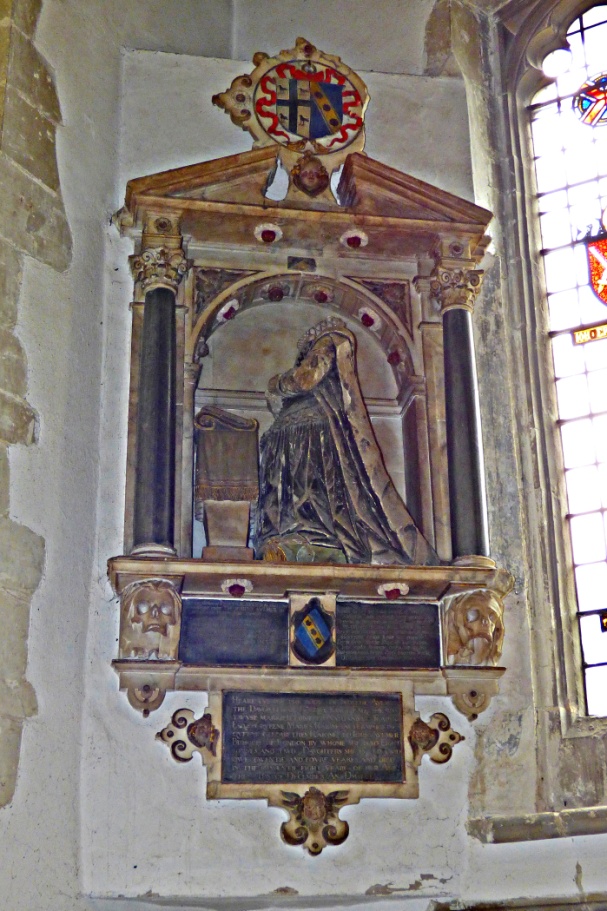
**The changing status and identity of English bishops’ wives c.1549-1625**

**Thesis submitted to the Department of History for examination in the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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**Declaration of Authorship**

I ……………………............... hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it

is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always

clearly stated.

Signed:

Date:

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**Abstract**

This thesis will provide the first full length study of English bishops’ wives between 1549 and 1625. Clerical marriage was one of the most controversial issues of the English Reformation, and created a new social group who had to be accorded a position within the strict hierarchy of Tudor society. Initially clerical wives faced marginalisation and hostility from their communities, and were negatively affected by the fluctuating legal status of clerical marriage between 1549 and 1559. However, during the stability of Elizabeth’s reign clerical marriage was able to establish itself and became a secure feature of the emerging Church of England.

Whilst the legal history of clerical marriage is well known, the women at this centre of this radical social and theological change have rarely been considered. Married to the leaders of the English Church, bishops’ wives were the most visible and scrutinised of all clerical wives. They lived at the heart of the established Church whilst their husband’s high office also drew them into elite secular society. However, to date they have not been subject to any detailed study, with the result that we know very little about a significant group of women who emerged in early modern England.

Combining a chronological and thematic approach this thesis will firstly demonstrate how bishops’ wives were affected by and contributed to the early reform movement, before considering them as members of the office holding class. Drawing together a wide range of sources for the first time this thesis will seek to recover the lived experience of bishops’ wives to show who they were, where they came from, what their role was and how it changed and developed between 1549 and 1625; ultimately shedding light on an important group of women who emerged from the Reformation to take on a new role in society.

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**List of Abbreviations**

BL British Library

Add. Additional MS

Add. Ch. Additional Charter

Harl. Harley MS

Borth. Inst. Borthwick Institute, University of York

CALS Cheshire Archives and Local Studies

CCC Corpus Christi College

CPR Calendar of Patent Rolls

CSP Calendar of State Papers

LA Lincolnshire Archives

LPL Lambeth Palace Library

NRO Norwich Record Office

*ODNB* Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (www.oxforddnb.com)

SRO Staffordshire Record Office

*TAMO The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO*(HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: http//www.johnfoxe.org

TNA The National Archives, Kew

C Chancery

E Exchequer

SC Special Collections

SP State Papers

PROB Probate

WYA West Yorkshire Archives

Zurich StA Staatsarchiv, Zurich

**Introduction**

The legalisation of clerical marriage in England has been described as ‘the greatest single change that the Protestant Reformation made in the status of the clergy and its relation to the laity.’[[1]](#footnote-2) The introduction of married priests into churches and the end of the centuries-old practice of mandatory clerical celibacy was, ‘a highly visible symbol of changing doctrine and practice,’ that would have been manifestly evident at the local level.[[2]](#footnote-3) However, this ‘revolutionary’ change in religion and ethics did not occur overnight and the institution of clerical marriage, and particularly new clerical wives and children, were subjected to the hostility and suspicions of a sceptical laity.[[3]](#footnote-4) First legalised by the Edwardian government in 1549, the legality of clerical marriage was reversed by the Marian regime, before being finally reinstated, albeit without a statutory basis, by the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559. Even at this stage, contemporaries feared that Elizabeth’s antipathy towards clerical marriage might lead to another reversal in policy, though none ever came, and clerical marriage endured to become a permanent fixture in the English Church.

However, legality did not bring about immediate acceptance amongst the laity. Clerical marriage was as much a social as a theological innovation, and created a whole new class of women who had to be accorded a position within existing social structures. The concerns of the laity attest to this; whilst including theologically grounded fears that a married priest was unfit to administer the sacraments, they predominantly focused on more worldly concerns such as increased nepotism and the spoilation of church lands. Clerical wives were often the target of these accusations and blamed for encouraging their husbands to be avaricious and self serving. Their position was further undermined by the uncertainty surrounding the legality of their marriages and the social stigma of being likened to a priest’s concubine. However, despite this inauspicious beginning, as the reign of Elizabeth I progressed and the Church Settlement of 1559 survived the accession of James I in 1603 intact, the theological and social controversies surrounding clerical marriage receded, and clerical wives became increasingly accepted members of society.

Although some aspects of clerical marriage, such as its legal and polemical history and the financial impact on the bishops have attracted considerable historical attention; the women at the centre of this radical new innovation have undeniably been neglected.[[4]](#footnote-5) While some work has been carried out on clergy wives in the later seventeenth century, most notably a study on the female literacy of clerical wives by Jacqueline Eales, there is no comprehensive survey, and the study of clerical wives’ experience of the turbulent sixteenth century has been very limited.[[5]](#footnote-6) This is perhaps surprising given that the clergy represented the largest office-holding class in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and clerical marriage was one of the most divisive issues of the Reformation period. Though Anne Llewellyn Barstow called for church historians to carry out further research on clergy wives and their families over thirty years ago, they have yet to be integrated into mainstream church studies and the number of dedicated studies remains few.[[6]](#footnote-7) To date there is still no full length work in this field, with just one PhD recently completed, which addressed clerical wives more broadly, and only two short studies on bishops’ wives.[[7]](#footnote-8) As a result we know very little about a significant group of women who emerged in early modern England.

This thesis will provide the first full length study of English bishops’ wives; to determine who they were, where they came from, what their role was and how it changed and developed between 1549 and 1625.[[8]](#footnote-9) Combining a chronological and thematic approach it will first demonstrate how they were affected by and contributed to the early reform movement. The turbulent legal history of clerical marriage meant that the fate of bishops’ wives was intrinsically linked to the progress of the reform movement, and it will be argued that they must be reinstated into narratives of the early English Reformation. Secondly, it will consider bishops’ wives within the context of their husband’s office. Over the past two decades historians have demonstrated that although all women operated within a patriarchal structure, they did have room for manoeuvre and were able to exert agency within their respective social spheres; from the political role of elite women at court to the business acumen of merchants’ wives and city women.[[9]](#footnote-10) For the first time this thesis will examine bishops’ wives as members of a social group whose husbands held high office, and seek to situate them within their social context.

The chronological parameters of the thesis will allow for a full discussion of the legalisation of clerical marriage, during the turbulent years of the early English Reformation, as well as provide scope to discuss how the institution was maintained and developed over a long period of time. In contrast to the accession of the earlier Tudor monarchs, the accession of James I in 1603 did not see any dramatic changes either to the religious settlement or to the bench of bishops, all of whom maintained their offices. Although from the 1590s onwards there was renewed tension in the Church as the Catholic threat receeded, exposing the divisions between the more conservative and Puritan wings of the Church, the period between 1559 and 1625 was one of relative stability for the institution of clerical marriage; allowing the evolution of precedents and traditions to be traced. The very fragmented source material for the period after 1559 also necessitated study over a long period of time, with some of the best documented bishops spanning the reign of both Elizabeth I and James I. The death of James I in 1625 was taken as a natural caesura for this study. The rise of Laudianism during the reign of Charles I revived earlier debates about the necessity of clerical marriage as a pre-requistite of holding high office, whilst an increasingly strident Puritan movement questioned the very existence of the office of a bishop. Although both of these movements had antecedents in the earlier period, their fruition under Charles I, and the devastating consequences for the bishops during the Civil War, put them beyond the remit of this study. Though it is always hard to draw lines, and the deaths of monarchs is not always the most cogent choice, it was felt that the pressures of the 1620s and 30s and their impact on the bishops and their families merited a separate study. **Why bishops’ wives?**

Married to the leaders of the English Church, bishops’ wives were the most visible and scrutinised of all clerical wives. Intimately connected to the reformed cause, their marriages both bound them to, but also helped shape, the development of the English Church. As Sherlock states, the introduction of clerical marriage ‘brought women and sexuality into the heart of the ecclesiastical establishment in a novel way,’ and no women were able to come closer to the centre of the establishment than bishops’ wives.[[10]](#footnote-11) Their husbands’ positions also drew them into elite secular society, a factor which has not been recognised or explored in any existing historiography. The bishops represented one of the most important segments of the office holding class, and whilst it has been noted that their wives’ status was compromised by a lack of title, this thesis will demonstrate that this did not prevent bishops’ wives from engaging in the lifestyle and practices of the elite.[[11]](#footnote-12)

In spite of their unique relationship to the English Church and its leaders and their participation in elite culture and society, episcopal wives have received very little scholarly attention. Mary Prior is the only historian to have completed any substantial work, drawing attention to them as a distinct group for the first time, and highlighting some of the problems they faced as a result of the novelty of their position and the peculiarities of the Elizabethan Church settlement.[[12]](#footnote-13) However, whilst Prior’s study highlights the novelty of bishops’ wives position and some of the social and legal difficulties they faced as a result of this, it offers a lot of scope for further research; posing far more questions than it effectively answers about the lived experience of bishops’ wives. Further, whilst indicating the early problems bishops’ wives faced, Prior does not attempt to explain or date any transition in their status, and concludes with an overwhelmingly negative assessment of their position, stating:

It is a paradox that those who first instituted clerical marriage recognized a new dignitity in the married state, not recognized in the medieval church, but the wives of the bishops themselves were socially and legally disadvantaged compared with other women, and rendered all but invisible in public life.[[13]](#footnote-14)

In an attempt to rectify this last issue, Peter Sherlock subsequently analysed the monuments of the women of the Barlow family in an attempt to date when and how public perceptions towards clerical marriage began to change. The Barlow family was notorious for the marriage of all five of Bishop Barlow’s daughters to men who would become bishops in the Elizabethan Church, and Barlow’s own remarkably early marriage in the 1530s.[[14]](#footnote-15) Through representing their subjects in ‘idealised words and images,’ Sherlock argues that these women’s monuments were able to retroactively define a respectable identity for clerical wives, and initiate a positive transformation in the public perception of the institution of clerical marriage.[[15]](#footnote-16) Sherlock argues persuasively that the women themselves were at the centre of this development, and demonstrates their agency in choosing to define their own identity through their monuments.[[16]](#footnote-17)

Sherlock’s use of material culture is very convincing and particularly important in light of a relative lack of more traditional sources related to episcopal wives. However, as Sherlock himself states, this strict focus on representation does not allow for any examination of women’s lived experience of clerical marriage.[[17]](#footnote-18) Further, whilst Sherlock’s focus on the Barlow family provides a coherent case study through which he presents his arguments and conclusions, a close focus on just one family is not enough to establish clear trends in the history of clerical marriage. Arguably he also over emphasises the significance of the Barlow monuments as a transition point in how clerical marriage was received in England.

This thesis will build on the foundations laid out in the work of Prior and Sherlock to provide the first full length study of bishops’ wives between 1549 and 1625. In its chronological scope and aims it will go much further than previous work, assessing the impact of clerical marriage from its inception, to a point at which it had been given time to develop . Studies of the institution of clerical marriage have often chosen to focus on narrow moments in its legal history, and particularly the argument about whether or not Elizabeth I was opposed to it.[[18]](#footnote-19) If bishops’ wives are mentioned at all, it is often only in anecdotal form, to either support or refute arguments about the development of clerical marriage, and Elizabeth’s supposed antipathy towards it.

In contrast, this thesis will chart all the key developments in the establishment of clerical marriage, and their impact on bishops’ wives. As far as the sources allow the lived experience of bishops’ wives themselves will always be at the centre of this study, which will endeavour to consider their motivations for marriage, as well as their agency within their new roles. Beyond simply reintegrating bishops’ wives into the history of clerical marriage in England, the long period of time covered in this thesis will also allow developments in the role of bishops’ wives to be fully considered. In the early years clerical marriage was intrinsically tied to the progress of the Reformation, with its acceptance or rejection correlating to wider developments in the English Church. As such bishops’ wives must initially be viewed through this lens, and their role in and contribution to the early reform movement considered. Their decision to marry a cleric ensured that bishops’ wives were not simply neutral or passive observers to the changes wrought by the Reformation, but actively involved in them as ‘agents of the Reformation.’[[19]](#footnote-20) Once the dust settled, however, and the Elizabethan settlement was given time to take hold, bishops’ wives could begin to establish themselves within their new roles and must then be considered as part of the office-holding class. This thesis will cover both elements, integrating bishops’ wives into narratives of female agency in the English Reformation, as well as assessing their social position as members of a new social group.

**“Agents of the Reformation”**[[20]](#footnote-21)

The first part of this thesis will primarily be concerned with reinstating clerical wives in narratives of the English Reformation. For a long time the Reformation’s impact on women has been judged by whether it brought positive or negative change to their lives.[[21]](#footnote-22) Questions have centred on the extent to which the elevation of women’s domestic role, advocated by reformers, translated into an increase in women’s status and educational opportunities; or whether, as Roper powerfully asserted, reformed theology limited women by imposing a restrictive patriarchal ideology, and failing to provide any alternative to the domestic model.[[22]](#footnote-23) More recently, Christine Peters has moved away from an assessment of what was lost or gained by women and argued that there was in fact considerable continuity between the late medieval and early modern age – with the increasingly Christocentric nature of late medieval parish religion, providing an important bridge to new Reformation understanding, and going some way towards mitigating the ‘loss’ of Mary and the female saints.[[23]](#footnote-24)

On the other side of the theological spectrum much work has been done on how women engaged with the Counter Reformation, with particular attention given to the spiritual movements led by Mary Ward and Teresa of Avila on the continent.[[24]](#footnote-25) In England the significance of English women to the Catholic recusant movement, and their membership of English convents in exile abroad, has also been highlighted.[[25]](#footnote-26) In spite of the Council of Trent’s stricture that female religious orders should be enclosed, many studies have emphasised the vitality of female orders and the scope women found to maintain contact with the outside world and exercise influence over their local communities.[[26]](#footnote-27) Equally, it has been noted that the Elizabethan Settlement, which only penalised male heads of households for not attending Prayer Book Services, enabled women to adopt organisational and leadership roles within English recusant communities.

It will be a major contention of this thesis that clerical marriage was a very active way in which women could engage with the Protestant Reformation, and a distinctive break from past practice. It was also an important part of the story of women’s experience of the early English Reformation, which has received fluctuating attention from historians. Until very recently the role of women in the Marian exile had been almost entirely overlooked, with Garret failing to provide a single female biography in her seminal inventory of over four hundred and fifty Marian exiles.[[27]](#footnote-28) Garret mentions women only briefly in the biographies of their male relations, with the result that Anne Hooper, a friend and correspondent of Heinrich Bullinger and an accomplished Latin scholar in her own right, receives just one line in the biography of her adolescent son. Her equally accomplished daughter, Rachel, the goddaughter of Bullinger, is missing entirely, and even Katherine Willoughby, the Dowager Duchess of Suffolk, and leading patron of the evangelical movement, can only be found through reference to her husband, Richard Bertie.

Although a number of other major studies on early Protestantism have similarly neglected the role of women, increasing work has been done to reassess their contribution and participation to both the Marian exile and the development and maintenance of evangelicalism in the reigns of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.[[28]](#footnote-29) Led by Patrick Collinson’s study of Anne Locke’s life and friendship with John Knox, there have since been a number of studies of other evangelical or godly women, largely focused on their epistolary relationships with Protestant divines and their role as ‘sustainers’ to imprisoned ministers.[[29]](#footnote-30) The important contribution played by elite women such as the Cooke sisters or Katherine Willoughby, to the development and maintenance of evangelicalism, through their appointment of godly chaplains, ecclesiastical patronage, and the education of their children and servants has also been noted.[[30]](#footnote-31)

However, despite the increased focus on women’s role in the English Reformation, episcopal wives are conspicuous largely by their absence. This is particularly striking given the nature of their relationships to the men responsible for shaping and implementing the religious settlement in England and the unique way in which the Reformation affected them. Whilst a number of aristocratic women demonstrated their evangelical convictions through epistolary relationships with Protestant divines, and ‘sustained’ imprisoned ministers during Mary’s reign, episcopal wives made a far greater commitment to their husbands and the reformed cause. They are a highly important but often neglected group in the story of Marian Protestantism. After Mary’s accession a number joined their husbands in exile abroad, or in hiding in England, while the wives of the three executed bishops faced even greater challenges.

Furthermore, whilst aristocratic women undeniably helped to advance the Reformation through their material contributions and influence over their households, episcopal wives were symbolic of the progress of the Reformationm their marriages representing a key reformed doctrine in practice. As a result of their husbands’ office, they came closer than any other women to the leadership of the established Church, which gave them a unique connection to it. Whereas Protestant theology advocated that every man must be a bishop in his own home, bishops’ wives lived with the real thing, in households that were part of the structure of the English Church.[[31]](#footnote-32) After the closure of the convents the post-Reformation English Church is often regarded as a male-only preserve. However, arguably clerical marriage brought a feminised influence back into the Church, with women occupying a central role in the episcopal households for the first time.

The neglect of English clerical wives is in stark contrast to the more substantial work that has been carried out on the wives of the continental reformers and the German clergy more generally. Marjorie Plummer has completed a highly significant study of clerical marriage in Germany, in which she argues that it is essential to attempt to understand the motivations behind women’s choice to marry clerics, as part of a wider endeavour to fully recognise women’s agency in the Reformation and to take their ‘actions and motivations...as seriously as those of men.’[[32]](#footnote-33) Plummer argues that this approach is particularly necessary in the case of clerical marriage, with the decision to marry a priest, ‘as much an act of rebellion for a pastor’s wife as it was for her husband,’ albeit ‘undertaken for reasons that often differed significantly from those of men.’ [[33]](#footnote-34) Plummer identifies numerous disincentives to marrying a priest, including social isolation, financial instability, as well as lingering doubts about the legitimacy of clerical marriage and any children born in such unions. As Plummer states, the extent to which these considerations would have affected a woman’s decision would have depended on her socio-economic background. In the case of former nuns or concubines, legal marriage to a cleric may have been an improvement on their former condition or their only viable option. However, for women of more secure social background and status, who had the chance to marry ‘under safer circumstances,’ motivations must have varied and require further interrogation.[[34]](#footnote-35)

While there are discrepancies between the chronology of the German and English Reformations and the structure of their respective reformed churches, Plummer’s approach can certainly be applied to a study of English episcopal wives. Many of the women who first married English bishops would have had the opportunity to marry ‘under safer circumstances,’ and their marriages exposed them to very real social, economic, and material deprivations, and in some cases separation from their natal families. In light of the risks they took to marry clerics, episcopal wives cannot be regarded as simply passive recipients of their husbands’ choice. The motivations behind their decision will be explored in chapter one and two, with evidence suggesting that religious conviction could be a motivating factor for women as well as men, alongside emotional attachment and the wishes of their natal family. What is clear is that clerical marriage marked a distinct break from past practice, and was initially a highly active way in which women could engage with the Reformation.[[35]](#footnote-36) As time progressed, however, marriage to a cleric became an increasingly less radical choice for women and this change will become apparent throughout the thesis.

Alongside Plummer’s influential study of German clerical wives, there has also been a more longstanding recognition of the wives of the early German reformers, with women such as Katherine von Bora, Wibrandis Bucer, and Katherine Zell attracting individual attention.[[36]](#footnote-37) Many of the early reformer’s wives had been former nuns and, as Wiesner states, they crossed one of society’s ‘most rigid borders by marrying,’ becoming ‘living demonstrations of their husbands’ convictions,’ and acting as local templates of Protestant piety.[[37]](#footnote-38) These women were expected to be models of ‘wifely obedience and Christian charity,’ and played an important domestic role, managing their husbands’ households and providing hospitality for the numerous students and refugees that flocked to their homes.[[38]](#footnote-39) This enabled the training of the next generation of Protestant clergy, and often required ingenious management of very limited resources.[[39]](#footnote-40) The significance of this role to the dissemination of Reformation ideas and the reform movement was recognised by Martin Bucer. In a letter to a fellow reformer he praised his wife, Wibrandis, previously married to both Oecolampadius and Capito, stating:

In past years she has really proven that she is not only pure, honourable, faithful, and godly, but also a diligent helper, who fruitfully made herself useful to the church and has a gift for ministry as for many years she demonstrated in her marriage to those two precious men of God, Oecolampadius and Capito.[[40]](#footnote-41)

Many of the reformers’ wives were well educated, taking part in theological discussions with their husbands, and this trend continued, with female literacy becoming a defining characteristic of a pastor’s wife.[[41]](#footnote-42) As the Reformation progressed pastors’ wives were also increasingly asked to be godmothers to children of all social statuses as well as deputising for their husbands at other events. This has led McLaughlin to state that ‘in effect, these women occupied a new church office without precedent, but with the potential for remarkable influence and impact...in effect they nearly doubled the clerical ranks.’[[42]](#footnote-43)

The wives of the continental reformers are particularly important to a study of English episcopal wives, with Prior noting that although the reformers were not bishops, their wives ‘provided the only pattern available’ for English bishops’ wives to follow.[[43]](#footnote-44) A number of Edwardian bishops married relatives of continental reformers, whilst other English women met the wives and families of the German and Swiss reformers during the Marian exile, and established friendships that endured long after their return to England. The wives of the continental reformers also offer an important point of contrast, with the development of the English Church and its retention of traditional hierarchies and structures, creating a very different environment in which English bishops’ wives had to negotiate their new roles. Although the theology of the English Church was altered by the Reformation and there was renewed emphasis on the role of the bishops in their dioceses, the structure and hierarchy of the English Church otherwise remained unchanged. The bishops continued to be important secular figures, and were expected to play a traditional role in local society; providing hospitality and living in a lordly fashion befitting their status.[[44]](#footnote-45) The role of a bishop’s wife was thus very different to that of a continental reformer’s wife. They had to adopt many of the secular functions and responsibilities of elite women, overseeing the management of the large episcopal households and estates which remained a part of the English Church.

**Elite women**

In light of their husband’s prominent social position, a study of episcopal wives also adds a new dimension to work focused on elite women. Throughout this thesis comparisons will be made to determine the extent of the similarities and differences between the role of bishops’ wives and that of other elite women. Prior first identified the anomaly that whilst bishops were equal in status to the nobility, with the archbishop of Canterbury taking precedence above all temporal peers, their wives had no equivalent titles and subsequently no place in the order of precedence.[[45]](#footnote-46) However, whilst this anomaly has been noted, its practical effects and the actual social circumstances of bishops’ wives have never been interrogated. If they did not bear a title, then bishops’ wives still lived in and presided over the expansive episcopal estates for the duration of their husband’s tenure; and the extent to which their lifestyles and roles either mirrored or contrasted with those of other elite women offers a rich area of study. It also places bishops’ wives within a context in which they have never before been viewed, as spouses of major office holders. Whilst there has been a lot of interest in how bishops’ roles were altered by the Reformation, the day to day life of bishops’ wives, their role in the episcopal households, and their place in wider society have never been explored.

Led by the work of Barbara Harris, there has been a significant reappraisal of the political role and agency of elite women in the Tudor period.[[46]](#footnote-47) Harris has demonstrated elite women’s ability to transcend what superficially appears to have been a spatially-confined domestic environment, through cultivating networks, engaging in gift exchange, and crucially playing an active part in ‘forming, maintaining, and exploiting patronage networks.’[[47]](#footnote-48) As centres of wealth and power, the great households presided over by elite women were inherently political, allowing them to have a significant influence over their locality.[[48]](#footnote-49) A growing number of studies have since been carried out on individual elite women, highlighting their ability to influence their local area and in some cases to act on the national stage.[[49]](#footnote-50) Elite women’s activities, such as female letter writing and correspondence networks, patronage and the importance of gift exchange, have also received attentiom.[[50]](#footnote-51) The political significance of hospitality amongst the elite has also been demonstrated by the work of Felicity Heal.[[51]](#footnote-52)

Lower down the social scale the agency of women within their respective social worlds has also been increasingly examined.[[52]](#footnote-53) However, exactly where clerical wives fit into secular society, and what their role entailed has yet to be addressed. It has been noted that the secular responsibilities expected of the bishops by the crown and laity remained relatively unchanged after the Reformation.[[53]](#footnote-54) Although the episcopate as a whole suffered from diminished financial resources, it was expected that the bishops would continue to maintain large households and play an important role in their local communities. This included dispensing hospitality and charity, and acting as a fount of local patronage in the form of offices and leases. The advent of clerical marriage and the need to make provision for legitimate families added to the bishops’ financial difficulties, and further jeopardised their ability to carry out their traditional role and live in the manner expected of them. There was no separation between ‘public’ and ‘private’ expenses, with the bishops forced to draw on the same revenues to support both their families and their official households.[[54]](#footnote-55) This of course left the bishops open to criticisms that they were promoting their families at the expense of their dioceses. They were also under pressure to conform to new Protestant expectations that bishops should act as godly superintendents, and were criticised from within Puritan quarters for living too opulently.[[55]](#footnote-56) Conversely, however, if they did not live magnificently or support their families in a style deemed appropriate by their gentry neighbours, they were also criticised, which made it very difficult for them to satisfy everybody’s expectations.[[56]](#footnote-57)

Aside from the financial burden of clerical marriage, one of the major innovations it wrought was the introduction of a female mistress into the formerly male-only episcopal residences for the first time. The extent to which bishops’ wives fulfilled similar functions to other elite women, and their social position within society, will be the focus of the second half of this thesis. Despite the reduced financial resources of the episcopate, the bishops remained some of the most important office holders in the country and Hembry’s study has demonstrated the enduring significance of their official homes.[[57]](#footnote-58) Although the primary function of episcopal residences was the provision of hospitality to the local elite, they also continued to play an important part in the life of the nation.[[58]](#footnote-59) After the dissolution of the monasteries they were some of the buildings capable of accommodating the court on progress, and they remained a popular destination for both Queen Elizabeth and King James.[[59]](#footnote-60) They also played host to visiting ambassadors and political prisoners, as well as continuing to serve as judicial and administrative centres.[[60]](#footnote-61) The multiple purposes for which episcopal residences were used ensured that they were made up of a diverse range of people including family members, domestic servants, ecclesiastical officials, chaplains and students. The extent to which bishops’ wives were able to carve out a role for themselves within these institutions has been challenged, with Prior stating that bishops’ wives had ‘remarkably little power in the Elizabethan episcopal palace, which continued to be run very much on the medieval pattern.’[[61]](#footnote-62) However, it will be argued that contrary to this bishops’ wives were in fact able to take up a leading role in their households and play a very similar role to other elite women. Beyond their homes bishops’ wives also found their place in local social networks, and whilst they were never welcomed at court, were otherwise accepted into elite circles in both London and the localities. They also formed part of new social networks forged between clerical families, who looked to each other for patronage and support.

Whilst on the whole this thesis will demonstrate that during their husbands term of office bishops’ wives operated in a similar fashion to other elite women, there were a number of notable differences. Like many of the post-Reformation bishops themselves, the majority of bishops’ wives came from relatively modest background. Their status was also entirely attached to their husband’s office, as opposed to the more solid foundations of hereditary titles, land and wealth. As chapter four will demonstrate the types of social networks clerical wives could engage with altered with their husbands’ promotions and the geographical location in which they found themselves. For example, bishops with a permanent London home had greater opportunities to engage with the aristocracy, increasingly based in London for portions of the year, than those who resided in remoter or poverty stricken dioceses. Bishops who were based in the same diocese for long periods of time would also have had more opportunity to integrate into local elite society, whilst those who resided primarily within residences close to their Cathedrals seem to have had close relationships with the families of other senior Cathedral clergy.

The widowhood of bishops’ wives was also a point of contrast with other elite women, and will be touched on in chapter five, alongside bishops’ wives preparations for death and their posthumous commemoration. Whereas elite widows could expect to gain greater control over their husband’s estates, with widowhood often regarded as a particularly autonomous period for elite women, bishops’ wives did not have the same relationship with the episcopal estates. The diocese belonged to the Church and after their husbands’ deaths bishops’ wives no longer had an active stake in it. However, through an examination of their wills and monuments it is clear that this did not prevent them from retaining links with their husbands’ former diocese, and a strong sense of their identity as a bishop’s widow. Several women chose to settle close to former episcopal residences during their widowhood, and requested to be buried in locations with strong links to their husbands’ former office.

**English clerical marriage**

In spite of the dearth of scholarship on clerical wives, there is a more substantial body of work on the legal and polemical history of clerical marriage in England, and its economic implications, which this study will engage with throughout. The legal history of clerical marriage is particularly important to this study, and provides the chronological basis for the first two chapters. The first clerical marriages had taken place in England during the 1530s, when reformers had anticipated that there would be more radical theological change after the break with Rome. However, they were disappointed and increasingly hostile legislation was passed against it, culminating in the 1539 Act of Six Articles, which ruled that clerical marriage was a felony, punishable by death. This remained in force until the accession of Edward VI in June 1547 when the Six Articles were revoked; though it would take until February 1549 before clerical marriage was approved by both Houses of Parliament and gained statutory status. In response to ongoing criticism a further Act had to be passed in March 1551, reinforcing the full legality of clerical marriage and the equal rights of clerical wives and children to inherit. Had this Act endured the legal status of clerical marriage would have been very secure. After Mary’s accession in 1553, however, her first Parliament revoked both Edwardian statutes and married clerics were forced to choose between renouncing their wives or being deprived of their livings; with much harsher action taken against the married bishops, who Mary held to be particularly culpable. With Elizabeth’s accession in 1558, a change in policy was once again expected – although Elizabeth initially alarmed the reformers by choosing not to put clerical marriage back onto a statutory basis. It was instead approved by an Injunction passed during the 1559 Royal Visitation, which explicitly affirmed the legality of clerical marriage, though with the proviso that all prospective clerical wives undergo a vetting process. This was followed by a set of Injunctions in 1561 which attempted to prevent clerical wives and children from living inside the precincts of cathedrals and colleges. However, these injunctions were rarely enforced and in spite of the potential misgivings of the Queen and the concerns of her bishops, clerical marriage remained an unchallenged feature of the Elizabethan Church, and was finally granted full statutory legitimacy by James I in 1603.[[62]](#footnote-63)

Building on the classic study by Lea, *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*, both Carlson and Parish have focused on the legal history of clerical marriage and the polemical controversy it generated.[[63]](#footnote-64) As part of his broader argument that the English Reformation failed to bring about as dramatic a transformation in attitudes to marriage and marriage law as occurred in Protestant Europe, Carlson has argued that clerical marriage in particular was never received with the same vigour and enthusiasm as it was on the continent.[[64]](#footnote-65) Challenging the ‘traditional’ argument that it was the royal conservatism of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I which stifled the adoption of clerical marriage in England, Carlson has argued that it was in fact the English clergy themselves who were to blame for its slow acceptance and for a failure to challenge the ‘celibate ideal.’[[65]](#footnote-66) Carlson argues that the early English reformers, had ‘virtually nothing positive’ to say about marriage, and defended it solely as a remedy to clerical fornication, rather than a positive force in itself.[[66]](#footnote-67) Forced to build on this ambivalent legacy Carlson argues that the Elizabethan clergy were not inhibited by Elizabeth I, whose attitude towards clerical marriage has been repeatedly misunderstood. He asserts that the injunctions and regulations she imposed on clerical marriage, as well as her refusal to grant it a statutory basis, arose from a desire to protect her Church from scandal, rather than any deep seated opposition to marriage or religious conservatism.[[67]](#footnote-68) Carlson further asserts that Elizabeth never discriminated against married bishops and that by 1563 clerical marriage was ‘a secure and unchallengeable feature of the Elizabethan Church.’[[68]](#footnote-69)

However, in contrast to Carlson’s work, a number of studies have emphasised the vitality of English criticisms of clerical celibacy, English interest in and sympathy with the works of continental reformers reappraising marriage, and the positive and enduring impact of the legalisation and practice of clerical marriage in the reign of Edward VI. Challenging Carlson’s contention that English polemicists were ambivalent towards marriage, Parish has argued that this is not supported by either their words or actions.[[69]](#footnote-70) A number of influential and married churchmen, including Thomas Cranmer, Miles Coverdale and John Ponet, produced treatises defending clerical marriage, and both Parish and Yost have highlighted the vehemence and intensity of the language and style used by reformers to criticise clerical celibacy and mandatory vows of chastity in their written works.[[70]](#footnote-71)

Spielmann’s study of clerical marriage in the reign of Edward VI and Mary I has also challenged Carlson’s bleak assessment of the impact of clerical marriage. Using surviving registers of married clerics Spielmann estimates that as many as 1,500 clergy may have married during Edward’s reign, a ‘rather more substantial number’ than Carlson acknowledges, given its short duration.[[71]](#footnote-72) Spielmann also argues that the usual assessment of the passivity of the majority of Tudor clergy in accepting the successive religious changes of the Reformation period needs some qualification in regards to clerical marriage. Although most clerics did submit to deprivation and separation from their wives and children in Mary’s reign, Spielmann argues that many would have remembered that their marriages had been fully legal in Edward’s reign, and that the harsh treatment they endured under Mary would not have altered this remembrance.[[72]](#footnote-73) He cites a number of examples of deprived priests, who despite having been restored to the priesthood, found ways to re-establish their relationships with their wives and to continue to support their children throughout Mary’s reign. Combined with the Marian regime’s inability to rapidly remove all married clergy, with deprivations occurring as late as December 1557, Spielmann asserts that these enduring relationships demonstrate that clerical marriage was not eradicated in Marian England, but rather ‘remained a fact or hope for some clergy.’[[73]](#footnote-74) Far from leaving an ‘ambiguous’ legacy to the Elizabethan Church, Speilmann asserts that ‘clerical marriage triumphed in Elizabeth’s reign because its legality and practice began in Edward’s reign.’[[74]](#footnote-75)

This thesis will incline towards a more positive assessment of the clergy’s commitment to clerical marriage, and argue that amongst the bishops at least the difficulties they endured during the early years of the English Reformation usually created very strong bonds between husbands and wives. It will also reintegrate bishops’ wives into the narrative of the legal history of clerical marriage, which has so far failed to consider how women were affected by and contributed to the development of clerical marriage in England, as well as setting the development of clerical marriage into an international context. Many of the first generations of Edwardian and Elizabethan bishops had spent time in exile where they met the families of the continental Protestant reformers, briefly aligning the English Church with the continental churches through very close personal relationships. Progressing past the early years of Elizabeth’s reign, it will also move beyond the controversy surrounding Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage, to examine how the position of episcopal wives actually evolved throughout her long reign and into the reign of James I. In contrast to the accession of previous Tudor monarchs, James I’s accession in 1603 did not lead to any mass resignations or expulsions amongst the bench of bishops, all of whom remained in their places. As chapters three, four and five will demonstrate this long period of stability allowed bishops’ wives to develop their roles and become fully integrated members of society.

**Sources**

As with any study focused on early modern women there are undoubtedly many obstacles to an attempt to reconstruct the life of an episcopal wife. Limited source material, particularly material that can be ascribed to the women themselves, is the most significant problem. However, all too often a lack of source material appears to have been taken for granted by historians, with the result that episcopal wives have been reduced to generalisations, anecdotes, or simply ignored completely. For example, in his chapter on Elizabeth I’s attitude to clerical marriage Brett Usher states that the limited source material on clerical wives necessitates the acceptance of ‘negative evidence’ as ‘positive evidence’ and concludes from this that most clerical wives were evidently ‘suitable, sober and entirely uncontroversial.’[[75]](#footnote-76) Hembry has also applied this approach to an examination of how the introduction of clerical families affected the episcopal palaces, stating that, ‘no doubt the majority of episcopal wives were devout women who behaved with decorum...easily absorbed’ into the fabric of the palaces.’[[76]](#footnote-77) Such attitudes wholly obscure women’s important contribution to the establishment of clerical marriage, and wrongly suggest that they were unaffected by the tumultuous religious changes and easily absorbed into existing structures. They also present a misleading impression of the sources available, as whilst there is no doubt that evidence is limited, and in some cases missing entirely, it can be found far more frequently and in more forms than previously acknowledged.

In total there were eighty four married bishops who held office between 1549 and 1625. Appendix one and two outline the basic biographical details of their wives and the dates of their marriages, where this information is known, whilst appendixes three, four and five show the distribution and timing of married bishops across the twenty one English dioceses. The marriages of bishops sometimes took place long before they were appointed to their sees, when they were relatively unknown, and in a number of cases not even the first name of a bishop’s wife survives. There are also other specific methodological problems with looking for bishops’ wives. In contrast to women from elite families, whose archives tend to be concentrated around their family estates or preserved within the state papers, episcopal wives can be harder to find. They were not part of dynasties and so there was no obvious reason for their families to preserve their correspondence, and the collections of letters which survive for their husbands in local or ecclesiastical archives tend to be mainly official in nature. They did not have a place at court, and so appear only infrequently in the state papers, and the nature of their husbands’ careers meant that they often moved several times and therefore did not usually leave concentrated records in any one place. Personal papers of the bishops, where records of their wives might be expected, are also not always well preserved and they are often not mentioned in the official dicosean records which are more prevalent. Finally there is also an imbalance of surviving source material towards the earlier part of the period when clerical marriage was more controversial, and as such attracted more attention. Amongst the higher echelons of the church, clerical marriage was often closely tied to a conversion to wider evangelical beliefs and many of the early bishops left some record of their motivations for marriage, either in the form of pamphlets or through the records of their interrogations under Mary.[[77]](#footnote-78) The tumult caused by the accession of Mary I in 1553 and the Protestant exile movement also generated more records, with the printed letter collections of the English exiles a particular rich source.[[78]](#footnote-79) Once clerical marriage became established, however, it subsequently attracted much less note and there is no equivalent body of letters for the later period.

However, it has been possible to find far more evidence of bishops’ wives than has ever been noted or drawn together in one place. Alongside the material evidence of monuments, identified by Sherlock, there is a range of more traditional written source material, including twenty wills, and a handful of letters both to and from episcopal wives, one of which has never before been printed and others which have been largely overlooked. When searching for archival material, the bishops themselves have always been the starting point. Whilst their wives are almost always absent from official diocesan records, maintained in local archives, their wills and any surviving collections of personal correspondence have been very useful and mined for any references or information about their wives. When details of their wives were established, every effort was made to search for any direct records of them within local and national archives, as well as to establish their family background through heraldic visitations and probate material. By far the most prevalent material that can be directly ascribed to them is their wills, of which twenty were found, as well as chancery material most often concerned with disputes about land ownership after their husbands’ deaths. Aside from the small number of letters written by bishops’ wives, these sources are the only others that can be directly ascribed to the women themselves. They are very useful in building up a picture of their social connections as well as their agency in defining their own identity in their wills and in fighting for their legal rights as their husbands’ widows and executors.

Exhaustive searches for more personal records of both bishops and their wives in local archives have also produced a small number of miscellaneous items such as household inventories, records of the godparents of bishops’ children and in the case of Bishop Bridgeman a remarkably detailed account book; all of which have been very useful in building up a picture of the lifestyle of bishops’ wives and their social connections. This study has also drawn on a number of printed letter collections of the English bishops, many of which were published by the Parker Society in the nineteenth century.[[79]](#footnote-80) Despite the ubiquity of these collections in Reformation studies and biographies of male reformers, they have been an underused source in relation to women and families. Both the *Zurich Letters* and the *Original Letters* evidence the strong relationships that existed not only between English bishops and their wives, but also between them and the families of their continental hosts during the exile; as well as the significance of family in general to the reformers.[[80]](#footnote-81) Other printed collections have also been consulted, with the letters of John Chamberlain as well as the diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, containing previously unnoticed references to bishops’ wives.[[81]](#footnote-82) It must be noted that this thesis does not provide a comprehensive discussion of contemporary printed material, such as polemical pamphlets or printed sermons, relying primarily on archival material and printed collections of primary sources.[[82]](#footnote-83) This was partly for reasons of timing and scale, and a prioritisation of sources which could be directly attributed to bishops’ wives, and which shed light on their lived experience. Such focus does leave room for further study, and there remains a gap in how bishops’ wives were popularly depicted. Future research could assess how bishops’ wives were represented in polemical treatises, both for and against clerical marriage, as well as assessing the extent to which there was an evolution in the public perception of their role. Surviving sources such as funeral sermons or book dedications would indicate how the position of bishops’ wives was more widely understood and the qualities that came to be publically associated with them. In the future more use could certainly be made of these types of sources, to combine an understanding of the lived experience of bishops’ wives with an analysis of how their public reputation developed.

***‘...in the time of her adversitie...’***[[83]](#footnote-84)

**Clerical Marriage in England c.1532-1559**

Although the German reformers had started to marry during the 1520s, the phenomenon of clerical marriage did not begin in England until the early 1530s. Emboldened by Henry VIII’s break with Rome, numbers of married priests began to increase, and included the future Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. However, official policy remained consistently hostile throughout Henry’s reign and in 1539 the *Act of Six Articles* ruled all existing clerical marriages void and that any subsequent breaches were to be treated as felonies, subject to the punishment of death. The accession of Edward VI in 1547 brought change, though delays through the House of Lords meant that it was not until 1549 that clerical marriage gained statutory status. Briefly enjoying the unequivocal support of both Convocation and Parliament clerical marriage was able to establish strong foundations, with eleven married bishops *in situ* by the end of the reign.[[84]](#footnote-85) The accession of Mary I in 1553, however, put an end to state sanctioned evangelicalism and heralded a time of adversity for the Edwardian reformers. Mary’s first Parliament saw the reversal of all ‘new thinges imagined and set forthe’ in the religious statutes passed during Edward’s reign, effectively ending the religious experiment of the last seven years.[[85]](#footnote-86) High on Mary’s agenda was the abolition of clerical marriage, which had been one of the most prominent and controversial reforms of the previous reign, and action was taken swiftly against the married bishops.

The central role of the married bishops themselves to these developments has been well recorded, from the dangerously early marriages of Thomas Cranmer and Bishop Barlow in the 1530s, to their individual responses to the accession of Mary I in 1553. As the leaders of the English Church the married bishops were held to be particularly culpable by Mary and were under immense pressure to conform to the new regime, or else face exile or martyrdom as the price of their defiance. Evidently these events also had a major impact on their wives and yet from John Foxe to modern historians their own experience of the turbulent years between 1532 and 1559 has been largely overlooked. This chapter will therefore seek to amend this neglect and establish the significance of bishops’ wives’ contribution to the development of clerical marriage in England, through their extraordinary decision to marry a bishop, and the unique way in which they were affected by and responded to the crisis caused by the accession of Mary I.

Whilst Mary’s accession was undoubtedly the greatest crisis faced by the married episcopate and their wives, the secret marriages contracted during Henry VIII’s reign also carried significant risks, and even during the relative security of Edward’s reign, the novel position of a bishop’s wife brought few certainties. The legality of clerical marriage remained in question throughout Edward’s reign and was not immediately resolved by the 1549 Act. Combined with ongoing popular hostility towards clerical marriage and the increasing financial difficulties of many of the dioceses, marriage to an Edwardian bishop would have brought few social or economic advantages. The first section of this chapter will assess the motivations behind these women’s decision to marry a bishop and how their family and religious background may have influenced their choice. In doing so it will follow the model set out by Plummer in her study of clerical marriage in the early German Reformation, in which she argues that due to the risks attached to clerical marriage the motivations of women must be taken as seriously as those of men, and their agency in the Reformation acknowledged.[[86]](#footnote-87) Secondly, the chapter will assess the lived experience of bishops’ wives during Edward’s reign, focusing on the challenges they faced and whether or not they were able to establish any precedents in their new roles. Both sections will build on the work of Prior, whose seminal chapter on Tudor bishops’ wives remains the only study to focus on them as a distinct group.[[87]](#footnote-88) However, whilst, Prior’s chapter is highly effective at signifying the emergence of bishops’ wives as a new group, its brevity means that it is not able to engage with these issues in any depth.

The final section will focus on how bishops’ wives were affected by and responded to the accession of Mary I through case studies of the wives of the three martyrs; those women who followed their husbands into continental exile; and briefly the wives of the three bishops who renounced their marriages and conformed to the Marian regime. While the quotation in the title refers specifically to the troubles faced by Margaret Cranmer, during the two and half years of her husband’s imprisonment, leading up to his execution in 1556, it is undoubtedly applicable to the situation faced by many bishops’ wives during the crisis years of Mary’s reign. This section will contest Prior’s assertion that the bishops’ wives who went into exile were inactive during Mary’s reign and argue that they played an important role in transmitting news and maintaining contacts within evangelical networks.[[88]](#footnote-89) It will also demonstrate that in spite of the brevity of Edward’s reign, clerical marriage had taken root in England, and created a legacy which the Marian regime was unable to reverse.

All three sections will contribute to the relatively limited scholarship on how women engaged with and participated in the early reform movement, with major gaps, particularly in women’s role in the Marian exile movement, still existing in the historiography of the period. Since Garret’s seminal inventory of over four hundred and fifty two Marian exiles, which failed to include a single female biography, there has been some attempt to reassess women’s contribution to the exile, and the development and maintenance of evangelicalism in the reign of Edward VI.[[89]](#footnote-90) However, within this small but important body of work, episcopal wives remain conspicuous largely by their absence, and there has been very limited study of individual women.[[90]](#footnote-91)

**“Agents of the Reformation:” women’s motivations for marriage**[[91]](#footnote-92)

One of the distinguishing features of the first generation of English bishops’ wives is that they came from a more diverse range of backgrounds than would later be common. Once the institution of clerical marriage had become more firmly established in the reign of Elizabeth I, marriage to a cleric became a much less radical thing to do. This reflects the novel nature of the institution and its fluctuating legal status between the 1530s and 1550s. As Plummer has demonstrated, this also occurred in the German towns and territories where it was not until the 1540s, when the Reformation had been more widely accepted, that clerical wives increasingly came from the middle classes.[[92]](#footnote-93) In previous decades, whilst the evangelical movement had remained in flux, they had been drawn from a far more diverse range of backgrounds, often with considerable social disparity between the couple. Plummer identifies that a large proportion of the first generation of clerical wives were marginal women such as former concubines or nuns.[[93]](#footnote-94) They would have had limited martial opportunities and may have regarded marriage to a cleric as preferable to their current condition.[[94]](#footnote-95) However, they also included women from more secure social backgrounds, who, as Plummer states, would likely have had the opportunity to marry in much safer circumstances and avoid the social and economic difficulties that marriage to a cleric entailed.[[95]](#footnote-96) In such cases women were evidently driven by different motivations, ranging from personal conviction to pressure from families keen to demonstrate public allegiance to the Reformation.[[96]](#footnote-97) Plummer highlights the necessity of recognising and understanding the broad spectrum of women’s motivations, arguing that they must be regarded as ‘agents of the Reformation and their actions and motivations taken as seriously as those of men.’[[97]](#footnote-98) Their decision to marry a cleric was as much an ‘act of rebellion’ for them as it was for their husbands, and although not always based on the same level of religious conviction, nevertheless contributed to the reform movement.[[98]](#footnote-99) As Plummer states, every clerical wedding represented a challenge to accepted social and legal norms and forced local communities to make decisions about wider evangelical teachings.[[99]](#footnote-100) In accepting the risks that came with the new role of a pastor’s wife women helped bring about social and religious change and became living representatives of the progress of the reform movement.[[100]](#footnote-101)

A consideration of the potential motivations behind the first generation of English bishops’ wives decision to marry a cleric along the lines of Plummer’s study is certainly necessary. Like the leaders of the German Reform movement, the marriages of the Edwardian bishops were influential in setting an example to the lower orders of the clergy. However, while the wives of the German reformers have increasingly received more attention in their own right, and been factored more heavily into biographies of their husbands, Edwardian bishops’ wives have remained neglected and presented as simply the ‘passive recipients of their husbands’ choice.’[[101]](#footnote-102) It is undoubtedly much harder to recover the motivations of bishops’ wives and early modern women in general, with a lack of written evidence often the main problem. The unprecedented nature of clerical marriage and its turbulent legal history meant that the majority of married bishops left some form of written explanation of the rationale behind their marriages, either in polemical pamphlets or the records of the Marian trial proceedings against them.[[102]](#footnote-103) Although these records can be problematic as they were often written for a specific purpose or audience, and in the case of the trial proceedings under very difficult circumstances, they are nevertheless useful in understanding how, at least publically, men wanted to justify their decisions. In contrast very few women in the early Reformation period left any record of their spiritual beliefs or what had influenced them in making decisions about their faith. On the continent, Katherine Zell, the wife of a prominent Lutheran pastor, did publish a biblical defence of clerical marriage, although unfortunately this was highly unusual and there is no English equivalent.[[103]](#footnote-104) However, it is still possible to make some inferences and distinctions between the different women who first married English bishops through examining their social and family background, the timing and context of their marriages, as well as the limited written source material available.

Although in the absence of written sources it is much harder to identify religious conviction as the primary motivation behind women’s choice to marry a cleric, it must nevertheless be regarded as a serious aspect of many of the first generation of bishops’ wives’ decision; and particularly those who married before the official legalisation of clerical marriage in February 1549. Whilst this action in their husbands has always been closely linked to the development of their reformed beliefs and desire to demonstrate their commitment to the reform movement, the extent to which their wives shared their commitment or belief has rarely been considered. However, in some cases such as Margasret Cranmer, Anne Hooper, and Elizabeth Coverdale, a level of religious conviction cannot be doubted. All three women were related to continental reformers, either through marriage or blood, and both Anne Hooper and Elizabeth Coverdale were religious exiles in their own right, having fled from Belgium and Scotland respectively before their marriages in the 1540s. Before her very early marriage to Thomas Cranmer in the summer of 1532, Margaret Cranmer had been a resident of the Lutheran city of Nuremberg where she lived in the household of her uncle, Andreas Osiander, who was a prominent theologian and reformer.

It is also important to consider the emotional dimension of women’s decision to marry a cleric, and the potential emotional cost if it involved separation from their natal families. Most people married in their best interests and to preserve their social and economic status. Where it can be seen that women made an autonomous choice to marry against these interests, then strong emotional attachment can be considered as a motivating factor; and there is evidence that some of the early bishops’ marriages were highly companionate and based on mutual affection. As will be demonstrated, many Edwardian bishops’ wives showed considerable loyalty to their husbands, accompanying them into exile during Mary’s reign and taking steps to preserve their legacy.

The link between the bishops’ decision to marry and their subscription to a wider set of evangelical beliefs is often much easier to establish. The association between Cranmer’s marriage and the development of his reformed opinions has always been highlighted by his biographers, with MacCulloch describing it as a ‘watershed in his thinking,’ and an uncharacteristically ‘drastic step’ given the risks that were involved.[[104]](#footnote-105) Cranmer had previously been married, while still a student at Cambridge University, to a girl known only as Joan. Despite not yet being ordained Cranmer had been forced to give up his fellowship at Jesus College, although after his wife’s early death in childbed he had been readmitted and went on to study theology, taking holy orders at some point before 1520.[[105]](#footnote-106) The circumstances of Cranmer’s second marriage to Margaret in 1532 were very different, and as MacCulloch states he gambled with far higher stakes.[[106]](#footnote-107) By this point Cranmer held an important position in the king’s service as ambassador to the court of Charles V, and having taken an official vow of celibacy, committed a crime through his second marriage. Just how much Cranmer had gambled would become evident only a few months later when, whilst still abroad on his diplomatic mission, he was informed that he had been chosen as the new Archbishop of Canterbury and recalled to England.

There were evident risks attached to Cranmer’s decision to marry, but as Mary Prior has highlighted, it is important to remember that these risks applied ‘to both husband and wife,’ and to try and understand what considerations made Margaret a willing bride.[[107]](#footnote-108) Cranmer had met Margaret through his friendship with the prominent Lutheran theologian, Andreas Osiander, who was married to Margaret’s aunt, Katherine Preu, and who Cranmer stayed with during his time in Nuremberg.[[108]](#footnote-109) Osiander had been ordained in 1520 and had very rapidly joined the Lutheran party. He played a significant part in the city of Nuremberg’s adoption of the Reformation in 1525 and cemented his reformed credentials by marrying Katherine Preu the same year.[[109]](#footnote-110) Although there is no record of Margaret’s feelings about her marriage, her residence in the Lutheran city of Nuremberg and specifically the household of her uncle Osiander, would have meant that she was very familiar with Lutheran doctrine and the practice of clerical marriage. However, the religious situation in England was very different and Cranmer was initially forced to leave Margaret behind in Germany, whilst he continued with his diplomatic mission. It is likely that she joined Cranmer in England shortly after his appointment as Archbishop, although his new position required that their marriage be kept a close secret, something the couple evidently achieved in spite of the birth of at least one child. There is no mention of Margaret throughout the 1530s either by Cranmer’s friends or more significantly his enemies, who would surely have used this against him had they known about the nature of his relationship.[[110]](#footnote-111)

It has been suggested that Margaret may have lived at Ford, one of the more remote archiepiscopal palaces, located in the small village of Hoath, six miles outside of Canterbury.[[111]](#footnote-112) This is based on a much later inventory of the property, taken after Cranmer’s arrest in 1553, which listed the contents of ‘his [Cranmer’s] wife’s chamber.’[[112]](#footnote-113) It is also likely that the couple were protected by Henry VIII, who almost certainly knew about the relationship, as well as by existing legislation regarding clerical marriage which stated that prosecution applied only to known marriages.[[113]](#footnote-114)However, the situation was altered by the passage of the Act of Six Articles in 1539, which imposed much stricter sanctions on clerical marriage, and highlighted the precarious nature of Margaret’s position in England. Cranmer publically opposed the Articles in the House of Lords, and according to Archbishop Parker sent Margaret and their children back to Germany after their adoption.[[114]](#footnote-115) It is unclear if Margaret returned to England before the death of Henry VIII, although it seems unlikely given the story included in Parker’s *Antiquatate*, and highlighted by Prior, in which Henry VIII challenged Cranmer on the Six Articles and asked him whether ‘his inner or privie bed were free from those articles.’[[115]](#footnote-116) Although Henry was apparently satisfied with Cranmer’s response, it seems unlikely that he would have so flagrantly jeopardised his position and he did not publically acknowledge Margaret until the beginning of the reign of Edward VI.

By this time, the couple had already been married for fifteen years, during which they had proven their commitment to each other through long periods of separation. Although there are no surviving records that reveal how either felt about their marriage, Cranmer’s revision of the marriage service for the 1549 Prayer Book has been regarded as evidence of the strength and success of his own marriage.[[116]](#footnote-117) For the first time, the service stated that alongside procreation and the prevention of sin, marriage had also been ordained for ‘the mutual society, help, and comfort that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.’[[117]](#footnote-118) The couple also promised to love and cherish each other ‘for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health,’ until death parted them.[[118]](#footnote-119) Prior has noted that these words must have been written in ‘light of the couple’s love for each other,’ while MacCulloch argues that it is very unlikely that an unmarried celibate cleric would have made these provisions.[[119]](#footnote-120) The changes to the service can be seen as a concrete way in which clerical marriage influenced the character of the emerging Church of England, as well as the personal influence of Margaret on her husband.[[120]](#footnote-121)

Alongside Margaret Cranmer, both Anne Hooper and Elizabeth Coverdale also had links to important figures in the continental reform movement. There are a number of striking parallels between the two women, most significantly the fact that they were both religious exiles in their own right before they married, and came from noble families. Foxe describes Anne Hooper, née de Tscerlas, as a ‘Burgonso woman born, and of great parentage.’[[121]](#footnote-122) In exile she was attached to the household of the Dutch Lord, Jacques de Bourgogne, seigneur de Falais, a distant relation of Charles V and a close correspondent of Calvin.[[122]](#footnote-123) Calvin had encouraged Falais and his wife to leave the Netherlands in 1543, and although they had initially set out to join him in Geneva they ended up temporarily settling in Strasburg, where Anne met her fellow exile and future husband John Hooper.[[123]](#footnote-124) Hooper was a former monk, who had entered a Cistercian monastery in 1519, remaining there until its suppression in 1537. He had then entered the service of Sir Thomas Arundell, where he encountered the works of Bullinger and Zwingli, which had a profound impact on him and dramatically altered the course of his life, forcing him to leave England first in 1539 and again in 1544.[[124]](#footnote-125) While Hooper’s first exile was spent in Paris, he went secondly to Strasburg, where he established connections with some of the leading continental reformers and a close and enduring friendship with Bullinger. It is unclear exactly when the couple married, but it seems likely that it was shortly after Hooper’s return from a brief visit to England in the early part of 1546. As Hooper described in a letter to Bullinger, the purpose of his visit was to try to retrieve a portion of his inheritance from his father, who he feared may otherwise leave him with nothing as he was ‘so opposed’ to his religious views.[[125]](#footnote-126) The trip carried a number of risks, and it appears that Hooper travelled alone, although by December 1546 he was definitely back on the continent and married, including greetings from his wife in a warm letter to Bullinger sent from Basle.[[126]](#footnote-127)

Although they may have delayed their marriage until after Hooper’s return from England, the couple had already met before his departure. In the same letter to Bullinger informing him of his plans to make the trip, Hooper had described meeting ‘two sisters of noble family,’ in the household of Richard Hilles, ‘the younger of whom named Anna is exceedingly favourable to true religion,’ and whom he hoped Bullinger would soon meet.[[127]](#footnote-128) It is highly likely that this was his future wife given Foxe’s description of Anne’s parentage and the fact that she had a sister who went on to marry the influential reformer, Valerand Poullain, in Zurich, in January 1548. Through their marriages the two sisters became further integrated into the networks of continental reformers based in Zurich and Geneva, and travelled extensively with their husbands on the continent, before settling in England during the reign of Edward VI. Very little is known about their family, although it appears that the sisters were living independently from them and had made an autonomous decision to go into exile for their religious beliefs, an option which was very rarely available to women. This can be confirmed by a letter from Hooper to Bullinger, written from Antwerp in May 1549. Hooper recounted how after Easter his wife had written to her mother, who after receiving the letter, her father being dead, had passed it to her son to read, ‘who immediately threw it into the fire without reading it.’[[128]](#footnote-129) Hooper concluded by stating that ‘you see the words of Christ are true, that the brother shall persecute the brother for the sake of the word of God,’ suggesting that like Hooper, the two sisters had gone against their natal family to pursue their religious beliefs.[[129]](#footnote-130)

It was certainly not in either the financial or social interest of the two sisters to marry clerics, and in light of their autonomous decision to leave their privileged lives and chose voluntary exile, as well as Hooper’s description of Anne’s beliefs, religious conviction must be considered as a serious aspect of their decision. It is also possible that they were motivated by a desire to be involved in the intellectual leadership of the reform movement. Anne is by far the most well documented Edwardian bishop’s wife thanks to the survival of so many of Hooper’s letters, and uniquely a number of letters written by Anne herself to the couple’s mutual friend, Heinrich Bullinger.[[130]](#footnote-131) Anne’s own letters, which are written in Latin, demonstrate that she was highly educated, and throughout her marriage she maintained a separate correspondence with Bullinger, as well as passing on letters to and from her husband. During the couple’s two year residency in Zurich between 1547 and their return to England in 1549 they were immersed in the intellectual reform community based there. From subsequent letters sent after their departure for England it is clear they established a number of warm and enduring friendships with many of Zurich’s ‘learned men’ and their wives and found great personal satisfaction in them.[[131]](#footnote-132) The couple’s daughter, Rachel, was born in Zurich in 1547, and they ensured that she had a lasting connection to the Swiss churches by appointing Bullinger and the wife of Theodore Bibliander as her ‘sponsors.’[[132]](#footnote-133) The couple frequently referred to this connection in their correspondence with Bullinger, and Hooper described how Anne often spoke to Rachel of the place she was born and ensured she was instructed in the baptismal promises made on her behalf.[[133]](#footnote-134) Anne’s relationship with her sister and brother-in-law Valerand Poullain was also very significant. At some point after Hooper’s arrest and imprisonment in 1553, Anne was persuaded by her husband and their friends to leave the country with her children. Despite an offer from Bullinger to return to Zurich, Anne decided to join her sister in , where Poullain was leading the English exile church.

Elizabeth Coverdale née Macheson is the third Edwardian bishop’s wife to have notable continental connections and shared a number of traits with Anne Hooper. She is described as coming from a noble family in Scotland, and in a direct parallel to Anne, fled her native country with her sister, Agnes. The pair came to England, where Agnes married John Macalpine (also known as John Machaebues), a former Dominican friar who had been forced to leave Scotland in August 1534, and went on to become an influential Protestant reformer and chaplain to King Christian III of Denmark.[[134]](#footnote-135) Whilst in England, Macalpine became a chaplain to Nicholas Shaxton, the evangelical bishop of Salisbury in 1535 and was granted a prebendary in Salisbury cathedral in 1538. Shaxton was involved in the early reform movement in England, and rose under to prominence under the patronage of Anne Boleyn. He was also a married man and like Cranmer had taken a ‘calculated risk’ to marry during the religious confusion of the 1530s, only to be proved wrong by the passage of the Act of Six Articles in 1539.[[135]](#footnote-136) In protest, both Shaxton and Hugh Latimer, bishop of Worcester, made the unprecedented decision to resign their bishoprics. After a brief period in which his movements and preaching were limited, Cranmer provided Shaxton with a living in Hadleigh, where he lived quietly with his family for several years. However, in 1546, Shaxton once again became embroiled in religious controversy when he supported the radical preacher Dr Crome and delivered his own sermon denying Christ’s presence in the sacrament of the altar. He was arrested and condemned to be burnt, but was persuaded to recant and formally put aside his wife.

