of parochial responses to the Reformation have been founded on an analysis of churchwardens' accounts.[237] Yet the survival of these accounts is extremely patchy; virtually none appear to have survived for any parishes patronised by women during the time period under consideration.[238] A large-scale analysis of court and probate records may well prove revealing, but is beyond the scope of this thesis and thus awaits a future researcher. In the meantime, we can look to diocesan visitation registers and surveys of church goods. Although piecemeal, these nevertheless provide some indication of the potentially significant influence that parish priests and their patrons might exert upon parochial worship.

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[234] N. J. G. Pounds, *A History of the English Parish: The Culture of Religion from Augustine to Victoria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 57.
[235] Pounds, *English Parish*, 171.
[236] CCCC MS 122, 78-79; 116; 124a; 125; 130.
[237] E.g. Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Larking, 'Renovating the Sacred'; Caroline Litzenberger, 'St Michael's, Gloucester, 1540-80: The Cost of Conformity in Sixteenth-Century England', in *The Parish in English Life, 1400-1600*, ed. Katherine L. French, Gary G. Gibbs, and Beat A. Kümin (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 230-49.
[238] Based on the list of churchwardens' accounts in Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 350-62 and the Churchwardens' Accounts Database, http://warwick.ac.uk/cwad, which is currently a work in progress.

The records of the episcopal visitation of the diocese of Hereford in c. May 1553, for instance, provide a glimpse of religious life in the parish of Oldbury, Shropshire.[239] The parish's rector, Roland Gosnell, had been instituted in March 1539 on the nomination of the widowed Katherine Blount (née Peshall) and her son William, and had thus presided over the community's response to the changes instituted by both the Henrician and Edwardian regimes.[240] Even as late as 1553, the parish lacked '*liber divini officii*' (that is, the Book of Common Prayer), and a Bible.[241] While Gosnell seems to blame the situation on the expense (the entry is badly damaged), we might suspect that he had done little to encourage their purchase. This was not due to a lack of competency: Gosnell was a learned man with a demonstrated interest in the spiritual life of the Church.[242] Rather, we can point to the priest's enduring conservatism. Gosnell had formerly been prior of the Clunaic house of Wenlock, Shropshire, and apparently never wavered in his traditionalist sympathies.[243] He was deprived from Oldbury in 1560 for non-compliance with the Elizabethan Settlement.[244] The ministrations of Gosnell, and parish priests like him, undoubtedly contributed to the slow uptake of religious reform in the conservative county. Shropshire, as a whole, welcomed Mary's accession with alacrity. It is notable that the town of Bridgnorth, which neighboured Oldbury, celebrated the event with particular enthusiasm, 'lauding, thanking and praising God with ringing of bells and making of Bonfires in every street.'[245] The precise circumstances of

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[239] HARC, HD5/7/2, Visitation Book, unpaginated.
[240] Arthur Thomas Bannister, ed., *The Register of Charles Bothe Bishop of Hereford (1516-1535)* (Hereford: Cantilupe Society, 1921), 382; Alan Harding 'BLOUNT, John (by 1471-1531), of Knightley, Staffs. and Kinlet, Salop.', *History of Parliament Online*, http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1509-1558/member/blount-john-1471-1531.
[241] HARC, HD5/7/2, Visitation Book, unpaginated.
[242] Marjorie M. Chibnall, 'The Abbey, Later Priory, of Wenlock', in *A History of Shropshire*, ed. A. T. Gaydon, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 44.
[243] Chibnall, 'Wenlock', 44-5.
[244] Field, *Province of Canterbury*, 140.
[245] Charles Henry Hartshorne, ed., *Extracts from the Register of Sir Thomas Butler, Vicar of Much Wenlock, in Shropshire* (Tenby: R. Mason, 1861), 15; Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), 359.

Gosnell's appointment are unknown, but we can almost certainly discern Katherine Blount's particular influence here, and her shared conservatism. Blount seems to have made something of a habit of promoting ex-religious. Shortly before Gosnell's appointment, she, in conjunction with her son-in-law Richard Lacon, had presented another former Wenlock monk, Alan Clyff or Clyp, to her home parish of Kinlet.[246]

The possession (or lack) of service books is also suggestive of another priest's conservative influence upon his parish. William Hutton was the rector of Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire from 1552 until his death in 1559. As mentioned earlier, Hutton had been presented to the living by Eleanor Manners, dowager countess of Rutland, and was intimately connected to the Manners family. Although their son and heir – and Hutton's later 'good lorde and master' – seemingly had evangelical leanings, the dowager Countess and her late husband had remained firmly traditional.[247] Their household accounts from the 1530s and early 1540s, for instance, abound with payments which testify to a devout Catholicism. They maintained close relationships with religious houses up to and during the Dissolution; made arrangements for masses; and continued to refurbish the images in their chapel.[248] It is not surprising, then, that Eleanor presented a priest whose conservatism mirrored her own. In April 1566, as part of an enquiry into the remnants of 'superstitious' church furniture in Lincolnshire parishes, the churchwardens of Woolsthorpe were asked about the parish's possession of 'mase bookes and all other bookes of papistrie.' They replied that 'we had none suche but that we borowed of one Mr. hutton our late parsonne and at the defacing of all suche bookes of papistrie he had

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[246] Bannister, *Register of Charles Bothe*, 382; Francis C. Baldwyn Childe, 'Register of Kinlet: Introduction', in *Shropshire Parish Registers*: *Hereford Diocese*, vol. 17, ed. W. G. D. Fletcher (n.p.: Shropshire Parish Register Society, 1920), v, xiv; [William Gilchrist] Clark-Maxwell, 'The Monks of Much Wenlock After the Suppression', *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 4th ser., 9, part 2 (1924): 171-2.
[247] M. M. Norris, 'Manners, Henry, second earl of Rutland (1526–1563)', in *ODNB*; Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 44.
[248] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, Preserved at Belvoir Castle*, vol. 4 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1905), 269-70, 272, 274-5, 281-3, 293, 317, 319, 342.

theim againe.'[249] Hutton, then, had evidently preserved these books in the course of the Edwardian spoliation, lending them out to his parish upon the restoration of Catholicism to save them the expense of purchasing their own.[250] The fact that he 'had theim againe' after they were once more prohibited under Elizabeth is indicative of his considerable reluctance to abandon the services and practices of Catholic worship. Hutton seems to have been successful inculcating or at least sustaining a similar reluctance in his congregation. Woolsthorpe waited until 1564 to destroy their rood loft, the attendant figures of the Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist, and 'all other Imagies of papistrie.'[251] By contrast, many of the other Lincolnshire parishes included in the survey had carried out this process in the first years of Elizabeth's reign.[252]

Indeed, at the other end of the spectrum, the parish of Aisthorpe, Lincolnshire, performed the task unusually early. The churchwardens reported that they had had no rood loft 'sens the tyme of Quene Mary'; presumably, they had destroyed it upon Elizabeth's accession.[253] Even more significantly, the images of Mary and John had been destroyed in Edward's reign and never replaced, and the parish had also lacked – among other things – vestments, a cross, pyx, and chrismatory since this time.[254] We cannot rule out the possible role of financial hardship in the failure to rebuild and replenish the material trappings of Catholicism under the Marian regime: Aisthorpe was (and is) a small parish.[255] However, the evangelicalism of the church's patrons and their appointees undoubtedly contributed.

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[249] Edward Peacock, ed., *English Church Furniture, Ornaments and Decorations, at the Period of the Reformation: As Exhibited in a List of Goods Destroyed in Certain Lincolnshire Churches , A.D. 1566* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866), 169.
[250] Such loans were not uncommon: Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 549-550.
[251] Peacock, *English Church Furniture*, 169.
[252] E.g. Peacock, *English Furniture*, 30, 34, 39, 50, 53, 59.
[253] Peacock, *English Furniture*, 32.
[254] Peacock, *English Furniture*, 32-3.
[255] For the financial implications of the restoration, see e.g. Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 545-555.

Katherine Willoughby, duchess of Suffolk presented Thomas Kingston to the living in 1551.[256] On Kingston's death in 1554, Thomas Sharrowe was instituted on the nomination of the duchess and her second husband, Richard Bertie, and served the parish until 1567.[257] Both Willoughby and Bertie, importantly, were known to take an active interest in the parishes under their patronage.[258] The fact that other parishes patronised by the duchess of Suffolk also dispensed with the trappings of Catholicism with alacrity and enthusiasm is certainly indicative of Kingston and Sharrowe's - and by proxy Katherine's own – influence upon Aisthorpe's response to the successive changes in regime.[259]

Cumulatively, these examples thus point to the tangible impact that patronage decisions might have upon local religion. Although the way in which a parish negotiated religious reform was the product of interactions between various parties – including churchwardens, local gentry, and the wider congregation – it is undoubtable that their ministers, and those who presented them, often performed a leading role in this process. It is also crucial to recognise that clergy, and thus women's exercise of ecclesiastical patronage, could also have an impact *beyond* the parish. Non-residence certainly limited a priest's influence over parochial worship. However, as was noted earlier, absence from the parish was in many cases due to service elsewhere in the church hierarchy, including in positions which brought with them the capacity to help direct the spiritual climate of a much larger region. Dr Robert Cronkar, whom we have already met, used his position as a licensed preacher to rail against Henrician religious policy, in particular the suppression of the monasteries and Marian shrines, in 'dyuerse townes' during the mid-1530s; his sermons created enough noise that he was called before an episcopal

[256] Edwards, *Sede Vacante*, 162.
[257] LRO, DIOC/Reg/28, f. 111v.
[258] Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 130.
[259] Peacock, *English Church Furniture*, 73-5, 96-8; Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 129-30.

committee in London to answer for his actions.[260] William Binsley – instituted to Calverton, Nottinghamshire, in January 1549/50 on the nomination of Anne de Vere (née Howard), countess of Oxford – was a leading figure in the administration of Peterborough diocese.[261] He served as commissary from *c.*1551, before becoming chancellor to the eminently conservative second bishop, David Pole, in 1557.[262] In these roles, he 'act[ed] regularly as judge in the consistory court', including in cases of heresy under the Marian regime.[263] Foxe, for instance, records that it was Binsley who was responsible for ordering the execution of a Northamptonshire shoemaker, John Kurde, who had been imprisoned for denying transubstantiation.[264] We also find more than one priest sponsored by a laywomen in service as a royal chaplain. Robert Isham, for example, whom Lady Mary Parr (née Salisbury) presented to Pytchley, Northamptonshire in 1548, was later chaplain to Queen Mary.[265] In their presentations to church livings, laywomen might thus contribute to shaping not only the religious character of local communities, but of the wider English Church.

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[260] John Bale, *A mysterye of inyquyte contayned within the heretycall genealogye of Ponce Pantolabus…* (Geneva [Antwerp]: Mycheal Woode [A. Goinus], 1545), f. 31r; 'Letter of Thomas Dorset', in *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1843), 36-7; MacCulloch, *Cranmer*, 152-3; Richard Rex, 'The English Campaign Against Luther in the 1520s: The Alexander Prize Essay', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 39 (1989): 92.

[261] LRO, DIOC/Reg/27, f. 281r.

[262] The earliest mention I can find of Binsley as commissary dates from March 1550/1: NthRo X956.1 Institution Act Book, f. 34v. 'Binsley, William', in Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp106-141; T. F. Mayer, 'Pole, David (d. 1568)', in *ODNB*.

[263] A. G. Dickens, *Late Monasticism and the Reformation* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), 134-6.

[264] Foxe, *Unabridged Acts and Monuments* (1583 edition), book 12, 2045.

[265] NRO X956.1, f.25v. Other examples include Thomas Wood and Hugh Zulley: LMA, DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, 206v; Field, *Province of Canterbury*, 35-6, 194, 279, 338 (Wood); CCCC MS 122, 54, 168-9; WRO b 716.093 BA 2648/9 (iv), 31 (Zulley).

VIII: Conclusion

This chapter has confirmed ecclesiastical patronage as an important site of female agency in early modern England. Across the country, laywomen regularly presented to benefices as both patrons *de jure* and *hac vice*, either independently or in conjunction with others. Although their involvement never approached the level of laymen, it was nevertheless numerically significant. Indeed, in some dioceses the proportion of ecclesiastical presentations in which women participated equalled or even surpassed those made by other influential patronal groups. By taking a broad-brush approach to the topic, this chapter has also demonstrated that this was not an avenue of patronage restricted only to certain key elites. While it was naturally a sphere dominated by the gentry and nobility, amongst the members of these classes there was widespread involvement. Participation in ecclesiastical patronage was further widened through the common practice of brokerage, as individuals sought to intervene in the patronage decisions of the Crown, the clergy, and their fellow laity. Widowhood, unsurprisingly, offered opportunities for particular patronal autonomy. However, as the examples of women such as Honor, Lady Lisle, Bridget Hogan, and Elizabeth Pymond suggest, women were capable of wielding substantial influence in this arena even during marriage.

Laywomen used the ecclesiastical patronage at their disposal to pursue a range of interests. Despite what the limited existing research might suggest, most women did not seek to further a particular religious agenda. Rather, obligations to kin and clients were often at the forefront. Spiritual and 'secular' concerns were certainly not always mutually exclusive, but in a number of cases clerical competency and the wellbeing of the parish were clearly secondary concerns. Occasionally, however, laywomen did engage with and respond to the spiritual upheaval of the reformation period by actively and consistently sponsoring those who shared their religious sympathies. We find those of both evangelical and more conservative leanings

fulfilling this role. The case study of Jane Cheney indicates that women, less burdened by the demands of political office, were in fact particularly well-placed to do so. The patronage decisions of these women were inevitably modulated by shifts in religious policy. However, they could nevertheless have a marked impact on the spiritual direction of local communities, and in some cases also exert an influence at higher levels of the church hierarchy. The following chapter further examines women's patronage in the parish context, and the close interrelation between spiritual, familial, social and political concerns in its exercise, by considering the evidence of last wills and testaments.

CHAPTER THREE

In Dei Nomine: Patronage at the End of Life

On 1 October 1557, Lady Anne Grey (née Barley), the veteran of three marriages and two decades of widowhood, composed her last will and testament.[1] The Virgin Mary and the saints were called upon to pray to God that he might accept her soul; there were to be masses and a penny dole at her burial and month's mind, as well as further charity bestowed upon the poor; and arrangements were made for a half-yearly obit to be said for twenty-one years at the parish churches of Albury and Bosworth, at Savoy chapel in London, and at the recently re-founded Westminster Abbey and house of Friars at Greenwich.[2] She bequeathed gold rings to her former and current chaplains, and left twenty shillings to the parson of Hadham to preach a sermon at her burial. Anne also bestowed considerable largesse on various parish churches with which she had been associated throughout her life. She gifted eighty shillings towards the reparations of the church and church house of Aldbury, Hertfordshire; eight other churches or chapels, across six different counties, were to be the recipients of an astonishing volume of richly-made liturgical textiles. She requested that John Feckenham, Abbot of Westminster, act as overseer of the will, bequeathing him her 'balys of gould' in recompense.

In the extent and variety of its pious benefaction, Lady Grey's will points to the crucial importance of the testament as a site for the formal exercise of religious patronage. It also raises again the thorny problem of the relationship between faith, patronage, and policy. Given this document alone, one might be forgiven for concluding that the Henrician and Edwardian

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[1] TNA PROB 11/40/229 (proved 7 May 1558). Anne's date of birth is unknown, but she was probably at least sixty at the time of her death, as she married her first husband, Sir Robert Sheffield, sometime after the death of his first wife in c.1509: Julian Lock, 'Sheffield, Sir Robert', in *ODNB*. She was subsequently wed to Sir John Grey of Blisworth, and then Sir Robert Clement of Ightham, Kent. See W. H. Challen, 'Lady Anne Grey', *Notes & Queries* 10, no. 1 (1963): 5-9.

[2] The month's mind was a requiem mass celebrated one month after an individual's death.

reformations had no effect whatsoever on post-mortem provisions, or at least that their effects had been swept away by the Marian Restoration. Other wills, from the same year and social class, naturally suggest a rather different story. The picture is muddied further when we consider Lady Grey herself. In many ways, the stalwart traditionalism displayed in her will seems unsurprising: she was, after all, the sister of Dorothy Barley, last abbess of Barking Abbey.[3] Yet her lifetime patronage is more ambiguous. The clerics she presented to benefices may possibly have had traditional leanings, but they were hardly hard-line conservatives. Both John Style and Hugh Zulley, incumbents of Woodford and Stretton-on-Fosse respectively, held onto their benefices through three successive regimes, with the latter finding favour at the courts of both Mary and Elizabeth.[4] More notably, this was also the same Anne Grey who was addressed by a seemingly grateful Thomas Becon in his a *A newe pathway vnto praier* (1542).[5] While this does not necessarily mean that she flirted with evangelicalism herself, it does complicate a seemingly cut-and-dried story of fervent and unwavering Catholicism.[6]

Anne clearly welcomed Mary's reign: the priests responsible for her obit were also tasked to pray that it long endure.[7] But was it this alone that caused her to embrace the old salvific rituals and devotional paraphernalia with such apparent confidence, or was she perhaps encouraged also by the looming spectre of death?[8] This is ultimately a question that we cannot

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[3] Challen, 'Lady Anne Grey', 7.

[4] NRO X956/1, ff. 1r, 74r; WRO b.716.093 BA2648/9(iv), 31; CCCC MS 97, f. 131v; *CCEd*, Hugh Zulley, person I.D. 172312; Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense: An Ecclesiastical Parochial History of the Diocese of London*, Vol. 1 (London: Benjamin Motte, 1708); 632; Field, *Province of Canterbury*, 194.

[5] See Chapter 1.

[6] As Jonathan Reimer's work on the 'traditional piety' of another of Becon's dedicatees, Thomas Neville, has shown: 'Thomas Becon's Henrician Writings: Composition and County Patronage, 1541-1543', *Reformation* 21, no. 1 (2016): 8-24.

[7] TNA PROB 11/40/229.

[8] As Katherine Lewis has pointed out, given the will's 'status as the last pious act of a Christian usually near death, it must be questioned whether its provisions can be taken as an accurate representation of the individual's concerns of priorities': Katherine J. Lewis, 'Women, Testamentary Discourse and Life-Writing in Later Medieval England', in *Medieval Women and the Law*, ed. Noël James Menuge (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), 60.

answer. We can say, however, with some certainty that such a will could not have been written just a few years before, or a few years after. With this in mind, this chapter turns from the lifetime benefaction discussed in previous chapters, to the particularities of patronage at the end of life, the motivations behind it, and the influence thereupon of both gender and the fluctuating religious climate. The chapter first outlines the problems and possibilities of probate evidence, before mapping both the ruptures and continuities in religious provision across the period. A third section examines the influence of gender, pointing particularly to the need to consider the different circumstances faced by male and female testators. The final two sections seek to further complicate the relationship between end-of-life patronage, faith, and religious change, by exploring the influence of kinship and lay-clerical relationships on spiritual provisions. It is argued that family identity and bequests to clergy, by virtue of their very embeddedness in the broader social fabric, provided points of relative stability in this period of religious flux. The Reformation disrupted and irrevocably narrowed the laity's options for pious benefaction, yet testamentary patronage remained a crucial means by which laywomen from across the spectrum of belief could express and shape their faith.

