

ANNE, LADY BACON: A LIFE IN LETTERS

Katherine Alice Mair

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Statement of Originality

I, Katherine Alice Mair, affirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own, except where otherwise acknowledged in the text.

Abstract

Anne, Lady Bacon (c.1528-1610) is chiefly remembered as the translator of several important religious texts and as the mother of Francis and Anthony Bacon. This thesis seeks to re-evaluate her fulfilment of her role as a mother, translator and religious patron through an examination of her correspondence and an assessment of her published works. In doing so it demonstrates that Anne was adept at utilising epistolary conventions in order to achieve her politico-religious aims, and was far more capable at negotiating complex webs of power than has hitherto been acknowledged.

Over one hundred of her letters survive, most of which are written to Anthony between the 1592 and 1596, and only a few of which have been published. I have transcribed all these extant letters, and through a close analysis of their content and material construction I offer an outline of her epistolary habits, and demonstrate how her letter-writing practice was influenced by the practical elements of sixteenth-century epistolary culture. I describe the factors that influenced Anne's relationship with her sons, and analyse how both parties performed or neglected their duties.

The second half of my thesis focuses on Anne's religious patronage. I describe the iconographic significance of the female translator, and examine Anne's contribution to the nascent Protestant literary culture. Faced with a political climate that was becoming increasingly hostile to expressions of non-conformity, I look at how Anne harnessed other means by which to support the puritan cause, and assess the extent to which she directed the religious tenor of her local parishes.

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Abbreviations

BL	British Library
<i>CCEd</i>	<i>The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835</i> < www.theclergydatabase.org.uk >
<i>CPR</i>	Calendar of Patent Rolls
<i>CSPD</i>	Calendar of State Papers Domestic
<i>ELR</i>	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>EPM</i>	Patrick Collinson, <i>The Elizabethan Puritan Movement</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967)
EUL	Edinburgh University Library
HMC Hatfield	Historical Manuscripts Commission, Hatfield House Papers, cited with permission
HRO	Hertfordshire Record Office
<i>HF</i>	Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, <i>Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon</i> (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998)
<i>LL</i>	Francis Bacon, <i>Letters and Life</i> , 7 vols, ed. by James Spedding (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861-74)
<i>LPL</i>	Lambeth Palace Library
<i>Memoirs</i>	Thomas Birch, <i>Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth</i> , 2 vols (London: A. Millar, 1754)
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , 2 nd edn < www.oed.com >

- PMLA* *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
- Rich* Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*, rev. edn (London: Virago, 1986)
- Stiffkey* *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, 3 vols, ed. by A. Hassel Smith, Gilliam M. Baker and R.W. Kenny (Norwich: Norfolk Record Society, 1979-90).
- STC* *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed Editions of the England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad*, first compiled by A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, 2nd ed., 3 vols (London: Bibliographical Society, 1976-91)
- Works* Francis Bacon, *Works*, 7 vols, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longmans, 1857-9)

Personal Abbreviations

- AB Anthony Bacon
- ACB Anne Cooke Bacon
- EE Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex
- FB Francis Bacon
- RC Robert Cecil
- WC William Cecil, Lord Burghley

List of Illustrations

1. ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fols 6^r-7^v (art. 4)

p. 84

2. ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 103)

p. 85

Transcription Policy and Note on Dates

In quoting from manuscripts I have silently expanded all abbreviations and contractions, and lowered all superscriptions. The exceptions are for those abbreviations still in use, such as “Mr’ and ‘Dr’; and the abbreviations for pounds, shillings and pence, which also retain their superscript form. I have indicated insertions (with caret marks) and deletions (with strikethroughs), as these practices are often significant to the meaning of the text. I have maintained the original orthography and punctuation, as I wish to maintain as far as possible Anne Bacon’s mode of expression. Any editorial additions are placed within square brackets, and Latin words are italicised.

In quotations from early modern printed material I have modernised usage of ‘i/j’ and ‘u/v’ graphs, as well as the long ‘s’, and silently expanded abbreviations and contractions.

I have used new style dates throughout my narrative, but where a letter has been dated in the old style I have indicated both dates in my citation, for example 5 February 1591/2.

Introduction

The Otherworldly Advice of Anne Bacon

In the division of labor according to gender, the makers and sayers of culture, the namers, have been the sons of mothers.¹

The maternal fears and frustrations of Anne, Lady Bacon endure in surprising detail in the cache of letters written to her sons, Anthony and Francis Bacon, at the end of the sixteenth-century. But her expressions of motherly concern also persist in the altogether more unorthodox form of a ghost story told by members of Gray's Inn, the inn of court once the home to the brothers:

It is said – on what authority is unrecorded – that Lady Anne Bacon, the wife of Queen Elizabeth's Lord Keeper, haunts the gardens [...] On Call Nights, so the legend runs, when there is a "sound of revelry by night" from the Hall, the lady, dim as an opiate vapour, rises from the catalpa-tree that her famous son, Francis Bacon, planted. Gliding along the grass, alone, and palely loitering like Keats's hero, she wrings her lily-white hands and smites her magnolia-like brow. 'Alas! they mum. They sinfully revel,' she moans.²

Anne's phantasmal laments have their origins in her authentic concerns expressed in a letter written by Anne to Anthony in December 1594. Anne's objections (on religious grounds) to the Christmas revels of the law students are articulated in no uncertain terms, and she writes to Anthony, 'I trust they wyll not

¹ Rich, p. 11.

² G.C.L. DuCann, 'Ghosts at Gray's Inn', *Graya*, 1 (1927), 27-30, (p. 27). Robert Tittler draws attention to this story in *Nicholas Bacon: The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (London: Cape

ne[either] mum nor mask nor synfully revell at Grayes Inne'.³ Her pleas went unheard, and the celebrations that year included not only what is believed to be the first performance of William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, but also a dramatic interlude written by her own son, Francis.⁴ It is a testament to the potency and dramatic effect inherent in her letter-writing style that this brief complaint is converted into a playful tale, and in doing so it promotes two of the common views of Anne Bacon. First, it reflects her failure to exercise effective control over her offspring. Secondly, as a ghostly presence she is stripped of any characteristics other than that of the moaning mother of a celebrated son. Through this reduction all Anne's other attainments, as a scholar, patron, and influential gentry woman are thus erased, and she comes to represent only the most negative forms of anxious motherhood.

The fault may be laid partially at the feet of her textual remains, as the passionate histrionics of her letters portray a candid persona rarely encountered in biographical documents from the period. Her idiosyncratic and forthright epistolary voice makes the letters an eminently quotable source for scholars intrigued by the Bacon family specifically and early modern social relations in general. However, the distinctiveness of this voice and the strength of her maternal persona have created a caricature of Anne that ignores her fulfilment of alternative roles. In tracing the background of Francis and occasionally Anthony, historians and literary critics often fall back on the same repertoire of quotations, a sort of 'best-of Anne Bacon', culled from published sources, their readings of which rarely add anything to the established perceptions of her life.⁵

To rescue Anne from the one-dimensional image of the whingeing spectre and to understand the complexity of her character it is necessary to return to

³ ACB to AB, 5 December 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 329^r-330^v (art. 222). To avoid confusion I will in most instances refer to the Bacon family members by their first names.

⁴ *LL*, I, pp. 327-328.

⁵ Anne's evocative protest at the influence of Francis's men over her son, 'For I wyll not have his cormorant seducers and instruments of satan to him committing Fowle synns by hiss his cowntenance to the displeasing of god' (ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653 fol. 319^r-319^v art. 176), is quoted in numerous accounts of the period including those as diverse as: Edith Sitwell, *The Queens and the Hive* (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 437; Lytton Strachey, *Elizabeth and Essex* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1928), p. 54; Martin Greif, *The Gay Book of Days: an evocatively illustrated who's who of who is, was, may have been, probably was, and almost certainly seems to have been gay during the past 5,000 years* (London: W.H. Allen, 1985), p. 27.

her letters with a greater awareness of the context in which they were produced. While the impact that the dynamic of the mother-son relationship has on the correspondence needs to be considered at all times, by viewing her as a translator of religious texts or as a puritan patron, a more nuanced character emerges. The disapproving yet ultimately powerless woman that the ghost-like figure represents recedes into one area of her life, instead of dominating her entire existence, and it becomes possible to outline an intellectual and spiritual life beyond the role of mother.

My thesis responds to this scholarly lacuna, and is the first extended study which takes Anne, Lady Bacon as its main subject, and is the first to stitch together systematically the different elements of her life as revealed by her letters and printed works. Anne's letters are written in her own scrawling hand, and although some have appeared in print, the messiness of her handwriting seems to have discouraged the publication of an edition. In order to complete my research I have therefore made full transcriptions of her correspondence, a task that has allowed me to conduct a thorough analysis of her epistolary habits. While the abundant detail found in these letters has enabled me to reconstruct more fully her relationships with her sons, it has also provided much material from which to assess her performance of alternative roles. In tracing Anne's interaction with different networks of power, I have therefore been able to illustrate the extent of her agency over the politico-religious sphere. My detailed study of her letters demonstrates that Anne's use of patronage was sophisticated and relentless and that she used epistolary conventions to negotiate complex webs of power and promote her own interests and those of the puritan cause.

PART ONE: LIFE AND INFLUENCES

In many respects Anne led a life of privilege and unsurpassed opportunity for a woman of her era. Born to a well-connected gentry family in around 1528, Anne's father, Anthony Cooke, was somewhat of a progressive thinker in the field of female education, and chose to train his five daughters in the same humanist curriculum that he offered his four sons. Despite the similarity of their

training, Anthony's sons were not as intellectually capable as his daughters, and have receded into relative anonymity.⁶ In contrast his daughters excelled, and the connection that Anthony forged with them through their shared interests is evident from his will, as he instructed each to choose two Latin books and one Greek book from his library, a fitting present of remembrance considering his influence.⁷

The humanist pedagogical style, which was first practised by Italian scholars in the fourteenth-century, was based on the premise that the study of classical languages and literature supplied an all-encompassing framework for the intellectual development and moral discernment of pupils.⁸ The popularity of this method had spread to England by the sixteenth-century, where it was modified and adapted to suit different needs. Anthony Cooke appropriated a version that has come to be known as Christian humanism, as he was one of 'those humanists who applied their classical scholarship to biblical and patristic studies and who adopted and defended in their writings some tenets of Christian religion or theology'.⁹ For Cooke the ultimate purpose of learning was to further the spread of the reformation, and the fusion of these two impulses is demonstrated by his preface to a translation of a sermon by St Cyprian from Latin into English in which he referred to his rejection of the 'bondage of Rome'.¹⁰ As a humanist educator Cooke was highly respected, and contemporary accounts name him as one of the tutors to Edward VI, although there is no official record of his employment as a royal tutor.¹¹ Due to his religious beliefs Cooke left England upon the accession of Queen Mary in 1553, and played a significant part in the community of English exiles resident in

⁶ Margaret Keniston McIntosh describes the sons as 'bland' and outlines their careers in 'The Fall of a Tudor Gentle Family: The Cookes of Gidea Hall, Essex, 1579-1629', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 41 (1978) 279-297 (p. 280).

⁷ Excerpts from Anthony Cooke's will are printed in Stephen J. Barns, 'The Cookes of Gidea Hall', *The Essex Review*, 11 (1912), 1-9 (pp. 4-5).

⁸ Paul Oskar Kristeller, 'Humanism', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Quentin Skinner and Eckhard Kessler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 113-137 (p. 114).

⁹ Kristeller, 'Humanism', p. 133.

¹⁰ Quoted by Margaret Keniston McIntosh in 'Sir Anthony Cooke: Tudor Humanist, Educator and Religious Reformer', in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 119 (1975), 233-250 (p. 237).

¹¹ McIntosh discusses the evidence for Cooke's role as a tutor to Edward VI, in 'Sir Anthony Cooke', p. 241.

Strasbourg.¹² His influence over religious matters foundered when he returned home after Queen Elizabeth's accession in 1559, as although he contributed to the initial parliamentary debates concerning the reformation of religious practice, it swiftly became apparent that his hopes for change were not going to be met.¹³ But the role he played in the establishment of early Protestantism, both in England and on the continent, had lasting implications for Anne's reputation, and her subsequent religious activism was seen as a continuation of her father's work. It was unsurprising that his daughters inherited his religious ideologies, and (apart from the youngest) each in their own fashion made use of their skills and learning for a purpose that their father would have approved. Anne was the first to do so in a public sense: her translations from Italian to English of the Siennese preacher Bernardino Ochino's sermons were first published in 1548, and demonstrated her linguistic talents as well as her enthusiasm for reformed religion.¹⁴

The only profession available to women in the early modern period was wifehood, and Anne duly married Nicholas Bacon, a lawyer and later Lord Keeper of the Great Seal in 1553, when she was about twenty-five years old. A recently widowed man in his forties, Nicholas had seven children, and while Anne would have overseen their care, this role would probably have been largely supervisory, allowing her to continue fulfilling the other responsibilities pertaining to gentry wifehood. Although Anthony was born in 1558, and Francis in 1561, family life did not call a halt her literary activities, and her translation from Latin to English of John Jewel's *Apologia ecclesiae anglicanae* was published in 1564.¹⁵ During Edward VI's reign Anne also served as a gentlewoman of the privy chamber to Mary, an intriguing appointment considering Anne's publicly espoused admissions of faith in her preface to her translation of Ochino's sermons, and a signal of Anne's ability to maintain a political connection that ran contrary to her beliefs for the benefit of her family. The wisdom of this decision to maintain strong links with the Catholic princess

¹² Christina Hallowell Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), p. 27.

¹³ McIntosh, 'Sir Anthony Cooke', p. 245.

¹⁴ *Sermons of Barnardine Ochine of Sena godlye, frutefull, and very necessarye for all true Christians*, [trans. by Anne Cooke], (London: R.C. for W[illiam] Redell, [1548]).

¹⁵ *An apologie or answeere in defence of the Church of Englande*, [trans. by Anne Bacon], (London: Reginalde Wolfe, 1564).

was borne out explicitly when she succeeded to the throne, as Anne's previous intimacy with the Queen enabled her to broker a rapprochement between her husband (who had been strongly supportive of the previous reformist government) and his sovereign.¹⁶ Anne continued to serve as a lady-in-waiting during Mary's reign, and her husband's position within the court remained relatively secure. Under Elizabeth's rule Nicholas rose to the senior position of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal; Anne however was not as popular with Elizabeth as she had been with her sister, and does not seem to have been appointed as a lady-in-waiting to the new Queen.

Anne's relationship with her sisters also had a profound effect upon her life. Their shared passion for scholarly pursuits and their commitment to reformed religion bound them closely together, a bond that was perhaps further tightened by their exceptional status as learned women within the period. Their unity was also reflective of their fulfilment of the more traditional obligations to their kinship group, an institution 'whose purpose was the mutual economic, social and psychological advancement of the group'.¹⁷ Daughters advanced the interests of their family through marriage to influential and wealthy men, and the matches the Cooke sisters made proved hugely beneficial in both of these senses to their family. Lawrence Stone suggests that 'marriage meant not so much intimate association with an individual as entry into a new world of the spouse's relatives, uncles, nephews and distant cousins', and this web of interconnections proved invaluable to the Cooke sisters for the promotion of their family interests.

The marriage of Anne's eldest sister, Mildred, to William Cecil in 1545 forged a connection that was to have enduring consequences for Anne. Cecil's presentation of a copy of an edition of the New Testament in Greek to his sister-in-law in 1552 testifies to his friendship with her, and Anne has inscribed on the title page 'William Cecil: gave this holy booke to me, Anne Cooke, sister of his

¹⁶ This episode is described in Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955), p. 101. Anne was described as 'one of the gentlewomen of the Privy Chamber', and was granted rents and lands for 'her services' in 1555. *CPR, 1554-1555*, no. 26, p. 12

¹⁷ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 86.

wife. 1552'.¹⁸ Anne's marriage to Nicholas Bacon, a friend and political ally of Cecil, seems to have secured their relationship further, and a warm letter between the two couples illustrates their continual involvement in one another's lives.¹⁹ Elizabeth was married to Sir Thomas Hoby, linguist and courtier, in 1558, and after his death in 1566 she took John, Lord Russell as her second husband in 1574. Katherine married Sir Henry Killigrew, a diplomat, in 1565, and died in childbirth in 1583. The final Cooke sister, Margaret, married Sir Ralph Rowlett (a goldsmith) in 1558, but died within a few weeks of their wedding. Anne's connections therefore stretched across the fabric of Elizabethan society, and linked her to humanist, political and noble circles of power.

When Anne had married Nicholas Bacon his family home had been in Redgrave, Suffolk, and his London residence at York House in Charing Cross. Seeking to establish a base nearer to London, Nicholas purchased the estate of Gorhambury in Hertfordshire in 1560, and undertook the construction of a new mansion to house his second family. Plans show that the ground floor consisted of two courtyards surrounded by at least thirty rooms, including a chapel.²⁰ The second floor contained a library, and about twenty to thirty-five further rooms. To impress the Queen, who had visited the house in 1574 and been distinctly unimpressed with its size, Bacon added a long gallery before her second visit in 1577. The hall itself was decorated with pairs of *sententiae* – short, pithy Latin phrases that Nicholas had extracted from classical sources and ordered under personally devised headings. The sentences have been recorded in an illuminated manuscript that Sir Nicholas Bacon had created for Lady Jane Lumley, and thematically testify to his personal philosophy of moderation and endurance.²¹ The brilliance of this manuscript is that it provides a glimpse of the decorative detail of Gorhambury to accompany the surviving architectural

¹⁸ This inscription found in a copy of Robert Estienne's edition known as the *Editio regia*, printed in Paris in 1550, Sotheby catalogue, 11 Apr 2006, lot 2309. For a description see T.H. Darlow and H.F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525-1961*, rev. by A.S. Herbert (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968), no. 4622.

¹⁹ Nicholas Bacon to WC (postscript by Anne), 18 Aug 1557, HMC Hatfield I, no. 534, p. 143. BL Microfilm 152/19.

²⁰ The following description of Gorhambury is based on Robert Tittler's account, pp. 66-67.

²¹ BL MS Royal 17.A.xxiii. Elizabeth McCutcheon has published an edition of this manuscript in *Sir Nicholas Bacon's Great House Sententiae, English Literary Renaissance Supplements 3* (Amherst, MA: ELR, 1977).

information, and shows how the Bacons surrounded themselves with classical literature and culture. The shared attention that Anne and Nicholas paid these sayings can be seen from the manner in which both husband and wife make use of these sentences in their epistolary advice.²²

Although Anne did not publish any further translations during her lifetime, she continued to be a committed supporter of Protestantism, and her efforts were directed at using her financial resources and personal influence to protect and sustain the more radical members of the English church. Her commitment to this cause appears to have intensified after the sudden death of Nicholas in 1579. Anne received a generous inheritance, which included the life interest of Gorhambury, and was charged with the 'well brynginge upp' of Anthony and Francis, twenty-one and eighteen years old respectively at the time of their father's death.²³ Anne's conduct during her widowhood is easier to trace than her married life, partly because legally she re-emerges from the shadow of her husband, and also because the majority of her letters were written in this period of her lifetime. They show that her chief occupations were the management of her estate, the (attempted) supervision of her sons, and her efforts to sustain the movement for further reform.