Macalpine did not follow the more risky path of his patron, Shaxton, and soon after the passage of the Act made plans to leave England for Saxony, departing with his wife Agnes in 1540. It is likely that Elizabeth had been living with her sister and brother-in- law up until her own marriage to Coverdale at some point during 1540, after which they left England for Strasburg. Coverdale was an early convert to reformed ideas and had previously been forced to leave England in 1528 after preaching a series of radical sermons. He had returned as the reforming party were making headway in 1535, and was involved in Cromwell’s initiative to print an English bible for every parish. However, after the collapse of the reform party, he evidently felt that like his new brother-in-law, Macapline, it was no longer safe to remain in England and he departed for Strasburg with Elizabeth. Although very little is known about the backgrounds of Elizabeth and Agnes Macheson, it can be safely assumed that similarly to Anne Hooper and her sister, their decision to marry exiled clerics was by no means an obvious or expedient choice. They had already made a declaration of their religious beliefs by choosing to leave Scotland and through their residence in England would have been fully aware of the instability of the religious situation and the risks attached to their decision. Their marriages were undoubtedly as much an ‘act of rebellion’ for them as they were for their husbands, and something for which they were prepared to go into a second exile .[[136]](#footnote-137)

During her exile on the continent, Elizabeth, like Anne, was immersed in the intellectual reform community. On their initial arrival in Strasburg, Elizabeth and Coverdale were met by Calvin’s wife, Idelette de Bure, placing their arrival in the city at some point after August 1540, when Calvin’s marriage took place.[[137]](#footnote-138) Throughout the Calvins’ nine year marriage, Idelette, similarly to Wibrandis Bucer, devoted herself to helping her husband’s ministry and welcoming religious refugees into her home.[[138]](#footnote-139) It seems that she assisted the Coverdales in setting up in Strasburg and in a later letter to Calvin, dated 26 March 1548, informing him of his imminent departure back to England, Coverdale asked Calvin to ‘affectionately salute your wife, who deserved so well from me and mine; when we went up to Strasbourg.’[[139]](#footnote-140) Whilst in Strasbourg the couple became well acquainted with Conrad Hubert, Martin Bucer’s secretary, and his family. Hubert successfully recommended Coverdale to the position of assistant minister and the Headmaster of a boys’ school in his home town of Bergzabern, where the Coverdales lived between 1543 and 1548. Surviving correspondence from this period shows the strength of the friendship between the two families, and the seemingly particularly close friendship between Hubert’s wife, Margaret, and Elizabeth Coverdale. Coverdale often included warm greetings from his wife, and Elizabeth made an independent visit to stay with the Hubert’s in Strasbourg after the birth of one of Margaret’s children.[[140]](#footnote-141) The Coverdale’s also entertained Bucer, when he made a visit to inspect the church at Bergzabern, and regularly dined with the local prelate and his wife. Writing to Hubert about one such occasion, Coverdale described how over the course of dinner the subject of sacred ministry had arisen. Coverdale stated that he would have been glad to say something on the subject ‘but the wife of the prefect pleaded the cause of the Lord with such dexterity, that it was needless for me to say anything,’ providing a glimpse of the highly educated milieu in which the Coverdales lived.[[141]](#footnote-142) In a final parallel to Anne Hooper, the couple’s connection to Elizabeth’s brother-in- law, John Macalpine, would also later prove to be very significant. After the accession of Mary I, Coverdale’s well known reformed credentials ensured that he was a key target of the new regime and he was very rapidly called before the council in London, before being placed under house arrest in Exeter. It is likely that he was only spared a worse fate through the intervention of King Christian III of Denmark, who at the request of Macalpine, petitioned Mary for Coverdale’s release and safe passage to Denmark.

Whilst all three women related to continental reformers married their husbands before the official legalisation of clerical marriage in England, they were not the only ones to do so. Alongside Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Shaxton, it is almost certain that William Barlow, at that time bishop of St David’s, married Agatha Wellesbourne during the 1530s. Although there are limited details about Agatha herself, her marriage to Barlow has attracted attention due to its early date and endurance through all four Tudor reigns until Barlow’s death in 1568. It is also notable for its creation of the first episcopal dynasty, with all five of the Barlows’ daughters famously married to men who would become Elizabethan bishops.[[142]](#footnote-143) Although there is no official record of the couple’s marriage it has been dated back to the reign of Henry VIII on account of the large number of children born to the couple by the 1550’s. A family tree created by the couple’s daughter Frances Matthew in 1595 shows they had produced no less than twelve children by 1555.[[143]](#footnote-144) As Sherlock has highlighted this indicates that their relationship must have started in the mid-1530s, most likely before Barlow became a bishop in 1536 and certainly before the Act of Six Articles in 1539.

In contrast with the foreign-born wives of Cranmer, Hooper and Coverdale, Agatha was from an English gentry family; the youngest daughter of Humphrey Wellesbourne of Bustlesham Montagu, who had served as the mayor of High Wycombe. Sherlock has speculated that the couple may have met through a mutual connection to the parish of Bisham Berkshire, where Agatha’s family lived.[[144]](#footnote-145) Barlow was appointed as a prior there in April 1535, by which time he was already described as a ‘fervent reformer.’[[145]](#footnote-146) To make such an extraordinary marriage, and one that would survive the vicissitudes of religious reform until Barlow’s death in 1568, it is almost certain that Agatha must have shared some of Barlow’s reformed opinions. At the very least she must have been prepared to put aside traditional church teachings on clerical marriage to allow her to enter into a union with an ordained cleric and former Augustinian canon. There is unfortunately no evidence to indicate the religious sympathies of the rest of Agatha’s family. Agatha’s father died in 1517 and whilst his will is filled with legacies to numerous religious orders and institutions, from the local priory to Sion Abbey and the Charterhouse in London, this is not surprising given the date.[[146]](#footnote-147) There is no evidence about how the family’s opinions may have developed over the next twenty years, before Agatha’s marriage to Barlow, or their response to it. If the marriage did take place in the mid-1530s the couple may have been encouraged by the success of the reform party as well as Barlow’s own rising career under the patronage of Anne Boleyn. However, like all who had risked this step early, the couple would undoubtedly have been concerned by the Act of Six Articles. Although Barlow did oppose several of the clauses of the Act, including the statement that clerical celibacy was a divine ordinance, he did not resign his bishopric and his career was seemingly unaffected. There is no evidence that he was forced to send Agatha away and Sherlock has calculated that a number of the couple’s eldest children were born before 1547, indicating that in contrast to the Cranmers their marriage continued unbroken and undetected throughout the duration of Henry VIII’s reign. The diocese of St David’s was certainly far less prominent than Canterbury and its geographical remoteness from London may have made it considerably easier for Barlow to hide his wife or conceal her true position in his household.

The women who married priests during the reign of Henry VIII undoubtedly shared in the significant risk taken by their husbands, and ultimately had to endure exile and separation as a result of their decision. While the marriages of Cranmer, Hooper, Coverdale and Barlow survived into Edward’s reign, the fate of the Shaxton’s marriage in 1546, demonstrates the fragility of their position. Confronted with imprisonment and death, Shaxton chose to conform to the Henrician regime and put aside his wife, foreshadowing the challenges faced by all Edwardian bishops and their wives on the accession of Mary I in 1553. However, with the death of Henry VIII in 1547 the serious risks attached to clerical marriage receded and reformers would have had reason to feel confident about the future. Although the judicial legalisation of clerical marriage was not completed until February 1549, due to delays through the Lords, it had received strong support from both the Commons and Convocation as early as December 1547. The Act of Six Articles was also revoked by Edward’s first parliament, removing the worst penalties against clerical marriage. Although still technically illegal no action was ever taken to enforce this or prevent married men from receiving ecclesiastical appointments or promotions. A number of reformers, including several of the Edwardian bishops, did not wait until the official legalisation of clerical marriage and took advantage of the changed situation to marry at the earliest opportunity.

However, although in this case the reformers were rewarded with the outcome they had hoped for, official legalisation of clerical marriage in 1549 did not alter prevailingly negative attitudes towards it. As Plummer has stated, clerical marriage represented a challenge to established social and legal norms, and was not something communities automatically welcomed.[[147]](#footnote-148)In 1551 the Edwardian regime was forced to pass a second Act specifically enforcing the legitimacy of clerical wives and children and their rights to inherit. It stated that since the last act ‘divse evill disposed persons’ had claimed clerical marriage had only been permitted ‘for the eschewing of greater inconvenience and eville,’ and ‘in the opynion of manye,’ priests’ children should be ‘accompted as Bastarde’ rather than ‘laufullie borne.’[[148]](#footnote-149) The conservative priest Robert Parkyn, who was active in the parish of Adwick-le-Street in the diocese of York, certainly held these views and like other conservative commentators regarded clerical marriage as equal to if not worse than concubinage. In his account of the Reformation in his parish, Parkyn recorded how the same ‘vilanus persons’ who denied the mass decreed that it was lawful for priests to marry women:

Usynge tham as ther wyffes, wich was veray pleasanntt to many, for thay were maryede in veray deyde both byschopps & other inferiowres, beynge so blyndide with carnall con-cupiscens thatt thay prechide& tawghtt the people oppenly, that it was lawfull so to do by God's law, and enactyde the sayme.[[149]](#footnote-150)

In particular, Parkyn criticised the marriage of the Archbishop of York, Robert Holgate for ‘gyffinge suche lewde exemple,’ and frequently referred to the wives of the bishops and priests as ‘whores’ and ‘harlots,’ taking great pleasure in examples of the laity mocking married priests.[[150]](#footnote-151) John Hooker’s chronicle of Exeter also demonstrates the ongoing public hostility towards clerical marriage. After describing Coverdale’s extensive work in his diocese Hooker lamented that in spite of his dedication, ‘the common people (whose old Bottles would receive no new wine) did not love him or like him, because he was a Preacher of the Gospel, an enemy to Popery, and a married man.’[[151]](#footnote-152)

In spite of increasing official support, these attitudes suggest that marriage to a bishop during Edward’s reign, would still not have been the most obvious or expedient choice for many women. Bishops’ prominent positions ensured that their marriages came under greater public scrutiny, and offered limited social, economic and legal security in return. As Prior has highlighted the social position of bishops’ wives was complicated by their lack of title.[[152]](#footnote-153) Whilst the bishops ranked as peers, with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York second only to the monarch in orders of precedence, and entitled to be addressed as ‘your grace,’ bishops’ wives were never granted any corresponding title, and remained simply addressed as ‘Mrs.’ For the women who married before the official legalisation of clerical marriage in February 1549, there may also have been an element of doubt about the legitimacy of their union. It is almost certain that a number of the more evangelical bishops including Henry Holbeach, John Ponet, and Robert Ferrar, married before the official legalisation of clerical marriage. Whilst there were no immediate repercussions of this decision, their wives would still have had to have been willing to put aside all traditional religious teaching and accepted social conventions, at a time when the institution’s legality remained officially unconfirmed.

Although there is no official record of the marriages of either Henry Holbeach, bishop of Lincoln, or Robert Ferrar, bishop of St David’s, both are estimated to have married before the official legalisation of clerical marriage in February 1549, on account of the number of children born to them by the summer of 1551. Both men were former monastics, who had been introduced to reformed ideas at an early stage and had links to leading reformers. Through the patronage of Thomas Cranmer and Hugh Latimer, Holbeach had secured successive positions before his appointment as the bishop of Rochester in 1544 and bishop of Lincoln in 1547, whilst William Barlow personally recommended Ferrar to be his successor as the bishop of St David’s in 1548.[[153]](#footnote-154) Ferrar had previously been the prior of Nostell, but after its suppression in 1539 had lived as a gentleman farmer on a piece of land purchased in his native Yorkshire.[[154]](#footnote-155) Unfortunately very little information survives about either of the men’s wives to allow for any speculation about their motivations, although it is possible that they would have been encouraged by their future husbands’ current favour with the Church elite. All that is known about Ferrar’s wife is that she was called Elizabeth, and whilst it has been plausibly suggested that she came from Yorkshire on account of Ferrar’s residence there during the 1540s, no conclusive evidence supports this.[[155]](#footnote-156) By the summer of 1551 the couple had three children who they named, Samuel, Sage and Griffith. As Ferrar was adamant that his eldest son, Samuel, was ‘begotten and born in honest marriage,’ a marriage date before February 1549 seems likely.[[156]](#footnote-157)

The wife of Holbeach, is listed in the Lincolnshire Pedigrees as Joan Mannet, daughter of Richard Manett, but this is unfortunately all that is known about her natal family.[[157]](#footnote-158) It has been speculated that Joan and Holbeach were married as early as 1544, and they were certainly married before February 1549, with two children, Judith and Thomas mentioned in Holbeach’s will in August 1551.[[158]](#footnote-159) If the marriage had taken place before Edward’s accession, then like Agatha Barlow, Joan must have been willing to risk marriage to a cleric at a time when it was still a criminal offence. Even after Edward’s accession, both Joan and Elizabeth Ferrar must have felt confident enough of the changing religious situation to marry before it was officially legal to do so, suggesting some awareness of the religious controversies being debated and conviction in the outcome. Uniquely, as a result of Holbeach’s death in the summer of 1551 Joan benefited from the positive laws of Edward VI’s reign and unlike many other bishops’ wives, whose husbands struggled to make adequate provision, was left well provided for. Holbeach also made provision for his daughter, Judith, and son Thomas Randes, who went on to have a successful career in the Church under Elizabeth I as the Archdeacon of Lincoln. At some point after Holbeach’s death, Joan remarried a local Lincolnshire gentleman, John Tournay of Caenby, whose family was also entitled to bear arms.[[159]](#footnote-160) Tournay’s first wife, Cecily, was a co-heir to her father, Sir George Tolboys, and the widow of Sir William Ingleby. His willingness to take Joan as his second wife is surely testament to her unusually secure financial position and his own lack of concern about marrying a bishop’s widow.[[160]](#footnote-161) In 1553, Tournay and Joan were both named on a teller’s bill as Holbeach’s executors, and are recorded as having paid £17 16s. 8d., for the temporalities of the see.[[161]](#footnote-162) Had Holbeach lived, Joan’s situation may have been very different. As a former monastic Holbeach would have been deprived alongside Ferrar, Bird, Bush and Holgate in March 1554, and as a known reformer, he may also have faced imprisonment and the confiscation of his lands, if not execution if he had proved recalcitrant.[[162]](#footnote-163)

In contrast to Holbeach and Ferrar, official evidence for the early marriage of John Ponet survives in the form of a dispensation for him and his first wife to eat meat issued by Cranmer’s faculty office on 4 December 1548.[[163]](#footnote-164) MacCulloch has described this document as potentially ‘the first routine administrative mention of clerical marriage in the English Church,’ and it is testament to the strong relationship between Cranmer and Ponet.[[164]](#footnote-165) Ponet had served as Cranmer’s chaplain and had been granted a number of positions by him before his appointment as the bishop of Rochester in March 1550 and bishop of Winchester in March 1551. Ponet was a strong advocate of clerical marriage and in 1549 published a treatise in defence of it which he dedicated to the Duke of Somerset.[[165]](#footnote-166) However, several years after his own marriage Ponet found himself facing charges of bigamy, after it emerged that his wife was already married to a Nottingham butcher. The couple were granted a formal separation in July 1551 and Ponet was ordered to pay the butcher an annual sum for the rest of his life. Although no other details about Ponet’s wife survive, it has been noted that her background made her a socially inappropriate partner for him; regardless of the fact the marriage was also illegal.[[166]](#footnote-167) It is possible that this was a rare instance where marriage to a cleric may have brought an improvement to the social and economic circumstances of Ponet’s wife, as well as providing her with the opportunity to escape an unwanted marriage.

In spite of the scandal of Ponet’s first marriage, and the diarist Henry Machyn’s observation that he was divorced with ‘shame enough,’ there were surprisingly few recriminations against him and his career was not affected.[[167]](#footnote-168) He was able to remarry, and just a few months after his separation from his first wife married Mary Hayman, in October 1551. Mary was the daughter of Peter Hayman described by MacCulloch as Cranmer’s ‘most trusted fiscal officer’ and a gentleman with a considerable estate in Kent.[[168]](#footnote-169) This made her a far more socially suitable partner for Ponet and the marriage was celebrated in the parish church at Croydon, near the archiepiscopal palace, with Cranmer himself in attendance alongside ‘many’ others.[[169]](#footnote-170) A large and public wedding in the presence of Cranmer would have ensured that there was no hint of scandal surrounding the marriage, as well as demonstrating Cranmer’s support for Ponet and more broadly the institution of clerical marriage. It is also testimony to Cranmer’s friendship with Peter Hayman, who alongside John Sandford, was granted the lands and properties in Yorkshire, given to Cranmer by Henry VIII, and marked out as his son’s inheritance.[[170]](#footnote-171) Although no written testimony by Mary herself survives from this period, it is clear that her family had very strong evangelical sympathies which she undoubtedly shared, later choosing to accompany Ponet into exile in Strasburg. Her elder sister Katheryn was married to William Hammond, who was an exile in Frankfurt during Mary’s reign and one of the signatories of an invitation to John Knox to become the pastor of the congregation there.[[171]](#footnote-172) Mary also remained in lifelong contact with her two brothers, William and Ralph, who were evidently supportive of her and stood as executors for her second husband, another cleric John Hill.[[172]](#footnote-173) Peter Hayman died in October 1554, before which it seems that he may have suffered for his close connections to Cranmer and Ponet. There is evidence that he may have had a legal attainment against him, and been deprived of two of his local offices.[[173]](#footnote-174)However, he managed to make provision for his large family, which included a bequest of a hundred marks to Mary, evidencing his ongoing support of her.[[174]](#footnote-175) Interestingly, he did not mention Mary’s married name, despite referring to two of her sisters by their married names and making specific provisions for his unmarried daughters. This was perhaps a diplomatic decision, given her connection to Ponet and status as an exile.

John Scory, Bishop of Chichester, and John Harley, briefly the Bishop of Hereford, were also married and went into exile during Mary’s reign accompanied by their wives, with Scory heading to Emden whilst Harley disappeared into obscurity in England. Although both were clearly committed reformers there is unfortunately nothing to date Harley’s marriage and no surviving details about his wife. Scory’s wife’s name was Elizabeth, but nothing else is known about her family or background. The only record of the Scory’s marriage is a licence granting them both permission to eat meat in Lent and other prohibited times, which is dated November 1551, although it is possible that they were married at an earlier date.[[175]](#footnote-176) Both women were evidently willing to accompany their husbands into exile, and alongside Agatha Barlow, Elizabeth Scory was the only other Edwardian bishop’s wife to return from exile and resume her former role. In contrast, the wives of the last three bishops to marry during Edward’s reign, Holgate, Bush and Bird, were put aside by their husbands after they reconciled with the Marian regime and renounced their marriages. Whilst it is again not possible to be specific about dates, both Holgate and Bush certainly married after the official legalisation of clerical marriage, and it is highly likely that Bird did also.

All three bishops demonstrate the complexity of automatically equating marriage with a more extensive range of Protestant opinions, even amongst the highest orders of the church, where there was in most cases a much stronger link.[[176]](#footnote-177) They had all been loyal servants of Henry VIII and were appointed to their dioceses during his reign.. On the accession of Edward VI, they did not oppose the successive religious changes and Holgate in particular seemed to have been sympathetic to the reform movement, supporting vernacular liturgy and making substantial changes to the interior of York Minster and the education of the clergy. In spite of his conservative views, Paul Bush equally supported the English bible and did not oppose the introduction of the two Prayer Books, also he did vote against clerical marriage in the House of Lords in 1549**.** In his apology written during his imprisonment in Mary’s reign, Holgate later claimed that his marriage had been the result of pressure to conform to the new regime, and whilst the document was written to obtain his freedom, it is possible that there was some truth in it. Holgate was already sixty eight when he married in January 1551, and had evidently not been in a rush to marry before the official legalisation of clerical marriage. His position as the Archbishop of York may well have made the regime more likely to have exerted pressure on him to make a public statement of support through marriage. Such a consideration may also have influenced Paul Bush, who was fifty nine at the time of his marriage, although there was likely to be less pressure on him as the bishop of Bristol and he possibly just took the opportunity to enjoy a family life once it had become fully legal, able to somehow balance it with his otherwise conservative views.

Much less is known about John Bird, the bishop of Chester, although he was evidently able to adapt himself to the Edwardian regime. There are no surviving records of his wife although he must have repudiated her very quickly after Mary’s accession as he received a pardon on the 16th November 1553, months before his formal deprivation, suggesting rapid compliance. After his deprivation, he was appointed as the vicar of Great Dunmow in November 1554, and was later promoted to suffragan bishop to Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London. This evidences the extent of his reconciliation with the new regime and suggests that he had no further contact with his wife whose fate remains a mystery. Records do, however, survive for the wives of Holgate and Bush, both of whom came from local gentry families. Whilst this would have meant that they were respectable choices of brides for their husbands, their own motivations for marriage are less apparent, with aged formerly monastic bishops perhaps not the most obvious choice in either case, especially in light of continuing popular hostility towards clerical marriage. Edith Ashley, the wife of Paul Bush was the youngest daughter of Henry Ashley of St Giles, Winborne, who owned lands in Dorset.[[177]](#footnote-178) Edith had six elder sisters, five of whom had made very conventional matches to men from the local gentry, which must also have been an option available to Edith.[[178]](#footnote-179) The choice of Edith’s eldest sister, Elizabeth, who is recorded in the pedigrees as ‘a nonne of Shaftesbury,’ makes her own decision even more extraordinary.[[179]](#footnote-180) It is also testimony to the dramatic religious changes that had taken place between 1539 when Shaftesbury was dissolved and 1549 when Edith married Bush, with two sisters from the same family, able to live such radically different lives. There is no evidence to suggest that other members of Edith’s family held overtly reformed opinions, although they do not seem to have had any objections to her marriage and evidently had a good relationship with Bush. In 1550 Bush granted a long lease on one of the episcopal manors in Dorset to Edith’s brother, Henry Ashley, and another to her brother in law, John Hawles.[[180]](#footnote-181) After Edith’s premature death in 1553, Bush remained in contact with his wife’s family, who helped him make provision for the couple’s son, and he left them a number of bequests in his will.[[181]](#footnote-182)

Holgate’s wife, Barbara, was also from a good family, the daughter of Roger Wentworth, of Hamthwaite, Adwick-le-Street, in the deanery of Doncaster, who was a man of some local importance.[[182]](#footnote-183) According to Parkyn their marriage was celebrated on the 15 January 1551, in the palace of Bishopthorpe, three weeks after banns had been read in the parish church of Bishopthorpe as well as in Barbara’s parish of Adwick le Street.[[183]](#footnote-184) However, in spite of this official beginning and Barbara’s respectable background, the marriage initially looked like it might cause some scandal, when in a repeat of the Ponet case, a man called Anthony Norman, challenged its legality by claiming that he had been betrothed to Barbara in childhood and was her legal husband. Norman lodged a suit against Holgate in 1551, and the Privy Council initially wrote to him ‘to make his indelayed repayre hither, and to cause his wief to be here allso, either as sone as hymsellf or as shortly after as she may.’[[184]](#footnote-185) However, just a few days later this order was rescinded and although there was an investigation, Holgate’s marriage was held to be valid on the grounds that having reached the age of consent Barbara had successfully obtained an annulment from Norman.[[185]](#footnote-186) The event was covered in full by a gleeful Robert Parkyn, who was the curate of Barbara’s parish of Adwick le Street. Parkyn recorded how Barbara ‘was before tyme maryede in hir childeheade unto a yunge gentill man nemyde Anthony Norman (wich mariaige turnyde to grett trouble & besynes after wardes).’[[186]](#footnote-187) Parkyn also made the wholly unfounded claim that Holgate and Barbara had been secretly married before January 1551 by ‘the heretyk Doctor Tonge,’ perhaps to add a further touch of scandal to the event.[[187]](#footnote-188)

As Dickens has highlighted, in spite of the Privy Council’s summons, it does not appear that they ever took the allegations seriously, something he believes they would have done had there been sufficient grounds.[[188]](#footnote-189) It is likely that they were convinced by the outcome of a trial held in the diocesan court of York in May 1548, in which the annulment of Barbara’s marriage to Norman was disputed.[[189]](#footnote-190) Dickens does not appear to have been aware of this event, and although only the deposition survives, it seems highly likely that the court ruled against Norman, making his claim to the Privy Council a false one. It also suggests that Dickens’ belief that it is ‘improbable’ Holgate knew of the pre-contract at the time of his marriage to Barbara is incorrect, with the trial held in Holgate’s own church court and just a short time before his marriage to Barbara is thought to have taken place.[[190]](#footnote-191) The deposition also sheds some light on Barbara, giving her age as 21/22 which evidences that there was a significant age gap between her and Holgate.[[191]](#footnote-192) It is again difficult to speculate what her motivations may have been for the marriage to Holgate, although her autonomous action in the case against Norman, where she was the plaintiff, suggests it may have been an independent choice. In the deposition it describes how on a number of occasions her father and uncle had encouraged her to take Norman as her husband and ‘use hym accordyngly’, but that she had always maintained that she could not love him.[[192]](#footnote-193) It is unclear whether her family actively supported her marriage to Holgate, although Barbara was left a legacy in her father’s will which was proved in October 1551, several months after her marriage to Holgate.[[193]](#footnote-194) As Parkyn’s account demonstrates there was strong hostility towards clerical marriage in Barbara’s own parish, which she cannot have been unaware of when she undertook to marry Holgate.

**“A most sober, chaste and godly matron:” the first generation of bishops’ wives**[[194]](#footnote-195)

All of the women who first married bishops during the reign of Edward VI entered unchartered territory and took up roles for which there were no precedents. Whilst there is not much evidence of their daily lives or experience during Edward’s reign, a number of fragmented sources do survive. Once again it is the Hoopers who are the best documented thanks to a number of surviving letters to Bullinger, detailing the religious situation in England and the unfolding events of Edward’s reign. Hooper was not consecrated as the bishop of Gloucester until March 1551, and before this time lived in London with his family, under the protection of the Duke of Somerset who was his patron. His letters provide an insight into the troubled religious situation and the fears of the reformers that there would still be a return to the old religion. Although Hooper was optimistic about the number of Londoners who attended his daily public sermons, he was also worried about ongoing support for popery and an increase in heresy, including significant numbers of Anabaptists.[[195]](#footnote-196) He also recorded how he had been unable to visit his family in the West Country due to unrest and how as late as March 1550 he had been unable to leave the city ‘without a numerous attendance.’[[196]](#footnote-197) In spite of his popularity as a preacher, Hooper was a contentious figure, and aware that he had numerous enemies.From their position in London, the Hoopers were well placed to send Bullinger reports of developments in the government and the Church. Although unfortunately none of Anne’s letters survive from this period, they are referred to in one of Hooper’s letters to Bullinger. After apologising that Bullinger has not received his letter containing news about himself and England, Hooper stated that he assumed the letters sent by his wife to the wives of Bullinger and Bibliander had also not been received, ‘or you would at least have learned from them the situation both of myself and of this kingdom.’[[197]](#footnote-198) This further evidences the close network of communication between their families, and the value of women’s letters in transmitting not only personal but also political news.[[198]](#footnote-199) It is also clear that Anne forged connections in London, and in a letter to Bullinger dated May 1550, Martin Micronius, who had accompanied the Hooper’s back to England, described how, ‘Mistress Anne, the wife of Hooper, is not at home. She has gone to the mansion of a certain noble lady in the neighbourhood of the city, for a change of air.’[[199]](#footnote-200) By this date Hooper had become a renowned preacher, and had taken over from Latimer as the court preacher to Edward VI, as well as maintaining his relationship with Somerset. Although the identity of the noble lady is not certain, it is clear that both Anne and Hooper were moving in influential circles in London, and that Anne was accepted into noble society.

The first surviving letter from Anne to Bullinger is dated London, April 3 1551, and evidences that she did not immediately join Hooper in his new diocese, as she informed Bullinger that she would be unable to immediately deliver his letter to her husband, as he had already set off for Gloucester.[[200]](#footnote-201)The letter thanked Bullinger for his concern about Hooper’s recent troubles (caused by his initial refusal to accept his bishopric) and gave him an update on her daughter Rachel’s progress, as well as general news about the unsettled conditions in London, due to the high prices of food, and the rumours of a French invasion of Ireland. The letter also evidences Anne’s belief in the importance of Hooper’s preaching work and the impact it was having. She asked Bullinger to ‘recommend master Hooper to be more moderate in his labour,’ as she was worried that his heavy preaching schedule and ‘overabundant exertions’ could lead to:

premature decay by which very many souls now hungering after the word of God, and whose hunger is well known from the frequent anxiety to hear him, will be deprived both of their teacher and his doctrine.[[201]](#footnote-202)

In the postscript she warned Bullinger to ensure that all letters to both her and Hooper were well sealed, stating that ‘there are certain busy-bodies who are in the habit of opening and reading them, if by any means they can do it.’[[202]](#footnote-203) Although privacy was a common concern, it is possible that Anne felt particularly vulnerable in London as a result of Hooper’s contentious position. The letter was accompanied by a gold coin on which Anne stated ‘the effigy of the king of England is very well expressed,’ suggesting that she may have seen him in person, perhaps even at court with Hooper.[[203]](#footnote-204)

The next surviving letter from Anne to Bullinger is dated October 27 1551, by which time she had joined Hooper in his new diocese.[[204]](#footnote-205) Whilst at Gloucester Hooper continued to push himself with a heavy workload, initiating a programme of reform unmatched anywhere else in the country. From her letter it is clear than Anne was also kept busy and she excused herself from not having replied sooner on account of having been ‘overwhelmed by so many and urgent engagements that scarce any leisure was allowed me.’[[205]](#footnote-206) She assured Bullinger that it was not sloth which had delayed her as ‘at this time my engagements will not admit of its indulgence.’[[206]](#footnote-207) It certainly seems likely that as Hooper’s wife Anne would have been kept occupied, particularly given his enthusiasm for entertainment and hospitality. Foxe described how even before he became a bishop, Hooper had been ‘very liberall in keeping of house, and sometime more free, than his lyuing would extende unto.’[[207]](#footnote-208) This continued once he was a bishop, and Foxe, who had personal experience of Hooper’s hospitality at Gloucester, described how he had observed a table in his common hall ‘spreade with good store of meate, and beset full of beggers, and poore folke.’[[208]](#footnote-209) When he had asked Hooper’s servants what this meant they had replied that it was their master’s custom to have every day ‘a certayne number of the poore folks of the sayd city’ to dinner whom he would examine on basic articles of faith before they could eat.[[209]](#footnote-210) As Heal states this combination of care for the bodies and souls of the poor was idealised by the reformers as the correct use of bishops’ wealth and a way of turning the clerical household into the centre of the Reformation.[[210]](#footnote-211) Foxe also praised Hooper’s household describing it as like ‘some holye temple. Euerye corner therof, beyng so stuffed and full of vertue, piety, silence, loue of God, and readyng of the holye Scriptures.’[[211]](#footnote-212) Again this was an idealised vision of what a bishops’ household should be like, and contrasted sharply with the reality of some of the medieval bishops’ households which had been criticised for being too worldly and ostentatious. Although Anne is not mentioned in Foxe’s account, Hooper personally carried out extensive visitations of his diocese and was often away, which makes it likely that it was Anne who took care of the day to day running of the palace at Gloucester.

Despite Hooper’s record of preaching and hospitality and Foxe’s panegyrical description of his household, the couple did attract some criticism from their friend Martin Micronius. In a letter to Bullinger, dated August 1551, Micronius wrote:

I pray you exert your influence in recommending to him [Hooper] meekness and gentleness. Exhort Mistress Anna his wife, not to entangle herself with the cares of this life. Let her beware of the thorns, by which the word of God is choked. It is a most dangerous thing for one who is in the service of Christ to hunt after riches and honours. Your admonition will have much weight with them both.[[212]](#footnote-213)

Although Micronius does not make any specific accusations, his implication that Hooper, and particularly Anne, had become overly concerned with worldly status and material possessions is clear. Although this is the earliest recorded criticism of an episcopal couple, such accusations would later become very common and are indicative of the contradictions inherent in the role of a post- Reformation bishop. As Heal has demonstrated, Edwardian bishops were increasingly expected to conform to reformist ideas which regarded their primary function as providing relief to the poor, and challenged the idea ‘that it was the duty of the godly bishop to concern himself with the rich and mighty.’[[213]](#footnote-214) However, in reality they continued to operate in an unreformed church structure in which they were expected to uphold their traditional social role and fulfil their obligation of providing hospitality and entertainment to the elite. Bishops often found themselves in an impossible position as if they did not provide lavish hospitality they were accused of parsimony, but equally if they maintained the lifestyle of their medieval predecessors, they were open to the charge that this style of living was not appropriate for a man of God.[[214]](#footnote-215) The novelty of their position meant there were no precedents for the role of a bishop’s wife. However, it seems likely that they would have faced the same difficulties as their husbands in living up to what was expected of a godly wife, while taking on the role and responsibilities of an elite woman in managing the large episcopal estates and households. Anne clearly had links to the aristocracy and it is possible that Micronius felt that she was taking too much interest in aspects of her new life which he felt were antithetical to her position as a bishop’s wife. Many reformers, who had spent time abroad, including Hooper himself, were critical of the unreformed episcopacy in England. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that Micronius would have been concerned if the couple appeared to have lost sight of the ideals they had all aspired to at Zurich.

As the leader of the reform movement and primate of all England, the contradictions in the role of a bishop were particularly acute for Thomas Cranmer. Heal has demonstrated how he was forced to compromise between old and new practices, introducing some changes to the way charity was administered by his household, whilst maintaining the prestige of the Church hierarchy and carrying out the traditional social role expected of him.[[215]](#footnote-216) As the surviving household ordinances from Lambeth Palace demonstrate, Cranmer retained the vast medieval structure that was based on a strict hierarchy and equivalent in size to the largest aristocratic households.[[216]](#footnote-217) In 1550 he received a licence to retain ‘a hundred persons,’ and had access to all the luxurious trappings of the archiepiscopal household, listed in the inventory of Lambeth Palace taken after his arrest in 1553.[[217]](#footnote-218) It is not clear if Cranmer’s wife Margaret had a formal role in the large hierarchical household, and she is not mentioned in the household ordinances.[[218]](#footnote-219) However, a brief reference in a chancery document, admittedly from after Margaret’s death and during a protracted case between Margaret’s third husband and a number of her family and friends, possibly alludes to charitable activities during this time.[[219]](#footnote-220) As evidence of the unreasonable behaviour of her third husband, one of the defendants, John Hunn, described how ‘the old gentell woman [Margaret] had awayes beene good to the pore and loked to have contenewed her former good wyll,’ but that she was ‘in short tyme’ after her marriage prevented by him from carrying out ‘all such honest and godley dedes which in many yeres before she had bene accustomed to doo.’[[220]](#footnote-221) Although he did maintain a traditional structure, Cranmer was commended for an unusual generosity to the poor, and it is certainly not unlikely that Margaret took on some form of charitable role.[[221]](#footnote-222) It is also possible that she assisted Cranmer in fulfilling his other primary responsibility of providing hospitality at Lambeth Palace. As well as entertaining the elite, Cranmer also hosted the prominent foreign reformers Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius, who he invited to England after it became unsafe for them to remain on the continent. It seems very likely that Margaret met both these men and their families, with the only surviving mention of Cranmer’s family found in a letter sent by him to Bucer in which he passed on greetings from ‘all mine to all yours.’[[222]](#footnote-223)

It was undoubtedly difficult for bishops’ wives to negotiate a balance between their new secular responsibilities, whilst living up to the ideals of the reformers. Even for the wives of the bishops who did not embrace all evangelical teachings, life in the episcopal household would have centred round a daily schedule of prayers. In a later set of household ordinances used by Archbishop Parker, the Usher of the Hall and Amner was instructed to ring a bell at ten thirty in the morning and six thirty in the evening, to ensure that all members of the household, not employed in essential work, attended Margaret Parker at morning and evening prayers.[[223]](#footnote-224) Household religion had always been recognised as an important female area, and elite women were expected to follow a daily regime of piety and take a leading role in the organisation of the spiritual life of their families and household. However, it is likely that given their husbands’ positions there was even more pressure on bishops’ wives to provide an example of godly domesticity. In his chronicle of Exeter, the antiquarian and civic administrator, John Hooker, who was in the employment of Miles Coverdale in 1551, provided a glowing account of Coverdale’s household, paying particular attention to his wife, Elizabeth. Hooker states:

He kept great Hospitality at his House, considering his Income; was very moderate in Diet, godly in Life, friendly to the godly, liberal to the Poor, and courteous to all Men…His wife was a most sober, chaste and godly matron: his house and household another church, in which was exercised all godliness and virtue.[[224]](#footnote-225)

The description of reformer’s households as ‘another church’ or other religious institution was common amongst Protestant writers keen to emphasise the godliness of clerical households, and counteract conservative criticism of them. Although Hooker is the only known writer to have described the characteristics of an ideal English bishop’s wife, he presents a very similar list of virtues to those used by reformers such as Bucer and Calvin to describe their own wives.

More practically, clerical marriage also meant that bishops had to find a way to provide for their wives and children. This was not always easy and remained a perennial problem throughout Elizabeth’s reign and beyond, with no official mechanisms ever put in place to provide for episcopal families. The bishops were expected to maintain their traditional social role and duties at a time when many dioceses faced substantial losses in revenue due to the encroachment of the crown and aristocracy on Church lands. There were also substantial differences between the wealth of the dioceses, and whilst some like Canterbury, York and Winchester remained wealthy, others incurred serious financial problems. As the bishop of Exeter, Miles Coverdale, inherited only debts from his aged predecessor, Bishop Vesey, and was unable to pay his first fruits, which were subsequently renegotiated after the diocese was re-valued at just a third of its former value.[[225]](#footnote-226) Robert Ferrar also struggled in St David’s and was unable to raise enough money to pay the annual tenths and subsidy due to the crown.[[226]](#footnote-227) He was later criticised in the Marian trial proceedings against him for having been remiss in dispensing hospitality and not living in the style befitting his rank. Ferrar replied that having found the hall at the episcopal residence of Abergwilli to be ruinous, he had used an adjoining Chamber, ‘for his selfe and his seruauntes, and all maner of straungers, and besides twentye persones in house daily.’[[227]](#footnote-228) This was clearly on a much smaller scale to the huge establishment at Lambeth, and demonstrates how different the experiences of episcopal wives could be. Ferrar was only able to make provision for his family by transferring the leases of properties he owned privately in Yorkshire into the names of his wife and children, to ensure that they were not confiscated by the crown to cover the debts owed by his diocese.[[228]](#footnote-229)

Even in the wealthiest dioceses, a bishop’s ability to make provision for his family often depended on personal wealth. All the temporalities attached to their office belonged to the diocese and were simply held in trust by the bishop for the duration of their episcopate, to be passed on intact to their successor.[[229]](#footnote-230) If they could make any savings from the net income of the see, which they were entitled to use for their personal expenditure, then bishops could use this to purchase goods or lands which could then be left to their families.[[230]](#footnote-231) However, in reality the expectation that bishops continue to maintain their traditional lifestyle, coupled with generally reduced episcopal endowments, often made this impossible. While there is not as much information about the provisions made by Edwardian bishops as their later Elizabethan counterparts, they undoubtedly faced the same difficulties. Alongside Ferrar’s timely provision for his family, the only other bishops known to have made provisions during Edward’s reign were Archbishops Cranmer and Holgate, both of whom had accrued substantial personal wealth through long service to the crown. Cranmer had been granted two estates in Yorkshire in Henry VIII’s will, and as these were his personal property and not part of the archiepiscopal estate, he took steps in Edward’s reign to ensure that they would be inherited by his son Thomas.[[231]](#footnote-232)

Holgate also had a large fortune, distinct from the diocese of York and evidenced by the generous bequests made in his will to his charitable foundations. During Edward’s reign he was able to make substantial provision for his wife Barbara’s future through several grants of land from the Privy Council. The first was made in April 1553, when the Council ordered the Court of Augmentations to:

make a booke to the Archebysshop of Yorke of landes and tenements to the yerely value of xxx li to the use of hymsellf and his wyfe, and the lenger lyver of them both, and after theyr disceasse the same landes to remayne to th archebusshoprike of Yorke.[[232]](#footnote-233)

This was followed in May 1553 by a grant ‘to the said archbishop and Barbara his wife of the site and capital mansion, lordship and manor of Scrobye,’ an extensive former property belonging to the archbishopric of York, with a recorded value of 630l 7s 6d.[[233]](#footnote-234) This was followed by a second grant, ‘to hold the said Robert archbishop of York and Barbara his wife, for life, in survivorship; holding of the king in free socage as of his manor of Estgrenewiche, Kent’ to once again be returned to the archbishopric of York after their deaths, and with a yearly value of 37l. 8s. 5 ½ d.[[234]](#footnote-235) As well as evidencing Holgate’s concern to provide for his much younger wife, these grants are also testimony to the official acceptance and acknowledgement of Barbara, and are the most extensive provisions made by any Edwardian bishop. Such provisions would have been out of the reach out many of the bishops, and had Edward lived their wives would most likely have faced the same financial difficulties as a number of Elizabethan episcopal widows.[[235]](#footnote-236)

**“All but dead through grief:” wives of the martyrs**[[236]](#footnote-237)

Although Edwardian clerical marriage proved to be short lived, progress was made and the limited surviving evidence suggests that bishops’ wives had started to be assimilated into society. Their marriages received official support and some women seem to have been able to start carving out a role for themselves in the episcopal households. However, with the accession of Mary I in July 1553, the relative security of Edward’s reign came to an end and bishops and their wives found themselves in a very tenuous position. Following a brief political and religious hiatus over the summer months during which the Marian regime established itself, action was taken swiftly to remove the married bishops from their diocese. Amongst the first to be imprisoned were the future martyrs Thomas Cranmer, John Hooper and Robert Ferrar, and it was undoubtedly their wives who suffered the most. Although very little is known about Elizabeth Ferrar, it is almost certain that she remained in England with her three children, Samuel, Sage and Griffith throughout Mary’s reign. As previously mentioned, Ferrar had made very timely provision for his family through transferring the lease of his Yorkshire estate into their names during the summer of 1553.[[237]](#footnote-238) Just weeks before his arrest in September 1553, and perhaps in anticipation of this, he also granted a twenty one year lease on farmland at the manor of Abergwili to his servant Matthew Harbottle, and transferred the legal ownership of the estate into his family’s names.[[238]](#footnote-239) Combined these properties would have ensured that Ferrar’s wife and children had an income, and it is possible that they either remained in St David’s, where his two eldest children lived at various points during their adult life, or returned to Yorkshire, where members of either Elizabeth or Ferrar’s family may have supported them.[[239]](#footnote-240)

Although it has always been assumed that Margaret Cranmer went into exile either before or after Cranmer’s execution in March 1556, there is in fact no evidence to suggest that she left England during Mary’s reign.[[240]](#footnote-241) The Cranmers’ young son Thomas was certainly sent abroad in 1554, most likely under the protection of Cranmer’s brother, Edmund, the former Archdeacon of Canterbury, who had been deprived of his office for marriage.[[241]](#footnote-242) However, Margaret did not accompany them and in the chancery documents relating to the breakdown of her third marriage to Bartholomew Scott, her son in law, Thomas Norton, described the kindness shown to Margaret by Scott’s father, John, ‘in the time of her adversitie after the said Archibyshops troble and deathe,’ which strongly suggests that she stayed in London.[[242]](#footnote-243) The Scott family did not go into exile and had a manor house in the parish of Camberwell adjacent to the parish of Lambeth. Although John Scott died in 1558, during her second marriage to Edward Whitchurch, Margaret and her husband temporarily lived with Bartholomew’s brother, Edward, in the manor house at Camberwell. It is therefore certainly not unlikely that this was also Margaret’s refuge during Cranmer’s imprisonment. Margaret had a further tie to the Scott family through Scott’s third wife, Katherine, who was the widow of Cranmer’s close friend and servant, John Sandford, who died in 1551. Sandford had been a member of Cranmer’s household and appointed as one of the trustees of the estates set aside for the use of his son. He evidently knew Margaret well and in his will he had bequeathed ‘to my Lord’s Grace a sovereign, and to My Lady his wife another.’[[243]](#footnote-244)

Further evidence to support this theory is provided by Margaret’s receipt of numerous household goods from Lambeth Palace, following the dissolution of the household in the wake of Cranmer’s conviction for treason. The items are recorded in the detailed inventory of all Cranmer’s goods and what happened to them, made by Sir Robert Southwell during Cranmer’s imprisonment in the Tower c.1553.[[244]](#footnote-245) They provide an insight into the luxurious lifestyle led by Cranmer and Margaret at Lambeth Palace, and although the majority of goods listed as ‘geven to the Busshopp[es] wief’ are utensils and crockery, another section recorded as being ‘delivered to the Busshopp[es] wief’ included three featherbeds and boulsters, six pairs of ‘fine sheets,’ four ‘sarcenet curteins’ and other furnishings made from rich materials.[[245]](#footnote-246) The inventory is very specific about what happened to all the goods, and the fact that the items are listed as being ‘given’ or ‘delivered’ to the bishop’s wife, would suggest that Margaret remained in close proximity to the Palace, and certainly within the City of London.

Assumptions that Margaret subsequently went abroad after Cranmer’s death have mainly been based on the fact that at some point after this event she remarried the notable evangelical printer, Edward Whitchurch, believed to have fled to Germany during Mary’s reign and listed as an exile in Garret’s inventory.[[246]](#footnote-247) However, the recent work of Scott Lucas has gone a long way towards restoring Whitchurch’s reputation, which had suffered from accusations that he retreated from his formerly fierce evangelicalism, through flight to the continent during Mary’s reign, and a quiet life during the reign of Elizabeth I.[[247]](#footnote-248) Through a series of property transactions, Lucas has demonstrated that contrary to these assumptions, Whitchurch in fact remained in England throughout Mary’s reign.[[248]](#footnote-249) After liquidating his assets to ensure that he remained below the radar of the Marian regime, Whitchurch covertly worked to obstruct the printing of conservative texts and provided support to evangelicals.[[249]](#footnote-250) This behaviour continued unbroken after the accession of Elizabeth I, and though he never returned to printing himself, Whitchurch provided support to his son-in-law, who continued to print evangelical texts, as well as providing monetary support to returning exiles.[[250]](#footnote-251) The only evidence to place Margaret abroad during this time is the belief that she married Whitchurch while both of them were in exile, and if as Lucas has demonstrated, he did not leave England, it is highly implausible that she did either. Further evidence to place them both in England during Mary’s reign is the action taken by Whitchurch in May 1557, to secure the inheritance of Margaret’s young son Thomas, in Yorkshire. Both properties assigned to young Thomas had been lost to the crown after the attainder of treason passed against Cranmer, although two of Cranmer’s friends, John Cawen and Reyner Wolfe, had successfully petitioned to have the properties re-granted to them to covertly to hold in trust for the young Thomas.[[251]](#footnote-252) In his will Whitchurch claimed to have been the driving force behind this scheme claiming that, ‘by my traveile and charge I have redemed of Quene Mary the leace of Kyrkstall and Anys,’ the two properties in question.[[252]](#footnote-253)

By marrying Whitchurch Margaret remained within the evangelical network that had surrounded Cranmer in London during Edward’s reign, and which she most likely welcomed. It is also probable that she would have had limited marital choices and that against the backdrop of Marian England only a man with considerable evangelical sympathies would have been willing to shoulder the burden of the Cranmer legacy. Whitchurch more than rose to this challenge and Prior describes him as ‘such a man as protestant martyrs advised their wives to take in their widowhoods: godly men who would be good fathers to their children.’[[253]](#footnote-254) This is a reference to the high rate of remarriage between the German reformers and their wives, with Wibrandis Rosenblatt, being perhaps the most dramatic example of this. In total Wibrandis married four times, including unions with three prominent reformers, Johannes Oecolampadius, Wolfgang Capito, and finally Martin Bucer. When Bucer married her he pledged to treat her existing children by Oecolamadius and Capito as his own, and cited his love for them as one of his motivations for marrying her.[[254]](#footnote-255) At the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign, Whitchurch arranged for Thomas Cranmer to receive the reserved rents from the two properties in Yorkshire and arranged a marriage for Margaret’s daughter, Margaret, to the evangelical lawyer, Thomas Norton, another friend of the Scott family. When he died in 1562, Whitchurch left bequests to both of his adoptive children, as well as Margaret, and described his ‘service and good will to her and hers,’ carried out during his lifetime.[[255]](#footnote-256)

However, while Whitchurch and the wider circle associated with Cranmer undoubtedly supported Margaret through the difficult years of Mary’s reign and beyond, she was not simply a passive figure, and took an active role in the preservation of her family’s inheritance. Although she is often a silent presence in the records, a set of chancery documents relating to her last years and difficult third marriage, provides some inferences about her character and understanding of her own position as an episcopal widow. In the first document Margaret herself is the plaintiff, and although it is undated, Margaret names herself as Margaret Whitchurch, widow, placing it sometime in the short period between Whitchurch’s death and her third marriage to Bartholemew Scott.[[256]](#footnote-257) The document is a plea to have her rights to the estate of Amyrode in Yorkshire recognised, which she argued had been unlawfully usurped by John Mylne and others. Margaret was evidently confident of her case and clearly outlined her claim, stating how the estate had previously been in the possession of Thomas Cranmer, ‘late Archbishop of Canterberie and husband to your sayd Oratore,’ before being granted out by letters patent to Cawen and Wolfe in the reign of Phillip and Mary.’[[257]](#footnote-258) Whilst others had previously managed this ongoing case for her it is clear that in the absence of a husband and during her son’s minority she was confident of handling it herself.

Margaret’s confidence in her position can also be seen in the set of chancery documents relating to her third marriage to Bartholemew Scott. The details of the case are not always clear, but it seems that before the marriage took place, Thomas Norton has drawn up a series of covenants to protect Margaret’s interests and those of her son, Thomas. After initially agreeing to these covenants, Scott seems to have rapidly broken them after the marriage had taken place. Without any resolution, Margaret separated from him and went to live in the house of Reyner Wolfe and his wife Joan in the city of London. Scott strongly contested their separation and accused Margaret of taking goods that were lawfully his, and took out a bill of complaint against Thomas Norton and John Hunn, Wolfe’s son in law, for their role in assisting her. The two defences written by Norton and Hunn, in response to Scott’s complaint, vary considerably, with Hunn much more openly condemnatory of Scott and his treatment of Margaret. However, they both agree on some basic facts including Margaret’s personal appeal to Archbishop Parker for help in her cause against her husband. In Norton’s account, he describes how after he had refused to sue Scott for breaking the covenants, pushing instead for a reconciliation, Margaret had appealed to Parker, who had sent for Norton ‘to charge him that he had deceived Trust,’ and on Margaret’s behalf inform him that he was to hand over control of the covenants to Reyner Wolfe.[[258]](#footnote-259) Hunn’s account is more dramatic and describes how ‘for the safftye of her lyfe’ and ‘for Releffe of her necesstye’ Margaret had been ‘forseed to complayne to the Busshop of CanterBeryes grace & dyvers other her magysytes hye comyssyners,’ who had agreed that for her ‘better securtye’ she should reside with Wolfe.[[259]](#footnote-260) The fact that Margaret appealed directly to Parker, in spite of the parish of Camberwell being outside his jurisdiction, suggests that she had a sense of her own position and the confidence to go straight to the top. It also infers that she may have had a personal relationship with Parker, which is not unlikely given his known interest in accumulating information and records about Cranmer’s life.

In contrast, Anne Hooper was urged by her husband and friends to leave England, and although she did not go immediately and was unwilling to leave her husband, she did eventually travel to Frankfurt in the spring of 1554. Once again, the Hoopers’ experience of this crisis point is the best documented thanks to their surviving correspondence. Unlike Cranmer, who was forbidden from corresponding during his imprisonment, Hooper appeared to have had little problem in sending and receiving letters from the Fleet, where he was held until shortly before his execution in February 1555. Hooper’s surviving correspondence from this period includes the only known letter from an Edwardian bishop to his wife, sent to Anne in October 1553, shortly after his imprisonment. The letter is an exhortation to patience, and although it was addressed to ‘my most dearly beloved and godly wife,’ it was almost certainly intended to be read by a wider audience, with Anne perhaps expected to ensure its distribution.[[260]](#footnote-261) The letter dealt with persecution and the cares of worldly life, and how Christians were expected to deal with times of adversity. It cited numerous biblical examples, chosen to provide consolation and sustenance to the reader, and advised contemplation of the life to come as the best method of overcoming despair. Although the letter is mostly general in tone, befitting its broader audience, a number of specific references are made to Anne throughout. In one reference Hooper reminded her of a passage in St Matthew, ‘of which place, you and I have many times taken great consolation,’ evidencing Anne and Hooper’s shared spirituality and her knowledge of the bible.[[261]](#footnote-262) Hooper concluded the letter by warning of the troubles ahead, but also affirming his confidence in Anne and her ability to ‘perceive and to beware of the vanity and crafts of the devil well enough in Christ.’[[262]](#footnote-263) Interestingly, despite referring to Anne throughout the letter as ‘my dearly beloved wife,’ Hooper signed himself ‘your brother in Christ. John Hooper.’[[263]](#footnote-264) This signatory was normally used between religious men to each other, and testifies to a level of spiritual equality between Anne and Hooper in this time of suffering.

Alongside Hooper’s correspondence, a number of letters from Anne to Bullinger also survive from this period, and give a unique insight into Anne’s response to the Marian crisis, and its specific impact on her. In the first letter, dated from FrankfortFrankfurt, April 20 1554, Anne thanked Bullinger for his concern and the timely arrival of his letter, stating that:

God had at that time visited me with a calamity in which I was forced not only to lament the common condition of the church at large, but also my own individual affliction. My women’s mind being battered with these two engines, what wonder if it seemed about to give way? But the spirit of the Lord was with me, and raised up his ministers to give me comfort...For after I had received and read it over, I began by God’s assistance to bear myself up against the weight of such calamity.[[264]](#footnote-265)

Although Anne touches on her own suffering, she contextualised it within the larger calamity that had befallen the Church at large and strongly reaffirmed her trust in God to see her through the crisis. Whilst there is no reason to doubt Anne’s genuine distress at the trauma she had experienced, the language she uses both here and throughout her letters is typical of reformed prescriptions. As Karant-Nunn states reformed sermons often included expressions of ‘regret, self abasement, and glorification of a hyper-elevated God,’ while emotions such as fear and un-assuaged guilt were discouraged as indicators of a lack of belief in the totality of divine providence.[[265]](#footnote-266) This certainly characterises Anne’s expression of her state of mind, and whilst her concern for her husband later increased she never allowed herself to despair but wrote of her trust in God and his providence, and the comfort she received from his word.

In this first letter Anne also explained her reasons for remaining in Franfort, with her sister and brother-in-law, despite Bullinger’s wish that she could join him in Zurich, stating that:

the senate has granted liberty to the foreign church for their whole ecclesiastical ministry both of the word and sacraments. On this account I shall prefer remaining here in my own hired house, until I see how the Lord shall deal with my husband, concerning whom, as I have not yet received any intelligence, I am not a little anxious.[[266]](#footnote-267)

Increasing concern for Hooper was a dominant theme in Anne’s letters, and she continued to ask Bullinger for his prayers for both herself and Hooper as the religious situation in England deteriorated. It seems likely that she was aware of his possible fate from the beginning, describing in her first letter that the ‘burden of widowhood was very painful.’[[267]](#footnote-268) Although in September 1554, she informed Bullinger that she was bearing the calamity ‘as firmly’[[268]](#footnote-269) as possible, by November of the same year, she was ‘more than commonly anxious’ about her husband; describing how she often felt herself to ‘be all but dead through grief,’ though still ‘never entirely forsaken of the Lord.’[[269]](#footnote-270) This change was in response to rumoured news from England that ‘the hand of an individual had been burnt off, because he refused to hear mass,’ as corporal punishments began to be deployed against the reformers.[[270]](#footnote-271)

As well as passing on what news she could about Hooper and the religious situation in England, Anne’s position also allowed her to inform Bullinger of the developments in the exile church in FrankfortFrankfurt, established by her brother-in-law, Vallerand Poullain, and the political news from Germany. Her letters evidence her enthusiasm for and engagement with the ‘little’ church in FrankfortFrankfurt, and in April 1554 she described how the community had been granted the use of the church of the white virgins, where Poullain had delivered the first sermon and baptised his young son in the Rhine.[[271]](#footnote-272) Through her personal connection with Poullain and Bullinger she provided a bridge between the exile church in FrankfortFrankfurt and the reformed community in Zurich, with both men sending greetings to each other via their letters to Anne. In the first letter sent to Bullinger, Anne stated how Poullian had ‘earnestly entreated’ her to salute Bullinger in his name ‘and to commend his ministry’ to the prayers of Bullinger and his colleagues in Zurich.[[272]](#footnote-273) In a subsequent letter, Anne sent Bullinger a book outlining the ‘constitution and general order of our little church,’ with a request from Poullain that he check the work for any corrections.[[273]](#footnote-274) Anne stated that Poullain would be very much obliged to Bullinger for this service, and entreated him to so herself for ‘Christ’s sake,’ indicating her own commitment to the Church and true religion.[[274]](#footnote-275) As Anne demonstrates, exile could bring women into closer communication with continental reform leaders, and presented them with unique opportunities to participate in the organisation and governance of the exile churches.

In Anne’s last surviving letter to Bullinger, dated April 11 1555, some two months after Hooper’s execution, her grief, but also her commitment to the reformed cause and desire to preserve the legacy of her husband is renewed. Anne asked Bullinger if he could revise and print a book in Zurich, written by Hooper during his imprisonment, and forwarded to Anne for publication. Anne explained how she had attempted to follow Hooper’s wishes and have it published before the next FrankfortFrankfurt fair by sending it to Peter Martyr in Strasbourg. However, Martyr had been unable to print it because of the doctrine of the Eucharist it espoused which was not permitted in Strasbourg. Anne stated that as she knew Hooper’s memory was ‘most precious’ to Bullinger she was certain that he would ‘oblige him in this matter, as if he were now alive,’ before expressing her own grief and continuing, ‘indeed, he is alive with all the holy martyrs, and with his Christ the head of the martyrs; and I am dead here till God shall again unite me to him.’[[275]](#footnote-276) Anne thanked Bullinger for his continuing friendship and asked him to continue to pray for her, declaring that without ‘the most holy martyr my husband, of whom being now deprived, I consider this life to be death, do not forsake me.’[[276]](#footnote-277) In the postscript, Anne gave an indication of her feelings towards the Marian regime, stating that ‘Rachel sends you an English coin, on which are the effigies of Ahab and Jezebel [by which she meant Phillip and Mary],’ the Old Testament rulers who abandoned the worship of God in favour of false deities.[[277]](#footnote-278) Unfortunately Anne died just months later during the outbreak of plague in FrankfortFrankfurt in December, followed shortly afterwards by her two children. However, her letters provide a unique insight into the life of one woman who demonstrated a level of religious conviction that matched her famously zealous husband.

**“A companion with him in banishment:” wives of the exiles**[[278]](#footnote-279)

Although Anne Hooper was forced to make her journey into exile alone, the wives of the four bishops who chose to leave England for the continent during Mary’s reign, Scory, Barlow, Ponet and Coverdale, were able to accompany their husbands. Despite the fact that Barlow and Scory were the only two Edwardian bishops to return from exile to be granted new bishoprics at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I, limited information is known about their time in exile. There are also no surviving records of their wives from this period. Both bishops were removed from their dioceses at a very early stage, and Barlow was imprisoned in the Tower of London in December 1553. He tried twice to escape to the Continent in April and November 1554, finally recanting before Stephen Gardiner in January 1555, after which he fled to Emden where he briefly became the minister of the English congregation, before moving on to Wesel and then Poland as a part of the Duchess of Suffolk’s household. Scory was involved in the fateful publication and distribution of Cranmer’s declaration against the mass, which led to the Archbishop’s arrest in September 1553; however, his movements after this date are unclear. In spite of rumours that he renounced his wife and submitted to Bishop Bonner in July 1554, he was in fact already a member of the exile community at Emden by this point, having been granted citizenship of the German town on 20 June 1554.[[279]](#footnote-280)

Until the work of Andrew Pettegree, the exile community at Emden was the least well studied of all the English exile communities, but Pettegree’s work has now gone a long way towards putting it back on the map and emphasising its wider significance to the Marian exile.[[280]](#footnote-281) As one of the most senior ecclesiastical English exiles Scory was almost immediately appointed to a leadership role in the community, becoming its spokesman as well as making a number of important contributions to the print literature of the exile movement.[[281]](#footnote-282) As Pettegree has demonstrated, the silence which surrounds the wives of the two bishops can be explained by the fact that the Emden register of English exiles granted citizenship between 1554 and 1558 only contained the names of men.[[282]](#footnote-283) It is highly implausible that all the exiles would have been single men, and as Pettegree has shown the presence of wives and children can be attested to by the congregation’s appointment of two schoolmasters to care for the children amongst them.[[283]](#footnote-284) Agatha Barlow’s much later monument, erected by her children after her death in 1595, also evidences that she did accompany her husband into exile, stating:

She being a woman godly wise and discreete from her youthe most faythfull unto her husband both in prosperite and adversite and a companion with him in banishmente for the gospell sake moste kinde and loving unto all her children and dearly beloved of them all for her ability of a liberall mynde and pitifull unto the poore.[[284]](#footnote-285)

It is clear that for Agatha’s children, who commissioned the monument, their parents’ ‘banishmente for the gospel sake’ during Mary’s reign, was a source of family pride, and Agatha’s supportive role is acknowledged.