I. Sources and Methodology

Wills are perhaps simultaneously the most enticing, and the most fraught, of sources for historians of lay piety. They are unparalleled in their abundance, and invaluable for the glimpses they provide of individual lives across the social spectrum. Yet they are not without their problems: far from being 'mirrors of men's souls', they provide, at best, a ''key-hole' vision.'[9] Their preambles or 'soul bequests' – a long-favoured source for historians intent on

[9] Quotes are from, respectively: W. K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480-1660: A Study of the Changing Pattern of English Social Aspirations* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), 16; Clive Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills

tracking the reception of reform – were arguably shaped as much by convention, scribal influence, and the pressure to conform to official policy, as by the testator's personal religious inclinations.[10] Bequests offer a somewhat surer indication of the testator's religious priorities.[11] Yet even shifts here can be interpreted as evidence of 'realism in the face of a rapacious regime', as readily as of alterations in religious opinion.[12] Thus, as Eamon Duffy has pointedly remarked, the lack of intercessory provisions in Edward's reign reveals little 'except that most Tudor testators were possessed of a normal allowance of common sense.'[13] Wills, as legal documents, made particularly poor instruments for promoting religious practices out of step with that of the ruling regime.[14] Moreover, as Clive Burgess has demonstrated, testaments do not necessarily reflect the testator's pious priorities during their life, nor all of the provisions that they made in preparation for their death. Indeed, 'a meagre will may be indicative more of the fact that the testator died with his wishes and estate well in order and with widow and parish prepared for what was to be done, rather than suggesting lack of funds or apathy toward religion.'[15]

This applies as much to women as it does to men. We know, for instance, that Lady Joan Denny displayed an enthusiasm for religious literature during her life, and is also said to

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and Pious Convention: Testamentary Evidence Reconsidered', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England*, ed. Michael Hicks (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), 30.

[10] See e.g. J. D. Alsop, 'Religious Preambles in Early Modern English Wills as Formulae', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40 (1989): 19-27; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 505-507; Margaret Spufford, 'Religious Preambles and the Scribes of Villagers' Wills in Cambridgeshire, 1570-1700', in *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Nigel Goose (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press, 2000), 144-57.

[11] Christopher Marsh, 'In the Name of God? Will-Making and Faith in Early Modern England', in *The Records of the Nation*, ed. Peter Spufford and Geoffrey Martin (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1990), 225, 248.

[12] Alec Ryrie, 'Counting Sheep, Counting Shepherds: The Problem of Allegiance in the English Reformation', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 87.

[13] Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 504.

[14] *Ibid.*, 504-5.

[15] Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills', 14-33 (qtd. 21).

have provided financial aid to the martyred Anne Askew.[16] Shortly after her death, her executor presented to the parish of Amwell on her behalf.[17] Yet her will, proved in 1553, is utterly devoid of any pious provision.[18] Indeed, the methodological issues associated with wills are particularly acute when it comes to women, who are, by all accounts, 'severely under-represented' in probate records.[19] It has been estimated that women's wills only constitute between twelve and seventeen percent of those proved in the sixteenth-century.[20] The vast majority of these belong to widows or those who never married, since a wife could only make a will with her husband's consent. Even where this obstacle was overcome, a married woman's ability to dispose of material goods was naturally limited, given that their ownership of property was restricted under coverture.[21]

Yet, as even Burgess has conceded, despite these issues 'the detail and variety of wills' content proscribes any thought of discarding them.'[22] Instead, we must use them cautiously, holistically, and with a consciousness of their gaps and limitations.[23] It is for this reason that this chapter approaches testamentary patronage as distinctive, rather than using wills to attempt to illuminate the lifetime piety of the testators, and focuses less on pinning down personal belief than on tracking the myriad factors which shaped post-mortem provision. While the lack of intercessory arrangements under Edward might reveal little about religious preference, it does suggest a great deal about the avenues for pious expression that testators had open to them at

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[16]Askew, *The lattre examinacyon*, 40r-40v, 43r-43v. For Denny's interest in and apparent sponsorship of religious literature, see Chapter 1.

[17] LMA DL/A/A/006/MS09531/012/002, f. 176r.

[18] TNA PROB 11/36/157 (Joan Denny, 1553).

[19] Nigel Goose and Nesta Evans, 'Wills as an Historical Source', in *When Death Do Us Part: Understanding and Interpreting the Probate Records of Early Modern England*, ed. Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Nigel Goose, (Oxford, Leopard's Head Press, 2000), 46.

[20] Erickson, *Women and Property* 204-5. For additional figures see Goose and Evans, 'Wills', 46-7.

[21] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 139-40, 204; Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 41-3; Goose and Evans, 'Wills', 46-7.

[22] Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills', 15.

[23] For a recent study along these lines, see Stephanie Jane Appleton, 'Women and Wills in Early Modern England: The Community of Stratford-upon-Avon, 1537-1649' (Ph.D., University of Birmingham, 2017).

that time. It is for this reason, too, that this chapter combines quantitative analysis with close reading and the accumulation of examples.[24]

Much has been written about wills and lay female piety. Historians such as Claire Schen and Christine Peters have explored what they suggest about gendered patterns of pious provision and women's involvement in parish life, as well as about the impact of religious change thereon.[25] Others have zeroed in on particular aspects of women's activity, including post-mortem charity, and widows' role in the financing and construction of their own and their husbands' funerary monuments.[26] This chapter draws upon this research, but redirects the focus, instead interpreting wills and their contents through the lens of patronage and patronage relations. Moreover, where these studies have typically focused on testamentary provisions as expressions of piety and spiritual concerns, this chapter also addresses the influence of personal and familial motivations, allowing for a more nuanced assessment of the relationship between wills and religious change. It is based on a sample of 334 women's wills, proved in the Prerogative Courts of Canterbury and York between 1528 and 1558. While this is only a portion of the wills dating from this period, care was taken to ensure a sufficiently representative sample: it contains a roughly even number of wills for each five-year interval

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[24] For comments on the problems associated with a reliance on statistical methods, see for example: Ryrie, 'Counting Sheep', 86-7.

[25] Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes', 250-268; Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 40-59. See also French, *Good Women*, esp. 37-48; Susan E. James, *Women's Voices in Tudor Wills, 1485-1603: Authority, Influence and Material Culture* (2015. Reprint, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), 13-58; Nicola A. Lowe, 'Women's Devotional Bequests of Textiles in the Late Medieval English Parish Church, c. 1350-1550', *Gender & History* 22, no. 2 (2010): 407-429; Marianne Wilson, 'A Reformation of Remembrance? Devotional Practices of Female Testators in Lincolnshire 1509-1558', *Midland History* 44, no. 2 (2019): 176-89; Claire Cross, 'Northern Women in the Early Modern Period: The Female Testators of Hull and Leeds 1520-1650', *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 59 (1987): 83-94.

[26] Ian W. Archer, 'The Charity of London Widows in the Later Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', in *Local Identities in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Norman L. Jones and Daniel Woolf (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 178-206; Schen, *Charity*; Barbara J. Harris, 'The Fabric of Piety: Aristocratic Women and Care of the Dead, 1450-1550', *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 2 (2009): 308-335. Clive Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls': The Parish of All Saints' Bristol on the Eve of the Reformation* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), 119-162.

and covers the geographical breadth of England. Given that the Prerogative Courts had authority over cases where the deceased possessed property worth over five pounds in more than one jurisdiction, the sample is weighted towards the nobility and gentry. Yet it also includes testators of the merchant, artisan, and lesser landholding classes. All bar twenty-four of the women were widows; of these, twenty were wives, and the remaining four had never married. To provide a point of comparison, 119 wills of male testators were also analysed. Most of these men were the relatives of these female testators. Most notably, the sample includes eighty-seven spousal pairs, allowing for a more precise assessment of the role of gender and kinship on end-of-life testamentary practices.

II. Doors Closed and Doors Left Open: The Impact of Religious Change

Protestantism brought with it a fundamentally altered conception of death and the dead. Where previously the living and the dead had been yoked together in the quest for salvation, the former tasked with aiding the latter's journey to heaven, the disavowal of Purgatory and of works-based salvation rendered the intercessory system of pre-Reformation Catholicism doctrinally obsolete. As Peter Marshall has aptly put it, '[i]n the space of a few years the doctrinal rationale for a plethora of ritual observances and material constructions was entirely swept away, and the whole basis on which the dead were to be honoured and remembered was open for renegotiation.'[27] Of course, the ideological repudiation of this system was one thing; its dismantlement in practice and even more so in popular belief was a rather more 'slow and resisted' process.[28] Yet even in the first decades of the English Reformation, governmental

[27] Peter Marshall, *Invisible Worlds: Death, Religion and the Supernatural in England, 1500-1700* (London: SPCK, 2017), chap. 1, ebook.
[28] Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), qtd. 313.

attacks on the intercessory system had a profound impact on the provisions made by the dying and for the dead.

The broader shifts in testamentary provision as a result of the Reformation have been well canvassed elsewhere.[29] Yet it is necessary to say something about what these shifts meant for religious patronage specifically. Unsurprisingly, the repudiation of purgatory had a similarly profound impact on testamentary patronage, so closely intertwined as it was with the expectation that legatees, both individual and institutional, would engage in intercessory prayer in return. The effects were further compounded by assaults on other traditional targets of testamentary largesse: monasteries, chantries, and the devotional furniture of the parish church. This was a particularly critical issue for women. As the will of Lady Anne Grey – with which this chapter opened – suggests, testaments provided a critical avenue for women's exercise of religious patronage. The will was one of the principal ways in which women from across the social spectrum could directly express their spiritual interests and support the religious life of their community, in a climate in which more formal options for involvement were not always open.[30] Changes here thus had broader repercussions for women's religious activism.

On the eve of the Reformation, the range of options for religious benevolence open to testators was extensive. The particularly lengthy will of Dame Elizabeth Reed (d. 1533), late wife of former alderman and mayor of London Sir Bartholomew Reed, furnishes a useful example.[31] Alongside charitable donations to the poor and for public works, Reed bestowed considerable patronage on at least forty-five different religious institutions or individuals, both in London and across England. Her bequests included gifts of vestments and mass books to her

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[29] See e.g. Lorraine C. Attreed, 'Preparation for Death in Sixteenth-Century Northern England', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 13, no. 3 (1982): 37-66; James, *Women's Voices*, 13-58. Litzenberger, *English Reformation*; Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes'; Schen, *Charity*.

[30] Katherine L. French, '"I leave my best gown as a vestment": Women's Spiritual Interests in the Late Medieval English Parish' *Magistra* 4, no. 1 (1998): 57-77.

[31] TNA PROB 11/24/33 (Elizabeth Reed, 1531; proved 1533).

local parish church and to that of Weybridge, Surrey; £10 for the building of the Church of the Crossed Friars on the proviso that they sing for her soul; smaller amounts of money to other parish churches and religious houses, including the Carthusian Charterhouse at Sheen and Ickleton Priory, Cambridgeshire; as well as bequests to specific monks and nuns, her former chaplain, and her husband's chantry priest. Most female testators, admittedly, were rather more modest in their testamentary largesse. However, the vast majority made provision for some form of religious benefaction, even if it was just the customary bequest to the high altar of the parish church for tithes forgotten. Indeed, just eight out of the 174 (or 5 percent) women's wills in the sample composed before 1547 were entirely devoid of pious bequests.

Such patronage was far from entirely altruistic, intended as it was to help the testator achieve salvation. Yet patronage was, by its very definition, designed to be of mutual benefit to both parties, and this element of self-interest does not negate the crucial spiritual and communal functions it performed.[32] Gifts of money or goods to parish churches, for instance, performed an essential role in maintaining and enriching their fabric, and in providing the necessary equipment for the celebration of the liturgy.[33] Even chantries, often perceived as largely self-interested foundations, were – as Clive Burgess has demonstrated – valued by testators as much as a means of providing communal as personal profit, augmenting the 'clerical presence' in a parish and thus its liturgical standards.[34]

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[32] See, e.g. Patterson, *Urban Patronage,* 2.

[33] The laity were required by 'episcopal mandate…to maintain the nave and churchyard and to supply various liturgical items': Katherine L. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 20.

[34] Clive Burgess, 'Chantries in the Parish, or 'Through the Looking Glass'', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 164, no. 1 (2011): 100-129. See also *idem*, ''For the Increase of Divine Service': Chantries in the Parish in Late Medieval Bristol', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36, no. 1 (1985): 46-65. For the more pessimistic view, see in particular K. L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 304-12.

The religious changes imposed by the Henrician and Edwardian regimes irrevocably disrupted the traditional patterns of testamentary patronage. As scholars have noted, wills begin to evidence a state of uncertainty, even anxiety, about the legality of various bequests, and the fate of the funds or goods earmarked for spiritual purposes.[35] Some testators coped by adding caveats or specifying contingency plans. Composing her will in 1549, Bridget, Lady Marney specified that her requests for burial services, and for a priest to sing for her soul for two years, were to be fulfilled 'yf the kynges lawes wolle so suffre yt'; if not, the funds were to be dispersed in acts of charity.[36] Others, despite evidently retaining faith in the efficacy of intercession, bypassed the church entirely. Agnes Hartforthe, in 1556, instead placed the responsibility for her soul in her children's hands: they were to enjoy the residue of her estate for their 'owne use to pray for my saull.'[37] Most dramatically, the proportion of women's wills which make no reference to religious provisions increased sharply as the period progressed, accounting for twenty-two of the ninety-one sample wills proved in Edward's reign (24 percent). This trend was not reversed in Mary's reign: sixteen of the sixty-eight wills proved between 1554 and 1558 are devoid of religious bequests (also 24 percent).

That this trend was primarily a product of the uncertainties and strictures produced by the religious turbulence, rather than a mounting lack of enthusiasm for post-mortem religious benefaction, will become evident when some of the principal targets of testamentary patronage are granted closer attention below. Such an examination also reveals that the trajectories of this patronage in the first decades of the English Reformation were characterised by somewhat more ambiguity, continuity and co-existence than this apparently linear trend suggests, even if the ultimate implications for women's involvement were undeniably marked.

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[35] For example: Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes', 256.
[36] TNA PROB 11/33/186 (Bridget, Lady Marney, 1549; proved 1550).
[37] BI, Prob. Reg. 15, pt. 1, f. 245v (Agnes Harforthe, 1556).

It is worth turning first to the avenues of patronage which the Reformation most definitively closed off: religious houses and chantries. The question of the importance of the former in the spiritual landscape of the English laity on the eve of the Reformation remains a particularly thorny one, not least as it was evidently subject to regional and class differences. While some historians have maintained a generally positive view of their place in lay religion, others have sought to downplay the impact of their dismantlement.[38] Barbara Harris, for instance, has argued that convents – and indeed religious houses in general – 'played a rather peripheral role' in the 'spiritual and philanthropic lives' of late medieval aristocratic Englishwomen.[39] Claire Schen has similarly contended that bequests to these institutions from London testators, both male and female, had already begun to decline prior to 1500, and thereafter constituted just a small proportion (12.66 percent) of total pious bequests.[40] This may be true for these specific social and geographic groups. However, if we consider a wider cross-section of female testators from across England, it becomes clear that this perceived marginality should not be overemphasised. Of the 103 women's wills in the sample written in the decade prior to 1539, forty-one (40 percent) contain bequests to at least one religious house or order: a minority, but a significant one.

Bequests to the mendicant orders proved especially resilient.[41] Just months before their suppression, for instance, Elizabeth Wilkinson of West Heslerton, Yorkshire – a woman of manifestly modest means – left bequests of barley to the three orders of friars in Scarborough,

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[38] For generally positive views, see e.g.: Claire Cross, 'Monasticism and Society in the Diocese of York 1520-1540', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 38 (1988): 131-145; Marilyn Oliva, *The Convent and the Community in Late Medieval England: Female Monasteries in the Diocese of Norwich, 1350-1540* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), 178, 183.

[39] Barbara Harris, 'A New Look at the Reformation: Aristocratic Women and Nunneries, 1450-1540', *Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 2 (1993): 89-113, esp. 91, 99, 109-10.

[40] Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes', 252.

[41] cf. Oliva, *Convent and Community*, 176.

and to the Austin Friars of York.[42] At the other end of the country, Dame Jane Guildford bequeathed the rather more substantial sum of £20 to the Black Friars of London to pray for her soul, in whose church she wished to be buried.[43] Yet monasteries and convents also continued to be singled out for benefaction, albeit less frequently, in the years prior to the Dissolution. Composing her will in 1537, Elizabeth, dowager Countess of Oxford, left various sums of money to the Carthusian Charterhouses of London and Sheen, as well as the abbeys of Denny, Barking, Syon, and the Minoresses of London for prayers; Syon was also to receive her 'best altar-cloth of white cloth of baudekin.'[44] Further down the social scale, Isabel Swales, a lay sister at the hospital of St Mary Magdalene, Killingwoldgraves (Yorkshire), evidently remained confident in 1536 of the institution's future, leaving her 'greatest maser, to bee an heyrelome in the house.'[45] Indeed, in some cases women continued to display a loyalty to local religious institutions even after they had been suppressed. In 1541, Jane Hotham of Etton, Yorkshire, for instance, left four bushels of wheat to 'my laidie priores with her ij susters.'[46] The following year, Dame Alice Cotton left Dorothy Smythe, a former nun of Thetford Priory, Norfolk (in whose vicinity Cotton held lands), and a hermit named 'Father Yonge' enough black cloth to each make a gown – a common form of charity in this period.[47] Religious houses and their inhabitants thus retained an important place in the devotional lives of many Henrician testators.

The absence of religious orders in England for fifteen years following the Dissolution

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[42] BI, Prob. Reg. 11, ff. 318r-v (Elizabeth Wilkinson, 1538).
[43] TNA PROB 11/27/324 (Jane Guildford, 1538). For other bequests to friaries on the very eve of the Dissolution, see, for example: TNA PROB 11/26/120 (Katherine Troyse, 1537); TNA PROB 11/27/117 (Juliane Mundy, 1537); TNA PROB 11/27/205 (Edith Darnall, 1538); TNA PROB 11/27/250 (Margaret Butler, 1537; proved 1538); TNA PROB 11/27/331 (Anne Roo, 1538).
[44] TNA PROB 11/27/144 (Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, 1537).
[45] J. W. Clay, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia: A Selection of Wills from the Registry at York*, vol. 6 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1902), 53-4 (Isabel Swales, 1536). Swales refers to herself as 'sister' in her will, but mentions both her previous and current husbands.
[46] Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 103-4 (Jane Hotham, 1541).
[47] TNA PROB 11/29/329 (Alice Cotton, 1543).

unsurprisingly did much to erode this connection. There was no renewed flood of benefaction under Mary I. Just three of the fifty-six wills (5 percent) composed between the re-founding of the first friaries in April 1555 and Mary's death in November 1558 contain bequests to religious houses. However, a closer look at these bequests suggests that some residual interest in sponsoring the religious life did remain. Of the roughly 837 religious houses and friaries in England on the eve of the Dissolution, just seven were re-founded under Mary.[48] Most of these were in or around London, further limiting the circle of potential benefactors. Nevertheless, all but one of these (the Friars Observant of Southampton) received bequests from Marian female testators. These bequests, moreover, imply a confidence that these re-foundations would endure. Lady Anne Grey, as mentioned previously, endowed a twenty-year obit at both Westminster Abbey and the church of the Franciscan Observants at Greenwich. Agnes Golde left £10 each to the Greenwich Friars, Black Friars of London, and the nuns at King's Langley; while Jane Dauncye bequeathed £20 to Syon to pray for her soul.[49] If religious houses, then, were increasingly (and unavoidably) marginalised in the testamentary concerns of English women during this period, they nevertheless remained the target of patronage right up until the last possible moment. Despite the concerted attacks on professed religion, and the enthusiasm with which many members of the laity had participated in the appropriation of monastic lands, for some laywomen the religious houses and their intercessory function remained of considerable spiritual significance.

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[48] Knowles estimates that there were 650 religious houses, excluding 187 friaries, in c. 1530: David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 247, n. 2. The houses were Westminster Abbey, the Franciscan Observants at Greenwich and Southampton, the nunneries of Syon and King's Langley, the Carthusian charterhouse at Sheen, and the Black Friars of London: David Loades, 'Introduction: The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor', in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, ed. Eamon Duffy and David Loades (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 23. Dates of re-foundation are given in Richard Rex, *The Tudors* (2002. Reprint, Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2012), 133.

[49] TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558) TNA PROB 11/39/95 (Agnes Golde, 1557); TNA PROB 11/41/103 (Jane Dauncye, 1558).