The conduct of her sons perplexed Anne deeply. Despite showing great promise, Francis's career demonstrated little sign of progression, and this situation could not be remedied by any manner of intervention upon Anne's part. Anthony had left England for the continent after the death of his father, and was initially commissioned by William Cecil and Francis Walsingham to undertake espionage work. However, he unexpectedly settled in France and did not return for twelve years, an extraordinary length of time to remain abroad on uncertain and dangerous business. It was Anthony's overdue return in 1592 that precipitated the bulk of the extant letters between Anne and her son, and these form part of the Anthony Bacon papers, held at Lambeth Palace Library in

²² McCutcheon notes that Nicholas ends a possibly unwelcome letter of advice to Walsingham with one of the sentences painted on the walls at Gorhambury: 'Seneca saythe *Malle in amico consilium quam fidem deesse*', p. 25. My own research has uncovered a letter in which Anne concludes her advice to her sons with the same sentence: 'I cannot cease to warn as long as I am A mother that loveth yow in the lorde most dearly and as Seneck by phisophy onely cowl'd say. *in Amico admottendo mallem success 'quod tamen nolle' quam Fidem Desse.*' (ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 331^r-332^v (art. 223).

²³ Will of Sir Nicholas Bacon, *Stiffkey*, II, pp. 25-29.

London. The topics discussed in the letters are many and varied. Anne dispenses advice on the salvation of the soul as well as suggesting cures for gout; communicates news of local gossip alongside discussing matters of national importance; sends her sons gifts of strawberries and trout in one letter while threatening to disinherit them in the next. All of the letters are threaded with a personal detail that allows for a more profound insight into her everyday life, and give us a rare opportunity to see how her humanistic learning is carried over into the epistolary mode.

Upon his return Anthony had turned to William Cecil seeking some reward for his service abroad, but discovered that his uncle had no intention of offering him financial or professional recompense. Although there were strong kinship and friendship links between the older members of the Bacon and Cecil families, Anthony and Francis believed that William Cecil was actively blocking their professional advancement, so as to safeguard the ambitions of his own son. Cecil's perceived rejection propelled them into an alliance with Robert Devereux, the second earl of Essex, in the hope that he would offer an alternative route through which to procure the Queen's approval. Although already established as one of the Queen's favourites, Essex was intent on establishing himself as a key political player in the court, and in the 1580s and 1590s was attempting to increase his influence over the Queen in matters of foreign policy. His ambitions set him on a path of collision with William Cecil and his son Robert Cecil, and the Bacon brothers were quickly drawn into the power struggle between these two factions.

From Essex's perspective Anthony Bacon was an important connection to cultivate, as his significant experience in foreign affairs placed him in a prime position from which to organise and direct an intelligence network to rival that which was controlled by the Cecils. Between 1594 and 1595 Essex gathered around him a personal secretariat to provide him with the administrative support he needed if he was to have any chance of displacing Cecil as Elizabeth's chief counsellor.²⁴ Paul E.J. Hammer marks an important distinction between the work that Anthony Bacon performed for the earl of Essex and that undertaken

²⁴ Paul E. J. Hammer, 'The Use of Scholarship: The Secretariat of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, c.1585-1601', *English Historical Review*, 109 (1994), 26-51 (p. 30).

by his other secretaries. Hammer describes Bacon as a “special friend” of Essex, not a servant’ and shows that this arrangement was reflected by the way that ‘Bacon was never paid a salary, but received recompense for his assistance to Essex by means of favours and occasional gifts’.²⁵ Although Bacon’s absorption into Essex’s sphere may have initially resulted from the need to find an alternative patron to William Cecil, it seems to have developed into a relationship of genuine personal affection and respect, a bond that proved harder to break than any financial link.

Essex’s abortive rebellion in 1601, and his subsequent execution appears to have sounded the death knell for his loyal friend Anthony, who died that same year, and was buried on 17 May at St Olave’s church in Hart Street, London.²⁶ Anthony’s health had been poor all his life and seems to have rapidly deteriorated in the 1590s, and the trauma of seeing his patron fall from grace is likely to have exacerbated his condition. Unlike other close associates of Essex, Anthony was not implicated in the rebellion, and escaped punishment. That Francis acted for the prosecution against Essex despite their earlier close association, coupled with the apparent disengagement of Anthony from the rebellion, has led to the suggestion that the younger sibling ‘agreed to take on his role for the prosecution in return for a guarantee of his brother’s immunity’.²⁷ But such a deal might not have been necessary; Anthony was perhaps regarded as too invalided to warrant much attention, and Francis had already argued against Essex in an earlier hearing and effectively parted company with his old patron.²⁸ Either way, Anthony did not long outlive his master, and died heavily in debt.

The fall of Essex and his men and the death of Anthony must have been agonizing for Anne to witness, but we have no letters that record her experience of these years. Contrary to assumptions that she died shortly after Anthony, a letter by Francis uncovered by James Spedding for his edition of Francis Bacon’s works and letters proved that she died in 1610, outliving her eldest son

²⁵ Hammer ‘The Use of Scholarship’, p. 35.

²⁶ *The Register of St Olave, Hart Street, London, 1563-1700*, ed. by W.B. Bannerman (Harleian Society, 1916), 46, p. 132.

²⁷ *HF*, p. 240.

²⁸ *HF*, pp. 240-241.

by nine years.²⁹ As Spedding notes, the lack of letters is not in itself strange; it was a rare quirk that so much of her correspondence should have survived from the period anyway, an incidental result of Anthony Bacon's careful administrative habits. What he does concede as odd is the absence of other references to her in the period between her last letter and her death. The last years of her life have largely been interpreted in light of the comments made by Godfrey Goodman, bishop of Gloucester, in his memoir of the reign of James I written in the 1650s and edited and published by J.S. Brewer in 1839.³⁰ Goodman describes Anne as 'little better than frantic in her old age', and Brewer's note to this assertion directs the reader to Anne's letters to support his claim. Goodman's throwaway comment has been accorded more authority than it may warrant, and Spedding concurred with this opinion but moderated it by suggesting that:

the supposition which seems to me most probable is that she lost the command of her faculties some years before her death, that the management of her affairs was taken out of her hands, and that somebody was employed to take care of her.³¹

In his letter to Sir Michael Hicks dated 27 August 1610, Francis 'heartily' requests the company of his friend 'at my Mother's funeral which I purpose on Thursday next in the forenoon', so that he may 'pass over this mournful occasion with more comfort'.³² This places the time of her death to some time in August 1610, making her around eighty-two years old. Roger Fenton, a renowned preacher, delivered her funeral sermon, but I can find no record of his words on this occasion.³³ Francis also identifies his mother's last resting place, as in his will he asks to be buried 'in St Michael's church, near St Albans: there was my mother buried'.³⁴ These references to his mother's death and burial

²⁹ *LL*, IV, pp. 217-218.

³⁰ *The Court of King James I*, ed. by J.S. Brewer, 2 vols (London: R. Bentley, 1839), I, p. 285.

³¹ *LL*, IV, p. 217.

³² *LL*, IV, pp. 217-218.

³³ Some of Fenton's funeral sermons are collected in Roger Fenton, *A sermon preached at St Mary Spittle* (London: William Aspley, 1616).

³⁴ *LL*, VII, p. 539.

illustrate a sentimental attachment of Francis to his mother that is rarely found in his (admittedly very few) extant letters to her.

After the accession of James VI and I, Francis's political career began to make the progress it had never achieved in Elizabeth's lifetime, and he was granted his first crown office in 1607. The publication of his philosophical writings within in the last decade of Anne's life sealed his intellectual reputation, as he outlined new methods of scientific investigation that rejected traditional models. Anne also lived to see his marriage to Alice Barnham, the fourteen-year old daughter of an alderman, which took place on 10 May 1606. Although this union did not provide her with much desired grand children to continue the family line, Francis's intellectual posterity as one of the forefathers of modern science was perhaps an achievement that not even his mother could have imagined for him.

Religious beliefs

Anne's life is impossible to relate without reference to her religious faith, for this was how she understood herself and the world in which she lived. She provides a rare model for the early modern period as her published translations provide public avowals of faith, while her letters offer more personal confessions alongside evidence for her day-to-day religious practice. The length of her life also provides significant scope from which to examine the impact religion had upon her cultural and personal identity, as her appearances in print as both a translator and dedicatee of religious texts extend for over 70 years, from 1548 to 1624, straddling the varied manifestations of post-reformation English religious policy.³⁵

As noted above, Anne's religious identity had been strongly shaped by her father's reformist beliefs. Anthony Cooke embraced the break from Catholicism, one that was inaugurated doctrinally by Martin Luther in Germany in the 1520s, and established institutionally by Henry VIII. Henry's desire to break with Rome

³⁵ This time period begins with her Ochino translation of 1548, and ends with Thomas Wilcox's dedication to her in *A short, yet sound commentarie; written on that worthie worke called; the Prouerbes of Salomon* (London: Thomas Orwin for Thomas Man, 1589), which was included in *The works of that late reverend and learned divine, Mr Thomas Wilcocks* (London: John Haviland, 1624).

was politically motivated, and he was steered towards the reformist ideas of the Lutherans as a way to substantiate morally his rejection of the papacy. The King's personal beliefs were notoriously ambiguous, but the decision to place the education of his son in the hands of evangelicals allowed a more committed trend to the new system of belief to flourish in the English court.³⁶ The term 'Protestant' was not used in its modern sense, to refer to a the body of believers who had separated from the Catholic church, until the reign of Mary, and Diarmaid MacCulloch suggests that the term 'evangelical' is a more appropriate marker 'for those promoting the Reformation before 1553', a nomenclature that I will follow throughout my thesis.³⁷ The evangelicals rejected the practice of mass as a route to salvation, and in its place elevated personal contact with the word of the Bible as the mode of attaining true faith.

The establishment of a reformist religious culture in England was by no means instantaneous, and 'pre-Elizabethan "Protestantism"' has been described as a 'loose and fractious movement, a cacophony of voices advocating personal and corporate reform through appeals to the "Gospel"'.³⁸ Anne's translation of Ochino's sermons contributed to this noise, and established her support of one of the key evangelical tenets – the belief in predestination. One of the doctrines emphasised by the theologian John Calvin, predestination referred to the belief that God had pre-ordained which of his subjects would be granted salvation, those known as 'the elect', and that no actions undertaken in their lifetime could undermine this assurance. This idea became widely accepted by English Protestants, and was developed by Theodore Beza into the concept of double predestination, which defined those who had been rejected by God as the reprobate and were therefore destined for damnation. Anne's translations and her religious activism clearly positioned her as someone who believed they were one of the elect, a belief that fostered a strong sense of superiority and righteousness in all her dealings.

³⁶ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 1.

³⁷ MacCulloch, p. 5.

³⁸ Peter Marshall and Alex Ryrie, 'Protestantisms and their beginnings', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, ed. by Peter Marshall and Alex Ryrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 13.

However, at the time at which she was proclaiming her adherence to the reformist movement, her role as a lady-in-waiting to Mary signalled a pragmatism concerning the extent to which religious belief could be allowed to interfere with political life. This loyalty to a Queen intent on returning England to Catholicism sits uncomfortably with Anne's uncompromising negative opinions concerning Catholics expressed in her later letters, a contradiction that can be explained by the intensification of her religious belief as she matured.³⁹ Although there is no doubt that her fervency increased as she grew older, the disjuncture of the nature of personally expressed sentiment with her official responsibilities points to one of the truly unique features of reading her life through her letters, as they frequently offer us a contrary voice to her publicly espoused persona. After the Elizabethan Settlement, Anne continued to advocate for the government's religious policy, and her translation *Apologie in defence of the church of England* was published in 1564. Written to combat accusations that the Church of England was fostering unnecessary schism, it demonstrated her willingness to use her talents for the support of the government, and presented an argument that seemed to reflect her own beliefs at this point.

There did, however, remain an element within the Church of England that was dissatisfied with the extent of reform that the church had undergone, and sought to push for further liturgical and doctrinal change. Dubbed 'puritans' by their enemies, this group instead preferred to define themselves by alternative epithets, such as the 'godly', 'professors' or 'true gospellers', but eventually the group appropriated puritan as a term of self-identification.⁴⁰ Whether used by its enemies or by its adherents, the term is applied loosely, and this variability has engendered much debate concerning the origin, definition and use of the word. In the sense that the word defines a 'hotter sort of protestant' and denotes a

³⁹ Patrick Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism*, Patrick Collinson (London: The Hambledon Press, 1983), pp. 135-153 (p. 150).

⁴⁰ Patrick Collinson 'The Godly: Aspects of Popular Protestantism' in *Godly People*, p. 1. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, 'Introduction: The Puritan Ethos, 1560-1700', in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. by Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 2. On the appropriation of the term see Peter Lake, 'Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice', in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke*, ed. by Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Boydell Press: Suffolk, 2006), pp. 80-97, p. 86.

person who failed to be fully content with the church as it stood, it is an indispensable term and one that I will use throughout my thesis.⁴¹

The puritan movement can be described as a specific strand of Protestant belief, one that gained a political identity as a result of the shared religious convictions of a self-defined group of people. Puritanism has to be understood in terms of its similarities to and differences from those who were content with the Church of England, known as conformists. Both groups agreed on the major aspects of Protestant doctrine and practice and shared important features: the virulent rejection of Rome, the elevation of the Bible as a means to salvation, a belief in predestination and divine providence were common characteristics of all English Protestants. Where puritanism can be seen to differ from its more mainstream model is in the degree with which they espoused these beliefs, a feature often described as 'Puritan zeal'.⁴² This zeal, as Peter Lake notes, is a result of their desire to bring 'external reality into line with subjective experience undergone by the individual believer'.⁴³ The 'experience' referred to was the process undergone in order to define oneself as one of the elect, and the 'tension' between this internal experience of holiness and the failure for this to be realised in the world is what sustained the hysterical pitch and zealousness of their belief.⁴⁴ Puritans believed that the wordly realisation of their internal spirituality would result in the unification of true believers, and the transformation of the English church into an institution more similar to the reformed churches in Geneva, the city that had become the spiritual home of evangelism.

This group of true believers were set against the ungodly, who because of their reprobate status failed to hear the word of God and lived in ignorance. Whilst Lake sees that this recognition of the ungodly as a convention shared by all Protestants, it is the extent to which the puritans conceptualised this differentiation between souls that marks them out, and their fear of the ungodly

⁴¹ Patrick Collinson extracts the description of puritans as 'the hotter sort of protestant' from a pamphlet written by Percival Wiburn, a cleric that, as we will see, comes to be closely associated with Anne. *EPM*, p. 27.

⁴² Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the English Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 18.

⁴³ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 18.

⁴⁴ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 18-19.

element present in the world in which they lived led to a voluntary separation from their wider community.⁴⁵ Likewise it was the *degree* of anti-popery that they expressed that set them apart from their fellow Protestants, as their conviction that the separation from Rome had not been thorough enough led them to 'critique' the national church.⁴⁶ While conformists accepted the elements of tradition and ritual still present in the church by defining them as *adiaphora* or 'things indifferent', puritans believed that these remnants of Rome were preventing the complete transformation of the church. Puritans understood the world through a particular lens, refusing to temper the intensity of their religious experiences, or to separate their godliness from their day-to-day experience in the world. Protestant modes of accessing the word of God, such as reading scripture, listening to sermons and discussing doctrine with preachers, became intensified practices in the sphere of the puritan, as the search for assurance of their elect status led them into a state of permanent self-examination. It is important to emphasise that the puritans still saw themselves as members of the Church of England, and actively differentiated themselves from separatist groups such as the Brownists, who had given up on the church ever enforcing the changes they desired. However critical the puritans may have been of the church they always strove to maintain a semblance of loyalty to the Queen, and detested being accused of promoting schism.

Anne's personal religious tenor, as expressed in her religious publications, was in her younger years avowedly evangelical, and developed a more standard Protestant tone in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. But her letters suggest that she underwent a conversion experience in the mid- to late-1570s, and from this point on her sharp criticisms of the English Church allow us to define her as a staunch puritan. The nature of Anne's support for her brand of Protestantism altered as the politico-religious climate became more censorious towards nonconformists, and her letters illustrate more covert and personal attempts to help the cause. Anne offered patronage, financial support and hospitality to nonconformist preachers who found themselves in trouble with the authorities, and she used her wide kinship network to argue their case. Her

⁴⁵ Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1982), p. 230.

⁴⁶ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 56.

letters testify to her participation in a loyal community of similarly minded believers, and illustrate the intense religious practice around which she centred her life.

PART TWO: THE ARCHIVE

Of great importance to how the letters are read is the influence of the archive in which they are housed. Anne's letters are bound within the Anthony Bacon Papers, interspersed between intelligence letters from across Europe, receipts detailing money owed and debts paid, and all the paraphernalia generated by a culture reliant on epistolary communication for all its needs. Anthony's close relationship with Essex had very practical consequences for the papers, as they continue only until 1598, some three years before Anthony's death. It seems likely that, either preceding or following Essex's rebellion in 1601, all papers that may have served as evidence against the earl and his faction were destroyed.⁴⁷ Those that survived appear to have been passed to Francis Bacon, and then to his chaplain William Rawley. William Rawley's son, William, had become friends with Thomas Tenison, later archbishop of Canterbury, when they were both students at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.⁴⁸ It is possibly through this connection that Tenison, a bibliophile and founder of several public libraries, came to purchase Francis's manuscripts from John Rawley, the executor of William Rawley the elder's will. Tenison gave these papers to the Lambeth Palace Library, and they were first catalogued in 1720.⁴⁹

Although the papers span the period 1579 to 1598, the bulk can be dated to the period between Anthony Bacon's return from France in 1592 to their curtailment in 1598. Most of the documents, including Anne's letters, are

⁴⁷ Alan Stewart suggests this may account for the absence of papers covering the period 1597-1601, 'Anthony Bacon (1558-1601)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/988>, accessed 12 Sept 2009). Gustav Ungerer argues against this assumption, and believes that Bacon would have retained papers dealing with the later years in order to provide evidence to defend Essex, and 'it seems more reasonable to assume that the missing volumes were confiscated at the fall of Essex rather than burned by Bacon'. *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez's Exile*, 2 vols (London: Tamesis, 1974-1976), I, p. xiv.

⁴⁸ This description follows James Spedding's account for the provenance of the papers, *Works*, III, p. 797.

⁴⁹ From E.G.W.B (Geoffrey Bell), the introduction to the *Index to the Papers of Anthony Bacon (1558-1601)* In *Lambeth Palace Library (Mss. 647-662)* (London: Lambeth Palace Library, 1974).

endorsed with the names of sender and addressee, and the date, and Anthony appears to have accorded an equal importance to the retention of both professional and family documents. This is, of course, a false line to draw in the period, as family and political interests were so often interchangeable, but Anne's letters have occasionally been regarded as an incongruous inclusion in an archive of letters heavily focused on political affairs. James Spedding, suggests that the reason so many of her letters survive was due to Anthony's 'habit of keeping all his correspondence without distinction, and consequently leaving behind him so many bundles of imperfectly arranged papers, the valuable and the worthless mixed confusedly together'.⁵⁰ Spedding's categorization of Anne's letters as 'worthless', despite the care Anthony took over their preservation, begs questions over what the contents of other archives may have looked like if they had been spared the energetic attentions of nineteenth-century historians.