There is slightly more information about the wives of Mary Ponet and Elizabeth Coverdale. As one of the most prominent reformers, Coverdale was almost immediately called before the Privy Council after the accession of Mary I. However, in contrast to the other leading evangelical bishops who were imprisoned in London, he was allowed to go back to his diocese under house arrest, though remained in great danger with many convinced that he would ultimately be executed by the regime. He was spared from this fate by the intervention of the King of Denmark, Christian III, who petitioned Mary for Coverdale’s release on behalf of his chaplain, Macalpine, Elizabeth Coverdale’s brother-in-law. In spite of the considerable diplomatic pressure put on Mary by Christian she prevaricated for as long as possible, waiting for long periods of time before replying to his initial letters sent in the spring of 1554. When she did reply she informed Christian that Coverdale was not being held for any religious crime, but for a debt owed to the crown. This was clearly an excuse and recognised as such by Christian who wrote in September 1554 that he was glad to hear this and felt sure that Mary would now soon release him. He stated that her last letter had ended the sorrow of Coverdale’s friends [Macalpine and his wife] and given them the ‘hope and expectation of his assured welfare.’[[285]](#footnote-286) He also stated that as Coverdale had not held the bishopric for very long, nor been able to enjoy any great ‘comoditie’ from it, Mary’s ‘benignitie’ would undoubtedly allow her to overlook the debt.[[286]](#footnote-287) Christian concluded that he looked forward to welcoming Coverdale soon and hearing from him the extent of Mary’s goodness towards him.[[287]](#footnote-288) Although Mary waited another five months before acting, she did eventually relent and in February 1555 the Privy Council issued a passport for Coverdale to ‘passe from hence towardes Denmarke with two of his servantes, his bagges and baggages.’[[288]](#footnote-289)

Although there is no specific reference to Elizabeth in the passport it is possible that she was one of the servants or that she did not require a pass to leave the country, with Mary showing considerable leniency towards bishops’ wives. It seems very likely that Elizabeth travelled with Coverdale who went first to Denmark where he was offered a benefice by Christian III. However, Coverdale refused this preferment and went on briefly to become a preacher in the English church at Wesel, before returning via FrankfortFrankfurt, where the Prayer book was being revised, to his old position at Bergbazern.[[289]](#footnote-290) The couple stayed there for two years before moving to Aarau in 1557 where the town records describe Coverdale as a former bishop accompanied by a wife and two children.[[290]](#footnote-291) In October 1558, the couple received leave to settle in Geneva, where Coverdale collaborated with a group of scholars to produce the prestigious Geneva bible. Although there are no surviving references to Elizabeth from their time here, Coverdale was asked to stand as godfather to Calvin’s second son, Elezeer in November 1558, and it is probable that as in Bergbazern she became acquainted with the wives of the other reformers.[[291]](#footnote-292) After the accession of Elizabeth I the couple made no rush to return to England and did not leave Geneva until the summer of 1559. Coverdale did not resume his bishopric, either because he was not offered it or because he refused, perhaps feeling that at seventy two he was too old to take on his former responsibilities.[[292]](#footnote-293) Coverdale does not appear to have been in any better financial situation than he was before he left, and although he remained a sought after preacher he was not offered a living in London until January 1564, to compensate for his lack of annuity or pension.[[293]](#footnote-294) Elizabeth Coverdale died in September 1566 having undoubtedly experienced all of the hardships that marriage to a bishop entailed, including two exiles and perpetual financial difficulties. Despite now being in his late seventies, Coverdale remarried less than a year after Elizabeth’s death to a woman known only as Katherine. This decision was possibly in line with the view held by reformers such as Bucer that a man of his stature required a wife to manage his household to allow him to effectively fulfil his pastoral responsibilities, which he continued to do until his death in 1569.[[294]](#footnote-295)

In contrast to the Coverdales’ who travelled between many of the English exile communities, the Ponets’ settled in Strasbourg and remained there. Once again the exact circumstances or date of their departure from England are unclear, although they were definitely in Strasbourg by July 1554, and welcomed a son in the autumn of that year.[[295]](#footnote-296) The child was baptised, Elias [Elijah] in the church of St Thomas with fellow exiles Lady Morison and John Abel standing as godparents.[[296]](#footnote-297) Amongst the English reformers and exiles, it was common to name children after figures from both the Old and New Testament to mark them out as members of the Godly. Both Ferrar’s son, Samuel, and the Hooper’s children, Rachel and Daniel, were named from the Old Testament, whilst Scory’s son, Sylvanus, and the Ponet’s daughter Martha, were named from the New Testament. In a letter to Bullinger, sent from Strasburg in April 1556, Ponet described the hardships of exile, stating that he was ‘weighed down with various crosses from the Lord,’ but that he knew exile to his ‘scourge.’[[297]](#footnote-298) He also referred to his reduced financial situation stating that ‘the Lord God, I acknowledge has taken from me all that I had, which indeed was most ample. Buy why should he not? He who gave has taken away.’[[298]](#footnote-299) The exiles often referred to their reduced material circumstances, and used parables from the Old Testament to compare themselves to the persecuted Israelites, to evidence the extent of their suffering for their faith. In part this was necessary to justify why they had left their native countries whilst others remained to die for their faith, and they were sometimes guilty of over exaggerating the dangers and material difficulties they endured. However, although it is probable that Ponet was to some extent utilising this rhetoric, the couple had suffered a disaster in September 1555, when the house they had been allocated in Strasbourg by the City Council burnt down, reportedly with a considerable amount of money and jewels inside.[[299]](#footnote-300)

For Mary Ponet at least, her financial situation would deteriorate further, when at the age of just forty two, Ponet died on 2 August 1556. Alongside their son baptised in Strasbourg, who was just two years old, the couple also had two young daughters. They can be identified through a reference in the will of Mary’s second husband, John Hill, who left bequests to a Jane Wood and Martha Mosley, both described as ‘my wives daughter.’[[300]](#footnote-301) After Ponet’s death Mary chose to remain in Strasbourg, where she had the support of friends. This can be evidenced by a letter sent by Mary to Peter Martyr in July 1557 in response to what had obviously been a request for the return of some books previously leant to Ponet. Mary explained that it was not her fault that Martyr had been so long without the books, stating that:

my dear husband has died and left me a wretched widow, and entirely unacquainted with these things: he left also I know not how many or what kind of books, all of which, as I thought they belonged to me, I sold to that excellent person, and my very good friend, master Cook.[[301]](#footnote-302)

Mary’s letter continued to explain that as soon as she had discovered the books belonged to Peter Martyr, she had immediately addressed herself to Master Cook and attempted to repurchase the books at ‘whatever cost.’[[302]](#footnote-303) Having been unable to do so and ‘exceedingly anxious’ to restore the books to Martyr, she had purchased new ones which she had forwarded through her good friend John Abel.[[303]](#footnote-304) She concluded ‘although I am but a poor widow, I had rather die than do an injury to any one, or than not pay everyone their due, as far as lies in my power,’ before asking Martyr to remember her in his prayers and signing herself ‘your reverence’s most devoted Maria Ponet.’[[304]](#footnote-305) At some point after Ponet’s death, and most likely back in England, Mary married a cleric named John Hill who was from her native Kent.[[305]](#footnote-306) Hill’s location and his relationship with Mary’s brothers, who were both named as the executors of his will, suggests that he may have already been part of the family’s evangelical network before his marriage to Mary.[[306]](#footnote-307) If so, then like Edward Whitchurch, he was probably an ideal and more significantly willing partner for the widow of an exiled bishop, and made provision for her children by Ponet in his will.

**Marriage was my “onelye faulte:” wives of the conformists**[[307]](#footnote-308)

Finally it is also worth considering what happened to the wives of the three bishops, Holgate, Bush and Bird, who renounced their marriages and conformed to the Marian regime. Due to his position as the Archbishop of York, action was taken swiftly against Robert Holgate who was imprisoned in the Tower of London by September 1553, where he was held until January 1555. At some point during his imprisonment Holgate wrote a lengthy petition to the Council asking for his release and the restoration of his lands and goods, as well as the right to perform sacerdotal functions again. The petition highlighted Holgate’s long and valuable service to the crown and expressed regret solely on the issue of his marriage, which he described as his ‘onelye faulte.’[[308]](#footnote-309) He also highlighted that the other imprisoned bishops were ‘moche further gone amyss’ in religion then he was.’[[309]](#footnote-310) Holgate apologised for marrying ‘unwisely’ and ‘gyving evell example to other to do the like,’ recognising that he was ‘verye muche worthie punyshement’ for this crime given his prominent position as the ‘seacounde prelaite of this realme.’[[310]](#footnote-311) In justification of his actions, however, Holgate claimed that he had only married on the counsel of Edward Duke of Somerset, and out of ‘feare of the laite Duke of Northumberlande,’ who used to ‘call him papiste.’[[311]](#footnote-312) More bravely, he also acknowledged that he himself had believed that he could marry by ‘Godes lawes and the Kinges,’ highlighting the fact that clerical marriage had in fact been legalised by both Parliament and Convocation during Edward’s reign.[[312]](#footnote-313) The petition has often been regarded as evidence of Holgate’s weakness and lack of commitment to the reformed cause, with Dickens previously referring to it as a ‘cringing document’.[[313]](#footnote-314) However, Dickens later offered a more sympathetic interpretation and emphasised Holgate’s age, he was over seventy four years old, and the long months he had spent in the Tower, as well as his desire to regain his properties to continue to administer his extensive charitable endeavours in the North.[[314]](#footnote-315) Parish has also suggested that under duress Holgate returned to the ideals he had held before the last decade of ‘more radical activity,’ having adopted his reformed ideas relatively late in life.[[315]](#footnote-316) As the second prelate of the realm he was also forced to make a public and definitive choice with his position precluding any opportunity for him to retire quietly. After his release, Holgate seems to have remained in London, where he died in November 1555. Under the shadow of the Tower it is unlikely that Holgate made any contact with his wife Barbara and she is not mentioned in his will. However, as Prior discovered, it seems that Barbara was able to keep possession of the manor of Scrooby, granted to the couple during Edward’s reign, which she still owned in 1573.[[316]](#footnote-317)

It is not clear what happened to the wife of John Bird, bishop of Chester, although his subsequent promotions within the Marian Church would suggest that he did not retain contact with her, or perhaps that she died. This was the situation faced by Paul Bush, the bishop of Bristol, whose wife, Edith, died just three months after Mary’s accession in October 1553. This did not prevent Bush’s deprivation in March 1554 as a married bishop, although he was allowed to retire to the parish of Winterbourne where he became the rector. He evidently did not have any problem reconciling himself to the restoration of Catholicism, and on the basis of his known religious opinions he may even have welcomed it.[[317]](#footnote-318) However, whilst Bush may not have been strongly committed to the reformed cause, his case provides evidence of the pervasive legacy of clerical marriage and the Marian regime’s difficulty in eradicating all traces of it. Amongst the lower clergy Spielmann has argued strongly that whilst there is evidence to support the standard assessment that the majority of Tudor clergy passively accepted the successive religious changes imposed upon them by Church and state, clerical marriage provides an exception.[[318]](#footnote-319) Unlike other contentious doctrines it affected them personally, and Spielmann states that the clergy cannot have forgotten that their wives and children had been fully legitimate in the previous reign. Throughout Mary’s reign numerous clergy who had renounced their marriages to prevent deprivation found ways to maintain relationships with their wives and children, and in some cases remarried their wives on the accession of Elizabeth I.[[319]](#footnote-320) This was a problem recognised by the authorities, but one they ultimately failed to combat, with a number of married priests slipping under their radar entirely. According to Spielmann this provides definitive evidence that ‘clerical marriage ‘could not be eradicated for the English church and clergy,’ remaining a hope for many priests and a reality for others.[[320]](#footnote-321)

Although Bush’s wife had died, the couple had a son, Paul, and there are several indications that Bush simply did not turn his back on his family or entirely repudiate his marriage. In the first instance when Edith died she was buried in the North Aisle of Bristol Cathedral, suggesting that she had been living with or near Bush as late as October 1553. Further, in his will, created in 1558, Bush left instructions for his own tomb to be constructed close to the spot where his wife had already been buried.[[321]](#footnote-322) Whilst neither of the inscriptions on their respective monuments mentioned the couple’s marriage, Edith’s did use her married name, reading, ‘of your charyte pray for the soule of Edith Bushe, otherwise Ashley, who deceased 8 October 1553.’[[322]](#footnote-323) Although he had been deprived, Bush’s monument celebrated that he had been the first bishop of Bristol and depicted him as an emaciated figure lying on a rush mat with his head resting on a mitre and his pastoral staff by his side. Whilst Bush’s marriage was perhaps not a marker of his theology, his commemoration, and more significantly that of his wife in a prominent location in Bristol Cathedral, would support Spielmann’s assertion that in spite of their best efforts the Marian regime failed to eradicate clerical marriage, literally setting in stone its recent reality in the diocese of Bristol. Alongside the commemoration of his wife, Bush also made provision for the couple’s young son, Paul, through purchasing a property and the surrounding land in the county of Gloucester in 1556 for the use of ‘Bushe in his life with remainder successively to Paul Asshely, son of Edith Assheley, deceased, alias Paul Busshe in fee tail, and to the said Paul Busshe, clerk, in fee simple.’[[323]](#footnote-324) As with Edith’s memorial, their son is referred to as an Ashley, but his former status as a legitimate child under the previous regime is also acknowledged. This is the only reference to the couple’s son, and it has previously been assumed that Bush did not have any children. Unfortunately, it does not appear that Bush’s son survived infancy, as he is not mentioned in Bush’s will, made two years later.[[324]](#footnote-325) Bush did however remember his wife’s family and left items to a number of Edith’s siblings and their spouses, evidencing the enduring legacy of the connections made through clerical marriage.

**Conclusion**

Whilst the Edwardian period and particularly the reign of Mary I was undoubtedly ‘a time of adversity’ for the first generation of English bishops’ wives it was also a time of survival, both for the women themselves and the institution of clerical marriage. In making their extraordinary decision to marry a bishop these women created a legacy which could not be reversed by the Marian regime. Although Prior has argued that the bishops’ wives who went into exile were unable to do anything to contribute to the survival of English Protestantism, their very presence there embodied the recent reality of clerical marriage in England, and one of the key reformed doctrines for which their husbands had been exiled or martyred.[[325]](#footnote-326) Far from being passive figures the women who went into exile played a previously unacknowledged role in transmitting news between their husbands and the continental reformers. Back in England, despite the persecution of the Marian regime, vestiges of episcopal marriage remained in the provisions made by Bush and Ferrar for their children; Whitchurch’s dogged protection of the Cranmer family; and the commemoration of Edith Bush on the steps of the North Altar in Bristol Cathedral. Pettegree has argued that Protestantism had made enough progress in England by 1553 to ‘leave a robust residue; indeed, a far more robust and numerous remnant than has often been recognised.’[[326]](#footnote-327) This can certainly be applied to clerical marriage and although only Agatha Barlow and Elizabeth Scory returned from exile to their former positions, a legacy had been created which could not be undone in Mary’s short reign, and Elizabeth I would appoint sixteen married men to her first bench of bishops.

As the first generation of bishops’ wives, the women married to Edwardian bishops established a number of precedents and traditions that came to define the role. Whilst there is limited evidence for their day to day lives and position within the large episcopal households, what little there is, points to the idealised characteristics of piety, godliness, charity, intellect, good household management and devotion to the work of their husbands. Less positively, there is also evidence of concerns being raised about their overlapping role as ‘godly wives’ and mistresses of large estates, which was a recurrent criticism levelled at bishops and their wives.

The first generation were, however, in some respects also unique, with both their backgrounds and motivations for marrying bishops distinct from those of later generations. The novelty of the position and the uncertainty of the times meant that they came from a much more diverse range of backgrounds, than would be typical later on. Whilst a number came from the English gentry, the wives of Hooper, Coverdale and Cranmer were related to members of the continental reform community, creating important links between England and the continent. The wives of Hooper and Coverdale were also from the Dutch and Scottish aristocracy, respectively, which is again a marker of the unusualness of the times, with bishops later highly unlikely to make matches with the aristocracy either at home or abroad. These women also embody the fact that marriage to a bishop during this period was far more likely to have been driven by personal religious belief, in light of the precarious religious situation. At the very least all of the women were willing to ignore traditional church teachings on clerical celibacy, and in doing so created a distinct break with past practice, becoming became living exemplars of Reformation doctrine.

**“The Queen will wink at it but not stablish it by law which is nothing else but to bastard our children”**[[327]](#footnote-328)

**Clerical marriage 1559-c.1570.**

Edwin Sandys’ angry response to Elizabeth I’s perceived attitude towards clerical marriage is often cited by historians as evidence of the Queen’s hostility towards the institution and her bishops increasing dissatisfaction with her religious settlement. Although Elizabeth’s accession in 1558 had been greeted with acclamation by the reformers, their early enthusiasm quickly turned to frustration at the slow pace of change and the Queen’s obstructive behaviour. For many, and particularly those who had returned from exile abroad, the 1559 Settlement simply did not go far enough; and as Sandys complained, failed to return clerical marriage to a statutory basis. Exactly what the motivations behind the Settlement were and the interplay of Elizabeth’s personal religious views has engendered a rich and complex historiography.[[328]](#footnote-329) In spite of previous claims to the contrary, it is now widely acknowledged that the Settlement was in essence a return to Edwardian Protestantism and that Elizabeth herself subscribed to some kind of reformed belief.[[329]](#footnote-330)Aspects of the settlement remain, however, difficult to reconcile and Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage is a particular stumbling block. Whilst proponents of the *via media* asserted that it was indicative of her innate religious conservatism, more recent interpretations have regarded it as more of a personal quirk. Elizabeth was essentially a Protestant, but, strictly on her own terms; either retaining elements of religious conservatism, or, as MacCulloch has argued, subscribing to a more old fashioned Henrician evangelicalism.[[330]](#footnote-331) Following the work of Carlson, there have also been further attempts to modify traditional assumptions about Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage and argue that her supposed hostility has either been misinterpreted or over exaggerated..[[331]](#footnote-332)

This chapter will contribute to the debate surrounding Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage, through a close focus on the first generation of Elizabethan married bishops and their wives, who are particularly well documented. Whilst numerous studies have referred to Elizabeth’s attitude and touched on anecdotal evidence about particular bishops’ wives, very few have given any consideration to the actual lived experience of these women or compared them together as a group. This chapter will therefore move beyond anecdotes to assess the extent to which Elizabeth’s attitude actually affected the first generation of her bishops and their wives. It will argue that whilst Elizabeth undoubtedly demonstrated a consistently hostile attitude towards clerical marriage, this did not in practice have any significant impact on the development of the institution, which was well established by 1570. This is not to deny that Elizabeth’s less than clear policy towards clerical marriage had no ramifications for bishops and their families. Matthew Parker clearly took the warnings of Sandys seriously and had his eldest son legitimised by a private Act of Parliament early in Elizabeth’s reign.[[332]](#footnote-333) Parker’s wife, Margaret, who predeceased him in 1570, also had difficulty leaving her personal property to her sons after her death, apparently due to the unclear legal status of clerical marriage.[[333]](#footnote-334) There is also evidence that many of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops were deeply discomfited by Elizabeth’s attitude and clearly felt personally under attack. However, in spite of this Elizabeth’s attitude did not prevent the re-establishment of clerical marriage and by 1570 it was a secure feature of the English Church. In the coming years, as the married bishops began to die in office, many were replaced with married colleagues, which helped to consolidate the position of clerical marriage within the church and increase its normalcy in wider society.[[334]](#footnote-335)

Although the debate about Elizabeth’s attitude has dominated studies of clerical marriage, this chapter will also consider the other factors which may have affected the experience of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops’ wives. Perhaps most significant was the new regime’s failure to make any substantive changes to the funding structure of the Church, and Elizabeth’s acquisitive tendencies towards church property. Concern was first raised by the 1559 Act of Exchange. This formalised the crowns right to take manors from the bishops in exchange for spiritualities, prompting several returning exiles to turn down bishoprics. Although in the long term it has been argued that the exchanges were not in themselves particularly detrimental to church finances, they were felt as part of a general climate of economic insecurity.[[335]](#footnote-336) This was exacerbated by the crown’s refusal to support the bishops against the demands of the laity. Church lands were a valuable source of patronage for the crown, and bishops who attempted to oppose alienation of church lands or unfavourable land exchanges with the aristocracy, were open to accusations of disloyalty. On the other hand, the bishops were still expected to maintain their traditional role in society; contributing to local politics, dispensing generous hospitality and charity, as well as fulfilling all of their spiritual obligations. This was without any modifications to their income to compensate for losses to the aristocracy or rising inflation.[[336]](#footnote-337) On top of this clerical marriage represented an additional financial burden. This fell particularly hard on some of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops, many of whom returned from exile with few reserves and having been denied the opportunity to build up profits throughout Mary’s reign. The bishops were watched closely for any signs of nepotism and, as will be demonstrated, legitimate families added new fuel to their disputes with their aristocratic competitors, with bishops’ wives in particular held responsible for parsimonious behaviour.

The local conditions in the diocese and the attitude of the local elite also had a major impact on the experience of the bishops and their wives and how easy they found it to fulfil their new positions. In more conservative regions such as Durham, where there was an entrenched conservative hierarchy and which was directly affected by the northern uprising of 1569, it was undoubtedly much harder for a married bishop and his wife to gain acceptance, as Bishop Pilkington would discover. The previous experience of the bishops’ wives would also have shaped how they were able to adjust to their new roles. Only two of the married Edwardian bishops were reinstated by Elizabeth after returning from continental exile with their wives. In contrast the rest of the newly appointed Elizabethan bishops were notable for their lack of administrative experience within the Church. Whilst a number, including Matthew Parker, had held senior positions within the universities, only Robert Horne, the Edwardian dean of Durham, had formerly held a senior Church position. This would have meant an equally large adjustment for their wives, many of whom had no experience of running large scale households and who would have previously moved in very different social circles.

Indeed, for many of the bishops and some of their wives, their most recent experience had been in exile or in hiding during Mary’s reign. It has often been noted that taking up a bishopric changed the men who had returned from exile, with the realities and responsibilities of office holding and maintaining families, blunting the edges of their religious fervour.[[337]](#footnote-338) However, it was also a big transition for their wives, with conditions in England very different to those they had experienced in exile. Within the exile communities clerical marriage had been well established and as demonstrated in chapter one, women had been given unusual opportunities to engage with the reformed leadership, and contribute to the running and organisation of the reformed churches. Back in England there was still considerable hostility towards clerical marriage. The close relationships formed during exile were also weakened by distance, as their husbands became dispersed across the country and preoccupied with their new roles. This chapter will consider how women coped with this transition, and how their experiences in exile or their previous lives may have prepared them for their new roles.

Taking a view at 1570 it will also consider the extent to which the development of clerical marriage correlated with wider developments in the English Church. There is no doubt that Elizabeth’s reign saw the consolidation of practices and structures that decisively broke away from the models of the continental churches. Whilst there was some protest against these trends, most notably in the Vestarian Controversy of 1566, there was never again any discussion of an international Protestant synod, as imagined by Thomas Cranmer in the 1550s; and the English Church began to go its own way.[[338]](#footnote-339) This is not to say, however, that the bishops forgot their exile experience in the pursuit of office. Whilst there is no doubt that their new positions within the hierarchical English Church required some modifications and compromises, surviving correspondence between the bishops and their former continental hosts, demonstrates the enduring significance of their exile connections to both them and their wives. Although several later bishops also had strong links to the exile movement, this first generation and their connections were, like their Edwardian predecessors, in some respects unique, as the international years of the English Reformation came to an end.

**“Her Majesty continueth very evil affected by the state of matrimony in the clergy.” The 1559 Settlement and clerical marriage**[[339]](#footnote-340)

Much of the debate about Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage is based on interpretations of the measures either taken or not taken to legalise clerical marriage at the beginning of her reign. The situation was certainly complex and it is easy to see why Sandys became frustrated with the outcome of the 1559 Settlement. As he complained to Parker, no laws concerning the marriage of priests were passed during the 1559 Parliament and the Edwardian legislation, which had been repealed by Mary, was not restored to the statute book.[[340]](#footnote-341) Indeed, Elizabeth actually removed an article that would have straightforwardly legalised clerical marriage from the final draft of the Supremacy Bill.[[341]](#footnote-342) However, during the 1559 Royal visitation an injunction was issued explicitly affirming the legality of clerical marriage, though it did specify that all prospective clerical wives must be vetted by a bishop and two justices of the peace. This was followed by a notorious set of injunctions ‘for the better government of Cathedrals’ issued by Elizabeth whilst on progress in Ipswich in 1561.[[342]](#footnote-343) In a letter to Archbishop Parker, Cecil described how Elizabeth had taken offence at the ‘undiscreet’ behaviour of the local clergy and equated this with their marital status, stating:

Her majesty continueth very evil affected by the state of matrimony in the clergy. And if [I] were not therein very stiff, her Majesty would utterly and openly condemn and forbid it.[[343]](#footnote-344)

The injunctions therefore appear to have been a strategy adopted to appease Elizabeth and prevent her from taking more drastic action. They forbade clerical wives and children from living within the precincts of cathedrals or colleges, stating that their presence there had caused ‘no small offence’ to the intended scholarly environment of these institutions.[[344]](#footnote-345) This was the last direct ordinance regarding clerical marriage although the Queen’s approval of a bill of subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles in 1571, which did explicitly state the legality of clerical marriage, tacitly restored it to a statutory basis. As Prior has noted, however, there was still a disparity between the wording of the Article, which stated that it was lawful for priests ‘as for all other Christian men’ to marry at their own discretion, and the process of vetting imposed by the 1559 Injunction.[[345]](#footnote-346)

Although it is easy to see how these policies have traditionally been interpreted as evidence of the Queen’s hostility towards clerical marriage, both Carlson and Usher have challenged this interpretation. Carlson has argued that Elizabeth’s attitude is far more complex than has been recognised, and that the measures she imposed to regulate clerical unions were born out of a desire to protect the Church from scandal, rather than a personal dislike of clerical marriage.[[346]](#footnote-347) It was the clergy themselves who bore far more responsibility for the slow acceptance of clerical marriage in England, with a long legacy of clerical ambivalence towards the institution.[[347]](#footnote-348) Usher broadly agreed with this analysis, confirming that Elizabeth may have feared the kind of marital scandal that had engulfed the two Edwardian bishops, John Ponet and Robert Holgate, and been led by the attitude of some of the clergy that clerical marriage was merely the lesser of two evils.[[348]](#footnote-349) Both historians also highlight the relative lack of success Elizabeth had in imposing her policies, particularly the Ipswich Injunctions, which seem to have only been strongly enforced in the Royal Peculiars of Westminster and Windsor.[[349]](#footnote-350) They also note the high number of married clerics appointed to bishoprics throughout her reign, and draw on case studies which they argue highlight Elizabeth’s tolerance towards the institution, and her favourable treatment of a number of individual married bishops.

It is, however, not possible to accept this interpretation in light of the evidence from the bishops themselves. As Elizabeth’s contemporaries, the bishops were well placed to judge her attitude and were obviously highly concerned by it. Although with hindsight it is clear that a Protestant settlement without clerical marriage would have been impossible to institute, this would undoubtedly not have seemed as certain to men who had lived through two decades of radical religious change. Whilst most modern historians have agreed that Elizabeth was ‘enough of a Protestant’ to recognise and accept the need to allow clerical marriage, this again was evidently not taken for granted for granted by her contemporaries.[[350]](#footnote-351) It is also difficult to regard Elizabeth’s actions as stemming primarily from a desire to protect the Church from scandal, and indeed both Parker and Cox believed that her actions actually had the opposite effect. In a letter to Parker, sent after he had received his copy of the Ipswich Injunctions in August 1561, Cox stated that whilst he agreed colleges should remain free from women and children, he could not understand the justification for removing them from cathedrals.[[351]](#footnote-352) Cox argued that if their families were removed, the houses of deans and prebendaries would fall into disrepair and hospitality would suffer. He also questioned the legitimacy of the policy, given the scriptural basis for clerical marriage and stated that if the clerics families ‘be hurled out suddenly,’ it would be a ‘poor reward for their preaching and godly travail hitherto.’[[352]](#footnote-353) Cox also expressed concern about how the injunctions looked to their enemies, stating, ‘what rejoicing and jeering the adversaries make! How the godly ministers are discouraged.’[[353]](#footnote-354)

These sentiments were mirrored in a long letter sent from Parker to Cecil in which he expressed his shock and outrage at the Queen’s attitude towards clerical marriage and the lack of scriptural justification for it. Describing a recent meeting with the Queen, Parker stated that:

I was in an horror to hear such words to come from her mild nature and christianly learned conscience, as she spake concerning God’s holy ordinance and institution of matrimony. I marvelled that our states in that behalf cannot please her Highness, which we doubt nothing at all to please God’s sacred majesty.[[354]](#footnote-355)

Parker continued that he feared that the Queen’s attitude, which was widely known, would seriously damage the clergy’s reputation amongst the people and provide fuel to their religious enemies. The Queen had, he described, openly expressed her regret that the married bishops had been appointed to their offices:

Which inclination being known at large to Queen Mary’s clergy they laugh prettily to see how the clergy of our time is handled, and what equity of laws be ministered to our sort.[[355]](#footnote-356)

Parker also criticised the Ipswich Injunctions, along the same lines as Cox, stating that it was a poor reward for men who openly prayed for the Queen’s prosperity and continuance, whilst other secret Catholics prospered. He also stated that the Queen had ‘talked of other manner Injunctions that shall hereafter follow,’ but which he hoped she could be prevailed upon to change her mind about to prevent the clergy from having to show her disobedience.[[356]](#footnote-357) Whilst these injunctions never materialised, Parker’s allusion to them is further evidence that nothing was being taken for granted, and there was genuine concern about the future status of clerical marriage.

Parker’s letter also expressed a very clear sense of personal betrayal about how he had been treated by the Queen and he concluded:

I have neither joy of house, land, or name, so abased by my natural sovereign good lady: for whose service and honour I would not think it cost to spend my life; to the contribution of whose desire and commandment I have earnestly travailed, or else some things might peradventure have been worse.[[357]](#footnote-358)

His recent discussion with the Queen seems to have been the final straw, with clerical marriage obviously something that the married bishops felt very strongly about. Although Parker perhaps indulged in a degree of hyperbole, many of his contemporaries would have shared his sense that having endured the uncertainties of Edward’s reign and the difficulties of Mary’s reign they were now being mistreated by the Queen in whom they had trusted. The unique circumstances in which many of the marriages of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops had been contracted, and the risks many couples subsequently endured as a result of their choice, seem to have created particularly strong bonds and marriages based on high levels of affection. This undoubtedly added to the new bishops’ sense of betrayal at the Queen’s attitude. The next section will address the circumstances of the bishops’ marriages to highlight the close bonds between couples as well as the social and religious background bishops’ wives brought to their new roles.

**‘Where never woman came before.’ The making of episcopal marriages**[[358]](#footnote-359)

As Prior has noted, the majority of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops’ wives came from within strong Protestant circles, and a significant number had spent time in exile during Mary’s reign.[[359]](#footnote-360) In total sixteen married bishops were appointed to English sees after 1559, eleven of whom were former exiles.[[360]](#footnote-361) This included the two Edwardian bishops, John Scory and William Barlow, who had been deprived for marriage after Mary’s accession and fled with their wives and families to the exile community at Emden. Behind the bishops, one of the most senior Edwardian clerics to have fled was the future bishop of Winchester, Robert Horne, who had been the Dean of Durham Cathedral before his deprivation. Unfortunately only the first name of Horne’s wife, Margery, survives, and no details of her family background are known. It can be surmised that the couple married before Horne’s appointment to the Deanery in 1551, as Horne’s marital status was referred to in criticism levelled against him by the Duke of Northumberland. Durham was a very conservative region, and it is likely that the couple would have faced criticism from other quarters as well, particularly in light of some of Horne’s provocative reforms within the Cathedral.[[361]](#footnote-362)

After Mary’s accession, Horne was very quickly summoned to London and later described how he had been charged by Cuthbert Tunstall with diverse charges, including heretical preaching, infecting the diocese with new learning and bringing his wife into the ‘cathedral where never woman came before.’[[362]](#footnote-363) Facing imprisonment, Horne fled the country with his wife, going first to Strasbourg to visit Peter Martyr, before heading to Zurich where he and his wife appealed for leave to remain. They stayed in the city for a year, before moving on to FrankfortFrankfurt where they remained until Mary’s death. In spite of the brevity of their stay in Zurich, it appears that the couple became well integrated into the reform community there. In letters to Bullinger sent after his return to England Horne frequently included greetings from his wife, which were reciprocated by Bullinger. Indeed as late as 1574, Bullinger asked Sandys to greet Horne in his name and ‘wish on my behalf every

happiness to him and his wife.’[[363]](#footnote-364)

Although there is no direct record of Margery Horne’s experience in exile, the bond between the exiles and their hosts, as well as the esteem in which clerical wives were held in reform communities, can be inferred from the letters sent between Horne and Bullinger. In a particularly effusive valediction from 1563, Horne wrote:

It now remains for me, my Bullinger, to salute affectionately, in my wife’s name as well as my own, both yourself and the excellent ladies; your wife and Froschover’s; and also your sons in law, Simler, Lewis, Lavater, and Zuinglius; as well as my beloved brethren in Christ, masters Gualter, Bibliander, Wolfius, and Haller; my landlord too, and that poor widow who waited upon us when we lived together in Froschover’s house, and to whom I have sent two crowns. [[364]](#footnote-365)

Such greetings were very common at the end of letters between the exiles and their former hosts, and served to reinforce their continued sense of belonging to an international godly community, of which women were evidently very much a part. Throughout the *Zurich letters* families and marriages were frequently celebrated and enquired about, whilst deaths, such as that of Bullinger’s wife in 1564, were commiserated. Whilst this would all be normal information to update friends with, there is a sense that such news carried extra significance to the reformers, with each new marriage and birth consolidating their religious gains and reinforcing their collective sense of identity. For this early generation, marriage may also have retained some of its novelty, with many perhaps never having anticipated that they would be able to have an openly acknowledged family. Certainly many letters evidence their delight in family life and pride and interest in the achievements of each other’s children. This was another way of keeping the connections alive and several former exiles including Sandys and Parkhurst later helped fund the studies of Rudolph Gwalther and Rudolph Zwingli [the grandson of both Bullinger and Zwingli] when they came to England in the 1570s, with Parkhurst and his wife also briefly hosting them at the episcopal palace of Ludham.[[365]](#footnote-366)

Other future bishops who left England with their wives during Mary’s reign included Richard Cox, John Parkhurst, Thomas Young and Nicholas Bullingham, all of whom had held both clerical and university positions at the time of Mary’s accession. Once again very little is known about the antecedents of these women, although they all seem to have married at an early date during Edward’s reign. Like many other reformers, Cox appears to have married his wife, known only by her first name Jane, shortly after Edward’s accession in 1547. Their marriage became public after she came to live with him at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1549, where he was the Dean. This caused conflict with some of the conservative canons, and like Mrs Horne’s residence in the Dean’s house at Durham represented a distinct break with past practise. Whilst at Oxford the couple became well acquainted with the celebrated continental reformer, Peter Martyr Vermigli, who had been invited to take up the Regius chair of Divinity at the University by Edward VI. Martyr was later joined by his wife, which caused another scandal and featured prominently in Martyr’s dispute with his predecessor, Richard Smith, who was strongly opposed to clerical marriage.[[366]](#footnote-367)

As McNair has stated, it is important not to underestimate how novel the idea of clerical marriage was in Edward’s reign, and how much of a threat it was perceived to be by conservative critics.[[367]](#footnote-368) Whilst a similar situation arose in Cambridge, where Parker and his wife played host to the Bucer’s, the more conservative climate of Oxford would have made the open co-habitation of Cox and Vermigli with their wives all the more shocking. It did, however, offer both Jane Cox and Margaret Parker the opportunity to meet women in a similar position to them, as well as meet with the foreign reform leaders. Whilst the Parkers remained in England during Mary’s reign, the Coxs went into exile, spending time in Strasbourg and FrankfortFrankfurt. When Jane died in 1568 Cox was devastated and his private diary contains a record of the epitaph he composed. He described Jane as ‘most trustworthy partner of my life,’ as well as his pain at having ‘the half part of himself’ ripped away, concluding with his wish that he might eventually ‘enjoy a joyous fate with my dear wife.’[[368]](#footnote-369) Cox showed equal distress at the death of a daughter two years later in 1570 for whom he also composed a touching poem.[[369]](#footnote-370)

Although he was approaching seventy, Cox chose to remarry after the death of his first wife. In possession of the rich diocese of Ely it seems highly likely that he could have looked for a more lucrative match the second time around, with several later bishops marrying up or at least marrying money if they became widowed.[[370]](#footnote-371) However, he chose to follow the pattern of the German reformers and married Jane Turner, a former exile and widow of the religious controversialist, William Turner. The German reformers, such as Martin Bucer, had always encouraged remarriage between the partners of deceased reformers, arguing that they made suitable consorts, with the women already prepared for life as a cleric’s wife. Before their marriage, Bucer’s wife had previously been married to both Oecolampadius and Capito, a fact Bucer believed made her particularly suitable as a prospective partner. In a letter to a fellow reformer Bucer stated:

In past years she has really proven that she is not only pure, honourable, faithful, and godly, but also a diligent helper, who fruitfully made herself useful to the church and has a gift for ministry as for many years she demonstrated in her marriage to those two precious men of God, Oecolampadius and Capito.[[371]](#footnote-372)

After reports surfaced that Cox had married a ‘young widow,’ he was forced to defend himself against reports of an inappropriate marriage and declared to Cecil that he has joined himself to a ‘good Christian woman of suitable age.’[[372]](#footnote-373) The German reformers also believed that remarriage was valid and necessary, even if there were no young children to care for; with a wife able to assist her husband with domestic tasks, leaving him free to perform his spiritual duties. Although it seems that Jane was younger than Cox, the date of her previous marriage means that she would have been well into her fifties and Cox was clearly taken aback by the criticism of his marriage.

A little more detail is known about the background of Bullingham’s wife, Margaret Sutton, the daughter of Hammond Sutton and his wife Emlyn of Washingborough, Lincolnshire. Bullingham had been appointed to a prebend in Lincoln Cathedral in 1547, and was promoted to Archdeacon in 1549, and so it is likely that he met his wife through local connections. Although there is little evidence of the religious beliefs of Margaret’s family, her mother appointed Bullingham as the co-executor of her will alongside her son, suggesting that the family had not been opposed to the marriage. After Mary’s accession the couple initially retreated to the house of Bullingham’s mother, where Margaret gave birth to the couple’s second child. Shortly afterwards Bullingham travelled to Emden, although there is no record that Margaret accompanied him, and given the very young age of her children it seems much more likely that she remained with his mother until his return at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign. Bullingham evidently felt very strongly about the issue of clerical marriage, however, and in a later Elizabethan sermon he castigated the Marian priests who ‘forsooke unnaturalye ther wives and marryede bennefycis.’[[373]](#footnote-374)

Reuniting at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign the couple went on to have three further children before Margaret’s death in 1566. Left with a young family, Bullingham subsequently remarried and like Cox chose a woman from amongst the former exiles, Elizabeth Hill. Elizabeth’s father had been Sir William Lok, alderman, and her sister was the celebrated female exile Rose Hickman. Elizabeth’s first husband, Richard Hill was a London mercer and the couple had fled to Antwerp during Mary’s reign. Remarkably, though Elizabeth had thirteen children by Richard Hill, this re-marriage did not seem to draw any criticism and Bullingham’s tombstone in Worcester Cathedral proudly stated that he was ‘A man twise maried in Gode's feare.’[[374]](#footnote-375)

Far more evidence survives for Margaret Parkhurst, who is another strong example of the need to take women’s motivations for marrying clerics as seriously as those of their husbands, and acknowledge their role in the exile movement. In spite of three surviving letters from Margaret to Bullinger, and frequent mentions in her husband’s well preserved letter collection, Margaret has received very little historical attention and her letters have remained unpublished. This neglect has recently been remedied by the work of Giselbrecht, who transcribed two of the letters for the first time and incorporated details of them into a chapter focused on Bullinger’s correspondence with Englishwomen.[[375]](#footnote-376) However, further work is required to fully rehabilitate Margaret into narratives of the English Reformation. Whilst some mystery remains about her provenance, it seems very likely that she was a native Englishwoman, possibly the daughter of Thomas Garnish of Kent. Whilst the exact date of their marriage is unclear, it does not seem to have met with approval from Margaret’s family, and in an Latin epigram Parkhurst suggested that Margaret’s father had opposed the match, and refused the couple financial aid on the basis of Parkhurst’s religious beliefs.[[376]](#footnote-377) In another, Parkhurst revelled in his delight at being a married man, as well as alluding to the necessary secrecy it entailed. In full the epigram states:

No more is there to pray for than that we may in one

House be together, united in a faithful marriage bed.

So holy a work the two horned crowd of shaven ones

Cannot endure,

The (two horned) crowd, soon to be plunged into the Stygian lakes!

But meanwhile, let us together seize out joys in private secrecy

Our all too happy, too rare joys.[[377]](#footnote-378)

Although it is not clear when exactly Parkhurst composed this epigram it is seems likely that it was at a relatively early date. It has been speculated that ‘the two horned crowd of shaven ones’ referred to monks who could not abide clerical marriage and who Parkhurst hoped would soon be overthrown. In the meantime, he stressed the continued need for secrecy, suggesting their marriage may well have taken place even before Edward’s accession.

The combined evidence from Parkhurst’s epigrams certainly indicates that Margaret Parkhurst married against her family’s wishes and the survival of her letters confirms her own strong religious convictions and keen interest in the development of the national and international Protestant movement. By 1548 the couple were living in Bishop’s Cleeve, Gloucestershire, where Parkhurst had been appointed as a rector. Here they entertained friends including Parkhurst’s former student and the future bishop of Salisbury John Jewel. A rare insight into the confusion and rumours that overtook the reformers in the months following Mary’s accession is provided by a series of letters sent by Jewel to Parkhurst, in an increasingly desperate attempt to discover Parkhurst’s whereabouts and what had happened to him. Despite eventually hearing that Parkhurst was well, Jewel nevertheless set out to check on him at Cleeve, where he was variously told that Parkhurst had ‘yielded to the times,’ or ‘simply fled.’[[378]](#footnote-379) However, Jewel had not believed the rumours and he described how he had continued on to Cleeve where he had found Margaret ‘shut up in the house, guarded by not a very large body of servants, unconcerned about herself, wretchedly anxious about you.’[[379]](#footnote-380) Jewel repeated his request for Parkhurst to get in touch as soon as possible, and alluded to his own precarious situation at Cambridge, describing how he was miserable but fairing ‘better perhaps than they wished who are displeased that we are alive at all.’[[380]](#footnote-381)

There was a tendency amongst the exiles and those who chose to remain in hiding in England to exaggerate the danger they experienced after Mary’s accession. However, there is no reason to doubt that both Jewel and his wife were ‘wretchedly anxious’ about Parkhurst with so many arrests having taken place.[[381]](#footnote-382) There is no record of where Parkhurst was during this period to cause such anxiety, although he and Margaret had reached the continent by July and arrived in Zurich by October 1554. The couple stayed in the city until January 1559. During this time they established friendships with a number of the leading Swiss reformers and their wives which survived long after their return to England. In a letter sent shortly after their arrival back in London in May 1559, Parkhust wrote of his wife that ‘she very frequently falls into tears when any mention is made of the ladies of Zurich,’ evidencing her close friendships with these women.[[382]](#footnote-383) Such strong sentiment was later echoed in a letter sent after the death of Bullinger’s wife in 1565, in which Parkhurst wrote:

As soon as she [Margaret] heard of the death of your wife and daughter she burst into a flood of tears. I was therefore obliged for some time to discontinue reading, as she was unable to listen.[[383]](#footnote-384)

The letters also contain references to affectionate gifts sent by Margaret, including two pairs of boots sent to Bullinger in 1563 to protect him from the winter.[[384]](#footnote-385)

The three surviving letters of Margaret Parkhurst, written between 1561 and 1562, confirm in her own words the closeness of her relationship to the reformers and their wives. They are all written to Bullinger in German, and in the first dated 14 May 1561, Margaret conferred her blessings and good wishes on Gwalther and his new wife on the occasion of their marriage, and sent general greetings to all of their common friends and Bullinger’s family.[[385]](#footnote-386) It also contained a report on Parkhurst’s health, which was an enduring cause of concern for Margaret, and a summary of the state of the Church. Like so many other English reformers, Margaret confirmed that the times were not easy and that her husband was aware of the need to tread carefully and beware of his opponents evil and false tongues. She was, however, optimistic, that things were getting better and the papists were becoming uncomfortable.[[386]](#footnote-387) The second letter was shorter and spoke largely about how pleased she was that Hans Heinrich Smidt was staying with them, with the rest of the letter again sending greetings and blessings to all her acquaintances in Zurich.[[387]](#footnote-388)

The final letter contained more political information, and again demonstrates Margaret’s concern about the future of the Church.[[388]](#footnote-389) Margaret thanked Bullinger and his family for not forgetting the difficulties still faced by the English people and their Queen. She described how the country had not sent any representatives to the Council of Trent, because of the Pope’s participation, and prayed that God would protect them from all evil and badness. There was also another update on Parkhurst’s health, and Margaret described how he had become very unwell after preaching outside in Norwich. Although for a while his life had been despaired of, God had providentially spared Parkhurst so that he could continue his valuable work with the people. Like Anne Hooper before her, Margaret evidently strongly believed in the necessity of her husband’s work, and as Jewel had earlier reported, showed concern only for him. Margaret also clearly shared in the reformers sense of providence that they were living through important times in the Church’s history.

The first Elizabethan Archbishop of York, Thomas Young, had also fled to the continent with his wife during Mary’s reign, where they had spent the majority of their exile in Emden. Although the first name of Young’s wife is unknown, she was the daughter of George Constantine, the registrar of St David’s, where Young had been the precentor during Edward’s reign. Little is known about her and she did not long survive the couples return to England. Slightly more is known about the wife of Thomas Bentham, the future bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who had been one of the fellows at Magdalen College removed by Stephen Gardiner during his visitation in 1554. He went abroad, where he spent time in Zurich, Basle and FrankfortFrankfurt, before receiving an invitation to work on the Geneva Bible. Bentham accepted and arrived in Geneva in November 1557, where he met and married his wife, Maud Fawcon, who was an exile in her own right. Whilst nothing is known about her family background, or whether she had travelled into exile in a group or on her own, she came from the village of Hadleigh in Suffolk, which was well known as a strong centre of reformed belief. It has been suggested that she may have been a member of Dr Rowland Taylor’s congregation, who had been appointed to Hadleigh in 1544, and who was martyred in 1555. Unusually, the couple returned to London before Mary’s death, where Bentham ministered to the secret Protestant underground and spoke out at some of the last London burnings. Years of exile and a modest background meant Bentham came to his new diocese with little money and a scholarly background which did little to prepare him for the rigours of running a diocese. He struggled to overcome the many difficulties in his diocese and left his widow and six children badly provided for, with debts of £1100 to the crown and £250 to the bishopric.[[389]](#footnote-390)

Of the remaining former exiles who went on to become bishops under Elizabeth I, only Edwin Sandys was married during Edward’s reign to a remote cousin called Mary Sandys. He spent time in Cambridge with Martin Bucer, where he was the vice-chancellor and was also appointed to several prebends. Having publicly declared for Lady Jane Grey, Sandys was arrested and sent to the Tower before being transferred to the Marshalsea. He was, however, released and went to Strasbourg where his wife later joined him, although she died soon afterwards along with the couple’s baby son. Shortly after his return to England, Sandys married again on 19 February 1559, at a point when clerical marriage was still technically illegal. His second wife, Cicely, was the daughter of Sir Thomas Wilford of Kent, and it seems likely that her family had strong reformed sympathies. Whilst it has been speculated that she may have been an exile herself, there is no record of this and Sandys makes no mention of her until after his return to England; although her brother definitely did go abroad and later bequeathed her a Geneva Bible.[[390]](#footnote-391)

Both James Pilkington and Gilbert Berkeley also spent time abroad, predominantly in FrankfortFrankfurt, but only married after their return to England. Like Sandys, Pilkington married into a staunchly Protestant gentry family. His wife, Alice Kingsmill, was the daughter of Sir John Kingsmill of Sigmantun, Hampshire, and like Cicely one of her brothers had also been an exile during Mary’s reign.[[391]](#footnote-392) It is not known exactly when the couple married, but it would have been sometime before 1564, when their first child was baptised in St Andrews, Auckland, by which point Pilkington was already into his forties. Interestingly, the marriage appears to have been kept secret at first, with Pilkington describing Alice in his will, dated 1571, as ‘my now known wife.’[[392]](#footnote-393) It is not clear why this may have been the case, although it has been assumed that it was due to the general prejudice against married clergy. Pilkington did initially refuse the bishopric of Winchester when it was offered to him, due to proposed alienations, and campaigned for better livings for the clergy, before finally being appointed to Durham in February 1561. As he was not already known to have been married, Pilkington may have felt it was wiser to keep it secret during the negotiations. Pilkington was the first married prelate of Durham, and faced considerable opposition from the conservative diocese throughout his episcopate, which culminated in the Rebellion of the North in 1569. In his account of the rebellion Fuller stated that both Pilkington’s wife and his infant daughters had been caught up in the violence, and had fled in fear of their lives dressed as beggars.[[393]](#footnote-394) There is no other account to verify this story, and Pilkington is known to have fled south at the first sign of trouble, and so it is unlikely that he would have left his wife and daughters behind. However, Pilkington’s house and property were plundered and it is likely that life in Durham was difficult both before and after the rebellion, with Catholic survivalism remaining a major issue in the region. Pilkington himself complained bitterly to Cecil about the state of the diocese, and compared himself to ‘biblical characters forced into exile or obliged, against their will, to carry out impossible tasks.’[[394]](#footnote-395) Although, there is no record of Alice’s feelings about her new home, it was undoubtedly just as much of a ‘culture shock’ for her, having grown up in a Protestant family in Hampshire.[[395]](#footnote-396)

The marriage of Gilbert Berkeley to Emme Smarthwett may also have been conducted under more secretive circumstances and has previously been doubted as having taken place at all. This is due to the fact that Berkeley did not make any mention of his marital status in his will or make it clear that Emme was his legal wife, describing her as:

Emme Smarthwett borne in Dente in Yorkshire daughter to Roger Smarthwett of the said towne of Dent servant to old Mr Ffielde of Wakefielde and servante to his sonne Matthew Ffielde in Sainte Lawrence Lane in London.[[396]](#footnote-397)

It was previously thought that this concealment was due to the Queen’s hostility, although it has recently been speculated that it was more ‘to conceal what was probably a social *mésalliance*.’[[397]](#footnote-398) It is undoubtedly true that from Berkeley’s description it would appear that Emme was from a particularly modest background. However, two separate sources demonstrate that Emme’s status was both known about and accepted during Berkeley’s episcopate, at least within reformed circles. The first is a letter from John Parkhurst, dated 19 October 1572, in which he concluded, ‘and so with my hartye comendacions to you and to your good yokefellow,’ unquestionably referring to Emme.[[398]](#footnote-399) The second source is the will of John Rugge, who was the Archdeacon of Wells during Berkeley’s episcopate. In his will Rugge left Emme a gold ring, and explicitly referred to her as ‘Misteris Barkelie his Lordshippes wife. He also left a ring to Berkeley, and beseeched him to ‘finde and further my pooer wife in such cases as she shall neede his Lordshoppes assistance.’[[399]](#footnote-400) This not only demonstrates that Emme’s status was acknowledged within Berkeley’s diocese, but also evidences the close relationships that could exist between the families of the cathedral close, a factor which will be explored further in chapter four.

The remainder of the first generation of Elizabethan bishops, Matthew Parker, William Alley, John Best, William Downham and Edmund Scambler all chose to remain in England during Mary’s reign. Alongside William Cecil, Matthew Parker’s subsequent promotion to Archbishop of Canterbury meant that he has come to be seen as one of the most significant Nicodemites, consciously choosing to stay in the country as opposed to going into exile. Parker and his wife, Margaret née Harlestone, had married shortly after Edward’s accession in 1547. According to Strype’s account, this followed a seven year courtship during which the couple had mutually decided to ‘abstain from wedlock,’ whilst the Act of Six Articles remained in force and clerical marriage was a felony.[[400]](#footnote-401) However, it is possible that they had been living together since 1544. Like many reformers they married prematurely, with clerical marriage not formally legalised until February 1549. This does not seem to have caused any imminent problems although it later prompted Parker to legitimise his eldest son, who had been born before this date by an Act of Parliament.

Margaret came from a gentry family of ‘good Quality and Wealth,’ which together with her long involvement with Parker suggests that marriage to him was a considered choice.[[401]](#footnote-402) Both of Margaret’s brothers held strong reformed beliefs and her brother Simon practiced as a priest in the town of Mendlesham. In 1556 Harlestone was forced to flee Mendlesham with his wife and five children and was later in danger of his life but spared through his accusers death.[[402]](#footnote-403) Like the Parker’s, the Harlestone family chose to go into hiding in England during Mary’s reign, although it seems likely that Margaret’s other brother, Robert, did go into exile on the continent.[[403]](#footnote-404) At the time of their marriage, Parker was the master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and Margaret became the first woman to live in the master’s house within the college precincts. In spite of the novelty, the couple do not seem to have faced the same acrimony levelled at Cox and his wife and were able to entertain freely. It was whilst at Cambridge that Bishop Ridley paid his famous visit in which he was so struck by Margaret’s ‘comely Features,’ and with ‘what becoming and prudent Behaviour all her Speeches and Actions were comported,’ that he enquired whether she had a sister like herself.[[404]](#footnote-405) The couple also met the continental reformer Martin Bucer and his wife, with whom they dined several times, as well as the Italian Hebraist Immanuel Tremellius and his wife, with whom they became close friends.

Although the Bucers’ stay in Cambridge was only brief, it would have allowed Margaret the opportunity to meet the wife of a continental reformer who provided the only available models for English clerical wives. After Mary’s accession the family went into hiding in Norfolk, remaining there until Elizabeth’s accession. They were not totally cut off from the reform movement, however, and seem to have been able to keep up with events. Parker seems to have been particularly moved by the fate of his old friend John Cheke, who was captured by agents of the Crown whilst returning from visiting his wife in Brussels in 1556. During his imprisonment at the Tower of London and in fear of his life, Cheke recanted and was released, although was said to be consumed with shame and died less than a year later.[[405]](#footnote-406) His fate evidently struck a chord with Parker, who perhaps had to wrangle with his own decision to remain in England in hiding, and he later wrote on a copy of Cheke’s recantation, *Homines sumus*, ‘we are men.’[[406]](#footnote-407) The Parkers also suffered a personal tragedy during this period, when Margaret was delivered of a short lived son, Joseph, in September 1556, who did not survive the year. Strype speculates that the name may have been chosen:

for the same reason that Jacob so called his Son of that Name, because God had Added another Son to those several others born to him before as also, to parallel his present Condition to that of Joseph, who suffered much for preserving a good Conscience.[[407]](#footnote-408)

Whilst this can only be speculation, the choice certainly fits the trend of naming children after Old Testament figures found amongst the Marian exiles, who compared their fate to that of the Israelites and the state of the realm of England to the Babylonian Captivity.[[408]](#footnote-409) Both Robert Horne and Richard Cox had daughters called Rachel and Rebecca, whilst Pilkington named his daughters Ruth and Deborah and his two short-lived sons, Isaac and Joshua.

The remainder of the bishops were more obscure figures during Edward’s reign. Although little is known of William Alley’s early life his friend, the Exeter historian John Hooker, stated that he married during Edward’s reign and was consequently forced to vacate his rectory after Mary’s accession. His wife was Sybil Honacott, from Landkey, north Devon, although nothing is known about her family or their religious background. During Mary’s reign, Hooker described how Alley:

trauelled from place to place, in the North countrie, where he was not knowne; and sometimes by practising of phi|sick, and sometimes by teaching of scholers, he picked out a poore liuing for himselfe and his wife, and so continued, being not knowne to haue béene a préest, during all Q. Maries time.[[409]](#footnote-410)

Whilst it is likely that Hooker may have exaggerated Alley’s travails during Mary’s reign, his story demonstrates the hardships faced by the married clerics who lost their livings through refusing to give up their wives, and did not have family money to fall back on. A similar situation was faced by John Best, and his wife Elizabeth Somner, both of whom were from obscure Yorkshire backgrounds and who were married around 1550. After his deprivation for marriage in 1554, it seems the couple returned to the north, where they became part of the protestant underground in Yorkshire. Curiously, William Downham does not seem to have had to give up his livings and indeed was actually promoted throughout Mary’s reign, despite having definitely been married by 1554. It is possible that he was protected by the patronage of the then Princess Elizabeth, who occupied one of his previous houses throughout Mary’s reign. Whilst previously his wife’s name was unknown, her first name can now be identified as Katherine through a document in the Cheshire archives.[[410]](#footnote-411)

**“I must confess my continuall misliking of preestes marriage.”**[[411]](#footnote-412)

A brief survey of the background of the wives of the first Elizabethan bishops confirms that many had spent time in exile abroad, within the Protestant underground, or had close relations who had been directly involved in these movements. Whilst again, there are few direct statements of their faith, outside the letters of Margaret Parkhurst, their actions largely speak for themselves. The women who had married clerics during Edward’s reign had already demonstrated that they were willing to flout social convention, in some cases setting up their homes in previously male-only institutions. Both exile and the decision to remain in England after Mary’s accession carried some risk, and even the women who married after Elizabeth’s accession did so in a climate in which the legality of clerical marriage still seems to have been tinged with uncertainty. Their husbands’ acquisition of bishoprics would radically change their lives and put them in positions they had perhaps never anticipated holding. Like their Edwardian predecessors, many of these women came from social backgrounds that would not have prepared them from their new positions. Although several came from gentry backgrounds, others came from undoubtedly more obscure social backgrounds. Several of the first Elizabethan bishops died deeply in debt and their wives’ impoverished state during their widowhoods would suggest that they did not have any independent financial support from their families to fall back on. To some extent this was caused by the unusual circumstances in which many of the marriages had been formed, with the novelty of clerical marriage often meaning that normal marital practices and conventions were not followed. As clerical marriage became more established, however, the associated risks with marrying a cleric were reduced and there was no longer any need for clandestine matches or for bishops to obscure their marital status.

Although the Queen’s hostile attitude towards clerical marriage has attracted the most attention, the bishops’ relationship with the local aristocracy could also be strained, with competition for land and titles often the root cause of disputes. Bishops were also increasingly accused of neglecting their local social and political responsibilities to accumulate money for the benefit of their families. Whilst these types of accusations were nothing new, clerical marriage provided critics with a potent new target, and clerical wives in particular were often held to be accountable for their husband’s behaviour. This had begun in Edward’s reign, with criticisms about parsimony and lax moral behaviour often directly equated with a cleric’s marital status. In January 1553, the Duke of Northumberland had written a letter to the Privy Council complaining about what he regarded to be the lack of religious provision in Durham. He described how he had been particularly disappointed by the then Dean of Durham, Robert Horne, who he described as a ‘gredy covetous man,’ as well as ‘a malicious and an open evell speaker.’[[412]](#footnote-413) The Duke concluded by asking that a suitable replacement be found, complaining that too many of the King’s recent clerical appointments ‘be so sottyed of theyr wyves and chyldren that they forget bothe theyre poore neyghbores and all other things w[hi]ch to theyr calling Appteynaths.’[[413]](#footnote-414) He also warned that this would continue, ‘so longe as his ma[jes]ie shall suffer theym to have so great posessions to mayntene theyr idle lyves.’[[414]](#footnote-415)

Elizabeth’s decision to maintain the traditional structure of the Church and the estates of the bishops, without providing any compensation either for their losses or the additional burden of clerical marriage, meant that they and their wives remained susceptible to these accusations throughout her reign. One of the bitterest disputes arose between Edwin Sandys, bishop of Worcester, and his neighbour, Sir John Bourne, in 1563. The two men already had an acrimonious history, having crossed paths during Mary I’s reign, when Bourne had been her principal secretary of state. However, Bourne’s accusations were largely focused on Sandys’ behaviour since becoming the bishop of Worcester in 1559, and were set out in a series of articles sent to the Privy Council. Although they contained typical accusations about parsimonious behaviour and despoiling episcopal estates, they also contained a distinctly new type of gendered malice targeted at Sandys’ wife. For example, after accusing Sandys of allowing the episcopal manor of Grymley to fall into disrepair, Bourne stated that Sandys had:

taken a greate quantitie of brycke and other stuffe p[ar]cell of the sayde house and made ther w[i]th at his palace a washing house necessarye for his wyiffs laundrye.[[415]](#footnote-416)

This was followed by a similar accusation that he had pulled down the manor house of Northwick, selling off half the materials for a profit and using the rest to erect:

A pretye buylding w[hi]ch he calleth his nursery to w[hi]ch use it also is putt his wyief beinge of good fecundytye and a very frutefull woman.[[416]](#footnote-417)

To furnish the nursery, Bourne claimed that Sandys had:

Lykewyse rased and pulled downe a fayre longe vaulted chappell of stone standinge w[i]th in his sayde pallace.[[417]](#footnote-418)

Throughout his attack Bourne was at pains to negatively compare Sandys’ behaviour to that of his predecessors, who had according to him cared for these buildings and used them correctly for the promotion of hospitality. One way of doing this was to highlight the malign feminine influence exerted by Sandys’ wife, with the inference throughout that Sandys actions were at her instigation. Typical accusations of despoiling episcopal estates were compounded by Bourne’s claim that Sandys had used the revenues and materials to construct the highly feminised rooms of the laundry and nursery for the use of his wife, with the sentiment behind this very similar to the Duke of Northumberland’s a decade before.

Bourne’s attack did not stop there, and he moved on to criticise Sandys’ promotion of his children, stating that:

His wyefe being thus frutefull, he hathe for one of his children procured in his brothers name, one lease of the p[ar]sonage of FFladburye.[[418]](#footnote-419)

Bourne was once again at pains to observe the differences from past practice stating that ‘great hospitalitye’ had previously been kept at the ‘godly mansion.’[[419]](#footnote-420) In contrast, he noted that in the new lease granted for ninety nine years on behalf of Sandys’ son there was no order for the leaser to ‘keep hospitalyte upon the parsonage at any tyme during the sayde terme.’[[420]](#footnote-421) For a second child Bourne stated that Sandys had got the lease of a parsonage in Lancashire which was a ‘verye good thinge belonging to the sayde dean and chapter.’[[421]](#footnote-422) Although Bourne was critical of Sandys’ actions his implicit disapproval of Sandys’ wife and the impact of her fruitfulness was once again evident, and he described how the eldest of Sandys’ children ‘by this woman’ was three years of age.[[422]](#footnote-423) Indeed, in this first set of articles written against Sandys Bourne did not trouble to hide his dislike of clerical marriage. In the final section he responded to claims made by Sandys about the ‘misbehaviour’ of himself and his household. These included secretly hearing mass, not coming to church, preserving the altar stone, hindering justice and the misusing of priests’ wives. Bourne responded that this was in every point most untrue:

save onely that I must confess my continuall mislking of preestes mariag esp[ec]ially his [Sandys] and all preestes and minister apperteininge to him as the thing that sheweth their covetousness watoness and carelessness to do in their office that they are cheiflye bownde unto as I ame well able to avowe and justefye by good matter and sufficient testimonie.[[423]](#footnote-424)

It is notable that whilst Bourne denied all other charges against him, he felt confident expressing his strong opposition to clerical marriage to the Privy Council several years into Elizabeth’s reign. Once again he also drew on the old arguments that clerical marriage made clerics greedy and distracted them from their proper function.

Similar accusations were repeated in a separate document which appears to be Bourne’s response to Sandys’ reply to the original articles, although the chronology of the various documents is not entirely clear. In this document Bourne also responded to an accusation that he had rejected Sandys’ hospitality, stating that:

The truthe is I frequented his table wot win his favour and good reporte, mynding to behave me towards hym and his, as becomed me frendly and honestly, my comyng was oftner than twise to his table and shuld have ben oftener but that he semed to myslike w[i]th me for drinking to his wief who is faier well nurtured sober and demure so farr as I have sene Drinking to her I called her Lady where w[i]th he chafed and said I mocked bothe hym and her.[[424]](#footnote-425)

In spite of his complimentary description of Mrs Sandys and protestation of his innocence, it seems likely that, as Sandys clearly interpreted, Bourne took advantage of Mrs Sandys’ lack of title to make a social slur, knowing that she was not entitled to be addressed as my Lady. Although positively this incident evidences that bishops’ wives participated in the delivery of hospitality to their neighbours, an aspect explored in chapter three, it also clearly demonstrates the obstacles they faced in attempting to integrate into local social hierarchies, particularly in areas where conservative religious opinion prevailed. It is also possible that alongside conservative religious views, men such as Bourne, who were from old gentry families, felt uncomfortable with what they regarded as the social incursion of bishops’ wives.