The abolition of the chantries in 1547/8 left an arguably larger hole in the philanthropic lives of lay testators. It is true that the endowment of perpetual chantries had already 'ceased almost entirely' after the initial assaults on religious houses and purgatory in 1536: none were founded by women after 1540.[50] Yet the endowment of stipendiary services, or 'temporary chantries', remained popular until the option was forcibly removed.[51] Between 1528 and 1536, twenty-eight of seventy women's wills (40 percent) included provisions for time-limited services, ranging in duration from six months to two decades. While this proportion did decrease thereafter, bequests for temporary chantries still appear in a third of wills proved in the decade before their abolition (39 of 119). Indeed, provisions were being made until the very passage of the Chantries Act, which provided for the dissolution of the chantries and the seizure of their property by the Crown.[52] Just eleven days before it received royal assent on 24 December 1547, Dame Elizabeth Talbot of Bromsgrove, Worcester requested that a priest sing for her soul for five years.[53] Only twelve months previously, Elizabeth Swillington of Coventry had bequeathed £72 towards the finding of a priest for twelve years.[54] The aforementioned figures, moreover, capture only those who explicitly founded their own services and discussed the arrangements in their wills; considerably more engaged in the system through bequests to guilds and the establishment of yearly obits, while others made the necessary arrangements

[50] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', 321.
[51] For a discussion of terminology, and the distinctions between chantries and services, see Sylvia Gill, 'Managing Change in the English Reformation: The 1548 Dissolution of the Chantries and Clergy of the Midland County Surveys' (Ph.D., University of Birmingham, 2010), 115-6. The phrase 'temporary chantry' is used by Burgess, 'For the Increase of Divine Service'.
[52] For the 1547 Act and its implications, see Gill, 'Managing Change'.
[53] TNA PROB 11/32/42 (Elizabeth Talbot, 1547; proved 1548).
[54] TNA PROB 11/31/386 (Elizabeth Swillington, 1546; proved 1547). For another example, see TNA PROB 11/31/644 (Joan Bawghe, 1547).

during their lives.[55] More still – as a later section of this chapter will show – performed a crucial role in the foundation and management of chantries endowed by their deceased husbands.

Despite their former popularity, the confiscation of chantry wealth and resources by the Edwardian regime rendered the endowment of such services an eminently unattractive option for testators, even after the Marian Restoration. 'Recent experience', as Peter Marshall has pointed out, 'had demonstrated how vulnerable the institutional arrangements for upholding intercessory prayer were to the attentions of a permanently impecunious Tudor state.'[56] While less extensive provisions for intercession began to reappear with increasing frequency after Mary's accession, just two of the female testators in the sample sought to establish stipendiary services.[57] In 1554, Dame Alice Ratclyffe of Salisbury left £140 for her chaplain, Christopher Alanson, to pray for her and her late husband as a stipendiary priest: enough for twenty-eight years at the specified rate of £5 per year.[58] Four years later, Helen Clifford of Brackenborough, Lincolnshire, made rather more modest arrangements for a priest to sing in the parish church of Kelstern.[59] While a belief in intercession undoubtedly lingered amongst large swathes of the English population, testators were evidently unwilling to risk substantial resources in their efforts to achieve salvation when there was a very real chance that they might not see the benefits.

What, though, of the avenues for testamentary patronage which the early Reformation left at least partially open? The most important was undoubtedly the benefaction directed towards parish churches, which were by far the most common ecclesiastical beneficiaries in

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[55] In his work on Bristol, Burgess suggests that the number provided by wills is undoubtedly a 'gross underestimate' of the temporary chantries established, since 'it is clear that the living could and did establish chantries.': 'For the Increase of Divine Service', 52.
[56] Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead*, 116.
[57] For a discussion of wider trends in intercessory provision under Mary, see Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead*, 117.
[58] Another priest was to be found in the event of Alanson's death. TNA PROB 11/37/58 (Alice Ratclyffe, 1554).
[59] TNA PROB 11/42A/66 (Helen Clifford, 1558).

lay wills.[60] As has already been mentioned, the vast majority of testators left at least a small sum for tithes forgotten, alongside the funds reserved for funerary services. Many women went beyond this basic (and evidently expected) provision, bequeathing goods and/or additional funds to one or more parish churches, with the latter often earmarked for 'church works' or repairs. For instance, in what is an entirely unexceptional Henrician will, Edith Darnall of London bequeathed twenty shillings for repairs and a cope of blue damask to the Church of St Olave in Silver Street, as well as an equal sum and the rest of her suit of copes and vestments to the Church of St Alban, Wood Street, where she wished to be buried.[61] The proportion of female testators who made such additional bequests remained remarkably consistent throughout the latter Henrician period, equating to 45 percent between 1528 to 1534 (twenty-five out of fifty-six wills), and 46 percent between 1535 to 1546 (fifty-five out of 119 wills).

Unsurprisingly, this figure declined sharply under Edward VI, as parish churches were progressively stripped of the external trappings of traditional worship.[62] While women continued to invest in their parishes through the provision of poor relief – one of the few officially sanctioned avenues for pious giving – just thirteen of the ninety-one wills written between 1547 and 1553 (14 percent) contain bequests of goods or funds for building works to the churches themselves. The vast majority of these bequests, moreover, were made in the first years of the reign, and no female testator left goods to a parish church after 1549. Yet, in a clear testament to their centrality to lay spiritual philanthropy, patronage of parish churches recovered comparatively well after Mary's accession, when considered alongside the forms of pious giving discussed above. 32 percent of the women's wills written between 1554 and 1558 (twenty-two out of sixty-eight) contain bequests over and above those for services or tithes

[60] French, *Good Women*, 38; Attreed, 'Preparation for Death', 46.
[61] TNA PROB 11/27/205 (Edith Darnall, 1538).
[62] For a discussion of this process, see Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 478-503.

forgotten, with the proportion increasing over the course of the reign as testators aided in the refurnishing of their churches. In 1557 Dame Lucy Clifford, for instance, bequeathed all of her vestments and 'chapel stuff', including a silver pyx, to the church of Shenley, Hertfordshire. Anne Grey, as mentioned, left a considerable body of liturgical textiles to various churches; this included bequests of a vestment of crimson satin embroidered with gold and silk flowers, 'foure peece' for the alb, a stole, and a 'fannell' (maniple) to the church of Blisworth, Northamptonshire alone.[63] Significantly, the impetus for this renewed benefaction came largely from the patrons themselves. As Eamon Duffy has noted, 'the Marian Church … did not press Bonner's original policy of seeking to meet the expenses of reconstruction from bequests. The re-establishment of the pattern of such bequests, therefore, where it occurred, was not the result of pressure from above.'[64] Nonetheless, this renewed benefaction did not survive Mary's death. Ultimately, the assault on purgatory and good works removed much of the basis and incentive for such largess. It is hardly coincidental that the vast majority of these bequests appear in the wills of women who clearly retained an enthusiasm for traditional worship. Thus, while the parish remained central to lay religious life, the Reformation – as scholars have long recognised – 'severely reduced' the scope for participation, not least when it came to end-of-life patronage.[65]

However, not all avenues of women's testamentary patronage were so dramatically affected by the religious turmoil. Bequests to clergy are a case in point. Traditionally, such bequests were also tied closely to intercession, made on the proviso – explicit or otherwise – that the recipient 'pray for my soul.' Yet the decline in these bequests was considerably more

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[63] TNA PROB 11/40/50 (Lucy Clifford, 1557; proved 1558); TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558).
[64] Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 552-3.
[65] Burgess, 'By Quick and By Dead', 858; Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes', 251, 267-8; French, *Good Women*, 223-230.

gradual than the foregoing discussion might lead one to expect. Bequests to specific clerics, excluding those tied to funerary services or tithes, appear in 41 percent of female wills in the sample between 1528-1534 (twenty-three out of fifty-six), and 37 percent of those composed between 1535 and 1546 (forty-four out of 119). Whereas bequests to parish churches more than halved in Edward's reign, bequests to clergy still appear in 33 percent (thirty out of ninety-one) of the wills written between 1547 and 1553. This proportion remained relatively steady after Mary's accession, at 31 percent (twenty-one out of sixty-eight). While evidently not untouched by the religious changes, patronage of clergy thus remained an eminently viable, and popular option for female testators. The reasons for this will be interrogated further below.

The sponsorship of preaching similarly remained a viable option, and indeed was one of few avenues of spiritual philanthropy which increased in popularity over this period. This has led some historians to interpret bequests for sermons as 'indicators of Protestantism.'[66] However, while the Reformation certainly elevated preaching from a supplementary role as 'the handmaid to the sacraments' to a central place in Protestant worship, this link should not be overemphasised.[67] As Susan Wabuda has so shown, sermons 'were part of the regular scene of English church life long before the breach with Rome.'[68] They also continued to play a role in *Catholic* reform throughout this period. Eamon Duffy, for instance, has argued that Cardinal Pole viewed preaching as a crucial instrument of the Marian restoration.[69] Bequests for sermons

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[66] Claire S. Schen, 'Charity in London, 1500-1620: From the "wealth of souls" to the "most need' (Ph.D., Brandeis University, 1995), 128, 155. Schen's later work avoids such explicit claims, and acknowledges ambiguity, but nevertheless maintains a particularly close connection between evangelicalism and bequests for preaching: *Charity*, 51-2, 104-5; 'Women and the London Parishes', 257.

[67] Susan Wabuda, *Preaching During the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 7, 12, 24 (qtd 7).

[68] Wabuda, *Preaching*, 26.

[69] Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 50-6.

appear in women's wills throughout these early decades of religious change, and across the spectrum of belief.

It must be acknowledged that testamentary provisions for preaching were always the exception rather than the norm. Explicit requests for sermons appear in the wills of just eight female testators in the sample: two dating from the 1530s, two from the 1540s, and four from the 1550s, all of them proved in the Province of Canterbury.[70] Even at the height of their popularity in the first decades of Elizabeth's reign, gifts for sermons remained in the minority.[71] It is likely that testaments do not capture all of the arrangements for sermons, and especially funerary sermons, that were actually made. In his research on the early seventeenth century, Eric Carlson found evidence of individuals making face-to-face requests for sermons on their death beds, and there are indications that this kind of practice was also taking place much earlier.[72] One of the earliest published funeral sermons, printed in 1552, had apparently been composed as a result of just such a request. Its author, Robert King, claimed that he had written it as his (unnamed) mistress lay 'deadly sicke', at the prompting of one of her 'cheefe officers.'[73] Nevertheless, it seems clear that sermons were only requested by a small proportion of testators.[74] The cost would certainly have been prohibitive to many. While the amount left for the purpose is not always specified, the smallest figure mentioned in the sample is five

[70] TNA PROB 11/24/181 (Dorothy Codrington, 1523; proved 1532); TNA PROB 11/27/398 (Alice Clere, 1539); TNA PROB 11/28/484 (Susan Kingston, 1541); TNA PROB 11/31/102 (Elizabeth Payton, 1545; proved 1546); TNA PROB 11/34/91 (Anne, Countess of Derby, 1551); TNA PROB 11/34/81 (Elizabeth Stevyns, 1550; proved 1551); TNA PROB 11/36/194 (Ellyn Gresham, 1550; proved 1553); TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558).

[71] Schen, *Charity*, 105. See also Carlson's figures for the early seventeenth century: Eric Josef Carlson, 'English Funeral Sermons as Sources: The Example of Female Piety in Pre-1640 Sermons', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 32, no. 4 (2000): 574.

[72] Carlson, 'English Funeral Sermons', 574-5.

[73] Richard King, *A funerall sermon that was prepared to haue b[i]ne preached … for a cert[e]in honourable lady then almoste deade, but afterward recouered.* (London: Richard Grafton, 1552), Aiir. The identification of this as among the earliest published Protestant funeral sermons is Peter Marshall's: *Beliefs and the Dead*, 98.

[74] Carlson argues similarly: 'English Funeral Sermons', 575.

shillings; others left up to twenty for a single sermon.[75] However, their relative rarity arguably heightens the significance of these bequests where they do appear: they were not something included as a matter of convention, but instead represented a deliberate choice to sponsor this form of spiritual instruction.

Turning to some specific examples, there was undoubtedly a shift in the way in which preaching was framed in the wills of female testators – whether as a consequence of their personal religious affiliation, or the constraints of official policy. Traditionally, bequests for sermons were viewed as having a salvific function, one of the 'panoply of good works that expedited souls through purgatory.'[76] This is evident, for instance, in the 1541 will of Dame Susan Kingston, whom we have already encountered in Chapter One as a vowess of Syon Abbey.[77] Kingston's request for three sermons comes immediately after the arrangements for dirge and mass at her burial, and is linked to the requiem masses which were to be sung for her soul both then, and on the one month and one year anniversaries of her death.[78] In other cases, female testators yoked their requests for sermons to chantry or obit provisions, specifying that the chaplain should preach as well as say Mass.[79]

Evangelical sermons, by contrast, were aimed more explicitly at the instruction of the living than the aid of the dead. The aforementioned sermon by Robert King exemplifies this shift. King claims that he produced the sermon 'for the instruction of all them, that should have been present' at his mistress's burial, 'to lerne them howe they should prepare themselves to

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[75] TNA PROB 11/36/194 (Ellyn Gresham, 1550; proved 1553); TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558).
[76] Wabuda, *Preaching*, 49.
[77] See Chapter One, 61-3.
[78] TNA PROB 11/28/484.
[79] TNA PROB 11/24/181 (Dorothy Codrington, 1523; proved 1532). For a particularly good example of such a provision (though not part of the selected sample), see the will of Joan Marlar (1530/1), who was also a vowess at Syon: TNA PROB 11/24/26. This example, as well as the phenomenon of 'preaching chantries' more broadly, is discussed in Wabuda, *Preaching*, 163-169.

die'. He is careful to dissociate the occasion from any taint of purgatory: this is not, he stresses, a place where souls are purged, but where 'fooles purses be emptied.'[80] We can see this attitude filtering into women's wills. The early 1550s testament of Ellyn Gresham, widow of the London mercer William Gresham, is suggestive. Gresham's will is (by necessity, if nothing else) free of the traditional trappings, and while the sermons are still to be preached '*for*' her, they are much less closely associated with the state of her soul. While one is to be preached at her burial or the following day, two more are simply to be preached on subsequent Sundays. It is noteworthy, too, that Gresham places particular emphasis on the preacher's knowledge of 'the sacred worde of god.'[81] While we know nothing further about Ellyn's own intellectual interests, the Gresham family would prove keen promoters of lay education.[82]

Importantly, however, this was by no means a linear transformation. While there was certainly a rise in this latter attitude, these conceptions co-existed throughout the early Reformation. In fact, the most discernibly 'evangelical' provisions in the sample date from 1539. Well before most of her contemporaries, Dame Alice Clere, aunt to Anne Boleyn, dispensed with masses, and entirely divorced her provisions for preaching from any hint of prayers for the dead. She requested that a learned priest preach the 'worde of God' for an entire year after her decease, 'at suche due tymes and places as shalbe appoynted by myn executours.'[83] That same year, Dame Alice Whether went so far as to specify that the thirty sermons she requested be preached by evangelicals such as Edward Crome, Robert Barnes, and John Thixtill.[84] Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum is the will of Anne Grey,

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[80] King, *A funerall sermon*, Aii^{r}, Fiii^{v}. The sermon was ultimately not preached, as the unnamed lady recovered from her illness.
[81] TNA PROB 11/36/194 (Ellyn Gresham, 1550; proved 1553).
[82] Ellyn's brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Gresham, was the founder of London's Gresham College. Ian Blanchard, 'Gresham, Sir Thomas (c.1518-1579)', in *ODNB*.
[83] TNA PROB 11/27/398 (Alice Clere, 1539)
[84] Whether's testament is not among the sample; instead, I owe this example to Wabuda. TNA PROB 11/27/515; Wabuda, *Preaching*, 56.

proved twenty years later. This was, as we have seen, thoroughly imbued with a traditional emphasis on the salvific power of good works, and it was in this context that Grey left twenty shillings for a sermon at her burial.[85]

Indeed, some testators sought to blend these approaches. The will of Elizabeth Stevyns of London, composed in late 1550, is a case in point. Stevyns requested that one 'Mr Maydewell', or another learned man, preach five sermons. Like Gresham, Stevyns specified that one was to be preached at her burial, and the remainder on subsequent Sundays. Yet she also requested that her tomb bear an inscription requesting prayers for her soul.[86] The very number 'five', as Schen has suggested, may have been a nod to Catholic devotions to Christ's five wounds (as indeed Alice Whether's request for thirty sermons may have been modelled on a trental of masses).[87] Moreover, despite the suggestion that evangelical bequests for sermons were distinctive in reflecting a 'personal involvement in the edification of a congregation',[88] this was evidently a concern which seeped over any perceived confessional lines. Grey, for instance, was clearly just as concerned about the quality of the preacher as her evangelical-sympathising counterparts. She specifically requested that the sermon be preached not by the parish priest of Albury, where she wished to be buried, but by the parson of nearby 'Hadham.' This was almost certainly Edmund Brigott, Doctor of Divinity, who was rector of Much Hadham until 1562. As well as being highly educated, Brigott was a practiced preacher: he had formerly been a friar of the Franciscan Order – well-known for their preaching – and there is record of him giving several sermons at Thetford Priory in the late 1530s.[89]

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[85] TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558).
[86] TNA PROB 11/34/81 (Elizabeth Stevyns, 1550; proved 1551).
[87] Schen, 'Women and the London Parishes', 258.
[88] Schen, *Charity*, 104; *idem*, 'Charity in London', 122.
[89] Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (London: B. Motte, 1708), 832; Andrew G. Little, *The Grey Friars in Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), 283-4; David Dymond, ed., *The Register of Thetford Priory: Part 2: 1518-1540* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 690, 756; 'Brycote,

By the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559, post-mortem religious patronage was far removed from its early Henrician appearance. Women of the moneyed and landed classes no longer had the option of directing funds to religious houses or the ministrations of chantry priests, while the religious turmoil and doctrinal changes meant fewer bestowed largesse on their parish churches. Their ability and incentive to use their wills to contribute to the spiritual life of their communities was undeniably reduced. Nevertheless, this was not narrative of unmitigated decline and contraction. The endurance of these forms of religious benefaction until the religious changes rendered them untenable, and their partial renewal under Mary, is indicative of a lingering enthusiasm; so, too, is the fact that many women continued to sponsor individual clerics, and to a lesser extent preaching, throughout the period. Post-mortem patronage, at least as it is revealed in wills, was particularly vulnerable to shifts in religious policy. But it too bears marks of the continuity and overlap which marked the other forms of benefaction discussed in this thesis. These threads of continuity, and their significance in terms of laywomen's negotiation of religious change, will be further discussed below. First, though, we must address the influence of gender.

III. The Influence of Gender

Thus far, this chapter has focused on women's wills as a discrete category. However, it is worth interrogating whether, and to what extent, testamentary patronage was a gendered practice: both genders, after all, faced the same religio-political uncertainties. Through a comparative analysis of men's and women's wills, including those of eighty-seven spousal pairs, this section examines the ways in which gender interacted with other factors – notably marital status and

Edmund (Bricotte)' in Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/alumni-oxon/1500-1714/pp201-227.

social position – to shape post-mortem benefaction. In doing so, it both builds upon and qualifies existing scholarship on this issue.