The papers include ninety-eight letters from Anne to Anthony, written in her own hand, and seven letters from Anne to other recipients. There are eighty-four letters from Anthony to his mother, all but one of which are copies, the originals presumably having been sent to Anne. A small number of her letters are also to be found elsewhere, having been incorporated into the papers of William and Robert Cecil. The strength of the collection at Lambeth Palace is that it provides us with a correspondence between a mother and son of unparalleled intensity; its weakness lies in the fact that it warps our view of Anne's character, as the most personal examples of self-expression extant are written within the frame of her relationship with her son. The tone and content of her correspondence to one person becomes synonymous with her entire personality, and the failure to situate the letters within the wider context parent-child relationships has given rise to an over-simplified interpretation of her complaints as the fulfilment of the stereotypical role of the nagging mother.

⁵⁰ *LL*, IV, p. 216.

The afterlife of Anne's letters

The substance of the archive has inevitably attracted the attention of a number of early modern historians, and Anne's letters have often been used to supplement the relation of events found in other sources, and are mined for the knowledge they can contribute to the political history of the period.⁵¹ Interest in the political and scientific achievements of Francis Bacon has also driven the readings of her letters, and they have provided much evidence for those seeking to unravel Francis's family relations.⁵² This again distorts our view of Anne, and her life is often outlined purely in order to provide a background context for the early years of her celebrated son.⁵³

The most influential and intelligent early interpretation of her letters occurs in James Spedding's monumental biographical work on Francis Bacon. Spedding credits Anne with a significant influence over the formation of the character of her son, believing that the relationship between Anne and Francis 'was too important at this period of Francis's life to be lost sight of', and that 'to understand this relation rightly, it is necessary to know her as well as him'.⁵⁴ As a result he prints a substantial number of excerpts from her letters, and some in full.

Interest in Anne's letters continued into the twentieth-century, and have been printed in editions of papers relating to Nathaniel Bacon (her step-son), and Antonio Pérez (an exiled Spaniard working for the Earl of Essex).⁵⁵ They have been used extensively in biographical works concerning Francis and Anthony Bacon, most notably in Daphne Du Maurier's biography of Anthony and Francis Bacon, *Golden Lads* (1975), and Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart's biography of Francis Bacon, *Hostage to Fortune* (1998).⁵⁶

⁵¹ Thomas Birch was the first historian to make extensive use of her letters in *Memoirs*, and printed lengthy passages.

⁵² James Anderson draws on the letters printed by Birch to provide a hagiography of Anne in *Ladies of the Reformation: Memoirs of Distinguished Female Characters* (London, 1854).

⁵³ William Hepworth Dixon provides a light-hearted interpretation of Bacon family relations in his *Personal History of Lord Bacon* (London: John Murray, 1861), and prints seventeen of Anne's letters in his appendix.

⁵⁴ *LL*, I, p. 110.

⁵⁵ Several of Anne's letters are printed in *Stiffkey*. Gustav Ungerer prints some of her letters in *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England*.

⁵⁶ Catherine Drinker Bowen also uses quotations from Anne's letters in *Francis Bacon: The Temper of a Man* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993).

Released from the constraints of academic accountability, Du Maurier is free to voice her speculations concerning their family relations, which for the most part are solidly rooted in the evidence found in the correspondence.⁵⁷ However, she presents a rather fantastical view of the early life of Anne, perhaps as a result of the paucity of evidence pertaining to her early years. Despite Du Maurier's discovery of new material and evidence concerning Anthony Bacon's time in France, her underlying claims that the brothers were responsible for the works of Shakespeare has meant that her biographical endeavours have not been regarded as highly as they would have been otherwise.⁵⁸ Nonetheless Du Maurier is highly successful in evoking the tension between Anne and her sons, and she manages to untangle the complex unfolding of events as related in the letters to produce a compelling narrative.

Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart's biography of Francis Bacon, *Hostage to Fortune*, incorporates a significant amount of new material concerning the early years of Francis's life, much of which has been drawn from Anne's letters. They unravel a more nuanced version of Anne's direction of her sons, and emphasise the seniority of her status within the Elizabethan court and the extent of her influence before her marriage to Sir Nicholas Bacon. They point to the problems rather than the advantages of her kinship ties for her sons, and carefully trace how reliant Anthony and Francis were on her for their financial subsistence. The manner in which they incorporate her letters into their text makes full use of the dramatic potential of her words, and gives her voice a primary place in their description of Francis's early years.

Curiosity about Anne's intellectual achievements has also resurfaced intermittently over the twentieth-century, and there have been several articles focusing on her religious translations.⁵⁹ But her literary productions did not receive substantial critical analysis until the publication of Mary Ellen Lamb's essay on the Cooke sisters. Lamb assesses the cultural outputs of Anne and

⁵⁷ *Golden Lads: a study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975).

⁵⁸ Lisa Jardine, 'Introduction', *Golden Lads*, 2007, p. xiii.

⁵⁹ Pearl Hogrefe, *Women of Action in Tudor England: Nine Biographical Sketches* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1997). Mary Bradford Whiting, "The Learned and Virtuous Lady Bacon", *The Hibbert Journal*, 29 (1930-31), 270-83. Ruth Hughey, 'Lady Anne Bacon's Translations', *Review of English Studies*, 10 (1934), p. 211.

her sisters, and identifies discrepancies between the personas expressed via their letters and through their religious translations.⁶⁰ In a comparison of the letters of the three sisters, Lamb correctly asserts that ‘the more personal tone of Anne Cooke Bacon’s religious and maternal fervors’ stems from the dynamic of her relationship with her son.⁶¹ However, she interprets Anne’s letters as religiously motivated emotional outpourings, in contrast to the more intellectual and politically astute letters of her sisters. Lamb’s limited exploration of Anne’s correspondence prevents her from viewing Anne’s varied epistolary habits, and she fails to see the political relevance of Anne’s religious patronage.

In contrast, Louise Schleiner brings the religious motivations of the Cooke sisters to the forefront of her analysis of their cultural output.⁶² Schleiner believes that the sisters formed a coterie that allowed them to transmit their views into the public sphere through their publication of religious translations or penning of prefatory verses. Schleiner notes Anne’s retreat from literary patronage for her religious ideals to more practical methods of support for deprived preachers, yet it is not within the scope of her research to investigate fully the evidence for this support as found in her letters.

Alan Stewart contributes the most thorough analysis of her published works in conjunction with her letters, in his attempt to unravel a cohesive thread between the supposedly disparate voices that she utilises.⁶³ He argues that, until the death of her husband in 1579:

we do not hear the voice of Anne Cooke Bacon, but the doubled voice of Anne and whatever man she was translating socially or textually at the

⁶⁰ Mary Ellen Lamb, ‘The Cooke Sisters: Attitudes toward Learned Women in the Renaissance’ in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent University Press, 1985), pp. 107-125. This essay is also being reprinted as part of an Ashgate series on women writers, which dedicates one chapter to the Cooke sisters in *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700, vol 1: Early Tudor Women Writers*, ed. Elaine V. Beilin (Ashgate: forthcoming, Oct 2009).

⁶¹ Lamb, p. 123.

⁶² ‘Activist Entries into Writing: Lady Elizabeth Hoby / Russell and the Other Cooke Sisters’, in *Tudor and Stuart Women Writers*, Louise Schleiner (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 30-51.

⁶³ Alan Stewart, ‘The Voices of Anne Cooke, Lady Anne and Lady Bacon’, in *This Double Voice: Gendered Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (London: Macmillan Press, 2000) pp. 88-102.

time. From 1579 Anne Cooke Bacon's voice is heard, independent, for the first time, and it is heard as mad.⁶⁴

Instead of resorting to the degeneration of her mental faculties to explain this change, Stewart sees these opposing identifications as reflective of her consistent attempts over the course of her life to promote her religious beliefs. What altered was the social, economic and political circumstances within which she could wield this power, and Stewart emphasises that Anne's different voices reflected her changing identity as she made the transition from daughter to wife to widow.

In another sustained focus on Anne's letters Lynne Magnusson also explores the perceived anomaly between Anne's published and epistolary personas. Magnusson is accurate in identifying and ranking the sources of Anne's authority, noting how her:

status as a well-allied gentlewoman, as a scholar, and as a well-known patron of the Puritan cause also stands behind her words, but, for her high-spending sons, above all [...] it is the material organization of Elizabethan widowhood for women of her class [...] that gives her speech action its sustained legitimacy.⁶⁵

Magnusson then explores the implications of these factors upon the language of Anne and Anthony, and describes Anne's 'godly and motherly plainness [as] a self-consciously theorized Protestant style', that contrasts with Anthony's deliberately obscure and yet still deferential mode of expression.⁶⁶ Magnusson sees the decline of Anthony's tone of respect as correlating with the depletion of Anne's financial resources, and that consequently 'a variation on the Lear story began to take shape'.⁶⁷ However, she fails to outline the full spectrum of Anne's

⁶⁴ Stewart, p. 89.

⁶⁵ 'Widowhood and Linguistic Capital: The Rhetoric and Reception of Anne Bacon's Epistolary Advice', *ELR*, 31 (2001), 3-33 (p. 13).

⁶⁶ Magnusson, p. 21.

⁶⁷ Magnusson, p. 19.

admonitory tone, one that differs significantly when it is found in letters to her sons, Cecil or Essex. Reading much into Anne's exhortations to Essex, Magnusson overlooks factors outside the religious sphere that influenced his response to her, and separates the interests of Essex too firmly from those of his protégés.

A different perspective

While the most recent articles on Anne's letters persuasively demonstrate the complexity of Anne's self-fashioning, in both her printed works and her letters, their restricted scope means that they are unable to analyse sufficiently her general letter-writing practices, and therefore cannot provide a solid assessment of her epistolary persona as it appears in different circumstances. By making Anne the main topic of my study, I have been able to investigate more thoroughly her fulfilment of different roles available to educated women in the period, and to assess the extent to which she manipulated her public and private personas.

My thesis therefore begins by focusing on the material life of the letters, and Chapter One describes the complexities of early modern epistolary practice in order to contextualise the primary source material. I outline Anne's personal letter-writing habits and demonstrate the sophisticated nature of her use of epistolary conventions, which has often been overlooked. By making the processes of writing, sending and reading a letter central to my analysis, I am able to interpret Anne's anxieties about the afterlife of her letters as reflective of the broken trust that exists in her relationship with her sons. Chapter Two examines the dynamic that has the most impact on her letters: the relationship between mother and son. By surveying the general model of this relationship in the period, and by examining the evidence for Anne's personal experience of this relationship, I establish the scope of Anne's authority over her sons, and how this altered as her marital status changed from wife to widow. This investigation is then developed in Chapter Three, as I show that the failure of both parties to fulfil their obligations lies behind the fractious tone of their correspondence, and provides a rationale for Anne's voice of maternal

complaint. Turning to the other spheres over which she held sway and which helped her to maintain her influence in the 1590s, Chapter Four describes her national and international reputation as a proponent of Protestantism, and examines her published works and those works dedicated to her. This allows me to demonstrate the extent of her agency within printed religious culture, and I argue that her astute management of her printed persona helped to protect her from accusations of excessive unorthodoxy. The true extent of her nonconformist activities is revealed in Chapter Five, as by piecing together evidence from her letters and other sources I am able to trace the links that she had with local puritans and the methods by which she attempted to protect nonconformist clerics from the ecclesiastical authorities. Her effective use of her kinship networks, her control over advowsons, and her influence over Anthony allowed her to wield a substantial amount of power, making her a force to be reckoned with.

Interpreting Anne's life through her letters is an endeavour that undoubtedly benefits from drawing on such an evocative and passionately articulated correspondence. While my thesis appreciates this aspect of her letters, I have deliberately attempted not to be overly distracted by her style. This has allowed me to bring the unique status of the correspondence as a resource for the unravelling of the personal, intellectual and political life of an early modern woman to the forefront of my analysis, and has, I hope, enabled me to create a fresh view of such a fascinating figure.

Chapter One

'Lysence me a little more for this once good Mr Secretarie': Anne Bacon's Negotiation of Epistolary Culture

The dominant male culture, in separating man as knower from both woman and from nature as the object of knowledge, evolved certain intellectual polarities which still have the power to blind our imaginations. Any deviance from a quality valued by that culture can be dismissed as negative: where "rationality" is posited as sanity, legitimate method, "real thinking", any alternative, intuitive, supersensory, or poetic knowledge is labeled "irrational". If we listen well to the connotations of "irrational" they are highly charged: we hear overtones of "hysteria" (that disease once supposed to arise in the womb), of "madness" (the absence of a certain type of thinking to which all "rational men" subscribe), and of randomness, chaotic absence of form.¹

As befitted his role as a trusted intimate of the earl of Essex, Anthony Bacon was scrupulous in passing letters that may have been of any importance to his patron. Even, it seems, a letter written by his mother to Robert Cecil, the Secretary of State, complaining about the violent commandeering of one of her horses for the royal post.² Although Anthony considers the letter significant enough to have it copied and passed to Essex, he does not hold as much hope for such an attentive reception of the letter by its rightful recipient, who, Anthony writes, 'I dare ^swear^ will not haue the patience to read so scribled a hand'.³ Consequently he decides not to send on a further note by his mother on the same matter to Cecil, 'knowing that before Mr Secretary haue made an end of reading my Mothers letters will be wearye'. Anthony's presumptive censorship of his mother's correspondence is based upon his own experience of reading

¹ Rich, p. 62.

² ACB to RC (copy), 13 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 129^{r-v} (art. 91).

³ AB to EE, 13 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 147^r (art. 106).

her letters, and the weariness caused by her troublesome hand and unrelenting tone.

Anthony's opinion of his mother's letter-writing techniques reverberates strongly with modern assessments, and some four hundred years later we find historians describing her hand as 'execrable' and 'indecipherable', and her letters left untranscribed due to their supposed illegibility.⁴ More damagingly for her historical reputation, the early modern association of outward form to inward substance is carried over into contemporary thinking, and descriptions of her hand are conflated with her personality. The ill-formed shapes of Anne's characters, the unevenly spaced lines and haphazard insertions are seen as representative of her declining mental faculties. In an illuminating article on the visual impact of the written and printed word, Cathy Shrank suggests that handwriting is 'presented as a form imbued with the essence of its inscriber' and notes how the changing definition of 'character', which slips from "'a graphic symbol,...a letter of the alphabet'" to "'the sum of the moral and mental qualities which distinguish an individual or race'" (according to the Oxford English Dictionary) can be 'traced to the early modern period'.⁵ Shrank's observation of the equation between 'alphabetical character' and 'writer's character' opens up a speculative aperture from which to view precisely how the material and physical nature of Lady Bacon's letters affected the contemporary reception of her words, and how their material nature has driven the later historical understandings of her character.

Even the briefest glimpse at the sequence of letters passed between Anne, Anthony, Essex and Cecil has revealed how alien early modern letter-writing practices are to contemporary notions, particularly in terms of how many pairs of eyes (or indeed ears) were privy to the contents of a letter supposedly written from one person to another. This chapter will seek to show how developments within the field of letter-writing studies facilitates a more nuanced interpretation of Anne's letters, that moves away from merely seeing her untidy habits as synonymous with her failing mind. The sheer number of Anne's extant

⁴ Paul E.J. Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 378, note 190; James Daybell, *Women letter-writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 96.

⁵ "'These few scribbled rules": Representing Scribal Intimacy in Early Modern Print', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67 (2004), 295-314 (p. 298).

holograph letters allows us to establish patterns of epistolary practice specific to her, enabling us to begin to unravel the significations of the different material and textual elements within the letters. By examining how the formal construction of her letters relates to their function, the sophisticated level of her practice quickly becomes apparent, and illustrates how effectively she negotiates the system of epistolary communication. Finally, by investigating the impact that the issues surrounding the transmission of letters had upon their construction, it is possible to see her anxieties about her sons reflected in the very materiality of the letter.

Women's letters

The study of early modern letters has become an increasingly popular area, as the seductive promise of a handwritten missive offering unadulterated access to the desires and motivations of its author proves too much for the modern reader to resist.⁶ Confronted with a document that bears such clear signs of usage – splattered ink blots, the trace of a broken seal, the deep grooves of the fold lines – it is difficult to reject the notion that it represents the unmediated thoughts of the author. The persistence of the basic structure of the letter, and its continual use as a mode of communication in everyday life, lends the letter form a deceptive simplicity, and tempts the modern reader to approach it with less historical sensitivity than they would apply to other manuscript documents.⁷ The promise of closer access to the subject that the letter potentially provides has proved particularly alluring for those studying the history of women, frustrated as they are by the small number of female-authored texts available for analysis, and hampered by the conventions that inhibit the topics open for discussion in contemporary texts. James Daybell's identification of 650 women letter writers operating in the Tudor period, and his location of the existence of more than 3,000 letters, has induced him to argue for a 'reassessment of the

⁶For example, the impetus to hear Penelope, Lady Rich 'speak in her own words through the many letters in her own hand' drives Grace Ioppolo to inadequately historicise Rich's correspondence with Anthony Bacon. "I desire to be helde in your memory": Reading Penelope Rich through Her Letters', in *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies*, ed. by Dymphna Callaghan (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 299-325 (p. 301 and pp. 318-320).

⁷Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), p. 287.

sixteenth century as a period of literary production for women'.⁸ Falling between the gaps created by the boundaries of history and English literature subject areas, these letters have for many years remained an 'untapped' resource, the potential of which has been realised only with the rise of interdisciplinary studies.⁹ The readjustment of critical perspectives of these letters has elevated the genre within the field of women's studies, and the importance of these documents for reconstructing the experiences of everyday life, assessing the construction of self-hood, and analysing linguistic developments is now being fully explored. Daybell's extensive and varied studies of different aspects of women's letter-writing practice in particular has laid the groundwork for subsequent scrutiny of this form and has made women's letters, in many ways, a more fully described area of research than letters written by men.¹⁰ Through a close investigation of the material, thematic and rhetorical elements of the letters, Daybell has shown how the diverse nature of women's letters is a result of the interrelation of educational, social and personal factors, and he offers a broad yet detailed outline of the processes of production, composition, transmission and reception that affected women's letter-writing.¹¹ This research into women's letters has made a substantial contribution to the wider field of the study of letters, and I aim to engage with some of the key principles explored by Daybell in relation to Anne Bacon throughout the following chapter.

Letter-writing historiography

Although women's letters offer a different perspective from male-authored texts on many aspects of early modern life and experience, the form of the letter used by both genders is rooted in the same material and ideological

⁸ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 33; James Daybell, 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England, 1540-1603: An Introduction to the Issues of Authorship and Construction,' *Shakespeare Studies*, 27 (1999), 161-86 (p. 162).

⁹ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 33.

¹⁰ James Daybell, 'Recent Studies in Sixteenth-Century Letters', *ELR*, 35 (2005), 331-362 (p. 350).