As might be expected Sandys delivered a robust response to all the charges against him. He vehemently denied the accusations that he had built a nursery or laundry room and responded that he had only demolished the manor of Northwick ‘upon good advice,’ and used the materials to build ‘fyve chambers two gallaries and one studie,’ at the Palace of Bishopthorpe.[[425]](#footnote-426) He also defended his acquisition of the parsonage for his son, in his brother’s name, stating that his brother would hold it until his son had trained to be a minister, and that this was the only preferment he had ever meant or would ever make for any of his children. In a separate document Sandys also accused Bourne of primarily disliking him because of an incident involving the two men’s servants. According to Sandys’ account, Lady Bourne and her son, alongside some of their servants, had got into a boat with two ministers’ wives whom Sandys described as ‘honest and sober,’ one being a gentlewoman.[[426]](#footnote-427) In the boat Bourne’s son had started ‘blaspheminge and swearing,’ telling the women they were ‘amongest papists,’ and insulting them both; behaviour which Sandys stated was not surprising given that his father ‘termeth the mynsters wives whores.’[[427]](#footnote-428) One of the Bourne’s serving men had then drawn his buckler on one of the priests’ wives, tearing her coat and piercing her skin, and causing both the women ‘great fear.’[[428]](#footnote-429) Subsequently one of Sandys’ servants, who was a cousin of one of the women involved in the incident, had taken offence and coming across one of Bourne’s servants had challenged him to a fight, which escalated into a fracas between the two groups of servants outside the palace, that had to be broken up by a bailiff. Whilst Bourne in turn denied these charges, it is certainly not unlikely that such an event could have taken place, in light of Bourne’s known beliefs about clerical marriage and the tensions between the two households.

Although neither account can be trusted implicitly, the dispute between Sandys and Bourne does highlight the ways in which clerical marriage added new dimensions to local power struggles, and refocused hostile criticism of the bishops onto their wives. The second wife of Richard Cox was also later targeted in a similar fashion during her husband’s dispute with Lord North, who had petitioned the Queen for a long lease on one of the episcopal manors in 1575. Throughout his whole episcopate Cox was a staunch defender of the possessions of his see and initially refused North’s request. In response North produced a bill of complaint against Cox and sent him a threatening letter in which he warned him of the consequences of defying his monarch, stating that:

Your wife hath also councelled yowe to be a Latimer in thes dayes, gloryinge as it were to stand agaynst your naturall Prince. Well! my Lord, let not your wives shallow experience carrye yowe to far, least she laye your honor and credit agrounde, and haply make a shipwracke of the hole. Howbeit, God be thanked, your wife mistaketh the case, for Latimer lost his livinge for the sacrament, & for tharticles, & not for denyinge the King.[[429]](#footnote-430)

Once again, North was shifting the blame for Cox’s actions onto his wife, and assuming that it must be her influence at work in his refusal to grant the lease. The dangers of an overbearing wife were clearly highlighted in the presentation of Mrs Cox as fundamentally misguided and capable of utterly destroying Cox’s honour and credit. It is possible that men such as Bourne and Lord North felt they had more license to attack clerical wives, and their criticisms undoubtedly contained a strong gendered element. In a separate incident, one of Cox’s tenants referred to his wife as ‘Jezebel,’ another pejorative reference to her unnatural influence over her husband.

**‘A thinge allowed both by gods lawes and the Quenes.’**[[430]](#footnote-431)

In spite of these incidents and the enduring nature of some of the derogatory stereotypes that became attached to clerical wives, clerical marriage was not wholly lacking in institutional support and clerical wives were not without their defenders. Whilst it has been demonstrated that the bishops themselves, in contrast to Carlson’s assertions, were ardent defenders of their right to be married, help and support also came from other quarters. Notably, the Privy Council ruled in favour of Sandys during his dispute with Bourne and Bourne was committed to the Marshalsea, where he wrote a repentant letter to Cecil acknowledging his fault. In a summary of the articles levelled against Sandys by Bourne, the Privy Council recorded that:

In his fourth Article he bryngeth into questyon and disputeth against the mariage of ministers w[hi]ch is a thinge allowed both by gods lawes and the Quenes, he contennynge doth dare thus do before so honorable a counsell if doinge it in so highe a place he may escape unpunished both he and others will take courage therby to disquiet all married ministers abrode in the realme.[[431]](#footnote-432)

This demonstrates that the Privy Council was aware of the consequences of Bourne’s belief that he had the freedom to openly express his dislike of clerical marriage, and were concerned to make an example of him. Their note also contains an unambiguous assertion of the full legality of clerical marriage from the highest level of government. That this still needed to be restated in 1563, however, evidences the ongoing need to reinforce its legality, and certainly Bourne’s actions suggest confusion. Indeed, as late as 1567 Bishops Grindal and Horn had to refute rumours about the state of the Church of England, circulated in a series of articles. In a letter to Bullinger and Gwalther, they confirmed that

The wives of the clergy are not separated from their husbands; they live together, and their marriage is esteemed honourable by all (the papists always excepted).[[432]](#footnote-433)

This suggests that, as Parker and Cox had anticipated, the 1561 Ipswich Injunctions had cast a long shadow and led to pervasive rumours that the clergy’s marriages were not considered honourable and clerical couples were forced to live apart.

The aristocracy also showed themselves willing, at times, to defend the interests of bishops’ families and, as chapter four will demonstrate, in spite of occasional incidents such as Bourne’s outburst, bishops’ wives were able to successfully integrate into local society. In 1569 the Earl of Shrewsbury petitioned William Cecil on behalf of Jane Young, widow of the Archbishop of York. He asked that one Leigh of Shrewsbury be called before the Court of Wards to answer the charge that he had unlawfully retained lands which had been granted to Jane in her husband’s will for the benefit of herself and the couple’s children. Since the Archbishop’s death, Leigh had kept all of the profits from the land for himself and Shrewsbury asked that in light of this injustice and the fact that Mrs Young’s son was a ward of the Queen, Cecil would grant his request and fulfil a ‘very charitable deade.’[[433]](#footnote-434) Although during their husbands’ episcopate, their wives could be cast in a greedy and avaricious light, there does seem to have been some recognition that their widowhoods could be difficult, and both Elizabeth Bullingham and Elizabeth Best were reprieved from their husband’s debts.[[434]](#footnote-435) This petition also demonstrates that Jane Young, had access to the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had been a member of the Council of the North during her husband’s episcopate, and was able to ask him to petition the Council on her behalf. This was, moreover, not her only experience of petitioning the Council. In 1580 a case was brought before them in which Jane Young accused William Stanley of abducting her daughter from her house, without her consent, and of pretending to be married to her.[[435]](#footnote-436) The complaint was acted on and the Stanley family were ordered to deliver Jane’s daughter into the care of the current Archbishop until the matter was resolved. The young William Stanley was also ordered to attend upon the Privy Council until such time as this order was dismissed.[[436]](#footnote-437) This again demonstrates that bishops’ wives and widows were not simply marginalised or ignored, but did have access to the highest channels of power, and were able to gain patronage to assist them in pursuing their grievances.

**Conclusion**

By the end of the first decade of Elizabeth’s reign there is no doubt that in spite of Elizabeth’s attitude, the position of Elizabethan bishops’ wives had become legally secure and as chapters three and four will demonstrate they were rapidly able to assert their position within their households and integrate into local society. However, despite their successful adaptation to the new conditions of Elizabethan England, the legacy of Mary’s reign was not erased. This can be seen most clearly amongst the exiles, many of whom kept in touch with their former hosts in Zurich well into Elizabeth’s reign and continued to conceptualise themselves as part of an international godly community. In practice the English Church was moving away from continental influences and without any further reform to the structure or finances of the Church, bishops and their wives found themselves not as ‘godly superintendants’ but custodians of ancient estates, with all the social responsibilities they entailed. The collegiate and intellectual environment of Zurich had to give way to the realities and responsibilities of office and the *Zurich Letters* show that over the years the former exiles saw less and less of each other as they became more tied to carrying out their social and administrative responsibilities in their dioceses. As the next chapter will demonstrate, a very different role was required from English bishops’ wives than from their continental counterparts.

During their lifetimes, the former exiles and their wives were a living link to the exile movement, with international connections that would not be maintained by future generations as the English Church became more inwards looking and isolated from the continental churches. The marital patterns of the bishops also altered as clerical marriage became a more accepted part of the Church and society. In Berlatsky’s study of the martial practices of the Elizabethan episcopate he notes that the majority of Elizabethan bishops married the daughters of minor gentry, small traders and fellow clerics, which was obviously a new trend as clerical families became established.[[437]](#footnote-438) A number of bishops also married the daughters of university officials. Extending Berlatsky’s date range until 1625 demonstrates that the Elizabethan trends continued, with a large proportion of bishops’ wives drawn from gentry and clerical families, including several bishops’ daughters as well as a number of archdeacons’ daughters.[[438]](#footnote-439) By 1570 the international years of the Reformation, based on personal friendships, were coming to a close as the exile generation began to die and clerical marriage in England would subsequently evolve along very English lines and in accordance with English customs and traditions.

**Chapter 3**

**“‘And I pray you commend [me] to Mistress Parker, whom, although I do not know, yet for the fame of her virtue in God I do love.’**[[439]](#footnote-440)

**Becoming the bishop’s wife 1559-1625**

In spite of fears to the contrary, Elizabeth’s failure to take any further action against clerical marriage ensured its *de facto* survival. In many ways the historiographical focus on the nature of her beliefs or the reasons for her disapproval has been misleading and obscured the narrative of the actual development of clerical marriage. In practice, her beliefs had very little impact on the institution and whilst the hurt she caused to her first loyal generation of bishops and the genuine concern they felt for the future security of their families should not be underestimated, 1559 did mark the beginning of the permanent establishment of clerical marriage. Elizabeth’s first bench of English bishops included sixteen married men, and a further thirty married men were appointed to the English dioceses over the course of her reign.[[440]](#footnote-441) In contrast to the start of previous reigns, the accession of James I in 1603, did not lead to any dramatic upheavals in the bench of bishops, with all incumbents remaining in place. This continuity led to clerical marriage finally being established as a fixed aspect of the English Church, and allowed women to begin the process of becoming the bishop’s wife and defining their role more clearly.

As Prior has stated ‘fitting into or inventing’ the role of a bishop’s wife was no easy feat.[[441]](#footnote-442) Edward’s reign had been brief and the only other contemporary models were the wives of the continental reformers, who were a poor fit for the conditions of the English Church, which continued to operate along traditional medieval lines. However, with no further alteration to the legal status of clerical marriage, this chapter argues that Elizabethan and later Jacobean bishops’ wives were able to establish precedents and traditions that solidified their position in the ecclesiastical households and helped to ensure the integration of clerical marriage within the fabric of the official Church. Through assessing their day to day to lives, it provides the first detailed study of the lived experience of English bishops’ wives and argues that they must be incorporated into broader studies of elite women where they have so far remained absent.

Whilst the wealth and prestige of the bishops had been undermined during the Reformation years, they still remained some of the most important office holders in the country. Despite calls from the returning exiles and later puritan critics to abolish the episcopacy in its traditional form, no reforms were ever made. Both Heal and Berlatsky have emphasised the extent to which bishops were expected to continue to fulfil a conservative social role by the crown and laity.[[442]](#footnote-443) This included maintaining their traditional obligation of providing hospitality and living in a lordly fashion befitting their status. Though the episcopate as a whole did suffer from diminished resources, with some hit worse than others, Hembry’s study has shown that despite some significant losses throughout Elizabeth’s reign, the bishops’ primary residences were mostly protected, and they retained their principal palaces.[[443]](#footnote-444) A key function of these establishments was the provision of hospitality and entertainment of the local elite. As Hembry has stated, the episcopal residences also continued to play an important part in the life of the nation, serving as the theatre for many important state and religious occasions, as well as acting as judicial and administrative centres.[[444]](#footnote-445)After the dissolution of the monasteries they were some of the only buildings, alongside the palaces of the nobility, capable of accommodating the court on progress and they also played host to ambassadors and political prisoners.[[445]](#footnote-446)

The Elizabethan settlement therefore required a distinct set of qualities from bishops’ wives who on their husbands’ accession found themselves in possession of large estates and households. Although much has been made of their lack of title and the fact they did not have an inheritable right to the episcopal estates, it will be argued that in spite of these limitations, bishops’ wives played a prominent role in the episcopal households and were able to participate in an elite lifestyle, with the same agency and authority as other elite women.

Recovering the details of the day to day lives of bishops’ wives is undoubtedly difficult; however, all too often a lack of sources seems to have been taken for granted or interpreted negatively. Although Prior’s study did much to recover bishops’ wives from obscurity, she did not explore their lived experience of marriage in any detail. Using the example of just one household official, Prior states that bishops wives ‘had remarkably little power in the Elizabethan palace which continued to run very much on the medieval pattern,’ with the large retinues of servants and household officials ‘often jealous of any trespass by the wife within their traditional sphere.’[[446]](#footnote-447) In his study of clerical marriage, Usher also accepted the lack of source material for bishops wives and concluded from this that in the light of any contradictory evidence the majority of bishops wives must have been ‘suitable, sober and entirely uncontroversial.’[[447]](#footnote-448) The lived experience of bishops’ wives is also missing from the numerous studies dedicated to the economic activity of the post-Reformation bishops. Whilst many of these studies note the additional financial burden imposed on bishops by their families they do not attempt to recreate the experience of their wives. Finally, their impact on the formerly male-only episcopal households is also downplayed by Hembry’s generalisation that ‘no doubt the majority of episcopal wives were devout women who behaved with decorum...easily absorbed into the fabric of the palaces.’[[448]](#footnote-449)

It is a major contention of this chapter that bishops’ wives were far more visible and active in the running of the episcopal residences than has so far been recognised or explored in any detail. The introduction of a wife was undoubtedly a major innovation, with a woman placed at the head of the formerly male-only households for the first time and a hostess available to assist with hospitality. Although they could vary greatly in size, episcopal households were complex and could be made up of a mixture of servants, family members, clerical and lay officials, students and chaplains, with a record of Bishop Parkhurst’s household also showing that he maintained a number of ‘poore folkes.’[[449]](#footnote-450) Whilst much work has focused on the reduced economic circumstances of post-Reformation bishops, Berlatsky has sought to modify the picture by focusing on the actual changes to their lifestyle and living standards. He acknowledges that the Elizabethan and Jacobean bishops were unable to match the magnificence of their medieval forbears and saw the real value of their incomes decline. However, he argues that in spite of this, the bishops worked hard to maintain their traditional lifestyle, whatever the cost, and that any decline in living standards was a ‘matter of degree not a change in kind.’[[450]](#footnote-451) At the highest level, the dioceses of Canterbury, Ely, Winchester and Durham could support a lifestyle comparable to that of the greatest peers, whilst almost all bishops could attempt to live in the style of the gentry and lower nobility. Building on this assessment of bishops’ lifestyles, it will be argued that far from being isolated or side-lined within these large households, bishops’ wives fulfilled all of the same household duties as secular elite women. These duties included overseeing domestic servants, organising the spiritual life of the household, dispensing charity and hospitality, and overseeing the management of their households and estates in their husband’s absence. Although the episcopal estates were not hereditary, evidence including inventories, wills, chancery documents, and pictures demonstrate that bishops’ wives did leave their mark on the episcopal households, which were physically adapted to suit the needs of women and children.

The fragmentary nature of the evidence for bishops’ wives necessarily calls for caution. In total there were seventy three married bishops between the accession of Elizabeth I in 1559 and the death of James I in 1625, with at least fifty percent of the dioceses occupied by a married bishop at any one time throughout this period.[[451]](#footnote-452) Whilst basic details are known about most of the bishops’ wives, several remain completely unknown figures and the quantity and quality of surviving evidence for the rest varies greatly. The evidence is not spread evenly across either the different dioceses or the two reigns and is weighted towards the wealthier bishoprics, which makes genuine comparative work difficult. The eclectic nature of the surviving source material which includes inventories, ordinances, chancery documents, accounts and paintings also requires a creative approach. Many of these sources have previously either been overlooked completely or used for different purposes. Drawing them all together for the first time enables the construction of a more detailed picture of the daily life of bishops’ wives than has so far been attempted. This chapter will focus firstly on the material conditions of bishops’ wives and their physical impact on their new homes, before considering their role and status within the household. Particularly rich source material survives for Margaret Parker, the wife of Elizabeth’s first Archbishop of Canterbury, and her former daughter-in-law, Frances Matthew, the wife of James I’s Archbishop of York. Standing at either end of the period under consideration, their lives will be used as recurring case studies throughout. Both women were noted as ideal bishops’ wives by contemporaries and historians alike and the qualities which made them particularly suitable will be explored to determine what came to be expected of somebody in their role.

**“In my mistresses room:” finding evidence of bishops’ wives in the episcopal residences**[[452]](#footnote-453)

The material conditions in which bishops lived have been explored in detail by both Berlatsky and Hembry, and the main focus of this section will as such be to look for specific evidence of bishops’ wives.[[453]](#footnote-454) However, it is first necessary to summarise some of their key findings to get a general sense of the lifestyle bishops and their wives could expect. Berlatsky has sought to modify the view that the post-Reformation attacks on church lands resulted in a drastic decline in the wealth and social prestige of the bishops.[[454]](#footnote-455) Although the post-Reformation bishops were unable to compete with their medieval predecessors and early Tudor bishops such as Tunstall, Gardiner or Wolsey, Berlatsky argues that they continued to live ‘at the apex of a hierarchy’ with considerable resources at their disposal.[[455]](#footnote-456) Only in the Welsh dioceses and the newly created diocese of Oxford and Peterborough, both of which lacked an allocated mansion house, did standards of living ever fall much below that of the gentry.[[456]](#footnote-457) The Reformation years did see a notable decline in the number of episcopal residences available to bishops due to exchanges with the Crown and pressure to either grant or lease them to prominent laymen. Canterbury alone was reduced from eleven residences to five and the majority of the bishops lost their traditional London homes.[[457]](#footnote-458) However, the palaces and residences that remained to the bishops were often substantial and Berlatsky notes that even in the poorly endowed diocese of Chester the bishop still had access to a well equipped mansion house of twenty rooms.[[458]](#footnote-459) The first Elizabethan bishop of Ely, Richard Cox, possessed five extensive residences, two of which had over thirty rooms, alongside extensive complexes of outbuildings.[[459]](#footnote-460) The surviving inventory of Archbishop Matthew, taken after his death in 1628, also demonstrates the extensive number of rooms in the four major palaces of the diocese of York; whilst Archbishop Parker possessed Lambeth Palace in addition to two large palaces in Kent.[[460]](#footnote-461)

As well as looking at the residences available to the bishops, Berlatsky has also addressed the material conditions in which they lived. The main evidence for this comes from inventories and wills which show that whilst some bishops were undoubtedly impoverished many lived comfortably, and those at the top were able to live in very grand state. In total there are five surviving inventories for married bishops from this period, which will be referred to throughout this chapter.[[461]](#footnote-462) Representing some of the wealthier bishoprics are the inventories of Archbishop Parker of Canterbury, Bishop Richard Cox of Ely and Archbishop Tobie Matthew of York. All three inventories demonstrate a very high standard of living with rich furnishings and luxurious items throughout the residences they detail. The inventory of Archbishop Parker is particularly substantial, with a list of possessions ‘comparable to those of any great noble,' split across forty six rooms, with a combined value of £1208 15*s*.[[462]](#footnote-463) The surviving household ordinances for Lambeth Palace further evidence the lavish lifestyle enjoyed by Parker and his wife. They record that a large number of servants oversaw facilities including a stable with twelve horses and two newly fashionable coaches, as well as a wardrobe in which all ‘furnishings’, ‘roabes,’ ‘apparell’, and ‘furres’ or ‘garments,’ that were likely to come near Parker or his wife were ‘well laid upp and often seene unto.’[[463]](#footnote-464)

The other two inventories detail the goods of Bishop John Parkkurst of Norwich, at the palace of Ludham, and Bishop John May of Carlisle, at Rose Castle. While both residences were undoubtedly well furnished, neither of them are anywhere near as grand as those of Parker, Cox or Matthew, and May’s inventory contains a noticeable number of ‘ould’ clothes and furnishings.[[464]](#footnote-465) The inventory of John May is also an important reminder of how much difference the location of episcopal residences would have made to the experience of bishops’ wives, with the wealth and location of their husbands’ dioceses very important variants. Situated near the Scottish borders in Northumbria, Rose Castle was one of the most remote bishops’ residences. Its location made it vulnerable to attacks from the Scots, and in 1597 Tobie Matthew petitioned Archbishop Whitgift on May’s behalf, after he claimed that an attack had left May spoiled of all of his oxen and most of his sheep and horses.[[465]](#footnote-466) Matthew also played up May’s poverty stating that ‘he had loste the best parte of his goodes which God knoweth was not great afore.’[[466]](#footnote-467) Although the inventory suggests this may have been somewhat of an over exaggeration, it does build up an interesting picture of the very rural life of Rose Castle.[[467]](#footnote-468) The contents of a number of barns and outbuildings are listed alongside a large amount of ‘husbandry geare,’ which are missing from some of the more urban palaces. [[468]](#footnote-469) As Hoyle has demonstrated elite women who lived on rural estates could be very active in estate management and farming pursuits, and given that May is known never to have attended Parliament and to have resided primarily at Rose Castle, it seems likely that his wife would have participated in this work.[[469]](#footnote-470) In the future more focused studies of individual diocese would enable more comparative work to be done.

Despite the disparity in living conditions, it is clear that many bishops’ wives would have enjoyed a comfortable if not always extravagant lifestyle within the episcopal residences. Their potential impact on these buildings is, however, more difficult to assess. It seems obvious to assume that the arrival of women and children into formerly male-only residences would have necessitated material changes, although it can be hard to find clear evidence of this. Undoubtedly one of the biggest changes to arise out of bishops’ new marital status was their requirement for a nursery. This was a particularly pressing issue for the first generation of Elizabethan bishops many of whom had young families at the time of their consecration. As mentioned in chapter two, it came to the fore during the heated dispute between Edwin Sandys and his neighbour Sir John Bourne in 1563, during which Bourne accused Sandys of despoiling his episcopal estate to build a ‘pretye’ nursery for his children.[[470]](#footnote-471) Although Sandys vehemently denied this charge and it seems likely that Bourne may have exaggerated his claims to make a political point, there is no doubt that men such as Sandys, who had a notoriously large family, would have had to make some adjustments to residences which had previously only accommodated celibate males.

A much later inventory drawn up after the death of Archbishop Tobie Matthew in 1628, recorded details of all his goods at the archdiocese’s four principal residences, Cawood Castle, Bishopthorpe, York and Southwell. One of the rooms listed at the Palace of Southwell was ‘the nurserie, which included a truckle bed, several small stools and a frame for a pair of virginals.[[471]](#footnote-472) In Sandys later years as Archbishop of York he showed a decided preference for the palace of Southwell, located in Nottinghamshire, and he was eventually buried there. Although there is no evidence to date the construction of the nursery at Southwell to Sandys time, it is not improbable that he did build one there. The relative privacy afforded by Southwell may well have made it a more attractive place for raising children. It was notably a favourite palace of Cardinal Wolsey who spent his last year there in retirement.[[472]](#footnote-473) Archbishops and bishops had always had favoured residences. Gregory’s work on the archiepiscopal residence of Knole in Kent highlighted its function as a place of retreat for the archbishops from their public life, which was played out at the neighbouring palace at Otford.[[473]](#footnote-474) It seems highly likely that a family would have increased bishops’ desire for privacy and it may well also have made sense to separate young families from their official life when they had the option of multiple residences.

Evidence of a nursery also exists for Auckland Castle which, alongside Durham Castle, was one of the primary residences of the bishop of Durham. Whilst the first evidence of a nursery is found in the will of Bishop William James, who died in 1617, an earlier memorial portrait of the first Elizabethan bishop of Durham (fig.1), James Pilkington, attests to family life at the castle from a much earlier date. The portrait is the only known depiction of a bishop’s family outside those on funerary monuments and is noted by Ryrie as an ‘unusually vivid depiction of a Protestant family at prayer.’[[474]](#footnote-475) In total, Pilkington and his wife had four children, including two daughters who survived to adulthood, and two sons who died whilst still very young. As it is a memorial painting it seems likely that the two small figures kneeling on either side of their parents represent the couple’s sons whilst their daughters may be represented by some of the figures kneeling behind their mother. Displayed at Auckland Castle until the present day, the picture is a clear indication not only of changed theology but also of the prominence of the bishop’s family within the household. All six of the men appointed to the diocese of Durham between 1559 and 1625 were family men and it seems likely that the nursery would have been in continuous use. Pilkington’s successor Richard Barnes had nine children by his first wife who was buried in the church of St Andrews adjacent to Auckland Castle, suggesting that it was a primary residence for the family at the time of her death. Barnes was followed successively by Matthew Hutton, Tobie Matthew, William James and Richard Neile all of whom had at least one child.

Whilst it seems unlikely that any of these later bishops had children who were young enough to require a nursery, it is possible that their adult children and grandchildren may have used it. Amongst the aristocracy it was very common for young couples to live with one set of parents for several years after their marriages.[[475]](#footnote-476) Archbishop Parker’s inventory shows that his son, Matthew, and his wife Frances, had a room in Lambeth Palace; whilst Frances’ own son, John, by her second marriage to Tobie Matthew, had a room at Cawood Castle.[[476]](#footnote-477) This suggests that the practice was also not unusual amongst the bishops and that some adult children chose to make their home in the episcopal residences at least some of the time. This may have been the case for William James, whose will makes the first definitive mention of the nursery at Auckland Castle. The will bequeathed a number of items of furniture to James’ successor at Durham, including:

All the boxes and cupboard ssett in the walls in my bedchamber at Auckland and in the chamber called the nurcerie belowe.[[477]](#footnote-478)

This description suggests that the room was commonly known as the nursery and certainly it continued to be known as that during the time of James’ successor, Richard Neile, and his wife Dorothy. Earlier in his career, Neile had been the first married dean of Westminster, where adjustments had also had to be made to the dean’s house to accommodate his wife.[[478]](#footnote-479)



Figure 1

As well as the new requirement for nurseries, accommodation would also have had to be found for the bishop’s wife and her female servants and companions who would also have been new members of the episcopal household. Once again, whilst these changes may seem obvious, material evidence of specifically female spaces within the episcopal residences can be hard to find, and relies on the preservation of detailed inventories listed on a room by room basis, such as the much earlier example recording Mrs Cranmer’s room at the palace of Ford.[[479]](#footnote-480) Unfortunately only two surviving inventories from this period make specific reference to the rooms of a bishop’s wife. The first is the 1569 inventory of Bishop Richard Cox for his house at Downham. As part of a list of bedchambers it recorded ‘Mrs Cox hir chamber,’ which included a bedstead and table followed by ‘the maydes chamber.’[[480]](#footnote-481) A separate room is then listed for Bishop Cox before the rest of the chambers allocated to household servants and officials are recorded. Amongst these is a ‘Mrs Kempes chamber,’ and whilst it has not been possible to trace who she was it is likely that she was a female companion or senior household servant.[[481]](#footnote-482) The diocese of Ely was one of the wealthiest sees and the provision of a separate room for both Mrs Cox and her maid is further evidence of the elite lifestyle in which she was able to participate, as well as her status and presence in the household.

The 1628 inventory of Tobie Matthew also made reference to the individual rooms of his wife, Frances Matthew, at the palace of Bishopthorpe. Listed under the heading ‘in my mistresses room,’ the inventory recorded a grand bedstead with ‘gilt knobbs’ worth thirty pounds, a ‘fayre livery cupboard,’ a ‘green cloth carpet,’ various soft furnishings, one chair, two low stools, ‘hir stool,’ as well as equipment for the fire.[[482]](#footnote-483) The next room listed on the inventory was a closet which contained a ‘couch bedstead with teaster and valance of green kersey stript with green silke lace and fry curtins,’ bedding, a ‘verie little table and a turkey worke carpet,’ and a ‘press with five pertitions.’[[483]](#footnote-484) Personalised closets had become increasingly popular in large houses throughout the sixteenth century and offered the lord and lady a private space to retreat to, usually built into their respective bedchambers.[[484]](#footnote-485) The fact that Frances Matthew had access to a closet, and indeed a private room is another small piece of evidence testifying to the parallels between her lifestyle and that of other elite women. It can be further reinforced by the next two rooms which recorded the contents of ‘the gentlewomen’s chamber,’ followed by a ‘maydes chamber.’[[485]](#footnote-486)

Without a list of the members of the household it is not possible to determine who these women were, or how large France’s female entourage may have been. However, this set of rooms clearly demonstrates a designated female area within the palace of Bishopthorpe.[[486]](#footnote-487) It was common for elite women to have female relations amongst their companions, and certainly it is likely that this may have been the case for bishops’ wives. Bishops had always employed members of their own families, and there is evidence they now employed members of their wives families as well. John Pilkington appointed his brother in law, Richard Kingsmill, as the attorney of the Duchy of Durham in 1565, whilst Bishop Bridgeman also employed his brother-in-law, Thomas Warner, whilst he was the Dean of Peterborough, in the 1600s.[[487]](#footnote-488) In light of this it certainly seems likely that bishops’ wives may also have employed, or given shelter to, their own female relations as well as those of their husband.

Although none of the other surviving inventories make specific reference to female rooms in the same way, it is still possible to discern material evidence for the presence of bishops’ wives. For example, the 1575 inventory of John Parkhurst, included several articles of female clothing as well as ‘a saddle bridell & a cloth w[i]th all furniture for a woman.’[[488]](#footnote-489) Female riding equipment was also listed at Cawood Castle in the inventory of Tobie Matthew and again offers an insight into the lifestyle of bishops’ wives and the resources available to them. As the next chapter will demonstrate some bishops’ wives travelled extensively between their husbands’ respective estates and London. Although the Parkers had access to two coaches and a barge, it is likely that horses would have been the main form of transport for many bishops and their wives; with coaches remaining a considerable luxury throughout Elizabeth’s reign.

Alongside the portrait of the Pilkington family another rare double portrait (fig. 2) of Edwin Sandys and his wife Cicely also provides evidence of the physical presence of families and the status of wives within the household. Painted in 1571 it depicts them in sombre albeit rich attire and advertises their union and strong religiosity. It is the only known portrait of an Elizabethan bishop’s wife and echoes strongly the famous double portrait of Martin Luther and his wife Katherina von Bora, produced in the workshop of Lucas Cranach in the 1520s (fig,3). The Cranach portrait had been designed to advertise the Luther’s domesticity and respectability after their marriage had been derided by critics. As Marshall states, it ‘proved immensely important in creating a kind of visual representation of the changed realities, allowing people to imagine the Luther’s marriage in positive terms.’[[489]](#footnote-490)

The Sandys portrait was obviously intended to hang within a domestic environment in the episcopal palace, and would have been a very clear indicator of change and a contrast to the solo portraits of the earlier medieval bishops.[[490]](#footnote-491) Further evidence of portraiture of bishops’ wives can be found in the account book of Bishop John Bridgeman. Shortly after his promotion to the rich diocese of Wigan in 1616 through the patronage of King James I, Bridgeman brought a number of books, pictures, and maps he clearly thought were necessary for his new position. They were a traditional selection and resembled those owned by Archbishop Parker, which included pictures of important religious figures, reformers, statesmen, and Kings and Queens of England, albeit on a smaller scale than Parker’s impressive collection.[[491]](#footnote-492) The pictures Bridgeman selected for his new home included portraits of the Lord Chancellor, the archbishop, seven kings and queens of England, Erasmus and Cromwell and significantly ‘my wife’s picture drawing & mine.’[[492]](#footnote-493) Once again, though only a small detail, the fact that these portraits were commissioned evidences the status of bishops’ wives and the changed configuration of the episcopal household around a couple, with a mistress alongside a master for the first time.



Figure 2



Figure 3

**“A domesticall comfort to her husband:” the household role of bishops’ wives**[[493]](#footnote-494)

Having established the material presence of bishops’ wives in the episcopal residences, this section will examine their role and status within the household and their relationship to the other members. Whilst all bishops were still expected to maintain a large number of servants both as an outward sign of their status and as a charitable service to the local community, the size of episcopal households could vary greatly depending on the wealth and taste of the bishop.[[494]](#footnote-495) At the highest level archiepiscopal households could be very large. In 1563 Matthew Parker estimated that in addition to diverse members of his family he had just fewer than one hundred persons living under his roof,[[495]](#footnote-496) whilst Tobie Matthew arrived in London in 1617 accompanied by ‘fiftie horse.’[[496]](#footnote-497) In contrast other bishops retained much smaller households. The list of the members of John Parkhurst’s household at Ludham recorded only thirty six people, whilst his successor Bishop Jegon made do with even less.[[497]](#footnote-498) As well as household servants the bishops were also entitled to maintain liveried retinues, which could again vary greatly in size. Whilst Archbishop Parker received a license to maintain one hundred liveried retainers, Bishop Bridgeman of Chester kept only fourteen.[[498]](#footnote-499)

It can be difficult to reconstruct the exact nature of episcopal households without detailed accounts, although sources like the inventories and the record of Parkhurst’s household can help to build up a picture of the types of people who lived and worked within them. Aside from the family, the most senior members of the household would have been the stewards and chancellors, who were allocated prime rooms within the palaces, followed by a hierarchy of domestic servants. Parkhurst’s household included two cooks, a brewer, cater, baker, yeoman of the horse and in testimony to his marital status, six maids.[[499]](#footnote-500) A very similar picture of occupations is reflected in the inventories, where specific rooms and their occupants are listed. Episcopal palaces had always been a mixture of official residence and private home and this is reflected in their personnel. As well as the purely domestic servants, the bishop would have had ecclesiastical officials to serve him as well as resident chaplains and in some cases students. The homes of bishops were also still used for official state purposes, which included the maintenance of political prisoners. Archbishop Parker housed the deprived Marian bishop Dr Thirlby until his death in 1570,[[500]](#footnote-501) whilst William James was briefly entrusted with the custody of Lady Arbella Stuart in 1621.[[501]](#footnote-502) Extended family members of both the bishop and his wife could also be present and as the inventory of Tobie Matthew demonstrates it seems likely that bishops’ wives may also have had more senior female servants or companions to attend them.

Exactly what the role and status of bishops’ wives was within these large and complex households has undoubtedly been understudied. In the few instances where it has been considered the assumption has been that bishops’ wives either found it difficult to assert themselves amidst the traditional hierarchy of servants, or that their presence made little tangible difference.[[502]](#footnote-503) However, as the study of the material impact of bishops’ wives has demonstrated, their presence was felt in the episcopal households, which were reconfigured around a master *and* a mistress for the first time. Further evidence of what this meant in practical terms can be found through looking at the evidence for their role in household management and the delivery of hospitality. In this case unusually strong evidence exists for Margaret Parker who will be used as a primary case study.

From the earliest days of her marriage to Parker in 1547, Margaret was regarded as an ideal clerical wife by contemporaries, and this is a view which has been shared by later historians.[[503]](#footnote-504) One of her earliest admirers was Bishop Nicholas Ridley who asked Parker to commend him to ‘Mrs Parker whom, although I do not know, yet for the fame of her virtue in God I do love,’ and later flatteringly enquired whether she had a sister.[[504]](#footnote-505) Parker’s fellow bishop, Edwin Sandys, also seems to have had a high regard for Margaret and at the end of a letter to Parker in 1559 asked to be commended to his ‘abbess.’[[505]](#footnote-506) Margaret’s reputation was further consolidated by the eighteenth-century historian John Strype, who published a biography of Parker in 1711. Strype’s account draws heavily from the Matthaeus, which was a semi-autobiographical account commissioned by Parker from his Latin secretary, Joscelin. In Strype’s account Margaret is given credit for rising to the challenge of becoming the Archbishop of Canterbury’s wife, ‘ordering her House-keeping so nobly and splendidly...that all things answered that venerable dignity.’[[506]](#footnote-507) Further, she is credited with managing the domestic affairs, ‘so discreetly, and yet so exactly to the Mind of her Husband, that is creditably and honourably...that he was taken off from caring for those more Private Concerns, and the more wholly gave up himself to the Affairs of the Church and Commonwealth.’[[507]](#footnote-508) Such a role was certainly in line with that prescribed by the continental reformers who consistently emphasised the value of a ‘godly wife’ in supporting her husband’s ministry, through relieving him of all domestic responsibilities and managing his household, which as Luther stated, men were simply unprepared for.[[508]](#footnote-509) Parker was certainly influenced by the ideas of the continental reformers, and owned a number of treatises on clerical marriage by reformers such as Bucer, Oecolampadius and Bugenhagen.[[509]](#footnote-510) In his own work, the *Defence of Priestes Marriage*, Parker employed similar arguments stating that a Godly wife could also be a ‘domesticall comfort’ in her husband’s hospitality, and he cited numerous biblical and early Christian examples of men whose ministry had been enhanced by the presence of a wife.[[510]](#footnote-511)

As the wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the domestic responsibility imposed on Margaret would have been considerable, with the management of the large episcopal households a far cry from the small household she had presided over during the couple’s time at Cambridge in Edward’s reign. It would also have been on a different scale to the types of household and household responsibilities envisaged by the continental reformers. Further evidence of Margaret’s central role in the household can be found in a manuscript entitled, ‘Archbishop Parker’s regulations of the offices of the Archbishop of Canterbury belonging to his Palace at Lambeth,’ held at Lambeth Palace and later printed in *Ducarel’s History* of Lambeth Palace.[[511]](#footnote-512) Although there is some question about the provenance of this source, it certainly seems likely that it was utilised by Parker in Lambeth Palace. One of the most striking aspects of the ordinances is the references to ‘Her Grace’ and ‘their Graces,’ innovations that are wholly missing from the earlier household ordinances of Thomas Cranmer, also known to have been used by Parker.[[512]](#footnote-513) Of course Margaret was not entitled to be addressed as ‘your grace,’ and outside of the ordinances there is no evidence that Margaret was ever given this title. Whilst all Parker’s letters addressed him as ‘your grace’, the only extant letter known to have been addressed to Margaret referred to her simply as ‘good mestres Parker.’[[513]](#footnote-514) However, if Margaret was never officially accorded this title the ordinances demonstrate that this did not lead to any social embarrassment within the household. It appears that Margaret assumed the title *de facto* and was accorded the same position and respect in her household that the official title of ‘her grace’ would have commanded. This also mitigates the implications of the famous anecdote about Margaret Parker in which Queen Elizabeth was supposed to have slighted her by saying ‘and you Madam, I may not call you, and Mrs. I am ashamed to call you so as I know not what to call you, but yet I do thank you,’ after being received by Margaret at Lambeth Palace.[[514]](#footnote-515) First recorded by John Harrington, there is no other contemporary account of this event, and it is probably more representative of Harrington’s own prejudices. As demonstrated in chapter two, there was a contemporary awareness of the fact that bishops’ wives did not have titles, which was used by critics such as Bourne to cause social embarrassment. However, the ordinances demonstrate that within her household, Margaret was not limited by this and her position was not affected.

The ordinances also provide a detailed insight into the size and structure of the household and Margaret’s position in it, with full descriptions of the role of all household servants from the ‘Steward’ down to the ‘Silver Scullerye Maide.’[[515]](#footnote-516) The ordinances demonstrate Margaret’s clear authoritative role in the management of her household, directly comparable to that of other elite women. Overseeing the work of servants, and ensuring the efficient running of the household, was one of the most important tasks fulfilled by elite women in their homes. Amongst the elite, wives often governed multiple large and complex households, which required an ‘enormous amount of supervision.’[[516]](#footnote-517) Lambeth Palace was certainly large, and although this is the only set of ordinances to survive, Parker also possessed palaces in Canterbury and Bekesbourne, which Margaret would undoubtedly have also taken responsibility for. Although the male head of the household was always ultimately in charge, as both Harris and O’Day have noted many husbands were happy for their wives to deputise for them in their absence, and delegated considerable power and responsibility for the management of resources to them.[[517]](#footnote-518) Evidence for Parker and Margaret’s joint authority can be found in the description of the role of the Controller, which states that ‘He is to pay all rents, annuities, wages, and such other disbursements as hee shal be appointed unto by their Graces.’[[518]](#footnote-519) This is also clear in the description of a number of other offices, including the Yeoman of the Horse, which instructed the incumbent to follow the ‘direction and comaund,’ of ‘their Graces.’[[519]](#footnote-520)

Amongst the domestic household staff, Margaret appears to have possessed even greater authority with all ‘servants and waiters in general’ described as being in ‘her graces service.’[[520]](#footnote-521) Significantly, she also had direct command of the ‘Gentleman Ushers to her Grace,’ who played a key role in the organisation and delivery of hospitality and the reception of guests. In the description of their role it states that they were to take turns to wait, two in the dining room and one in or near the withdrawing room, ‘there to receive her Graces comaunds, and give entertainment to strangers,’ having first announced them to ‘their Graces.’[[521]](#footnote-522) As Heal states, ushers performed an essential function in great households, filtering out all guests according to their rank and degree and ensuring that they were entertained accordingly and not placed with ‘those who would offend their social sensibilities.’ [[522]](#footnote-523) All great households contained physical divisions which enforced social hierarchies and ushers had to ensure that guests were correctly navigated through this ‘social geography’ to reflect their station.[[523]](#footnote-524) For example, the Gentlemen Ushers were commanded, on the departure of guests, to either attend on them at the gate ‘if they be eminent p[er]sons, or into the hall if of meaner quality.’[[524]](#footnote-525) Before bishops’ wives, this role may have been carried out by the Constable or Keeper of the episcopal palace, whose duties often included the reception of guests.[[525]](#footnote-526) The fact that Margaret adopted this role is further evidence that she was not sidelined by existing structures of servants, but that she was able to establish herself as the mistress of the household, to whom all guests were reported and presented. Her household position is also confirmed by the instructions given to ushers at mealtimes to ‘attend on their graces till riseing from the table, to take away stooles, and to give cloakes and swords to the noblemen and guests that sitt at the table,’ as well as the later instruction after the meal was finished, and ‘their Graces and company are risen and gone’, to ensure the dining room was swept clean.[[526]](#footnote-527) These both establish that Margaret would normally dine with Parker and would have taken her place next to him as the mistress of the household, and an unquestioned equal of the nobility and other guests, whose reception and entertainment she planned and oversaw.

Finally, the ordinances provide an interesting insight into Margaret’s spiritual role in the household. Household religion had always been recognised as the responsibility of women an of d although it was once argued that the Reformation diluted women’s role through the removal of the parish priest and the elevation in his stead of the male head of the household, it is now more commonly thought that this did not in fact represent a radical break with Catholic practice.[[527]](#footnote-528) Although it was accepted that women were subject to their husbands as the Church was to God, they were still recognised as having a crucial role in household religion and the organisation of their family’s spiritual life.[[528]](#footnote-529) As wives and mothers, women were expected to act as a godly exemplar, provide religious instruction to their children and servants, and follow a daily regime of piety that included prayers, meditation and the reading of devotional books.[[529]](#footnote-530) In the absence of their husbands, women also deputised for them by leading the family prayers.[[530]](#footnote-531) An outstanding example of this is Lady Margaret Hoby, whose household at Hackness in Yorkshire has been described as ‘a microcosm of the godly Protestant commonwealth, wherein the service of God was carried out with a zeal that dominated the lives of all.’[[531]](#footnote-532) There is no doubt that Lady Margaret was at the centre of this initiative, with her diary recording her strict adherence to a daily regimen of prayer and meditation. Although she did not have any children herself, Lady Margaret frequently describes hearing ‘publeck’ prayers at home, which were assumedly attended by the other members of her household,’ as well as initiating religious discussions with her women.[[532]](#footnote-533)

Of course for clerical wives their husbands were not simply the metaphorical priest or bishopthat Reformation prescriptions stated all husbands should aspire to be, a situation that was undeniably an innovation. Prior has questioned what this unique relationship may have meant for the position of a clerical wife in relation to her husband and the extent to which she was able to deputise for him. Both of these questions are left largely unanswered in Prior’s chapter although the implication throughout is that they faced unusual obstacles or disadvantages because of their unprecedented position. However, as demonstrated, Margaret was able to establish herself fully as the mistress of the household, and the ordinances demonstrate that this also applied to her spiritual role. In the instructions to the ‘Usher of the Hall and Amner’, it states:

They are also to ring the bell halfe an hower past x in the forenoone and vi in the evening; and all such of the household as are not necessarily otherwise employed to attend on her grace to morning and evening prayers; and that in times of prayer such as are in the hall are to come to divine service.[[533]](#footnote-534)

It is clear that despite Parker’s position as the Archbishop of Canterbury, there was no ambiguity attached to Margaret’s role in household religion, with all members of the household commanded to ‘attend on her grace’ at morning and evening prayers, deferring to her position as the mistress of the household. In Parker’s absence, Margaret was able to fully deputise for him, leading the spiritual life of the household in a way that was comparable to Lady Margaret Hoby and other elite women.

Aside from these remarkably detailed ordinances, there is limited evidence of the relationship between bishops’ wives and the members of their household. However, brief references such as the description of ‘my mistresses room’ in Tobie Matthew’s 1628 inventory suggest that Margaret’s prominent status within the household was not unusual for a bishop’s wife. The portrait of the Pilkington family (fig.1) also clearly shows Alice Pilkington leading the female members of the household in the family prayers, where she is on an equal level with her husband, who is at the head of the male members. Thissuggests that Alice Pilkington took a leading role in the spiritual life of the household, and perhaps like Lady Margaret Hoby, exercised direct control over the religious education of her female servants. The extensive records of Bishops Jegon’s secretary Anthony Harrison also show a positive relationship between himself and the bishop’s wife Dorothy, which evidences that she had contact with her husband’s retinue as well as the purely domestic staff. After her husband’s death, his two consecutive successors at Norwich attempted to sue Dorothy for dilapidations to the estate. During the proceedings Harrison supported Dorothy and referred to her as ‘my old mistress and friend.’[[534]](#footnote-535) Andrew Foster has also noted the warm relationship between Richard Neile’s wife Dorothy and his chaplains and friends, several of whom later left her gifts in their wills.[[535]](#footnote-536) He states that she played a key role in providing hospitality and making ‘Durham House home to so many allies in the 1620s,’undoubtedly proving herself to be a model of ‘domesticall comfort to her husband.’[[536]](#footnote-537)

**Hospitality**

According to the continental reformers, a key function of clerical wives was to assist their husbands in providing hospitality, and this would undoubtedly have been a major part of the role of bishops’ wives in England.[[537]](#footnote-538) The episcopal residences remained very important centres of local hospitality and bishops were readily criticised if they were perceived to be failing in their traditional obligation to provide hospitality to their neighbours. The buildings also continued to play an important part in the life of the nation, playing host to monarchs and serving the state through welcoming visiting officials and, when necessary, detaining political prisoners.[[538]](#footnote-539) As the Archbishop of Canterbury, Parker had some of the weightiest expectations on his shoulders and once again there is surviving evidence to demonstrate his wife’s supporting role in this crucial area. In her close study of the hospitality practices of the Archbishops of Canterbury, Heal highlighted the attempts made by successive post-Reformation archbishops to emulate their medieval predecessors, both to satisfy the Queen and to meet the expectations of their social equals.[[539]](#footnote-540) Heal states how Parker in particular was deeply aware of the historic expectations of his role and sought out models from the past, implementing the formal and hierarchical household ordinances instituted by Cranmer, as well as looking further back to the magnificent hospitality of Warham’s day.[[540]](#footnote-541)

In his biography of Parker, Strype accords great weight to Margaret’s contributing role in the provision of hospitality, stating that whenever Parker wished ‘to do anything magnificently,’ Margaret would:

earnestly study to please him therein by her Council and her Pains, by contriving and consulting, and joining with him...and in those most splendid and noble Buildings and Feastings of his before mentioned; neither was her Will nor Industry wanting in the ordering and managery therof.[[541]](#footnote-542)

This description certainly does not fit with Prior’s suggestion that bishops’ wives were sidelined by episcopal officials or absent from public life, with Margaret evidently occupying a central role in the planning and delivery of hospitality on a grand scale. The Parkers experienced the wide range of functions that episcopal palaces were utilised for, with Parker variously asked to maintain a number of recalcitrant Marian bishops in custody at Lambeth Palace, and subsequently to entertain the French ambassador during his visit to England in 1564, where the subject of clerical marriage was discussed. In 1562, Parker expressed his frustration to Cecil at the protracted stay of a number of guests sent to him to be kept in secret, stating that he hoped his house would not be ‘made an hostry for all times and all comers,’ but reserved only for ‘such entertained guests as necessity may require for the state of the realm.’[[542]](#footnote-543) This may well have been a sentiment that Margaret shared, and is also a reminder of the very ‘public’ nature of the lives of bishops and their wives.

Alongside the duties necessary for the ‘state of the realm,’ it was the maintenance of traditional hospitality that would have remained the most important function of the episcopal palaces. As Heal states Parker was very aware of the need for good hospitality, both to preserve his reputation from accusations of parsimony, and to influence the laity.[[543]](#footnote-544) The Queen was of course the primary target to impress and paid her first visit to Lambeth in 1560.[[544]](#footnote-545) Whilst the details of Harrington’s famous story about Elizabeth’s visit to the Parkers can be mistrusted, with no other contemporary source recording her supposed insult to Margaret, there is no reason to doubt that Margaret would have been present during her visits. Margaret was certainly present at other grand occasions, including the assize feast held at Canterbury in the summer of 1565, as part of a series of feasts to mark the completion of Parker’s renovation of the palace’s great hall. Of the three feasts held in Canterbury, the assize feast is described as ‘more grand than any of the rest,’ and afforded Parker the opportunity to invite all those associated with the assize as well as the county elite.[[545]](#footnote-546) The magnificence of the event is described by Strype, who states that the ‘Hall was set forth with much Plate of Silver and Gold, adorned with rich Tapistry of Flanders, and furnished with many Tables,’ with everything excellently served and attended to by the Archbishops’ servants.[[546]](#footnote-547) There were so many guests that the Ladies and Gentlewomen had to be entertained separately in the inner parlours ‘received there by Mrs Parker.’[[547]](#footnote-548) That this separation of the sexes was unusual, however, was noted by Strype, who states that it was the Archbishop’s custom ‘in Honour of Matrimony, to entertain both men and their Wives,’ suggesting that Margaret would usually have co-hosted events with Parker.[[548]](#footnote-549) Far from being ‘invisible in public life,’ Margaret rather seems to have played a significant role in Parker’s quest to uphold medieval standards of hospitality, adding a female hostess to functions at the archiepiscopal palaces for the first time.

Aside from Margaret Parker, there is limited evidence for other bishops’ wives organisation of hospitality. However, the records of the royal progresses show that both Queen Elizabeth I and the family of James I continued to visit episcopal residences regularly throughout the country.[[549]](#footnote-550) Hembry has also highlighted Elizabeth’s enthusiasm for visiting episcopal residences which remained ‘desirable places to stay,’ after the Reformation.[[550]](#footnote-551) The cost of these visits could be considerable and undoubtedly required careful planning and organisation. As with Margaret Parker, it seems highly likely that other bishops’ wives would have acted as the hostess during these visits and assisted their husbands throughout the planning stages. Alongside the anecdote about Elizabeth I’s clumsy compliment to Margaret Parker it has also been claimed that after a visit to Bishopthorpe she favoured Frances Matthew by presenting her with ‘the peculiarly priceless gift of a fragment of a unicorn’s horn.’[[551]](#footnote-552) Whilst the veracity of this claim is equally doubtful, the survival of these anecdotes suggests that it was commonly understood that bishops’ wives would be present on royal occasions. During James I’s tour of the north (on his way back to visit Scotland) during 1617, he stayed with both Archbishop Tobie Matthew at Bishopthorpe in York, and Bishop William James at Bishop’s Auckland in Durham. Whilst neither of their wives are mentioned in the records, this certainly does not mean that they were not present. The sources from which the record of the progresses were recreated tend to only reference the male head of the household of the residences visited by the monarch, and there is no reason to think that their wives would not have been present.

Alongside the entertainment of royalty, there is further evidence of bishops’ wives role in the provision of hospitality for their elite neighbours. In the dispute between Edwin Sandys and his neighbour Sir John Bourne, Cicely Sandys’ role as hostess was clearly highlighted albeit in a rather negative fashion. Responding to one of Sandys accusation that he had rejected his hospitality, Bourne replied that:

The truthe is I frequented his table wot win his favour and good reporte, mynding to behave me towards hym and his, as becomed me frendly and honestly, my comyng was oftner than twise to his table and shuble have ben oftener but that he semed to myslike w[i]th me for drinking to his wief who is faier well nurtured sober and demure so farr as I have sene Drinking to her I called her Lady where w[i]th he chafed and said mocked bothe hym and her.[[552]](#footnote-553)

Bourne was a confessed opponent of clerical marriage and whilst it may have been the case that Sandys genuinely misunderstood his intentions, it seems much more likely that Bourne may have found it difficult to accept the new reality of a female hostess at the episcopal residence and sought to embarrass Cicely by drawing attention to her lack of title. Far more accepting of bishops’ wives was Sir Robert Ker of Cessford, a warden of the Scottish Marches, who was held in custody by Archbishop Matthew Hutton in 1598. Hutton’s hospitality and kindness towards his prisoner was later recognised by Ker who wrote to thank Hutton for the ‘ressonabill curtessies and undeservit favouris that I resavit of zour Grace at my being in zourhous of Bischopthorpe.’[[553]](#footnote-554) In concluding the letter Ker asked ‘that my humbill dewtie may be rememberit to Maistres Huttonn zour wfy, and to sick utheris of zour number as se pleis impairt it unto.’[[554]](#footnote-555) Evidently Mrs Hutton had played a role in helping to ensure the success of Robert Ker’s enforced visit and he thanked her as the mistress of the household. His letter is also a reminder of the diverse functions of episcopal residences and the visitors to them. More commonly it would have been members of the local elite who were entertained by bishops and their wives and the next chapter will examine evidence for the relationship between bishops’ wives and their elite neighbours in more detail. In the absence of more household account books the best evidence for the visits of the local elite can be found in letters such as those between Matthew Hutton and Lord Shrewsbury in which they attempted to find a mutually convenient time and place to meet, with Shrewsbury stating that his wife was very eager to see Hutton again.[[555]](#footnote-556) In the one surviving account book of Bishop Bridgeman, the cost of such visits is recorded with Bridgeman noting a payment in 1630 for the considerable sum of ‘£66-13-4’ for the ‘entertainment of Duchess of Tremoille at Chester.’[[556]](#footnote-557)

**Patronage**

The status of bishops’ wives and their relationship to their husband can also be evidenced by the extent to which people viewed them as a channel to their husband’s patronage. Since the work of Harris, which sought to redefine many aspects of women’s lives traditionally considered ‘domestic’ as ‘political,’ attention has been paid to women’s important role in patronage networks.[[557]](#footnote-558) As Daybell’s work has demonstrated elite women could be very influential as both dispensers and brokers of patronage; using their letters to gather and disseminate news, maintain and extend kinship networks, and petition and intervene in suits on behalf of themselves and others.[[558]](#footnote-559) Women such as the Cooke sisters, who were married to Elizabeth’s premiere servants, William Cecil and Nicholas Bacon, were in a key position to exercise influence as a result of their husband’s position.[[559]](#footnote-560) Mildred Cecil was known to have acted as an intermediary between petitioners and her husband, and was regarded as an important channel through which to sway her husband, at times on issues of national significance.[[560]](#footnote-561) If the relationship between husband and wife was known to be particularly close, then petitioners would sometimes deliberately contact the wife first, in the belief that this would bring about a better result. This was the case in 1568 when Archbishop Parker chose to write directly to Anne Bacon, instead of her husband, on the issue of ensuring godly preaching in Norwich.[[561]](#footnote-562) Of course, widows or women who held any form of patronage in their own right would also have been contacted directly, with women who held positions at court regarded as particularly significant patrons.[[562]](#footnote-563)

There is no doubt that in spite of having less patronage at their disposal than their predecessors and more legislation restricting their disposal of it, the Elizabethan and Jacobean bishops remained sought-after patrons.[[563]](#footnote-564) The collection of Archbishop Parker’s letters shows that he was approached by members of many of the leading noble families, both male and female. Their letters included petitions for offices on behalf of their servants or clients, as well as a wide variety of dispensations held in his gift. These could range from grants for children to hold offices whilst still underage, to the right to eat meat during Lent.[[564]](#footnote-565) As shown above, applications for patronage were often first made to the wives of the landed classes, with elite women exercising considerable influence. The extent to which episcopal wives fulfilled a similar function is, however, harder to gauge with a lack of surviving correspondence the main problem. While collections of elite women’s letters such as those of the Cooke sisters or the Countess of Shrewsbury tend to be preserved amongst family papers, there are no obvious repositories for the letters of bishops’ wives, and no substantial collections.

It is certainly possible that in terms of patronage requests episcopal wives did not fulfil the same position as other elite women and this could be for a number of reasons. Whilst elite couples often spent significant time apart, with elite men frequently spending long periods of time away from their family estates, bishops’ wives seem to have spent more time with their husbands, which may have meant there was less need to approach them separately. Elite women could also hold court positions in their own right, and in certain cases it may have made more sense to contact them directly, whereas bishops’ wives held no independent position. However, there is fragmentary evidence to suggest that bishops’ wives did act as intermediaries and that more is not known about this role simply because of a lack of surviving sources. The most important source is a letter addressed to ‘Good mestres parker’, from a sender known only as B.Skewitt, who unfortunately cannot be further identified.[[565]](#footnote-566) The letter entreats Margaret to pass on an enclosed letter to her husband, and act as a ‘mean’ on their behalf. It is part of a collection of Parker’s letters held at Corpus Christi, and it seems likely that it ended up in the collection by mistake as it seems to be a more personal and informal letter than many of the rest. Rather than seeing it as an isolated exception we can therefore speculate that this may have been a more common occurrence than the surviving evidence reveals.

In the first instance, that Margaret Parker received a letter asking her to intervene with her husband testifies that her relationship and influence with Parker was known, and that like the Cooke sisters she was recognised as an important and legitimate channel to reaching him. However, the letter is not just a simple patronage request and provides further insight into Margaret’s influence and networks. The sender, B. Skewitt, evidently knew Margaret and had met her in person. It also appears that Margaret was familiar with the details of the case Skewitt wanted Parker’s assistance with, and he provides her with an update on its progress stating that, ‘sense I sawe you the queen hathe com[m]yted the matter between p[ro]rokerte [rector] tirrit and m[e] to the hearynge and determenacon of my lorde keeper.’[[566]](#footnote-567)Skewitt then assures Margaret that if Parker grants his [enclosed] request he will ‘spede [speke] a greate deale the better’, and implores her to be a ‘meane’ with Parker on his behalf.[[567]](#footnote-568) Finally, Skewitt gives Margaret ‘hartye thankes for that you sente me by your man,’ desires that she make his ‘humble comendacons’ to Parker and signs off ‘from the courte the thirty daye of may.’[[568]](#footnote-569) As Harris has demonstrated, although elite women’s lives, spent mostly in castles or manors belonging to their marital families, appeared on the surface to have been ‘spatially confined and narrow in scope,’ in reality their ‘interests and connections’ extended far beyond their own family and household.[[569]](#footnote-570) Women who held court positions, or had relatives who did could be remarkably well informed. Both Elizabeth Talbot and Anne Bacon had access to comprehensive and wide spread intelligence networks.[[570]](#footnote-571) This enabled them to engage in the transmission of news, and whilst this was sometimes in conjunction with, or on behalf of their husbands, women also corresponded independently. Once again, this letter would suggest that Margaret had a comparable influence outside of her own household, receiving letters and information from court and corresponding with Skewitt independently from Parker, with Skewitt specifically thanking Margaret ‘for that you sente me by your man.’[[571]](#footnote-572)

A rather less sophisticated attempt to influence a bishop through his wife is recorded in the surviving correspondence of Bishop Bridgeman. In a letter addressed to one of his vicars, John Leigh, in 1622, Bridgeman expressed his regret that he had not been able to give Leigh the answer he had hoped for in relation to the appointment of a Mr Roles, on whose behalf Leigh had evidently petitioned. Bridgeman stated that since the last time he had expressed his opinion on the matter another reason had come to light that would prevent him from showing favour to Mr Roles ‘who hath now offered me a greater wrong than I supposed could have entered into his heart, to have done me.’[[572]](#footnote-573) Bridgeman then went on to describe the offence and explains how Roles ‘hath in a letter to my wife sent her some gold,’ which he interpreted as an outrageous slur on his honesty and an attempt to bribe him.[[573]](#footnote-574) Bridgeman concluded by stating that any thoughts of lifting his censorious opinion of Role had been removed when ‘I saw how sinisterly he conceited me & endeavoured to corrupt one so near me,’ explaining that he had instructed his wife to send the package back to Leigh.[[574]](#footnote-575) Although this may have been a clumsy attempt to influence a bishop through their wife it does again show that people thought wives could be a useful avenue through which to get to their husbands. More seriously, it has been suggested that Bridgeman’s wife may have influenced Bridgeman’s toleration of puritan preachers throughout their twenty year marriage. In particular she is known to have been friendly with the puritan preacher John Angier who prayed with her during her illness. Angier was reported to Bridgeman several times for non-conformity but escaped with only ‘occasional and brief suspension.’[[575]](#footnote-576)

Certainly critics were quick to point to the undue influence of wives over their husbands. Lord North warned Richard Cox to beware the advice of his wife whilst the accusations levelled against Mrs Freke have become notorious. In a document sent to the Privy Council detailing the ‘unadvised dealings of the Bishop of Norwich,’ it was claimed that she was responsible for ‘directing the Bishop; speaking reproachfully of learned preachers; sharing the commodity of the high commissioners; and wishing to turn every honest man out of the Bishop's presence.’[[576]](#footnote-577)It was stated that ‘it is well known throughout all Norfolk that whatsoever Mrs. Freke will have done, the Bishop must and will accomplish, or she would make him weary of his life, as he complained with tears.’ Further if anyone dared to come to the Bishop without a present, ‘she will looke on him as the Divell lookes over Lincoln.’[[577]](#footnote-578) The truth of the relationship between Bishop Freke and his wife cannot be known and she has become a caricature who is regarded as a prototype for Trollope’s Mrs Proudie.[[578]](#footnote-579) However, the criticism levelled against her is testimony to people’s belief that bishops’ wives could possess significant influence over their husbands

As well as acting as mediators between their husbands and those seeking access to them to request favours or offices, a single example evidences that Frances Matthew, at least, was also considered to be an attractive literary patron. In 1602 Francis Bunny, a former fellow of Magdalene College, Oxford, published a pedagogical tract entitled, ‘An exposition of the Lordes praier wherin are delivered necessary lessons for all Christians to learne and practise when they will pray,’ prefaced by a letter addressed to Frances Matthew.[[579]](#footnote-580) At the time Bunny was serving as a cleric in the substantial living of Ryton, in the diocese of Durham where he enjoyed the support and confidence of Archbishop Tobie Matthew.[[580]](#footnote-581) Female patronage was common amongst royal and noble women of the court, with art and literature seen as part of women’s sphere, and certainly in the early years of the Reformation women such as Catherine Parr and Lady Jane Grey had been sought as patrons of religious tracts.[[581]](#footnote-582) This is, however, the only example that has been found in which a bishop’s wife is the dedicatee of a printed text. It is certainly possible that this was an accident of survival, though Frances Matthew undoubtedly seems to have enjoyed a particularly high status and reputation throughout her husband’s career. The date of the publication is also potentially significant, with bishops’ wives by this point occupying an established and recognisable position. This may have made them an increasingly attractive option, particularly for more junior clerics seeking approval for their work, as opposed to during the earlier period when their position and status was less clear. Certainly the letter conveys respect for Frances’s station addressing her as ‘the right worshipfull Mistresse Frances Matthew, wife to the Right Reverende Father in God, Toby Lord Bishop of Durham.’[[582]](#footnote-583) Further research would reveal whether this was an increasing trend, or whether Frances Matthew was unusually influential.