There was considerable overlap between the end-of-life provisions of male and female testators. Among the spousal pairs, for instance, approximately the same proportion of men and women left bequests to the church and made explicit provisions for chantries or obits. Men, too, were as likely to leave bequests for sermons, and to recognise religious orders in their wills.[90] As in the wills of female testators, friaries received by far the greatest largesse. However, whereas women were equally likely to recognise male and female houses, male testators – while not ignoring nunneries – tended to pay greater attention to monasteries.[91] Both sexes left bequests to specific clergy, though women were slightly more likely to do so: of the spousal pairs, 21 of the husbands left such a bequest (24 percent), compared to 26 of the wives (30 percent).[92]

Both sexes were also apt to look beyond their own parish churches. Undoubtedly as a product of their differing regional foci, scholars have reached diametrically opposed conclusions about the geographical scope of women's testamentary patronage. In her research on the dioceses of Lincoln and Bath and Wells, Katherine French found that women 'were twice as likely to remember neighbouring parishes in personal ways in addition to their own home parish.'[93] Christine Peters, by contrast, has argued that while male testators from

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[90] Four male testators (of 119) left bequests for sermons: TNA PROB 11/25/123 (William Butler, 1528; proved 1534); TNA PROB 11/30/653 (Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, 1545); TNA PROB 11/33/422 (Robert Payton, 1550); Nicholas Harris Nicolas, ed., *Testamenta Vetusta*, vol. 2, (London: Nichols and Sons, 1826), 740-2 (Edward Lord Hastings). Of the 37 men's wills in the sample written in the ten years before 1539, 41 percent include bequests to religious institutions. This proportion increases to 48 percent if those written before 1529 are considered.

[91] Eight male testators left bequests to monasteries, while four left bequests to nunneries. A further two left bequests to the sisters of hospitals. While this sample is small, the conclusions reached are in accordance with Barbara Harris' work on aristocratic bequests: 'Aristocratic Women and Nunneries', 99.

[92] Cf. Katherine French, who found that in late medieval Lincoln and Bath and Wells women were twice as likely to leave bequests to clergy: 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 66.

[93] French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 67.

Worcester frequently bequeathed funds to 'a large number of local parish churches … there are no examples of women doing the same'; women, she argues, were more closely focused on their own parish.[94] Yet an examination of wills from across England suggests that, in the mid-sixteenth century, the reality for the moneyed and landed classes lay somewhere in the middle. Of the 61 couples in the sample who died within the same reign (thus mitigating the influence of shifts in religious policy), 28 percent of the husbands (17) recognised more than one parish church, compared to 20 percent (12) of the wives. When cathedrals are included, the proportions are even closer, rising to 36 percent of men (22) and 33 percent of women (20). In a reflection of the influence of community identity and loyalty on testamentary patronage, most of these bequests were to local institutions. However, some testators – both male and female – also looked much further afield, leaving gifts to parish churches in distant counties.[95] Class, not gender, was the most important determinant here: the majority of those who did so were members of the aristocracy.[96]

The most prominent distinctions along gender lines are to be found not in the targets of patronage, but in the *value* and *nature* of the bequests made. Unsurprisingly, given their greater access to resources, men frequently – though not universally – gave more money than women for the same purpose. Sir John Mundy and his wife Juliane, for instance, who both died in 1537, left forty shillings and ten shillings respectively to each of the London friaries.[97] Similarly, Robert Chadwick bequeathed three shillings and four pence to the church works at

[94] Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 49.
[95] For further discussion of this point, see the following section.
[96] 'Aristocracy' here refers to both the nobility and the knightly class, following Harris, *English Aristocratic Women,* 6.
[97] TNA PROB 11/27/118 (John Mundy, 1537); TNA PROB 11/27/117 (Juliane Mundy, 1537).

West Retford, compared to the shilling left by his wife, Katheryn; both of their wills were proved in 1556.[98]

Perhaps more significantly, as scholars have noted, women were markedly more likely than men to bequeath material objects to churches or other religious institutions, in place of or alongside money.[99] 16 percent (54) of female testators in the sample made one or more such bequest, compared to 9 percent (11) of male testators. Gifts of goods provided a means for testators to link themselves personally and tangibly to the recipient institution. Given that gendered patterns of ownership 'led women to attach significance to the … material objects they owned in their own right', women's more enthusiastic involvement here may certainly be suggestive of a 'more intimate emotional involvement with the devotional and liturgical life' of the church.[100] Moreover, as French has argued, bequests of goods offered women 'a way of compensating for their more restricted role in parish decision making', since, in doing so, they could 'directly shap[e] the religious experience of the rest of the parish community.'[101] Yet this trend was also the product of the differing circumstances faced by male and female testators. Most of the latter, as noted, were widows, making their wills when their children had already been provided for and their husband's estate distributed; their death thus brought with it the dissolution of their household.[102] As such, they had somewhat greater scope to disperse its contents in their will. It is telling that of the twenty-four wills written by single women or wives who predeceased their husbands, only one includes a bequest of material goods to the church.[103]

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[98] BI, Prob. Reg. 15, pt. 1, ff.176v-177r (Robert Chadwick, 1556); BI Prob. Reg. 15, pt. 2, ff.252r-v (Kathryn Chadwick, 1556).
[99] For example: Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 49-52; French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests.'
[100] Lowe, 'Women's Devotional Bequests', 408-9, 425 (qtd. 25); 'Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 52.
[101] French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 67-8.
[102] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 212-3; French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 65.
[103] Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 53-4 (Isabel Swales, 1536). Christine Peters has noted a similar trend in churchwardens' account: in all of the parishes she examined, the majority of female donors seem to have been widows: *Patterns of Piety*, 42-3.

Indeed, in a reflection of the greater difficulties these women faced in gaining control over wealth and property, these wills in general are limited in their pious bequests. Thirty-eight percent (9) contain none whatsoever.

An examination of the different kinds of objects bequeathed allows this picture of gendered giving to be nuanced further. In existing accounts of women's testamentary piety, bequests of household goods, including clothing and textiles – allocated for repurposing as vestments and other liturgical items – have been singled out as a central and fundamentally *feminine* feature.[104] There is much truth to this: as Peters notes, many of women's 'mundane and domestic' possessions were particularly apt 'to be put to holy use.'[105] Thus in one of several such instances among the sample, Ellen Armerode, of South Kirkby, Yorkshire (d. 1544/5) bequeathed her best board cloth, her best sheet, and a towel, to three altars within her parish church.[106] None of the 119 men's wills examined contain comparable bequests of household linen. Pious bequests of jewellery likewise seem to have been the sole preserve of female testators. Gifts of wedding rings to the parish church or, prior to the Dissolution, the Marian shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, were particularly common.[107]

However, not all bequests of goods were so gender specific. Gifts of garments to the church were a recurrent feature of Englishwomen's wills up to the Edwardian Reformation. Dame Margaret Hungerford (d. 1531) bequeathed her 'best gowne of blacke velvet' to the parish church of St John the Baptist, Cirencester, 'to make a vestment'. Fifteen years later and at the other end of the country, Isabel Stapleton left sarsenet tippets to the churches of

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[104] James, *Womens' Voices*, 74; Lowe, 'Women's Devotional Bequests'; French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 69, 71-4; Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 52.
[105] Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 52.
[106] Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 213-4 (Ellen Armerode, 1544; proved 1545).
[107] For example: TNA PROB 11/24/138 (Katherine Beche, 1531); TNA PROB 11/27/144 (Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, 1537); TNA PROB 11/39/542 (Elizabeth Hull, 1557). For bequests of other forms of jewellery, see e.g.: TNA PROB 11/24/113 (Katherine Style, 1530; proved 1531). For the significance of bequests of wedding rings, see Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 50.

Hovingham and Gilling, both in North Yorkshire, 'to maike an ornament for the blissed sacrament to hange over the altar.'[108] Yet, while somewhat more common in women's wills, the gifting of clothing was hardly a 'peculiarly female phenomenon.'[109] Of the eighty-seven spousal pairs, four of the men bequeathed clothing to the church, compared to five of the women. Thomas West, Baron De La Warr (d. 1525), for example, left his mantle of the Order of the Garter and crimson gown to the church of Broadwater, Sussex to make two altar cloths, as well as a gown of tawny velvet to the church of Boxgrove.[110] Sir Robert Clere (d. 1531) similarly left his gown of crimson velvet to the church of Ormesby St Margaret, Norfolk, 'to make with a coape'.[111]

Both sexes also bequeathed purpose-made liturgical textiles throughout this early Reformation period. Sir George Gales' (d. 1556) gift of a velvet altar frontal 'with the resurrection upon it wrought in golde', and Sir Thomas Hastings' (d. 1558) of a russet-velvet vestment and alb, for instance, parallel the aforementioned gifts of Anne Grey, Elizabeth Reed, and Lucy Clifford.[112] That said, whereas French found that in her two late-medieval dioceses roughly equal proportions of men and women made such bequests, the mid-sixteenth century sample examined here is rather more female-dominated.[113] Men, by contrast, were more likely to gift funds for the purchase of these items.[114] Again, this can be linked to the fact that widows

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[108] TNA PROB 11/24/71 (Margaret Hungerford, 1527; proved 1531); Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 232-4 (Isabel Stapleton, 1546).
[109] Lucinda M. Becker, *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 159. Becker here is referring to bequests of clothing in general, but other scholars have made similar claims in relation to gifts of clothing to the church: see footnote 100 above.
[110] TNA PROB 11/22/57 (Thomas West, 1525; proved 1526).
[111] TNA PROB 11/24/84 (Robert Clere, 1529; proved 1531). See also TNA PROB 11/21/540 (John Marney, 1524; proved 1525); Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 84-5 (Lancelot Stapleton, 1539).
[112] BI, Prob. Reg. 15, p. 1, ff. 62r-v (George Gale, 1556); TNA PROB 11/40/236 (Thomas Hastings, 1558).
[113] French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 68-9.
[114] For example: TNA PROB 11/23/362 (William, Lord Willoughby, 1529; proved 1530); TNA PROB 11/28/527 (Alexander Culpepper, 1540; proved 1541); TNA PROB 11/25/212 (the testator, Elizabeth Toll, leaves £40 to purchase a suit of vestments as per her husbands will; proved 1534). Some female testators also left funds: TNA PROB 11/30/10 (Mary Horton, 1543; proved 1544); TNA PROB 11/27/217 (Joan Peerse, 1536; proved 1538).

were more likely to be responsible for the dissolution of the household. Many of these items would have formerly been used in the household chapels which were a feature of most gentry and noble manor-houses.[115] The will of Sir John Spelman (d. 1546), for instance, suggests that their contents certainly did end up in female hands: he bequeathed 'all suche thinges as appertene to my chapell' to his wife Elizabeth.[116] Indeed, more than one female testator explicitly states that the items bequeathed are those currently used in their chapel.[117]

This also goes a long way to explain the gendered patterns which characterise bequests of other devotional paraphernalia. French found that in the late-medieval parish male testators bequeathed markedly more books and liturgical items to the church than women, a trend she attributes to their greater literacy and resources.[118] But among the moneyed and landed testators of the mid-sixteenth century, this pattern seems to have been inverted. In the sample of wills analysed for this chapter, *only women* left books, or funds to purchase them, to their parish church. Elizabeth Reed (d. 1532/3), for instance, left her 'best masse boke' and one of her portesses (portable breviaries) to her parish church, while Eleanor West, Lady De La Warr (d. 1536) bequeathed the printed antiphoner from her own chapel to the church of Broadwater, Sussex.[119] Katherine Beche (d. 1531) left all her books to her 'goostly father' – likely her parish priest or curate – in addition to £6 toward the purchase of an antiphoner for the church.[120] Although the liturgical texts would have been in Latin, and thus inaccessible to the majority of women, this last example in particular suggests that this change conceivably owed something

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[115] For the prevalence of such chapels, see: Saul, *Lordship and Faith*, 113; Kent Rawlinson, 'The English Household Chapel, c. 1100- c. 1500: An Institutional Study' (Ph.D., University of Durham, 2008), esp. 257-8.
[116] TNA PROB 11/31/37 (John Spelman, 1546).
[117] E.g. TNA PROB 11/25/592 (Eleanor West, Lady La Warr, 1536); TNA PROB 11/40/50 (Lucy Clifford, 1557; proved 1558).
[118] French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 69.
[119] TNA PROB 11/24/303 (Elizabeth Reed, 1531; proved 1533); TNA PROB 11/25/592 (Eleanor West, Lady La Warr, 1536)
[120] TNA PROB 11/24/138 (Katherine Beche, 1531). Further bequests by women of or for books can be found in e.g. TNA PROB 11/24/181 (Dorothy Codrington, 1523; proved 1532); TNA PROB 11/27/217 (Joan Peerse, 1536; proved 1538).

to rising rates of female literacy and, concomitantly, of enthusiasm for books – not to mention the greater affordability and accessibility afforded by the printing press.[121] Women were also slightly more likely to bequeath liturgical items. Of the men among the eighty-seven spousal pairs, for instance, only Sir William Butler (d.1533/4) made such a bequest, leaving two candlesticks of silver parcel-gilt to the church of St Mildred Poultry, London.[122] Two of the wives, by contrast, bequeathed chalices for use in the divine service of their parish churches; another left a pewter basin for use in baptisms.[123] A number of other female testators in the sample also bequeathed such items – chalices, candlesticks, crosses, a pyx, a pax, and a paten.[124] Only one other male testator, meanwhile, made such a bequest.[125]

Therefore, despite the substantial overlap between the testamentary religious patronage of men and women in early Reformation England, there were undoubtedly marked differences which can be mapped along gender lines. These were arguably as much a product of the differing circumstances faced by male and female testators – and not least of that fact that the latter were primarily widows – as of any distinctively feminine piety. The fact that this analysis has at times contravened existing studies in its identification of these distinctions only reinforces the need to further contextualise pious bequests. Not only gender and marital status, but social position, regional differences, and the period in which a will was composed, all contributed to shaping testamentary patronage. Furthermore, while the present discussion has

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[121] For female literacy, including readership and ownership of books, see for example: James Daybell, 'Interpreting Letters and Reading Script: Evidence for Female Education and Literacy in Tudor England', *History of Education* 34, no. 6 (2005): 695-715.

[122] TNA PROB 11/25/123 (William Butler, 1528; proved 1534)

[123] TNA PROB 11/25/592 (Eleanor West, Lady La Warr, 1536); TNA PROB 11/37/41 (Jennette Lounde, 1554); TNA PROB 11/42A/15 (Ursula Androwes, 1558). A few other testators among the pairs, both male and female, left funds for such items to be purchased or made: TNA PROB 11/21/540 (John Marney, 1525); TNA PROB 11/27/56 (Roger Mynours, 1537); TNA PROB 11/26/302 (Alice Mynours,1540).

[124] For example: TNA PROB 11/27/250 (Margaret Butler, proved 1538); TNA PROB 11/30/599 (Agnes, Duchess of Norfolk, 1545); TNA PROB 11/27/144 (Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, 1537); TNA PROB 11/24/45 (Anne Brickys, 1531); TNA PROB 11/40/50 (Lucy Clifford, 1558); TNA PROB 11/27/21 (Agnes Pirry, 1537); TNA PROB 11/23/154 (Joan Takyll,1529).

[125] TNA PROB 11/40/236 (Thomas Hastings, 1558).

centred solely upon testators' own wills, examining this patronage more holistically complicates the picture further still: as we will see below, widows' frequent position as executrices for their late husbands points simultaneously towards the presence of more male-female collaboration, and a more substantial female contribution.[126]

IV. Testamentary Patronage as a Family Affair

Unsurprisingly, for a document fundamentally concerned with the distribution of property, the family was at the core of early modern testaments. It was a concern which preoccupied both male and female testators, for kin predominated among the beneficiaries of both. But it was also one which arguably manifested particularly pervasively in the wills of women. As men had the more pressing obligation, tasked as they were with securing 'the future of family lands, trade or goods', their wills were chiefly focused upon their children and wives.[127] Women were less encumbered by this duty, and also typically possessed of a far more complex familial identity. Whereas men maintained an allegiance to one lineage throughout their lives, women acquired new ties as they married – often more than once – while still sustaining a relationship with their family of birth.[128] As Barbara Harris has noted, wills 'prove beyond any doubt' that women 'were far more than "passing guests" in their natal and marital families. Rather, they accumulated families as they married and remarried and remembered them all when they died.'[129] Their recognition of kin in their wills was also far more likely to extend laterally as

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[126] The following discussion centres upon women's role as executrices; for an overview of other roles women might perform in the probate process, see Lloyd Bonfield, *Devising, Dying and Dispute: Probate Litigation in Early Modern England* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), Ch. 10.
[127] Becker, *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman*, 110.
[128] See e.g. James, *Women's Voices,* 68.
[129] Barbara Harris, 'Regional and Family Networks: The Hidden Role of Sisters and Sisters-in-Law', in *Gender and Political Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. James Daybell and Svante Norrhem (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 108.

well as lineally, 'incorporating siblings and their offspring, godchildren, indigent female relations, and assorted dependents whom they considered to have a claim on their notice and protection.'[130] This pattern largely continued across the transformations of the Reformation. While these (gendered) familial loyalties had their most obvious impact on testators' personal bequests, they also inevitably permeated the religious patronage women disbursed in their wills, influencing the ecclesiastical institutions and individuals to which they directed their benefaction. Moreover, for widowed women the familial dimensions of testamentary patronage were heightened still further by their customary appointment as sole or joint executrix for one or more husbands, which rendered them responsible for fulfilling their spouse's spiritual requests.[131] This section examines this two-fold intersection between kinship and post-mortem piety. In doing so, it highlights women's disproportionate influence over the expression of this piety, and demonstrates that, even when the fate of the soul was in the balance, spiritual agendas were far from incompatible with more worldly concerns. Family and the production of family memory became a framework through which piety was negotiated.

Burial decisions

Nowhere is the role of the family in shaping testamentary patronage more evident than in the 'decidedly proprietary attitude' which many upper-class individuals exhibited towards the parish churches in which they wished to be buried.[132] By the late Middle Ages, the local parish church had overtaken the monastery as the preferred site of interment for both the aristocracy and gentry.[133] This was, as Nigel Saul has noted, largely the product of dynastic concerns: for many families, the former 'reflected more fully the territorial dimensions of their lordship',

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[130] James, *Women's Voices*, 1-2.
[131] See e.g. Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills', 20-1; Erickson, *Women and Property*, 156-61.
[132] Harris, 'Aristocratic Women and Nunneries', 105.
[133] Karen Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and their Patrons: England and Wales, c.1300-1540* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), 116-18.

and burial here thus offered a stronger expression of their 'landed identity.'[134] (By the same token, where monastic churches *were* selected prior to the Dissolution, it was most often due to longstanding hereditary ties.)[135] The result was that many parish churches came 'to resemble private mausoleums for the most prominent local family.'[136]

If burial decisions were thus habitually inflected by concerns of lordship and lineage, they were concerns of which women were, by necessity, particularly conscious. Whereas men typically selected the parish church of the family's main seat of residence,[137] women's choices – as Barbara Harris has pointed out – 'were neither self-evident nor predetermined', belonging as they did 'to several families during their lifetimes.'[138] Their decisions, accordingly, 'reflected their primary attachments and fixed the identity by which they wanted to be remembered.'[139] Lady Anne Grey, for instance, requested burial not with one of her three late husbands, but in her natal parish church of Albury, Hertfordshire. She further affirmed her identification with her birth family in her arrangements for her tomb: she requested 'a tombe of marble or white Alabustre declaring a memorial *of the stock that I came of*.'[140] Various women of the Howard family, both natal (e.g. Elizabeth Boleyn) and marital (e.g. Agnes, Duchess of Norfolk), elected burial in St Mary's, Lambeth, in what became a peculiarly feminine mausoleum.[141] Bridget, Lady Marney (née Waldegrave, d. 1549) asked to be buried amongst the family of her first husband, William Findern, in the church of Little Horkesley,

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[134] Saul, *Lordship and Faith*, 169-70, 183.
[135] Saul, *Lordship and Faith*, 161; Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries*, 112-116.
[136] Vale, *Piety, Charity, and Literacy*, 9.
[137] Saul, *Lordship and Faith*, 169-171.
[138] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', 327.
[139] *Ibid*.
[140] TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558). Emphasis added.
[141] Nicola Clark, 'The Gendering of Dynastic Memory: Burial Choices of the Howards, 1485-1559', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 68, no. 4 (2017), 747-765.