¹¹ See Daybell 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England'; 'Introduction' and 'Female Literacy and the Social Conventions of Women's Letter-Writing in England, 1540-1603', in *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700*, ed. by James Daybell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 1-15 and pp. 59-76; 'Scripting a Female Voice: Women's Epistolary Rhetoric in Sixteenth-Century Letters of Petition', *Women's Writing*, 13 (2006), 3-22; *Women letter-writers*. Daybell also provides a useful survey of the field in 'Recent Studies in Sixteenth-Century Letters'.

developments. A plethora of scholars have attempted to recuperate the process of letter-writing in early modern England, resulting in a body of research that aims to untangle the rhetorical, social and material significance of these texts.

Much of the earliest work on early modern letters is concerned with situating the form within the classical, medieval and renaissance theories of letter-writing and Claudio Guillén notes that 'letters may be regarded as one of the classical genres that are cultivated again or resurrected during the renaissance'.¹² The strict codification of the form developed by medieval theorists in letter-writing manuals, known as the *ars dictaminis* structured letters according to the five parts of classical oration: *Salutatio* (greeting); *Captatio benevolentiae*, or *exordium* (complimentary opening); *Narratio* (the main substance of the letter); *Petitio* (the request); *Conclusio* (conclusion).¹³ The rediscovery of Cicero's *De Oratore*, *Brutus*, and *Orator* in 1421 replenished the genre with a further set of models for composition based on the rules of oratory, but the form remained largely dependent upon the original five.¹⁴ It was, however, the need of the growing humanist movement to find a mode of communication more suited to the circulation of their ideas than oratory that inaugurated a real change in the form, and the compatibility of the letter form to the new printing technology proved the winning combination by which to achieve their aims.¹⁵

Epistolography discovered a new, innovative and eloquent proponent in the Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus, and his textbook on letter-writing, *De conscribendis epistolis*, was reprinted over one hundred times in the sixteenth-century, and widely drawn on by later vernacular texts on the same topic.¹⁶ Erasmus's departure from previous models of letter-writing was achieved by his promotion of the more personal and flexible possibilities of the genre, and he moulded the form into something more appropriate for the sixteenth-century letter writer's needs, adding a fourth type of letter, the familiar letter, to the three

¹² 'Notes Towards the Study of the Renaissance Letter', in *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History and Interpretation*, ed. by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (London: Harvard University Press, 1986) pp. 70-101 (p. 71).

¹³ Charles Fantazzi's Introductory note to *De Conscribendis epistolis*, trans by Fantazzi, in *Collected Works of Erasmus: Literary and Educational Writings 3*, ed. by J.K. Sowards, (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 25, p. 7.

¹⁴ Fantazzi, p. 7.

¹⁵ Fantazzi, p. 6.

¹⁶ Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 25.

classical models already established, which are explored below.¹⁷ For Erasmus, according to Lisa Jardine, letters enable ‘the making present of absent persons in living form, the communication of feeling and relationship publicly, but in the language of intimacy’, illustrating how perfectly suited the letter in its printed form was for the self-promotion of humanist scholars.¹⁸

Alongside the classical examples of letters, such as Cicero’s *Ad familiares*, Erasmus’s *De conscribendis epistolis* and *De duplici copia verborum et rerum* became the key texts by which sixteenth-century children were taught Latin composition.¹⁹ Vernacular epistolary manuals such as William Fulwood’s *The enimie of idlenesse* (1568), Abraham Flemings *A panoplie of epistles, or a looking glass for the unlearned* (1576) and Angel Day’s *The English secretorie* (1586) drew on humanist epistolography in their efforts to instruct the literate public in letter-writing skills.²⁰ These texts married the humanist ideals of letter-writing ‘to make absent friends present’ with the quotidian practices of sixteenth-century England and their instructions and examples of ideally structured letters have proved attractive models for scholars seeking to interpret manuscript letters.²¹ Whilst it is obviously important to trace the genealogy of the letter as a form, the extent to which the average sixteenth-century letter-writer used the prescriptions of the epistolary manuals in practice is a contentious matter. Despite the common caveat regarding modern critical use of these manuals, they are invariably referred to in any attempt to historicize letters, but the problems of applying the rules and regulations of these artificial guides to actual letters will become apparent in the following analysis of Anne’s letters.

Giles Constable suggests that while the humanist letters ‘remained within the framework of traditional epistolography’, it was ‘letter writers who were dealing with more everyday affairs who for the first time really broke out of this

¹⁷ Mack, p. 25.

¹⁸ *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 149.

¹⁹ Mack, p. 24.

²⁰ Jean Robertson, *The Art of Letter Writing: An Essay on the Handbooks published during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (London: University Press of Liverpool, 1942), pp. 17-20.

²¹ For example Lynne Magnusson uses Day in ‘A Rhetoric of Requests: Genre and Linguistic Scripts in Elizabethan Women’s Suitors’ Letters’, in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. by James Daybell, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 56-72; and Jonathan Gibson uses Day and Fulwood in ‘Significant Space in Manuscript Letters’, *The Seventeenth Century*, 12 (1997), 1-9.

framework and created the type of intimate vernacular private letter that is familiar today'.²² Constable cites the letters of the Stonor and Paston families, which span the late medieval period, as examples of the appropriation of the form, as in their focus on the day-to-day management of family affairs they are as far from the literary letters written by humanists as can be imagined.²³ Yet this is precisely why Constable believes they are of such great interest, as they offer a wealth of social and historical information that is absent from the formulaic literary letters.²⁴

Although these letters are clearly the forerunners of sixteenth-century familiar letters, they differ significantly in tone, and express little personal affection and emotion beyond that required by convention. Ralph Houlbrooke suggests that the formal deferential salutations found in fifteenth-century letters were replaced with more personal ones in the sixteenth-century, and that letters became 'fuller and more intimate records of pleasures and preoccupations'.²⁵ He traces this alteration to the influence of humanism, seeking as it did to infuse letters with a personal and intimate tone. In relation to women writers, James Daybell sees this apparent shift from a rigid, impersonal style to one more reflective of the personality of the writer as possibly related to the increased literacy of women, which enabled them to dispense with the use of an amanuensis and pen their own letters.²⁶

If the formulae of model epistolary construction do not prove entirely relevant for investigations of actual letters, analyzing the verbal conventions that structure letters has proved more fertile for literary historians seeking to contextualise such documents. Drawing on rhetorical theory, Frank Whigham shows that the 'apparent rambling' pleas of a suitor for the Deanery of Durham must in fact 'be seen as political know-how carefully suited to the accomplishment of the goals' of the letter-writer, as their letter becomes an opportunity for displaying learning.²⁷ Whigham also asserts the hybrid nature of the letter, seeing it as both an historical and literary document. He suggests that

²² *Letter and Letter-collections* (Turnhout: Éditions Brepols, 1976), p. 40.

²³ Constable, p. 40.

²⁴ Constable, p. 40.

²⁵ *The English Family 1450-1700* (London: Longman, 1984), p. 170.

²⁶ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 17.

²⁷ 'The Rhetoric of Elizabethan Suitor's Letters', *PMLA*, 96 (1981), 864-882 (p. 870).

these texts 'display much self-conscious artistry', which demands that they be scrutinized as literature, yet their authors are 'engaged in fully pragmatic activity' that requires attentive unfurling.²⁸ The dual nature of the letter is a key theme within modern epistolary commentary, and Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb define letters as 'composed texts; they filter representations of lived experience through the rhetorical forms that shape them', yet they are 'embedded in everyday practice and take their meaning from the part they play in actual lives and relationships'.²⁹ For Couchman and Crabb the manipulation of rhetorical devices by authors is as significant as any historical 'fact' that may emerge from the letter. Lynne Magnusson develops Whigham's use of rhetorical theory, using it alongside modern-day discourse pragmatics to assess how successful the linguistic strategies of women's suitors' letters were in achieving their aims, and how language is affected by the social relations of the writer and addressee.³⁰

The rise of interdisciplinary approaches has enabled critics to mobilize the theories and research techniques of anthropology as an alternative lens through which to examine letters. Susan Whyman applies anthropological methodologies alongside close historical analysis to examine the seventeenth-century Verney family letters, and this enables her to unravel the significance of the 'rituals of everyday life', such as gift-giving and coach lending, in order to demonstrate the complexity of the 'personal networks and dynamic interactions' of the gentry.³¹ Whyman also sees letter collections as playing an important role in the linking of "'big" and "little" history', as despite the apparent specificity of the letter to the time and place of its creation, its inevitable connection to other letters and its role as a link within a larger chain allows it to 'impart a larger meaning' for cultural and social analysis.³² Gary Schneider also turns to the

²⁸ Whigham, p. 864.

²⁹ Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb, 'Form and Persuasion in Women's Letters', in *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700: Form and Persuasion*, ed. by Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 5.

³⁰ Magnusson, 'A Rhetoric of Requests'. Magnusson's application of these theories to the general letter-writing field can be seen in *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue: Dramatic Language and Elizabethan Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

³¹ Susan E. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late-Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 8.

³² Susan E. Whyman, 'The Correspondence of Esther Masham and John Locke: A Study in Epistolary Silences', *Studies in the Cultural History of Letter-Writing*, special issues of *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 66, nos 3 and 4 (2003), 275-305 (p. 301).

cultural conditions of the circulation of letters in order to interpret them. Focusing on the language of letter-writing, Schneider sees letters as 'sociotexts: collective social forms designed, understood, and expected to circulate within designated epistolary circles', and suggests that the rhetorical devices found in letters reflect an intense awareness of the instability of their production and transmission.³³ His approach foregrounds the practical elements of the epistolary communication process specific to the period, and he notes that 'the traditional dyadic model of letter exchange [...] is insufficient to comprehend the collective nature of letter writing, transmission, and reception in the period'.³⁴ James Daybell's exposition of the varied processes undertaken in the writing and composing of women's letters also highlights how letter-writing was a 'collaborative, communal, and strategic form'.³⁵ The collaborative aspect of letter-writing is particularly pertinent for women letter-writers, as low levels of literacy made it more likely that they would use the services of a scribe or amanuensis.³⁶ In such cases the main body of the text would be penned by the scribe, with the sender's own signature added to authenticate the document, a form known as an *autograph* letter. In contrast those women who had received a more extensive education often wrote their own letters, producing what is known as a *holograph* letter. The manner of production therefore tells us a considerable amount about how letters were composed, and is applicable to both male and female letter-writers. Most recently Alan Stewart has explored in great detail the impact of the material processes of the writing, sending and reading of letters, as part of a wider project to return a 'historical specificity' to the letters that appear in the plays of William Shakespeare.³⁷

Faced with handwritten texts, students of letters have been urged by a number of scholars to pay closer attention to the visual organisation of the document. A.R. Braunmuller's work on literary manuscripts ignited an interest in the significance of spatial conventions to the meaning of the text, and his

³³ Schneider, p. 22.

³⁴ Schneider, p. 22.

³⁵ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 46.

³⁶ Daybell, 'Female Literacy', p. 59.

³⁷ Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare's Letters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 5.

suggestions have been eagerly taken up by those seeking to incorporate an analysis of the material form of letters more firmly into epistolary studies.³⁸

Jonathan Gibson continues this strand of work, noting the relationship between the spatial construction of the letter and social relations. Observing how William Fulwood and Angel Day instruct letter-writers to position the subscription according to the relative status of writer and addressee, Gibson highlights how the strict social hierarchy of the early modern period was reflected in the material construction of the letter as well as its rhetorical devices.³⁹ Sara Jayne Steen urges manuscript scholars to 'read beyond the words', and emphasises the importance of paying critical attention to the handwriting as well as the spacing of the letter.⁴⁰ Steen suggests that critics should not rely on early modern letter-writing manuals to interpret letters, but instead should make comparisons with other letters by the same writer, in order to understand their personal code of conventions.⁴¹ Jonathan Goldberg takes a more theoretical approach to the material nature of letters, focusing on the significations of handwriting for the development of the author's identity.⁴² And providing a typographer's perspective of the sixteenth-century letter, Sue Walker argues that the technology of writing affects the graphic organization of the letter as much as any adherence to rules found in manuals.⁴³

Such wide-ranging and detailed research has helped to create a robust critical framework within which to situate the letters of Anne Bacon. The scope of Anne's education means that a comparison of her letters to the humanist models is a more relevant exercise than it is for many other female letter-

³⁸ A.R. Braunmuller, 'Accounting for absence: the transcription of space', in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985-1991*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Text and Studies (vol. 27) in conjunction with the Renaissance English Text Society, 1993), 47-56. See also James Daybell, 'Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters in Early Modern England', *Literature Compass*, 6 (2009), 647-667.

³⁹ Gibson, 'Significant Space', p. 2.

⁴⁰ Sara Jayne Steen, 'Reading Beyond the Words: Material Letters and the Process of Interpretation', *Quidditas, The Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association*, 22 (2001) 55-69 (p. 55). *The Letters of Lady Arbella Stuart*, ed. by Sara Jayne Steen (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁴¹ Steen, 'Reading Beyond the Words', p. 63.

⁴² *Writing Matter: From the Hands of the English Renaissance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 62.

⁴³ Sue Walker, 'Letter-Writing' in *Typography and Language in Everyday Life: Prescriptions and Practices* (Harlow: Longman, 2001).

writers. Her epistolary practice demonstrates a familiarity with the spectrum of formality required by the early modern decorum of written communication, as she produces letters of both a formal and familiar nature. By drawing on the research undertaken into how the social relation of writer and addressee affects the rhetorical and physical construction of the letter, it becomes possible to see the extent of the dependency of her letters on wider societal conventions governing mother-son relations. Finally, an increased awareness of the problems surrounding the sending and reading of letters, and how their form and content reflected these anxieties, also helps to contextualise her anxieties concerning her sons' reception of her letters.

General letter-writing conventions

The possibility that both men and women were less directed by the conventions presented in epistolary books is raised by Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe, who suggest that although 'a good number of young Englishmen came away from their education with Erasmus's letterwriting precepts etched in their minds, [...] there was still a leap to be made from those models, deeply involved in a Latin education, to their possible application in a vernacular English setting.'⁴⁴ The pupil's absorption of Erasman theories and models of letter-writing occurred within the context of their schooling in Latin composition, as they were directed to his texts to guide their letter-writing exercises.⁴⁵ In *De conscribendis epistolis* Erasmus defines the classical categories under which letters can be grouped: persuasive, demonstrative, and judicial, and adds the familiar letter as an alternative category. Under the umbrella of persuasive letters the following topics are clustered: 'conciliation, reconciliation, encouragement, discouragement, persuasion, dissuasion, consolation, petition, recommendation, admonition and the amatory letter'. Under 'demonstrative' he includes accounts of persons, places and things, and the judicial class embraces such topics as 'accusation, complaint, defence, protest, justification, reproach, threat, invective and entreaty'. The category of familiar letter

⁴⁴ *Letterwriting in Renaissance England*, ed. by Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe (Washington DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2004), p. 22.

⁴⁵ Mack, p. 24.

encompasses narrative letters, those that announce news, congratulatory and consolatory letters, business letters, letters of gratitude, praise, obligation and humour. Erasmus then discusses each model and provides classical and personal examples. Angel Day's *The English secretorie* replicates this division into genres and sub-genres, and also provides examples of these. In theory every possible contingency was covered; in practice what seems to have occurred is that these regulations were more likely to have been followed for the composition of a formal letter than a familiar letter.⁴⁶

For Daybell, 'women's domestic epistolary writing' can be characterized by its 'Protean' nature, as it took on a range of flexible and highly personal forms that depended on the intersection of multiple factors such as the education of the writer, the function of the letter, and the relative social relationship of the writer and addressee.⁴⁷ The tailoring of their education toward practical purposes meant that they were unlikely to have been significantly affected by the formal pedagogy of letter-writing, and more influenced by their everyday experience of practical letter-writing.⁴⁸ Daybell suggests that while most women's familiar letters maintained opening and closing conventions, the main body of the letter was rarely structured in the fashion prescribed by letter-writing manuals.⁴⁹ However, within this large range of women's letters there are distinct types of letters, all of which harness specific forms and rhetorical conventions. At the most formal end of the scale lies the letter of petition, a sub-genre that accounts 'for almost one-third of women's letters during the sixteenth century', and can be divided into letters seeking favours on the behalf of kin, servants and friends, and those seeking assistance and advantages for the writer.⁵⁰ The mode of petition automatically assumed the need for a humble tone on behalf of the suitor, especially as the request would most frequently have been addressed to someone of a higher status, and such letters often relied heavily on the models of petitionary letters found in the letter-writing manuals. Much early modern

⁴⁶ Peter Mack suggests that letters dealing with practical business matters were more reliant on conventional forms than letters written to friends, p. 114.

⁴⁷ *Women Letter-Writers*, p. 45.

⁴⁸ *Reading Early Modern Women: An Anthology of Texts in Manuscript and Print*, ed. by Helen Ostovich and Elizabeth Sauer (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 187; James Daybell, 'Introduction' in *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing*, p. 7.

⁴⁹ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 23.

⁵⁰ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 229.

correspondence dealt with business matters, and as mentioned above these types of letters tended to follow conventional prescriptions. Letters responding to events in the life-cycle (birth, marriage, death) also followed established patterns, and Peter Mack suggests that this was particularly important for letters of consolation, as their main function was to convey 'a sense of order and reassurance', and 'originality in letters of this type would be a sign of anxiety, of uncertain or inappropriate sentiments on the part of the writer.'⁵¹ The letters which were constructed in the most flexible manner tended to be those that communicated instructions, often in relation to estate management, and those that contained family news, local gossip and advice.⁵² In letters of this type the writer often skips from topic to topic, and although the purpose of the letter may have been stated in the first few lines, the remaining available space is often filled up with matters of a more conversational nature.⁵³

While no form of letter was gender specific, those written by women often deployed an explicitly feminine rhetorical style. Daybell describes how letters of petition often made use of a deferential trope that foregrounds the cultural norms of 'female "weakness", "frailty", "vulnerability", women's intellectual and physical "inferiority" to men', and that these characteristics 'could be employed to their own advantage to manipulate male assumptions'.⁵⁴ When used in letters of petition, this 'melancholic rhetoric' echoed the voice of lament used by female characters in Ovid's *Heroides*, and could be used by both male and female suitors.⁵⁵ These devices could be made even more potent when combined with traits specific to the marital status of the (woman) writer. By emphasizing the 'ideal types of feminine behaviour' associated with the good wife, mother and widow, women activated a voice of authority that exploited common notions of womanhood.⁵⁶ Their regular self-identification as mother or wife indicates the importance of letters for the construction and maintenance of family ties, and shows that the rhetorical conventions found in such letters are therefore

⁵¹ Mack, p. 116.

⁵² Mack, p. 116.

⁵³ See for example Lady Anne (Bacon) Townshend's letter to her son, Sir Roger Townshend, dated 8 August 1619, where she covers many topics in a short space. Printed in Stewart and Wolfe, pp. 85-87.

⁵⁴ Daybell, *Women letter-writers* p. 255.

⁵⁵ Daybell, *Women letter-writers* pp. 252-3.

⁵⁶ Daybell, *Women letter-writers* p. 255.

generated by the social relations between writer and addressee rather than by the purpose of the letter and the sub-genre under which it can be seen to fall.