**Estate management**

As well as managing their households it can be assumed that bishops’ wives also played a role in the running and management of their husbands’ estates. The landed estates administered by the bishops could be extensive and throughout their episcopate they were expected to maintain them to ensure that they were passed onto their successor intact, whilst ensuring that they were able to live off them and where possible make a profit. It has been well established that elite women could be very active in estate management both in their own right, or as deputies for their underage sons or absent husbands.[[583]](#footnote-584) The letters of Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury reveal that she maintained ‘a firm grip on estate and household management,’ even when she was physically absent from her properties.[[584]](#footnote-585) Elizabeth corresponded regularly with her estate manager and kept an up to date record of expenditure in her account book.[[585]](#footnote-586) In the absence of equivalent sources it is difficult to recreate the extent to which bishops’ wives may have played a similar role. However, although there are no direct sources relating to the period of their marriages, records from chancery cases undertaken after their husbands’ deaths do give some indication of bishops’ wives knowledge of the episcopal estates.

Most often bishops’ widows appear in chancery records as participants in dilapidation disputes with their husbands’ successors; although as the executors of their husbands’ wills they were also involved in other disputes arising from the execution of the terms of their husbands’ wills. In many ways the types of cases involving bishops’ widows, and particularly the dilapidation cases, highlight the stark contrast between their position and that of other elite women after their husband’s death. Although, as Harris has demonstrated, many elite widows owned or administered a ‘huge amount of real and moveable property as their husbands’ executors and guardians of their children,’ bishops’ widows did not have a hereditary stake in the episcopal estates, which passed to their husbands’ successor after their death.[[586]](#footnote-587) However, this is not to say that they had not been effective overseers of the estates during their husbands’ lifetimes. Whilst we need to be careful about reading sources backwards, especially ones created for such specific purposes, the detailed evidence provided by bishops’ wives during the chancery cases demonstrate their knowledge and familiarity with how the episcopal estates were run. Further, their defences show that they were willing to vigorously defend both their own rights and their husbands’ legacy and like other elite women draw on the skills and connections they had acquired during their marriages.

It was relatively common for bishops to launch dilapidation cases against their predecessors with demands for payments often amounting to hundreds of pounds. If the bishop had been promoted and was still alive then he could of course fight his own battle with his successor, but if not then it was left to his executors to settle the payments. Although not exclusively the case, the majority of bishops, like aristocratic men, appointed their wives as sole executors of their wills.[[587]](#footnote-588) In 1575 Alice Pilkington became one of the first bishops’ widows to be drawn into a dispute with her husband’s successor, Richard Barnes, which was brought before the Lord Treasurer. In Alice Pilkington’s answer to Barnes’ demands it was claimed that the dilapidation payment requested was too great and exceeded the payments received by Pilkington and his predecessors.[[588]](#footnote-589) Common arguments were deployed that Pilkington had maintained the estate well and left it richer than when he had found it through not felling trees or granting leases which he would have been entitled to do. However, the statement also included the novel argument that if ‘suche a mass were due to his L. as is p[re]tended,’ then what little Alice had as Pilkington’s executor would not be sufficient ‘to bringe up her children.’[[589]](#footnote-590) Appeals to feminine weakness were common in chancery suits but were obviously a new dimension to dilapidation cases between bishops and their predecessors.

However, not all bishops’ wives had young children or used their maternal responsibilities as part of their defences. With the help of her second husband Sir Charles Cornwallis, Dorothy Jegon delivered a robust defence to the requests by two of her husbands’ successors, Bishop Overall and Bishop Harsnett, for payment of dilapidations. The couples’ claims were supported by Bishop Jegon’s former secretary Anthony Harrison who made a record of his involvement in the case as well as some of the letters sent between Sir Charles Cornwallis and Bishop Harsnett.[[590]](#footnote-591) Harrison recorded how first Overall, who died before he was able to reclaim any money, and then Harsnett, had brought a suit of dilapidation against Dorothy as her husband’s executor. Acting as a witness, Harrison described how he had responded to the first case brought by Overall and given his evidence that Bishop Jegon ‘did keep and maintain the Palace and building thereto belonging by the terme of his incumbency in such reparacons in all things past as for many years past before his coming to it...and did leave in as good ease as he found it after the death of Bishop Redman his predecessor.’[[591]](#footnote-592) Parts of the thatched palace were badly damaged in a fire of 1614 which also seems to have destroyed some of the outbuildings. However, Harrison states that up until this point Jegon had always maintained the house and after it was destroyed built another ‘convenient’ house at his own expense.[[592]](#footnote-593) Before the case could be settled, Overall died and before the appointment of his successor Harrison described how Dorothy Jegon married her second husband. This evidences that she had fought the first case alone, evidently able to draw on the support of her husband’s former secretary who she had obviously established a good relationship with during her marriage.

After her remarriage it appears that Dorothy’s second husband took over the case on her behalf and Harrison provides copies of several letters sent between himself and Cornwallis and Cornwallis and Bishop Harsnett. In a long letter to the bishop, Cornwallis set out his wife’s defence responding to each of the four accusations in turn. Although Dorothy’s husband wrote the letter adding his reputation and influence to her cause it was evidently she and Harrison who provided the specific details.[[593]](#footnote-594) The most in depth response was to claims about the repairs made to Ludham Palace both before and after the fire. Cornwallis stressed the improvements made to the estate by Jegon after its neglect at the hands of his predecessor which included rebuilding some of the houses in stone, improving the gardens, orchards, hopp grounds and the surrounding area. He also stated how after Jegon’s death ‘his wife...did erect the frame of a fair barne and stable at the end of it which cost her more than 50 pounds,’ concluding that in light of this he could not see why in ‘charity’ or ‘conscience’ Bishop Harsnett could ask for any more dilapidations.[[594]](#footnote-595) The fact that Dorothy paid for the construction of the barn after the death of her husband is clear evidence of her investment in and knowledge of the estate.

In a later section of his account book, Harrison recorded the ‘counsel given touching dilapidations,’ written by the dean of arches and several other doctors, which stated that bishops were bound by law to keep their house ‘as a good husband would do his own inheritance.’[[595]](#footnote-596) Whilst in some ways this was a very different situation from the relationship of elite husbands and wives to their estates, both were charged with the responsibility of maintaining estates for future generations. It was also in the interests of bishops and their wives to ensure the upkeep of their estates to try and protect themselves and their families from future dilapidation suits. Certainly the defence produced by Dorothy suggests that she had taken her role as a custodian of the estate seriously and had also been effective in cultivating supporters for her cause.

Not all bishops’ widows remarried and other women showed themselves more than capable of fighting cases themselves. Cicely Sandys, who remained a widow for twenty two years after her husband’s death in 1588, is one such example. Just one year after Sandys’ death she was sued in chancery by his former bailiff William Brewster having first threatened him with a common law suit for negligence over audits.[[596]](#footnote-597) Brewster claimed that he had been treated unfairly by Cicely who had requested that he provide all of the sums he had received since the last audit. Whilst Brewster stated that he had been happy to provide receipts he could not provide all the money as he had spent some of it on ‘suche necessarie and convenient business,’ as he had been commanded by the late Archbishop.[[597]](#footnote-598) He did not think that he would get justice in the common law court and so asked that Cicely be brought before the chancery court. In her response, however, Cicely stated strongly that the case should be tried in the common law court and that Brewster had not only failed to present the accounts of the last year but that the last audit he had completed before her husband’s death had been negligent. After a rejoinder by Brewster, Cicely reiterated her case and stated that he had used the chancery suit ‘contrarie to right’ though attempting to waste time and prevent her from obtaining what she was justly owed.[[598]](#footnote-599) Whilst the outcome of the case is unfortunately not known it nevertheless demonstrates Cicely’s confidence in her position and rights and her willingness to instigate legal action. Further, it demonstrates her familiarity with the extensive estates of the Archbishopric and the servants who had worked for her husband, again evidencing that bishops’ wives were active in estate management.

**Conclusion**

Although Prior concluded her assessment of bishops’ wives with the assertion that they were ‘socially and legally disadvantaged compared with other women, and rendered all but invisible in public life,’ this chapter has argued for a much more positive assessment of their role.[[599]](#footnote-600) Whilst it is true that bishops’ wives faced unique problems, such as their lack of title and dependence on their husband’s ability to make a profit from the episcopal estates, so they were not left in penury during their widowhood, many positive developments occured; and Prior’s assessment is simply not reflective of their household role. This chapter has argued that contrary to previous assessments, bishops’ wives were able to successfully carve out a role for themselves in the episcopal households and adopted many of the same functions as other elite women. For the first time episcopal residences were organised around a couple which had an impact on the way they were managed as well as the material environment, with evidence of female spaces emerging in the formerly male-only palaces and manors.

Although bishops’ wives did take on a comparable role to other elite women, it must be remembered that the transformation of episcopal residences into family homes was a genuine innovation of the Reformation period. In Germany, Karant-Nunn argues that although it has become increasingly common to draw continuities between the late medieval period and the Reformation era, the ‘construction of the Lutheran pastoral family,’ and its elevation to a model of piety and decorum, did mark ‘a radical break with the prevailing Catholic practice of concubinage.’[[600]](#footnote-601) Although not all bishops married, the same case can be made for the episcopal estates in England, with women and families becoming integrated into the highest echelons of the established Church in a novel way. There is no doubt that a legitimate family would have altered the way that the episcopal estates were run as well as the bishop’s social interaction with his neighbours. The next chapter will look beyond the household to assess how bishops’ wives fared in society and the types of social networks episcopal couples could engage with.

**“The Bishop’s wife came to see me this night.”**[[601]](#footnote-602)

**Bishops wives: isolated or integrated 1559-1640?**

Undoubtedly one of the most significant ramifications of clerical marriage was the creation of a new social group who had to be accorded a position within the strict hierarchy of Tudor society. In the previous chapter it was argued that despite the theoretical limitations placed upon bishops’ wives in practice they were able to perform many of the same household functions as other elite women. This chapter now moves beyond the household to explore the social networks of bishops’ wives and what this can add to our understanding of their life cycle and experience of married life. It further challenges Prior’s negative depiction of the lived experience of bishops’ wives and answers some of the questions posed in her work about their status in secular society, as well as within the new clerical networks. It also draws on the work of Harris to determine whether any similarities can be drawn between the types of social networks occupied by elite women and those of bishops’ wives. Harris’ work argues strongly that perceptions of elite women as isolated figures, consumed by the interests of their marital families are incorrect, and that their interests and connections actually extended far beyond their homes and immediate lineal descendants.[[602]](#footnote-603) This chapter will demonstrate that this was also the case for bishops’ wives and that despite their more unusual life cycle and social position they were not isolated, but able to successfully integrate into both new and established social networks.

There is no doubt that the social position of bishops’ wives was unusual, resting as it did on their husband’s office as opposed to the rather more solid **accoutrements** enjoyed by the landed and titled elite. This distinction is a central concern of Prior’s work, and she asserts that the contradictions inherent in their position caused many problems for bishops’ wives. Particular areas problematized by Prior included the relationship between a bishop’s wife and her husband, when he was both her head and the head of the Church; the position of a bishop’s wife in relation to the lower clergy, and the extent to which this was analogous to the relationship between a lord’s wife and an esquire; the impact of the bishop’s rank as a peer on the rest of his family, and the extent to which a bishop’s wife could deputise for her husband in any comparable way to a noble or gentlewomen.[[603]](#footnote-604) In the previous chapter, the relationship between husbands and wives was explored and it was argued that within the setting of the household bishops’ wives were able to act in exactly the same way as any other wife. Further evidence to support this claim will be presented in this chapter, and again it will be argued that their lack of title had limited impact when it came to forging social networks. Once again Prior’s assessment that bishops’ wives ‘were socially and legally disadvantaged compared with other women, and rendered all but invisible in public life,’ will be challenged, and this chapter will offer a more positive view of their social prospects.[[604]](#footnote-605) It will first explore the evidence of networks found in four extant lists of the godparents of bishops’ children, before using the fragmentary evidence found in letters and diaries to explore bishops’ wives potential to forge social connections within the traditional milieus of London and the localities. Throughout it will also consider bishops’ wives’ position within the Elizabethan and Jacobean Church structure, which now consisted of families and created a significant new social network. Far from being isolated figures set apart by the anomalies in their social position, bishops’ wives successfully integrated into existing social networks and helped to establish and maintain new ones. This integration served to normalise clerical marriage in local communities and reinforced its position at the heart of the English Church.

As ever, caution must be deployed in using the fragmentary evidence available for assessing the social networks of bishops’ wives to draw definitive conclusions. Key determinants such as wealth and location would have had a major impact, with the experience of a bishop’s wife in a more remote and poverty stricken diocese most likely very different from those whose husbands occupied wealthier dioceses with a rich choice of episcopal residences. Unfortunately the evidence does not permit a comprehensive comparison of the experience of bishops’ wives, however, with caution, it is possible to make some strong inferences about the types of social networks bishops’ wives engaged in and how these developed over the course of their married life. The circumstances of bishops’ wives could change quite dramatically as their husbands progressed through the ranks of the Church, and this obviously had an impact on their social networks. The number of promotions and the age at which their husbands were promoted to bishoprics would also have been a distinguishing factor, with some bishops remaining in the same diocese for many years, while others moved regularly.[[605]](#footnote-606) Patterns also changed across the period. The resignation of all but one of the Marian bishops after Elizabeth’s accession had accelerated the careers of many men who had previously only had limited experience in church administration, and whose wives would equally only have had limited time to adjust to their new role as a bishop’s wife. It would later become far more common for men to work up through the ranks of the church, which meant that their wives would potentially also have had a long career as a clerical-wife. As appendix two demonstrates, a number of bishops’ wives also came from clerical families, with at least seven the daughters of other bishops, which would have given them extensive experience of the clerical lifestyle.[[606]](#footnote-607)

Bearing in mind these important variables, there are a number of specific areas that will be considered. Firstly, bishops’ wives ability to integrate into national networks centred on London will be examined. We know that bishops’ wives were not welcomed at court and held no official court positions throughout this period. They did not participate in public ceremonies, such as coronations or funerals, and are not included in the lists of New Year gifts. This has led Prior to conclude that bishops’ wives remained ‘invisible in public life.’[[607]](#footnote-608) However, it will be argued that this definition of public life is too limited. As demonstrated, bishops’ wives played an active role in providing hospitality within the episcopal residences, where their role must undoubtedly be regarded as having been a public one. Whilst it is true that they did not hold court positions, it will be argued that there were exceptional cases, such as Frances Matthew, who seems to have had a relationship with King James I and Queen Anne. Further, although they may not have been accepted at court, bishops’ wives did accompany their husbands to London for sessions of Parliament, providing them with opportunities to meet other bishops’ wives as well as members of the elite. These opportunities were of course limited by the infrequency with which parliament was held, and the number of bishops who attended at any one time. There were numerous reasons why bishops may not have attended and equally even when they did their wives may not always have joined them, with childcare responsibilities, ill health, or cost potentially keeping them at home.

By Elizabeth’s reign, the majority of bishops had lost their traditional London homes as part of the property ‘exchanges’ exacted by successive Tudor monarchs, and were forced to rent temporary accommodation in the city, which could be an expensive affair.[[608]](#footnote-609) However, whilst it is impossible to know exactly how many bishops’ wives accompanied their husbands to London or how often, there is clear evidence that at least some bishops’ wives spent periods of time in London and to this extent mimicked the practices of the aristocracy and gentry, who increasingly spent fixed portions of the year in London.[[609]](#footnote-610) The Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London are obvious exceptions, with both retaining large London residences at Lambeth and Fulham and their positions keeping them predominantly in the capital. Depending on their court duties, other bishops also spent considerable time in London, even - as in the case of Richard Neile - when they held dioceses in the north of the country. This would have impacted on their social networks, and given both them and their wives far greater opportunity to integrate into networks centred on London.

Although bishops’ wives certainly visited London, like aristocratic women, they seem to have spent the majority of their time in the country palaces and manors belonging to their husbands’ dioceses; according with the post-Reformation emphasis on bishops’ residency in their sees. At the very least, a bishop would have had one house or palace next to their cathedral, whilst the wealthier dioceses also possessed a collection of country estates and manors. Some residences were always more popular than others, with successive bishops of Lincoln favouring the more centrally located palace of Buckden in Cambridgeshire, while the Palace of Southwell in Nottinghamshire offered the Archbishops of York a convenient stopping place between London and the north, as well as a retreat from public life. For other bishops their choice of residence would have been much more limited, and this would have had an impact on the couple’s social network. For example, a couple based primarily in an episcopal residence close to the cathedral would have been in much closer proximity to other senior members of the cathedral chapter and their families, whereas those residing out in the country were likely to have been more integrated into local county networks. However, this is not to suggest that different networks were mutually exclusive. As Harris has demonstrated, although aristocratic women primarily spent their time within the castles and manors of their marital families, this did not preclude them from maintaining a wide social network which included members of both their marital and natal family, as well as the local aristocracy.[[610]](#footnote-611) Therefore, whilst this chapter will consider the social networks in which bishops’ wives participated in within the contexts of London, the localities, and the Church, this is not to deny the significant overlap between all three. The distinction does, however, help to draw attention to the fact that the emerging social networks between clerical families were something new, and deserves to be considered as such. Aside from the work of Prior and Berlatsky, both of whom focused solely on the rate of intermarriage between clerical families, no other work has been carried out on the nature or importance of other types of clerical connections for either bishops or their wives.[[611]](#footnote-612) This chapter will argue that they were highly significant and a means by which clerical marriage was reinforced and maintained, with relationships between clergy families, whether through intermarriage or godparentage, serving to normalise clerical marriage and create a growing social network.

**Godparents**

Although much of the source material that can be used to assess the social networks of bishops’ wives is fragmentary a set of four surviving lists of the godparents of bishops’ children offers one lens through which to view the social networks of bishops and their wives. The small pool of lists obvo iously makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the practice of godparentage amongst bishops, however, with caution it is possible to use them to answer some of the questions posed by Prior about the place of bishops and their families in the Church and secular society. Chronologically the lists span the period between 1550-1630, which allows for a degree of comparison and assessment of whether there was any changing practice. Three were created by the bishops themselves, whilst one was written by a bishop’s wife. They also cover a range of dioceses, and whilst three of the bishops progressed to the wealthier sees of Lincoln, London, York and Durham, the fourth list was created by a future bishop of Chester, which was a comparatively poor see. This therefore allows for some comparison of the social prospects of different bishops, whilst the time scales covered by the individual registers allow for an examination of how prospects changed as the bishops’ careers progressed.

Despite the qualms of some more radical Protestants who believed godparents ‘were another groundless popish invention,’ the post-Reformation English Church maintained them and most families continued to appoint them for their children.[[612]](#footnote-613) As Cressy argues, it is likely that for many families secular and social considerations took precedent over spiritual surety, with the acts of securing and standing as a godparent very much a ‘matter of social respect and esteem.’[[613]](#footnote-614) Although many couples chose godparents from their own families, the birth of a child also offered a good opportunity to ask individuals who they felt would bring social prestige to their families or future benefit to the child being baptised. If possible couples would seek to appoint somebody of a higher rank, with godparentage an important part of the ‘matrix of kinship and clientage.’[[614]](#footnote-615)Cressy notes that some couples were willing to delay baptism to secure a particular godparent. However, if there were any concerns about the child’s health or any other reasons for holding the baptism quickly, the choice of godparents would have been more limited and dependent on those who were available at short notice. It can be hard to find records of godparents, with no requirement for priests to record this information in parish registers. Where references do survive, however, whether in letters or diaries, or in this case lists of godparents, they can be important indicators of wider social networks.

The earliest baptismal register was created by Nicholas Bullingham, the future bishop of Lincoln and Worcester, who recorded the details of all his children’s births, as well as their godparents, in a 1533 edition of *Fabyan’s Chronicle*.[[615]](#footnote-616) Bullingham had married during Edward’s reign, at which point he was the archdeacon of Lincoln, and the register covers the turbulent years between 1553 and 1570. All but one of the six children listed were born to his first wife Margaret Sutton, who was from a minor gentry family in Lincolnshire. The godparents chosen for their first son, Frances, born in March 1553 are evidence of the couple’s integration into local elite society, and provide the first evidence of what would be an enduring social network based on several Lincolnshire families. They included Sir Francis Askew, the brother of the Henrician martyr Anne Askew and a prominent Lincolnshire gentleman; Mistress Joyce Dighton, widow of a Lincolnshire gentleman who had profited from the sale of monastic land; and Thomas Grantham, who was most likely Margaret Bullingham’s nephew and the son of a wealthy Lincolnshire cloth merchant.[[616]](#footnote-617) This evidences firstly that the marriage was accepted by Margaret’s family, with Bullingham also later named as an executor to Margaret’s mother.[[617]](#footnote-618) It also demonstrates that at an early stage clerical marriage was accepted by the local elite who were happy to sponsor the child of a clerical union. It has been speculated that Sir Francis Askew may have shared his sister’s early conversion to evangelical ideas. However, the case of Joyce Dighton is more interesting. When she died in 1570, Joyce’s will bequeathed her soul ‘to God, our Blessed Lady St Mary, etc,’ suggesting that at the very least she was not an enthusiastic reformer.[[618]](#footnote-619) In spite of this she had evidently been happy to stand as godmother to an archdeacon’s son, evidencing that religious difference may not have impinged on well established local networks, and that the introduction of clerical families did not destabilise local social hierarchies. [[619]](#footnote-620) These families would have been the natural acquaintances of Bullingham and his wife, both of whom came from minor gentry backgrounds, and the fact that Bullingham was a cleric does not seem to have disrupted this. Together with Francis Askew, the Dighton and Tryhitt family, all of whom were connected by marriage, remained supportive of Bullingham and his family throughout the dramatic years between 1553 and 1559 which saw his deprivation, exile and eventual restoration.

As a married priest, Bullingham was deprived of his livings relatively quickly after Mary’s accession and had been replaced as archdeacon by 5 May 1554. The register evidences that in their time of crisis the Bullinghams took refuge in the house of Bullingham’s mother in Worcester, where their second child Edward was born in November. This time around, and perhaps with a need to keep a low profile, the godparents were limited to family members and included Bullingham’s mother, Susan, his brother, Richard, and Christopher Dighton who was most likely his brother in law.[[620]](#footnote-621) Shortly afterwards, Bullingham must have made his escape to Emden where he was recorded as a citizen in November 1555, which normally required a year’s residency. There has been some speculation about whether or not Margaret joined Bullingham in exile, and Bullingham later castigated the clerics ‘who forsook unnaturalye ther wives and marryede bennefyces’ during Mary’s reign.[[621]](#footnote-622) However, it is clear that he was referring to those who voluntarily separated from their wives in order to keep their livings, and the register strongly suggests that Margaret did not join him in exile. Firstly the very recent birth of her son, combined with a second young infant, would have made an initial journey extremely unlikely, and secondly no further children are registered as being born until 1561, suggesting that the couple were not together during Mary’s reign. It is possible that Margaret remained with Bullingham’s mother in Worcester, and she evidently had friends in Lincolnshire. Although Bullingham had been forced to give up his house in the cathedral close on his deprivation, somebody renegotiated a lease on another property in the town for him in 1556.[[622]](#footnote-623) It is not unlikely that this person did so in negotiation with Margaret, and that like Margaret Cranmer she was supported by a network that was able to function throughout Mary’s reign. Shortly after Elizabeth’s accession Sir Francis Askew successfully petitioned Cecil for Bullingham’s restitution as the archdeacon, suggesting that there was ongoing contact between them; and his strong Lincolnshire connections seem to have played a part in Bullingham’s election to the bishopric of Lincoln in November 1559.[[623]](#footnote-624)

The remainder of the Bullingham’s children were born at the episcopal residence of Buckden in Huntingdonshire, and christened in the local parish church, which evidences the couple’s preference for the more centrally-located palace at Buckden, rather than the palace at Lincoln. Two, short-lived daughters, both called Susan, were born in 1561 and 1563, and a son called Nicholas in 1566. The children’s godparents were a mixture of members of the local elite and figures from within the Elizabethan Church, evidencing the ongoing strength of the couple’s local connections as well as an expanding network from within the Church. Godparents drawn from the local elite included Sir Laurence Taylor, Sir Robert Tyrwhitt and his wife Lady Tyrwhitt, and Lady Darcy, who was Sir Robert’s daughter and heir to his estate in Huntingdonshire.[[624]](#footnote-625) The proximity of the Tyrwhitt estate to the palace at Buckden and the repeated requests to the Tyrwhitt family to stand as godparents to their children gives some indication of the Bullingham’s social network in the county, and suggests that like many others they used the practice of godparentage to expand and consolidate social connections they perhaps thought would be useful to their children in the future. The rest of the godparents who can be identified are either church figures, or their wives. The practice of asking the wives of clergymen to stand as godmothers was obviously a new innovation, and is indicative of the social networks that formed between this new group of women and their husbands. The clerical godparents listed were Dr and Mrs Yale and Mrs Cox, ‘wife to my lord of Ely,’ Bishop Richard Cox.[[625]](#footnote-626) Dr Yale was Archbishop Parker’s chancellor and vicar general and it is likely the two men met through him as Parker was one of Bullingham’s most important patrons. The inclusion of Mrs Cox, wife to the bishop of Ely, evidences that there were opportunities for bishops’ families to socialise with each other and that networks existed between them as well as with other clerical families. Although we can only speculate, it is possible that the women were perhaps named as godmothers because they were with Mrs Bullingham for the birth of her children, or visited shortly afterwards. Both of the Bullingham’s daughters were christened on the Sunday following their birth, which would have allowed time for visitors to arrive.

Unfortunately, Margaret Bullingham died shortly after the birth of her last child, ‘before she was cherched,’ in October 1553.[[626]](#footnote-627) Bullingham subsequently remarried Elizabeth Lok, who was a former exile and who brought thirteen step-children to the marriage. The couple also had one child together, a son called John, who was born at Buckden in November 1570. This demonstrates that Bullingham continued to use Buckden as one of his primary residences with his second wife. The godparents chosen were in keeping with his previous choices and included ‘Mr Scambler Busshop of Peterburgh,' maister darrnyngton Esquyer,’ and ‘mrs Mathew his aunt.’[[627]](#footnote-628)

The second baptismal register was compiled by Edwin Sandys, who became the first Elizabethan bishop of Worcester in December 1559, before being translated to London in 1570 and finally York in 1577. It records the births of all the children born to him and his second wife, Cicely, née Wilford, whom he married shortly after his return to England from exile in February 1559.[[628]](#footnote-629) Sandys later became notorious for the supposed nepotism he exhibited towards his large family, and was forced to defend himself from these accusations on several occasions. Certainly, their family was prodigious, and Cicely gave birth to seven children between 1560 and 1570, whilst Sandys was the bishop of Worcester. Similarly to the Bullinghams the godparents chosen for these children were drawn primarily from the local elite. They included members of the Russell, Lygot, Lyttelton and Packington family, who all held local office in Worcestershire and appear to have been an established local network. For the couple’s first and third child they also asked the dean of Worcester, John Pedder, and his wife Anne, to stand as godparents, which suggests that there was sociability between the families of the bishop and the dean and that this was an emerging social network. Although one of Sandys’ brothers stood as a godparent none of Cicely’s natal relatives appear to have been asked, despite the fact that she herself came from a gentry family. This can, however, perhaps be explained by geographical distance as Cicely’s family were based in Kent. With their location based on their husband’s career many bishops’ wives spent long periods of time living at great distances from their natal families, a similar situation to that of many elite women. However, as will be demonstrated in chapter five, evidence from the surviving wills of bishops’ wives suggest that they did stay in touch with their natal families, with brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews often beneficiaries.

The couple’s last two children were born in September 1572, after Sandys’ election to London, and March 1577, shortly before his election to York. What is notable is the much higher social strata of the godparents chosen. All were titled, and included the Earl of Huntington, William Lord Sandys, Lady Margaret Talbot, the Earl of Cumberland, William Lord Ewry, and Katherine Countess of Huntingdon, a committed Protestant with Puritan leanings, and the sister of Elizabeth’s favourite, Robert Dudley. As the bishop of London, Sandys would have spent more time at court. The episcopal residence of Fulham Palace, situated on the edge of the Thames, would also have enabled him to entertain the aristocracy in London. After her husband’s death in 1595, Katherine Countess of Huntington chose to settle in Chelsea, suggesting that she and her husband may have had an existing house there and thus have been neighbours during the Sandys’ time in London.[[629]](#footnote-630) The Earl and Countess also held the King’s manor in York, which meant they would also have been neighbours after Sandys’ promotion to Archbishop. Although the exact nature of their relationship cannot be known, Katherine’s protégé, Lady Margaret Hoby, who was educated in her household at York, later established friendships with several bishops’ wives, and it is possible that the Countess of Huntington may also have welcomed Sandys and his wife into her home.[[630]](#footnote-631) Several of the other godparents chosen held court positions during Sandys’ time at London. Whilst again it is not possible to determine the exact nature of the relationship it was clearly considered appropriate for them to stand as godparents to the children of a bishop, and they were all happy to tie themselves publicly to the Sandys family.

It is difficult to determine how exceptional the experience of Sandys and his wife may have been without any comparable sources for another bishop promoted to a high office at a time when his family was still growing. It did become increasingly unusual for men to be promoted as rapidly as the first generation of Elizabethan bishops had been. From the surviving records it does not seem likely that any of Sandys’ successors to either London or York had young children whilst they were in office. Undoubtedly, however, the experience of the bishops and their wives who had a permanent home in London, and particularly the bishops of London, would have been very different and they would have had many more opportunities to engage with national networks. It is notable that Sandys did not appoint many clerics or their wives. . As a former exile and member of Cambridge University Sandys was not an isolated figure amongst the first generation of Elizabethan bishops. However, he nevertheless chose to look outside of the Church for his children’s godparents. Whilst in Worcester, Sandys had begun to make future provision for his children and it is likely that the choice of godparents, from amongst the local elite, was also intended to help secure their future position in the county. In London the family were evidently able to look higher, and seem to have made the most of the new contacts that came with Sandys’ position. It is also possible that having attained high office in the Church Sandys did not see any benefit either for himself or his children in appointing clerical godparents. He clearly did not envision that all of his sons would follow him into an ecclesiastical career and purchased land for their future benefit in Worcester. The choice of godparents from amongst the local elite in the county, and subsequently amongst the aristocracy, is further evidence of his provisioning for their future. As the next two registers will demonstrate, clerical contacts seem to have been more important at an earlier stage in bishops’ careers, whilst Sandys’ register potentially shows that networks became less exclusively clerical as bishops’ careers progressed, and their concerns became worldlier.

The third baptismal register was created by Frances Matthew, and is the only one to have been created by a bishop’s wife. It is a single manuscript page and is written in Frances’ own hand under the title, ‘the birthe of all my children.’[[631]](#footnote-632) It records the births of her children from her first marriage to Matthew Parker, the son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and her second marriage to Dr Tobie Matthew, who later became the Archbishop of York, between the years 1575 and 1583.[[632]](#footnote-633) First published as part of an anthology of early modern women’s life-writing, it has never before been compared against the other bishops’ registers or interpreted specifically as evidence of the social networks of bishops’ families.[[633]](#footnote-634) Unlike the Bullinghams and the Sandys all of the Matthew children were born before Tobie Matthew was appointed to his first bishopric in 1595, which was undoubtedly the more common experience, especially as time progressed. The record created by Frances Matthew testifies to her husband’s promotions through the ranks of the Church and also gives a brief insight into the key events in the life of a woman who was a living testament to the progress of clerical marriage. As previously stated, Frances was the daughter of Bishop William Barlow and his wife Agatha, who had most likely married at some point in the mid-1530s when Barlow had been the bishop of St David’s. The couple had remained together throughout the reign of both Henry VIII and Edward VI before going into exile during Mary’s reign. Returning to England in Elizabeth’s reign Barlow had been appointed as the bishop of Bath and Wells. Frances herself had initially married the younger son of Archbishop Parker in 1569 and had spent her brief marriage to him living with or close to her parents-in-law at Lambeth Palace. Her sister-in-law at this time was the daughter of Bishop Richard Cox of Ely, and famously all of her natal sisters eventually married men who would become Elizabethan bishops. As such Frances’ life was inexorably linked to the institution of clerical marriage and she had a wide social network drawn from this new group of clerical families.

This is clearly reflected in Frances’ register which starts with the birth of her only child from her first marriage to Matthew Parker, born after his death on 11 July 1575. The child was born at Eton College where her sister’s husband William Day was the provost, suggesting she had been staying with her sister for the pregnancy and again showing the importance of family in challenging times.[[634]](#footnote-635) The child’s godparents were all drawn from her natal and marital family and included William Day, her brother-in-law John Parker, and her mother, Agnes Barlow. The remaining five children were all born during her second marriage to Dr Tobie Matthew, which was contracted in early 1577.[[635]](#footnote-636) By this point in his career Matthew held prebendal stalls in both Salisbury and Wells Cathedral, had been appointed archdeacon of Bath, and had most recently been appointed dean of Christ Church Oxford, a position he held until 1584 when he was appointed dean of Durham. All of their five children, including three sons and two short lived daughters were born either at Salisbury, which was evidently one of the couple’s primary residences, or at the dean’s house in Christ Church Oxford, between the years 1577 and 1583. In contrast to the Sandys and Bullingham registers, the majority of those chosen to stand as godparents for the Matthew children were drawn from the Church and university hierarchy, as opposed to the local elite. This is perhaps indicative of the different stage reached in Matthew’s career when his children were born and the social networks the couple moved in during this period.

The notable exception was Mary Sidney, the Countess of Pembroke, who was asked to stand as godmother to one of the couple’s short-lived daughters in 1582; christened Mary, most likely in her honour. The Sidney family had a long acquaintance with the Matthew family. Mary’s brother, the famous poet, Philip Sidney, had attended Oxford with Tobie Matthew and both he and her husband, Henry Herbert, provided patronage for Matthew’s clerical career.[[636]](#footnote-637) Mary Sidney herself worshipped at Salisbury Cathedral where it is possible that she met the couple, and later maintained a correspondence with the couple’s eldest son.[[637]](#footnote-638) As will be discussed later, Frances Matthew eventually moved in very high circles, and these connections evidently began early with a close friendship with Mary Sidney.

However, at this stage, the majority of godparents were drawn from the Church and university, and also included family members from both sides. Amongst the latter were both of the couple’s mothers as well as Frances’ sister Anne Westphaling née Barlow, whose husband later became the bishop of Hereford and who was known for his zeal in converting Roman Catholics. Amongst the former were Dr Humphrey and Dr Culpepper who were both senior figures at the University of Oxford. Dr Humphrey was a former Marian exile and very committed to the reformed cause, leading the fight against clerical vestments. Although sometimes a controversial figure, he remained influential at Oxford and evidently enjoyed a good relationship with the Matthew’s with his wife Joan also asked to stand as a godmother. Both Dr Withington and Dr Slithers were also reformed clerics at the University, and the list evidences the Matthew’s integration into college life. As discussed in chapter two, the presence of wives and children within the university colleges had been something that Elizabeth had tried to prevent, and the arrival of Mrs Cox and Mrs Vermigli in Oxford during the reign of Edward VI had been a cause of scandal. However, as this register demonstrates the colleges did become home to clerical families and it is clear that there was considerable sociability between them.

The final baptismal register was created by John Bridgeman, later the bishop of Chester, who recorded the details of all of his children’s births in his account book amongst the records of his expenditure.[[638]](#footnote-639) Bridgeman originated in Exeter and proceeded through Oxford before being ordained deacon and priest at Peterborough Cathedral in 1601, and promoted to its first prebend in 1605. He married his wife Elizabeth Heylar, the daughter of the archdeacon of Barnstaple, in 1606, and the account book details the fourteen children born to them between 1608 and 1633. This particularly long period of time clearly enables the progress of Bridgeman’s career and the impact of this on his family life to be charted, with several distinct periods shaped by his position and the family’s primary location. The first child whose birth and christening was recorded was born in Exeter, where Bridgeman seems to have kept a residence, and his godparents included one of Bridgeman’s uncles and members of two local families. The couple’s next five children were, however, born in Peterborough, and their godparents provide some of the strongest evidence of the sociability that existed between clerical families within the cathedral close. The bishop of Peterborough at this time was Thomas Dove, and the Bridgeman’s appear to have had a very close bond with him and his family, calling on several members to stand as godparents to their children. Indeed, they named their first child born at Peterborough ‘Dove Bridgeman’ assumedly in his honour, and asked his eldest son William Dove, his wife Margaret Dove, as well as Margaret Dove’s brother, Thomas Warner, to stand as godparents. A later daughter, Elizabeth, had both of Dove’s daughter-in-laws as her godmothers, whilst Henry Bridgeman, born a year later, had the bishop himself as his godfather. Others chosen from the clerical community included the wife of Dr Whalley, who was most likely another deacon, as well as the counsellor, William Reynolds. Only two godparents from the local elite were selected, the husband and wife Sir Humphrey and Lady Orme, who resided in the city as tenants at the bishop’s manor of Borough Bury.[[639]](#footnote-640)

These choices of godparents clearly demonstrate the very close networks that could exist between clerical families in the cathedral close. The account book covering the period the Bridgeman family remained in Peterborough also recorded quarterly payments to ‘Mrs Dove’ for the diet of Bridgeman and his wife.[[640]](#footnote-641) This gives a further insight into the household role of bishops’ wives, which evidently included provisioning for the diet of more junior clerics and their families, who perhaps lived in or very near to the episcopal palace. Bridgeman’s record for the Peterborough years also gives a poignant insight into the sadder parts of family life in the close. The Bridgemans lost two children during these years, both of whom were buried ‘before the Dean’s seat in the quire.’[[641]](#footnote-642) In many cathedrals this area came to be used for the burial of the family of senior cathedral members, and is another example of how family life came to be an accepted and integrated part of life in the cathedral close.[[642]](#footnote-643)

In 1616 Bridgeman was granted the rich parsonage of Wigan, and it is here that the couple’s next three children were born. Once again the godparents were drawn primarily from amongst the local clergy and their wives. They included Dr Augustine Widbore, the preacher at Wigan, and his wife, and Mr Leigh ‘parson of Standish,’ which was a neighbouring parish.[[643]](#footnote-644) They also seem to have included some local residents including a John Wrightman esq., Mrs Chaderton and Mrs Barrow. In 1619, Bridgeman was consecrated bishop of Chester in London. Whilst it seems likely that Mrs Bridgeman remained in Wigan during this visit, in June 1621 she accompanied her husband to London, where the couple’s eighth son Richard was born. In his account book Bridgeman recorded that he had been born in the house of Mr Maddox in Westminster during Parliament.[[644]](#footnote-645) It is likely that the bishops’ attendance at parliament provided an opportunity for bishops and their families to socialise with each other and the godparents chosen for Richard certainly support this. Christened four days after his birth, Richard’s godparents consisted of Richard Parry, bishop of St Asaph, Thomas Morton, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and the wife of Rowland Searchfield, bishop of Bristol.[[645]](#footnote-646) This evidences not only that bishops’ wives accompanied their husbands to London, but that they were sufficiently well acquainted with each other’s families to be asked to stand as godparents. Bridgeman’s accounts reveal that he travelled back to Chester twice during the Parliament, and the couple’s next child was born in Wigan in 1622, which Bridgeman had been allowed to keep too supplement his income. In 1624, Bridgeman at least was back in London for another parliament, during which he unfortunately recorded the death of one of his daughters who was subsequently buried in St Margaret’s church, Westminster.

After a gap of some years, two final children were born to the couple. The location of their births again gives some sense of what could be a very transient lifestyle for bishops and their families, with the first born in the palace of Chester in 1630, whilst the second was born in a house in Westminster in 1633. At Chester both the chancellor and prebendary of the cathedral were chosen as godparents, whilst in London the prebendary of St Margaret’s Westminster was chosen alongside the Lady Asaph and Mrs Hopton, continuing the couple’s tendency towards appointing a combination of clerical and lay godparents.[[646]](#footnote-647) Mrs Bridgeman lived long enough to see her first grandchild, born to the couple’s son Orlando, in the prebend’s house in the Cathedral Close of Chester in 1635, but died the following year, having borne fourteen children over a seventeen year period.

Judging from Bridgeman’s register, it is clear that he and his wife never achieved the social heights reached by the Sandys or Matthew family, and do not seem to have had the strong local connections held by the Bullingham’s in Lincolnshire. A large proportion of the godparents they chose were drawn from the clergy and their wives in the communities in which they lived as Bridgeman was promoted, first at Peterborough, then at Wigan, Chester as well as London. This is a reminder of the fact that the social experience of bishops’ wives could be very different and was dependent on a huge range of factors, including their own background, their husband’s promotions and the location of their husband’s diocese. However, it is possible to discern some trends. As the later registers of Matthew and Bridgeman demonstrate, after the first generation of Elizabethan bishops, it became much more common for bishops to have the majority of their children before they were appointed to their sees and to appoint members of the clergy and their wives as godparents. This reveals the sense of community that existed between clerical families, and particularly those who lived in close proximity to each other in the cathedral closes and university colleges. It also adds a new dimension to Berlatsky’s study of the marital patterns of bishops and makes it easy to see why so many clerical children intermarried.[[647]](#footnote-648)

Outside of the Church it is clear that bishops, as well as deans and prebends, could also look to the secular elite to stand as godparents for their children. This was most spectacularly demonstrated by Sandys who was able to look to the higher echelons of the aristocracy, although as the registers show all of the bishops were able to appoint some titled neighbours as godparents. It would be fascinating to know the extent to which bishops’ wives were appointed as godmothers to the children of the elite and lower social classes, and whether they were ever considered particularly desirable choices. As we have seen clerics clearly employed other clerical wives as godmothers to their children, and it seems highly probable that others did to. A single anecdote provides some evidence that this was the case. During an outbreak of plague in 1625, the bishop of Exeter, Valentine Carey and his wife Dorothy stayed with the family of Sir George Chudleigh. During this visit Dorothy was appointed as godmother to the Chudleigh’s newborn child. Whilst the search necessary to find more examples of this practice is beyond the remit of this study, given the friendships between bishops’ wives and members of the gentry and aristocracy, discussed below, it seems highly likely that they were appointed as godmothers to the children of the elite. Further research could also be carried out to establish whether they were a popular choice amongst the lower classes.

**Local communities**

The remaining evidence for the social networks of bishops’ wives is able to support some of the trends shown above and paint a fuller picture of the types of social networks in which bishops’ wives participated . It is drawn primarily from the diaries of Lady Anne Clifford and Margaret Hoby, as well as the correspondence of several bishops, most notably Tobie Matthew and Matthew Hutton; and it points again to bishops’ wives integration into both secular and clerical networks.

Turning first to their position in local communities, we have already seen that bishops’ wives hosted and entertained the local elite in their residences. The evidence from the list of godparents also suggests that bishops and their wives were sufficiently well acquainted with their influential neighbours to ask them to stand as godparents. That they were able to establish genuine friendships that went beyond simple clientage or patronage relationships can be evidenced by the diaries of Lady Margaret Hoby and Lady Ann Clifford. Lady Margaret Hoby had been educated in the puritan household of the Countess of Huntington. Schooled in Calvinist doctrine, her diary evidences her strict adherence to puritan principles and throughout her life she followed an exacting regime of spiritual instruction and observance.[[648]](#footnote-649) A wealthy heiress, Lady Margaret Hoby was a rich prize in the Tudor marriage market and had two short lived marriages before her third and final marriage to Sir Thomas Posthumous Hoby in 1596, which is the period covered by her diary. Her principal residence was an estate at Hackness, North Yorkshire, although she also spent considerable time in London. Lady Margaret Hoby often recorded her visits and visitors which included a wide range of family members, friends, chaplains and preachers. The first reference to her friendship with a bishop’s wife is made on the 22 September 1599 when she recorded:

After a priuat praier I brake my fast and then talked with Mr lister: then I took my Cotch and went to Bisshopthorpe to the Busship: their I dined, and talked with Mrs Hutten of relegion tell I Came from thence.[[649]](#footnote-650)

The estates of Hackness and Bishopthorpe were very close and although only a small reference this is evidence that bishops’ wives were not isolated in their homes or marginalised by their unusual social position, but able to fully integrate into their localities and establish friendships with the local elite.

It is also tempting to speculate about the nature of the religious life of bishops’ wives, with Lady Margaret Hoby specifically recording that she spoke to Mrs Hutton about religion. This was not particularly uncommon in Lady Margaret Hoby’s diary which recorded many such discussions with both men and women and accords with her desire to record her spiritual development. However, there is no doubt that the households of bishops’ wives would have followed particularly strict religious regimes. Bishops’ wives literally lived at the centre of the Church establishment, and so it is not unlikely that they may have shared the religious enthusiasm of women like Lady Margaret Hoby, who dedicated their lives to creating godly households. After Hutton’s death in 1606, Tobie Matthew was elected Archbishop of York and it seems that Lady Margaret Hoby similarly became acquainted with him and his wife Frances. Although her diary ends in 1605, a letter sent by Tobie Matthew to her husband Thomas in which he concluded with, ‘myne & my wifes hartiest salutations unto you & the virtuous ladie Hoby,’ suggests that the couple’s knew each other and had met.[[650]](#footnote-651) Certainly Frances Matthew shared Lady Margaret Hoby’s strong religious convictions, and her Catholic son Sir Tobie Matthew later recalled how she had been:

much more fervent towards the Puritanical sole- Scripture way, and was ever upon all occasions wont to be as busy with Scripture as if it had been some glove upon her fingers’ end; and, accordingly, she was held in a mighty kind of opinion with that sort of people.[[651]](#footnote-652)

Whilst he disapproved of his mother’s beliefs, there is no doubt that Lady Margaret Hoby, as one of ‘that sort of people,’ would have found them appealing, and certainly Frances would have been a suitable companion who matched Lady Margaret in intellect and piety.

As Tobie Matthew’s wife, Frances Matthew enjoyed a long career as a bishop’s wife, twenty two years of which were spent whilst Matthew held the distinguished position of Archbishop of York. This would have allowed her considerable time to make connections at the highest level, and as shown, even whilst her husband was serving as the dean of Christ Church, the couple were already well acquainted with the aristocratic Sidney family. At York, Frances made the acquaintance of Lady Anne Clifford, the sole heir to the third Earl of Cumberland and the wife of Lord Buckhurst, third Earl of Dorset. Although much of Anne’s adult life was dominated by disputes about her inheritance, with some of her family’s key estates passing to her uncle, she was still a wealthy woman who frequented the court. Fragmented extracts of her diary provide a record of a large part of her life, though the most complete section of her dairy covers the years between 1616 and 1619. Notably in December 1616 she recorded:

Upon the 11th I went to Yorke[.] 3 of Ld Sheffields Daughters & Mrs Matthews the Bishop’s wife came to see me this night [.] Mrs Matthews lay with me.[[652]](#footnote-653)

Again whilst this is only the briefest of records, it is further evidence of the integration of bishops’ wives into local hierarchies. Not only was Mrs Matthew invited to see Anne Clifford as part of a group which included the daughters of an aristocrat, she was subsequently invited to ‘lay with’ the countess as an equal, which assumedly meant share the countess’s bed for the night.

Evidence of such intimacy with the local aristocracy also exists for the second wife of Bishop John Thornborough of Bristol, although in a slightly less salubrious form. In 1615 Mrs Thornborough was ‘obscurely implicated’ in the court scandal surrounding the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury.[[653]](#footnote-654) Overbury had thwarted the attempts of the Countess of Essex to gain an annulment so that she could marry her lover the Earl of Somerset, and subsequently died whilst imprisoned in the Tower. Two years after his death, rumours of poison abounded and the Countess was accused alongside several mostly female accomplices. Mrs Thornborough’s name was put forward in an anonymous letter to the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, who was carrying out the investigation.[[654]](#footnote-655) Coke pursued the matter and several witnesses testified that Mrs Thornborough had known the Countess and her mother intimately. Frances Brittain described her as being ‘very intimate with the Countess and her mother, and would see them even in bed,’ whilst Stephen Clapham described her as ‘very intimate with the Countess of Suffolk and Somerset, and the Lady Walsingham.’ [[655]](#footnote-656) Another woman testified that Mrs Thornborough had obtained lands in Yorkshire, where she and her husband primarily resided, through the Countess.[[656]](#footnote-657) It does not seem that anything ever came from these enquiries and it is difficult to be sure of exactly what sort of relationship existed. Mrs Thornborough possibly had some reputation as a healer, which was alluded to in the anonymous letter sent against her, although, as Lindley states, the accusations against her seem to have been based purely on hearsay and Coke could not find anyone to testify that she had actually dabbled in anything untoward.[[657]](#footnote-658) More likely, it seems that Mrs Thornborough was just a close acquaintance of the Countess, who was momentarily caught up in the scandal that overtook her. As will be demonstrated she was a good friend of Lady Margaret Hoby and spent considerable time with her in London, which makes it highly likely that she did move in these aristocratic circles.

Although all of these anecdotes are Jacobean, evidence of more personal friendships between bishops’ wives and aristocratic women does exist for the earlier period. For example in Edward’s reign, Anne Hooper had been invited to the ‘mansion of a certain noble lady in the neighbourhood of the city, for a change of air.’[[658]](#footnote-659) Early in Elizabeth’s reign Margaret Parker had also dedicated a book of psalms translated by her husband to ‘the right vertuous and honourable ladye the Countess of Shrewsbury from her lovinge friend Margaret Parker.’[[659]](#footnote-660) It is thought that the book was printed in 1567 which makes it possible that the Countess of Shrewsbury was the famous Bess of Hardwick, who assumed that title on her marriage to George Talbot in 1568.[[660]](#footnote-661) As stated by Harris, gift giving was ‘one of the most striking features of elite life’, with the constant exchange of gifts often having political implications as well as used to maintain existing kin and patronage networks.[[661]](#footnote-662) Different gifts served different purposes and represented various levels of intimacy; however, all created a bond between the donor and the recipient that gave each a claim on the others resources and assistance.[[662]](#footnote-663) Women were particularly active in the system of gift-exchange, with Donawerth arguing that it was much easier for them to ‘garner influence and trade power’ in this system than in the more male-dominated patronage system.[[663]](#footnote-664) They were further assisted by the fact that the system was not based solely on the monetary value of the gift, but also took into account the personal care and concern that had been taken with it, so that the type of gifts usually bestowed by women, such as embroidery and prayers, could be regarded as having an equal value with more materially expensive gifts.[[664]](#footnote-665) Although it was more unusual for women to give books as gifts, than it was for men, it was not unheard of and Donawerth cites a number of examples of women sending books and other pieces of writing as gifts to other women. The purpose of sending a printed book as a personal gift could be manifold.[[665]](#footnote-666) Translated by her husband, during the couple’s exile in Mary’s reign, the psalms would have had a personal touch, but Margaret may also have been anxious to ensure that her husband’s work was disseminated to influential people. Both Bess and her husband wrote to Parker separately requesting patronage for two of their acquaintances or dependents in 1568.[[666]](#footnote-667) Whilst both were very formal patronage request letters, the dedication suggests that there may have been further connections between them. Either way, the book was certainly part of the system of gift exchange, and evidences that Margaret was able to participate in this important aspect of elite culture.

It is highly likely that such friendships were much more common than the surviving evidence reveals. The wealthier bishops’ wives at least were able to command substantial resources and their husband’s position would have brought them into the orbit of the elite on a regular basis. As the last chapter demonstrated, episcopal residences remained important centres of hospitality in which bishops’ wives were able to fulfil the traditional functions of the mistress of the household. That they were not simply grudgingly tolerated is evidenced by these anecdotes which prove they were able to fully integrate into elite networks and participate in an elite lifestyle, something which is only further corroborated by their experiences in London.

**London**

Although circumstantial evidence, such as the death of several bishops’ wives in London or their decision to move to the city as widows, suggests that it was not uncommon for them to accompany their husbands to London, once again the most substantive evidence is Jacobean. The account book of bishop Bridgeman provides clear evidence of his wife’s presence in London and gives a small insight into the couple’s social connections there. Further evidence of the social opportunities afforded by London can be found in the diary of Lady Margaret Hoby. In October 1600 Lady Hoby embarked on a three month stay in London, during which she spent considerable time with Mrs Thornborough, the second wife of Bishop John Thornborough, later indicted in the Countess of Essex scandal. Although he was at this point bishop of Limerick, Thornborough held the deanery of York in commendum and it is clear that the couple knew Lady Margaret Hoby from Yorkshire. Mrs Thornborough was invited to Hackness shortly before the London trip, and Lady Margaret Hoby later recorded an invitation to Thornborough’s house in York. In London, Mrs Thornborough was almost a constant companion to Lady Margaret Hoby, and frequently visited her during the day, with the two couples also dining at each other’s homes. They also engaged in leisure pursuits with Mrs Thornborough joining Lady Margaret Hoby and her mother for a walking excursion in the Fields[[667]](#footnote-668) as well as a shopping trip to the Royal exchange.[[668]](#footnote-669) In December it is possible that they were joined by another bishop’s wife, with Lady Margaret Hoby recording that she was visited by ‘Mistress Thornborow and Mistress Cotton.’[[669]](#footnote-670) Although a positive identification is not possible without any other evidence, William Cotton was the Bishop of Exeter at this time and was known to have visited London on at least two occasions in the early days of the Parliament of 1601 and 1604 so it is not impossible that it was his wife. At any rate Mrs Thornborough’s interaction with Lady Margaret Hoby is some of the clearest evidence of bishop’s wives social integration and demonstrates they were able to pursue the leisure activities and lifestyle of the elite whilst in the capital.

As seen from Bridgeman’s account of his son’s christening in London, it seems likely that sessions of parliament afforded bishops’ wives the opportunity to visit London and potentially meet each other. Further evidence of this can be found in the letters of John Chamberlain. Fond of gossip, Chamberlain’s letters recount the comings and goings of notable London citizens, about which he seems to have been very well informed. Reporting on the 1621 Parliament he noted:

There was a faire assemblie of bishops and prelates and among them the archbishop of Yorke to my seeming looked almost as well and as fresh as he did the last time I saw him which I thincke is a dosen yeares ago: he lies at Bedford House and came up with his wife in very goode equipage attended by fiftie horse.[[670]](#footnote-671)

Although a brief reference, this is nevertheless significant in unequivocally demonstrating that Frances accompanied her husband to London, and did so in some style. The archdiocese of York did not possess a London residence during this period. However, the couple were able to stay at the prestigious residence of Bedford House. This detail is another important reminder of the significant differences in the standards of living amongst bishops. Whilst Bishop Bridgeman’s family had stayed in the ‘house of Mr Maddox’ near a watermill in Westminster, Bedford House was the town house of the Earls of Bedford and situated in the highly desirable Strand area.[[671]](#footnote-672)

There is no doubt that the Matthews enjoyed a particularly high standard of living, and possibly unusually powerful connections. Frances Matthew was acquainted with several aristocratic families and it may be that her connections extended to the royal family. When she died in 1629 Frances bequeathed several pieces of jewellery from both King James and Queen Anne, with similar items not found in any other surviving wills for bishops’ wives.[[672]](#footnote-673) Evidence of her potential influence can also be inferred from another letter written by Chamberlain in May 1617.[[673]](#footnote-674) Several years earlier Frances’ son, Tobie, had converted to Catholicism whilst abroad, and after a brief return to England had been ordered to leave the realm. By 1617, however, he was again eager to return, and was finally allowed to do so after his parents appealed to Buckingham to influence the King. Chamberlain’s account of the event is rather interesting though for stating that:

I heare the archbishop of Yorke (or at leastwise his wife) hath obtained of the King that theyre sone Tobie Mathew may returne, but yet so that he is to be under some restraint.[[674]](#footnote-675)

Chamberlain’s correspondent Dudley Carleton, to whom this letter was written was an acquaintance of the young Tobie Matthew and so he was not altogether unfamiliar with the family. It is interesting that he believes that it was primarily the influence of Frances which acquired the favour, and is evidence of her visibility and ability to exert agency as an Archbishop’s wife.

**Clerical networks**

The evidence above, combined with the information from the lists of godparents, suggest that to a large extent bishops’ wives were able to participate in existing social networks at a local, and occasionally national level. However, they were also part of clerical networks. Whilst the full extent of these networks cannot be recovered, they were evidently much more significant than has been previously recognised and undoubtedly much more widespread than the surviving records indicate. As part of a new class and in the case of bishops and deans sometimes living in very close proximity in the cathedral close it is likely that they would have had close relationships, and this is confirmed by the evidence from the lists of godparents. There were undeniably points of conflict, particularly, as we have seen in the previous chapter, between the families of bishops and their successors over dilapidations, and deans and bishops by no means always had cordial relationships. However, as we have also previously seen, bishops did also look out for one another’s families. In 1570, Richard Barnes petitioned the Council of the North, after his appointment to the diocese of Carlise, on behalf of his predecessor’s widow, Elizabeth Best, and Tobie Matthew later similarly petitioned Elizabeth I on behalf of Bishop John May.[[675]](#footnote-676) In 1597, Bishop William Chaderton, fearing that he did not have long to live, also wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury beseeching him to remember ‘my request in the end of my former letters in behalf of my wife and daughter (for it is the last I am like to make unto you) if occasion so require.’[[676]](#footnote-677) Chaderton did not die and it is not clear what sort of assistance he required, although he clearly trusted the then Archbishop to look out for his family. It is notable that the Archbishop at the time was John Whitgift, who was not himself married, but evidently considered to be a sympathetic patron.

As well as providing support and practical assistance to each other, it is also clear that bishops and other clerical families knew each other socially. As appendix two demonstrates there was notable intermarriage between clerical families and they clearly selected each other to stand as godparents. The surviving letters of bishops also point towards sociable relationships. As we have seen in chapter two the former exiles and their families were a close knit group, and whilst there is no comparable record for the later period, fragmentary evidence does point towards other groupings. Particularly notable of course is the clerical network established by the Barlow family, unusual for being both clerical and familial. We know that Frances Matthew kept in close contact with her sisters and mother and chose to have her first child with her sister Elizabeth Day. In a later letter sent by Tobie Matthew to Bishop William Wickham, the husband of Frances’s sister Antonia, he expressed pleasure that his wife’s recent visit to her sister had helped restore her to health and made continued reference to their double ‘brotherly’ relationship as fellow bishops and brothers-in- law.[[677]](#footnote-678) Whilst he was the dean of York, Tobie Matthew also seems to have had a good relationship with Archbishop Hutton. In a set of surviving letters between the two men, they sent greetings to each other’s spouses with Hutton passing on well wishes to ‘good Mrs Matthew,’[[678]](#footnote-679) whilst Matthew thanked Hutton for his recent hospitality and passed on ‘most hearty salutations to good Mrs Hutton your vertuous yoake fellow.’[[679]](#footnote-680) As the Archbishop of York, Matthew then seems to have enjoyed a similarly good relationship with the bishop of Durham, William James, who also sent his ‘very harty comendacons unto Mrs Mathew.’[[680]](#footnote-681)

**Conclusion**

The nature and extent of social networks is always difficult for historians to recreate, with substantial source material rarely available for any one individual. For bishops’ wives the source base is particularly fragmentary, and aside from the lists of godparents, relies largely on chance references in the letters and diaries of others. Nonetheless, a picture does emerge of bishops’ families clearly associating with neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances of varying social status. One key observation: the choice of godparents reflected bishops’ career developments, where the nature of the office allowed individuals and their families to rise through the ranks, with the Sandys family being a key example of the social rewards high office could bring. London was also important in forging connections and there is evidence that bishops’ wives participated in elite culture during their visits. Their husband’s attendance at Parliament also provided them with the opportunity to meet other bishops’ wives and it is clear there was a level of sociability between episcopal families, with both Bullingham and Bridgeman appointing bishops’ wives as godmothers. Back in their dioceses, there is also evidence of close relationships between the clerical families who lived and worked within the cathedral close, as well as within the university colleges where many bishops began their careers. As in other social spheres, family also remained very important, particularly during times of social isolation and hardship. The next chapter will demonstrate that despite potential distance created by their husbands’ appointments, bishops’ wives remained in touch with their natal families, who were clearly supportive of their marriages. There are no further examples of the type of familial split caused by the earlier marriages of Anne Hooper or Margaret Parkhurst, with clerical marriage evidently becoming a much more acceptable marital option.

**Chapter 5**

**Wills and monuments: The afterlife of bishops’ wives 1559-1625**

Just as the social position and role of bishops’ wives in life had to be negotiated in the hierarchy of the living, so did their place in the hierarchy of death. As a new group to emerge from the Reformation, there were no precedents for the burial and commemoration of bishops’ wives. Out of the seventy-three bishops appointed between 1559 and 1625, at least forty eight had surviving widows. While a number of these women remarried, the majority died as bishops’ widows. The extent to which early modern women were able to construct their own identity and express their subjectivity, particularly through wills which are often the only surviving written sources for women, has been a debated issue.[[681]](#footnote-682) As Harris notes in the absence of many journals or self-reflective letters there are limited ways for historians to access how women identified themselves in this period.[[682]](#footnote-683) However, the requirement for elite women to make provision for their death and commemoration is an exception to this dearth, and presented these women with ‘an opportunity to proclaim and memoralise identities they chose for themselves and by which they wanted to be remembered.’[[683]](#footnote-684) Although all women’s identities were constrained by an intensely patriarchal society, and in particular by their families and lineages, Harris argues that these women were able to negotiate the institutional structures which constrained them, to make autonomous decisions about how they were represented.[[684]](#footnote-685)

It will be a major contention of this chapter that bishops’ wives were similarly able to shape their identities through their wills and monuments. The brevity of Edward VI’s reign and the subsequent dislocation caused by Mary I’s accession meant that many of the first generation of bishops’ wives died in obscurity. Aside from Elizabeth Scory and Agnes Barlow, whose husbands resumed their positions after Elizabeth’s accession, very little is known about the death or burial of the remainder of the Edwardian bishops’ wives. There are no surviving wills and only one monument, now missing, appears to have been constructed in Bristol Cathedral to commemorate the wife of the bishop of Bristol, Edith Bush, who died in the early months of Mary’s reign[[685]](#footnote-686). There is also very limited evidence for the married bishops themselves, three of whom were executed, leaving neither will nor monument, whilst another died intestate abroad in Strasbourg. The only monument to survive from this early period is that of Bishop Bush, which was constructed near to his wife’s memorial in Bristol Cathedral.[[686]](#footnote-687) However, as clerical marriage became increasingly established after the Elizabethan settlement of 1559, there is accordingly an increase in the number of surviving wills and monuments as bishops began to die in office, and their wives became more accepted members of society.

Wills and monuments are both highly significant to a study of the changing status and identity of bishops’ wives, drawing together both written and material evidence. They can inform us how bishops’ wives themselves understood and expressed their social and religious identity as well as how they were commemorated within and by their communities. Creating a will offered women a rare opportunity to document their religious beliefs through the religious preamble, charitable bequests, and any instructions left for their burial, commemoration or funeral. It could also document their social concerns, providing information about their kinship and friendship networks as well as their material status, with women’s wills often including far more detail than men’s about individual possessions.[[687]](#footnote-688) Monuments are also important indicators of status and identity, as well as an important source for charting changing religious identity and beliefs. Together they also represent one of the only substantial bodies of evidence relating to bishops’ wives from the period 1559-1625. This allows for a level of comparison not only between different bishops’ wives but also between them as a group and other elite women. Whilst Harris’ work demonstrates the significance of elite women’s families and lineages to their identity, the identity of bishops’ wives was tied much more closely to their husband’s office and former diocese, as well as the institution of the Church more broadly. In constructing an image of themselves through their preparations for death and commemoration, bishops’ wives were able to overcome the social ambiguities inherent in their position and defined both how they saw themselves and how they wished to be remembered by posterity.