Essex, whose manor had been bestowed on her for life.[142] Yet she exhibited a clear desire to recognise all three families of which she had been part: she requested that her tomb be embellished with brass images of herself, Findern, and her second husband Sir John Marney; escutcheons of their respective arms; and an inscription to 'shewe the tyme of my decease and of what stockes I cam of and to what men of woorship I was maryed unto.' The prominent position of her tomb – 'at the hygh ende of the Chauncell' – would ensure that this tripartite identity would be broadcast to posterity.[143] These decisions reflected concerns of status and dynastic memory. Women who had married more than once commonly elected to be buried with the father of their first-born child (or son) or their highest-ranking husband; heiresses often chose burial with their natal kin.[144] Anne Grey's childlessness may explain her desire to emphasise her Barley ancestry. But these choices were also very much a product of less tangible emotional attachments.[145]

The impact of these burial decisions on patronage was two-fold. Monuments and memorials, such as those commissioned by Grey and Marney, were naturally designed to serve as a 'perpetual reminder' of their own and their family's socio-economic status and 'position within the community' (and, for much of this period, to encourage intercessory prayer).[146] However, as Barbara Harris has noted, these memorials – and indeed intra-church burials more broadly – also contributed to the 'material well-being' of the church and its parishioners: burial sites naturally 'had to be paid for', and the fees required for the particularly desirable sites

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[142] TNA PROB 11/33/186 (Bridget, Lady Marney, 1549; proved 1550). See also the will of her father-in-law, Sir William Findern (d. 1517), who granted her the manor (his son, Bridget's husband, seems to have predeceased him): TNA PROB 11/18/590.
[143] TNA PROB 11/33/186.
[144] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', 327-333.
[145] *Ibid*., 327-333.
[146] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', 325. Peter Sherlock has estimated that around one-third of the elite were commemorated in material form between 1400 and 1700: *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 21.

habitually selected by the gentry and nobility constituted 'a major source of parish income.'[147] Secondly, and for our purposes more importantly, female testators almost inevitably directed their greatest benefaction towards the churches in which they intended to be buried.

To take just one example: Anne Whiting, née Pauncefoot (d. 1534) bequeathed 6s.8d. and a pair of vestments to her marital parish of Kentisbeare, Devon, where her late husband was buried, as well as three cows for a yearly obit for their souls.[148] These bequests, however, paled in comparison to those she made to the parish church of Compton Pauncefoot, Somerset, where she wished to be buried alongside her 'grauntfather and other of myn Auncetours.' Aside from the substantial sums which were to be outlaid for her funeral, month's mind, and year's mind, she made provisions for two priests to sing for her soul for a year, donated several pairs of vestments to the church and its chantry, and left 40s. to the chantry priest.[149]

It is unsurprising that Anne held a particular preference for this, her natal parish church. In 1531, she had secured sole ownership of Compton Pauncefoot manor and, with it, the advowson of the neighbouring church.[150] Moreover, the latter was, quite literally, a product of Pauncefoot patronage. Her grandfather Walter had provided the impetus for the rebuilding of the church, bequeathing ten marks towards the works, as well as £20 specifically for the construction of the south aisle, where he wished to be buried; the parishioners were to raise the remaining funds.[151] In addition, Walter had founded and furnished the chantry chapel there, of which Anne was patron.[152] Anne herself (or more probably her successors) left her own mark

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[147] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', 324-5.
[148] TNA PROB 11/25/170 (Anne Whiting, 1534). Her husband, John Whiting, Esquire, had died in or before 1530: TNA PROB 11/23/269.
[149] TNA PROB 11/25/170
[150] Anne records the transaction in her will. Prior to this, she had a half share of the manor; the other half was held successively by her co-heir and sister, Maud, and Maud's son William: M. C. Siraut, ed., *A History of the County of Somerset*, vol. 9, *Queen Camel and the Cadburys* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), 135.
[151] TNA PROB 11/7/199 (Walter Pauncefoot, 1485).
[152] *Ibid*; TNA PROB 11/25/170.

on the physical fabric of the church: a stone tablet inscribed 'Anne Whyting 1535' can be found by the south-east window of the church, along with a frieze of shields, bearing the arms of Pauncefoot, Whiting, and the marital families of two of her daughters.[153] Anne's testamentary provisions, then, display a clear melding of spiritual and familial impulses: her bequests to the church worked to enhance both its divine service, as well is its function as a monument to the wealth, status, and pastoral stewardship of her family. Her request that her 'best gowne and best kirtell' be made into vestments for use in her grandfather's chantry furnishes a particularly poignant illustration.[154] The church thus became the embodiment of an identity both familial and religious, the family embedded in the fabric of religious practice.

While Whiting's will exemplifies testators' tendency to reserve the greatest largesse for their preferred burial location, it also makes clear that this was far from the only way in which kinship shaped testamentary provisions. Testators were also apt to leave bequests to other churches with which they had, at one point, had natal or marital ties. Widowed testators who, like Whiting, were buried apart from a former spouse quite often left legacies to the church in which the latter was interred. Lady Elizabeth Talbot, née Hungerford (d. 1548) elected to be buried in the church of Bromsgrove, Suffolk, with her mother-in-law and other Talbot kin, but apart from both her husbands.[155] Yet she also left funds to support, for a further five years, the chantry priest singing for the souls of her second husband, Sir Gilbert Talbot, and his father of the same name at their burial place of Whitchurch, Shropshire. This was not simply the product of executorial duty, since Elizabeth was not named among the executors of her husband's will, in which he made arrangements for this chantry.[156] In a similar fashion, while Margaret,

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[153] 'Compton Pauncefoot: Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary', Camelot Parishes, http://camelotparishes.co.uk/compton-pauncefoot (accessed 30 June, 2018); 'Compton Pauncefoot', *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 59 (1913): 42.
[154] TNA PROB 11/25/170.
[155] TNA PROB 11/32/42 (Elizabeth Talbot, 1547; proved 1548).
[156] TNA PROB 11/29/393 (Gilbert Talbot, 1542; proved 1543).

Countess of Kent (d. 1540) requested burial with her third and final husband, the Earl of Kent, she also left twenty shillings to her sometime parish church of St Anne and St Agnes within Aldersgate, where her first husband was buried.[157]

Even when a spouse was interred elsewhere, testators might demonstrate a residual allegiance to former marital parishes. Anne Grey, for instance, left richly-made liturgical textiles to the parish churches neighbouring the manors of her first two husbands, though the first, and possibly both, were buried elsewhere: Butterwick, Lincolnshire, where she had resided with Sir Robert Sheffield; and Blisworth, Northamptonshire, where she had lived with Sir John Grey, and where her late brother, William Barley, had formerly been the parish priest.[158] Given that she retained no residual economic interest or patronal obligation in these parishes, it seems evident that these bequests were solely a product of a continuing sense of familial loyalty.[159] It is undoubtedly these ties, too, which account for her charity to the poor in two parishes in John Grey's native Warwickshire – including Astley, where several members of his family were interred.[160]

Female testators might also exhibit a continuing bond with their natal kin and communities through bequests to their parishes of birth.[161] Joan Peerse (d. 1538) directed most of her patronage towards her parish church and intended burial place of St Thomas, Salisbury, but also left 'a paire of vestments price xxxs' to the church of Durrington 'wher I was borne.'[162]

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[157] TNA PROB 11/28/347 (Margaret, Countess of Kent, 1540). Her first husband, not named in her will, was the gentleman Oliver Curteys or Curtis. His will is transcribed in William McMurray, ed., *The Records of Two City Parishes: A Collection Documents Illustrative of the History of SS. Anne and Agnes, Aldersgate, and St. John Zachary, London* (London: Hunter & Longhurst, 1925), 203a, 205b.

[158] TNA PROB 11/40/229 (Anne Grey, 1557; proved 1558); TNA PROB 11/29/232 (William Barley, 1542); W. Challen, 'Lady Anne Grey', 5-9.

[159] TNA PROB 11/19/217 (Robert Sheffield ,1518; proved 1519); *CCEd*, Butterwick, location I.D. 8028; *CCEd*, Blisworth, location I.D. 9647; 'Parishes: Blisworth', in *A History of the County of Northampton*, ed. L. F. Salzman, vol. 4, *British History Online*, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/northants/vol4/pp224-228.

[160] See e.g. TNA PROB 11/24/141 (Thomas Grey, Marquess of Dorset, 1530; proved 1531).

[161] For a further discussion of this, see James, *Women's Voices*, 68-70.

[162] TNA PROB 11/27/217 (Joan Peerse, 1536; proved 1538).

Similarly, Elizabeth Warley (d. 1531), late wife of a London goldsmith and parishioner of St Mary Woolnoth, bequeathed funds to the church works of Holy Trinity and 'Our Lady' in her native Cambridge; her parents were evidently interred in the latter, since she requested that her bequest be met with prayers for their souls.[163]

Such bequests were not entirely restricted to female testators. Rauf Swillington (d. 1526), for instance, requested burial in London, but made provisions for a yearly obit and a stone with 'thymage of my father and his iiij chilern' to be established in the parish church of Driffield, Yorkshire, 'where I was borne.'[164] Sir John Clerke (d. 1539) was himself buried in the church of Thame, Oxfordshire, but made provisions for a stone to be laid upon the grave of his second wife and mother to his sons, Elizabeth Ashby, who was interred in the church of Blakesley, Northamptonshire – the site of another of his manors.[165] However, given the structural factors outlined above, as well as the tendency for wives to outlive their husbands, these were, inevitably, largely gendered practices.[166] As we have seen, where men did leave such bequests, they were more often monetary than material. Women, as the producers of family memory, influenced not just the physical form of religious institutions, but in collapsing religious patronage with familial commemoration, gave particular shape to the practice of the faith.

Provisions for kin

The influence of the family on post-mortem patronage extended beyond the fabric and finances of parish churches to the men that staffed them. Just as patrons were not infrequently guided

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[163] TNA PROB 11/24/83 (Elizabeth Warley, 1531).
[164] TNA PROB 11/22/63 (Rauf Swillington, 1525; proved 1526).
[165] TNA PROB 11/27/474 (John Clerke, 1539); Frederick George Lee, *The History, Description, and Antiquities of the Prebendal Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Thame* (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1883), 307, 310.
[166] Barbara Harris has estimated that around 70 percent of aristocratic women survived their husbands: 'Sisterhood', 21.

by kinship in their presentations to benefices, so a number of female testators displayed a particular concern to direct their testamentary benefaction towards clerical relatives. Dame Katherine Babington (d. 1537) left ten shillings to a Sir William Babington to say a trental (a set of thirty requiem masses), as well as the rather more generous bequest of a featherbed, bedding, a broach, and cookware to Thomas Babington, parson of Gotham.[167] Katherine's bequests, moreover, formed just one part of the wider familial sponsorship of these priests: Thomas had received his benefice at the hands of her husband, Sir Anthony; William, meanwhile, was later presented to Egginton, Derbyshire, by her brother- and sister-in-law, Humphrey and Eleanor Babington.[168]

Indeed, some women showed an even more substantive concern to safeguard the livelihood of clerical kin. Dame Mary Fitton of Gawsworth, Cheshire (d. 1557), for instance, bequeathed to Sir William Fitton, chaplain, not only various items of bedding, but also a 'wichehouse of syx leades' (that is, a salt-house), which he was to hold for 'all suche terme of yeres and interest' as remained to her.[169] Her precise relationship to the cleric is unknown – he does not appear in the pedigree of the Fittons of Gawsworth – but he was evidently a member of her extended marital family.[170] He had, moreover, enjoyed the patronage of the Gawsworth Fittons for some time: his ordinations as subdeacon (September 1543), deacon (June 1544), and priest (September 1544) had occurred with a title – a guarantee of financial support – from her husband, Sir Edward (d. 1548).[171] That Mary refers to him as 'chaplain', as well as her gift of bedding, indicates that he was employed in her household. Mary's sponsorship of Sir

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[167] TNA PROB 11/27/203 (Katherine Babington, 1537; proved 1538).
[168] Sir Anthony held the advowson of Gotham: *Abstracts of the Inquisitiones Post Mortem Relating to Nottinghamshire*, ed. W.P.H. Phillimore, *Vol. I: Henry VII and Henry VIII, 1485-1546* ([Nottingham]: Thoroton Society, 1905), 228-30. For William, see *CCEd*, William Babington, person I.D. 19321.
[169] TNA PROB 11/39/471 (Mary Fitton, 1557).
[170] Robert Glover, *The Visitation of Chester in the Year 1580*, ed. John Paul Rylands (London: Harleian Society, 1882), 100.
[171] *CCEd,* William Fitton, person I.D. 36123.

William clearly owed much to kinship. He was not the only Fitton relative to hold a position on her domestic staff: a Thomas Fitton, referred to as 'my servant', was also a beneficiary of her will, receiving – like William – 'a fetherbed, a bolster, ij blankettes, ij coverlettes, a payre of flaxen sheetes, and one pillowe and pillowbeere.' As in the case of the Babingtons, this kind of familial patronage was clearly habitual for the family: her husband had earlier presented one Ranulph Fitton to the Gawsworth benefice.[172] Yet, in a telling illustration of how familial and spiritual concerns could co-exist and coalesce, William's ecclesiastical vocation was evidently crucial to Mary's bestowal of such comparatively generous largesse. Mary specified that if he died before the lease expired, the wich-house (and the profits thereof) was to be enjoyed for the remaining term not by another relative, but by the priest/s responsible for saying divine service at the nearby chapel of Siddington.[173]

The religious and the familial were often similarly intertwined in pre-Reformation bequests to religious houses, and especially convents.[174] Both male and female testators, unsurprisingly, favoured houses with which they had a personal connection, and particularly those in which family members were professed. This was certainly the case for the gentlewoman Anne Brickys (d. 1531), whose daughter, Suzanna Sulyard, and 'cousin', Dame Agnes Townsend – both beneficiaries of her will in their own right – were nuns at Barking Abbey.[175] Brickys' request to be buried within the abbey's Lady Chapel, as 'nyghe my dought[er] fortune I may', suggests that a second daughter had once been professed there. Barking is the only religious house mentioned in Brickys' testament, and is the target of

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[172] LichRO, B/A/1/14iii, f.35v.

[173] The Gawsworth Fittons held the manor of Siddington: George Ormerod, ed., *The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester*, vol. 3 (London: Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor and Jones, 1819), 360.

[174] Cf. Harris, 'A New Look', which argues that decreased bequests to convents can be linked to the fact that only small numbers of aristocratic women entered religious houses – the implication being that testators were more likely to support houses in which family members were professed.

[175] TNA PROB 11/24/45 (Anne Brickys, 1531); Teresa L. Barnes, 'A Nun's Life: Barking Abbey in the Late-Medieval and Early Modern Periods' (M.A., Portland State University, 2004), 38, 40-1.

substantial patronage: Anne bequeathed to the abbey a gilt cup, satin gowns to make two vestments, and forty shillings to the nuns to pray for her; a pax and vestment were to go to its appanage, the chapel of All Hallows; and the abbess, Dorothy Barley, was gifted a richly illuminated tablet of gold.[176]

Other testators were less narrowly focused on a single institution but were nevertheless guided by kinship in their disbursal of testamentary largesse. Elizabeth de Vere (née Scrope), Countess of Oxford (d. 1537), for instance, recognised twelve separate convents, monasteries, and friaries from across the east of England, but singled out the convents of Syon, Denny, and Barking for particular generosity.[177] It hardly seems coincidental that these were all houses to which de Vere had familial connections. Her niece, Ursula Brewes, was professed at Denny Abbey. [178] Her cousin, Dame Margaret Scrope, was a nun at Barking, as had been her late sister, Anne Scrope, while her marital family, the de Vere's, were the convent's 'principal patrons.'[179] Similarly, both the de Vere and Scrope families had longstanding connections to Syon.[180] Even where women lacked professed relatives, kinship might nevertheless inflect their bequests to religious houses. In particular, the interment of a spouse in a monastery, whether or not the testator wished to be buried there themselves, often prompted the same kind of generosity as we saw above with parish churches. Amongst the numerous institutions to which Elizabeth Reed made benefactions, the equal largest (£10) was reserved for the London Charterhouse, where her late husband was entombed. [181]

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[176] TNA PROB 11/24/45.
[177] TNA PROB 11/27/144 (Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, 1537).
[178] Brewes, the daughter of the Countess' sister Jane, was bequeathed 40s. in her will: TNA PROB 11/27/144. She is referred to as a nun of Denny in the will of Elizabeth's servant Margaret Ryther: TNA PROB 11/29/155 (1540).
[179] TNA PROB 11/27/144; Desilets, 'Nuns of Tudor England', 54, 117, 118; Emily Stockard, 'Who was Jane Scrope?', *Renaissance Papers* 2014 (2015), 8-9.
[180] See, e.g. Bainbridge, 'Syon Abbey', 87; Paul Lee, *Nunneries, Learning and Spirituality in Late Medieval English Society: The Dominican Priory of Dartford* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2001), 147-8.
[181] TNA PROB 11/24/303 (Elizabeth Reed, 1533).

Ties of kinship only became *more* crucial after the Dissolution, as a number of former nuns – lacking the career options open to their male counterparts, and typically left with smaller pensions – fell back on familial support.[182] While we have seen above that some testators made bequests to former religious with whom they do not seem to have had any familial connection, in the overwhelming majority of cases such benefaction was extended to kin. Elizabeth Peche (d. 1544), for instance, left £5 to her sister, the aforementioned Margaret Scrope of Barking, whom she had apparently housed since the Dissolution.[183] In 1548, Isabel Craike made arrangements for an annuity of £3.6s.8d to be paid to her daughter of the same name, formerly of Wilberfoss Priory, and bequeathed to her an extensive range of clothing and household goods.[184] Male testators, too, might evidence a concern for the continued financial wellbeing of female kin. Eustace Sulyard (d. 1547), for example, brother to the aforementioned Susanna, late of Barking Abbey, arranged that she receive an annuity of forty shillings.[185] However, these bequests appear with markedly greater frequency in the wills of women.

This kind of overtly preferential patronage of ecclesiastical institutions, clerics, and professed or former religious linked to the testator by blood or marriage was hardly universal. Testators, of course, could and frequently did direct benefaction towards institutions and individuals with no discernible familial connection. But there are more than enough such instances to establish that that kinship often inflected end-of-life patronage. When we add to this the almost ubiquitous influence of the family on burial decisions, it becomes even clearer that kinship was frequently crucial in shaping testators', and particularly female testators',

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[182] For a discussion of women religious after the Dissolution, see: Erler, 'Religious Women after the Dissolution', 135-45; Marilyn Oliva, 'Unsafe Passage: The State of the Nuns at the Dissolution and their Conversion to Secular Life', in *The Vocation of Service to God and Neighbour*, ed. Joan Greatrex (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 87-103.
[183] TNA PROB 11/30/166 (Elizabeth Peche, 1541); Mary C. Erler, 'Exchange of Books between Nuns and Laywomen: Three Surviving Examples', in *New Science out of Old Books*, ed. Richard Beadle and A. J. Piper (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 364; Stockard, 'Who was Jane Scrope?', 9.
[184] *TE*, vol. 6, 270-5; Desilets, 'Nuns of Tudor England' 383.
[185] TNA PROB 11/31/508 (Eustace Sulyard, 1547).

religious arrangements. Indeed, as representatives of their families in their own right, support for priests and women religious can be seen – like an investment in a church building – one of the ways that families weaved themselves into the fabric of the faith. The Reformation diminished the forms of pious giving open to testators. However, even as the disavowal of purgatory removed the imperative for earthly intercession on behalf of dead kin, women continued to find ways to sustain these connections throughout the period considered here, and indeed beyond. Alms, in particular as a common replacement for direct contributions to the church across Europe, could be employed as a means of recognising and reinforcing both familial and spiritual loyalties.[186] Writing her will in 1563, Blanche Forman (née Stanney) left bequests to the poor in her birthplace of Oswestry, Shropshire, as well as in the London parishes she had inhabited with each of her two husbands.[187] As we will see, post-mortem patronage was a very much a family affair not only in the making of these arrangements, but in their fulfilment.