Anne Bacon's letter-writing conventions

The exchange of letters between Anne and Anthony Bacon makes up the largest surviving body of letters between a mother and son from the sixteenth-century.⁵⁷ Numbering around one hundred and eighty letters in total, this correspondence provides us with enough material to begin to lay out a more personal pattern of epistolary practice, by considering which conventions she makes use of in relation to the function of the letter. It also allows us to investigate the extent to which the maternal relationship directs the contents of the letters.

In order to glean some sense of the processes undertaken by Anne when writing a letter we need first to consider the nature of her education and the likely impact it had on her writing practices. In contrast to the majority of English women, Anne, Lady Bacon, received an education that is highly likely to have exposed her to the humanist letter-writing models outlined above. Although there exists no precise information as to the curriculum the Cooke children followed, the later attainments of the sisters in both classical and modern languages suggests that it is likely to have been similar to the syllabi recommended by humanist educators. The heavy reliance of such pedagogy on the works of Erasmus makes it reasonable to assume that the children would have come in contact with epistolary theory, and would have had practical experience in devising letters according to the prescribed models. The ownership of Erasmus's *De duplici copia verborum et rerum* and *De conscribendis epistolis* by Anne's elder sister Mildred, Lady Burghley, indicates the familiarity with such texts by a figure closely comparable to Anne, although

⁵⁷ Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers*, p. 179.

the publication dates of these editions are much later than the years of her schooling.⁵⁸

Viewing the entire corpus of Anne, Lady Bacon's surviving letters it becomes evident that she was keenly aware of the overarching theory of humanist epistolography – of the necessity for the style and tone of the letter to be appropriate to the subject matter and the status of the person to whom it is addressed.⁵⁹ The fact that the bulk of the holograph letters which survive are addressed to her sons and are written in an informal style often gives the impression that she did not apply formal epistolary principles to her letters.

However, the manner in which she chooses to write to her sons is for the most part in keeping with contemporary models of mother-to-son relationships, and survival of other, more formal, letters indicates that her letter-writing style was governed by the purpose of the letter. In his assessment of how far early modern letter-writers used rhetorical techniques, Peter Mack notes how a letter written by Anne congratulating her step-son Nathaniel Bacon on the birth of his daughter is structured around the same points that Sir Thomas Gresham, the father of Nathaniel Bacon's wife, uses in similar circumstances four years later.⁶⁰ Lady Bacon begins the letter by congratulating Nathaniel on the birth of his daughter, excuses herself for not being able to make the christening and appoints 'my dawghter Wyndham' to go in her place, describes the present she has sent and ends with a final line of congratulation to the recently delivered mother. Such a formalized expression of congratulation signals her fulfilment of her step-motherly duties.

Another example of Anne's awareness of socially acceptable formulae of letter-writing is evinced by her letters of petition written to William and Robert Cecil. Letters of petition (or request) from suitors to those in more powerful positions covered the full gamut of early modern needs - financial, political, personal - yet they were generally channelled through a similarly constructed

⁵⁸ The books owned by Mildred were: *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo multa accessione novisque formulis locupletati. Una cum commentariis M. Veltkirchii* (London, 1573), and *Opus de conscribendis epistolis, ex postrema auctoris recognitione emendatius editum* (Antwerp, 1564). Caroline Bowden, 'The Library of Mildred Cooke Cecil, Lady Burghley', *The Library*, 7 (2006), 2-29 (p. 27), appendix nos 14 and 15.

⁵⁹ Fantazzi, p. 8.

⁶⁰ Mack, p. 115. ACB to Nathaniel Bacon, 6 August 1573, *Stiffkey*, I, pp. 81-2; Thomas Gresham to Nathaniel Bacon, 3 April 1577, *Stiffkey*, I, p. 254.

epistolary frame. Letters of petition written by women have provided historians with an alternative method by which to assess female political power, and Caroline Bowden has demonstrated how elite women served as channels by which to influence patrons on behalf of others as well as for themselves.⁶¹ These letters consisted of five rhetorical parts, not all of which were used in each instance.⁶² These were *exordium* (introduction); *narratio* or *propositio* (which outlined the subject of the letter); *petitio* (request); *confirmatio* (amplification); *confutatio* (refutation of objections); *peroratio* (conclusion). Although there was no specification for a different use of this form by male and female writers, this was a sub-genre in which women frequently incorporated deferential tropes of womanhood and familial stereotypes in order to add a further element of persuasion to their texts. Anne's letters to William Cecil should therefore be viewed against the wider background of this sub-genre, as they offer a rare example of her formal letter writing techniques.

Her most formal letter of petition occurs in connection to her intervention in religious politics. The letter begins by thanking Cecil for allowing her access into the Houses of Parliament in order to witness a debate over religious policy, and she makes requests relating to the outcome of his debate; namely that two ministers from the reforming party be allowed to put their case before the Queen or Privy Council.⁶³ The structure of her letter can be seen as a loose imitation of the format of a letter of petition outlined above. It opens with a few introductory lines which refer to her previous contact with Cecil, proceeds to outline the circumstances to her request, makes the request, elaborates on the cause by promoting the goodness of those for who she is making the request, justifies her involvement, and then concludes with an appropriate display of humility. The clearest divergence from the conventional format is the justification of her involvement, which she chooses to explain at length, possibly the result of the unorthodox nature of her intervention into political and ecclesiastical matters. Daybell suggests that deviations from the structural and linguistic form of letters of petition 'indicate more personal elements of women's

⁶¹ Caroline Bowden 'Women as Intermediaries: an Example of the Use of Literacy in the Late Sixteenth Century and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *History of Education*, 22 (1993), 215-223.

⁶² Daybell, 'Scripting a Female Voice', p. 5.

⁶³ Anne's motivations for writing this letter are discussed in Chapter Five.

petitions', and this is certainly true in this case, as this detour into her history of salvation inserts a highly personal element into this otherwise formally structured document.⁶⁴

The rhetorical conventions employed within the letter also indicate its situation within this sub-genre. The salutation used by Anne in the opening line ('myne speciall goode Lorde') signals her deference to Cecil, and similar terms of address are used throughout the letter.⁶⁵ She repeatedly places herself in the conventional position of a humble suitor, by apologising for the 'troublesome' nature of her request, and foregrounding any notion of presumption on her behalf by referring to the 'bowldeness' of her suit. In reference to the suit she is making Anne highlights the pitiable state of the ministers, illustrates their worthiness, and amplifies the harmful behaviour of the bishops, a construction that reveals her easy use of rhetorical modes of petition. Her supplication also includes the conventions of praise and goodwill for her superior, and she writes of the 'very entier Affection I owe and do beare unto your honor', and of her obligations towards him for his 'comfortable dealing towards me and myne', which implies their kinship connections rather than making them explicit. The subscription invokes a blessing for Cecil and his family, indicating her interpolation of deferential devices into all elements of the letter.

Materially the letter also reflects her humbleness, as it is penned in the most legible example of her handwriting extant, suggesting she has used her presentation hand for this letter. In her analysis of Arbella Stuart's hand, Sara Jayne Steen suggests that Stuart, like other 'aristocratic and highly literate women', used 'a presentation italic hand for formal letters to her social superiors or politically influential friends [...] and an informal italic hand for letters to family, friends, and social inferiors'.⁶⁶ The effort expended on the production of the text was therefore symbolic of the pleader's respect for their superior. Anne also excuses her use of two sheets of paper, writing, 'For thinnes of the paper I

⁶⁴ 'Scripting a Female Voice', p. 17.

⁶⁵ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fols 119^r-120^v. In a comparison of the terms of address used in letters of petition to Sir Julius Caesar and William Lord Burghley, Daybell notes that Burghley was addressed by terms of greater deference, due to his senior status, for example 'my very good lord', 'my singular good lord', 'right honourable my very good Lord', whereas Caesar is addressed as 'Good master Caesar'. Anne's choice of address clearly fits this convention. 'Scripting a Female Voice', p. 9.

⁶⁶ Steen, 'Reading Beyond the Words', p. 57.

write in thother leaf for myn yll eyes', suggesting that she recognizes that such a letter should not be too lengthy in order to avoid the irritation of the addressee.

Anne is clearly aware of the conventional requirements of a letter of petition, and her deft production of such a letter suggests she is a practised hand in this form. The rhetorical choices she makes prevents it from being a formulaic model of request: she does not make their kinship ties explicit, or use the deferential tropes so often used by women and she refuses the option of casting herself in the role of a poor widow. This is possibly connected to the nature of the request she is making, as the fact that she is attempting to enter a specifically politico-religious arena may have meant that she wished to distance herself from the iconography associated with female supplicants, in order to present herself as a rational suitor.

In a second, less formal, letter of petition addressed to William Cecil, Anne writes on behalf of her nephew, Robert Bacon, who is seeking the wardship of a Mr Tyrell.⁶⁷ Anne's opening line ('I humblie desire your honor to licence me to write in somewhat a more unaccustomed stile unto your good lordship') suggests that she rarely petitions Cecil, and hints at the existence of a regular correspondence between Cecil and Anne in which she is perhaps more used to writing to him as a friend than a suitor. By emphasising her 'unaccustomed stile' she illustrates her awareness and usage of the different rhetorical styles appropriate to various types of letter, and highlights the uniqueness of her plea. Anne is careful to stress her personal association and respect for Robert Bacon, a claim that bolsters the authenticity of her suit. In this case she does sign her letter 'late lord keepers widow', perhaps feeling more at liberty to draw on her previous status in a matter that is not associated with religious politics. Although her tone in this letter is deferential and the letter structured in a conventional fashion, it is written in a more relaxed fashion than her previous letter. This reflects the fact that this suit is of a less controversial nature than the one concerning the suspended ministers, and shows how the petitionary framework altered, depending on the content.

⁶⁷ ACB to WC, 10 March 1596, LPL MS 656 fols 95^r-96^v (art. 59).

Anne's authorship of two further letters of petition, both to Robert Cecil, shows how her utilisation of deferential tropes relates to the nature of the request and the status of the recipient. One letter is written on behalf of a forest ranger in Enfield, who is seeking employment under Cecil.⁶⁸ Anne's obligations to this man are fairly insubstantial - his brother-in-law resides in her parish, and she thinks the ranger is a 'comely man'. These factors indicate she had little personal investment in whether or not Robert Cecil chose to employ the man, unlike the plea she had made to his father. It seems that Anne is also influenced by the younger age and lesser status of Robert to his father, and as a consequence she writes to him in an informal style reminiscent of the manner in which she writes to her own sons. Her letter begins abruptly, 'This Bearer, Syr Robert, is he sayth A ranger in Enfeild', and by embedding her salutation into the opening line, she makes little effort to elevate his status. Once she has made her suit she turns quickly to a discussion of her own affairs, making no attempt to signal her change of topic through the spatial organisation of the text. With little preamble she also slips in a request for venison, suggesting that she retains the socially superior position to the recipient of the letter. Her subscription emphasises their familial bond: 'Fare yow well, good nephew [...] Yowr Aunt A Bacon', as do her references to family affairs. The inclusion of such details, the informal structure and her mode of address suggest that the letter is conceived of as an informal letter of petition.

The second letter to Robert Cecil is more formal, perhaps as a result of his promotion to the position of Secretary of State in 1596, as well as the nature of demands contained within it.⁶⁹ Anne opens the letter by addressing Robert Cecil as 'Mr Secretarie and honorable Nephew', allowing her to emphasise both his political status and position of kinship to her. As with her letter to William Cecil, she refers to their last meeting in order to establish the continuity of her plea: 'I thanke yow for allowinge your ^old^ aunt some speche with some leisure at my laste beinge with yow'. She then invokes the memory of his father's services to her, suggesting that 'since it pleased my Lord yowr Father to use me so kindlie thereto, that yow will doe so much for me', and she proceeds to press once

⁶⁸ ACB to RC, 13 July 1594, *HMC Hatfield*, IX, pp. 560-561. BL Microfilm 27/33.

⁶⁹ ACB to RC (copy), 13 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 129^{r-v} (art. 91).

more for their support for gentleman who has been 'descredited' by the townspeople of St Albans. Once again her suit develops in loosely structured manner, although here she does apologise for the length of her letter, 'Lysence ^me^ a little more for this once good Mr Secretarie', signalling her recognition that she needs to harness at least a minimal mode of deference. Her next plea, concerning the sequestration of one of her horses for the royal post, is cleverly introduced by a line that highlights her weakness and vulnerability, 'After I had written the premises and paused for my weake sight the Lorde lighten my soles sight this fell out to my much unqwytange [disquietude]'. Her relation of the events paints a dramatic and violent picture of the incident, and contrasts effectively with the persona of an elderly lady that she has so artfully created. In this example of a letter of petition we see how Anne manipulates the rhetorical conventions common to the genre in order to make her plea more persuasive.

Family letters

Anne's letters of congratulation and petition demonstrate her assimilation and reproduction of some of the most formal modes of epistolary cultural conventions. The bulk of her letters, however, display a familiarity with a more informal epistolary relationship, that between mother and son. The relations inscribed in these letters reflected societal expectations of the role of mothers and sons, and consequently we find a correspondence structured by maternal authority and filial obedience. Motherhood offered women in this period a rare chance to wield authority in moral, religious and practical matters, and as a result letters from mothers are filled with advice on all manner of topics. The maternal position of authority was further intensified by widowhood, which allowed the mother to assume the primary parental role. Anne's advice often morphs into instruction, and then usually into censure, as she demands her counsel be put into practice. However her correspondence shows that maternal letters could also demonstrate care and affection, expressed either verbally within the letter or materially through gifts accompanying the letter. The responses of Anthony and Francis show that a son was expected to reciprocate with letters that demonstrated their respect, obedience and gratitude, as well as expressing concern and interest in their mother's health and well-being. This

show of care combined with frequent apologies about their conduct worked to defuse the more censorious elements of their mother's letters, and aided the maintenance of an epistolary relationship that in turn stabilized the bond between mother and son.

This relationship was reaffirmed within the letter by salutations and subscriptions that continually reiterated the relationship of writer to the recipient. In *A panoplie of epistles* Abraham Fleming suggests that mothers should be addressed as 'most loving', 'carefull', 'naturall', 'tender', and fathers as 'wellbeloved', 'reverend', 'right good', an epistolary reflection of the differentiation between parenting roles in the period.⁷⁰ Although the letter-writing manuals contain a common crop of standard letters of advice and admonition from fathers to sons, and the appropriate apologetic response, and widow's complaints to their sons are also regularly featured, there are fewer examples of letters written to mothers. This is indicative of a lack of anxiety surrounding this particular epistolary relationship, possibly as a result of the small social or commercial risk involved in such a communication, and the easy translation of conventional filial platitudes into a written form.⁷¹ Anthony's terms of address reflect this standard, and his salutations emphasise his mother's status and relationship to him. He often opens his letters with 'To the honourable his very good Ladie and mother the Lady Anne Bacon widdowe', or a similar such combination, although this term of address might also be placed at the end, indicating a flexibility about the structure of the letter.⁷² He also uses the more concise salutatory line 'my most humble dutie remembred'.⁷³ His subscriptions are similarly respectful, and he will often conclude with a phrase along the lines of 'your moste humble and obedient sonne anthony bacon', or 'Your Ladieships most humble and obedient sonne'.⁷⁴ If he does not mention his filial identity he still highlights his subservience to her, concluding 'and so with remembrance of

⁷⁰ *A panoplie of epistles* (London: [by H. Middleton] for Ralph Newberie, 1576), sig. B3^v.

⁷¹ Linda C. Mitchell suggests that a letter in which a widow asks her son to study rather than drink and gamble can be found in 'virtually every manual'. 'Entertainment and Instruction: Women's Roles in the English Epistolary Tradition', *Studies in the Cultural History of Letter-Writing*, special issue of *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 66, nos 3 and 4, (2003), 331-347 (p. 332).

⁷² Examples of the first usage can be seen in AB to ACB, 5 February, LPL MS 649 fol. 49^{r-v} (art. 31); the second can be found in AB to ACB, 20 January 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 22^{r-v} (art. 13).

⁷³ AB to ACB, 28 May 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 135^{r-v} (art. 87).

⁷⁴ AB to ACB, 20 August 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 264^{r-v} (art. 173); AB to ACB, 28 May 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 135^{r-v} (art. 87).

my humble dewty I take my leaue'.⁷⁵ Francis follows a similar pattern, opening his letter with the same phrase 'my humble dewtie remembred', and signing-off 'your Ladieships most obedient sonne'.⁷⁶

In contrast Anne's letters to Anthony are less likely to refer to their kinship in the salutation, and on the rare occasions when she does she simply addresses him as 'sonne'.⁷⁷ The most frequent allusion to her relationship to him occurs in the superscription, which usually reads 'To my sonne Mr Anthony Bacon'.⁷⁸ Observing a similar habit in the letter of another mother to her son, Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe note that by addressing the letter 'To hir very Louinge sunn Sir Roger Townsend give these', the writer 'breaks an important rule by revealing familial ties in the superscription. Antoine de Courtin's *The rules of civility* states that "No one superscribes a Letter *For his Dear Wife, or Lovinge Husband*, unless it be one that hath not had ingeneous education, or have a mind to be laught at".⁷⁹ Courtin's assumption that the identification for the relationship between the writer and addressee in the superscription is evidence of the writer's lack of education is patently not the case for Anne. Her decision to note the relation on the outer side of the letter may be a deliberate choice within the context of the letter, as in her petition to William Cecil she uses the correct form (according to Courtin) of the superscription, addressing it 'To my very goode lorde the lorde Tresurer of England'.⁸⁰ In the one extant superscription on a letter from Anthony to Anne he also mentions their familial ties, adding to the outer folio: 'Your Ladyships most lovinge and obedient son Anthony Bacone'.⁸¹ This may indicate that this format was acceptable practice within their correspondence. Anne also uses the space of the superscription to convey messages that would be usually found in the main body of the letter and in one instance she adds 'part not with yowr London house' below her

⁷⁵ AB to ACB, 5 February, LPL MS 649 fol. 49^{r-v} (art. 31)

⁷⁶ FB to ACB, 9 June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 217^{r-v} (art. 140).

⁷⁷ This term of address is used in the opening line in ten of her letters. See for example ACB to AB, 21 January 1596, LPL MS 654 fols 43^r-44^v (art. 29); ACB to AB, 2 March, LPL MS 656 fol. 49^{r-v} (art. 30).

⁷⁸ See for example ACB to AB, 15 August 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 330^r-331^v (art. 212).

⁷⁹ See their introduction of a letter from Lady Anne (Bacon) Townshend to her son Sir Roger Townsend written in 1619, *Letterwriting in Renaissance England*, p. 85.

⁸⁰ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fol. 120^v.

⁸¹ 6/18 June 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 207^r-208^v (art. 132).

directions for the despatch of the letter.⁸² Her reason for placing her counsel in the superscription is perhaps because she believed that it might have had more impact resounding from such an unusual location, and demonstrates how she subverts the conventions of letter-writing in order to fulfil her own objectives.

These discrepancies between prescription and practice indicate how writing manuals can be especially misleading when considering letters between close family members. Although these letters can be described as familiar letters, and may in some cases retain the conventional features particular to their form, in other instances they lose all formal structure, making interpretation of them through epistolary manuals problematic.