**Historiography**

Although there is a large literature on women’s wills, those of bishops’ wives have never been considered in any detail.[[688]](#footnote-689) In total there are twenty surviving wills for English bishops’ wives from the period 1559-1625. Some of the contents of the will of Margaret Parker, wife of Archbishop Parker, are also known about thanks to references in other sources, although the actual will is missing.[[689]](#footnote-690) The existence of many of these wills is mentioned by Prior, although she makes limited use of them in her study, noting that ‘unfortunately we learn more of their widowhood than of their married life.’[[690]](#footnote-691) Significantly, as Prior notes, the survival of wills is weighted towards women whose husbands had occupied the wealthiest sees, with eight from the dioceses of Durham, York and Winchester alone.[[691]](#footnote-692) However, this is to some extent mitigated by the survival of the will of Elizabeth Best, widow of the bishop of Carlisle, who suffered serious financial problems during his episcopate, as well as the wills of widows of the bishop of Bath and Wells, Oxford and Hereford, which were also not wealthy sees.

In contrast, the monuments of bishops’ wives have attracted more attention in the work of Peter Sherlock. Building on the work of Nigel Llewellyn, Sherlock has completed substantial work on post-Reformation monuments and how they were used to convey social identity and changing religious beliefs.[[692]](#footnote-693) The tombs and monuments of bishops’ wives are mentioned both in a study charting changes in the post-Reformation commemoration of bishops as well as a close study of the monuments of the women of the Barlow family, who were all famously married to Elizabethan bishops.[[693]](#footnote-694) Sherlock’s work is very significant in highlighting bishops’ wives as one of the new groups to emerge from the Reformation, demonstrating some of the ways that their monuments helped to consolidate their emerging identity. In particular he demonstrates the significance of Frances Matthew née Barlow, who acted as the chief patron of her family’s monuments. However, more generally Sherlock underestimates the significance of bishops’ wives monuments and the agency of the women themselves in determining where they wanted to be buried, as well as excluding a number of key monuments from his study. Sherlock notes that the majority of bishops’ wives were not buried with their husbands in cathedrals and that their husbands’ tombs often did not make reference to them, interpreting this as a negative representation of their status.[[694]](#footnote-695) Through looking at their surviving wills, however, it can be seen that many women made deliberate choices about where they wanted to be buried, and were not simply sidelined from the cathedrals. It is therefore only through looking at both sources in tandem that a more detailed understanding of both the religious and social identity of bishops’ wives can be ascertained.

**Wills**

The historical debate about the utility of using wills to recreate the religious beliefs and identity of individuals has a long history. In particular the religious preamble which formed the opening of all early modern wills has been analysed for its reliability in accurately conveying the religious convictions of the testator.[[695]](#footnote-696) The various pitfalls of analysing this section in isolation have been well documented. It has been argued that due to its formulaic nature the preamble cannot be trusted as a reflection of personal belief, and even when considered in light of other testamentary evidence adds little or nothing to our understanding of the changing beliefs of individuals or communities.[[696]](#footnote-697) However, others have taken a more positive view and argued that, with caution, there is nothing to prevent both the preamble and details from the body of the will from being regarded as ‘serious indications of personal religious belief.’[[697]](#footnote-698) This is the view adopted by this chapter and it will be argued that through focusing on bishops’ wives wills in their entirety including preambles, bequests, and directions for funerals and burials, we can make inferences about their social and religious identity and how they themselves understood their position and status.

**Religious preambles**

It is perhaps not surprising that all twenty bishops’ wives wills contain Protestant statements of faith. The sample ranges in date from 1586 to 1647 and is geographically diverse, both factors which may influence trends in religious preambles.[[698]](#footnote-699) However, they are all united by their husbands’ positions and, having lived in such close proximity to the established Church, an openly Protestant statement is to be expected. Drawing on the categorisation of wills used by Smith in his study of Colchester 1570-1640, all of the wills conform to his identification of a basic expression of Protestantism, and the majority exceed this.[[699]](#footnote-700) Smith divided his sample of wills into five categories based on their religious preamble, ranging from those that contained traditional Catholic or neutral statements, to those that made explicitly Calvinist statements. Using this system, only two of the twenty wills fall into Smith’s second category and make relatively limited statements of faith. Elizabeth Best (d.1586) committed her soul to ‘allmightie god my savior and redeemer,’[[700]](#footnote-701) whilst Jane Pilkington née Barnes (d.1604) committed her soul to ‘almightie god my creator and redeemer.’[[701]](#footnote-702) Although in the past such statements were regarded as neutral at best and potentially evidence of conservative beliefs, Smith has argued that in the absence of any other evidence, such statements should be interpreted as probably Protestant.[[702]](#footnote-703) They are also a good reminder that religious preambles are most useful when viewed in the context of the rest of the will and the biography of the testator. Even without knowledge of these two women’s obviously Protestant background, as will be demonstrated, further evidence from both wills can be used to more fully substantiate their religious beliefs and identity.

A further thirteen out of the twenty wills fall into Smith’s third category, demonstrating a ‘firm conventional Protestantism’ and using fairly formulaic language in their religious preamble.[[703]](#footnote-704) They clearly state their belief in salvation through ‘the only meanes, meritte and mercie of Jesus Christ,’ with several also mentioning Christ’s death and passion. A number also touch on the transitory nature of life and the inevitability of death as a motivation for creating their wills. Most interesting, however, are the five wills that fall into Smith’s fourth and fifth category. These wills contain more complex and individualised statements of faith as well as clear references to assurances of eternal life. Smith makes a distinction between the two groups largely on the basis of whether the wills contain specific references to the elect, which identifies them as clearly Calvinist, and places them in the fifth category. However, he notes that this distinction may be problematic as testators in group four may have assumed that their hope to be saved as members of the elect was implicit in their statements and understood by their family and friends.[[704]](#footnote-705)

Out of the five wills, only that of Jane Young (d.1612), widow of the Archbishop of York, Thomas Young, makes specific reference to the elect. In the preamble she bequeaths her soul to almighty God, ‘not doubting to be p[ar]taker of his heavenly kingdome prepared for his electe by the merritts of my Lord and saviour Jesus Christe onlely,’ which is an unambiguous statement of Calvinist belief.[[705]](#footnote-706) Whilst not as explicit, the other four nevertheless make clear references to their assurance of salvation and the afterlife. The will of Elizabeth Scory (d.1593), the widow of Bishop John Scory of Hereford, states:

I bequeath my soule unto god the father the sonne and the holie ghoste three parsons and one god in who onlie I hope to be saved, and doe beleve without doubte that by the grace of god, and by the merites of Jesus Christ my saviour and vertue of his death and resurrection I have and shall have remission of all my sins and after this life shall live with god for ever[[706]](#footnote-707)

The will of Cicely Sandys (d.1611), widow of the Archbishop of York, Edwin Sandys, equally states that she bequeathed both her body and soul to God ‘beying fullie persuaded that what soever is commited to his keeping shall not perishe and that in Christe Jesus he will quicken us and lift us up unto life eternall.’[[707]](#footnote-708) More briefly Judith Aylmer (d.1618), widow of Bishop John Aylmer of London, simply states that she bequeathed her body ‘in full assureance of ioyfull resurrection by Christ Jesus.’[[708]](#footnote-709)

As well as assurances of the afterlife, these wills also contain more individualised statements, which is Smith’s second criterion for separating them from those who used the standard Protestant formula. This is most apparent in the final will of Frances Matthew (d.1629), the widow of the Archbishop of York, Tobie Matthew, whose religious preamble was unusually long and personalised. In full it states:

ffirst I bequeath my soule into the hand of Almightie God my heavenlie father whose onelie power and goodness it was that gave it unto me and so longe contynewedit thorough so many afflictions In this meak dwellinge of my bodie praisinge his holie name that he hath given me my beinge w[i]thin this church of England where I have learned the profession of Christian and saving doctrine in firm resolution to power out my last breath in the same and humblie beseeching our Father of heaven and earth by the mediation of Jesus Christ his sonne my onelie saviour and redeemer by the sanctifieing of the holy Ghost that when this earthlie \_\_\_ of my bodie shalbe dissolved he will be pleased to receive my soule into the heavenly mansions prepared in his kingdom for all those that love the cominge of his sonne.[[709]](#footnote-710)

Whilst Frances also made a declaration of faith attesting to her assurance of the afterlife, what really sets this will apart is the personal account of Frances’ spiritual development and her resolution to ‘pour out my last breath’ within ‘this church of England where I have learned the profession of Christian and saving doctrine.’[[710]](#footnote-711)

Such an expression of commitment to the Church of England was undoubtedly more unusual, and whilst it is found in the wills of several bishops, who used their religious preamble to justify or explain their service to the Church, Frances Matthew was the only bishop’s wife to include such a statement. Her husband Tobie’s preamble (d.1628) states that he committed his soul to Almighty God, ‘in full assurance through that faith wherof it hath pleased god, to appoint me an assiduous preacher in those eminent places of the church w[hi]ch by his goodness I have sustained.’[[711]](#footnote-712) The will of Edwin Sandys (d.1588) equally contains a long exposition of his service in the Church, stating that he committed his spirit in the ‘doctrine which I have privately studdyed and publiquly preached and which is this daye maynteyned in ye churche of Englande.’[[712]](#footnote-713) Although Frances obviously did not claim to have had any leadership or preaching roles like the bishops, she clearly situated herself within the Church of England and its doctrine in a similar way. Frances had, of course, had a unique lifelong connection to the Church that predated her marriage to Tobie Matthew. Famously, both her father and all four of her brother-in-laws had been bishops, whilst her first husband had been the son of Archbishop Parker, which could explain her particularly strong identification with the established Church.

It is also perhaps significant that all five of the women whose wills offered more complex and personalised statements of faith had either participated in or had close connections to the Marian exile movement. Married to the Edwardian bishop of Chichester, Elizabeth Scory had accompanied her husband into exile after his deprivation in 1554. The couple went first to Emden, where Scory became the superintendent of the English congregation, then briefly to Geneva in 1556, before their eventual return to England in 1559. It is also likely that Frances Matthew had spent time on the continent with her parents who had left England after her father’s deprivation in 1554, also heading to Emden before following the Duchess of Suffolk’s household to Poland.[[713]](#footnote-714) Although there has been speculation that Cicely Sandys may have met her husband whilst in exile, as discussed in chapter two there is in fact no other evidence to place her there. However, her brother Thomas Wilford, who she remained close to and who left her a Geneva Bible in his will, was definitely an exile who had spent time inFrankfurt.[[714]](#footnote-715) Jane Young was also not an exile herself although her husband, Thomas Young, had spent time in Emden during Mary’s reign and like the other four bishops was a noted Calvinist.[[715]](#footnote-716) This is also true for Judith Aylmer who was married to her first husband, Nathaniel Traherne, during the reign of Mary I, whilst her future husband John Aylmer was in exile in Strasbourg. They married sometime before 1561 and Aylmer was again a noted Calvinist.

Going above and beyond the standard and acceptable declaration of faith, it seems highly likely that all five of these women, and certainly Frances Matthew, had made an informed and deliberate choice about the wording of their religious preambles. Women had very few opportunities to make formal declarations of their faith, and as such unusually personalised or specific religious preambles such as these should be taken seriously as indicators of religious belief. They should also not be seen as mere reflections of their husbands’ beliefs. Although Frances Matthew died just after a year after her husband, as stated, her will clearly testifies to her individual commitment to the Church of England. The other four women all survived their husbands by long periods, and as they did not remarry it can be assumed that their Calvinist beliefs were their own, and they had used this opportunity to express them.

In most cases it is clear that the women whose wills contained preambles which exceeded standard declarations of faith had shared the beliefs of their husbands in life and continued to maintain them independently after their husband’s death, even if widowed for many years.. As bishops’ wives there is no doubt that these women would have been exposed to the current teachings of the Church on a very regular basis, and it is therefore not surprising that their wills conformed to prominent religious trends in the Church and to the beliefs of their former husbands. Nevertheless, they should not be seen as mere reflections of their husband’s beliefs. It is clear that for a number of women, and particularly those who had lived through the turbulence of Mary’s reign, or experienced exile themselves; their strong faith stayed with them, and was something that they personally wished to articulate at the time of their deaths.

**Social status**

As well as providing evidence of the religious convictions of bishops’ wives, wills can also reveal how they viewed their social status and identity. This is particularly significant during widowhood, when their wills were typically composed. Whilst the social position of all widows was to some extent anomalous in a society that expected all women to be married, bishops’ wives faced unique circumstances.[[716]](#footnote-717) It has already been noted that in contrast to elite women, whose status was rooted in titles, land, and wealth, the postion of bishops’ wives rested solely on their husband’s office. They did not have a title, and in contrast to aristocratic widows who could maintain an influence over their husbands’ estates, particularly if their child was the heir, did not have any claim on Church lands or properties and were displaced by their husband’s successor. However, in spite of this, evidence from their wills suggests that bishops’ wives felt confident in their social position and had a clearly defined understanding of their own status. Eight of the women identified themselves from the outset by their marriages and their husbands’ office, beginning their wills along the lines of Elizabeth Scory ‘widowe late wife to the Reverende father in god John Scorye late Byshoppe of Hereforde,’ or Jane Howson, ‘relict of the right reverend father in god John late Lord Bishop of Duresme.’ [[717]](#footnote-718) It was again the case that the majority of these women had outlived their husbands by a considerable number of years, but continued to identify themselves by their husband’s office. This was very common amongst women from the aristocracy and gentry, who would normally identify themselves according to their husband’s highest title or position. In the remaining cases, most women identified themselves simply as widow of the area in which they lived, although Amy Cooper (d. 1603) referred to herself as a ‘gentlewoman,’ giving a clear indication of her sense of where she fitted into local society.

Further evidence of how bishops’ wives understood their social position can be gained from the arrangements they set out within their wills for their funeral and burial. As Harris states, the decision about where women wanted to be buried and with whom was highly significant, resulting in ‘a permanent representation of how they saw themselves and how they wanted to be remembered.’[[718]](#footnote-719) Although six of the bishops’ wives wills simply stated that they committed their bodies to the earth either where they died or at the discretion of their executors, the rest made varying degrees of explicit requests. Most simply, Elizabeth Best (d. 1586), widow of the bishop of Carlisle, John Best, asked to be buried ‘in the churchey[ar]de of Tonbridge’ Kent, which was her local parish church.[[719]](#footnote-720) The former wife of Richard Barnes, Bishop of Carlisle, Jane Pilkington (d.1604) also asked to be buried in the ‘cathedral church yard of Durham.’[[720]](#footnote-721) After Barnes’ death, Jane had remarried Leonard Pilkington a canon of Durham Cathedral and the brother of James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham. In spite of her modest bequest to be buried in the church yard she was in fact buried beside her second husband within the Cathedral.[[721]](#footnote-722) Both Amy Cooper (d. 1603) widow of Bishop Thomas Cooper of Winchester and Judith Aylmer (d. 1618) widow of Bishop John Aylmer of London also made simple requests, although they are more significant in terms of suggesting an understanding of status. Amy Cooper asked to be buried in the ‘chancel of the parish churche of Buckden,’[[722]](#footnote-723) whilst Judith Aylmer requested the ‘chancell of much Haddam.’[[723]](#footnote-724) Both of these parish churches were located close to episcopal residences belonging to their late husbands’ former sees. This evidences that both women continued to live close to former episcopal residencies, and to worship in and maintain a connection to the parish churches connected to these residences.

Their request to be buried in the chancel of the respective churches is also significant. In spite of reformed criticism of the practice, burial within a church was still regarded as more prestigious than burial in the churchyard and was a ‘visible and ostentatious sign of social superiority.’[[724]](#footnote-725) Within the church itself, space was subject to a hierarchy with certain areas considered to be more sacred and thus more desirable as a final resting place. The chancel was widely acknowledged as the most prestigious location due to its proximity to the altar, and was therefore monopolised by the elite.[[725]](#footnote-726) Secular considerations would also have been important, with people’s sense of degree playing a major part in the location of funeral monuments.[[726]](#footnote-727) Aside from its perceived sacredness, the chancel was one of the most prominent locations within a church, adding to its attraction as a location for a monument. Both women clearly felt confident enough in their local status to request to be buried in this location, and this is something that Sherlock fails to consider when he notes that bishops’ wives ‘tended to be placed in a parish church, often far removed from their husbands’ tombs in a cathedral.’[[727]](#footnote-728) Sherlock concludes that this disparity with the customs of the nobility, where husband and wife were often commemorated together or at the very least mentioned on each other’s tombs, ‘did little to raise the social status of bishops or their wives.’[[728]](#footnote-729)

However, whilst it is true that bishops’ wives were often commemorated separately from their husbands, as the examples of Judith Aylmer and Amy Cooper demonstrate, this did not necessarily equate to a diminished social standing. Their request to be buried in a prominent position in parish churches associated with their husbands’ former office shows that they maintained a sense of their own status, and a prominent position in their local communities, even after their husbands’ deaths. In Judith Aylmer’s case we know that her wishes were carried out thanks to the survival of her monument in the chancel of St Andrew’s Church in Much Hadham (fig.4). The monument was constructed by her son, Theophilus Aylmer, who was the incumbent priest at the time of her death. Although he would have had control over the construction of monuments in the church, he would still have been under pressure to conform to local social structures and clearly felt that it was socially appropriate for his mother to be buried and commemorated in the chancel. There is no surviving monument or record of the burial of Amy Cooper in Buckden Church and she did not have a living family connection to it. However, it is likely that her wishes were carried out. The wife of her husband’s predecessor, Nicholas Bullingham, had been buried in the church, and in the future subsequent Bishop’s of Winchester and their family members would also be buried there.

In another five cases bishops’ widows requested to be buried alongside or close to their husbands. Two of these women, Jane Young (d.1612) and Frances Hutton (d.1615), had been married to former Archbishops of York, Thomas Young (d.1568) and Matthew Hutton (d.1606) respectively, and requested to be buried ‘nere to’ their husbands in York Minster.[[729]](#footnote-730) Both Archbishops had been commemorated with life size effigy monuments, neither of which, as Sherlock has noted, made reference to either their marriages or their wives. However, once again, this does not seem to indicate that these women suffered from a lack of social status, with their request to be buried in the Minster again demonstrating a confidence in this regard. Whilst cathedrals were not always a popular choice for the aristocracy, who preferred to be buried in parish churches connected to their estates, they were still a prestigious location and York Minster contained monuments to both the local ecclesiastical and aristocratic hierarchy.[[730]](#footnote-731) Both women clearly felt that their husband’s position entitled them to be buried within the Minster, whilst not expecting to be commemorated alongside their husbands in the double effigy style tomb of the aristocracy. The later wills of Dorothy Carey and Jane Howson also expressed a desire to be buried near to their husbands in St Paul’s Cathedral.[[731]](#footnote-732) Although the churchyard of St Paul’s had become less popular as a final resting point after the Reformation, the Cathedral itself remained an important site of burial and commemoration for the elite.[[732]](#footnote-733)

As Sherlock has demonstrated, bishops’ monuments remained focused on the commemoration of their spiritual office, and did not necessarily reflect their new status in a Reformed Church.[[733]](#footnote-734) Arguably, however, the continuation of traditional forms of burial for bishops was not as detrimental to the social status of their wives as Sherlock suggested. Although they were not commemorated alongside their husbands, this did not mean that bishops’ wives had no sense of status and as the last few examples demonstrate they clearly felt confident requesting to be buried in prestigious locations, often attached to their husbands’ former offices. Once again, we have evidence that the wishes of Jane Young were met through the survival of her memorial slab which, just as she requested, lies ‘nere to’ the tomb of her husband in the east end of the choir aisle.[[734]](#footnote-735) The case of Alice Heaton, widow of Bishop Martin Heaton of Ely, is also interesting in demonstrating that bishops’ wives did not always expect or desire to be commemorated alongside their husbands. In her will, dated 1628, Alice, who was living in Westminster, requested that her body be buried in ‘the parish church of St Margarete next adioyning to St Peters Church in Westminster.’[[735]](#footnote-736) However, she subsequently appointed ‘one hundred poundes for the making of one tomb at Ely for my husband sometimes Bishopp of that place to be made at the discretion of my executor.’[[736]](#footnote-737) Alice clearly did not expect to be buried with her husband, but felt that it was appropriate for him to be commemorated. The surviving monument to Martin Heton in Ely Cathedral is very traditional, commemorating his office and making no reference to his wife or family in spite of Alice’s significant contribution to its cost.

Katherine Chaderton (d.1620), the widow of Bishop William Chaderton of Lincoln (d.1608), did unusually request to be ‘buried and layde by my deare Lord and husband in Southoe Church.’[[737]](#footnote-738) Having let the traditional home of the bishops’ of Lincoln at Buckden fall into ruin, the Chadertons had primarily lived on an estate purchased by William in Southoe. In his own will William had requested that he be buried either in the chancel of the church at Hollywell, where he had been rector, or ‘in my chappell at Sowthe.’[[738]](#footnote-739) The request to be buried in a personal chapel was certainly in line with aristocratic practises, and in this case seems to be linked more to his ownership of the estate at Southoe than his position as Bishop of Lincoln. A Visitation Report from 1613 which records features of the church no longer in existence, described how there used to be a number of inscriptions on the wall, one of which was a list of lord of the manors.[[739]](#footnote-740) The last name on the list was William Chaderton, which would again have emphasised his link to the estate. However, in her will, Katherine, despite having been widowed for twelve years, still referred to herself as the ‘widdowe of the late right reverend ffather in God William Chadderton late Lord Bishoppe of Lincolne,’ and this was clearly how she primarily identified herself.[[740]](#footnote-741) As well as specifying where she would like to be buried, Katherine also gave a black velvet pulpit cloth and a black velvet cushion to the churches of Holywell and Southoe, and a mourning gown and hood to the preacher of her funeral sermon, who she specified should be a Mr Burton.[[741]](#footnote-742) These were modest bequests, although emphasise Katherine’s continuing involvement and familiarity with her husband’s former churches.

In the final cases of Jane Still (d.1608) and Cicely Sandys (d.1611), there are overt similarities between the provisions laid out for their burial and funerals and those typically found in wealthier gentry wills. In terms of the location of burial, Jane Still requests:

my bodie to be buryed in decent manner according to my birth and degree in the Cathedrall church of Wells yf I fortune to dye there as nere as conveniently yt may be unto my daughter Megan Yf it happen I departe this life at Cloforde then my bodye to be buryed by the toombe of Sir John Horner knight my father deceased. Yfels where then my bodye to be buryed where I shall fortune to dye by the discretion of my executors*.*[[742]](#footnote-743)

Jane Still is very clear about her status, requesting to be buried according to her ‘birth and degree’ and offering a variety of alternatives for her burial, including her late husband’s Cathedral and a parish church that had family connections, where she was eventually buried.[[743]](#footnote-744) Jane left one hundred pounds for her funeral expenses and requested that as many ‘poore women as I shall happen to be years ould at the tyme of my decease,’ be given black gowns.[[744]](#footnote-745) She also provided ‘fortie shillings’ and a ‘ffunerall gowne’ for the preacher who would deliver the sermon, as well as ten shillings a piece to the men who carried her body into church.[[745]](#footnote-746) Cicely Sandys equally requested to be buried in ‘suche decent state as shalbe seemly for a Christian woman,’ and left a ‘blacke gowne of fine cloathe and fortie shillinges in money’ for the preacher who delivered her funeral sermon.[[746]](#footnote-747) The will also specified black cloaks of ‘twentie shillings a yard’ for all of her sons and sons in laws, mourning cloth for all her serving men and ‘a gowne of sad coulored cloathe of eight shillinges the yarde’ for ten poor women.[[747]](#footnote-748) Cicely also requested that her executor ‘provide a marble stone to laye on my grave.’[[748]](#footnote-749) Although there was a delay of some years, her son more than fulfilled this request by erecting a large monument to her in the chancel of Woodham Church, near one of the Sandys family homes in Woodham Ferrers, Essex, in 1619.[[749]](#footnote-750) All of these trappings, from paid men to bear the coffin, to mourning clothes and a marble stone were expensive, and as Cressy has demonstrated, would only have featured in the funerals of the wealthy.[[750]](#footnote-751) Mourning clothes in particular were a very visible symbol of status, and marked both respect and dependency when worn by servants or the poor.[[751]](#footnote-752) Their provision was also a way of targeting relief and charity towards specific groups, and in spite of some reformed criticism of inviting the poor to funerals, remained an acceptable practice.[[752]](#footnote-753)

**Bequests**

The main body of the will including the charitable and material bequests made to family and friends and the poor is of course also highly important in determining the social status of bishops’ wives. Such details can also be used to build up a picture of their daily lives, albeit as Prior has noted, one skewed more towards their widowhood than their married lives.[[753]](#footnote-754) The wills range in length and detail from the brief document created by Elizabeth Scory, which is little more than a single paragraph, to the much longer and more detailed wills of Frances Matthew, Cicely Sandys, Amy Cooper and Jane Still, which are several pages in length. In many cases the wills state where the bishops’ widows were living at the time of their deaths. They demonstrate that of the three women married to Archbishops of York who left wills, all chose to remain in the city after their husbands’ deaths. The majority of the rest of the wills reveal that widows chose to live either in London, where their husbands may have brought property during their episcopate, or in properties close to former episcopal residences such as Buckden or Much Hadham.

Almost all women made some charitable donation to the poor, although again these varied considerably and their wills are not comprehensive records of their charitable activities. Frances Matthew famously donated her husband’s large collection of books to York Minster and is commemorated on her monument as a woman of exemplary ‘bounty,’ yet made only one charitable bequest to Peterhouse, Cambridge, in her will.[[754]](#footnote-755) Most women made a customary donation to the poor in the parish in which they resided, whilst a few also remembered other parishes associated with their husband’s former offices or their natal family. For example, Dorothy Carey, after promising a donation of ten pounds to the poor in the parish in which she died, promised a further five pounds to the poor of the cathedral close in Exeter, where her husband had been bishop and where he was buried.[[755]](#footnote-756) The second wife of Bishop Richard Cox of Ely, Jane, also remembered the ‘poor people of Downeham in the Isle of Elie,’ which was the location of one of the episcopal residences, alongside forty shillings to the poor in the parish in London where she then dwelt.[[756]](#footnote-757)

Several bishops’ wives also made donations to the clergy in their husband’s former diocese, which perhaps demonstrates their awareness of where the need was likely to be, having lived in close proximity to these men during their husband’s episcopacy. Dorothy Carey left an additional five pounds to be distributed amongst the ‘office of the church of St Peters’ in Exeter, whist Jane Still left five pounds to be divided between the vicars of Wells.[[757]](#footnote-758) In both cases these women had moved away from their husbands’ dioceses, but their bequests demonstrate an ongoing sense of duty of care to their husbands’ former clerics.

In contrast, Margaret Parker, who predeceased her husband by five years, bequeathed ‘fifty shillings to be paid yearly forever,’ to her birth parish of Mattishall.[[758]](#footnote-759) It was more unusual for women who predeceased their husbands to make wills as the laws of coverture meant that on marriage they ceased to have an independent legal identity and all of their property passed to their husbands.[[759]](#footnote-760) However, there were legal exceptions and husbands were sometimes happy to grant their wives permission to create a will to dispose of their personal property. At the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign Parker had purchased two properties, using Margaret’s maiden name, to ensure that there could be absolutely no doubts or complications about her right to the properties after his death. It would therefore have been necessary for Margaret to have created a separate will to dispose of these properties, which she granted to her two sons. Alongside this, her modest bequest to the parish of her birth demonstrates her continuing attachment to this place and her desire to ensure that the Reformation should continue to flourish there. The legacy specifically directed how the fifty shillings should be spent, with ‘one chief part for the use and relief of the poor of the said parish, another for the preaching of an anniversary sermon in the parish church to the people there and a third for the gratification of the vicar or some other that should teach school there.’[[760]](#footnote-761) This bequest was administered by Margaret’s brother Robert Harlestone, and had significant longevity with an essay on the history of Mattishall, published in 1809, stating that the sermon paid for by Margaret was, ‘preached every year by a fellow of Corpus Christi college in Cambridge [where Parker had been the master], on Tuesday in Rogation week,’ and that it was ‘much frequented.’[[761]](#footnote-762)

Amongst the most generous or individualised bequests to the poor, Jane Still stands out again for the large sum she was able to donate. Initially, at the beginning of the will, Jane bequeathed ten pounds to the poor in the parish in which she would happen to die. This was in itself much more than most bishops’ wives assigned to the poor, however, Jane subsequently made a further bequest of one hundred pounds ‘unto the poore of the parishe where I shall happen to decease…for theire mayntence and releife for ever.’[[762]](#footnote-763) Such a substantial bequest was exceeded only by Frances Matthew’s donation of two hundred pounds to establish a scholarship for poor scholars at Peterhouse, where her son had studied, and the donation of her husband’s books to the dean and chapter of York Minster, which were valued at six hundred pounds.[[763]](#footnote-764) In comparison, and to demonstrate how large these sums were, the next largest donation was made by Jane Young who bequeathed forty pounds to the City of York to be ‘imployed for the sole benefit of the poore of the said cittie by the discretion of the Lord Maior and Alderman thereof which I have given already.’[[764]](#footnote-765) This donation was made alongside the much smaller sums given to parishes in Shropshire, which perhaps had family connections, and an additional three pounds which Jane specified must be distributed between the four wards of the city of York.[[765]](#footnote-766) As well as demonstrating Jane’s position amongst the civic elite of York, this bequest is another reminder of the difficulties of tracing bequests made in life, if not recorded in this way.

Amongst the smaller bequests made by bishops’ wives it is possible to determine a number of their particular interests. Cicely Sandys bequeathed ten pounds to the poor of her local parish, Woodham Ferrers, where the Sandys family had an estate, as well as four pounds ‘to the mending of the highways in and abowte the sayed towne of Woodham Ferrers,’ to be allocated to specific places by her heirs.[[766]](#footnote-767) Jane Pilkington left six pounds to the poor of the city of Durham, as well as fifteen shillings and four pence to the poor prisoners in the Durham jail.[[767]](#footnote-768) Both of these bequests demonstrate these women’s involvement in their local parish and wider community, and their ‘confidence in their own ability...to impact the world around them.’[[768]](#footnote-769) They are also typical of post-Reformation testator’s focus on more civic matters. Whereas money had previously been channelled into intercessory offices, necessary for the salvation of the soul, the end of the doctrine of purgatory meant people increasingly invested in the wider community, as another way to ensure they were memorialised.[[769]](#footnote-770) That said a number of bishops’ wives did leave money towards the upkeep or fabric of churches, particularly those that had an association with their husband. After stating her ‘earnest desire’ to be buried in St Paul’s, Jane Howston stated that if she was buried there she would ‘give and bequeath the somme of ten pounds towards the repaire of the same cathedral church.’[[770]](#footnote-771) Katherine Chaderton also provided the much smaller gifts of a black velvet pulpit cloth and a black velvet cushion to both the church of Holywell, where her husband had been the rector, as well as Southoe church, where he was buried.[[771]](#footnote-772)

As well as generalised gifts to the poor, several bishops’ wives also made specific bequests to named individuals, a practice that was much more common in the wills of women.[[772]](#footnote-773) As James states, though the needy of both sexes were remembered in women’s wills, ‘there seems to have been a particular effort by women as a group to care for the less fortunate of their own sex,’ and they bequeathed far larger legacies to other women than did men.[[773]](#footnote-774) This was possibly a result of their recognition that the burden of poverty often fell hardest on women, with unmarried maidens and destitute widows some of the main targets of relief.[[774]](#footnote-775) This concern for other women is certainly reflected in the wills of Jane Pilkington and Judith Aylmer. Jane Pilkington made bequests of five shillings to two poor women, ‘Widdow Lamb the blindwoman,’ and her daughter ‘Barbara the creple.’[[775]](#footnote-776) The will of Judith Aylmer also contained numerous requests, which again demonstrates her involvement with her parish and knowledge of where the need was greatest. After making a general bequest of thirty shillings to the poor, to be distributed according to the discretion of her executors, Judith made several individual bequests of clothes to widows and women listed as ‘goodwife Gapes’ and ‘goodwife Wood.’[[776]](#footnote-777)

Alongside the charitable bequests to the poor the majority of wills also demonstrate ‘wide generosity,’ to family, friends and servants.[[777]](#footnote-778) As Erickson has shown, women’s wills tended to contain a broader range of bequests than men’s; a fact she ascribes to the more varied property holdings usually owned by women.[[778]](#footnote-779) Women’s wills were characterised by a greater ‘personalism,’ and they were able to use them to express their personal preferences and benefit a wider group of family, friends, godchildren and servants.[[779]](#footnote-780) Aside from the very short will composed by Elizabeth Scory, in which she simply named her daughter executor and declared her intention to bequeath her goods on her deathbed, the remainder of the wills certainly demonstrate the characteristics noted by Erickson. In almost all the wills children and grandchildren were the main beneficiaries, and again the wealthiest women, Frances Matthew, Cicely Sandys, and Jane Still were able to leave substantial monetary legacies of several hundred pounds to their immediate family, on top of gifts of plate, furniture and other household goods. These women also gave numerous bequests to extended family members, godchildren and servants.

Frances Matthew’s will is particularly notable, and despite not having been born wealthy, evidences that by the end of her life she had managed to accumulate a considerable fortune. As Sherlock has demonstrated she was unquestionably a woman of high status, with elite connections and the ability to finance several monuments to her family members.[[780]](#footnote-781) The will contains the most extensive list of bequests to a wide range of family members, and most notably recorded the bequest of three pieces of jewellery gifted to Frances by Queen Anne and King James. Frances described two pieces, a ‘ringe with a table diamond and ten less diamond about yt,’ and a ‘diamond set pendant w[i]th a little ruby at the end,’ as having been sent to her by Queen Anne, and bequeathed them to her niece and god daughter respectively.[[781]](#footnote-782) The third piece ‘one gold ringe sette with a diamond,’ was described as having been given to her by the ‘kings ma[jes]tie that now is,’ and was bequeathed to her eldest son Matthew.[[782]](#footnote-783) The detail with which Frances recorded the provenance of these objects evidences her pride in them, and also provides further evidence of her status. This is the only recorded mention of a personal gift from a monarch to a bishop’s wife, who are notably absent from the lists of New Year’s gifts presented by Elizabeth I throughout her reign.[[783]](#footnote-784) All the bishops received a customary gift from the Queen and some of these are detailed in their wills as bequests to their children. Both Jane Still and Cicely Sandys did however leave items of jewellery, and Cicely bequeathed two Geneva bibles to her daughter and granddaughter, one of which she described as having been given to her by her brother Frances Wilsford, known to have been in exile.

Even women without large amounts to leave ensured that their bequests were distributed widely, and they remembered nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters, and godchildren, evidencing the extent to which they kept in touch with members of their natal family. Amy Cooper’s brother was living with her at the time of her death, whilst Alice Heaton appointed two of her brothers as executors of her will.[[784]](#footnote-785) In line with her wealth, Frances Matthew left a wide range of bequests to nieces and nephews and even a number of great nieces and nephews, demonstrating that the extended Barlow family network remained in touch with each other, despite the geographical distance caused by the various offices held by the sisters’ husbands.[[785]](#footnote-786) Even the more impoverished, Elizabeth Best, whose husband had struggled as the bishop of Carlisle, remembered her sister and the children of her brother in her will. Once again this shows that despite sometimes moving very far away from their own families as a result of their husband’s promotions, bishops’ wives were able to remain in contact with them.[[786]](#footnote-787)

Almost all women also left bequests to their servants, and these details help to build up a picture of the size of their households during their widowhood. Only Antonina Wickham and Elizabeth Best made no bequests to servants, although this is not to say that they didn’t have any. At the more modest end, Alice Heaton remembered just one maidservant, although in the majority of wills several male and female servants were remembered, suggesting larger households. Cicely Sandys mentioned two male servants by name, and alluded to a greater number of servants when she bequeathed mourning cloth to ‘all my men,’ and extra wages to the maid of her chamber and ‘all my other women servants.’[[787]](#footnote-788) Similarly Jane Still also referenced two male servants by name and made a bequest to ‘every one of my mayde servants.’[[788]](#footnote-789) Judith Aylmer remembered one maidservant, as well as ‘all my sonne Doctor’s men’ and several of his maids and chambermaids, suggesting that she may have lived with him in a reasonable sized household.[[789]](#footnote-790) Amy Cooper remembered several servants in her will, whilst Frances Hutton and Katherine Chaderton also remembered a number of male and female servants.[[790]](#footnote-791) Whilst this demonstrates that bishops’ widows were able to maintain independent households of some means, they were clearly not on the same scale as their former homes in the episcopal residences discussed in chapter three.

**Monuments**

Significant work on post-Reformation monuments and their ability to represent and help transform social and cultural meanings has been carried out by Llewellyn and Sherlock.[[791]](#footnote-792) Sherlock has focused on the monuments of bishops’ wives and highlighted some of the changes that took place in the way in which they were commemorated.[[792]](#footnote-793) He notes that there was a lack of monuments to bishops’ wives prior to 1580, and states that it was not until the seventeenth century that any substantial monuments to bishops’ wives were built; although even at this stage they were often ‘far removed’ from their husbands’ tombs in the cathedrals.[[793]](#footnote-794) In his close study of the monuments of the Barlow family Sherlock highlights the significance of the monuments of the Barlow women in helping to consolidate a positive identity for bishops’ wives. Building on the work of Llewellyn he contends that through presenting their subjects in ‘idealised words and images monuments constructed an argument directed at the living.’[[794]](#footnote-795) In the case of the monuments of the Barlow women, and particularly that of Frances Matthew, which was erected in a prominent position in York Minster, this argument was about the ‘function, status and qualities,’ appropriate to clergy wives.[[795]](#footnote-796) However, while Sherlock asserts the significance of the Barlow monuments, he reiterates elsewhere that few bishops’ tombs, including that of Frances Matthew’s husband, made any reference to their wives or families.[[796]](#footnote-797) If women were commemorated at all this was usually separately from their husbands and aside from the rare instance of Frances Matthew, outside of the cathedral church. Sherlock contrasts this practice negatively with the traditions of the aristocracy, who were buried together, and asserts that it did little to raise the ‘social status of either bishops’ or their wives.’[[797]](#footnote-798)

Sherlock’s inclusion of and focus on the monuments of bishops’ wives is very significant, and is the only work that highlights and addresses the changes that took place in their status. However, this section will question and build on his work in several ways. Firstly, as has already been stated, it is very important to look at monuments within the contexts of other sources, particularly wills, as this allows the preferences of women to be taken into account and provides an insight into how women themselves understood their status and position. Whilst Sherlock clearly highlights the agency exerted by Frances Matthew in the construction of monuments to her mother and sister, both of whom were bishops’ wives, he does not take into account the provisions made by other women. In a number of cases used by Sherlock to show the tendency for bishops’ wives to be buried in parish churches as opposed to cathedrals alongside their husbands, women’s wills demonstrate that this was in fact their choice. Further, Sherlock does not give consideration either to the location of monuments within churches, many of which were erected in the prestigious location of the chancel, or the significance of the church, which often had links to their husband’s former office. It will also argue that it is not surprising that bishops’ wives often did not feature on their husbands’ tombs, with bishops’ monuments largely commemorating their office, which in contrast to the aristocracy were unique to them and not linked to their family. This deviance from aristocratic practice, did not, however, necessarily reflect negatively on the social status of bishops’ wives, many of whom confidently identified themselves as bishops’ wives and were commemorated as such long before the erection of Frances Matthew’s monument in 1629. Finally, it has also been possible to identify a number of additional monuments, which necessitates some modification of Sherlock’s timeframe of developments.

It is not always possible to corroborate whether all the women who made specific requests in their wills were buried in the locations they requested, or whether a monument was ever constructed. This is due to missing parish registers for some churches, as well as the destruction of a number of parish churches in London, not to mention old St Paul’s, where both both Dorothy Carey and Jane Howson hoped to be buried, in the Great Fire of London. In cases where women predeceased their husbands, it is sometimes easier to determine where they were buried based on where they were in residence with their husbands. For example, a number of bishops’ wives who died in London were buried in London parish churches, probably close to their London homes, whilst Margaret Parker was buried in the Duke’s chapel in Lambeth parish church.[[798]](#footnote-799) Other women were buried in parish churches attached to episcopal residences, as demonstrated by Richard Barnes’ erection of a monument to his first wife, Fridismund, in the chancel of St Andrews, Auckland; the main residence of the bishop of Durham.[[799]](#footnote-800) The wife of Robert Horne, Marjorie, was also buried in the presbytery of Waltham Church in 1575, after having likely died at the nearby palace of Bishops’ Waltham, the episcopal residence of the bishops’ of Winchester.[[800]](#footnote-801) Dated five years before the earliest monument identified by Sherlock, Marjorie’s memorial evidences that commemoration of bishops’ wives was an established practice from early in Elizabeth’s reign. The will of Bishop Henry Cotton of Salisbury (d.1615) also provides further evidence that it was not wholly uncommon for bishops’ wives to be buried inside cathedrals. In his will, Cotton requested to be buried ‘in the Cathedrall Church of Sarum neere to the place where my late wife was buried.’[[801]](#footnote-802)

Turning now to the surviving monuments themselves, it is important to consider their location as well as their form and content, which is to some extent addressed by Sherlock. Some of the earliest monuments to bishops’ wives were, as Sherlock has noted, the small brass plaques erected in memory of Fridismund Barnes in 1581 and the wife of Bishop John Woolton of Exeter also from the 1580s; as well as the memorial stone erected to Marjory Horne in 1575, which he was unaware of.[[802]](#footnote-803) Both the memorials to Fridismund and Marjorie were placed in the chancel of parish churches connected to episcopal residences, whilst the wife of John Woolton was commemorated in the choir of Exeter cathedral, close to where her husbands’ tomb was later erected.[[803]](#footnote-804) Although, as Sherlock notes, these monuments were all smaller than their husbands’ much larger tombs, they clearly identified the women as bishops’ wives and were not hidden away, but erected within prominent positions. In the case of Fridismund Barnes, her husband, who commissioned the monument, also incorporated a short inscription declaring her to be ‘casta, fida, vitrix.’[[804]](#footnote-805) Translated as ‘chaste, faithful, a victor,’ this was an archetypal Protestant declaration of faith, as well as a declaration of ideal female qualities.

The next group of monuments to survive are slightly more substantial, and commemorate Agatha Barlow (d.1595), Cicely Freake (d.1599), Elizabeth Scory (d.1592) and Isabel Redman (d. 1615). Both Agatha Barlow and Elizabeth Scory were bishops’ wives during the reign of Edward VI and went into exile with their husbands before returning to resume their former positions. Agatha Barlow’s monument paid direct tribute to this, stating that she was ‘most faithful unto her husband both in prosperity and adversite and a companione with him in banishment for the gospels sake.’[[805]](#footnote-806) This was part of a much longer inscription set into a stone tablet, which as Sherlock has noted paid tribute to the remarkable marriages of her five daughters to men who would become Elizabethan bishops, and her own marriage to Bishop Barlow.[[806]](#footnote-807) Similar inscriptions were also incorporated into the monument of Frances Matthew and her sister Anthonia Wickham.[[807]](#footnote-808) The inscription also commemorated Agatha’s personal qualities declaring that she had been ‘most kind and loving unto all her children, and dearly beloved of them all for her ability of a liberal mynde and pitifull unto the poore,’ concluding that she ‘died in the Lorde whom shee dayly served.’[[808]](#footnote-809) The monument was erected in the chancel of the parish church of Easton, Hampshire, where her son, who she had been staying with before her death, held the living.

The monument to Elizabeth Scory equally featured a long inscription, detailing her husband’s episcopal career and stating:

Beati mortui qui domino moruntur

Her corps lies here in chest

Her soul in heaven now lives

And she enjoys that rest

Which god to his saints gives

For in Christ she did trust

That he will restore

Again out of the dust

To live for evermore.[[809]](#footnote-810)

Such statements became increasingly common in Protestant England and represent a belief in the elect’s place in heaven. It correlates with Elizabeth Scory’s Calvinist declaration of faith in the religious preamble of her will, and suggests that these beliefs were shared by her son, Sylvanus, who assumedly commissioned her monument.

The monument to Cicely Freake is a brass plaque situated in the parish church of Purleigh in the county of Essex, where her son held the living (fig.1).[[810]](#footnote-811) It was commissioned by her three children, who added their names to the bottom of the monument, and contained a much shorter inscription stating:

Cecilia Freake, a good woman and pious widow, relict of the

Revd. Father Edmund Freake, formerly chief almoner

to the sacred queen Elizabeth; first Bishop of Rochester,

then of Norwich, and lastly of Worcester; also

Rector of this church. She died full of days

15 July. A.D. 1599.

For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. Philippians 1[[811]](#footnote-812)

Once again focused on the career of her husband, this inscription also painted Cicely in idealised terms and again expressed confidence in life after death. All three inscriptions were in some way typical of post-Reformation monuments; presenting their subjects as ‘examples to the living,’ and demonstrating a confidence in the afterlife as a result of good lives, as opposed to requesting prayers of intercession.[[812]](#footnote-813) It should be noted that all three monuments were erected in the chancel of parish churches. Both Cicely Freake and Agatha Barlow were buried in churches administered by the sons, whilst Elizabeth Scory was buried in a parish church in Shoreditch, where the connection is not clear. Although Sherlock has used these examples as evidence of women’s separation from their husbands’ cathedral-based tombs, they all express confidence in their position and make explicit reference to their husbands’ offices and promotions.[[813]](#footnote-814) In all three cases the women were widowed and had moved away from their husbands cathedral towns to be closer to their children, which made their local parish churches much more convenient and obvious places for them to be commemorated.

Isabel Redman (d.1613), who had been the third wife of Bishop William Redman of Norwich, was commemorated by a monument set at the north side of the high altar in the parish church of Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire. Constructed by her son, another William Redman, the monument also paid tribute to Bishop Redman’s parents as well as the deceased children of William and Isabel. The epitaph stated that Isabel lay ‘expecting a joyfull resurrection,’ before praising her qualities as:

A Gentlewomen endued in good measure with the blessings of Nature, Fortune and Grace. But especially this last, which enabled her to direct all her actions in Pieti and Patience in this transitory Life, towards the attaining the aeternall: To which in Christ she was called.[[814]](#footnote-815)

Given the mention of Bishop Redman’s parents, it seems likely that he had owned property in the area and that Isabel had retired to Great Shelford during her widowhood. Isabel’s status in the community can be attested to by her designation as a ‘gentlewomen,’ and the prominent positioning of the monument. Sherlock believes that the positive sentiments ascribed to Isabel ‘could not have been expressed about a clergyman’s wife, let alone a bishop’s, just two generations earlier.’[[815]](#footnote-816) However, this seems to be contradicted by some of the earlier monuments, which praised bishops’ wives in very similar terms. As demonstrated, the prestigious locations of earlier bishops’ wives’ monuments also show that bishops’ wives had been granted posthumous respect in their burial and commemoration from a much earlier stage than suggested by Sherlock.

The final group of monuments assessed by Sherlock are the more substantial monuments of Frances Matthew and Cicely Sandys. Both monuments feature kneeling effigies of the two women at prayer, and lengthy inscriptions detailing their family and their personal virtues. The monument to Cicely Sandys was constructed in the chancel of the parish church of Woodham Ferrers, near to the Sandys family home, whilst Frances Matthew’s monument was erected close to her husband’s effigy monument in the Lady Chapel of York Minster.[[816]](#footnote-817) Both women’s monuments paid tribute to their virtues, with Cicely Sandys’ describing how she had lived a ‘christian and holy life, wisely governed hir familie and charitably relieved the poor…a true mirror of a Christian matron.’[[817]](#footnote-818) Like the monument to Elizabeth Scory it concluded with the assurance that ‘hir blessed Soule Assending to the Comfort of the Blessed and hir Bodie lyeth here interred expecting the joyfull Resurrection.’[[818]](#footnote-819) It was cast in alabaster, with a carved figure of Father time on her left and a background carved with an arbour of roses. The names of all her children were also listed on the monument.

The monument to Frances Matthew (fig.2) is particularly notable for its location in York Minster, and also the epitaph which in full stated:

Frances Matthews, first married to Matthew Parker, son to Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury: afterwards to Tobie Matthew, that famous archbishop of this see. She was daughter to William Barlow, bishop of Chichester, and in King Henry VIII’s time ambassador unto Scotland, of that ancient family of the Barlows in Wales. She had four sisters married to four bishops; one to William Wickham, Bishop of Winchester, another to Overton, bishop of Coventry and Litchfield; a third to Westphaling, bishop of Hereford; a fourth to Day, that succeeded Wickham as Winchester; so that a bishop was her father, an archbishop her father in law; she had four bishops to her brethren, and an archbishop her husband.She was a woman of exemplary wisdom, gravity, piety, bounty and indeed other virtues not only above her sex, but the times. One excellent act of her first derived upon this church, and through it flowing upon the country, deserves to live as long as the church itself.[[819]](#footnote-820)

Not only did this inscription delineate Frances’ distinctive family background, suggesting that by 1629 it was possible to take pride in an episcopal lineage, it also ascribed Frances with qualities ‘not only above her sex, but the times.’[[820]](#footnote-821) The ‘excellent act’ was Frances’ donation of her husband’s books to the dean and chapter of York Minster. The description of it ‘flowing upon the country,’ although hyperbolic, once again suggests that Frances Matthew had an unusually influential position for a bishop’s wife, with her actions recorded as having national significance.[[821]](#footnote-822) There is no doubt that Frances herself felt a very close connection to the English Church, evidenced by her highly personal religious preamble, and this again seems to be reinforced by her monument which celebrates her clerical connections and ties her generosity to the life of ‘the church itself.’[[822]](#footnote-823)

Although Sherlock does acknowledge the significance of these two monuments as representing a positive development in the commemoration of bishops’ wives, he still argues that this was mitigated by their separation from the tomb of their husbands; both women ‘knelt in solitude.’[[823]](#footnote-824) In Cicely Sandys case this was more pronounced with her husband buried in Southwell Cathedral ‘a long way from Essex’ and her own monument.[[824]](#footnote-825) Sherlock does note that the monument of Edwin Sandys, which consisted of a tomb chest with a recumbent effigy on top, did include a depiction of Cicely, as a kneeling figure shown in front of the couple’s children on the side of the tomb chest. Like Prior, who also notes this on the side of the tomb of Thomas Bentham, [although he at least is also depicted on the side of the tomb in front of his wife] he interprets this negatively as an inequality in status between the couple.[[825]](#footnote-826) It is true that on tombs of the aristocracy husband and wife were normally commemorated in effigy together on top of the tomb chest, whilst their children may be depicted kneeling in prayer on the side. However, in the case of Cicely Sandys this seems to have been more than made up for by the large monument erected to her by her children. As stated, it must also be remembered that bishops continued to be commemorated primarily according to their office, and even on the tombs of Sandys and Bentham, which incorporated their families, the bishops’ effigies were depicted in their clerical dress. The office was unique to them, and so family tombs were not appropriate for bishops in the same way as for the aristocracy. As demonstrated by the large tombs of Frances Matthew and Ciecly Sandys, this did not mean that bishops’ wives went un-commemorated, but rather were depicted according to their own distinctive position, and we should not judge them according to the standards of the aristocracy as Sherlock does.

The significance of these two monuments must also be tempered by the existence of two further effigy monuments to bishops’ wives, not noted by Sherlock, both of which predate the monuments of Frances Matthew and Cicely Sandys. The first was constructed by the son of Bishop Godfey Goldsborough of Gloucester in commemoration of his mother, and was erected in Worcester Cathedral in 1613. (fig.3) It also depicted a kneeling woman in sober black dress, surrounded by an arch with Rose motifs. The inscription explained that Henry had constructed the monument in memory of his mother ‘sometime wife to the reverende father in god Godfrey late bishop of Gloucester.’ It appears that he ordered the monument to be erected after his own death, with the inscription stating that he had bequeathed his soul to god through his mediator and his body by his mother, evidently feeling that a monument to her was appropriate. The second monument is the effigy tomb of Judith Aylmer (d.1618), which was also constructed by her son, who was the rector of Much Hadham. It is loctated high on the wall in the chancel, where Judith had requested to be buried (fig.4). Judith’s figure is again depicted kneeling at a prayer desk, and the monument contains inscriptions detailing her life, and praising her virtues as a faithful and virtuous women (fig.5). It has been speculated that Judith’s monument may have been the target of iconoclasts during the civil war as it is missing its head. Much Hadham was targeted in the 1630’s when the rails and stained glass were broken, and so it is not unlikely that the monument of a bishop’s wife, and particularly a bishop who had been so opposed to Puritans in his lifetime, would have been targeted.[[826]](#footnote-827)

**Conclusion**

In death, as in life, this chapter has argued that bishops’ wives were not as marginalised as previous studies have suggested. In the light of a lack of other sources, both wills and monuments are very important in determining how these women identified themselves. Reading the two together, it is clear that women had a sense of their position as a bishop’s widow and that many retained ties to their husband’s former diocese, even in cases where they no longer physically lived there. In many ways their wills exhibit the same characteristics as archetypal female wills, containing a broad range of bequests to family and friends and individualised bequests to the poor. In terms of evidence of their religious beliefs, there is clear, if unexpected, evidence of Protestant beliefs, although a number of notable examples which go beyond standard declarations of faith and demonstrate strong Calvinist convictions. Out of these, Frances Matthew is particularly noteworthy for her highly personalised religious preamble in which she promised to pour out my last breath within ‘this church of England where I have learned the profession of Christian and saving doctrine.’[[827]](#footnote-828) This preamble clearly positioned her within the established English Church, and articulated her religious position in a way that was more unusual for women.

In contrast, the burial and commemoration of bishops’ wives was undoubtedly a new issue to arise following the Reformation, and although there are some similarities between the instructions bishops’ wives left behind and those of other elite women, there are also significant differences. As Sherlock has noted, it was customary, though by no means always the case, for aristocratic couples to be commemorated by double effigy tombs, in parish churches attached to the husband’s family estate. In contrast bishops continued to be commemorated primarily according to their office, with little or no reference to their wives and families, who were buried ‘far removed’ from their husband’s cathedral tombs.[[828]](#footnote-829) Though Sherlock argues that this practice jeopardised the social status of both bishops and their wives, this chapter has argued for a more positive interpretation.[[829]](#footnote-830) There were many anomalies in the Elizabethan Settlement which saw the imposition of a reformed doctrine onto a wholly unreformed church structure and hierarchy, and the commemoration of bishops and their families can be seen as just one small aspect of this. In spite of the protestations of reformers, the theoretical underpinning of the office of a bishop in the English Church was not radically changed, and the bishops continued to be seen, and commemorated, as part of an unbroken line of apostolic succession. In contrast to the aristocracy who commemorated lineage, bishops were commemorated according to their office and it is therefore not appropriate to judge the burial of bishops’ wives according to the practices of the aristocracy. It is clear from reading the wills of bishops’ wives that whilst they took pride in their position, they did not necessarily expect or plan to be buried with their husbands; or in cases where they did request this, to be commemorated on the same monument. Through reading the women’s wills and paying closer attention to the location of the monuments of women who were not buried in cathedrals, it is clear that many women requested, and were granted, burial in prominent locations in parish churches of their choice. If they did not have a position in the apostolic succession, then bishops’ wives certainly had a respectable place in secular society, occupied as much in life as in death.



Figure 1 - monument to Cecily Freke



Figure 2 - The monument to Frances Matthew in York Minster. Photograph: © The Chapter of York.



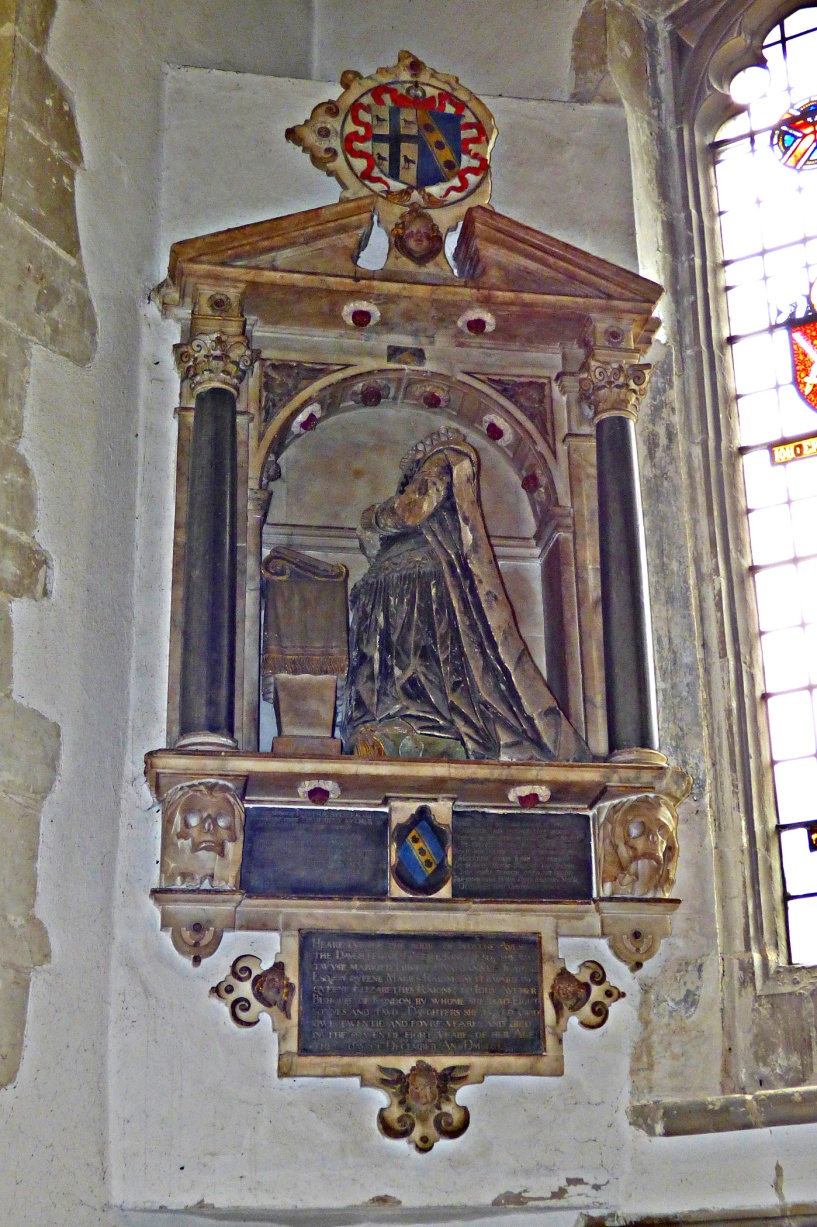
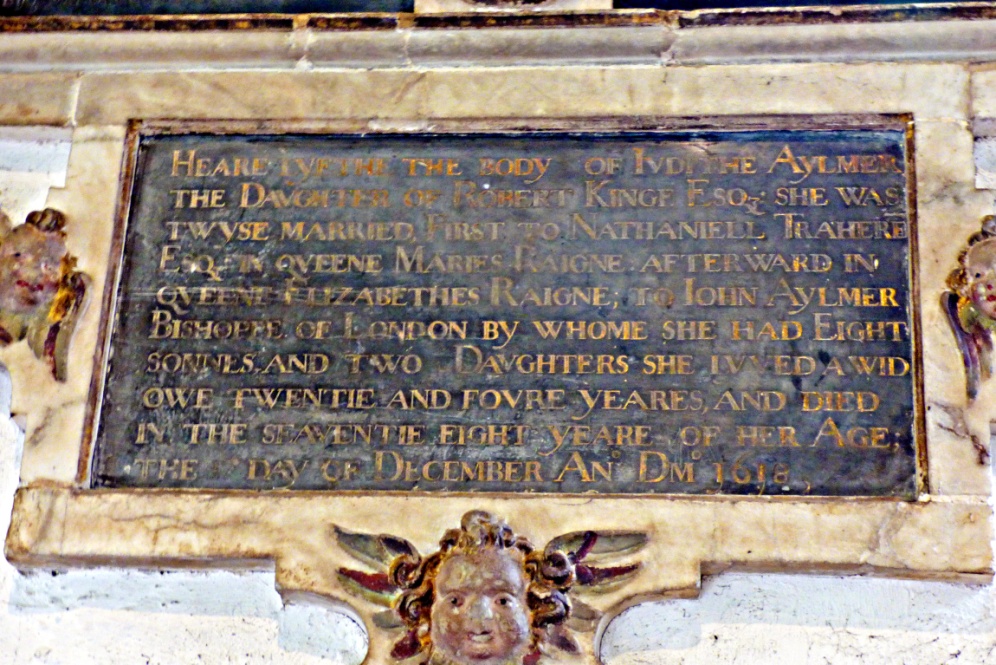


Figure 4 – monument to Judith Aylmer, St Andrew’s Church, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire

Figure 3: Monument to Abigail Goldsborough, Worcester Cathedral. Image sourced -https://www.flickr.com/photos/overton\_cat/5680198546/



**Figure 5 – inscription on monument to Judith Aylmer, St Andrew’s Church, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire**

**Conclusion**

**Beyond 1625**

At the end of James’ reign in 1625, clerical marriage was a secure feature of the English Church and eleven married bishops presided over the English dioceses. Although it has been speculated that Charles I, whilst generally supportive of clerical marriage, may have preferred a celibate bench of bishops; this did not come to pass, and married bishops were appointed to all but four of the English dioceses during the course of his reign.[[830]](#footnote-831) Although Charles’ reign is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would certainly be another rich area of exploration, witnessing the division of the Church and a period of upheaval, equivalent almost to a second Reformation. This was particularly acute for episcopal families, with the prominent position of bishops ensuring that their wives and children were uniquely and directly affected by the sustained attacks on the episcopacy during the 1640s; ultimately culminating in the arrest and imprisonment of twelve bishops in 1641, and the abolition of the bishoprics in 1646.

As McCall’s study of the children of loyalist clergy has demonstrated, the 1640s and 50s were difficult years for the families of sequestered clergy. Many of them were violently evicted from their homes, their fathers imprisoned, andtheir families humiliated, impoverished, and ostracized by society.[[831]](#footnote-832) Although, the religious landscape was very different and this persecution applied only to the families of loyalist clergy, it is reminiscent of the plight faced by all married clergy and their families one hundred years before during the difficult years of Mary I’s reign.

Even before this crisis point, however, it is possible that there may have been more subtle challenges to the idea of a married episcopacy and indeed the necessity of clerical marriage as a qualifier for high office in the Church. Laudianism, which dominated the Church in the 1630s and 40s, had re-emphasised the divine right of the bishops and sought to mark them out as a different caste from ordinary clergy. With this view of the origins and function of bishops it was feasible that celibacy could be considered acceptable, even preferable for bishops, leaving them free to wed themselves solely to their dioceses. It is notable that in 1646, when the dioceses were dissolved, Canterbury, York, London, Durham, Lincoln, Carlisle, and Gloucester were all held by unmarried men. The extent to which older conservative criticisms of clerical marriage resurfaced under Laud as a result of the theory of the divine right of the episcopacy has not been established, nor have its implications for the masculine status of the senior clergy. These questions are beyond the scope of this thesis, though it is important to note that whilst, as this thesis has demonstrated, the institution of clerical marriage did stabilise during the long reign of Elizabeth I and her successor James I, the tensions and conflict surrounding the institution never truly abated, There were always some who believed that divine office would be best served by celibate men, and although as the appendixes demonstrate there was a healthy supply of married men to the majority of dioceses throughout the period under consideration, Matthew Parker stands alone at the head of a long line of unmarried Archbishops of Canterbury, which is perhaps not insignificant. These are important considerations, and though they are not fully developed in this thesis, which focused primarily on the legal battle for clerical marriage and the development of the role of a bishop’s wife, 1559 did not mark an end to the debates surrounding clerical marriage. Future research into the later period should pick up on these debates and trace their impact through to the 1630s and 40s and beyond when they really began to have an impact.