Executing family piety

Wills require an executor, and in early modern England women, especially widows, were most commonly called upon to perform this function.[188] Indeed, of the male testators in the sample, three-quarters made their wives either sole or joint executrix. This custom gave women an essential, and disproportionately prominent, role in post-mortem religious patronage. Not only were they responsible for fulfilling their spouses' explicit bequests, but they were also frequently charged with using their own discretion to distribute the residue of the estate – over which they, as executrix, had 'virtually complete control' – in acts of piety for the benefit of

[186] See e.g. Thomas Max Safley, ed., *The Reformation of Charity: The Secular and Religious in Early Modern Poor Relief* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2003).
[187] TNA PROB 11/47/55 (Blanche Forman, 1563/4); James, *Women's Voices*, 60, 69-70.
[188] Erickson, *Women and Property*, 156.

the deceased's soul or charitable causes.[189] Clive Burgess has suggested that this latter clause, despite the ease with which it might be dismissed as a stock phrase, 'must in reality have betokened the most significant part of many a provision' – a fact which only heightens the significance of the executrix's function, and the considerable autonomy they had in exercising it.[190] While historians, most notably Burgess, have increasingly drawn attention to this role, much of the existing research has focused on the late medieval period, or on monuments.[191] Accordingly, the contributions of widows in the sixteenth century – and thus the extent to which testamentary patronage was a collaborative, familial endeavour – begs further consideration.

By virtue of their tangibility, tombs, memorials and other aspects of church architecture offer the most patent evidence of executrices' pious activities on their husbands' behalf. While a substantial minority of monuments were erected during the lifetimes of those they commemorated, as were a number of chantries, many more became the responsibility of the deceased's executor. As Barbara Harris has demonstrated, 'scores, probably hundreds' of widows from the nobility and gentry – for these practices were largely restricted to the elite – 'paid for and/or directed construction of their husbands' and their own chantries and tombs.'[192] Dame Elizabeth Peyton (née Clere, d. 1546), for instance, requested burial amongst her marital family in the church of Isleham, in the tomb of her late husband, Sir Robert Peyton (d. 1518), which she 'caused to be made.'[193] The ornately carved tomb-chest commemorates both of her

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[189] Erickson, *Women and Property*, qtd. 161. Despite the religious changes, requests to use this residue for the 'wealth of the soul' continue to appear in significant numbers up to 1558, albeit with a decrease (though not cessation) in Edward's reign.
[190] Burgess, 'Late Medieval Wills', 21.
[191] Burgess, *'The Right Ordering of Souls'*, 119-162; Harris, 'Fabric of Piety'; Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*, esp. 12-13.
[192] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety'. For the link between monuments and elite values, see e.g. Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*, 11-12.
[193] TNA PROB 11/31/102 (Elizabeth Peyton, 1545).

lineages: it contains painted escutcheons of the Peyton and Clere arms, as well as of the two arms impaled. Elizabeth was also undoubtedly responsible for the carved wall panel at the foot of the tomb, which once bore brasses of the couple and six children, praying before a crucifix. The inscription reads:

> Of yo' charite p'y for the souls of S' Ro'bt Peyton, knyght, which de'pted to God the xviii day of m'che, ye yere of o' lord M° Dxviii and for the soule of Dame Elizabeth Peyton his wyfe, whiche dep'tid to god ye yere of o' lord M'D…[194]

The fact that her year of death was left incomplete suggests that she herself had had this panel erected sometime between her husband's death and her own. Indeed, the entire structure seems to have been of her devising: Sir Robert specified the precise location within the church where he wished to be interred, but made no explicit arrangements for a tomb.[195] Elizabeth was thus responsible for a representation of her family as multilineal and devout, assuring the remembrance of both the maternal and paternal lines of this Christian family; conversely, she also contributed to an image of the faith as a family affair.

While tombs were undoubtedly the most common means by which widows might leave their stamp on the fabric of the parish church, executrices also contributed to more fundamental church works.[196] The church of Kingston-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire, reached its mid-sixteenth century form under the aegis of multiple members of the Babington family, including Dame Katherine (née Ferrers, d. 1537). Her husband, Sir Anthony Babington, had begun building the new church, formerly a chapel-of-ease, before his death in 1536 – most likely sometime after he composed his will in February 1534, since the document makes no reference to the

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[194] Richard Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, vol. 2, part 3 (London: J. Nichols, 1786), 282-3.
[195] TNA PROB 11/19/81 (Robert Peyton, 1518).
[196] Harris, 'Fabric of Piety', includes some discussion of chantry chapels.

church.[197] The task of overseeing the construction then fell to his wife, to whom Anthony had bequeathed the manor of Kingston and the 'soole administracon' of the residue of his estate.[198] Katherine's death in 1537 meant that she, too, left the church unfinished. The building was completed by her son and executor, John, in *c*. 1538-40.[199] However, Katherine's contributions to the fabric were significant. She was responsible for commencing construction of the chapel adjoining the chancel. In her will, she requested that John 'do fynyshe the Chapell which I haue begonne', and bequeathed three silver cups to make a chalice for its altar.[200] Her arms, impaling those of Babington, can be found in the stone tracery of the chapel's east window, along with those of Sir Anthony's first wife.[201] It seems that Katherine intended the chapel to serve – at least temporarily – as something of a chantry, as she asked that her executor employ a priest to say masses for her and Anthony's souls for the space of one year.[202]

This chapel, and its intended function, were quite plausibly Katherine's own initiative. While she makes explicit that another building project that she had commenced – a causeway from Kingston to Kegworth bridge – was at the request of her late husband, she makes no such claim in regard to the chapel.[203] Moreover, while Katherine's will makes several provisions for masses, such requests are entirely absent from her husband's testament. She certainly provided the initial impetus, if not the design, for the elaborate 'Babington Monument' within the church, requesting as she did that her executor 'cause to be made one Tombe of Aleblaster stone over my said husbonde and me in the Arche bitwene the Cauncell and the said

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[197] TNA PROB 11/25/563 (Anthony Babington, 1534); 'Kingston on Soar St Winifred', *Southwell & Nottingham Church History Project*, http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/kingston-on-soar; George Thomas Clark, 'Church Notes at Kingston Upon Soar, Co. Notts', in *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. 8 (London: John Bowyer Nicholas and Son, 1843), 265.
[198] TNA PROB 11/25/563.
[199] The date 1538 is carved into the chapel: Clark., 'Church Notes at Kingston Upon Soar', 272.
[200] TNA PROB 11/27/203 (Katherine Babington, 1537; proved 1538).
[201] Clark, 'Church Notes at Kingston Upon Soar', 269-70.
[202] TNA PROB 11/27/203.
[203] TNA PROB 11/27/203. Anthony made this request in his will: TNA PROB 11/25/563.

Chapell.'[204] An ornately-carved alabaster canopy was constructed by John or Thomas Babington, though a tomb-chest was either never created or is now lost.[205] Katherine here ensured the prominence of her family to her religious community, locating her memorial in a central space, and offering her own valuables as the fabric for a vessel to hold communion.

To take a second example, Elizabeth Peche (née Scrope, d. 1544) oversaw the completion of the north chapel of the church of St Botolph in Lullingstone, Kent, which her husband – the prominent courtier Sir John Peche – had initiated prior to his death in 1522. In his will, Sir John bequeathed her chains worth £220 'to make therwith my chapell', which was to serve as a chantry for the family.[206] Their dual foundation is represented in the stained glass of the chapel's east window, which depicts their respective arms, as well as rebuses of a peach tree (for Peche) with the initials 'J' and 'E'.[207] It is possible that Elizabeth had also had an influence over the church works during her husband's lifetime. The Scrope arms feature prominently on John Peche's early sixteenth-century tomb (in which she was also interred), and it has been posited that a stained glass window depicting Saints Elizabeth, Agnes, and Anne alludes to Elizabeth Peche and her sisters, Agnes Scrope and Anne Redmayne – a choice that encouraged viewers to associate these siblings with these significant saints so central to the faith.[208]

Despite the vast religio-political changes between husband's death and her own, Elizabeth Peche evidently remained committed to pursuing the chapel's intended function as a chantry. In her will, she requested that a priest be employed to pray for hers and Sir John's

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[204] TNA PROB 11/27/203.
[205] For a detailed description of the monument, see Clark, 'Church Notes at Kingston Upon Soar', 265-69.
[206] TNA PROB 11/20/389. These were presumably chains of livery, likely Peche's Collar of Esses, given his role as courtier. See Canon Scott Robertson, 'Peche of Lullingstone', *Archaeologica Cantiana* 16 (1886): 232-8, esp. 235.
[207] C. R. Councer, 'Painted glass at Cranbrook and Lullingstone', *Archaeologica Cantiana*, 86 (1971), 43, 53-4.
[208] Canon Scott Robertson, 'Church of St. Botolph, Lullingstone', *Archaeologica Cantiana* 16 (1886): 102-4; Erler, 'Exhange of books', 364-5.

souls 'by the space of five yeres *or more* nexte after my decease' – presumably, that is, for as long as her estate could fund the service, or the regime allowed it.[209] It is probable that this was in addition to, rather than in place of, her husband's request that she establish a priest to 'sing and praie perpetually' there.[210] This request had almost certainly already been fulfilled by Elizabeth prior to her death.[211] In her will, she left bequests to both the parson of Lullingstone, John Dean, and to 'Sir John Garland preest.' While she does not specify his role or parish, Garland was a witness to her will, and had similarly witnessed the will of another parishioner in 1537, suggesting that he was in the service of Lullingstone church.[212]

Whatever the case may be, it is inarguable that widows, as executrices, were integrally involved in the process of endowing and overseeing chantries and services. In his work on fifteenth-century Bristol, Burgess found that 'widows played perhaps the most consistently generous role in finding auxiliary priests and, indeed, prolonging their services.'[213] There is more than enough evidence to suggest that this pattern also holds true for other regions of England, well into the sixteenth century. Male testators continued to rely on their wives or heirs to appoint a suitable priest, and to ensure that they were appropriately funded out of their estate.[214] Widows were not only diligent in ensuring that these stipulations were met, but – less encumbered than their husbands by the need to provide for kin, and conscious that any such services would also benefit themselves – in many cases exceeded them.[215] Eleanor West, Lady

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[209] TNA PROB 11/30/166.

[210] TNA PROB 11/20/389

[211] While there is no record of the chantry in the certificates of 1548, it seems more likely that it had fallen into disuse, rather than never established. It is possible that this was due to a strained relationship between Elizabeth and her husband's nephew and heir, Sir Percival Hart, who was to inherit the Peche lands after Elizabeth's death: the two had had a quarrel in the mid-1530s, for which see SP 1/90, f. 149.

[212] TNA PROB 11/30/166; Leland L. Duncan, 'The Renunciation of the Papal Authority by the Clergy of West Kent, 1534', *Archaeologica Cantiana* 22 (1897): 309. The small size of the church makes it unlikely that a second priest was required for any other purpose.

[213] Burgess, 'Chantries in the Parish', 115.

[214] For the mechanisms of post-obit finance, see Burgess, 'Chantries in the Parish', 111-123.

[215] Some indication of the number of chantry or stipendiary priests funded by women can be found in e.g. CUL, Hengrave MS 82/1, 132r Accounts of Margaret Long, 1542; Chitty, *Registra Stephani Gardiner*, 177, 179, 183,

La Warr (d. 1536), for instance, established a thirty-year chantry in the church of Broadwater, Surrey, as per her late husband's will; on her death, she then made her own contribution to the service, bequeathing a chalice to her husband's altar there, as well as a printed antiphoner to the church 'to serve god for the health of my lord's soul and my soul.'[216] More substantially, Dame Constance Culpepper (d. 1542) stipulated that her chaplain was to say mass in the church of Goudhurst, Kent, for two years over and above the five requested by her spouse; a black velvet vestment, adorned with a cloth of gold cross, was bequeathed to the church for use in this service.[217] As in their wills, women ensured that their families, and the material traces that represented them, became significant not only to the fabric of buildings but to the rituals and routine practices of the faith.

These women, like Elizabeth Peche, inaugurated services during their own lifetimes. However, it was not uncommon for widows to wait until their own deaths to endow *post-obit* services for both themselves and their late husbands. Margaret Hungerford (d. 1531) left it to her son to fulfil her husband, Sir John Hungerford's (d. 1524), request that she appoint a priest to say mass for nine years, bequeathing him one hundred sheep for the purpose.[218] However, she also evidently took seriously Sir John's charge to dispose of the residue of his estate 'as to hir shall be thought most requisite and expedient' for the health of his soul. For, alongside this nine-year service, she bequeathed £120 to endow a perpetual chantry for them both, and their respective parents, in Cirencester Abbey.

185; Frances Rose-Troup, 'Lists Relating to Persons Ejected from Religious Houses', *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries* 17 (1932-3): 85-6, 88, 92-3, 95, 239-40.

[216] TNA PROB 11/25/592 (Eleanor West, Lady La Warr, 1536); TNA PROB 11/22/57 (Thomas West, Lord La Warr, 1525; proved 1526).

[217] TNA PROB 11/29/217 (Constance Culpepper, 1541; proved 1542); TNA PROB 11/28/527 (Alexander Culpepper, 1540; proved 1541).

[218] TNA PROB 11/24/71 (Margaret Hungerford, 1527; proved 1531); TNA PROB 11/21/417 (John Hungerford, 1524).

The abolition of the chantries, and the broader attack on the traditional intercessory system, ultimately put an end to these kinds of post-obit arrangements. As a result, executrices might be faced with considerable difficulties in fulfilling their spouse's wills. While some appear to have simply let the requested services lapse or remain unfilled, others responded by modifying their husbands' provisions to ensure their continuation in an uncertain religious environment. Margery Longford (d. 1550) of Ludlow, for instance, arranged that in place of the obit which her first husband had requested in his will, 13s.4d. was instead to be distributed yearly to the poor for the benefit of both of their souls. The perceived intercessory function thus remained the same, but it was placed in a guise more acceptable to the Edwardian regime.[219]

The precariousness and ultimate disappearance of intercessory services inevitably diminished the extent and gravity of the executrix's pious function. However, widows continued to be entrusted with considerable discretion in fulfilling their spouse's religious provisions in a more evangelical context. In particular, chantries and services were replaced with a greater emphasis on charity to the poor and, increasingly, the appointment of preachers. Sir Robert Payton (d. 1550), son of the aforementioned Elizabeth, charged his wife and executrix, Frances, with finding a 'lernid and discrete man' to preach a sermon in the church of Isleham on the one month and one year anniversaries of his death. She was also entreated to distribute funds, 'according to [her] discrecon', amongst the poor of Iselham and other villages. [220] While we have no information about any preachers appointed by Dame Frances, we do know that she fulfilled, and indeed extended, Robert's charitable provisions: she used the

[219] TNA PROB 11/33/458 (Margery Longford, 1550). It should be noted that the giving of money to the poor on the anniversary of an individual's death was a custom with a long history. See e.g. Schen, *Charity*, 42, 44-5.
[220] TNA PROB 11/33/422 (Robert Peyton, 1550).

profits of his estate to found an almshouse, known as Peyton's Hospital, at Isleham in the late 1570s.[221]

The Exeter merchant, Thomas Prestwood, writing his will in 1558, similarly requested that his wife and son – as co-executors – appoint and pay a preacher to give a sermon at his burial, for the advancement of God's Word, the edifying of the congregation, and as a testimony of his faith.[222] Moreover, although not mentioned in his will, he also enjoined his wife, Alice, to establish four almshouses within the city of Exeter. While unable to fulfil this request herself, dying as she did less than a year later, she left detailed instructions for their heirs to complete the project.[223] Via the increasingly popular outlet of the sermon, families continued to invest prominently in the central rituals of the faith, ensuring their memory remained closely associated with Christian devotion.[224] Similarly, as the opportunities to inscribe oneself on the physical structure of churches declined, payments for almshouses offered comparable symbolic functions in ensuring the memory of the (devout) family could be continued in new conditions.

Right across this period, and despite the many shifts in English religious policy, women were far more integral to the exercise of post-mortem religious patronage than a focus on their own wills alone might suggest. Trusted by their spouses to order their estate for the benefit of their soul and the spiritual life of their parish, they appointed priests, arranged services, dispensed charity, and made a lasting impact on the fabric of English churches and the wider community. In turn, they entrusted their own executors, most often their children, to ensure

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[221] Cambridge Archives P98/25/1A Peyton's Hospital, Royal Letters Patent, 1579. The Lady Frances Peyton Hospital is still a recognised charity in Isleham.
[222] TNA PROB 11/41/81 (Thomas Prestwood, 1558).
[223] TNA PROB 11/42A/308 (Alice Prestwood, 1558; proved 1559).
[224] Indeed, a number of reformers expressed concerns over the perceived parallels between intercessory masses and prayers, and the funeral sermon. See e.g. Frederic B. Tromly, '"Accordinge to sounde religion': the Elizabethan Controversy over the Funeral Sermon', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 13 (1983): 293-312; Carlson, 'English Funeral Sermons', 568-73.

that their own provisions were carried out. In more ways than one, testamentary patronage was a fundamentally collaborative, familial endeavour, as well as a spiritual one. In deploying religious patronage as part of the production of family identity and memory, women and their families not only actively engaged in the practices of their faith but gave them shape in an environment where their form was open to contest. Intercessory prayer may have transformed into alms for the poor, but both provided opportunity for family and faith to be produced together.[225]

V. '[T]o my veray good frende': The Intersection of the Pious and the Personal in Bequests to Clergy

Amongst the detailed arrangements for funerary services, charity, and intercessory prayer which Dame Joan Milbourne of London (d. 1545) made in her will, we find a solitary bequest to a named priest. Her 'veray good frende', Sir Bartholomew Linsted, former Prior of St. Mary Overy, Southwark, was to receive £6.13s.4d. to pray for her soul.[226] Joan's assessment of their relationship was certainly warranted. Her second husband, Sir John Milbourne (d. 1536) – draper, alderman, and sometime Mayor of London – had not only bequeathed £10 to St. Mary Overy, but had also made Bartholomew, then Prior, one of his executors, alongside Joan herself.[227] By the time of Joan's death, the two had thus been acquainted for at least a decade, probably longer.

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[225] For an excellent discussion of women and remembrance in the subsequent period, see J. S. W. Helt, 'Women, Memory and Will-making in Elizabethan England', in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 188-205.

[226] PROB 11/30/541. Linsted was Prior from 1513 until the House's dissolution in October 1539, upon which he was granted an annual pension of £100; he died in c.1553: Robert Edmund Chester Waters, *Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester of Chiceley*, vol. 1 (London: Robson and Sons, 1878), 28.

[227] Sir John's will, written in June 1535, is transcribed in Waters, *Geneological Memoirs*, 27-28.

The melding of friendship and pious concerns found in Dame Joan's bequest to Linsted neatly encapsulates the core argument of this section: women's bequests to clergy reveal that the relationships between them were, often, not merely spiritual and pastoral, but also *personal*. In some cases, like that of Joan Milbourne, their relationships played out in more discernibly 'secular' arenas of experience; in others, they were the product of long and/or frequent association between testator and confessor. This development of affective bonds, and of a relationship based on more than shared faith, is unsurprising. Early modern people were not, after all, one-dimensional, and nor were their relationships.[228] Yet the complexity of these relationships has often gone unremarked in studies intent on using wills to explore lay piety, or to track religious allegiance and the process of reform.[229] This section breaks new ground by bringing these ties to the forefront. In doing so, it further establishes that testamentary religious patronage must be understood within the context of the broader social fabric of sixteenth-century England. Importantly, it also establishes bequests to clergy as another thread of relative stability in an uncertain religious environment. Like the commemorative practices discussed above, these bequests served as a means by which laywomen could continue to express their faith and shape its practice in this period of flux.