Among all the conventional elements that make up a letter, it is within her signature that Anne expresses her relationship to her sons most explicitly. In most letters she emphasizes the maternal connection, writing 'yowr mother A Bacon' or '*mater tua* A Bacon'.⁸³ The use of Latin within the signature reflects her personal habit of beginning and ending letters in Latin, a practice that was perhaps a way of retaining some of the formal elements of epistolary construction in letters that were unconstrained in other respects. In many instances she keeps the 'yowr mother' formulation, in either language, but abbreviates her name to the initials 'A B'. In both cases she uses a ligature, joining the 'A' and 'B' together. This personal rendition of her name is used consistently throughout her correspondence, lending authority to the rest of her letters through its originality. The subscription is also the place where she provides the most explicit information on her emotional state, for example in a letter informing Anthony of the death of one of her servants she subscribes it with 'yowr sad mother'.⁸⁴ In a few cases she uses the area of subscription to express her affection, ending the letter with 'yowr carefull mother' in one instance, and 'yowr louinge and careful mother for yow' in another.⁸⁵ She also uses a Latin version of this sentiment, '*mater tua. pia.*' ('your tender mother').⁸⁶

⁸² LPL MS 651, 6/18 June 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 207^r-208^v (art. 132).

⁸³ ACB to AB, 23 January 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 15^r-16^v (art. 9); ACB to AB, 9 July, LPL MS 653 fol. 317^{r-v} (art. 174).

⁸⁴ ACB to AB, 18 October 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 340^r-341^v (art. 232).

⁸⁵ ACB to AB, LPL MS 649 fol. 153^{r-v} (art. 100); ACB to AB, 5 December 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 333^r-334^v (art. 224).

⁸⁶ ACB to AB, 15 August, LPL MS 651 fols 330^r-331^v (art. 212).

The signature becomes a locus for various types of self-identification, as in one letter she signs 'yowr mother A Bacon late lordkeepers wydow', stressing the position of authority she held during her husband's lifetime, and her status.⁸⁷ As noted above, the figure of the widow was often embraced by the woman letter-writer as a way to enlist a more sympathetic reading audience, as the role carried connotations of helplessness and poverty. Anne's usage of the term occurs most frequently in Greek, for example 'yowr mother A Bacon χηρᾶ', signalling an intellectual standing that acts as an adjunct to her maternal role.⁸⁸ In Lynne Magnusson's analysis of the rhetorical features of Anne's letters to Essex, she reads Anne's appending of 'widow' (in Greek) to her signature as a symbol of the alternative way in which she conceptualises her widowhood. For Magnusson, widowhood is 'glorified' by its rendering in Greek, and becomes a 'positive sign of her authority' that indicates Anne's assumption of the role of a godly widow within the reformed church, charged with directing the morals of noblemen in the same fashion as male clerics.⁸⁹ However, Magnusson fails to note that this formula was also used in letters to her sons, and read within this context it cannot be entirely divorced from its more practical and earthly significations. While Anne clearly desires to establish a position of religious authority over her sons, her use of the term within her letters also suggests she wishes to re-emphasise that the loss of her husband has altered her parental status, and increased her authority in this sphere. The use of her widowed status in this fashion would seem to be at odds with the wider trend (in an epistolary context) of utilising it to symbolise an abject state, but this may be a result of the modulation of her self-representation she enacts according to the recipient of the letter.

Surprisingly, Anne is not meticulous about subscribing her letters to her sons, and at least nine of her letters were apparently sent without either her signature or initial appended to the bottom. This does not seem to be a practice attached to any particular type of letter, as she omits signing both lengthy letters and

⁸⁷ ACB to AB, 6 July 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 200^{r-v} (art. 122).

⁸⁸ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109).

⁸⁹ Lynne Magnusson, 'Widowhood and Linguistic Capital: The Rhetoric and Reception of Anne Bacon's Epistolary Advice', *ELR*, 31 (2001), 3-33 (pp. 27-33).

short notes.⁹⁰ One pattern that is apparent is her failure to date any of her unsigned letters, indicating a nonchalance for letter-writing conventions that affects all elements, not just the subscription. Although she often signs her letters but neglects to add a date, all of her unsigned letters are undated, though they may carry a date in the endorsement. One letter even carries no actual signature but includes a concluding line.⁹¹ Alan Stewart suggests that the omission of a signature on a letter was significant and shed suspicion on the authenticity of the letter.⁹² Anne's lack of concern for this protocol implies a belief that her letters to her sons did not necessarily need to be structured in a conventional fashion, and that her hand, the mode of carrying the letter, and the nature of its contents were enough to identify the writer of the letter to the reader. The familial relationship therefore allowed a greater amount of flexibility when choosing how to construct a letter, and the social hierarchy that accorded Anne respect also gave her the power to dispense with conventional epistolary devices when she saw fit.

Anne's handwriting was certainly idiosyncratic enough to allow her letters to be authenticated without a signature, and her distinctive italic hand seems to have been as notorious within her circle of correspondents as it is for scholars studying early modern women today. Anthony's description of the 'scribbled' nature of his mother's hand has been noted above, and the wider concurrence with his opinion can be deduced from the evident problems that a scribe had in taking a copy of one of her letters - the preponderance of gaps and omissions found in the copy testifies to the trouble that contemporary readers had in comprehending her hand.⁹³

By the 1590s the italic hand was considered the most suitable form of writing for women to learn. However, Anne's training in the hand owes as much to the early phase of its usage, as a script preferred by scholars, than to this later gendered phase.⁹⁴ Italic had been developed by humanist scholars in Florence

⁹⁰ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fols 340^r-341^v (art. 190); ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 250^{r-v} (art. 135).

⁹¹ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fols 340^r-341^v (art. 190).

⁹² Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare's Letters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 5.

⁹³ The original letter recounts Anne's discussion of Francis's prospects with Robert Cecil, ACB to AB, 23 January 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 33^{r-v} (art. 21). The copy is LPL MS 650 fol. 37^{r-v} (art. 24).

⁹⁴ Daybell, 'Women's letters and letter-writing', p. 163.

in 1400, a result of their desire to find a clearer form than gothic or book hands.⁹⁵ Reaching England in the early sixteenth-century, italic became popular with Cambridge scholars, including the men in charge of the education of Henry VIII's children, Richard Croke, Sir John Cheke and Roger Ascham, and the survival of letters written by Elizabeth in a beautifully clear italic hand indicates that they passed on their knowledge of the italic hand to the princess.⁹⁶ Anne's father's association with this circle suggests he may have directed the handwriting of his daughters in the same fashion, as later letters written by Elizabeth Russell show that she also uses an italic hand.⁹⁷ Although Daybell suggests that women's handwriting could undergo significant change over their lifetime, the hand Anne uses in her letters of the 1590s does not seem to be a remarkable departure from the hand of her youth.⁹⁸ The earliest example of her hand that I have encountered dates from 1557, and shows evidence of the features apparent in her handwriting some forty years later.⁹⁹ Some of her later letters indicate that her script has degenerated to some extent over the intervening years, but problems of legibility cannot be blamed entirely on her age.

Anne's hand is difficult to read mostly because of the inconsistency of her letter formation, but the lack of standardised form of written English also contributes to the obfuscation of her meaning. Many of the elements in her letters that particularly confuse the modern eye are common to other handwritten documents from this period, but some are personal to her. It therefore seems a useful exercise to outline these features, and a letter written to Anthony on 17 May 1592 provides a suitable model for an assessment of her hand.¹⁰⁰ The first line of the letter contains four examples of Anne's formation of a terminal e, found in 'more' (used twice), 'sowle' and 'bodie'. The two es used

⁹⁵ Giles E. Dawson and Laetitia Kennedy-Skipton, *Elizabethan Handwriting 1500-1650: A Guide to the Reading of Documents and Manuscripts* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), pp. 11-12.

⁹⁶ Alfred Fairbank, 'Introduction', in *Renaissance Handwriting: An Anthology of Italic Scripts*, ed. by Alfred Fairbank and Bernard Wolpe (London: Faber and Faber: 1960), pp. 30-31.

⁹⁷ For examples of her hand see Elizabeth Russell to AB, 8 September 1596, LPL MS 659 fols 104^r-105^v (art. 75); Elizabeth Russell to AB, 9 September 1596, LPL MS 659 fol. 106^{r-v} (art. 76).

⁹⁸ Daybell, 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England', p. 163.

⁹⁹ Nicholas Bacon to WC (postscript by Anne), 18 Aug 1557, *HMC Hatfield*, I, no. 534, p. 143. BL Microfilm 152/19.

¹⁰⁰ ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 103). See Illustration 2, p. 85 for a facsimile copy of this letter.

in 'more' are distinct from one another, and although the style of *e* used in the second 'more' is repeated in the other two examples, they differ slightly in their formation. Anne's use of *w* for *u* in 'sowle' and 'yow' in this line is indicative of wider orthographical practice in the period, and is fairly consistent throughout her letters.¹⁰¹ Her abbreviations also reflect sixteenth-century conventions. In line three of the letter she uses a bar (also known as a tilde or tittle) to signal a contraction, as she has omitted the *m* from 'comfort'.¹⁰² Here the bar serves a purpose; however, as was common practice in the period she also used when it was technically unnecessary, as in line four she places one over 'tenant', despite having included the medial *n* in her composition of the word. She uses a curved shape bar, reminiscent of an 'r' loop, to signal the curtailment of a word, two examples of which are found in 'yowr Brother' in line seven.¹⁰³ Superscript letters are used to indicate a contraction, as we can see from 'with' in line eight. These features are used in conjunction with one another in her version of the word 'Master' in line nine.

Often Anne adds a 'minute curl' to the letter *d*, to symbolise the omission of a final *e*.¹⁰⁴ This usually occurs at the end of the word, although her use of it in 'goodeman' in line three indicates that it could also be placed within the word. Anne also adds a symbol to the end of words to signify a final *s*, as she does in line twelve in her rendition of the word 'dayes'. The manner in which Anne crosses her double *l* to signify *lle* can often be confusing, as the similarity of the ending of 'dett' and 'stille' indicates in the postscript to this letter. Her epistle contains Latin words and phrases, 'languescens' ('weary') and 'haud impune ferent' ('they will not carry it off without punishment'), but no visual differentiation is made between the handwriting of English and Latin. This is another factor that makes Anne's letters hard to read, as she slips between the two frequently, and other letter writers would tend to differentiate between the scripts to avoid confusion. The irregular use of capital letters in this letter is reflective of her

¹⁰¹ Dawson and Kennedy-Skipton, p. 17.

¹⁰² In this section I have relied heavily on Anthony G. Petti's description of abbreviations in *English Literary Hands from Chaucer to Dryden* (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), pp. 22-35.

¹⁰³ For a description of the development of this abbreviation see L.C. Hector, *The Handwriting of English Documents* (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), p. 31.

¹⁰⁴ Petti's description of this symbol, p. 23.

general habits, as are her occasional full stops and her use of gaps and lacunae within the text to signal a change of subject (see line thirteen).

It is clear that while Anne's abbreviations are not entirely out of step with common practice, her inconsistent usage means the reader needs to be aware of the variety of formulations that she deploys. Although her sister Elizabeth's letters are written in italic and contain inconsistent abbreviations and spellings, her hand is significantly more legible than Anne's, suggesting that it is Anne's heavy use of contractions and curtailments combined with her untidy letter formation that makes her letters so challenging to read.

Anne's spatial construction of her letters also causes difficulty for the reader, as she assembles the different components of her epistles in a highly flexible manner that can, in some cases, reflect the wider function of the letter. For the most part Anne's letters are written on a folio sheet of paper that has been folded in half. The letter text appears on the recto of the first half, the verso of this half is left blank along with the recto of the next leaf, and the superscription is written on the verso of the second leaf. The letter text usually fits into the space on this sheet, with Anne making every effort to restrict the writing to this side, often drastically reducing the size of the letters as it becomes apparent that the body of the letter will not fit, and continuing the text over into the margin rather than allowing the text to spill over to the verso. In the one instance in which she writes on both sides of the leaf the letter is extremely difficult to read, due to the seepage of the ink through the sheet. This suggests that the quality of the paper she used was not good enough to allow her to write on both sides, and explains why she chose to construct her letters in this fashion.¹⁰⁵ The use of a double sheet also prevented the ink from the first leaf from sinking through and obscuring the superscription, and would also have afforded the letter extra privacy.¹⁰⁶ Anne's standard practice is to leave a fair sized marginal space down the left hand side of the text, and in most letters she uses this as a guide to line up the beginning of each of her lines. Although the lines begin from the same vertical axis all the way through the letter, they do not continue along this

¹⁰⁵ Found in ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 331^r-332^v (art. 223). In this letter the first part, written on fol. 331^r, is particularly hard to read because about a quarter of fol. 331^v is filled with text.

¹⁰⁶ Steen, 'Reading Beyond the Words', p. 65.

horizontal line, and instead often slant upwards or downwards. The basic visual structure of the letter usually consists of single body of text, with a signature in the right hand corner that is separated from this block by a gap of a few lines. A common variant on this model is the inclusion of the salutation above the letter in the top left hand corner, and similarly she sometimes adds a concluding line that is separated from the letter in the bottom right hand corner, before the signature. If the date and place of writing are noted they appear within the concluding lines of the letter, usually before the signature. Separate paragraphs feature rarely, and indicate a significant change in topic or desire for emphasis when they do. Another method Anne uses to divide her text up is to leave a blank space in the text, larger than that would be normally found between words, and this also signals a change in topic. She often adds a postscript, some of which are a one-line instruction, while others are double the length of the main letter.

Apart from one letter that is written in Latin, all of her correspondence is in the vernacular, with Latin and Greek woven into the letter in a number of ways. As mentioned above she often uses Latin to frame her letters, by using a Latin salutation and/or a concluding line. These tend to be a variation on a theme, and reflect humanist models of epistolary greetings and farewells. Her salutations '*gratia in christo*', ('grace through Christ) and '*gratia et salus*' ('grace and health') combine the classical rhetorical greeting formulae with Christian sentiment.¹⁰⁷ Likewise, her concluding sentences often incorporate Latin phrases, and she regularly ends with '*cura ut valeas*' ('take care that you fare well'), commonly used at the end of classical sentences.¹⁰⁸ The date is also written in Latin. When these leave-takings and greetings are replicated in English they are incorporated into the main body of the letter, rather than preceding it in a separate line or in the margin. The use of Latin for these elements therefore seems to require that the letter be organised in a different fashion, and lends a rhetorical and visual formality to the letters.

¹⁰⁷ ACB to AB, 2 March 1591, LPL MS 648 fol. 12^r (art. 7); ACB to AB, 24 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 172^r (art. 106).

¹⁰⁸ ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 103). See Erasmus's examples of leavetaking phrases in *De Conscribendis epistolis*, pp. 62-63.

Anne also uses the occasional Latin word in her letters, quotes proverbs in Latin, and uses Latin and Greek as a cipher, 'as a first and second level of concealment'.¹⁰⁹ In her first letter to Anthony upon his arrival in England she also inserts a single Hebrew word (possibly 'amen'), indicating her familiarity with this script as well.¹¹⁰ In a general assessment of her usage of these languages, it has been suggested that 'Latin seems to be used to convey personal tenets: Greek, when her opinion might be seen as subversive', and this evaluation of Anne's practice will be explored below.¹¹¹ The mingling of vernacular and classical languages reflects not only the nature of her education, but indicates a continual involvement with these languages, which is suggestive of her wider intellectual interests. Anne's usage perhaps reflects Michael Clanchy's description of medieval literacy practices, when people 'passed from English to French or Latin, and some to Hebrew as well, frequently without comment and perhaps without effort'.¹¹²

These personally developed formal features are the template upon which Anne bases her letter-writing, and an awareness of which elements she chooses to utilize in certain circumstances is crucial for an understanding of her letters. Even writing within the boundaries of a conventional epistolary relationship such as that between mother and son, letter-writers were able to make use of a personal set of salutations, subscriptions and signatures, some of which fitted with the epistolary conventions expounded by the letter-writing manuals while others were more individual concoctions reflecting the status and personality of the writer to a greater extent. Anne grasps this opportunity for self-fashioning, taking advantage of the flexibility of the letter-writing form in order to present a specific model of authority. Margaret L. King observes the importance of the epistolary mode for female expression, suggesting that 'so common was the practice of a mother's ongoing guidance of her older children, notably her sons, that the epistles, handbooks and diaries composed for this

¹⁰⁹ 'Anne Bacon, née Cooke', in *Early Modern Women Poets: an Anthology*, ed. by Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 22-23 (p. 22).

¹¹⁰ ACB to AB, 3 February [1591/2], LPL MS 653 fols 343^v-344^v (art. 192).

¹¹¹ Stevenson and Davidson, p. 23.

¹¹² *From Memory to Written Record* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 173.

purpose constitute a major genre of female authorship'.¹¹³ Although these letters were to a certain extent codified by the expectations of parent-child relation, in other respects they offered a freedom from the constrictive structure of formal letters, particularly as their position of relative authority liberated them from the need to continually represent themselves in deferential terms. The intimacy of the relationship between mother and son also removed the necessity for excessive politeness (on behalf of the mother at least), opening up a space for a more candid voice to be heard.¹¹⁴

The purpose of her letters

Having established the potential flexibility of Anne's letters to her sons, it seems relevant to try to assess how far this form varied in relation to its function. Anne's letters purport to have been devised and sent with specific practical objectives in mind, usually concerning the management of the Bacon family estates, yet they often seem to serve a more general communicative function, and the informality of the mode allows elements of the more inward, personal reasons for letter-writing to creep in. If letters are outwardly productive in the sense that they advance and protect personal and general interests, maintain social and kinship ties, and perform everyday household and administrative tasks, they are also productive in terms of the sense of self that they create. James Daybell suggests that 'the process of letter-writing emerges as an individualizing activity, which encouraged in women a degree of inwardness', an idea that Susan Whyman develops, noting that letter writing promoted 'self-exploration' and became a way for the writer to 'relate' themselves to society.¹¹⁵ The frequency and length of many of Anne's letters indicates that they exceeded the practical function that they were supposed to fulfil (as assigned by Anne), and instead became a mode through which she could maintain and develop her personal relationship with her sons.

¹¹³ 'The Woman of the Renaissance', in *Renaissance Characters*, ed. by Eugenio Garin, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 207-249 (p. 209).

¹¹⁴ In her discussion of Esther Masham's letters Susan Whyman notes that 'the more intimate the writer, the less polite one had to be'. 'The Correspondence of Esther Masham and John Locke', p. 283.

¹¹⁵ *Women letter-writers*, p. 152; Whyman, *Sociability and Power*, p. 10.