Through providing the first comprehensive study of bishops’ wives from 1549-1625 this thesis has sought, as far as possible, to bring the lived experience of English bishops’ wives to the fore. As with any study focused on early modern women, sources are highly fragmented and in some cases it has not been possible to uncover even the most basic details about women, in spite of the public prominence of their husbands. However, through examining English bishops’ wives as a group and over an extended period of time it has been possible to build up what was a missing narrative. A number of particularly well documented bishops’ wives have also stood out, and provided valuable case studies by which to compare or speculate on the experience of other bishops’ wives, chart developments, and situate these women alongside other aristocratic women.

This thesis had contributed to the history of the early Reformation and the existing scholarship on clerical and episcopal marriage, in part by making connections between these fields and the related field of women’s history. The religious situation changed dramatically between 1549 and 1625, with the first generation of bishops’ wives bearing the brunt of the religious turmoil of the successive reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I. Though women have been increasingly incorporated into studies of the early Reformation, with focus now turning to studies of the impact of the Reformation on families and other social groups, episcopal wives have been largely absent from this scholarship, as well as the existing work on clerical and episcopal marriage.[[832]](#footnote-833) As chapter one demonstrated, bishops’ wives were uniquely and directly affected by the Reformation and became a living symbol of its progress. For some women, such as Anne Hooper, it is clear that they were driven by strong religious convictions, with clerical marriage providing a very active way in which women could participate in the Reformation. It has often been noted that the closure of the convents cut off an important avenue of female spiritual agency, with Protestantism offering women only the domestic roles of wife and mother. It would be too far to suggest that clerical marriage was a comparable alternative, and many women obviously found great emotional and spiritual solace in their reformed faith without resorting to marrying a cleric. However, it is possible that in the early years of the Reformation clerical marriage did present some women with an emotional outlet for their beliefs and like Anne, the opportunity to make a bold statement of commitment and faith, both to their husband and the reformed cause. Certainly it brought many of the first bishops’ wives into evangelical networks, whilst the women who went into exile had unique opportunities to engage with the leadership of the international reform movement, and play an active role in the exile communities. Even women such as Edith Bush or Barbara Holgate who married men less than wholly committed to the wider reform movement, helped to advance it through providing a living example of a key reformed doctrine; and it is for these reasons that bishops’ wives must be integrated into both narratives of English clerical marriage and more broadly the early Reformation movement.

The Marian exile movement was an important chapter in the lives of the bishops and their wives who were forced to flee and offered them the opportunity to meet the wives and families of the leading continental reformers. The strength of the friendships they formed is evidenced by the warm greetings exchanged in the letters sent by the exiles after their return home to England and the continuing interest they showed in each other’s families. These relationships briefly kept the English Church aligned to the continental Protestant movement through personal connections and further demonstrate the extent to which exile offered women the opportunity to forge connections and a sense of identity as part of an international godly movement. Certainly both Anne Hooper and Margaret Parkhurst felt that their personal travails were very much part of a wider struggle and confidently expressed their fears and expectations to Bullinger as equals to him.

Elizabeth’s attitude towards clerical marriage has been the subject of great debate and produced a number of striking anecdotes. It has been impossible to agree with historical interpretations that her negative attitude has been misunderstood or misintepretated and it was evidently a cause of great concern and hurt to her bishops. Nevertheless, it did not impede the development of clerical marriage nor have a detrimental impact on the status of bishops’ wives in their homes and neighbourhoods. The fact that the 1559 Settlement endured finally gave bishops’ wives the opportunity to develop their roles and they emerged as new members of the office holding class. They brought a feminised influence to the episcopal households for the first time, ushering in physical changes as well as a reconfiguration of the household around a mistress as well as a master. Within their households they played a very similar role to other elite women, managing staff, organising hospitality, as well as overseeing the wider episcopal estates and household religion. This work aligns with broader studies which have sought to determine how the Reformation impacted on gender roles and the position of women within their households. Though in many ways bishops’ wives appear to have adopted similar roles to other elite women, their unique relationship to the Church of England, through their husband’s office, provides a new perspective on this. Their place in the episcopal households is also another reminder that while in many ways the post-Reformation English Church appears to be a very male affair, clerical and particularly episcopal wives injected a feminised influence at the highest levels.

Beyond their households, bishops’ wives were able to integrate into local society, with the scope and nature of their social networks previously unexplored. Much has been made of the fact that bishops’ wives occupied a somewhat anomalous social position as an untitled spouse to their high ranking husbands, a situation which remains to this day. However, it is clear that this did not have any bearing on their ability to forge connections sometimes at the highest social levels. Whilst not all bishops and their wives attained the position of the Sandys or Matthew family, they were able to integrate into local elites, and move higher if the bishops’ career progressed. Clerical networks were also very important and are an area which could be explored further through work on the families of other senior cathedral clergy. An examination of the social connections of bishops’ wives also reveals what could be a very peripatetic lifestyle, with bishops’ wives accompanying their husbands to London, where they had the opportunity to meet other episcopal families; as well as between episcopal residences. Despite the novelty of their position, bishops’ wives were not marginal or ambiguous figures but were able to successfully integrate into existing social networks as well as forge new ones amongst the growing clerical community.

The preparations that bishops’ wives made for their death and commemoration in their wills provide the clearest evidence of how they understood their own status and identity. Whereas much of the existing scholarship on clerical marriage, deals with clerical wives in fairly abstract terms, as statistics or the subject of polemical attacks, this thesis has sought to bring out their lived experience, and their wills are one of the only direct records which can be attributed to them. A number of them demonstrated clear religious convictions in their religious preambles, with Frances Matthew incorporating a highly personalised dedication to the Church of England. Although their widowhoods were notably different from their lives in the episcopal residences, and they did not retain any formal interest in the episcopal estates; many women retained some links with their husbands’ former dioceses, and continued to define themselves primarily as bishops’ widows. Where they chose to be buried was also often reflective of their former position, and whilst few were commemorated alongside their husbands this was not a negative indictment of their status. Rather, bishops’ wives seem to have had clear ideas about what was appropriate and established their own precedents.

After the tumult of the civil war and the Interregnum, the Restoration of 1660 once again restored bishops and their wives to their former positions, where they have continued ever since, recently joined by the first bishops’ husbands. In taking on this role these men follow in the footsteps of the women who first pioneered it nearly five hundred years ago, and as women continue to be appointed to increasingly senior positions in the Church today it is interesting to look back at another period of transition in the Church of England’s history. The advent of clerical marriage was undoubtedly one of the ‘most revolutionary changes in religion and ethics produced by the Reformation,’ and one in which women played a key role.[[833]](#footnote-834) Initially a radical step that offered women a chance to engage with the Reformation movement, clerical marriage evolved into an institution that for a long time offered women their closest access to the Church establishment.

**Appendix 1: Edwardian married bishops**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Diocese** | **Bishop** | **marital status** | **Details** |
| Bath and Wells | William Knight (1541-1547) | Unmarried |  |
| Bath and Wells | **William Barlow (1548-1553)** | **Married** | **Agatha Wellesbourne** |
| Bristol | **Paul Bush (1542-1554)** | **Married** | **Edith Ashley** |
| Canterbury | **Thomas Cranmer (1533-1555)** | **Married** | **Margaret** |
| Carlisle | Robert Aldrich (1537-1556) | Unmarried |  |
| Chester | **John Bird (1542-1554)** | **Married** | **Unknown** |
| Chichester | George Day (1543-1551) | Unmarried |  |
| Chichester | **John Scory (1552-1553)** | **Married** | **Elizabeth** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | Richard Sampson (1543-1554) | Unmarried |  |
| Durham | Cuthbert Tunstall (1530-1559) | Unmarried |  |
| Ely | Thomas Goodrich (1534-1554) | Unmarried |  |
| Exeter | John Vesey (1519-1551) | Unmarried |  |
| Exeter | **Miles Coverdale (1551-1553)** | **Married** | **Elizabeth Macheson** |
| Gloucester | John Wakeman (1541-1549) | Unmarried |  |
| Gloucester | **John Hooper (1550-1554)** | **Married** | **Anne de Tscerlas** |
| Hereford | John Skip (1539-1552) | Unmarried |  |
| Hereford | **John Harley (1553-1554)** | **Married** | **Unknown** |
| Lincoln | **Henry Holbeach (1547-1551)** | **Married** | **Joan Mannet** |
| Lincoln | **John Taylor (1552-1554)** | **married?** | **?** |
| London | Nicholas Ridley (1550-1553) | Unmarried |  |
| Norwich | William Rugg (1536-1550) | Unmarried |  |
| Norwich | Thomas Thirlby (1550-1554) | Unmarried |  |
| Oxford | Robert King (1542-1558) | Unmarried |  |
| Peterborough | John Chambers (1541-1556) | Unmarried |  |
| Rochester | Nicholas Ridley (1547-1550) | Unmarried |  |
| Rochester | **John Ponet (1550-1551)** | **Married** | **Mary Hayman** |
| Rochester | **John Scory (1551-1552)** | **Married** | **Elizabeth** |
| Salisbury | John Capon (1539-1557) | Unmarried |  |
| Winchester | Steven Gardiner (1531-1551) | Unmarried |  |
| Winchester | **John Ponet (1551-1553)** | **Married** | **Mary Hayman** |
| Worcester | Nicholas Heath (1541-1553) | Unmarried |  |
| Worcester | **John Hooper (1552-1554)** | **Married** | **Anne de Tscerlas** |
| York | **Robert Holgate (1545-1554)** | **Married** | **Barbara Wentworth** |

**Appendix 2: Details of bishops’ wives 1559-1625**

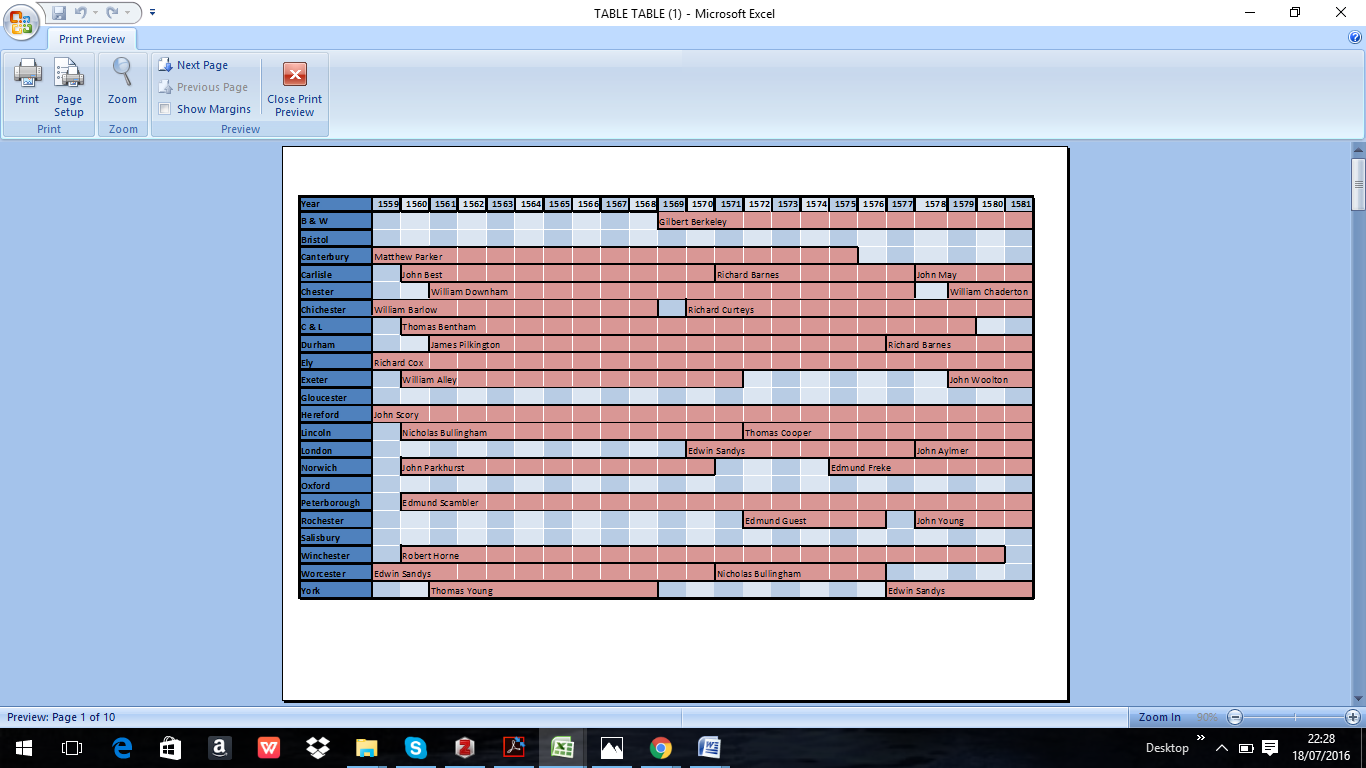
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bishop** | **Diocese** | **Wife/wives name** | **Background of wife/wives** |
| Edmund Allen | Rochester | unknown | Unknown |
| Edmund Freke | Norwich(1575-84), Rochester (1572-76) Worcester (1584-91) | Cicely (m.c.1550-d.1599) | Unknown |
| Edmund Scambler | Peterborough (1560-84) Norwich (1585-94) | Julyan Frauncys (m.1561- d.?) | Unknown |
| Edwin Sandys | Worcester (1559-1570) London (70-77) York (77-88) | (m.1) unknown (m.?-d.c.1553) (m.2) Cecily Sandys (m.1559-d.1611) | (m.1) cousin (m.2) daughter of Sir Thomas Wilford of Cranbrook, Kent. |
| Francis Godwin | Hereford (1617-34) | Suzan Woolton | daughter of John Woolton, Bishop of Exeter |
| Francis White | Carlisle (1626-29) Norwich (1629-31) Ely (1631-38) | married c. 1588 unknown | Unknown |
| George Carleton | Chichester (1619-28) | married | Unknown |
| George Llyod | Chester (1604-15) | ann wilkinson (d.1648) | daughter of John Wilkinson, probably of Norwich |
| Gilbert Berkeley | Bath and Wells (1569-81) | Emme Smarthwett (m.? - s.) | daughter to Roger Smarthwett, Dent, Yorkshire |
| Godfrey Goldsborough | Gloucester (1598-04) | Abigail | Unknown |
| Henry Cotton | Salisbury (1598-15) | Patience (d. After 1608) Elizabeth (s.) | unknown unknown although survived Cotton and later married Edward Reade, esq. |
| Henry Parry | Gloucester (1607-1610) | Elizabeth | Unknown |
| Herbert Westfaling | Hereford (1585-02) | Anne Bradbridghe née Barlow (d.1597) | daughter of William Barlow, bishop of Chichester, and widow of Augustine Bradbridge, prebendary of Salisbury |
| James Pilkington | Durham (1561-76) | Alice Kingsmill (m.1564-d.1595) | daughter of Sir John Kingsmill, of Sigmantun, Hampshire |
| John Aylmer | London (1577-94) | (m.1) ? (m.2) Judith Bures alias King (m.before 1561- d.1618) | (m.1) unknown (m.) daughter of Robert King of Suffolk and widow of Nathaniel Treherne |
| John Best | Carlisle (1560-1570) | Elizabeth Somner (m.c.1550-d.1586) | unlikely family very wealthy as she was able to continue residing in Rose Castle after her husband's death. |
| John Bridgeman | Chester (1619-46) | Elizabeth Helyar (m.1606-d.1636) | daughter of William Heylar, archdeacon of Barnstaple. |
| John Bridges | Oxford (1604-18) | (m.1) unknown (m.c.1578 - d.before 1592) (m.2) Jane Davey (m.1592- d.1631) | (m.1) unknown (m.2) unknown |
| John Coldwell | Salisbury (1591-96) | (m.1) Jane Henley (m.2) Clare Moore née Toke | (m.1) daughter of Walter Henley of Lancashire, gentleman. (m.2)daughter of John Toke of Great Chart, Kent, esquire, and widow of Nicholas Moore of Elham, Kent, gentleman |
| John Howson | Oxford (1619-1628) | Jane Floyd (1601-d.1641) | a former parishioner from Bampton |
| John Jegon | Norwich (1603-1618) | Dorothy Vaughan (m.1606-s.) | daughter of Richard Vaughan Bishop of London, Dorothy later remarried Sir Charles Conrwallis former ambassador to Spain |
| John King | London (1611-1621) | Joan Freeman (m.c.1690-s) | daughter of Henry Freeman of Staffordshire |
| John May | Carlisle (1577-1598) | Amy Cowel nee Vowel (m.1560-s) | widow of John Cowel of Lancashire and daughter of William Vowel of North Creake, Norfolk |
| John Overall | Coventry and Lichfield (1614-1618) | Anne Orwell (m.1604-?) | daughter of Edward Orwell of Christ Church, Greyfriars Newgate, London, registrar of the court of arches, who came from a Lancashire family |
| John Parkhurst | Norwich (1560-1570) | Margery (m.E's reign - s) | daughter of Thomas Garnish of Kenton, Suffolk |
| John Scory | Hereford (1559-1585) | Elizabeth (m.before 1551 - d.1593 ) | unknown |
| John Still | Bath and Wells (1593-08) | (m.1) Anne Alabaster (m.c.1574-d.1593) (m.2) Jane Horner (m.1594-d.1608) | (m.1) daughter of a wealthy clothier from Hadleigh, Suffolk (m.2) daughter of Sir John Horner of Cloford |
| John Thornborough | Bristol (1603-17) | (m.1) Elizabeth Bold (m.1582-divorced 1595) (m.2) Elizabeth Baynes (m.1595-1630) (m.3) Anne née Beswick (predeceased him) | (m.1) unknown (m.2) unknown (m.3) widow of Sir Henry Bromley of Holt Castle |
| John Woolton | Exeter (1579-94) | m.1560? | married the daughter of Protector Somerset's purveyor of household provisions |
| John Young | Rochester (1578-05) | Grace Watts nee Cocke (m.1578-s.) | widow of Thomas Watts, archdeacon of Middlesex, one of Pembroke's most notable benefactors. |
| Joseph Hall | Exeter (1627-41) | Elizabeth Winniff (m. 1582-d.1652) | daughter of George Winniff of Brettenham in Suffolk, gent |
| Martin Fotherby | Salisbury (1618-20) | Margaret Winter (m.1592 -s) | daughter of John Winter, a prebendary of Canterbury |
| Martin Heton | Ely (1600-1609) | Alice Weston (m.unknown - d.1626) | sister of Sir Simon Weston and James Weston esquire |
| Matthew Hutton | Durham , York | (m.1) Katherine Fulnetby (m. Before 1564- d.soon after) (m.2) Beatrix Fincham (m.1567-d.1582) (m.3) Francis Bowes (m.1583-d.1615) | (m.1) niece of Thomas Goodrich, the late bishop of Ely and lord chancellor (m.2) daughter of Sir Thomas Fincham of the Isle of Ely (m.3)  widow of Martin Bowes, son of the London alderman Sir Martin Bowes |
| Matthew Parker | Canterbury (1559-1575) | Margaret Harlestone (m.1548-d.1570) | Mattishall in Norfolk, |
| Miles Smith | Gloucester (1612-1624) | (m.1) Mary Hawkins (m.2)unknown | (m.1) from Cardiff (m.) unknown |
| Nicholas Bullingham | Lincoln (1560-71) Worcester (1571-76) | (m.1) Margaret Sutton (1549?-d.1566) (m.2) Elizabeth Hill née Lok (m.1569-d.1581) | (m.1) daughter of Hamond Sutton of Washingborough, Lincolnshire (m.2) widow of a London mercer, Richard Hill, and daughter of Sir William Lok, alderman |
| Nicholas Felton | Bristol (1617-19) | Elizabeth Norgate (m.1591-d.1606) | widow of the mater of Corpus Christi college Robert Norgate (d.1587) |
| Richard Barnes | Carlisle (1570-77) Durham (1577-87) | (m.1)Fridismunda Gifford (<1559-d.1581) (m.2) Jane Dillicotes (1582-s.) | [(m.1) daughter of Ralph Gifford of Claydon, MP, Buckinghamshire, and sister of Roger Gifford (d. 1597) later the queen's physician (m.2) a French woman remarried Leonard Pilkington, clergyman](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10652/?back=,1471) |
| Richard Cox | Ely (1559-1581) | (m.1) Jane (m.c.1547-d.1568) (m.2) Jane Turner (m.1568-d.1604) | (m.1) unknown (m.2) daughter of George Awder, alderman of Cambridge, and widow of William Turner, Marian dean of Wells |
| Richard Curteys | Chichester (1570-1582) | wife name unknwon | Unknown |
| Richard Fletcher | Bristol (1589-53) Worcester (1593-95) London (1595-96) | (m.1)Elizabeth Holland (m.1573-d.1592) (m.2)Mary Baker née Gifford (1595-s?) | (m.1) from Cranbrook, Kent (m.2) widow of Sir Richard Baker of Sissinghurst, Cranbrook |
| Richard Milbourne | Carlisle (1621-29) | m.1594 | Unknown |
| Richard Neile | Coventry and Lichfield (1610-1614) | Dorothy Dacre (c.1605-1647) | daughter of Christopher Dacre (d. 1593) and Alice Knyvett, gentry |
| Richard Senhouse | Carlisle (1624-26) | ? | Unknown |
| Richard Vaughan | Chester (1597-04) London (1604-07) | Joan Beweres (m.1581-s) | from Great Dunmow, Essex, a relative of John Aylmer’s wife Judith King (Alias Bures) |
| Robert Abbot | Salisbury (1615-18) | (m.1) Margaret Baker (m.1589-d.1596) (m.2) Martha Dighton (m.1597-d.1617) (m.3) Bridget (m.1617 - d.1647) | (m.1) unknown (m.2) daughter of the Worcester alderman Christopher Dighton (m.3) widow of John Cheynell, an Oxford physician, and daughter of John Egioke of Worcestershire. |
| Robert Bennet | Hereford (1602-17) | unknown | Unknown |
| Robert Horne | Winchester (1560-1580) | Margarey? (m. E's reign d. 1575) | Unknown |
| Robert Snoden | Carlisle (1616-1621) | Abigail Orme (1599-s.) | Rorbert Orme of Elston, Nottinghamshire |
| Robert Tounson | Salisbury (1620-21) | Margaret Townley née Davenant (m.1604-d.1634) | Unknown |
| Robert Wright | Bristol (1623-32) | unknown | Unknown |
| Rowland Searchfield | Bristol (1619-22) | Anne Hutchison | father was president of St John's college Oxford and a clergyman his wife had been the daughter of his predecessor as President. |
| Thomas Bentham | Coventry and Lichfield (1560-1579) | Maud/Mathilda Fawcon (m. 1557/8-s) | Unknown |
| Thomas Bilson | Winchester (1597-16) Worcester (1596-97) | Anne (c.1581-s) | Unknown |
| Thomas Cooper | Lincoln (1571-84) Winchester (1584-94) | Amy Royse? (m.1546- d.1603) | Unknown |
| Thomas Dove | Peterborough (1601-30) | Margaret Warner | daughter of Oliver Warner of Evesden, Cambridgeshire |
| Thomas Godwin | Bath and Wells (1584-89) | (m.1) Isabel Purfrey (m.1549? d. before 1584) (m.2) Sybil (1584-1587) | (m.1) daughter of Nicholas Purfrey (or Purefoy), of Shalstone, Buckinghamshire - her brother was an exile listed as gent. (m.) widow of London |
| Thomas Ravis | Gloucester (1604-07) London (1607-10) | Alice - (s.) | [natal family unknown but she was later wife of Sir John Borlase, master of the ordnance of Ireland](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2909/?back=,23175) |
| Thomas Young | York (1561-68) | (m.1) ? Constantine (m. During Edward's reign - d.?) (m.2) Jane Kynaston (m.? - d.1612) | (m.1) daughter of George Constantine, registrar of St David's (m.2) daughter Thomas Kynaston of Estwick, Staffordshire |
| Tobias Matthew | Durham (1595-06) York (1606-28) | Frances Parker née Barlow (m.1577 - d.1629) | daughter of Bishop William Barlow, and widow of Matthew Parker, son of Archbishop Parker |
| Valentine Carey | Exeter (1621-26) | Dorothy Coke (m.1600-d.1634) | daughter of Richard Coke (*d*. 1582) of Trusley, Derbyshire, and sister of John Coke (1563–1644), later secretary of state, and of George Coke (1570–1646), a contemporary of Carey at St John's and later bishop of Hereford. |
| William Alley | Exeter (1560-71) | Syblil Honacott (m.1549-s.) | Sybil, is said to have been of the Honacott family of Landkey, north Devon She later married Richard Dillon of Chumhill in Bratton Fleming, north Devon |
| William Barlow 1 | Chichester (1559-68) | Agatha Wellesbourne | daughter of Humphrey Wellesbourne of Bustlesham Montagu |
| William Barlow 2 | Lincoln (1608-13) Rochester (1605-08) | Joan (m.? - s) | Unknown |
| William Chaderton | Lincoln (1595-08) Chester (1579-95) | Katherine Revell (m.1589-d.1620) | daughter of John Revell of London, gentleman |
| William Cotton | Exeter (1598-1621) | Mary Cutler née Hulme (m.1578-d.1629) | daughter of Thomas Hulme of the county of Chester and widow of William Cutler, citizen of London |
| William Day | Winchester (1595-96) | Elizabeth Barlow (m.c.1610-s) | daughter of Bishop William Barlow |
| William Downham | Chester (1561-77) | Katherine | Unknown |
| William James | Durham (1606-17) | (m.) Katherine Risby (m.2) unknown (m.3) Isabel Atkinson née Riley | (m.1) came from Abingdon, Oxfordshire (m.2) unknown (m.3) came from Newcastle-upon-Tyne |
| William Overton | Coventry and Lichfield (1589-09) | (m.1) Margaret Barlow (m.1566-d.1601) (m.2) Mary Bradocke (m.1601 - d. ?) | (m.1) daughter of Bishop William Barlow (m.2) daughter of Edmund and Elizabeth Bradocke of Adbaston Hall, Eccleshall |
| William Redman | Norwich (1594-02) | (m.1) Elizabeth Hanchett (m.1566 d<1578) (m.2)Isabel Calverley (m.1578-d.1613) | (m.1) from Great Shelford, Cambridge (m.2) daughter of Nicholas Calverley of Christchurch, Newgate Street |
| William Wickham | Lincoln (1584-94) Winchester (1594-95) | Antonia Barlow (m.?- d.1598) | daughter of Bishop William Barlow |

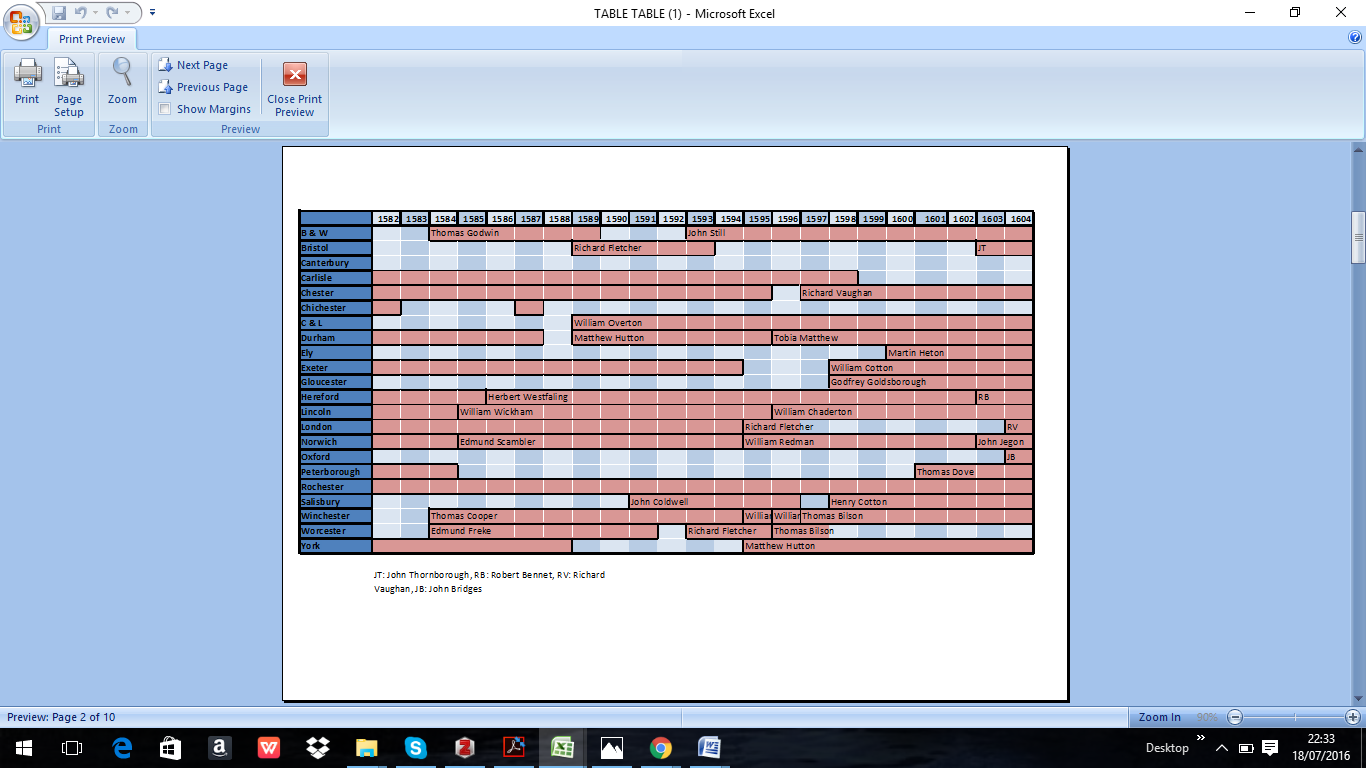
Although he was married Samuel Harsnett, the Bishop of Chichester 1609-1619, and Bishop of Norwich 1619-1629, has been excluded from this table as his wife Thomazine Kempe died eight years before he was appointed to his first diocese and he did not remarry.

**Appendix 3: All bishops appointed to English dioceses 1559-1625**

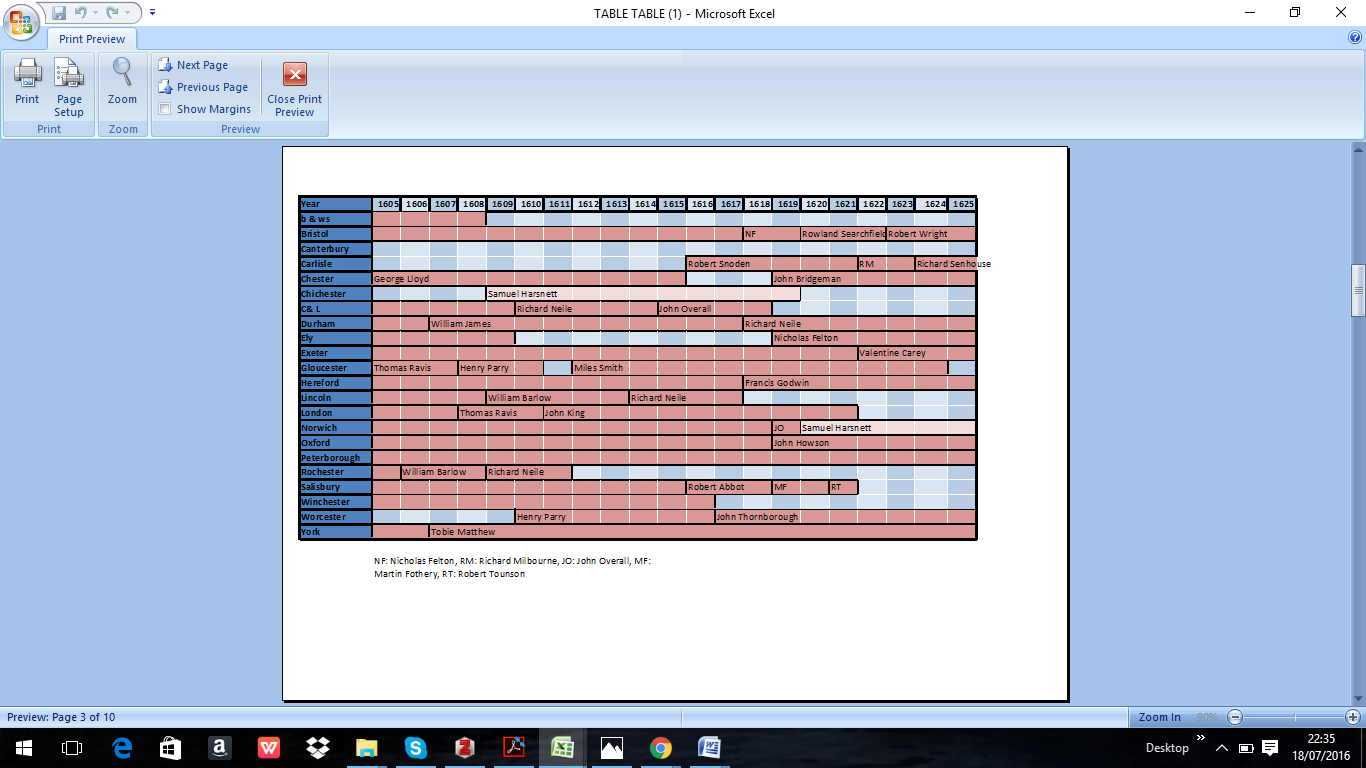
This table is to highlight the number of married bishops appointed to each diocese in relation to unmarried bishops.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Diocese** | **Bishop** | **Start date** | **End date** | **Marital status** |
| Bath and Wells | Gilbert Berkeley | 1569 | 1581 | **Married** |
| Bath and Wells | Thomas Godwin | 1584 | 1589 | **Married** |
| Bath and Wells | John Still | 1593 | 1608 | **Married** |
| Bath and Wells | James Montague | 1608 | 1616 | Unmarried |
| Bath and Wells | Arthur Lake | 1616 | 1626 | Unmarried |
| Bristol | Richard Cheney | 1562 | 1579 | Unmarried |
| Bristol | John Bullingham | 1581 | 1589 | Unmarried |
| Bristol | Richard Fletcher | 1589 | 1593 | **Married** |
| Bristol | John Thornborough | 1603 | 1617 | **Married** |
| Bristol | Nicholas Felton | 1617 | 1619 | **Married** |
| Bristol | Rowland Searchfield | 1619 | 1622 | **married** |
| Bristol | Robert Wright | 1623 | 1632 | **Married** |
| Canterbury | Matthew Parker | 1559 | 1575 | **Married** |
| Canterbury | Edmund Grindal | 1575 | 1583 | Unmarried |
| Canterbury | John Whitgift | 1583 | 1604 | Unmarried |
| Canterbury | Richard Bancroft | 1604 | 1610 | Unmarried |
| Canterbury | George Abbot | 1611 | 1633 | Unmarried |
| Carlisle | John Best | 1560 | 1570 | **married** |
| Carlisle | Richard Barnes | 1570 | 1577 | **Married** |
| Carlisle | John May | 1577 | 1598 | **Married** |
| Carlisle | Henry Robinson | 1598 | 1616 | **married** |
| Carlisle | Robert Snoden | 1616 | 1621 | **Married** |
| Carlisle | Richard Milbourne | 1621 | 1624 | **Married** |
| Carlisle | Richard Senhouse | 1624 | 1626 | ? |
| Chester | William Downham | 1561 | 1577 | **Married** |
| Chester | William Chaderton | 1579 | 1595 | **Married** |
| Chester | Hugh Bellot | 1595 | 1596 | Unmarried |
| Chester | Richard Vaughan | 1597 | 1604 | **Married** |
| Chester | George Llyod | 1604 | 1615 | **Married** |
| Chester | Thomas Morton | 1616 | 1619 | Unmarried |
| Chester | John Bridgeman | 1619 | 1646 | **Married** |
| Chichester | William Barlow | 1559 | 1568 | **Married** |
| Chichester | Richard Curteys | 1570 | 1582 | **Married** |
| Chichester | Thomas Bickley | 1586 | 1596 | Unmarried |
| Chichester | Anthony Watson | 1596 | 1609 | Unmarried |
| Chichester | Samuel Harsnett | 1609 | 1619 | **Married** |
| Chichester | George Carleton | 1619 | 1628 | **Married** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | Thomas Bentham | 1560 | 1579 | **married** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | William Overton | 1580 | 1609 | **married** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | George Abbott | 1609 | 1610 | unmarried |
| Coventry and Lichfield | Richard Neile | 1610 | 1614 | **married** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | John Overall | 1614 | 1618 | **married** |
| Coventry and Lichfield | Thomas Morton | 1619 | 1632 | unmarried |
| Durham | James Pilkington | 1561 | 1576 | **married** |
| Durham | Richard Barnes | 1577 | 1587 | **married** |
| Durham | Matthew Hutton | 1589 | 1595 | **married** |
| Durham | Tobias Matthew | 1595 | 1606 | **married** |
| Durham | William James | 1606 | 1617 | **married** |
| Durham | Richard Neile | 1617 | 1627 | **married** |
| Durham | George Montaigne | 1627 | 1628 | unmarried |
| Durham | John Howson | 1628 | 1632 | **married** |
| Ely | Richard Cox | 1559 | 1581 | **married** |
| Ely | Martin Heton | 1600 | 1609 | **married** |
| Ely | Lancelot Andrewes | 1609 | 1619 | unmarried |
| Ely | Nicholas Felton | 1619 | 1628 | **married** |
| Exeter | William Alley | 1560 | 1571 | **married** |
| Exeter | William Bradbridge | 1571 | 1578 | unmarried |
| Exeter | John Woolton | 1579 | 1594 | **married** |
| Exeter | Gervase Babington | 1595 | 1597 | unmarried |
| Exeter | William Cotton | 1598 | 1621 | **married** |
| Exeter | Valentine Carey | 1621 | 1626 | **married** |
| Gloucester | Richard Cheney | 1562 | 1579 | unmarried |
| Gloucester | John Bullingham | 1581 | 1598 | unmarried |
| Gloucester | Godfrey Goldsborough | 1598 | 1604 | **married** |
| Gloucester | Thomas Ravis | 1604 | 1607 | **married** |
| Gloucester | Henry Parry | 1607 | 1610 | **married** |
| Gloucester | Giles Thomson | 1610 | 1612 | unmarried |
| Gloucester | Miles Smith | 1612 | 1624 | **married** |
| Gloucester | Godfrey Goodman | 1625 | 1646 | unmarried |
| Hereford | John Scory | 1559 | 1585 | **married** |
| Hereford | Herbert Westfaling | 1585 | 1602 | **married** |
| Hereford | Robert Bennet | 1602 | 1617 | **married** |
| Hereford | Francis Godwin | 1617 | 1634 | **married** |
| Lincoln | Nicholas Bullingham | 1560 | 1571 | **married** |
| Lincoln | Thomas Cooper | 1571 | 1584 | **married** |
| Lincoln | William Wickham | 1584 | 1594 | **married** |
| Lincoln | William Chaderton | 1595 | 1608 | **Married** |
| Lincoln | William Barlow | 1608 | 1613 | **Married** |
| Lincoln | Richard Neile | 1614 | 1617 | **Married** |
| Lincoln | George Montaigne | 1617 | 1621 | Unmarried |
| Lincoln | John Williams | 1621 | 1641 | Unmarried |
| London | Edmund Grindal | 1559 | 1570 | Unmarried |
| London | Edwin Sandys | 1570 | 1577 | **married** |
| London | John Aylmer | 1577 | 1594 | **Married** |
| London | Richard Fletcher | 1595 | 1596 | **Married** |
| London | Richard Bancroft | 1597 | 1604 | Unmarried |
| London | Richard Vaughan | 1604 | 1607 | **Married** |
| London | Thomas Ravis | 1607 | 1610 | **Married** |
| London | George Abbot | 1610 | 1611 | Unmarried |
| London | John King | 1611 | 1621 | **Married** |
| London | George Montaigne | 1621 | 1628 | Unmarried |
| Norwich | John Parkhurst | 1560 | 1570 | **Married** |
| Norwich | Edmund Freke | 1575 | 1584 | **Married** |
| Norwich | Edmund Scambler | 1585 | 1594 | **Married** |
| Norwich | William Redman | 1594 | 1602 | **Married** |
| Norwich | John Jegon | 1603 | 1618 | **Married** |
| Norwich | John Overall | 1618 | 1619 | **Married** |
| Norwich | Samuel Harsnett | 1619 | 1629 | **Married** |
| Oxford | Hugh Curwen | 1567 | 1568 | Unmarried |
| Oxford | John Underhill | 1589 | 1592 | Unmarried |
| Oxford | John Bridges | 1604 | 1618 | **Married** |
| Oxford | John Bancroft | 1632 | 1641 | Unmarried |
| Peterborough | Edmund Scambler | 1560 | 1584 | **Married** |
| Peterborough | Richard Howland | 1585 | 1600 | Unmarried |
| Peterborough | Thomas Dove | 1601 | 1630 | **Married** |
| Rochester | Edmund Allen | 1559 | 1559 | **Married** |
| Rochester | Edmund Guest | 1560 | 1572 | Unmarried |
| Rochester | Edmund Freke | 1572 | 1576 | **Marri**ed |
| Rochester | John Piers | 1576 | 1578 | Unmarried |
| Rochester | John Young | 1578 | 1605 | **Married** |
| Rochester | William Barlow | 1605 | 1608 | **Married** |
| Rochester | Richard Neile | 1608 | 1611 | **Married** |
| Rochester | John Buckeridge | 1611 | 1628 | Unmarried |
| Salisbury | John Jewel | 1559 | 1571 | Unmarried |
| Salisbury | Edmund Guest | 1571 | 1577 | Unmarried |
| Salisbury | John Piers | 1577 | 1589 | Unmarried |
| Salisbury | John Coldwell | 1591 | 1596 | **Married** |
| Salisbury | Henry Cotton | 1598 | 1615 | **Married** |
| Salisbury | Robert Abbot | 1615 | 1618 | **married** |
| Salisbury | Martin Fotherby | 1618 | 1620 | **Married** |
| Salisbury | John Davenant | 1621 | 1641 | unmarried |
| Winchester | Robert Horne | 1560 | 1580 | **married** |
| Winchester | John Watson | 1580 | 1584 | unmarried |
| Winchester | Thomas Cooper | 1584 | 1594 | **married** |
| Winchester | William Wickham | 1594 | 1595 | **married** |
| Winchester | William Day | 1595 | 1596 | **married** |
| Winchester | Thomas Bilson | 1597 | 1616 | **married** |
| Winchester | James Montaugue | 1616 | 1618 | unmarried |
| Winchester | Lancelot Andrewes | 1618 | 1626 | unmarried |
| Worcester | Edwin Sandys | 1559 | 1570 | **married** |
| Worcester | Nicholas Bullingham | 1571 | 1576 | **married** |
| Worcester | John Whitgift | 1577 | 1583 | unmarried |
| Worcester | Edmund Freke | 1584 | 1591 | **married** |
| Worcester | Richard Fletcher | 1593 | 1595 | **maried** |
| Worcester | Thomas Bilson | 1596 | 1597 | **married** |
| Worcester | George Babington | 1597 | 1610 | unmarried |
| Worcester | Henry Parry | 1610 | 1616 | **married** |
| Worcester | John Thornborough | 1617 | 1641 | **married** |
| York | Thomas Young | 1561 | 1568 | **married** |
| York | Edmund Grindal | 1570 | 1576 | unmarried |
| York | Edwin Sandys | 1577 | 1588 | **married** |
| York | John Piers | 1589 | 1594 | unmarried |
| York | Matthew Hutton | 1595 | 1606 | **married** |
| York | Tobias Matthew | 1606 | 1628 | **married** |

**Appendix 4: Distribution of married bishops across the dioceses**

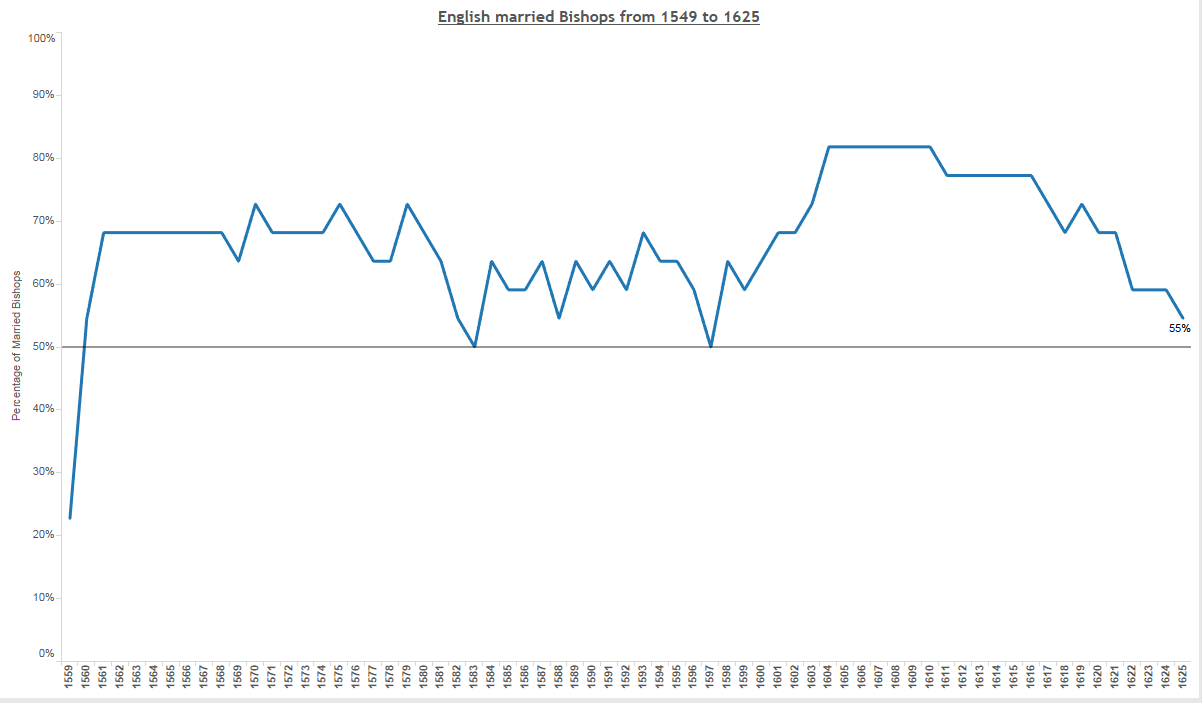


JT: John Thornborough, RB: Robert Bennet, RV: Richard Vaughan, JB: John Bridges



NF: Nicholas Felton, RM: Richard Milbourne, JO: John Overall, MF: Martin Fothery, RT: Robert Tounson

**Appendix 5: Graph to show the spread of married bishops 1559-1625**

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**Appendix 6: details of bishops’ wives wills**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Date of death | Archive | Husband | Husband’s date of death | Length of widowhood |
| Bridget Abbott | 1647 | TNA PROB 11/199/570 | Robert Abbot, Bishop of Salisbury | 1618 | 29 years |
| Judith Aylmer | 1618 | TNA PROB 11/133/131 | John Aylmer, Bishop of London | 1594 | 24 years |
| Elizabeth Best | 1586 | TNA PROB 11/69/268. | John Best, Bishop of Carlisle | 1570 | 16 years |
| Jane Bridges | 1631 | TNA PROB 11/159/224 | John Bridges, Bishop of Oxford | 1618 | 13 years |
| Dorothy Carey | 1634 | TNA PROB 11/165/86 | Valentine Carey, Bishop of Exeter | 1626 | 8 years |
| Katherine Chaderton | 1620 | TNA PROB 11/136/381 | William Chaderton, Bishop of Lincoln | 1608 | 12 years |
| Amy Cooper | 1603 | TNA PROB 11/107/267; | Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Winchester | 1594 | 9 years |
| Mary Cotton | 1630 | TNA PROB 11/157/265; | William Cotton, Bishop of Exeter | 1621 | 9 years |
| Jane Cox | 1588 | TNA PROB 11/73/50; | Richard Cox, Bishop of Ely | 1581 | 7 years |
| Alice Heton | 1626 | TNA PROB 11/171/218; | Martin Heton, Bishop of Ely | 1609 | 17 years |
| Jane Howson | 1641 | PROB 11/187/372 | John Howson, Bishop of Durham | 1632 | 9 years |
| Frances Hutton | 1615 | BI Prob. Reg. 35/495 | Matthew Hutton, Archbishop of York | 1606 | 9 years |
| Frances Matthew | 1629 | BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397r–398v | Tobie Matthew, Archbishop of York | 1628 | 1 year |
| Alice Pilkington | 1595 | TNA PROB 11/85/255 | James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham | 1576 | 19 years |
| Jane Pilkington | 1604 | BI Prob. Reg. vol. 31, f.99 | (m.1) Richard Barnes, Bishop of Durham  (m.2) Leonard Pilkington | 1587  1599 | 5 years |
| Cecily Sandys | 1611 | TNA PROB 11/117/140. | Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York | 1588 | 23 years |
| Elizabeth Scory | 1593 | TNA PROB 11/81/240. | John Scory, Bishop of Hereford | 1585 | 8 years |
| Jane Still | 1609 | TNA PROB 11/113/76 | John Still, Bishop of Bath and Wells | 1608 | 1 year |
| Anthonine Wickam | 1598 | TNA PROB 11/91/569 | William Wickham, Bishop of Winchester | 1595 | 3 years |
| Jane Young | 1612 | **Jane Younge** BI Prob. Reg. 32/651 | Thomas Young, Archbishop of York | 1568 | 44 years |

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1. John. K. Yost,The Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage in the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, *Church History* 50 (1981): 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Helen Parish, '“It Was Never Good Sence Minister Must Have Wyves:’ Clerical Celibacy, Clerical Marriage and Anticlericalism in England,” *Journal of Religious History* 36, no. 1 (March 2012): 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Yost, “Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage,” 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. See for example: Eric Josef Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation,” *Journal of British Studies* 31 (January 1992); Helen Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Joel Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate: Patterns of Life and Expenditure,” in *Princes and Paupers in the English Church 1500-1800*, ed. Rosemary O’Day and Felicity Heal (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981); Felicity Heal, “Economic Problems of the Clergy,” in *Church and Society in England Henry VIII to James I*, ed. Rosemary O’Day and Felicity Heal (London: Macmillan Press, 1977). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Jacqueline Eales, “Female Literacy and the Social Identity of the Clergy Family in the Seventeenth Century,” *Archaeologia Cantiana* 133 (2013). The experience of loyalist clergy families in the civil war has been explored by Fiona McCall, *Baal’s Priests: The Loyalist Clergy and the English Revolution* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. In her article Anne Llewellyn Barstow notes that despite acknowledgement of the radical change clerical marriage brought to the church, the new clergy families have not been explored and she hoped her article would ‘document the need for church historians to do further work on the family history of the Protestant ministry.’ Anne Llewellyn Barstow, “The First Generations of Anglican Clergy Wives: Heroines or Whores?,” *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 52, no. 1 (March 1983): 3. The article also asks a number of important questions about clerical wives – such as how they were received by the church and wider society and gives an overview of the legal history of clerical marriage and its impact. However, it draws on very few primary sources and references a number of anecdotes now known to be incorrect. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Anne Thompson, “Clergy Wives in Elizabethan England,” (PhD thesis, Warwick University, 2016),Mary Prior, “Reviled and Crucified Marriages: The Position of Tudor Bishops’ Wives,” in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1985); Peter Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage in Reformation England: Bishop Barlow’s Daughters,” *Gender & History* 16, No. 1. (April 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. In this study, the four Welsh dioceses are only touched on briefly. This is in part to give greater coherence to the study, but also due to the historic differences in the Welsh Church’s relationship with clerical marriage. As the work of Glanmor Williams has demonstrated the Gregorian reforms, enforcing clerical celibacy, had never been strictly implemented in Wales, which is thus deserving of its own study in this regard. Glanmor Williams, *Welsh Reformation essays.* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967); Glanmor Williams, *Wales and the Reformation*  (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. General surveys of early modern women include: Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Rosemary O’Day, *Women’s Agency in Early Modern Britain and the American Colonies* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2007). The work of Barbara Harris has led the way in demonstrating the agency of elite women both within their own households and beyond, Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Barbara J. Harris, “Women and Politics in Early Tudor England,” *The Historical Journal* 33, number 2 (June 1990); Barbara J. Harris, “Defining Themselves: English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550,” *Journal of British Studies* 49, no. 4 (October 2010): 734–752. For middling and poorer women see: Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Ann Christensen, “Merchant Wives, Agency, and Ambivalence in Early Modern Studies,” *Early Modern Women* 3 (2008): 217–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Prior notes that ‘when a temporal lord married, his wife normally took his rank, but, though bishops ranked fairly high and archbishops took precedence over all lord temporal, their wives had no rank whatever,’ which reduced their public visibility and denied them a place on state occasions. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified.” [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Ibid., 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. *Ibid*., 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. *Ibid*., 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. See for example: Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation”; Brett Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas. S. Freeman (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) which also focus a lot on the issue of Elizabeth I’s attitude towards clerical marriage. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. In her study of German clerical wives Plummer argues that “women need to be seen as agents of the Reformation and their actions and motivations taken as seriously as those of men.” Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer, *From Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011), 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Christine Peters, *Patterns of Piety: Women, Gender and Religion in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. General studies include: Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London: Routledge, 1993); Sherrin Marshall, *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe: Public and Private Worlds* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989); Mary. E. Weisner, *Gender, Church and State in Early Modern Germany* (Edinburgh: Addison Wesley Longman limited, 1998); Reetha. M. Warnicke, *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983); Roper offered a powerful challenge to the assumption that the Reformation was beneficial to women and argued that their position was in fact worsened by the movement, Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Karant-Nunn also argued that the Reformation largely did not bring about positive change to the position of women in Zwickau, Susan C Karant-Nunn, “Continuity and Change: Some Effects of the Reformation on the Women of Zwickau,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Peters, *Patterns of Piety*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. For continent: Barbara B. Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Elizabeth Rapley, *The Dévotes: Women and Church in Seventeenth-Century France* (Canada: McGill-Queen’s Press, 1990); *Silvia Evangelisti, Nuns: A History of* *Convent Life 1450-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. For England: C. Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2002); Claire Walker, “‘Doe Not Supose Me a Well Mortifyed Nun Dead to the World:' Letter-Writing in Early Modern English Convents,” in *Early Modern Women’s Letter Writing, 1450–1700*, ed. James Daybell(Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2001); Marie B. Rowlands, “Recusant Women 1560-1640,” in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1985). Alex Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Laurence Lux-Sterritt, *Redefining Female Religious Life. French Ursulines and English Ladies in Seventeenth-Century Catholicism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice: Enclosed Lives and Broken Vows in the Renaissance Convent* (London: Viking, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Christina Garrett, *The Marian Exiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Both Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism Six Studies* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1996); Clare Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation 1534-61* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003) neglect the role of women. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Patrick Collinson, “The Role of Women in the English Reformation Illustrated by the Life and Friendships of Anne Locke,” in *Godly People*, ed. Patrick Collinson (London: Hambledon Press, 1983); Christine. M. Newman, “The Reformation and Elizabeth Bowes: A Study of a Sixteenth Century Northern Gentlewoman,” in *Women in the Church Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and 1880 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Susan Wabuda, “Shunamites and Nurses of the English Reformation: The Activities of Mary Glover, Niece of Hugh Latimer,” in *Women in the Church Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and 1880 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); 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 (January 2000); Jennifer Higginbotham, “The Exile of Rose Hickman Throckmorton,” *Reformation* 15 (2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Margaret P. Hannay, ed., *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985); Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Melissa Franklin Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England*, *Katherine Willoughby Duchess of Suffolk and Lincolnshire Godly Aristocracy, 1519-1580* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008); Micheline White, *English Women, Religion, and Textual Production, 1500-1625* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Plummer, *Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife*, 214. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. *Ibid*., 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Karant-Nunn argues that in Germany the introduction of pastoral families represented a “radical break” with the Catholic practise of concubinage, Susan C Karant-Nunn, “The Emergence of the Pastoral Family in the German Reformation: The Parsonage as a Site of Socio-Religious Change,” in *The Protestant Clergy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. C. Scott Dixon and Luise Schorn-Schutte (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. See for example: Martin. L. King and Albery Rabil Jr., eds. *Teaching Other Voices, Women and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); Rudolph. K. Markwald and Marilyn Morris Markwald, *Katherine von Bora* (Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 2002); Elsie Anne McKee, *Katharina Schütz Zell. 1. The Life and Thought of a Sixteenth-Century Reformer* (Koln: BRILL, 1999); Ernst Staehelin, *Frau Wibrandis: A Woman in the Time of Reformation* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Merry E. Wiesner, “Nuns, Wives, and Mothers: Women and the Reformation in Germany,” in *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe*, ed. Sherrin Marshall (Blomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Wiesner, “Nuns, Wives, and Mothers: Women and the Reformation in Germany,” 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. H.J. Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, trans. John Vriend and Lyle. D. Bierma (Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Karant-Nunn, “The emergence of the Pastoral Family in the German Reformation,” 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. McLaughlin, “The Making of the Protestant Pastor,” 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. Prior, “Reviled and crucified,”124. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. The traditional role still expected of post-Reformation bishops is discussed in the work of Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate”; Felicity Heal, “The Archbishops of Canterbury and the Practice of Hospitality,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 (1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. Harris first argued for a more feminised definition of politics in Harris, “Women and Politics”; and has continued to develop these ideas in Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*; Harris, “Defining Themselves.” [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. Harris, “Women and Politics,” 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Melissa Franklin Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England, Katherine Willoughby Duchess of Suffolk and Lincolnshire Godly Aristocracy, 1519-1580* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. For letter writing and correspondence networks see: James Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); James Daybell, “Suche Newes as on the Quenes Hye Wayes We Have Mett’: The News and Intelligence Networks of Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury,” in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. James Daybell (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004); Gemma Allen, *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); For patronage and female alliances see: Sharon Kettering, “The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Noblewomen,” *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 4 (December 1989); Susan Frye and Karen Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women’s Alliances in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Amanda E. Herbert, *Female Alliances: Gender, Identity and Friendship in Early Modern Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). For gift giving see: Natalie Zemon Davis, “Beyond the Market: Books as Gifts in Sixteenth-Century France: The Prothero Lecture,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Beyond the Market, 33 (1983); Jane Donaweth, “Women’s Poetry and the Tudor-Stuart System of Gift Exchange,” in *Women, Writing and the Reproduction of Culture*, ed. Mary. E. Burke et al. (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000); Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Heal, “Archbishops of Canterbury.” [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. Christensen, “Merchant Wives, Agency, and Ambivalence in Early Modern Studies.” [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. Felicity Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: A Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate.” [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. Rosemary O’Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London: Routledge, 1986), 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. Phylis Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces 1535-1560,” in *Wealth and Power in Tudor England: Essays Presented to S.T. Bindoff*, ed. E.W. Ives, R.J. Knecht, and J.J. Scarisbrick (London: Athlone Press, 1978). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. *Ibid*., 155–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 138–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. It has been noted that Elizabeth I’s approval of a bill of subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles in 1571, which did explicitly state the legality of clerical marriage, tacitly restored it to a statutory basis Ibid., 133. However, some clerics remained uncomfortable about its lack of statutory status, and the Millenary Petition addressed to James I included a request to restore the Edwardian laws on the marriage of priests. This was granted and from the first year of James I clerical marriage was again specifically authorised by statute. Arthur Cayley Headlam, *The Church of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. Henry C. Lea, *History of sacerdotal celibacy in the Christian Church* (London: Watts, 1932) [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation*; Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation*, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. *Ibid*., 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation,” 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. *Ibid*., 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. Yost, “Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage,” 157; Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. Richard. M. Spielmann, “The Beginnings of Clerical Marriage in the English Reformation: The Reigns of Edward and Mary,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* L.VI, no. 3 (September 1987): 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. *Ibid*., 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
77. For pamphlets see Yost, “Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage,” a number of reformers including Archishop Cranmer and Bishop Hooper were interrogated about their marriages during their trials, John Foxe, *TAMO* (1583 edition) Book 11, 190, 1530 [Accessed: 01.03.11]. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
78. Hastings Robinson, ed. *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846); Hastings Robinson, ed. *The Zurich Letters: Comprising the Correspondence of Several English Bishops and Others, with Some of the Helvetian Reformers, During the Early Part of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Cambridge: University Press, 1845). [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
79. Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*; Robinson, ed. *The Zurich Letters*; John Bruce and T.T. Perowne, eds. *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, Letters Written by and to him...1535 to...1575* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1853); J. Raine, ed. *The Correspondence of Dr Matthew Hutton, Archbishop of York*, Surtees Society 17 (London, 1843). [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
80. Robinson, ed. The Zurich Letters; Robinson, ed. Original Letters. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
81. John Chamberlain, Elizabeth M. Thomson, and A. L. Rowse, eds. *The Chamberlain Letters: A Selection of the Letters of John Chamberlain Concerning Life in England from 1597 to 1626* (London: Murray, 1966); Joanna Moody, ed. *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady, The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby 1599-1605* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
82. Though contemporary printed sources are mentioned at a number of points, this thesis is primarily based on archival material and a comprehensive survey of contemporary printed material has not been conducted. For more information on contemporary literature concerning the polemical debates surrounding clerical marriage see Parish, Clerical marriage and the English Reformation and Yost, “The Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage.” Both works assess the nature and spread of treatises, written in support of clerical marriage, to demonstrate the impact they had on altering contemporary attitudes and the extent to which they can be used to chart changing beliefs. As Yost states, ‘the writings of the reformers in defence of clerical marriage provide the best insight into the conceptual process by which the moral value of matrimony came to replace the ascetic ideal of celibacy.’ Yost, “The Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage,” 153. Parish also notes the significance of the arguments put forward by English reformers in radically changing perceptions of clerical celibacy, asserting that clerical marriage was perceived by them as ‘a vital issue of doctrine and morality which was relevant to almost every Reformation controversy.’ Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation*, 22. Both Yost and Parish mount a challenge to the alternative thesis put forward by Carlson who argued that English reformers were much more ambivalent about the issue of clerical marriage than their continental counterparts, and did not advance radical arguments in support of the same. Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation*, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
83. TNA C3/217/30 (B. Scott v. T. Norton, T. Cranmer, J. Hunne). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
84. For details of the bishops and their wives see Appendix:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
85. 1st Mary, St. 2, c. 2 A.D. 1553, A. Luders et al., eds., *The Statutes of the Realm: From Original Records, Etc. (1101-1713)*, vol. 4. 1547-1624 (London, 1810). [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
86. Plummer, *Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife*, 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
87. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified.” [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
88. *Ibid*., 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
89. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*; This has largely comprised of studies of individual godly women such as Collinson, “Anne Locke”; Newman, “Reformation and Elizabeth Bowes”; Wabuda, “Shunamites and Nurses”; Higginbotham, “Exile of Rose Hickman Throckmorton”; Freeman, “Good Ministrye of Godlye and Vertuouse Women”; The importance of elite women in promoting evangelicalism through patronage and the education of their children has also been recognised Franklin Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
90. The exceptions are Margaret Cranmer and Anne Hooper who have both received biographies in the ODNB, Mary Prior, ‘Margaret Cranmer (d. c.1575),’ *ODNB* [accessed 12 July 2016]; Rachel Basch, ‘Anne Hooper (d. 1555),’ *ODNB* [accessed 12 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
91. Plummer, *Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife*, 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
92. *Ibid*., 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
93. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
94. *Ibid*., 219. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
95. *Ibid*., 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
96. *Ibid*., 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
97. *Ibid*., 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
98. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
99. *Ibid*., 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
100. Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer, "'Partner in His Calamities’: Pastors’ Wives, Married Nuns and the Experience of Clerical Marriage in the Early German Reformation," *Gender and History* 2, vol. 20 (2008): 222–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
101. McKee, *Katharina Schütz Zell. The Life and Thought of a Sixteenth-Century Reformer*; Markwald and Markwald, *Katherine von Bora*; Staehelin, *Frau Wibrandis*. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
102. For details of the polemical treatises written by English clerics see Yost, “Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage.” Both Hooper and Cranmer defended their marriages during their trial proceedings, Cranmer’s trial, John Foxe, *TAMO* (1583 edition) Book 11, 1530 [Accessed: 01.03.11], Hooper’s trial, John Foxe, *TAMO* (1583 edition) Book 11, 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
103. Elsie Anne McKee, *Katharina Schütz Zell: The Writings, a Critical Edition* (BRILL, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
104. Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996), 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
105. *Ibid*., 21–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
106. *Ibid*., 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
107. Prior, ‘Margaret Cranmer (d.c.1575), *ODNB* [accessed 27 Aug 2013], Mary Prior, ‘The marriages of Thomas Cranmer and Margaret Cranmer’ (unpublished manuscript), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
108. Robert. S. Westman, *The Copernican Question: Prognostication, Skepticism and Celestial Order* (London: University of California Press, 2011), 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
109. David Curtis Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings: From Geiler von Kayserberg to Theodore Betz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
110. Jasper Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962), 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
111. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
112. TNA E 154/2/39. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
113. Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer*, 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
114. Matthew Parker, *De antiquitate Britannicae ecclesiae et privilegiis ecclesiae Cantuarensis* (1572), 390–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
115. Prior, ‘Margaret Cranmer (d.c.1575), *ODNB* [accessed 27 Aug 2013]. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
116. Prior, ‘Margaret Cranmer,’ ODNB [accessed 27 Aug 2013], MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 480. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
117. F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, vol. 2 (London: Rivingtons, 1921), 800–804. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
118. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
119. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 480; Prior, ‘The marriages of Thomas Cranmer and Margaret Cranmer’ (unpublished manusctipt), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
120. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
121. John Foxe, *TAMO* (1563 edition) [Accessed: 29.08.2013], Book.5, 1118. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
122. Jules Bonnet, ed. *Letters of John Calvin*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1858), 395. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
123. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
124. D. G. Newcombe, ‘John Hooper (1495x1500–1555),’ *ODNB* [accessed 14 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
125. Letter XXI, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, 27 January 1546, in Hastings Robinson, ed.