As noted earlier in this chapter, women's wills abound with bequests to clerics, and this trend remained consistent throughout the early Reformation. Some of these bequests were undoubtedly the product of convention or a sense of obligation. Testators frequently requested that token monetary 'rewards' be distributed amongst any priests that participated in their

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[228] For similar sentiments, see for instance Lesley O'Brien's critique of *Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England: Katherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk, and Lincolnshire's Godly Aristocracy,1519-1580*, by Melissa Franklin Harkrider, *Journal of Religion* 90, no. 2 (2010): 253-5.

[229] Katherine French, for instance, notes that women were more likely than men to leave bequests to parish clergy, and suggests that this may be indicative of a closer relationship, but does not discuss the question any further: French, 'Women's Spiritual Interests', 66-7. For similarly cursory discussions, see e.g. Attreed, 'Preparation for Death', 47-8; Cross, 'Northern Women', 91.

funeral, or left small and rather impersonal gifts of a few pence or shillings to a parish priest or curate. Many others, however, were both individualised and substantial, suggesting that they were the product of something more. Given that many of the wills which include specific clergymen as legatees were also witnessed by the same individuals – and perhaps also scribed by them – we might suspect some degree of clerical influence over these bequests. However, Lorraine Attreed's research on northern England suggests that testators who 'named a clergyman as witness, supervisor, or scribe … were no more likely to give to a church or cleric than those who did not specify a witness.'[230] As such, we must look for other motivations.

For testators of both sexes, currency was the bequest of choice for clerical legatees. Alongside the minor bequests mentioned above, parish clergy were also the recipients of somewhat more substantial monetary gifts. Margaret Chapman (d.1556) expressed her gratitude to her parish curate, Sir William Pen, 'for the paynes he toke with my husband and me in our sickenes' with a gift of 20s (£1); Dame Joan Wadham (d.1557) bequeathed double the amount to her own parish priest, Sir Thomas Gluckey, vicar of Ilton.[231] Similar sums were outlaid by male testators. Household chaplains, meanwhile, tended to receive considerably larger sums – particularly from women – no doubt as a product of their more intimate association with the testator. Lady Jane Guildford (d. 1538) bequeathed her chaplain, Sir George Morlande, £10; Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford (d.1537), left hers £5 each.[232] Sir Roger Mynours (d.1537) gifted Sir Henry Wetton, his chaplain and co-executor of his will, five marks.[233] Bequests of livestock also appear with some regularity. Margaret (d.1556/7) and George Allard (d.1556) of Birdsall each bequeathed a sheep to their curate, Robert Watson, while Richard Lounde (d.1551), yeoman, gifted a 'baye stagge' and 40s. to Sir William

[230] Attreed, 'Preparation for Death', 48.
[231] TNA PROB 11/38/126 (Margaret Chapman, 1556); TNA PROB 11/39/358 (Joan Wadham, 1557).
[232] TNA PROB 11/27/324 (Joan Guildford, 1538); TNA PROB 11/27/144 (Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, 1537).
[233] TNA PROB 11/27/56 (Roger Mynours, 1534; proved 1537).

Marshall, clerk.[234] Dame Jane Fitzwilliam (d.1542) bequeathed to her chaplain, Sir John Fox, 'a nag called Gadbury.'[235]

It is, however, in the rather less common bequests of objects to clergy that we best get a sense of the genuine affection that might exist between testators and their priests. It is also here that gender distinctions become evident. Of the male testators in the sample, just two made such a bequest; one of these, moreover, was due not to the recipient's ecclesiastical position, but to ties of kinship.[236] This was undoubtedly in part the result of the different circumstances faced by male and female testators, as discussed above, as well as the greater connection women had to material items; for many, objects such as household goods and jewellery 'were perhaps the only items that [they] could definitively call their own.'[237] However this does not entirely account for the discrepancy, since men quite commonly bequeathed goods or clothing to family and friends.[238]

Far more so than gifts of currency, bequests of objects – as Lisa Liddy has argued – 'symbolise the importance of the relationship between testator and recipient.'[239] As well as acting as a physical memento of the deceased, serving to encourage remembrance or prayers for their soul, they became 'carriers of the testator's emotions and investments in his or her affective relationships.'[240] Lena Corwen Orlin has cautioned that this should not be taken too

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[234] BI, Prob. Reg. 15, pt. 1, ff. 185v (George Allard, 1556), 215r (Margaret Allard, proved 1557); TNA PROB 11/34/35 (Richard Lounde, 1550; proved 1551).
[235] TNA PROB 11/29/191 (Jane Fitzwilliam, 1542).
[236] Sir Thomas Hastings left a gilt cup to Cardinal Reginald Pole, uncle to his wife: TNA PROB 11/40/236 (1558). More significant is Sir Roger Mynours' bequest to his priest, Sir Henry Wetton, of 'one blacke gowne furred with bugge': TNA PROB 11/27/56 (1534; proved 1537).
[237] Lewis, 'Testamentary Discourse', 72.
[238] John Wether (d. 1536) for instance bequeathed to his son Richard 'a pott, a pan, a cofer, ij broches and a bed with all the apparel to the said bed': TNA PROB 11/26/27.
[239] Lisa Liddy, 'Domestic Objects in York c.1400-1600: Consumption, Neighbourhood and Choice' (Ph.D., University of York, 2015), qtd. 140. See also *idem*, 'Affective Bequests: Creating Emotion in York Wills, 1400-1600', in *Understanding Emotions in Early Europe*, ed. Michael Champion and Andrew Lynch (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 273-89.
[240] *Ibid*, 273-89.

far, arguing that the 'prevailing effect is of things given for their use value rather than any private meaning', and that the physical description of these objects – often seen as a mark of their sentimental importance to the testator – was instead merely designed to aid executors and overseers in their identification.[241] However, while it should certainly not be assumed that *all* objects were of inherent emotional significance, there are undoubtedly object bequests 'in which the possessions themselves are clearly given affective value beyond their original economic or functional value.'[242] In bequeathing personal and domestic goods to clergy, women could thus affirm the value they placed upon these social bonds, and symbolically reinforce them. This act functioned as one means by which women could express their faith. But in making these bequests, female testators were also recognising these clergy as part of their social networks: not infrequently, bequests to clergy are interspersed among gifts to family, friends, and valued servants, and are often similar to these gifts in their character.

The will of Dame Goditha Peyto (née Throckmorton, d. 1530/1) is a case in point. Throughout her testament, amongst other personal bequests, Peyto makes several bequests of objects to her domestic chaplain, Sir Edmund Whelar:

> Item I bequethe to Sir Edmond the bedd that he lyeth in, that is to say a coucher, a bolster, a pair of blanketts, ij coverletts and a greate pillow and a lytle, a helyng of green say … Item, to Sir Edmond my chalis with the vestement, two aulter clothes, a corporas with the case and my clothe of the crucifix with Mary and John … Item

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[241] Lena Cowen Orlin, 'Empty Vessels', in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, ed. Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 299-308 (qtd. 300).

[242] Liddy, 'Domestic Objects', 141. For further discussion of the potential emotive and symbolic significance of object bequests, see Tara Hamling, 'Household Objects', in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017), esp. 139; Catherine Richardson, *Domestic Life and Domestic Tragedy in Early Modern England: The Material Life of the Household* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 67-82; *idem*, ''Make you a cloak of it and weare it for my sake': Material Culture and Commemoration in Early Modern English Towns', in *Monuments and Monumentality across Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Proceedings of the 2011 Stirling Conference*, ed. Michael Penman (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 68-78; Appleton, 'Women And Wills', Ch. 5.

> to Sir Edmond a cofre and a cusshion of carpet worke … Item to Sir Edmonde my *Legenda Aurea* and a great cofre with the elme lid, and a pair of sheetes … Item I will that Sir Edmond shall have five markes for a hole yere and meate and drincke at my sonnes … Item to Sir Edmond his quarter wages xvjs. viijd. And my spone that is occupied daylye.'[243]

Some of these – namely, the chalice and liturgical textiles – are clearly reflective of Whelar's clerical status. Others, however, are indistinguishable from the bequests she left to secular beneficiaries: similar bequests of bedding are made to kin and to her lady's maid, while coffers are left also to female cousins. Peyto's affection for Whelar, and his place amongst her closest connections, is further suggested by the bequest of a copy of the hagiographical *Legenda Aurea*.[244] Three other books can be connected with Peyto, and all were passed on to natal kin. In her will, she bequeathed her psalter to her niece, Mary Burdett.[245] Although not recorded in her will, a second niece, Elizabeth Englefield (née Throckmorton) was gifted William Caxton's *Royal Book*, and Peyto inscribed the late fourteenth-century devotional manuscript in her possession, known as the Worcestershire Miscellany, to 'Goody Throkmarton'.[246] Peyto's decision to include Whelar in this intimate circle is surely significant, as is her final, symbolically-charged bequest to her chaplain of her 'spone that is occupied dayly.'

Peyto's bequest to Whelar are unusually extensive, but other women expressed a comparable affection for their priests. Some did so through gifts of domestic goods. In 1538, Alice Lane left her parish priest John Cragge, rector of Ludlow, her 'litell nutte with the cover', her spice plate, and – most valuably – six silver apostle spoons: as Goditha Peyto's will

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[243] TNA PROB 11/24/11 (Goditha Peyto, 1531).

[244] This was perhaps a copy of William Caxton's bestselling English translation, printed in the large (and expensive) folio format.

[245] For Peyto's relationship to Burdett, see the Throckmorton Pedigree in William Camden. *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, ed. John Fetherston (London: Harleian Society, 1877), 87.

[246] Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety*, 113-14. Erler suggests that Goody (i.e., Goditha) was yet another niece. The shared name suggests that she was also perhaps Peyto's goddaughter.

suggests, spoons were often 'highly cherished' items, and thus held both financial and affective worth.[247] Lane affirmed Cragge's position as a trusted friend by making him the overseer of her will.[248] Katherine Troyse (d. 1537) of South Stoneham was evidently not of any substantial wealth, and made very few bequests in her will, but left her vicar and 'my gostly father' Laurence Harwarde 'the rounde table *whiche I dyd give hym* with the stole therto belonging': a seemingly prosaic gift, but one which suggests an intimacy during life.[249] Other testators bequeathed objects which held emotional significance via their intimate connection with the body.[250] Composing a codicil to her will on her death-bed, Isabel Fitz-James (d. 1527) bequeathed to Sir William Clement, priest, the 'counterpoynt of verdor whiche nowe lyeth upon my bedde in the chamber', and to her parish priest, Sir Robert Rotheram, the 'counterpoynt of imagery *which nowe lyes upon me*.'[251] Fitz-James clearly intended these objects to 'speak the language of affect', their closeness to the body evoking the closeness of their relationship, and serving as a physical memorial thereof.[252] It is telling that Fitz-James' other bedcoverings, as well as her clothing, were bequeathed to members of her family.[253]

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[247] TNA PROB 11/27/326 (Alice Lane, 1538). A nut was a type of cup. Apostle spoons were so called because their knops were wrought in the form of apostles; a set often contained thirteen, with the thirteenth depicting Jesus. They were a common baptismal gift. For the significance of spoon bequests, see e.g. Appleton, 'Women and Wills', 269-272; Kate Kelsey Staples, *Daughters of London: Inheriting Opportunity in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), qtd. 136. Bequests of spoons to valued clerics were common in women's wills.

[248] We happen to know that Cragge was active in fulfilling this role. In September 1538, Cragge's goods were inventoried following (ultimately unproven) accusations of treason. It was found that 'some of the plate and money is supposed to belong to Alice Lane, widow, deceased, whose executor he is': *Letters & Papers*, 13, pt. 2, 333.

[249] TNA PROB 11/26/120. Emphasis added.

[250] See e.g. Catherine Richardson, 'Written Texts and the Performance of Materiality', in *Writing Material Culture History*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 52; *idem*, *Domestic Life and Domestic Tragedy,* 71.

[251] TNA PROB 11/22/416. Emphasis added. I owe this example to Lewis, 'Testamentary Discourse', 64. A counterpoint was a quilted bedcovering.

[252] Richardson, 'Written Texts', 52.

[253] TNA PROB 11/22/416. For a comparable but later example, see TNA PROB 11/32/349 (Isabell Nele, 1548; proved 1549).

Gifts of objects can also provide a glimpse of women's social interactions with priests beyond their own parish or household. Dame Margaret Copley (d. 1558) of Yorkshire entrusted Sir John Oliffe, rector of Plumtree, Nottinghamshire, with the oversight of her youngest son, Phillip's, inheritance while he completed his studies at Cambridge; presumably in recompense, she bequeathed him 'x grate beads of amber & a ring of gold with a dyamond.'[254] Oliffe had been in the Copleys' orbit for some time – having been presented to Plumtree by Margaret's husband, Sir William, in 1552 – and it seems likely that Margaret Copley intended for Oliffe to act as something as an advisor to Phillip on his own journey into the priesthood.[255] Not only was her bequest to Oliffe of intrinsic value, but it also likely bore a second, more personal layer of meaning: amber had a 'long association with rosary devotion', and it hardly seems coincidental that Copley bequeathed to Oliffe ten beads – enough for a one-decade rosary.[256] If this is the case, Copley evidently knew the priest well: although Oliffe conformed sufficiently to maintain his position, he would prove a vocal objector to certain stridently evangelical reforms.[257]

The case of Dorothy Paver (d. 1548) of St Bartholomew-the-Great, London, furnishes another example – albeit one which extends beyond objects to property. Paver bequeathed to the rector of St Bartholomew's, her 'ghostly father' Sir John Deane, a 'gilt pece' and the lease of her house, as well as twenty shillings to act as one of her executors.[258] While Paver was not

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[254] BI, Prob. Reg. 15, pt. 3, ff. 57v-58r (Margaret Copley, 1557; proved 1558).
[255] *CCEd* Person ID: 88328 (Oliffe); *CCEd* Person ID: 23175 (Copley). In her will, Copley bequeathed Phillip a number of religious items, including 'one vestment for a priest, ij tunycles for a deacon & subdeacon.'
[256] Rachel King, ''The Beads With Which We Pray Are Made From It': Devotional Ambers in Early Modern Italy', in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), esp. 156, 160. For comparable bequests of amber beads which were clearly rosaries, see: TNA PROB 11/27/315 (Thomasine Richards, 1537; proved 1538); TNA PROB 11/29/21 (Elizabeth Audley, 1532).
[257] Oliffe managed to hold his benefice until his death in 1608. In 1572, he refused to attend the 'exercises' established by Archdeacon Lowth, on the orders of Archbishop Grindal: Ronald A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (London: Longmans, 1960), 134
[258] TNA PROB 11/32/211 (Dorothy Paver, 1548). A pece was a drinking-vessel, most commonly a wine cup.

the only one of Deane's parishioners to remember him in their will, her bequest was unusually generous.[259] That it was more than the product of a simple priest-parishioner relationship is suggested by Paver's object-bequests to other members of the Deane family: she left a gilt pece to Sir John's cousin, also called John Deane, and a silver bowl to her servant, the rector's sister Agnes Deane, whom she made co-executor to her will.[260] Paver's close ties with the Deane family likely owed much to their shared geographical connections. Sir John Deane hailed from Northwich, Cheshire, and retained property there at the time of his death; his crowning achievement was the establishment of a grammar school in the town in 1558.[261] Paver, too, was not a London native. Her will includes a bequest for tithes forgotten to the parish church of Watford, Hertfordshire, indicating that she had once been parishioner there.[262] However, she also had significant familial ties to Northwich. As Marjorie Cox has noted, 'the two-thirds part of a salthouse with which Deane endowed his school was on the same site as the third owned by the heirs of James Paver of Watford.'[263] Indeed, the Paver family had a large presence in Northwich, and at least one member was closely associated with John Deane: Peter Paver was one of two attorneys involved in the foundation of Deane's school.[264] Paver and Deane, then, were bound not only by a pastoral relationship, but by a web of mutual, personal connections.

Further evidence of the close personal relationships which might develop between women and their priests can be found in the concern testators often displayed for the livelihood of their household chaplains after their death. Most commonly, this took the form of preferment

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[259] Marjorie Cox, *A History of Sir John Deane's Grammar School, Northwich* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975), 24.
[260] TNA PROB 1132/211; TNA PROB 11/46/451 (John Deane, 1563); Cox, *A History*, 24.
[261] TNA PROB 11/46/451; E. A. Webb, *The Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory and of the Church and Parish of St. Bartholomew the Great West Smithfield*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), 299-307; Cox, *A History*.
[262] TNA PROB 1132/211.
[263] Cox, *A History*, 24.
[264] *Ibid.*

to the chantries or services which they endowed. Margaret, Countess of Kent (d. 1541), for instance, requested that an 'honest priest' be retained to pray for her soul for two years, and that her chaplain, Sir William Wood, be preferred to this position 'if it shall please him.'[265] Dame Alice Radcliffe (d. 1554) – evidently confident in the endurance of the Marian restoration – made provision for her own chaplain, Sir Christopher Alanson, to pray for her and her husband within the parish church of Crosthwaite (Sundays and holy days) and the Chapel of Keswick (weekdays); she willed that £140 be directed towards this purpose, enough for 28 years of service at her specified rate of £5 per year.[266] Even where no particular priest was specified in the will, testators may have intended that a domestic chaplain fulfil the role. Elizabeth Swillington (d. 1546) bequeathed £72 'towards the fynding of a priest' to say mass for twelve years in St Michael's, Coventry.[267] While not mentioned in her will, it is almost certain that she made provision for one of her chaplains, William Abel, to perform the service. As Sylvia Gill has noted, 'Abel must have taken the place immediately as the dissolution certificate of 1548 states that he had received £8 'the whole' for the 'one year and four months ended at Easter' that he had been in post.'[268]

In part, this was undoubtedly a pragmatic move. The perceived importance of intercession in limiting one's time in Purgatory rendered it imperative that *post-obit* services be reliably carried out; as such, it is unsurprising that many testators wanted a known and trusted priest to fulfil this role.[269] However, it would be far too reductive to view this tendency as purely self-serving. It seems evident that, in most cases, these provisions were also the product of a genuine regard for these clergymen. This is indicated in the additional bequests of

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[265] TNA PROB 11/28/347 (Margaret, Countess of Kent, 1541).
[266] TNA PROB 11/37/58 (Alice Radcliffe, 1554).
[267] TNA PROB 11/31/386 (Elizabeth Swillington, 1546; proved 1547).
[268] Gill, 'Managing Change', 379.
[269] James, *Women's Voices*, 30.

money or goods which were frequently bestowed upon them. The aforementioned Margaret, Countess of Kent, bequeathed Sir William Wood 'the bedd complete & the hole hanginges of the chamber that he lyeth in within my house' in addition to his yearly stipend.[270] Alice Radcliffe bequeathed her chaplain a chalice, vestment and the sum of £20.[271]

Indeed, some wills make it clear that the while the intercessory services were important, providing for the priest was the foremost concern. Joan Peerse (d. 1538) willed that Sir William Smith should sing for her soul for ten years in the church of St Thomas, Salisbury; if, however, he had the opportunity to secure a promotion or benefice, he was permitted to leave this post, and indeed was to be granted a whole year's wages (£6.13s.4d) to aid him in his new endeavour.[272] Peerse evidently had a particularly close relationship with Smith: she also made him her sole executor, bequeathing him an additional £6.13s.4d and a silver-gilt goblet. However, her pronounced concern for his livelihood was not unique.