Most numerous within the corpus are letters relating to estate management. These letters are primarily concerned with business transactions, and usually consist of a sequence of abrupt instructions and requests. However, the opportunity afforded by writing a practical letter is not wasted, and in all cases Anne intersperses her business letters with advice, complaint, and news. The construction of such letters is mixed. In one of the most formal examples of these letters Anne states its purpose in the opening line, 'I am looking for Redborn writings', referring to the estate owned by Anthony that he was gradually selling off in order to pay off his debts.¹¹⁶ She proceeds to lecture him about the problems of this decision, which develops into a general prayer for God to guide his judgement and then into expressions of concern for his health. The letter moves away from the primary subject and on to discuss a number of matters, including the weather, local news, concerns for his reputation and finally ends with more prayers. Instead of an opening salutation that identifies her son as the addressee of the letter, the letter is prefaced by a Latin formulation, '*Gratiam et Salutem in christo*' ('Favour and grace to you in Christ'). This starts on a separate line from the main body of the text and is positioned to the farthest left edge of the sheet. The rest of the letter is indented, and is aligned flush to a reasonably sized margin. Despite all the topic changes within the letter, these are not separated by paragraphs, and only the final line is separated from the main body of the text by a blank space the size of a word. This line reads 'Looke well to yowr servants and ^to^ yowr own things. Gorhambury *ultimo Febru* 1591'. The inclusion of advice into this final, slightly separate sentence indicates that she wishes to accentuate this point, and her use of Latin in this fashion echoes humanist letter-writing conventions, as Erasmus instructs in *De conscribendis epistolis* 'immediately after 'Farewell' the ancients add the place and date'.¹¹⁷ This letter utilises all of the most formal letter-writing elements within Anne's repertoire, and is an example of one of the most clearly structured letters written to her sons.

In a letter to Anthony written to introduce various servants and tenants from Gorhambury, Anne also uses a fairly formal epistolary model, opening her letter

¹¹⁶ ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fol. 6^r-7^v (art. 4). See Illustration 1, p. 84.

¹¹⁷ *De Conscribendis epistolis*, p. 64.

'*Gratia in christo*' and closing it with a farewell line followed by the date in Latin.¹¹⁸ Her opening line of the letter clearly states its aim ('goodeman Finch amongst others is desirous to se yow and cometh purposely'), and she then proceeds to commend him. The rest of the letter is a mixture of advice and warning, illustrating how once the specific purpose of the letter is fulfilled she is at liberty to resume the voice of maternal rebuke.

Personal disputes are another frequent reason for Anne's letters to her sons, and the purpose of these letters is also clearly stated. Caught up in a disagreement with her 'cosin kemp' over a repayment of a loan, she writes to Anthony 'I pray yow sende me advyse by law how to to begin and to Proceade.'¹¹⁹ In another letter concerning a local dispute over tenancy rents she writes 'I send purposely. I pray yow lett me know certenly what way yow take to helpe it with spede.'¹²⁰ The manner in which she asks for advice reflects the social relations of mother and son, as her position of superiority means that there is no need for her to wrap her request within a blanket of deference, as she did in her letter to William Cecil. Other letters that demonstrate a clarity of purpose include those concerning visiting arrangements, and she opens two letters with direct questions concerning these matters, writing 'I sende to know whther yow kepe yowr jorny to morow' in one letter, and similarly 'I purposely send to know how yow do and what yowr Brother and [you] determyn For coming hether' in the other.¹²¹

While many of the letters referred to above are claimed by Anne to have been written for practical purposes, the mixture of topics they cover, and the response that they demand, indicates that they function more generally as a method by which she can maintain regular contact with her sons. However, occasionally she is more candid about her wish to hear from them, and this becomes the primary reason for the letter. In such cases this purpose is also enunciated in the first line, and in one letter she begins by stating 'I sende to know how yow and yowr Brother do'.¹²² Other letters of this type frame her

¹¹⁸ ACB to AB, 2 March 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fol. 12^r (art. 7).

¹¹⁹ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 340^r (art. 190).

¹²⁰ ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 331^r (art. 223).

¹²¹ ACB to AB, March 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 128^r (art. 76); ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 201^r (art. 109).

¹²² ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 320^r (art. 177).

desires in a more complex fashion, and indicate how letters can become an arena for self-expression. One letter opens with a paraphrase of a verse from the Book of Nahum: 'one of the prophetts Naom I think ^sayth^ that the lorde hath his way in the Hurle Wynd the storme and Tempest and cloudes are the dust of his Fete.'¹²³ This scriptural reference serves as a prompt for Anne to recount the details of a storm that has recently damaged the house and estate at Gorhambury. The juxtaposition of scriptural and experiential knowledge is illuminating, as it demonstrates how she uses her religious belief to make sense of her everyday life, and indicates a self-reflection and introspection that is rarely found in her letters. Mid-way through the letter she writes 'I desyre to know how yow dyd and do', suggesting a connection between the verbalization of a more emotive topic and her explicit demands to hear from her son for no other reason than a desire for communication. The last half of the letter returns to the usual tropes of advice, complaint and instruction, which has the effect of making the musings of the first half even more distinctive.

In another letter her wish to hear from her sons is mixed with a desire for other news, and she writes 'I am desirous to know how yowr health is how matters are after parlement go to private Folk *nempe* [namely as concerns] Mr Moore yowr cosin hoby, and *si vis* [and if you will] yowr brother too.'¹²⁴ This request signals the important role Anthony's letters play in maintaining Anne's connection to the political network with which the Bacon family are involved, and indicates that a thirst for news and gossip from London is another motivation behind her letters.

The conveyance of gifts of food and drink also served as an opportunity for a letter, the function of which was ostensibly to pass on information concerning the carriage and consumption of the item. In the summer months Anne frequently sent her sons strawberries, detailing how and when they were picked, and these letters are usually constructed in a more formal manner,

¹²³ ACB to AB, March 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 127^{r-v} (art. 75). Nahum 1:3: 'The Lord is slow to anger, but he is great in power, and will not surely cleare the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.' Geneva Bible (Cambridge: John Legate, 1591).

¹²⁴ ACB to AB, 15 April 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 99^v (art. 65). Translation from William Hepworth Dixon, *Personal History of Lord Bacon* (London: John Murray, 1861) p. 309.

utilizing the structure of a salutation, main body of the text, and closing line.¹²⁵ While these letters contain the usual mix of advice, instruction and news, she refers to the strawberries in the opening line of a new paragraph within the main body of the text. This indicates that the letter's function as a covering letter for goods is considered separately from its other functions, and although it does not warrant a separate note of its own, the use of a separate paragraph signals that this topic needs to be visually differentiated from the rest of the letter.

When the nature of the gift changed, so did the form of the letter. When Anne sends fish to her sons, the importance of transporting it as quickly as possible overrides convention, and she abruptly pens a brief note detailing cooking instructions and when it should be cooked by.¹²⁶ The importance of the timings is indicated by her insertion of the time at which the letter was written in her closing line, 'Thursday on[e] of clock *post meridiem*' a detail she does not normally include. The sending of beer necessitates a similarly urgent tone and form, as beer was more likely to be negatively affected by incompetent transportation and handling, and it is within this group of letters that we find Anne's briefest piece of writing. In a letter of April 1595 Anne uses a scrap of paper to communicate arrangements for the carrying of beer, which is a departure from her usual epistolary habits.¹²⁷ The letter is solely concerned with the matter of beer, unusual for Anne who is prone to supplement the letter with diverse topics, and is topped and tailed by the briefest of salutations and conclusions. The type of gift being sent makes an impact on the construction of the letter, and indicates that the letters often represented only one strand of a larger communication process, that could be embodied in oral messages and physical objects as well as the written word.

It seems that when a letter accompanied a gift, its primary purpose was to convey information about the gift; any other news or communication was considered less important. Another letter written to accompany a gift of beer demonstrates this spatial prioritizing of topics, as almost all of the main body of the letter is filled with instructions concerning the beer. However in the

¹²⁵ See ACB to AB, 6 July 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 200^{r-v} (art. 122); ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 177^{r-v} (art. 109); ACB to AB, 8 July 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 267^{r-v} (art. 173).

¹²⁶ ACB to AB, September 1595, LPL MS 652, fol. 20^{r-v} (art. 11).

¹²⁷ ACB to AB, 1 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 107^{r-v} (art. 65).

postscript Anne discloses the nature of a meeting she had with her sister Elizabeth Russell ('after the sermon'), revealing that Russell was 'much grieved' over a dispute with William Cecil. She then discusses a matter concerning the lease of York house, and adds warnings about her son's household. This results in the postscript being substantially longer than the first part of the letter.¹²⁸ While the function of the letter is contained within the main body, the news of a more substantial nature is placed within the postscript, indicating Anne's flexible usage of the different elements of the letter.

'Posting' letters

I have demonstrated that, as a result of her education and social standing, Anne was familiar with contemporary practices of letter-writing and could easily navigate both formal and informal modes. The intimacy of the mother-son relationship liberates her from a strict adherence to the conventional components of a letter, allowing the letter's visual and rhetorical construction to vary according to its function. The meaning of her letters is thus disseminated via both its written contents and visual presentation, an assessment that chimes with Daybell's entreaty that 'letters should not just be viewed as texts or documents, but are complex forms that registered meaning both textually and materially'.¹²⁹

The material components of the letter, such as the spacing, the handwriting, the type of paper used, and how the letter was sealed, have been recognized as imparting meaning upon the letter by a number of critics.¹³⁰ Recently, Alan Stewart has extended the attention paid to the material aspects of letter-writing to encompass the practical circumstances of epistolary transmission as well. Stewart suggests that Shakespeare utilizes the familiar and shared experience of the processes of writing and sending a letter to create "a grammar of letters": a vocabulary and a set of images that originate in the material practices of the

¹²⁸ ACB to AB, 4 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 105^r-106^v (art. 64).

¹²⁹ Daybell, *Women letter-writers*, p. 47.

¹³⁰ For example Steen explores the 'meaningful' aspect of handwriting and how it can be used to display social deference and empathy ('Reading Beyond the Words', p. 57) and Gibson shows how the positioning of a signature alters depending on the social status of the recipient ('Significant Space', p. 4).

letter-writing culture of early modern England'.¹³¹ The existence of a symbolic language derived from the practices of letter-writing indicates the intense impact that the process of epistolary communication had upon the contents and construction of letters. If, as Stewart suggests, anxieties surrounding the transmission of letters came to be representative in the dramatic and literary spheres of wider social problems, then perhaps Anne's concerns attending the composition, conveyance and reception of her letters can be seen as a reflection of her personal difficulties stemming from her relationship with her sons.

The vagaries of epistolary communication in the sixteenth-century generated a document that is markedly different from the modern letter. At all stages, from writing, sending to reading, the process was markedly distinct. In the first instance, the skills involved in producing a letter and the high rates of illiteracy (particularly among women) meant that households frequently employed an amanuensis to undertake writing tasks.¹³² This disrupts any notion we may have about the unmediated nature of the epistle, and asks questions about the extent of the scribe's involvement in the production of the letter. It is possible that the letter was dictated in full to the amanuensis but they may also have been asked to rework a set of notes into a letter.¹³³ Either way the amanuensis or secretary should be seen as a witness at this early stage of the letter's creation, and their presence makes it difficult to assess how far letters were the work of the nominal author or a joint effort.

The value of the letter appeared to change in relation to its production, and as we have seen a letter written in the hand of the author was considered far more personal than one written by a secretary, and also more respectful, as the writer was willing to expend time and effort on the mechanical production of the letter. The hand of the author also signalled the authenticity of the letter, and increased the privacy of the communication, although it did not make it total. Daybell observes that this demonstration of intimacy and respect was particularly valued by mothers, and notes how both Anne, Lady Bacon and

¹³¹ Stewart, p. 5.

¹³² James Daybell, 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England', p. 165.

¹³³ Daybell, 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England', p. 170.

Gertrude, Marchioness of Exeter complained to their sons about the use they made of amanuenses.¹³⁴

Without the existence of the public postal service, which was not established until 1635, letters were either conveyed to the recipient by a servant, a paid carrier, or a friendly contact willing to deliver the letter.¹³⁵ The letter is therefore invested with the texture of the relationship between the writer-bearer-reader, and a letter carried by an intimate associate of both writer and reader may contain news and information of a more personal nature than one carried by a less well-known bearer. The writer had to trust that the bearer would see the letter delivered, and would always be aware of the possibility that the bearer might read the contents. The knowledge of this meant that writers often used privacy devices within their letters, such as cipher, even if the bearer was considered reliable, in an attempt to maintain their security.

Once delivered, the letter would not necessarily have been read in private, but may well have been read aloud by the bearer or by another servant. The bearer may also have been charged with giving the addressee a verbal message from the writer of the letter, thus infusing the written form with an oral dimension, and would also often report back to the writer about the manner in which the letter was received.¹³⁶ At this point the letter may then have been communicated to others, either by passing the letter on or by circulating another copy. This dismantles the idea that letters were by definition private, stable documents, delivered anonymously and discreetly to a sole recipient. Letters would then have been endorsed and filed, with business and personal letters housed in the same repositories, indicating that they were seen less as a personal mode of communication than as a practical element of everyday life.

As the process of writing was such a time-consuming process with variable outcomes, it is unsurprising that writers in the period often refer to the various stages of the procedure within their letters.¹³⁷ Gary Schneider suggests that the 'system of the post and the materiality of the letter itself also had much to do

¹³⁴ James Daybell, 'Female Literacy', p. 69.

¹³⁵ Philip Beale, *England's Mail: Two Millennia of Letter Writing* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005), p. 187.

¹³⁶ Alan Stewart provides a superb example of the personalized nature of the delivery of letters, *Shakespeare's Letters*, pp. 198-199.

¹³⁷ Stewart and Wolfe, p. 121.

with how early modern peoples conceived letters and letter writing to function', and that as a result of this internal commentary on the process being undertaken 'numerous gestures towards epistolary theory [...] are contained in letters themselves', with Schneider seeing these 'gestures' being more valuable than the theories espoused in epistolary manuals.¹³⁸ For Anne Bacon the composition of her letters does not warrant as much comment as the sending, suggesting that of the two elements, sending was the more problematic. Perhaps this is also a reflection of her complete familiarity with the mode, and the control that she had over the writing of the letter as opposed to its sending. A glimpse of the manner in which her letters were sent and received can be seen from Anthony's letter to Essex in which he describes how a letter from Anne has been conveyed to him 'by her cheife man', and that she uses this servant to 'excuseth' her bad writing, 'protesting that she thinketh it shallbe the last'.¹³⁹ The written letter is therefore glossed by the verbal message of the carrier, and although there is a record of how the sender has attempted to frame the reception of the letter in this case, for the majority of her letters no such information exists.

The only instances in which Anne refers to her writing process are when she is making excuses for the rushed nature of her letter; she adds 'in hast late this sabbath' to a concluding line in one such letter. In another the opportunity afforded by a neighbour's trip to London motivates her to write a letter between the morning and evening prayers one Easter Sunday, which seems to have been written quickly as she writes 'I hast to the church Again' towards the end of the letter.¹⁴⁰ Her notifications of the time frame within which these letters are written suggest that this was not her normal practice. All of her letters contain marginal and interlineal insertions, and words are regularly crossed out, indicating that she did not draft or produce a fair copy of her letters. The frequency of these adjustments suggests that Anne re-read her letters and edited them once they had been written, adding material after the main letter had been composed. Evidence for this practice can be seen by the way her

¹³⁸ Schneider, p. 18.

¹³⁹ AB to EE, 3 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 147^r (art. 106).

¹⁴⁰ ACB to AB, 29 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 178^r (art. 110); ACB to AB, 16 April 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 99^v-100^r (art. 65).

insertions are written in a smaller hand in order for them to fit between the existing lines of text.¹⁴¹ She also revised letters as she wrote, as can be seen from a deletion of 'wens day' and her replacement within the same line of 'fryday'.¹⁴² By deleting a partially obscured word and rewriting it interlineally she also shows a concern for the legibility of her letter that is not often commented upon.¹⁴³

That she did not require complete privacy for her writing can be seen from a letter in which she notes her reception of a message halfway through the letter's composition. She writes that she will know by '2 of the clock at the Furthest this day' whether Margaret, Lady Paulet can lend her £100. But a few lines below she writes 'even as I had wrote thus Farr, my lady paulett sent me worde by her kinsman that she was sory she cowlde not lende me A C^{li} as desyred but hereafter if L^{li} wyll stande me she wyll For that summ'.¹⁴⁴ Clearly the letter has been written before two o'clock, and the fact that she is writing a letter had not prevented her from receiving visitors. The line beginning 'even as I had wrote thus farr' is separated from the preceeding sentence by a full stop and a gap in the text, and the ink from this point is slightly darker than it was in the earlier lines, subtle indications that her claim is not only for rhetorical effect. Indeed the only other example of a reference to her materials is in her letter of petition to William Cecil, referred to earlier, in which excuses the writing on a second sheet by saying 'For thinnes of the paper I write in thother leaff for myn yll eyes', and which can be read as a rhetorical device used to emphasise her helpless state and to prove her humility, rather than as a general reflection upon the practice of writing.¹⁴⁵

In contrast, Anne refers to the sending of her letters and their reception in a much more explicit manner. As befitting someone of her status, most of her letters were carried and delivered to Anthony by one of her servants, although evidence from her letters also shows that friends, neighbours and tradesmen travelling in the right direction were also tasked with letter-carrying. Those who did not have a household of servants ready and available to carry letters, could

¹⁴¹ ACB to AB, 9 Oct 1595, LPL MS 652 fol. 129^{r-v} (art. 87).

¹⁴² ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fols 6^r-7^v (art. 4).

¹⁴³ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109).

¹⁴⁴ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653, fol. 337^r (art. 188).

¹⁴⁵ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fols 119^r-120^v.

entrust their letter to one of the 'common carriers' that travelled between London and the main towns, transporting people, money and goods.¹⁴⁶ The carriers off-loaded their letters at a specific inn, so those waiting for letters would know where to look for their correspondence.¹⁴⁷ Obviously sending letters via a messenger with whom one was familiar was infinitely more desirable than using the carrier, but it did not entirely preclude the danger of miscarriage.

Most of Anne's letters were sent to her sons in London from Gorhambury, which lay about two miles west of St. Albans. Situated twenty-three miles from London, St. Albans was connected to the city by the Chester road linking London to Holyhead, one of the six main postal roads.¹⁴⁸ This road followed the Roman road, and was the route by which letters were sent to Dublin. In a letter detailing his travel arrangements from London to Gorhambury, Lord Clarendon writes to his host: 'Be sure we have oysters enough on Friday by twelve of the clocke, for I suppose being in a coach by eight will bring us to you by that hour'. Clarendon's timings suggest that the route would take four hours to cover at a speed of about six miles an hour.¹⁴⁹ The journey time would obviously have been different whether Anne's messengers were travelling by coach, horse or foot, but the method by which they travelled is not generally mentioned. The instances where she explicitly mentions the mode of transportation is when it has been by foot. In a postscript she orders Anthony to give 'Peter my cooke' a shilling for bringing pigeons and capons, as well as (presumably) the letter, 'because he had the goode wyll to cary them on Foote.'¹⁵⁰ In another letter, undated though the content indicates that it is summer time ('it is hote here early or elce I am very Fainty'), she describes how her messenger is leaving early because of the weather, 'my man riseth very early two mornings ^together^ to avoyde heat and dust and goeth on Foote. not used but upon such request of me'.¹⁵¹ Both references suggest that this is not how her letters are normally carried.

¹⁴⁶ Beale, p. 130; Stewart, p. 122.

¹⁴⁷ Stewart, p. 125.

¹⁴⁸ Stewart and Wolfe, p. 122.