     *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846), 34–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
126. Letter XXIII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, no date but presumed to have been written shortly after December 12 1546, in *Ibid*., 40–42. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
127. Letter XXIII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, no date but presumed to have been written shortly after December 12 1546, in *Ibid*., 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
128. Letter XXXI, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, May 3 1549, in *Ibid*., 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
129. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
130. The original letters are held in the State Archives, Zürich, MS letters, StA, E II, 343, 478. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
131. Letter XXXVI, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, December 27 1549, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
132. Letter XL, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, August 1 1551, in *Ibid*., 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
133. Letter XXXVIII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, March 27 1550, in *Ibid*., 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
134. Richard L. Greaves, ‘John Macalpine (d. 1557),*’ ODNB* [accessed 31 July 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
135. Susan Wabuda, ‘Nicholas Shaxton (c.1485–1556),*’* *ODNB* [accessed 30 June 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
136. Plummer, *Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife*, 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
137. John Witte Jr and Robert. N. Kingdon, *Sex, Marriage and Family in John Calvin’s Geneva*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eardman’s Publishing Co., 2005), 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
138. Wibrandis Bucer was the wife of the influential German reformer Martin Bucer. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
139. Letter XXXIII, Miles Coverdale to John Calvin, March 26 1548, in George Pearson, ed. *Remains of Myles Coverdale* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846), 499. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
140. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
141. Letter XXII, Miles Coverdale to Conrad Hubert, Bergzabern, October 3 1554, in *Ibid*., 514. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
142. Margaret Barlow (d.1601) married William Overton (d.1609) who became bishop of Coventry and Litchfield in 1579, Elizabeth Barlow (d.1575) married William Day (d.1596) who became the bishop of Winchester in 1595, after his wife’s death, Anthonine Barlow (d.1598) married William Wickham (d.1595) who became the bishop of Lincoln in 1584 and bishop of Winchester 1594, Anne Barlow (d.1597) married Herbert Westfaling (d.1602) who became bishop of Hereford in 1586, Frances Barlow (d.1629) married Tobie Matthew (d.1628) who became bishop of Durham in 1595 and Archbishop of York in 1606, Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
143. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
144. *Ibid*., 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
145. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
146. TNA PROB 11/18/307. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
147. Plummer, *Priest’s Whore to Pastor’s Wife*, 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
148. 50 and 60 Edward VI c.11, Luders et al., *The Statutes of the Realm*, 4. 1547-1624:146. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
149. Arthur. G. Dickens and Robert Parkyn, “Robert Parkyn’s Narrative of the Reformation,” *The English Historical Review* 62, no. 242 (January 1947): 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
150. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
151. John Hooker, *The Ancient History and Description of the City of Exeter* (Exeter, 1765), 281–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
152. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
153. Margaret Bowker, ‘Henry Holbeach (d. 1551),’ *ODNB* [accessed 6 July 2014], Glanmor Williams, ‘Robert Ferrar (d. 1555),’ *ODNB* [accessed 6 July 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. R Bretton, *Bishop Robert Ferrar*, Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society, (1934), 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. In 1545 Ferrar brought the lease of a piece of land at Reevy, where he was permitted to build a house, in return for providing various services to his landlord. In the document Ferrar is described as “of Hawkeworth,” which has led to the assumption that after leaving the priory of Nostell he resided with Walter Hawkesworth, at Hawkesworth Hall, where he acted as a chaplain and tutor to the children of the household. It has even been suggested that he married a daughter of Walter Hawkesworth, however, no record of him having a child named Elizabeth survives and so it is not possible to confirm this. It is likely that as a member of the lower gentry class himself, and of some means thanks to his pension, Ferrar would have married from this class, *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
156. Andrew J. Brown, *Robert Ferrar: Yorkshire Monk, Reformation Bishop and Martyr in Wales (c.1500-1555)* (London: Inscriptor Imprints, 1997), 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
157. Rev. A. R. Maddison, ed. *Lincolnshire Pedigrees*, vol. 4 (London, 1902). [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
158. TNA PRO, PROB 11/34, sig. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
159. Maddison, *Lincolnshire Pedigrees*, 4:1002–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
160. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
161. LA,Hill/23/2. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
162. CPR *Phillip and Mary Vol 1, 1553-1554,* 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
163. LPL, F I/A p. 345. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
164. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 492. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
165. Ponet published “A defence of the marriage of priests in 1549” John Nichols, ed. *The Diary of Henry Machyn Citizen and Merchant Taylor of London from A.D 1550 to A.D 1563* (London, 1848), 320. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
166. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 493. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
167. Nichols, *Diary of Henry Machyn*, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
168. Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer*, 493. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
169. John Corbet Anderson, *Chronicles of the Parish of Croydon, Surrey: Croydon Old Church: Parish Register; and the Whitgift Charity. 1878* (London, 1878). [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
170. *CPR Edward 1549-1551*, 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
171. Roger Virgoe, ‘William Hammond’, *History of Parliament, 1558-1563* [accessed 15/05/2014] He was also one of the executors of Peter Hayman’s will. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
172. TNA PROB 11/85/351. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
173. Helen Miller, ‘Peter Hayman,’ *History of Parliament*, volume 1509-1558 [accessed 14/04/2014]. Miller describes how in December 1553 when he sued out a general pardon Hayman was referred to as ‘esquire alias gentleman,’ which suggests a legal attainment but no other record of this has been found. Miller also describes how his name has been dropped from a list of commission of sewers, December 1553, and a commission of peace, March 1553. It is not, however, certain at what point he died – with the only evidence of his death the date that his will was proved, 12 October 1554. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
174. TNA PROB 11/37/145. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
175. John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials* (London, 1816), 428. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
176. Parish notes that amongst the higher clergy of the mid-sixteenth century, 'marriage was often indicative of Protestant belief,' although this is harder to identify amongst the lower clergy Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
177. Walter. C. Metcalfe, ed. *The Visitation of Dorsetshire 1565, by William Harvey, Clarenceux King of Arms* (Exeter: William Pollard & co., 1887), 3–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
178. The pedigree for the Ashley family states: Henry Ashley of St Giles Winborne, Esq., eldest son and heir to Hugh, mar. Radigunde, da. To Robert Gilbert of Widcomn, co. Som’set, and by her had issue, HENRY, his eldest son; Anthony, second son; Elizabeth, a nonne of Shaftesbury; Gyles, mar. to Roger Bodenham, Gent.; Dorathe, mar, to John Alye of Gussage St Andrew, co.Dorset, Gent.; Elizabeth, fourth da., first mar. to George Percy of Shaftesbury, after to William Daccombe; Anne, mar. to John Osborne of Fordingbride, co. South’ton, Gent.; Margaret, mar. to John Hawles of Winborne Nuncross co. Dorset, Gent.; and Edithe, *Ibid*., 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
179. *Ibid*. This is reminiscent of the two sisters of Thomas Cranmer, one of whom was a nun whilst the other was strongly evangelical. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
180. Joseph Bettey, *St Augustine’s Abbey and the Manor of Abbots Leigh*, Historic Churches and Church Life in Bristol, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2001, 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
181. TNA PRO, PROB 11/42A, sig. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
182. Arthur. G. Dickens, “The Marriage and Character of Archbishop Holgate,” *The English Historical Review*, 52, no. 207 (July 1937): 432. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
183. Dickens and Parkyn, “Robert Parkyn’s Narrative of the Reformation,” 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
184. *APC*, *1550-1552*, 427. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
185. *APC*, *1550-1552*, 426. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
186. Dickens and Parkyn, “Robert Parkyn’s Narrative of the Reformation,” 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
187. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
188. Dickens, “Marriage and Character of Archbishop Holgate,” 433–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
189. Borth Inst., Cause Papers, CP.G.404. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
190. Dickens, “Marriage and Character of Archbishop Holgate,” 437. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
191. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
192. Borth Inst., Cause Papers, CP.G.404, p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
193. Will of Roger Wentworthe, BI Prob. Ref. 13/790. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
194. Hooker, *The Ancient History and Description of the City of Exeter*, 281–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
195. Letter XXXIII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, June 23 1549, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
196. Letter XXXVIII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, March 27 1550, in *Ibid*., 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
197. Letter XXXVII, John Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, February 5 1550, in *Ibid*., 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
198. James Daybell, “Introduction,” in *Early Modern Women Letter Writing 1450-1700*, ed. James Daybell (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 3–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
199. Letter CCLX, Martin Mirconius to Heinrich Bullinger, May 20 1550, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 562. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
200. Letter XLIX, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, April 3 1551, in *Ibid*., 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
201. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
202. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
203. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
204. Letter L, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, October 27 1551, in *Ibid*., 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
205. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
206. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
207. Foxe, *TAMO* (1563 edition) [Accessed: 29.08.2013], Book.5, 1119. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
208. Foxe, *TAMO* (1563 edition) [Accessed: 29.08.2013], Book.5, 1122. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
209. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
210. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 226. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
211. Foxe, *TAMO* (1563 edition) [Accessed: 29.08.2013], Book.5, 1122. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
212. CCLXV, Martin Micronius to Heinrich Bulllinger, London, August 14 1551, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 574. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
213. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
214. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
215. Heal, “The archbishops of Canterbury and the practice of hospitality,” 553-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
216. LPL, MS 884.. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
217. *CPR Edward 1550-1553*, 7. TNA E 154/2/39. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
218. LPL, MS 884. This is in contrast to the ordinances used by Cranmer’s Elizabethan successor Archbishop Matthew Parker, which although largely identical to Cranmer’s included references to ‘her grace’ and the position of ‘gentleman usher to her grace.’ Although, ‘her grace’ was never the official title of Mrs Parker, the ordinances evidence that she had an established place in the archiepiscopal house and was second in command after her husband, LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
219. TNA C3/217/30 (B. Scott v. T. Norton, T. Cranmer, J. Hunne). [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
220. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
221. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
222. Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer*, 481. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
223. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
224. Hooker, *The Ancient History and Description of the City of Exeter*, 281–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
225. David Daniell, ‘Miles Coverdale(1488–1569),*’ ODNB*, [accessed 13 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
226. Brown, *Robert Ferrar Yorkshire Monk, Reformation Bishop, and Martyr in Wales*, 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
227. John Foxe, *TAMO* (1576 edition) [Accessed: 26.08.2013], Book.5, 1160. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
228. WYA, DB17/C2/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
229. Phylis Hembry, *The Bishop of Bath and Wells 1540-1640* (University of London: The Athlone Press, 1967), 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
230. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
231. *CPR, Edward VI 1547-1548,* 107. Records the grants of land made to hold to ‘the said Thomas archbishop of Canterbury, his heirs and assigns.’ In 1550 Cranmer put the properties in trust for the use of the said archbishop for his life and afterwards to the use of his executors for 20 years and after that to the use of Thomas Cranmere the youngest (natuminimi) and the heirs of his body, with the remainder in default to the said archbishop and his heirs and assigns.’ *CPR, Edward 1549-1551*, 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
232. *APC, 1552-1554*, 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
233. *CPR, Edward VI 1553*, 298. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
234. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
235. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
236. Letter LII Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger *Ibid*., 112–14. Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
237. WYA, DB17/C2/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
238. Andrew J. Brown, *Robert Ferrar*, 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
239. Bretton, *Bishop Robert Ferrar*, 224 [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
240. Many older biographies of Cranmer including Alfred W. Pollard, *Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556* (London: G.P Putnams's Sons, 1905) assert that Margaret fled to Germany, where she married Whitchurch, and this has continued to be repeated by more modern biographers including Jasper Ridley, who states, ‘He [Cranmer] was at least spared the experience of seeing Margaret become a victim of Mary’s government. She escaped to Germany, where she arried Edward Whitchurch, the printer,’ Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer*. In the most recent biography of Cranmer, MacCulloch is more cautious and does not confirm or refute whether Margaret went abroad, stating only that ‘Edward Whitchurch married the widow Margaret Cranmer, at a date which remains uncertain,’ MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 610. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
241. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
242. TNA C3/217/30 (B. Scott v. T. Norton, T. Cranmer, J. Hunne). [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
243. TNA PROB 11/34/30 – reference found in Prior, ‘The marriages of Thomas Cranmer and Margaret Cranmer’ (unpublished manuscript), 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
244. TNA E 154/2/39. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
245. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
246. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
247. Scott Lucas, “‘An Auncient Zelous Gospeller […] Desirous to Do Any Thing to Common Good’: Edward Whitchurch and the Reformist Cause in Marian and Elizabethan England,” *Reformation* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
248. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
249. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
250. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
251. *CPR, Philip and Mary 1556-1558*, 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
252. TNA PROB 11/45/323. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
253. Mary Prior, ‘*Margaret Cranmer,’ ODNB* [accessed 27 Aug 2013]. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
254. Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
255. TNA PROB 11/45/323. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
256. TNA C3/191/68 (M. Whitchurch v. J. Mylne). [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
257. TNA C3/191/68 (M. Whitchurch v. J. Mylne). [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
258. TNA C3/217/30 (B. Scott v. T. Norton, T. Cranmer, J. Hunne). [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
259. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
260. Letter XXVI, John Hooper to Anne Hooper, October 15 1553, in John Hooper, *Later Writings of Bishop Hooper, Together with His Letters and Other Pieces, Etc,* ed. Rev. Charles Nevison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), 578–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
261. *Ibid*, 436. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
262. *Ibid*, 436. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
263. *Ibid*, 437. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
264. Letter LI, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, April 20 1554, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
265. Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
266. Letter LI, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, April 20 1554, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
267. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
268. Letter LII, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, September 22 1554, in *Ibid*., 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
269. Letter LII Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger *Ibid*., 112–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
270. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
271. Letter LI, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, April 20 1554, in *Ibid*., 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
272. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
273. Letter LII, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, September 22 1554, in *Ibid*., 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
274. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
275. Letter LII, Anne Hooper to Heinrich Bullinger, April 11 1555, in *Ibid*., 114–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
276. *Ibid*., 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
277. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
278. Stephen Hyde Cassoan, *The Lives of the Bishops of Winchester*, vol. 2 (London: Rivington & co, 1827), 56–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
279. Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1996), Appendix 2, 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
280. Pettegree particularly highlights Emden’s value as a model for other reformed churches and a major printing centre of exile literature; see Chapter 1 “The English Church at Emden” Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
281. *Ibid*., 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
282. *Ibid*., Appendix 2, 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
283. *Ibid*., 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
284. Cassoan, *The Lives of the Bishops of Winchester*, 2:56–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
285. John Foxe, *TAMO* (1576 edition) [Accessed: 29.08.2013], Book.11, 1483. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
286. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
287. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
288. *APC, 1554-1556.* [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
289. Daniell, ‘Miles Coverdale,’ *ODNB*, [accessed 13 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
290. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
291. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
292. Daniell, ‘Miles Coverdale,’ *ODNB*, [accessed 13 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
293. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
294. In relation to his second marriage to Wibrandis Rosenblatt, Bucer stated that 'whilst I am past the age suited to marriage, I have nevertheless, in view of my circumstances and office, decided to follow the advice of my brothers and marry the widow of Capito.' Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
295. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
296. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
297. Letter LV, John Ponet to Heinrich Bullinger, April 14 1556, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
298. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
299. This matter was investigated by the Council of Strasburg, who sought to establish the cause of the fire, and what if any compensation Ponet may be entitled to. The records of the town are printed in Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
300. TNA PROB 11/85/351. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
301. Letter LVII, Maria Ponet to Peter Martyr, July 15 1557, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
302. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
303. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
304. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
305. W. Bruce Bannerman, ed. *The Visitations of Kent Taken in the Years 1530-1 by Thomas Benolte Clarenceux and 1574 by Robert Cooke Clarenceux*, Part 1 (London, 1923). [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
306. TNA PROB 11/85/351. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
307. Arthur. G. Dickens, “Holgate’s Apology,” *The English Historical Review*, 56, no. 223 (July 1941): 454. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
308. *Ibid*., 294. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
309. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
310. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
311. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
312. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
313. Dickens, “Holgate’s Apology,” 452. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
314. Dickens, “Marriage and Character of Archbishop Holgate,” 434. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
315. H. L. Parish, ‘Robert Holgate (1481/2–1555),*’ ODNB*, [accessed 13 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
316. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
317. J. H. Bettey, ‘Paul Bush (1489/90–1558)*,’ ODNB*, [accessed 4 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
318. Spielmann, “Beginnings of Clerical Marriage,” 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
319. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
320. *Ibid*., 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
321. TNA PRO, PROB 11/42A, sig. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
322. John Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey and Cathedral Church of Bristol : Illustrated by a Series of Engravings of Views, Elevations, Plans, and Details of That Edifice : With Biographical Anecdotes of Eminent Persons Connected with the Establishment* (London: M.A. Nattali, 1836), 61. The monument to Edith is no longer visible but Britton describes the location of the two monuments as follows: ‘At the east end of the north aisle is a low altar tomb, which supports an emaciated figure of Bishop Bush, who died in 1558. The head rests upon a mitre, and by his right side is a crozier. Over each of the pillars is a shield bearing arms. Round the base and cornice of the monument is an inscription. One a grave-stone, below the altar steps, is inscribed, Of your charity pray for the soul of Edithe Busshe, otherwyse called Ashley, who deceased the 8th day of Oct. A.D. 1553.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
323. *CPR, Phillip and Mary 1555-1556*, 410. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
324. TNA PRO, PROB 11/42A, sig. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
325. Prior negatively compares the role of bishops’ wives in exile to other Protestant women who remained in England and who she argues played “an active part” during Mary’s reign. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
326. Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
327. Letter XLIX, Dr Edmund Sandys to Matthew Parker, 30 April 1559, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
328. See for example Patrick Collinson, “Windows into a Woman’s Soul: Questions about the Religion of Queen Elizabeth I,” in *Elizabethan Essays*, ed. Patrick Collinson (London: Hambledon, 1994); Susan Doran, “Elizabeth I’s Religion: The Evidence of Her Letters,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* , no. 4 (October 2000): 699–720, ; Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I*  (London: Longman, 1998); William P. Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation. The struggle for a stable settlement of religion.* (Cambridge: University Press, 1968); Norman L. Jones, *The Birth of the Elizabethan Age: England in the 1560s*(Blackwell, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
329. Peter Marshall, *Reformation England 1480-1642* (London: Arnold, 2003), 117. Summarising the recent developments in the historiographical debate Marshall states that ‘few historians of the English Reformation would now seriously wish to portray the English Settlement as a halfway house between Protestantism and Catholicism, which was the argument put forward most strongly by J.E. Neale, “The Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity,” *English Historical Review,* 65 (1950); J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, *1559-1581* (London: St Martin's Press, 1953). [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
330. The first is suggested in Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993) and John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988) whilst Diarmaid MacCulloch believes that Elizabeth was an old fashioned ‘evangelical’ in the manner of her step-mother Catherin Parr, Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999), 186-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
331. Eric Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation.”*Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 31, (January, 1992) Carlson believes that Elizabeth I was not fundamentally opposed to clerical marriage, but adopted a cautious attitude to protect the church from scandal, a view which is supported by Brett Usher in, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” in *The Myth of Elizabeth,* eds. Susan Doran and Thomas S Freeman (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). This interpretation has been accepted in the recently published edition of Elizabeth Goldring et al., eds., *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources*, vol. II 1572-1578 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) which states "Carlson has convincingly demonstrated that the Queen had no objection to clerical marriage (her objection being for the maintenance of decorum through the choice of suitable wives), ii, 55(n) . [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
332. Nancy Basler Bjorklund, “A godly wife is an helper: Matthew Parker and the defence of clerical marriage.” *Sixteenth Century Journal* vol 34, no.2 (Summer, 2003), 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
333. John Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker* (London, 1711), 511. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
334. See appendix 3 and 4 for full information on the number and timing of married bishops’ appointments, and the spread of married bishops across the dioceses. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
335. The Act of Exchange and its impact on church finances is discussed in detail by Felicity Heal, “The Tudors and Church Lands: Economic Problems of the Bishopric of Ely during the Sixteenth Century,” *Economic History Review* 26, 2. (1973): 198–217; Heal, “Economic Problems”; Felicity Heal, “The Bishops and the Act of Exchange of 1559,” *The Historical Journal* 17, no. 2 (June 1974). [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
336. Heal, “Economic Problems,” 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
337. Joel Berlatsky, “Marriage and Family in a Tudor Elite: Familia Patterns of Elizabethan Bishops,” *Journal of Family History* 3:6 (1978): 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
338. Cranmer had written to Calvin, Bullinger and Melanchthon in 1552 inviting them to an international council in England, Carrie Euler, *Couriers of the Gospel* (Zurich: TVZ, 2006), 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
339. Letter CVII, William Cecil to Archbishop Parker, 12 August 1561, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 148–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
340. Letter XLIX, Dr Edmund Sandys to Matthew Parker, 30 April 1559, *Ibid*., 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
341. Parish, *Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation*, 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
342. Bridget Duckenfield, *College Cloisters - Married Bachelors* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 197. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
343. Letter CVII, William Cecil to Archbishop Parker, 12 August 1561, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 148–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
344. Letter CV, Order of Queen Elizabeth prohibiting the residence of women in colleges, 9 August 1561, in *Ibid*., 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
345. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
346. Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation,” 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
347. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
348. Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
349. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
350. Carlson, “Clerical Marriage and the English Reformation,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
351. Letter CIX, Bishop Cox of Ely to Archbishop Matthew Parker, August 1561, in Bruce and Perowne, (eds.) *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 151–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
352. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
353. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
354. Letter CXIV, Archbishop Parker to William Cecil, 1561, in Bruce and Perowne, (eds.) *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 156–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
355. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
356. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
357. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
358. Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London: Longmans, Green, 1938), 300. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
359. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
360. The sixteen does not include Edmund Allen, who though married and issued with the congé d'élire for the diocese of Rochester in 1559, died just a month afterwards and was never consecrated. He was replaced with the unmarried Edmund Guest. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
361. This included allegedly pulling down the tomb of St Cuthbert in the cloister garth, destroying some stained glass windows illustrating Cuthbert's miracles, and breaking up the Corpus Christi shrine in St Nicholas's Church with his own feet. Ralph Houlbrooke, ‘Horne, Robert (1513x15–1579), *ODNB*, [accessed 13 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
362. Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, 300. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
363. Letter XCVIII, Henry Bullinger to Bishop Sandys, Zurich, March 10 1574, in Robinson, ed. *The Zurich Letters*, 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
364. Letter LXI ,Bishop Horn to Henry Bullinger, Winchester, Dec. 13 1563, in *Ibid*., 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
365. Letter 8. To Rudolp Gwalther, in R.A. Houlbrooke, ed. *The Letter Book of John Parkhurst Bishop of Norwich, Compiled during the Years 1571-5* (Norfolk Record Society, 1947), 64–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
366. Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, 125; Philip M. J. McNair, “Peter Martyr in England,” in *Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform: And Italian Reform*, ed. Joseph McLelland (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press, 1980), 96–99. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
367. Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, 125; McNair, “Peter Martyr in England,” 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
368. CCC., MS 168, R. Cox, diary. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
369. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
370. Henry Cotton’s second wife brought him a dowry of £700, Julian Lock, ‘Henry Cotton (c.1545–1615), *bishop of Salisbury, ODNB* [accessed 13 July 2016], whilst John Still, Matthew Hutton, Thomas Young and Richard Flether also married into money second time around. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
371. Selderhuis, *Marriage and Divorce in the Thought of Martin Bucer*, 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
372. TNA PRO SP 12/48/64 Richard Cox to Cecil. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
373. LPL, MS 739, fol. 5*r.* [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
374. Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
375. 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 Reformation*, eds. Julie. A. Chappell and Kayley. A. Kramer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) The letters are not included in the Zurich letters or the printed edition of Parkhurst’s correspondence. . [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
376. J. Parkhurst, *Ludicra sieu Epigrammata iuuenilia* (London, 17573), 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
377. *Ibid.,* 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
378. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
379. John Jewel to Parkhurst, 28 June 1553, in Houlbrooke, ed. *Letter Book of John Parkhurst*, 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
380. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
381. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
382. Letter XII, John Parkhurst to Henry Bullinger, London, May 21 1559, in Robinson, ed. *The Zurich Letters*, 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
383. Letter LXV Bishop Parkhurst to Henry Bullinger, Ludham, Aug 18 1565, in *Ibid*., 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
384. Letter LIX, Bishop Parkhurst to Henry Bullinger, Ludham, August 13 1563, in *Ibid*., 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
385. Margareta Parkhurst to Heinrich Bullinger, Ludham, 14 May 1561, Zurich StA, E II 375, 648. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
386. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
387. Margareta Parkhurst to Heinrich Bullinger, Ludham, 24 April 1562, Zurich StA, E II 375, 647. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
388. Margareta Parkhurst to Heinrich Bullinger, Ludham, 30 May 1562, Zurich SrA, E II 377, 2322. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
389. Rosemary O'Day, ‘Thomas Bentham (1513/14–1579),*’ ODNB*, [accessed 8 April 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
390. Will of Ciceley Sandys, TNA PROB 11/117/140. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
391. Ibid., 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
392. Pilkington’s will is printed in James Scholefield, ed. *The Works of James Pilkington, B.D., Lord Bishop of Durham* (Cambridge: Printed at the University Press, 1842), xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
393. William Hutchinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (S. Hodgson & Robinsons, 1785), 452. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
394. David Marcombe, ‘James Pilkington (1520–1576)*,’ ODNB*, [ accessed 8 July 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
395. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
396. Will of Gilbert Berkeley TNA PROB 11/63/580. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
397. John Fines, ‘Gilbert Berkeley (*d.* 1581),’ *ODNB,* [accessed 10 July 2015]. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
398. f. 92, [102] To my Lord of Bathe [Gilbert Berkley] Houlbrooke, ed. *Letter Book of John Parkhurst*, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
399. Will of John Rugge TNA PROB 11/64/89. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
400. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
401. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
402. *Ibid*., 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
403. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
404. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 306. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
405. Alan Bryson, ‘Sir John Cheke (1514–1557),’ *ODNB,* [accessed 10 July 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
406. Spencer Cecil Carpenter, *The Church in England 597-1688* (London: John Murray, 1954), 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
407. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
408. As Ryrie states this practice was common amongst later Puritans who were uncomfortable with the use of non-Biblical saints names and so drew on names from the Old Testament Alec Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stuart Realms 1485-1603* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
409. John Hooker, *A Catalog of the Bishops of Excester with the Description of the Antiquitie and First Foundation of the Cathedrall Church of the Same. Collected by IohnVowell Alias Hoker, Gentleman* (London, 1584), 46.  [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
410. CALS, EDC 5/1583/68. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
411. TNA SP 12/28 f.127.   [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
412. TNA SP 10/18 f.1.    [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
413. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
414. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
415. TNA SP 12/28 f.127.   [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
416. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
417. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
418. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
419. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
420. *Ibid*.   [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
421. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
422. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
423. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
424. TNA SP 12/28 f.135. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
425. TNA SP 12/28 f.129.    [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
426. TNA SP 12/28 f.141.  [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
427. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
428. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
429. [Lord North to the Bishop of Ely, 20 November 1575*, Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury,* Vol. 2. (1572-1582).](http://go.galegroup.com.chain.kent.ac.uk/mss/retrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DA-ASC-SORT&inPS=true&prodId=SPOL&userGroupName=uokent&tabID=T001&searchId=R3&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&contentSegment=&searchType=BasicSearchForm&currentPosition=4&contentSet=GALE%7CMC4305300344&&docId=GALE|MC4305300344&docType=GALE&viewtype=Calendar) [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
430. TNA SP 12/28 f.151.    [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
431. *Ibid.*   [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
432. Letter LXXV, Bishops Grindal and Horn to Henry Bullinger and Rodoloph Gualter, London, February 6 1567, in Robinson, ed. *The Zurich Letters*, 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
433. LPL, [MS.3206](http://archives.lambethpalacelibrary.org.uk/CalmView/TreeBrowse.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&field=RefNo&key=MSS%2f3192-3206%2f3206). [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
434. Julian Lock, ‘Nicholas Bullingham, (1511?–1576),’ *ODNB* [accessed 18 July 2016]; Margaret Clark, ‘John Best, John (d. 1570),’ *ODNB,* [accessed 18 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
435. *APC,* *Elizabeth I 1580-1581*, 225.    [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
436. *Ibid*.    [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
437. Berlatsky, “Marriage and Family,” 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
438. For details see appendix 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
439. Letter XXXVI, Bishop Ridley to Dr Matthew Parker, 25th July 1551, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
440. Harris, “Women and Politics,” 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
441. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
442. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate”; Heal, “Archbishops of Canterbury.” [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
443. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 159–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
444. *Ibid*., 155–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
445. *Ibid*., 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
446. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
447. Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
448. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
449. Houlbrooke, ed. *Letter Book of John Parkhurst*, 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
450. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate,” 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
451. See appendix two for details of the wives of the seventy three bishops, and appendix 5 for a graph showing the distribution of married bishops between 1559 and 1625. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
452. Borthwick Institute, Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew, Prerogative oversize wills, 10 April 1628. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
453. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate”; Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces.” [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
454. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate.” [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
455. *Ibid*., 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
456. *Ibid*., 117–18. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
457. J. F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
458. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate,” 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
459. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
460. Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
461. [Matthew Parker] William Sandys, ed., “Copy of the Inventory of Archbishop Parker’s Goods at the Time of His Death,” *Archaeologia* 30 (January 1844)., [Tobie Matthew] Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew., [Richard Cox] Gonville and Caius College MS 53/30., [John Parkhurst] TNA E135/25/31., [John May]Cumbria Archives PROB/1598/INVX70. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
462. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate,” 116; Vivienne Sanders, “The Household of Archbishop Parker and the Influencing of Public Opinion,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 34 (1983): 544. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
463. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
464. Henry Summerson, ‘John May (d. 1598),’ *ODNB* [accessed 18 June 2016], Cumbria Archives PROB/1598/INVX70. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
465. LPL, [MS 3470](http://archives.lambethpalacelibrary.org.uk/CalmView/TreeBrowse.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&field=RefNo&key=MSS%2f3470-3533%2f3470), Tobie Matthew to Archbishop Whitgift, 21 November, 1597. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
466. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
467. Summerson states that ‘the inventory of his goods taken at Rose Castle immediately after his death suggests that he may not have been quite as impoverished as his will implies, but its record of mostly old and shabby clothes and furnishings hardly points to riches either,’ Summerson, ‘John May,’ *ODNB* [accessed 18 June 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
468. Cumbria Archives, PROB/1598/INVX70. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
469. Richard W. Hoyle, *Custom, Improvement and the Landscape in Early Modern Britain* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 265, Summerson, ‘John May,’ *ODNB* [accessed 18 June 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
470. TNA SP 12/28 f.127.   [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
471. Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
472. Richard Phillips Shilton, *The History of Southwell, in the County of Nottinghamshire, Its Hamlets and Vicinage, ...* (London: S.& J. Ridge, 1818), 72-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
473. Alden Gregory, “Knole: An Architectural and Social History of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s House, 1456-1538,” (PhD diss, University of Sussex, 2010), 212. It is important to note that Knole had been purchased by the Archbishops of Canterbury and had not been initially constructed as a bishop’s palace. Whilst many of the major residences of the bishops included both Southwell and Auckland Castle dated back to the medieval period, and would therefore have not have been designed to accommodate women and children, it is possible that some of the more minor residences may have originally been in secular use and would therefore perhaps have had existing female quarters which would have been repurposed as opposed to being completely new innovations. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
474. Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
475. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
476. Sandys, “Inventory of Archbishop Parker’s Goods,” Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
477. Will of William James, TNA PROB 11/129/689. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
478. Andrew Foster, “Richard Neile, Dean of Westminster 1605-1610: Home-Grown Talent Makes Its Mark,” in *Westminster Abbey Reformed, 1540-1640*, ed. R. Mortimer and C. S. Knighton (Aldershot, 2003), 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
479. TNA E 154/2/39. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
480. Gonville and Caius College, MS 53/30. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
481. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
482. Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
483. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
484. Alan Stewart, “The Early Modern Closet Discovered,” Representations, no. 50 (Spring 1995): 81–83. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
485. Borth. Inst.*,* Inventory of the goods of Archbishop Tobie Matthew. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
486. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
487. BL, Lansdowne Vol/8 f.212, The Bp. Of Durham to Sir Wm. Cecill; Staffs RO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
488. TNA E135/25/31. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
489. Peter Marshall, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
490. Archbishop Parker's portrait collection at Lambeth Palace included pictures of important religious figures and reformers, statesmen, Kings and Queens of England and continental royalty Sandys, “Inventory of Archbishop Parker’s Goods,” 1–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
491. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
492. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
493. ***A defence of priestes mariages, stablysshed by the imperiall lawes of the realme of Englande, agaynst a civilian, naming hymselfe Thomas Martin ...,* (**London: Richarde Jugge, 1567), 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
494. Berlatsky, “The Elizabethan Episcopate,” 121–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
495. Letter CXLVIII, Archbishop Parker to Sir William Cecil, 20 September 1563, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
496. Chamberlain, Thomson, and Rowse, eds. *The Chamberlain Letters*, 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
497. Houlbrooke, ed. *Letter Book of John Parkhurst*, 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
498. Letter CXXIX, Queen Elizabeth to Archbishop Parker, in Bruce and Perowne, eds.

     *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 175; Staffs RO D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
499. Houlbrooke, ed. *Letter Book of John Parkhurst*, 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
500. Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 194 [n]. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
501. Michael Tillbrook, ‘William James (1542–1617),’ *ODNB* [accessed 7 March 2016] [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
502. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 139; Usher, “Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop,” 205; Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
503. Many of Parker’s biographers have noted how essential Margaret appears to have been to Parker’s ability to carry out his heavy responsibilities, with Nancy Bjorkland in particular highlighting the strength of their marriage and Margaret’s supportive role Nancy Basler Bjorkland, “‘A Godly Wyfe Is an Helper: Matthew Parker and the Defense of Clerical Marriage,’” The Sixteenth Century Journal 34, no. 2 (2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
504. Letter XXXVI, Bishop Ridley to Dr Matthew Parker, 25 July 1551, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
505. Letter XLIX, Dr Edmund Sandys to Matthew Parker, 30th April 1559, in *Ibid*., 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
506. Strype, *The life and acts of Matthew Parker,* 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
507. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
508. R. Emmet McLaughlin, “The Making of the Protestant Pastor: The Theological Foundations of a Clerical Estate,” in *The Protestant Clergy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. C. Scott Dixon and Luise Schorn-Schutte (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
509. Bjorkland, “A Godly Wyfe,”349.Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 65; O’Day, *Women’s Agency in Early Modern Britain and the American Colonies*, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
510. ***A defence of priestes mariages, stablysshed by the imperiall lawes of the realme of Englande, agaynst a civilian, naming hymselfe Thomas Martin ...,* (**London: Richarde Jugge, 1567), 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
511. LPL, MS 1072. The title page records ‘Archbishop Parker’s regulations of the officers of the Archbishop of Canterbury belonging to his Palace at Lambeth.’ Although this title is supplied in an eighteenth century hand, it has been assumed that it was added when the book was rebound in 1784 and was taken directly from the original covers which were discarded. There is no attribution to Parker in the text, although its provenance can be corroborated by Ducarel’s transcription of the manuscript in his history of Lambeth palace, printed in 1763, before the book was rebound. Andrew Coltee Ducarel, *The History and Antiquities of the Archiepiscopal Palace of Lambeth, from its foundation to the present time. [With plates.]* (London: J. Nichols,1785). [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
512. The earlier set of ordinances known to have been used by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer are LPL, MS 884, Household ordinances of the Archbishops of Canterbury. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
513. CCC MS. 114a: *Matthew Parker's Correspondence*, Volume 1, MS. 114a, Letter from B. Skewit to Mrs. Parker, dated from the court, May 30. 361-366. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
514. Sir John Harrington, *A briefe view of the state of the Church of England as it stood in Q. Elizabeths and King James his reigne, to the yeere 1609 being a character and history of the bishops of those times.* London, 1653. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
515. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
516. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 64; the household role of elite women is also discussed in Sara Mendelson, “Women and Work,” in *A Companion to Early Modern Women’s Writing* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2002), 70–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
517. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 65; O’Day, *Women’s Agency in Early Modern Britain and the American Colonies*, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
518. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
519. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
520. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
521. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
522. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
523. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
524. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
525. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
526. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
527. Diane Willen, “Women and Religion in Early Modern England,” in *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe*, ed. Sherrin Marshall (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989), 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
528. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
529. Crawford, *Women and Religion*, 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
530. *Ibid*., 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
531. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
532. *Ibid*., 96–97. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
533. LPL, MS 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
534. NRO, DN/HAR 3/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
535. Andrew Foster, “Richard Neile, Dean of Westminster 1605-1610,” in *Westminster Abbey Reformed 1540-1640*, ed. C. S. Knighton and R Mortimer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
536. *Ibid*. Dorothy Neile was left gifts by several of Neile’s former chaplains including Richard Butler, John Buckeridge, and Augustine Lindsell. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
537. Archbishop Parker followed Bucer’s lead and argued that ‘not only was compulsory clerical celibacy damaging to the church, but it also denied clergy the practical benefits of marriage, particularly in their fulfilment of the obligation to hospitality,’Helen Parish, *Clerical Celibacy in the West: c.1100-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013), 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
538. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
539. Heal, “Archbishops of Canterbury,” 562. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
540. *Ibid*., 556. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
541. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 306. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
542. Letter CXXIII, Archbishop Parker to Sir William Cecil, 28 October 1562, in Bruce and Perowne, eds. *Correspondence Matthew Parker*, 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
543. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 270. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
544. *Ibid*., 271. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
545. Strype, *The life and acts of Matthew Parker,* 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
546. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
547. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
548. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
549. Goldring et al., *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources*; John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, His Royal Consort, Family and Court: Collected from Original Manuscripts, ..., Comprising Forty Masques and Entertainments, Ten Civic Pageants, Numerous Original Letters, and Annotated Lists of the Peers, ... Who Received Those Honours During the Reign of King James : Illustrated with Notes, ...* (London, 1828). [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
550. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 158. Hembry notes that in 1573 alone Elizabeth I visited Farnham, Canterbury, Croydon, and Hartlebury. She also visited minor episcopal homes including Bishop Cox at Longstandon in 1564 and 1578, and Bishop Aylmer in Much Hadham, where she held a privy council meeting. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
551. Jerusha. D. Richardson, *Women of the Church*, (Chapman and Hall: 1908), 42,; Raine, ed. *The Correspondence of Dr Matthew Hutton*, 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
552. TNA SP 12/28 f.135. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
553. Raine, *The Correspondence of Dr Matthew Hutton*, 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
554. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
555. *Ibid*., 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
556. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
557. Harris, “Women and Politics”; Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
558. Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England*, 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
559. Allen, *The Cooke Sisters*; Allen, *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
560. Caroline M. K. Bowden, ‘Mildred, Lady Burghley Cecil [Cooke], (1526–1589),’ ODNB [accessed 24 June 2015].  [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
561. Allen, *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
562. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
563. Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
564. See for example CCC MS. 114a: *Matthew Parker's Correspondence*, Volume 1, Letter from Robert Sidney to Matthew Parker, 3 March 1567 [letter from Sir Robert Sidney, desiring the archbishop to grant his son Philip Sidney, a licence to eat flesh in lent], 553, and Letter from Francis Russell to Matthew Parker, 20 June 1560 [letter from the earl of Bedford, requesting a dispensation for the son of Robert Fulford, a student of Oxford], 215-218 [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
565. CCC MS. 114a, Letter from B. Skewit to Mrs. Parker, dated from the court, May 30, 361-366. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
566. CCC MS. 114a, 361-366. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
567. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
568. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
569. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
570. Daybell, “Suche Newes as on the Quenes Hye Wayes We Have Mett’: The News and Intelligence Networks of Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury,” 127; Allen, *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon*, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
571. CCC MS. 114a, 361-366. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
572. SRO, D1287/18/2, P399/7, Bishop Bridgeman (at Wigan) to John Leigh, vicar of Budworth, 18 Dec. 1622. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
573. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
574. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
575. Robert Aspland, *The Christian reformer: or, Unitarian magazine and review*, volume 9, (London, 1842), 643. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
576. TNA SP 15/25, f.205. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
577. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
578. In Trollope’s novel, the Barchester Towers (1847) Mrs Proudie is the wife of an evangelical bishop, brought in to replace the high church bishop of the fictional cathedral town of Barchester. She is widely thought to exercise an undue influence on her husband. Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers* (London, 1857). [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
579. Francis Bunny, *An exposition of the Lordes praier wherein are delivered necessary lessons for all Christians to learne and practise when they will pray: by Fraunces Bunny sometime fellow of Magdalen colledge in Oxforde*, 1602. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
580. William J. Shiels, ‘Francis Bunny (1543-1617),’ *ODNB* [accessed 01 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
581. Wiesner, *Women and Gender,* 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
582. Bunny, *An exposition of the Lordes praier*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
583. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
584. Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England*, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
585. The relationship between Bess of Hardwick and her steward and the rhetorical techniques she used to exert her position as mistress of the household in her letters are examined in Felicity Maxwell, “Enacting Mistress and Steward Roles in a Letter of Household Management: Bess of Hardwick to Francis Whitfield, 14 November 1552" Vol. 4, No. 1 (Autumn, 2012), *Lives & Letters: A Journal for Early Modern Archival Research* 4, no. 1 (Autumn 2012) In total there are twenty nine surviving letters between Bess and her servants which allow for a more detailed picture of her role and responsibilities to be established ,*Bess of Hardwick’s Letters: The Complete Correspondence, c.1550-1608*, ed. by Alison Wiggins, Alan Bryson, Daniel Starza Smith, Anke Timmermann and Graham Williams, University of Glasgow, web development by Katherine Rogers, University of Sheffield Humanities Research Institute (April 2013), [31.05.2016], http://www.bessofhardwick.org . [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
586. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
587. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
588. TNA SP 12/120, f.105. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
589. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
590. NRO, DN/HAR 3/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
591. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
592. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
593. Charles Cornwallis was a courtier and diplomat, who had been the resident ambassador to Spain, Chris R. Kyle, ‘Sir Charles Cornwallis (c.1555-1629),’ *ODNB* [accessed 15 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
594. NRO, DN/HAR 3/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
595. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
596. TNA C 2/Eliz/B14/11. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
597. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
598. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
599. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
600. Karant-Nunn, “Emergence of the Pastoral Family,” 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
601. Katherine. O. Acheson, ed. *The Diary of Anne Clifford 1616-1619* (New York & London: New York & London Garland Publishing, 1995), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
602. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
603. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
604. *Ibid*., 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
605. See appendix 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
606. See Appendix 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
607. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
608. Merritt, *Social World of Early Modern Westminster*, 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
609. Merritt states this pattern can increasingly be seen amongst the gentry and aristocracy from the late sixteenth century onwards, and attributes this change to the fact that the court became more London-orientated, parliaments were held more frequently, particularly during the Jacobean period, and the advent of coaches encouraged more people to travel to London with their whole family and stay for longer periods of time. *Ibid*., 140–41. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
610. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
611. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified”; Berlatsky, “Marriage and Family.” [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
612. David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 150. [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
613. *Ibid*., 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
614. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
615. Edmund Venables, *Family Register of Bishop Nicholas Bullingham*, vol. 2, part 4 (Lincolnshire Notes and Queries, 1890), 98–103. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
616. Venables, *Family Register of Bishop Nicholas Bullingham,* 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
617. The Will of Joyce Dighton in Rev. A. R. Maddison, ed., *Lincolnshire Wills 1500-1600* (Lincoln, 1888), 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
618. The Will of Joyce Dighton, *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
619. As Kaplan states, ‘religious obligations and secular commitments were difficult to disentangle in early modern culture. Honor, loyalty, friendship, affection, kinship, civic duty, devotion to the common weal: these bonds had themselves a sacred character that might reinforce or complicate a person’s confessional allegiance.’ Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 9. Alex Walsham has also argued that at the local level, neighbourliness and local structures of power could disrupt the state’s attempt to enforce religious conformity, with local elites sometimes unwilling or unable to take action. She states that, ‘there was always potential for a significant gulf between the letter of the laws against religious deviance and the situation at the grass roots,’ with the measures enacted by the state to persecute non-conformity necessarily ‘filered through the sieve of local interests and priorities,’ of the pople who were supposed to enforce them. Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
620. Confusingly this does not seem to have been a relation of Joice Dighton – but to have been a member of the Worcester branch of the Dighton family, Venables, *Family Register of Bishop Nicholas Bullingham,* 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
621. LPL, MS 739, fol. 5*r.* [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
622. Lock states that despite Bullingham’s exile his Lincolnshire interests were not wholly neglected ‘for although he had to abandon his house in the cathedral close on deprivation, somebody negotiated a lease for him on another one in 1556,’ Julian Lock, ‘Nicholas Bullingham (1511?-1575)*, ODNB* [accessed 15 March 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
623. In December 1558 Francis Ayscough appealed to the privy council that Bullingham should be reinstated to the Archdeaconry his deprivation for marriage having led to his ‘utter undoing’ TNA PRO, SP 12/1/46. Although he was not initially absent from lists of potential bishops, his strong Lincolnshire connections may have been a consideration in his nomination – with the scale and reduced financial state of the diocese potentially making it difficult for an outsider. After his nomination twelve Lincolnshire gentlemen stood as security for his first fruits, Lock, ‘Nicholas Bullingham,’ *OBNB* [accessed 31 May 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
624. Venables, *Family Register of Bishop Nicholas Bullingham*, 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
625. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
626. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
627. Venables, *Family Register of Bishop Nicholas Bullingham*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
628. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, xvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
629. Claire Cross, ‘Katherine Hastings, countess of Huntingdon (c.1538–1620),’ *ODNB*, [accessed 5 Jan 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
630. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, xvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
631. York Minster Library, MS ADD 322. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
632. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
633. Helen Ostovich and Elizabeth Sauer, eds., *Reading Early Modern Women* (London: Routledge, 2004), 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
634. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
635. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
636. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
637. Margaret. P. Hannay, Noel. J. Kinnamon, and Michael. F. Brannan, eds. *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert the Countess of Pembroke*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 253 Although Sir Toby Matthew became a staunch Catholic he maintained literary friendships with English Protestants, exchanging manuscripts with amongst others the Countess of Pembroke. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
638. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
639. M.W. Helms and E.R. Edward, “Humphrey Edward Orme (1620-71), of Peterborough, Northants,” in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1660-1690*, ed. B.D. Henning, 1983. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
640. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
641. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
642. Robert Bennet, bishop of Hereford (d.1617 ) laid down in his will that his tomb was to be erected ‘in the church of the choir, behind the seat of his wife’ Will of Robert Bennet, TNA PROB 11/130/701. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
643. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
644. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
645. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
646. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
647. Berlatsky, “Marriage and Family.” [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
648. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
649. Frances Hutton was the third wife of Archbishop Matthew Hutton *Ibid*., 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
650. BL, Thoresby Papers, Vol.1 (ff. 309), Tobias Matthew, Bishop of Durham, afterwards Archbishop of York: Letter to Sir T. P. Hoby, 1614. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
651. A. H. Matthew, ed., *A True Historical Relation of the Conversion of Sir Tobie Matthew* (London, 1904). [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
652. Acheson, *Diary of Anne Clifford*, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
653. Brett Usher, ‘John Thornborough (1551?–1641)*, ODNB*, [accessed 7 Jan 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
654. David Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (Oxford: Routledge, 1993), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
655. *CSP James I, 1611-1618*, 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
656. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
657. Lindley, *Trials of Frances Howard*, 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
658. Letter CCLX, Martin Mirconius to Heinrich Bullinger, May 20 1550, in Robinson, ed. *Original Letters*, 562. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
659. LPL, E1440.P2, *The whole Psalter translated into English Metre which contayneth an hundred and fifty Psalmes* (London: John Dayes, 1567?) [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
660. The former Countess of Shrewsbury, Getrude Talbot, died in January 1567, which makes it more likely that it was Bess of Hardwick. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
661. Harris, “Women and Politics,” 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
662. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
663. Donaweth, “Women’s Poetry,” 8. See also Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts*. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
664. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
665. Zemon Davis, “Beyond the Market: Books as Gifts in Sixteenth-Century France: The Prothero Lecture,” 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
666. CCC MS. 114a, Letter from George Talbot to Matthew Parker, 26 April 1568 [letter from the earl of Shrewsbury recommending parson Wickless to the archbishop], 151-152, Letter from Elizabeth Talbot to Matthew Parker, 6 May 1568 [letter from the countess of Shrewsbury, recommending Martyne Nelson to be presented to the vicarage of Tatryke in Richmondshyre], 153-154. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
667. Moody, *Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady*, 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
668. *Ibid*., 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
669. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
670. Letter 370, Sir John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, London, February 3 1621, in John Chamberlain, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The American philosophical society, 1939), 338. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
671. SRO, D1287/3/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
672. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v.* [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
673. Letter 265, Sir John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, London, May 10 1617, in Chamberlain, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2:74. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
674. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
675. LPL, MS 1168. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
676. Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, Vol. 7, *1597*, 1030. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
677. BL, Add MS 4274, 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
678. BL, Add MS 4274, 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
679. BL, Add MS 4274, 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
680. Borth. Inst. William James to Tobie Matthew, 30 September 1612, ABP R.VII.PI 4-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
681. The debate about whether it is possible to recover an “authentic” female voice in wills is set out in Susan E. James, *Women’s Voices in Tudor Wills, 1485-1603: Authority, Influence and Material Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 7–8. James herself argues strongly that 'an investigation into and analysis of their wills allows us to engage with women in the first person, in their own words and without an intermediary present,' 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
682. Barbara J. Harris, “The Fabric of Piety: Aristocratic Women and Care of the Dead, 1450–1550,” *Journal of British Studies,* 48, no. 2 (April 2009): 311. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
683. Barbara J. Harris, “Defining Themselves: English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550,” *Journal of British Studies,* 49, no. 4 (October 2010): 741. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
684. *Ibid*., 752. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
685. John Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey and Cathedral Church of Bristol : Illustrated by a Series of Engravings of Views, Elevations, Plans, and Details of That Edifice : With Biographical Anecdotes of Eminent Persons Connected with the Establishment* (London: M.A. Nattali, 1836), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
686. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
687. Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1993), 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
688. Erickson, *Women and Property*; Maria Lynn Cioni, *Women and the Law in Elizabethan England with Particular Reference to the Court of Chancery* (New York: Garland, 1985); Mary Prior, “Wives and Wills, 1558-1700,” in *English Rural Society, 1500-1800: Essays in Honour of Joan Thirsk*, ed. J Chartres and D Hey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
689. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
690. Prior is not aware of the will of Alice Heaton and looks only at the wills of Elizabethan bishops’ wives Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
691. *Ibid*., 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
692. Nigel Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
693. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage;" Peter Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs in Early Modern England,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, no. 4 (October 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
694. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 676–80. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
695. J. D. Alsop, “Religious Preambles in Early Modern English Wills as Formulae,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40, no. 1 (January 1989); M. L. Zell, “The Use of Religious Preambles as a Measure of Religious Belief in the Sixteenth Century,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 50 (1977). [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
696. Alsop, “Religious Preambles,” 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
697. Lorraine. C. Attreed, “Preparation for Death in Sixteenth Century Northern England,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 13, no. 3 (Autumn 1982): 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
698. For details of all the wills see appendix: 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
699. Richard Dean Smith, *The Middling Sort and the Politics of* Social *Reformation Colchester 1570-1640* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Ltd., 2004), 89–91. [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
700. Will of Elizabeth Best TNA PROB 11/69/268. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
701. Will of Jane Pilkington BI Prob. Reg. vol. 31, f.99. [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
702. Smith, *The Middling Sort*, 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
703. *Ibid*. Will of Alice Heton or Heaton TNA PROB 11/171/218; Will of KatherineChadderton TNA PROB 11/136/381; Will of Amye Cooper TNA PROB 11/107/267; Will of Mary Cotton TNA PROB 11/157/265; Will of Jane Cox TNA PROB 11/73/50; Will of Frances Hutton BI Prob. Reg. 35/495; Will of Alice Pilkington TNA PROB 11/85/255; Will of Jane Still TNA PROB 11/113/76; Will of Anthonine Wickam TNA PROB 11/91/569; Will of Jane Bridges TNA PROB 11/159/224; Will of Jane Howson PROB 11/187/372; Will of Dorothy Carey TNA PROB 11/165/86, Will of Bridget Abbot TNA PROB 11/199/570. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
704. *Ibid*., 90–91. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
705. Will of Jane Younge BI Prob. Reg. 32/651. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
706. Will of Elizabeth Scorye TNA PROB 11/81/240. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
707. Will of Ciceley Sandys TNA PROB 11/117/140. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
708. Will of Judith Aylmer TNA PROB 11/133/131. [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
709. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v.* [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
710. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
711. Will of Tobie Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fol. 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
712. Will of Edwin Sandys TNA PROB 11/75/39. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
713. Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
714. *Ibid*., 283, 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
715. Andrew Pettegree, ‘Thomas Young (1507–1568),’ *ODNB*, [accessed 24 March 2015]. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
716. Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
717. Will of Elizabeth Scorye TNA PROB 11/81/240; Will of Jane Howson PROB 11/187/37. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
718. Harris, “Defining Themselves,” 741. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
719. Will of Elizabeth Best TNA PROB 11/69/268. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
720. Will of Jane Pilkington BI Prob. Reg. vol. 31, f.99. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
721. Richard L. Greaves, ‘Leonard Pilkington (1527–1599),’*ODNB,* [accessed 4 July 2016]. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
722. Will of Amye Cooper TNA PROB 11/107/267. [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
723. Will of Judith Aylmer TNA PROB 11/133/131. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
724. Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
725. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, 148; Harris also notes both the spiritual and material significance of being buried as close to the altar as possible and states that almost all aristocratic women “chose the chancel, chapels adjoining it, or the east end of the north and south aisles,” as the location for their monuments Harris, “Fabric of Piety,” 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
726. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
727. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
728. *Ibid*., 680. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
729. Will of Jane Younge BI Prob. Reg. 32/651; Will of Frances Hutton BI Prob. Reg. 35/495. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
730. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
731. Will of Dorothy Carey TNA PROB 11/165/86; Will of Jane Howson TNA PROB 11/187/372. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
732. Vanessa Harding, *The Dead and Living in Paris and London 1500-1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
733. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 680. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
734. Ian. R. Pattisson and Hugh Murray, *Monuments in York Minster: An Illustrated Inventory* (Ogletarm: Friends of York Minster, 2000), 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
735. Will of Alice Heton or Heaton TNA PROB 11/171/218. [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
736. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
737. Will of Katherine Chaderton TNA PROB 11/136/381. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
738. Will of William Chaderton TNA PROB 11/111/470. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
739. Thomas Allen, *The History of the County of Lincoln. by the Author of the Histories of London, Yorkshire &c* (London & Lincoln, 1833), 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
740. Will of Katherine Chaderton TNA PROB 11/136/381. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
741. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
742. Will of Jane Still TNA PROB 11/113/76. [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
743. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
744. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
745. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
746. Will of Ciceley Sandys TNA PROB 11/117/140. [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
747. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
748. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
749. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 678. [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
750. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death*, 438. [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
751. *Ibid*., 440. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
752. Ian. W. Archer, “The Charity of Early Modern Londoners,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 233–34. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
753. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
754. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
755. Will of Dorothy Carey TNA PROB 11/165/86. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
756. Will of Jane Cox TNA PROB 11/73/50. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
757. Will of Dorothy Carey TNA PROB 11/165/86; Will of Jane Cox TNA PROB 11/73/50. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
758. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 306. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
759. Prior, “Wives and Wills,” 201. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
760. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
761. Francis Blomefield, “Mitford Hundred and Half: Mateshale,” in *An Essay Towards A Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: Volume 10* (London, 1809), *British History Online* [accessed 11 May 2016], 233-239. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
762. Will of Jane Still TNA PROB 11/113/76. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
763. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v*. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
764. Will of Jane Younge BI Prob. Reg. 32/651. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
765. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
766. Will of Ciceley Sandys TNA PROB 11/117/140. [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
767. Will of Jane Pilkington BI Prob. Reg. vol. 31, f.99. [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
768. James, *Women’s Voices*, 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
769. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
770. Will of Jane Howson TNA PROB 11/187/372. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
771. Will of Katherine Chaderton *TNA* PROB 11/136/381. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
772. Archer, “Charity of Early Modern Londoners,” 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
773. James, *Women’s Voices*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
774. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
775. Will of Jane Pilkington BI Prob. Reg. vol. 31, f.99. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
776. Will of Judith Aylmer TNA PROB 11/133/131. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
777. Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
778. Erickson, *Women and Property*, 204–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
779. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
780. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 75–76. Frances commissioned monuments for her mother Agatha Wellesbourne, as well as her sister Antonia Wickham. [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
781. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v*. [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
782. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
783. Jane A. Lawson, ed., *The Elizabethan New Year’s Gift Exchanges, 1559–1603* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 676–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
784. Will of Amye Cooper TNA PROB 11/107/267; Will of Alice Heton or Heaton TNA PROB 11/171/218. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
785. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v*. [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
786. Will of Elizabeth BestTNA PROB 11/69/268. [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
787. Will of Ciceley Sandys TNA PROB 11/117/140. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
788. Will of Jane Still TNA PROB 11/113/76. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
789. Will of Judith Aylmer TNA PROB 11/133/131. [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
790. Will of Amye Cooper TNA PROB 11/107/267; Will of Frances Hutton BI Prob. Reg. 35/495; Will of Katherine Chaderton TNA PROB 11/136/381. [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
791. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*; Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage;" Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*; Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage.” [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
792. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs;” Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*; Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage.” [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
793. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 676–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
794. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
795. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
796. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 677–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
797. *Ibid*., 680. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
798. Mary Fletcher, wife of Bishop Richard Fletcher was buried in a parish church in Chelsea in 1592 and Anne Westfaling, wife of Herbert Westfaling, died at Westminster in 1597 whilst her husband was attending parliament. Parker had brought the Duke’s House in Lambeth for Margaret which entitled her to be buried in the Duke’s chapel in the adjacent parish church. Ibid., 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
799. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
800. George Frederick Prosser, *Antiquities of Hampshire, Illustrated in the Ruins of Ancient Buildings* (1842), 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)
801. Will of Henry Cotton TNA PROB 11/125/513. [↑](#footnote-ref-802)
802. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-803)
803. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-804)
804. Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*, 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-805)
805. *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. LXXXVI (London: F. Jeffries, 1816), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-806)
806. Sherlock, “Monuments, Reputation and Clerical Marriage,” 70–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-807)
807. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-808)
808. *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, LXXXVI:20. [↑](#footnote-ref-809)
809. Henry Ellis, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish Church of Shoreditch* (London, 1798), 55–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-810)
810. Edward Arthur Fitch and Charlotte Fell-Smith, *The Essex Review: An Illustrated Quarterly Record of Everything of Permanent Interest in the County* (London: E. Durant and Company, 1893), 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-811)
811. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-812)
812. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, 363. [↑](#footnote-ref-813)
813. Hembry, “Episcopal Palaces,” 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-814)
814. Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-815)
815. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-816)
816. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 678. [↑](#footnote-ref-817)
817. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-818)
818. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-819)
819. Pattisson and Murray, *Monuments in York Minster: An Illustrated Inventory*, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-820)
820. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-821)
821. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-822)
822. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-823)
823. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 678. [↑](#footnote-ref-824)
824. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-825)
825. *Ibid*., 677; Prior, “Reviled and Crucified,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-826)
826. Trevor Cooper and Ecclesiological Society, *The Journal of William Dowsing: Iconoclasm in East Anglia During the English Civil War* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2001), 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-827)
827. Will of Frances Matthew BI PROB Reg. 40, fols. 397*r*–398*v.* [↑](#footnote-ref-828)
828. Sherlock, “Episcopal Tombs,” 677. [↑](#footnote-ref-829)
829. *Ibid*., 677–78. [↑](#footnote-ref-830)
830. Maura Jane Farrelly, *Papist Patriots: The Making of an American Catholic Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-831)
831. McCall, *Baal’s Priests*, 617. [↑](#footnote-ref-832)
832. [↑](#footnote-ref-833)
833. Yost, “Reformation Defence of Clerical Marriage,” 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-834)