Dame Alice Cotton (d. 1543) similarly made a special effort to secure the future wellbeing of John Scott, priest, who 'nowe dwellith with me' – undoubtedly as her chaplain.[273] As well as providing him with a bed and other household items, she requested that he receive, from the profits of her lands, an annual stipend of £8 for twenty years to pray for hers and her parents' souls. This was not, however, a typical stipendiary arrangement: Cotton had already included a separate provision for 'an honest priest' to say mass for a year or more in her local church. Her arrangements concerning Scott appear more as a product of affection, designed to secure Scott's livelihood, rather than a concerted effort to secure *post-obit* services for herself. Scott was given no specific instructions, simply directed to pray 'in suche place as he shalbe

[270] TNA PROB 11/28/347 (Margaret, Countess of Kent, 1541).
[271] TNA PROB 11/37/58 (Alice Radcliffe, 1554).
[272] TNA PROB 11/27/217 (Joan Peerse, 1536; proved 1538).
[273] TNA PROB 11/29/329 (Alice Cotton, 1543).

abyding in at his pleasure'; tellingly, there was also no provision for a replacement to be found if he should die during the twenty-year term.[274]

This was evidently a particularly popular avenue of post-mortem patronage for female testators, and one which they were invested in continuing until the last possible moment. We see these kinds of provisions being made right up until the dissolution of the chantries in 1547, and again during the Marian restoration.[275] The abolition of chantries and services thus undoubtedly had a significant, and deleterious, impact on women's ability to posthumously provide for their clerical intimates. However, there were other means by which testators might seek to ensure the wellbeing of their chaplains after their death. Bequests of additional wages were reasonably common across the period, providing some support as the priests sought new employment. Mary Jenney (d. 1548), for instance, requested that her chaplain, Sir Thomas Twysadane, and her manservant be granted a year's wages on top of whatever they were owed, as well as 'their horses that they ryde uppon.'[276] Katherine Edgecombe (d. 1553) similarly bequeathed each of her chaplains 'a hole yeres wages' from the day of her death; in a token of her gratitude and affection, her 'olde Chapleyn' Sir William Jenkyns was to be given an additional mark 'in consideracion of his old service.'[277] Occasionally testators went further, making provisions for an annuity to be paid to the priest in question. Isabel Plumpton (d. 1552) requested that her executor pay her chaplain, Sir Robert, 'for his owneste servis and diligence exhibited unto me here before tyme', forty shillings per year until her grandson came of age;

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[274] As it happened, he seems to have only outlived her by two years. Scott, referred to by Cotton as a Bachelor of Divinity, can almost certainly be identified as the Cambridge graduate who was prebendary of Lichfield from 1522 until his death in 1545, and rector of Garboldisham, Norfolk, between 1533 and 1539: Venn and Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, 4: 31; *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541*, vol. 10, *Coventry and Lichfield Diocese*, ed. B. Jones (London: Institute of Historical Research, 1964), 53.

[275] E.g. TNA PROB 11/31/102 (Elizabeth Payton, 1545; proved 1546); TNA PROB 11/37/58 (Alice Radcliffe, 1554); TNA PROB 11/39/471 (Mary Fitton, 1557).

[276] TNA PROB 11/32/299 (Mary Jenney, 1548).

[277] TNA PROB 11/36/306 (Katherine Edgecombe, 1553).

the intent seems to have been that he would stay on and serve her son, Dennis.[278] Thus even as the mechanisms for doing so were profoundly disrupted, laywomen continued to find ways of sponsoring their clerical associates at end of life.

For it *is* primarily in the wills of women, namely widows, that these kinds of provisions occur. They are not, to be sure, entirely absent from the testaments of lay men. Male testators might also nominate a specific priest, most often a chaplain, to perform intercessory services. Mathew Boynton of Yorkshire (d. 1540), for instance, bequeathed to 'Sir Thomas Raven, chapplan, iij li. vj s. viij d., to syng and pray for my saull' for one year.[279] Similarly, they might also make alternative arrangements for a chaplain's support. Henry Fane (d. 1538) specified that his chaplain Sir James Baynes was to be provided with four marks yearly, 'till he be provided of a benefice in perpetuity.'[280] The probate records of the Swillingtons of Coventry clearly demonstrate that both men and women could develop close and lasting ties with particular priests, which they recognised in their testaments. In his 1526 will, Rauf Swillington made generous provision for his domestic chaplain, Sir William Queneborough, bequeathing him the advowson and right to farm the tithes of the chapel of St Thomas the Apostle and St Anne in Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, for the term of his life.[281] After Rauf's death, Queneborough continued to act as chaplain to his wife, Elizabeth.[282] She made Queneborough,

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[278] Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 260-2 (Isabel Plumpton, 1552). While Plumpton's will refers to William Plumpton as her 'nephew', he was in fact her grandson (the term could have this meaning in the early modern period). See the will of her husband: *TE*, vol. 6, 258-60. Despite her late son Robert's efforts to teach her 'the cleare light of Goddes doctrine' by sending her a copy of Tyndale's New Testament, Isabel and the Plumpton family remained firmly traditional in their beliefs: Thomas Stapleton, ed., *The Plumpton Correspondence* (London: Camden Society, 1839), 231-4.

[279] Clay, *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 6, 99-102 (Matthew Boynton, 1540). Only four instances of men preferring specific priests to such posts can be found in the sample, and none after 1540.

[280] TNA PROB 11/25/30 (Henry Fane, 1533; proved 1538).

[281] TNA PROB 11/22/63 (Rauf Swillington, 1525; proved 1526).

[282] From sometime between 1535 and the dissolution of the chantries in 1548, Queneborough also served as chantry priest in the church of Holy Trinity, Coventry: *Valor ecclesiasticus temp. Henr. VIII: auctoritate regia institutus*, ed. J. Caley and J. Hunter, vol. 3 ([London]: Record Commission, 1817), 60; Gill, 'Managing Change', 383.

'my chapleyn', one of the supervisors of her own will in November 1546, and substantially extended her husband's generous provision for the priest.[283] As well as twenty marks sterling, he was to 'enioye and occupie a close in Stichall called the litle Rydynges of the yerely rent of twelve shillinges during his lyfe without rent therfor paying during his life.' The regard Rauf and Elizabeth held for Queneborough was evidently mutual. Writing his own will in 1558/9, more than ten years after Elizabeth's death, William requested that 'an honest preest whyche was never maryed' say mass daily for two years in the Church of St Michael, Coventry, 'for my soll and for the solles of my good master & mistres Rauff Swyllyngton and Elizabeth his wife and all cristen soles.'[284]

How, then, do we explain women's greater tendency to make testamentary provision for domestic chaplains and other valued priests? As has become a common refrain throughout this chapter, structural factors provide part of the answer. As we have seen, husbands often entrusted the fulfilment of post-mortem arrangements to their wives, and thus had less need to include specifics in their wills. Continuity of service after the death of one spouse, as in the case of the Swillingtons, must also be taken into account. Yet, as in the bequest of objects to clergy, such factors on their own provide an insufficient explanation for the disparity. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that widows were more likely to develop personal and spiritual friendships with household and parish clergy, and to give material expression to these affective bonds in their testaments. The formation of particularly close relations between English laywomen and priests has been well-documented in climates of religious persecution (notably Catholic recusants and their confessors, as well as the Marian martyrs and their female 'sustainers') and in seventeenth-century Puritanism.[285] However, while these bonds were

[283] TNA PROB 11/31/386 (Elizabeth Swillington, 1546; proved 1547).
[284] LIRO, B/C/11 1558 Will of William Queneborough. I am grateful to Dr Sylvia Gill for providing me with a copy of Queneborough's will.
[285] See e.g. Freeman, 'Good Ministrye', qtd. 33; Seguin, 'Ambiguous liaisons'; Willen, 'Godly Women'.

perhaps heightened in their intensity and reciprocity, the evidence of wills suggests that they were part of a much larger trend.

Lay-clerical relationships naturally varied in their level of intimacy. Not all were characterised by the mutual affection of the Swillingtons and their chaplain, or the level of trust exhibited by Margaret Copley towards John Oliffe. Nevertheless, it is eminently clear that women's bequests to individual clergymen were motivated by more than a sense of pious duty or a concern for their own souls. If they were not, the Henrician and Edwardian reforms would have not only reduced the options testators had to support their priests, but also greatly diminished the entire practice – as they did the generic gifts to clergy at burials and anniversaries. As with commemorative practices, the very embeddedness of these relationships within testators' wider social networks encouraged the continuity of such provisions across the English reformations. In sustaining and reshaping these provisions in the face of new and changing circumstances, laywomen both affirmed the significance of these personal and spiritual bonds, and exerted a further, tangible influence on end-of-life religious practices in England.

VI. Conclusion

The abrogation of purgatory and intercessory prayer under Henry VIII and Edward VI radically, and ultimately irrevocably, disrupted the post-mortem rituals by which the living honoured the dead and aided the passage of their souls to heaven. The consequences of this for will-making were further heightened by the dismantlement of the religious orders and the 'stripping' of England's parish churches. The climate of uncertainty created by these changes bled into Mary's reign, ensuring that traditional post-mortem provisions remained diminished, even as their value and validity was once again affirmed. This narrowing of options was a particularly acute issue for women, for whom end-of-life patronage offered a crucial means by

which they, as both testators and executors, might express their spiritual interests and participate in the religious life of their families and communities. Indeed, as this chapter has shown, this was one arena in which laywomen arguably had greater influence than their male counterparts; its transformation over the course of the English reformations thus particularly affected women.

Across this period, however, there remained a keen emotional and spiritual impulse to sanctify and memorialise loved ones, to secure both their and one's own place in the memory of their descendants and community, and to recognise connections to people and place. Thus, even as the successive English reformations altered the permitted form of post-mortem patronage and its theological underpinnings, it retained an important continuity of purpose. While some laywomen certainly responded to the religio-political upheaval by excluding pious provisions from their wills, many others – at times with striking creativity – adapted their requests and bequests to suit the new conditions. Women continued to use their testaments to express their faith in ways that were meaningful to them. Lay sponsorship of preaching, for instance, as we have seen, reveals how pious bequests could be take on multiple, and at times ambiguous, meanings in this climate of religious uncertainty, employed in service of various shades of Christian belief. The entwinement of end-of-life religious patronage with concerns of kinship, family identity, and personal relationships – in particular with members of the clergy – was especially crucial in offsetting some of the more destabilising impacts of the early Reformation. Laywomen maintained a critical role in the production of family memory, and continued to commemorate their affective bonds through pious bequests both financial and material. As they negotiated the implications of religious change for the making and execution of end-of-life provisions, women, in turn, influenced post-mortem devotion and practice.

CONCLUSION

In March 1538, the London merchant John Husee wrote a letter of caution to his mistress, Honor Grenville, Lady Lisle. Alarmed at the suspicion that her overt traditionalism was generating at court and in Calais, he beseeched her to 'leave part of such ceremonies as you do use, as long prayers and offerings of candles', and to be more circumspect in her disapproval of the changes instituted by the Henrician regime. He warned her that 'though these things were good and right and might be suffered', she 'might do a very good deed to conform yourself partly to the thing that is used *and to the world as it goeth now*.'[1] As we have seen, Grenville did not heed Husee's advice. In her devotions and in her patronage, she continued to defy the regime's attempts to suppress 'popery' in England – even if her commitment was tempered by her responsibilities as deputy's wife and as a mother. It took the Lisles' arrest for treason in 1540 (of which they were ultimately cleared) and her husband's subsequent death to halt her religious activism; thereafter, she withdrew from public life until her own death in 1566.[2]

We do not know how Grenville felt about the more radical reforms of Edward VI, the re-establishment of Catholic ritual under Mary, or the accession of Elizabeth. But the decision of how to negotiate and adapt to the religio-political developments of the sixteenth century was one faced by all members of the English laity, and one which would only become more complex and ideologically charged as 'the world as it goeth now' continued to change. Patronage offers a valuable but underutilised window into these decisions, as one means by

[1] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 5: 63. See also 5: 66, 79-80. Emphasis added.
[2] Byrne, *Lisle Letters*, 6: 257-8; David Grummitt, 'Plantagenet, Arthur, Viscount Lisle (b. before 1472, d. 1542)', in *ODNB*.

which the laity engaged with and shaped religious practices. Its embeddedness within wider social, familial and political networks encourages a recognition of the intertwinement of spiritual concerns and identity with other facets of individual's lived experience; as such, it facilitates a more nuanced assessment of the impact of the English Reformation(s) on the laity, and their participation therein.

This thesis has sought to enhance our understanding of laywomen's religious patronage and, in doing so, to shed new light on their experience of the turbulent early years of the English Reformation. It has worked to examine the forms this patronage took, its relationship to the changing religious climate, and the ways in which it was inflected by religious identity, gender, kinship, status and other social and political concerns. Existing work on this topic has been largely fragmented and has focused on prominent evangelicals or – to a much lesser extent – conservatives, whose experience was not necessarily representative. This study has broken new ground by expanding the focus to consider the religious patronage of a much wider subset of English women, and the various 'shades of grey' which characterised their spiritual beliefs and devotional practices in this period of flux.

The first chapter presented a re-evaluation of women's involvement in the English book trade as patrons of authors, publishers, and translators of religious literature. Through a comparative analysis of conservative and evangelical literature, and of the texts associated with men and women, it identified elements of striking continuity across confessional and gender lines. In doing so, it challenged the established perception that the efforts of evangelical women like Anne Seymour, Katherine Brandon, and Mary Fitzroy represented a substantial break from traditional modes of literary patronage. It argued that it is in the rhetoric of dedicatory epistles, rather than in the actual mechanisms of literary patronage or the kinds of texts sponsored, that gender and religious differences become most distinct. Ultimately, this chapter established the significance of women patrons to the book trade both as active sponsors of religious literature,

and as figures who could be appropriated in service of different visions of the English Church and Christian womanhood.

Literary patronage was in some respects unique. By its very nature, the number of individuals involved was comparatively small. Moreover, the women who actively sponsored the book trade, and/or were singled out as dedicatees, were unusual in their open commitment to a particular doctrinal position. Chapters Two and Three explored more common forms of spiritual benefaction, and shifted the focus to the parish and community. The second chapter addressed the until now largely neglected topic of women's ecclesiastical patronage. Through a quantitative analysis of the presentations recorded in episcopal registers, coupled with a close reading of correspondence and other sources, it highlighted the widespread and significant participation in ecclesiastical preferment as both patrons and brokers. Laywomen's exercise of this patronage was guided as much by kinship, concerns of 'good lordship', and socio-political pressures as by any sense of pastoral or spiritual duty. However, some women, from across the religious spectrum, did make full use of their right of advowson to advance those who shared their beliefs. Their patronal decisions had tangible implications for the religious life of their communities, and indeed the character of the wider English Church.

Chapter Three provided an analysis of the pious bequests and spiritual provisions made by the laity in their last wills and testaments. End-of-life patronage was in important respects a gendered enterprise, in which women, and especially widows, featured prominently in their roles as both testators and executors. The Reformation profoundly disrupted the post-mortem rituals which had yoked together the living and the dead, and indelibly narrowed the options for pious benefaction. Yet this was not a narrative of unmitigated decline and contraction. Though refigured to suit the changing devotional environment, bequests to parish churches and clergy continued, charity remained central, and the period witnessed a rise in provisions for preaching. The position of wills as a site at which religious, personal and familial imperatives

merged also ensured that they retained an important continuity of purpose. Concerns of kinship and family identity, along with laywomen's personal relationships with clergy, were particularly crucial in providing continued opportunities for women to employ testamentary religious patronage in the shaping of devotion and memory.

English laywomen, particularly those of the gentry and nobility, exercised substantial religious patronage, both during their lives and at the time of their deaths. Their patronage power was inevitably more limited than that of their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons. Yet it was decidedly more considerable than previous scholarship on their spiritual benefaction has allowed. Indeed, in some arenas – most notably end-of-life patronage – their contribution was arguably more significant than that of their male counterparts. The comparative analysis undertaken in the foregoing chapters has revealed marked similarities in the forms and mechanisms of religious patronage exercised by lay men and women. But it has also highlighted the important ways in which this patronage was inflected by gender. Women's legal and social position placed certain restrictions on their activities; however, in some respects their very exclusion from formal political office, and from some of the obligations and expectations associated with lordship, gave them greater freedom as patrons – especially during widowhood. As we have seen in the case of book dedications, gender ideology could also influence the way in which female patronage was framed and understood.

Patronage offered women a means of expressing their faith, and of participating in and shaping the religious life of their communities and country. In the context of the English Reformation(s), it could function as a crucial vehicle for the promotion of a particular vision of what the English Church should look like. A number of women, at both the evangelical and conservative ends of the religious spectrum, certainly used the patronage power at their disposal to make statements about their allegiance to a specific brand of Christianity. Most religious patronage, however, was not guided by such an overt commitment to a particular

religious movement. A key value of the holistic and cross-confessional approach taken in this study is its problematisation of the relationship between patronage and belief. Women's patronal activities, especially at end-of-life, were often marked by diversity and ambiguity, as they navigated and sought to make meaningful a new and changing spiritual environment. At the same time, the decisions they made were almost inexorably modulated by more 'secular' concerns. Patrons were mindful of their obligations to and relationships with kin, friends, and clients. Examining the English Reformation through the lens of patronage thus provides a salutary reminder that the religious changes did not occur in a vacuum; their impact, and the laity's negotiation of the altered devotional climate, can only be understood as part of the English people's wider lived experience. Indeed, this thesis has argued that in some respects the very entwinement of spiritual and secular concerns in the exercise of religious patronage provided an element of continuity which helped offset some of the Reformation's destabilising effects.

Due to the constraints on length, this thesis has concentrated on three forms of religious patronage. However, as has been indicated at various points throughout this study, laywomen's spiritual benefaction extended beyond these arenas. Further work is necessary to illuminate the full range of women's efforts during the early Reformation. The household, for instance, has been recognised as a crucial site of pious patronage, particularly by historians of the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3] To date, however, considerably less attention has been paid to the laity's preferment of domestic chaplains, as well as their hospitality towards itinerant preachers and other clergy, in the preceding period.[4]

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[3] E.g. Hugh Adlington, Tom Lockwood and Gillian Wright, eds. *Chaplains in Early Modern England: Patronage, Literature and Religion* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013); William Gibson, *A Social History of the Domestic Chaplain, 1530-1840* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), esp. 79-88; Binczewski, 'Solitary Sparrows'.

[4] Exceptions include Wabuda, 'Shunamites', and Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 77-83, 117-20.

Women's ecclesiastical patronage would also benefit from continued research. This study has examined a sizeable number of English dioceses, but the records of many others remain untapped. Further comparative analysis of the presentations made by spouses and by other members of the same family would also provide additional insights into the influence of gender, kinship, and religious identity on patterns of patronage. Extending the analysis beyond the thirty years considered here would, by a similar token, enhance our understanding of the impact of these factors, and particularly of religious change, over the longer course of the English Reformation(s). More generally, more work could be done to situate women's patronal activities within larger religious, social, and political networks. For this, the digital humanities may prove particularly useful. The work of Ruth and Sebastian Ahnert on Protestant letter networks during the reign of Mary I, for example, highlights the ways in which the techniques of quantitative network analysis can help us map religious networks, as well as interrogate the place and significance of individuals within them.[5] Catherine Medici has similarly demonstrated the value of network analysis for examining the agency of early modern women.[6]

Although questions about women's religious patronage remain, this thesis has made important strides in establishing its significance for our understanding of the English Reformation. Religious patronage did not remain static throughout the sixteenth century. The Reformation altered the options open to patrons, and the meanings attached to their choices, as the successive Tudor regimes reshaped the boundaries of permitted spiritual expression. However, as has been a common refrain throughout this thesis, there were also remarkable threads of continuity – across time, and across the spectrum of religious belief. This is not a simple story of Protestant versus Catholic, old versus new. Rather, it is a story of a people

[5] Ahnert and Ahnert, 'Protestant Letter Networks'.
[6] Catherine Medici, 'Using Network Analysis to Understand Early Modern Women', *Early Modern Women* 13, no. 1 (2018): 153-62.

negotiating and making sense of a shifting religio-political landscape. Patronage provided a crucial means by which women could exercise cultural, social, political and spiritual agency. In the context of the English Reformation, it offered them a way of contributing to the shape of their faith, at a time when its form was open to contestation.

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