¹⁴⁹ Letter quoted by J. Crofts in *Packhorse, Waggon and Post: Land carriage and communications under the Tudors and Stuarts* (London: Routledge and Kegan Press, 1967), p. 123.

¹⁵⁰ ACB to AB, 24 July 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 196^{r-v} (art. 120).

¹⁵¹ ACB to AB and FB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 322^{r-v} (art. 178).

But by whatever means they travelled it seems it was possible for them to make the journey there and back within one day, as Anne demands that a messenger sent to Anthony return that day: 'I look For the boy at night dispatch him I pray yow'.¹⁵² In another letter she insists that her messenger return straight back after delivering the letter, 'I looke For him Again at night I pray yow stay him not. I have so charged him. he is able inowgh to do it god wylling. do not pitie it wyll make him worse'.¹⁵³ Control over the return of the messengers becomes a theme of her letters, and continues a wider concern with her sons' treatment of servants. Throughout her letters Lady Bacon expresses an anxiety that Anthony and Francis are being dominated by their servants, and that their financial problems are the result of a lack of control over the expenditure of their households. These suspicions are exacerbated by the seepage of her servants towards Anthony, as they recognised that his age, status and location offered them more opportunities for advancement than those at Gorhambury. They may also have been attracted by the prospect of working in the household of a bachelor as opposed to that of a pious matron. Her fears for the further depletion of staff can be seen as motivating factors behind her insistence that her messengers return promptly. Anne recognizes that making the return journey in one day is an unwelcome mission for her boy, but not one that she considers worth significant remuneration, as she instructs Anthony not to be over generous with his payment, 'yf yow geve him vi^d of yowr own selff. it is too much'.¹⁵⁴ 'Peter the cook' receives double this amount for similar services, indicating that payment was linked to status within the household. These examples also suggest that even if the messenger was employed within the household, they were paid extra for the delivery of letters, and may have been paid by both writer and recipient. Delivering a letter therefore offered servants the chance to earn extra money, as well as giving them the chance to escape from the control of the householder, at least as for as long as the delivery took. The freedom they gained from their mistress is obviously unwelcome to Anne, as she illustrates in reference to one messenger, 'I pray dispatch this my man I send him of purpose to yow and For none other Business. and I nede his

¹⁵² ACB to AB, 14 July (no year given), LPL MS 653 fols 326^r-327^v (art. 181).

¹⁵³ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109).

¹⁵⁴ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109).

service here at home. besyd the charge of Tareing'.¹⁵⁵ Not only does the carrying of the letter deprive Lady Bacon of manpower, but this complaint also implies that she is responsible for his expenses if he does remain away from the household. There is even a nervousness about allowing her messengers to remain at Anthony's residence at Redbourn, only five miles away, as she instructs him that 'Thomas Knite shall God wylling come tomorow morning to yow but not tary but so as he be here at Evening ^afternoone^ cathesing [catechising]'.¹⁵⁶

Her anger at another messenger's tardiness in returning to the household is intense enough to be the opening sentence of one of her letters:

surely I appoint my men to Return at my tyme. I dyd not think that Lawrence cowlde have sene yow then at all his tarieng was but A day and I needed things Fer-to be bowght and to attende my Inn post. and horsemeat [horse food] charge is ^dere^.¹⁵⁷

Apparently Lawrence has used the opportunity of his journey to London to visit Anthony, even though this was not part of his commission, and like her other messengers he was expected to have completed the return journey in one day. This description of Lawrence's misbehaviour enlightens us in regard to several points about Anne's postal means and methods. First, the reference to horse feed indicates Lawrence is travelling by horse, and therefore that her other messengers may also do likewise. Secondly, that she wants him to 'attende my Inn post' indicates that she received letters via the common carriers, which would have been delivered to a local inn in St Albans. Lawrence is therefore charged with the task of collecting these letters from the inn and returning them to Anne. So another system of letter bearing is in practice here, one that collects the letters from a carrier, via a specifically employed messenger, to the recipient. This is also further evidence for the wider epistolary circle that Anne

¹⁵⁵ ACB to AB, 12 May 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 156^{r-v} (art. 95).

¹⁵⁶ ACB to AB, 16 February 1593/4, LPL MS 649 fols 39^r-40^v (art. 24).

¹⁵⁷ ACB to AB, 23 February 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 69^{r-v} (art. 43). Lawrence also fails to do as Anne tells him in another letter, as she writes 'Lawrence came not home by London as I bad [bade] him'. ACB to AB, 21 October 1595, LPL 652 fol. 128^{r-v} (art. 86).

was part of, as it shows an alternative way in which she received letters. That she made use of the less personalized mode of transport can also be seen by an instruction she sends to Anthony asking 'whether yow have eny stuff sent upon monday that I may send For it upon Tewuesday to the town', indicating that she expects Anthony to be able to convey 'stuff' to St Albans within one day, and that she can arrange to collect it.¹⁵⁸ As Anthony's intimacy with the earl of Essex grew, so he was allowed to make use of his patron's servants for the conveyance of his letters. In one letter he informs Anne that 'his Lordships owne footman [...] attendethe here dailie to be dispatched where I thinke good', and offers Anne the services of the footman for the conveyance of her response.¹⁵⁹ However, Anne refuses, doubting the security of such a messenger so closely associated with the earl.¹⁶⁰

Lady Bacon's anxieties about her messengers therefore extended to their trustworthiness as well, and in such cases the contents of the letter were significantly altered due to the nature of the person carrying it. In a letter in which she expresses her suspicions about the handling of the sale of Barley, a manor in Hertfordshire belonging to Anthony, she warns 'let not my man this bearer understand eny thing by yowr selff or yowr men. For though honest and pretely spoken For his kinde yet he *^is^ satis linguae and non insulsus* [has sufficient languages and is not stupid].'¹⁶¹ The sale of Barley is seen as a local issue, and information about the matter would be more likely to be potentially meaningful to the bearer than other controversial matters concerning court or ecclesiastical politics. Letters containing discussion of these matters also utilise cipher on occasion but do not indicate a specific fear that the bearer may use the contents against her. In a similar respect the only letter to Anthony written in Latin (although the postscript is in English) is concerned with the town politics of St Albans, demonstrating how it is the combination of the bearer's identity with the content of the letter that determines Anne's utilisation of epistolary privacy devices.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ ACB to AB, 14 July, LPL MS 653 fols 326^r-327^v (art. 181).

¹⁵⁹ AB to ACB, 5 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 123^{r-v} (art. 86).

¹⁶⁰ ACB to EE, with a note to AB, 4 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 151^r-152^v (art. 109).

¹⁶¹ ACB to AB, 9 July, LPL MS 653 fol. 317^{r-v} (art. 174). The use of cipher in matters of religious sensitivity will be explored in Chapter Five.

¹⁶² ACB to AB, 25 January 1592/3, LPL MS 649 fol. 23^{r-v} (art. 14).

A similar modulation of content in relation to the identity of the bearer is apparent in another pair of letters written by Anne to Anthony. Having grasped the opportunity to convey a letter via a neighbour travelling to London, she attempts to conceal certain elements in the letter by converting from English to Greek mid-way through a sentence: 'For your state of wanting health and [^]of[^]mony and some other things towching yow both *gives me no quiet*'.¹⁶³ This use of a form of cipher where the substitution of Latin or Greek prevents unauthorised access by uneducated people, may easily have gone unnoticed, especially as 'gives me no quiet' does not seem to have added much that was not already apparent in the letter. But in a letter of two days later Anne makes her actions plain, as she refers to the sentiments she had expressed 'in Few wordes but yesterday by my neighbowr', and repeats that the 'state of yow Both doth much disqwiett me as in greeke words I signified shortly'.¹⁶⁴ The letter then goes on to list in explicit detail why she is angry at her sons, and focuses on the suspicions she has over Francis's male servants:

yet so long as he [^]pitieth not him selff but[^] keepeth that Bloody peerce [Percy] as I towlde him then, yea as A coch companion and Bed companion A prowde [^]prophane[^] costly Fellow, whose being about him I verely [^]Feare[^] the lorde god doth mislyke and [^]doth[^] less bless yowr Brother in credit and other wyse in his health.

These are among the most explicit implications made by Anne concerning Francis's sexuality, and although we have to be wary of assuming that she is condemning anything more than his over-reliance on his servants, the fact that she keeps back this sentiment from the earlier letter indicates its delicate

¹⁶³ ACB to AB, 15 April 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 99^v-100^r (art. 65). Italicised words in Greek, translation from Dixon, p. 309.

¹⁶⁴ ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653 fols 318^r-319^v (arts. 175 and 176).

nature.¹⁶⁵ The placing of her fears in Greek would also seem to run contrary to the assessment that Anne used Latin to express her 'personal tenets', and indicates once more the elasticity of her epistolary habits.¹⁶⁶

That the themes of the first letter (delivered by the neighbour) are developed at length in the second letter (no bearer specified), indicate the extent to which the identity of the bearer restricts her self-expression. Anne's disquiet about the bearer in the letter relating to Barley seems to infect the entire tone of the letter, which relays one suspicion after another in an almost hysterical tirade. Likewise the letter conveyed by her neighbour is notably more reticent about her opinions concerning her sons than other letters. The impact of the messenger on the letter has been theorized by Alan Stewart, who suggests that the 'messenger is part of the letter', and that 'letters *rely* for their meaning on a specific messenger whose employment as bearer impinges on, or indeed creates, the conditions of the relationship between writer and recipient'.¹⁶⁷

The use of a bearer in this situation creates a negative basis for the epistolary communication, a situation that can be fruitfully compared to Anne's employment of a trusted intimate to convey her first letter to Anthony upon his return from France in February 1591/2. Anne enlisted Nicholas Faunt, a man respected by both mother and son, to deliver her letter, in an attempt to smooth the path to reconciliation. Anne writes that 'I have entreated this gentleman mr Faunt to somuch kindness For me as to Jorny to yow', and fills the letter with words of admiration for Faunt's godliness and honesty.¹⁶⁸ The honesty of the bearer and her trust in him to see the letter rightly delivered, combined with his close association with Anthony, makes Faunt the ideal carrier for this letter, and illustrates Lady Bacon's awareness of the significance of the messenger to the letter and its reception. Anne seems to have chosen Faunt because she

¹⁶⁵ Anne's hunch would seem to support contemporary opinion that Francis's sexual preferences were other than the accepted norm. Simonds d'Ewes refers to his 'most horrible and secret sin of sodomy', and his 'custom of making his servants his bedfellows', and John Aubrey claimed he was a pederast. *Extracts from the MS Journal of Sir Simonds d'Ewes, with Several Letters to and from Sir Simonds and his friends* (London: J. Nichols, 1783), pp. 25-7; *Aubrey's Brief Lives. Edited from the original manuscripts with an introduction by Oliver Lawson Dick* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), p. 11.

¹⁶⁶ Stevenson and Davidson, p. 23.

¹⁶⁷ Stewart, p. 196.

¹⁶⁸ ACB to AB, 3 February [1591/2], LPL MS 653 fols 343^r-344^v (art. 192).

believes he could be relied upon to bring Anthony a kind report of his mother's position, something that she could not be assured of from other messengers.

Once the letter is out of the hands of the bearer and moves into Anthony's household Lady Bacon loses complete control over its dissemination, and it is her apprehension concerning this stage of the communication process that rouses her greatest fears.¹⁶⁹ As a consequence many of her letters are appended by a postscript instructing him to 'Burn this', which he evidently ignores.¹⁷⁰ Lady Bacon attempts to control by whom the letter is seen, writing 'let not yowr man see my lettres I write to yow and not to them', and also commanding that Francis alone be shown them 'I pray shew yowr Brother this lettre. But ^{^to^} no creature elce.'¹⁷¹ Her conceptualization of the malicious reception of her letters by Anthony's men, who will 'misconstrue' the contents, represents in epistolary form the harm she believes they wish upon her. Anne's predictions concerning Anthony's attitude towards her letters ('read not my lettres ether scoffingly or carelesly. Which hath ben used to much For I humbly thank god I know what I write and cownsell') also indicates the analogy she draws between the reception of her letters and her maternal advice.¹⁷²

Anne's fear over Anthony's composition of letters to her also belies her acute anxiety that their correspondence is unduly at the mercy of the machinations of his men. In a letter filled with advice concerning Anthony's behaviour, Anne makes the accusation that 'others write yowr lettres and not yowr selff'.¹⁷³ There is an element of truth here, as the letters written by Anthony to Anne all appear to have been drafted and then edited at a later stage. Insertions are often added in another hand, perhaps Anthony's, and those of a more substantial nature often seem to have been added to boost the religious tone of the letter:

¹⁶⁹ Lynne Magnusson discusses this letter in 'Scoff Power in *Love's Labour's Lost* and the Inns of Court: Language in Context', in *Macbeth and its Afterlife, Shakespeare Survey 57*, ed. by Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), pp. 196-208, (p. 201).

¹⁷⁰ ACB to AB, 1 April 1594, LPL MS 651 fols 108^r-109^v (art. 66).

¹⁷¹ ACB to AB, 27 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 172^r-173^v (art. 106); ACB to AB, 5 August 1595, 651 fols 328^r-329^v (art. 211).

¹⁷² ACB to AB, [1593], LPL MS 653 fols 330^r-331^v (art. 183).

¹⁷³ ACB to AB, 5 August 1595, MS LPL 651 fols 328^r-329^v (art. 211).

I purpose god willinge to doe my dewtie unto your Ladyship after the Tearme ^but^ not to remaine at Redbourne aboue 3 daies for-th by reason of some business which your Ladyship ^wyth god his healpe shall^ understand by my self¹⁷⁴

Only one of the letters sent to Anne by Anthony is extant, and in this example the main body of the letter was written by an amanuensis, and the subscription added in Anthony's own hand.¹⁷⁵ The excuse that the debilitating effect of gout prevented him from writing may have been acceptable to Anne, and in which case her accusation that 'others write yowr lettres and not yowr self' would refer to the general composition rather than the actual physical production of the letter. The drafting of his letters show that Anthony was as circumspect about writing letters to his mother as he was to other recipients, and their familial relation did not remove the need for him to exert maximum control over his self-representation within his letters. Daphne Du Maurier notes that Anthony's letter-writing style altered significantly depending on the recipient, describing the tone as:

intimate and light-hearted to his brother, the same though on humbler footing to the Earl, and, in contrast to both, sober, rather distant, and with religious undertones when writing to his mother.¹⁷⁶

Although he mirrors his mother's desire for religious sentiment within his letters, his lack of genuine interest results in a weary tone that, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Three, is eventually pushed to breaking point.

¹⁷⁴ AB to ACB, 10 [20?] June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 214^{r-v} (art. 137).

¹⁷⁵ AB to ACB/ACB to AB, 6/18 June 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 207^f-208^v (art. 132). That this example has survived is due to the way Anne has returned his letter with her own note appended to the bottom of the folio, and Anthony has duly catalogued it as he did her other letters. The way she has added a superscription to the outer folio suggests that it was conveyed as a discrete letter, and not merely been enclosed within another letter.

¹⁷⁶ *Golden Lads: a study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), p. 158.

Material concerns

Lady Bacon's suspicions about how her letters are received by Anthony and Francis bring us back full circle to Anthony's implications, discussed in the introduction, concerning the burdensome nature of his mother's correspondence. These frustrations are not vocalised to Anne, and Anthony's epistolary terms of address utilise the social conventions necessary in order to maintain a respectful attitude towards his mother. This deference is, however, undercut by the material life of the letter, as Anthony does not defer to her instructions regarding the composition of his letters, or the reception of her correspondence. If the conventional relationship of mother and son allows for further self-expression on the behalf of the mother, it conversely shackles the voice of the son, and in Anthony's letters we see little beyond a repetition of stock phrases of respect and brief snippets of information, alongside business matters. The imbalance of this relationship is reflected in Anthony's adherence to epistolary conventions and Lady Bacon's deviation from them, and while one of the correspondents is actively seeking further communication and contact, the other seems more intent on simply conserving a formal relationship. However, by placing Anne's letters to her sons within the context of her wider letter-writing activities, it is possible to see how it reflected the social relations of the writer and addressee. Even within this mode there exist different levels of formality pertaining to the function of the letter, and viewed from this perspective Anne's letter-writing practice seems more considered than has previously been assumed. Taking the long view in regards to her handwriting and physical composition of her letters also enable us to see the continuity of her letter-writing practice, and that rather than seeing her impassioned and barely legible letters as the result of a descent into madness, we can begin to see how the style and content is devised in direct response to her relationship with her sons. By interrogating how the content of the letters alters in response to the identity of the bearer, it becomes apparent how the problems of transmission directly affected the composition of the letters. Ultimately, the fight for control over the material afterlife of her letters becomes analogous to the wider power struggle of the relationship between mother and son, and Anne's

fears that her letters would be read 'scoffingly' seem to have their roots in reality.

1. ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fols 6^r-7^v (art. 4).

Gentle & saluten in Christ

4

6

I am looking for Redcorn Writing. you will not
 think how the most part of the people be your
 friends yet it is a way. Some cold felt this to
 leave it as much best. They comfult to sell
 caluoy & sappell & peridole leafe or some
 such small thing. & youg less did of so
 yet one might be able to more. God send
 you above all his time & grace in yo. hart
 our good healths to do yo. long discontinued
 truly to be. in the w. country. I pray you be
 careful. & have good diet & exercise. it is
 here in velvet cold & sharp, & sharp yet
 for you & yours. On Thursday or Friday
 next Friday I mean to be at London if
 the Lord will be so. many sicut be created
 & one of my household shall come.
 If I come not shortly I will send yo. Boy
 who is trusted wth cold & willing to be for you
 I wold gladly you had well & none be wth out
 be in some good state of health first & regard
 it carefully for any. wth God's blessing
 The Lord be wth you. Doss. For ever &
 give yo. thanks to please him & encrease
 yo. healths. Love well to yo. & yours
 in yo. own writing. Gort. 29. Feb. 1591

yo. most affectionate
Baron

2. ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r -168^v (art. 103).

103

167

god bless you dayly more & more both in health & wealth
 & send to friends how you do. for my selfe I am but languishing
 yet in good there is comfort & thanks god. The goodman
 Rolfe my tenant at Purston but lately recovered is
 desirous to see you. he is an honest man & a kind
 tenant & if diversion is desired. I sent my man
 Purry to direct him & to see you. & to put you in
 it is in your best. I humbly thank god for all
 to furnish to party of your wythe & wythe. I
 may greatly be affraid of god his displeasure & worse
 the. Muche disappointing of god his wythe in his vineyard
 by putting such to silence & in the world stirring dayly
 godd impose great come vpon us that. God entrust
 in your grace & comfort & stables yo hart in the love of his
 eternal love.
 God send you all
 17 May 1592

yo moste Barony

Think on yo selfe wythe.
 Be not troubled with
 subtle & hurtfull lying con.



Chapter Two

The Formation of the Mother-Child Bond in the Early Modern Period: A Study of Anne and Her Sons

In biological motherhood [...] woman was not merely a producer and stabilizer of life: there, too, she was a transformer. Menstrual blood was believed to be transformed into the infant [...] and into the milk which flowed from the mother's breasts.¹

At times tender and caring, at others accusatory and manipulative, the letters between Anne and Anthony Bacon reveal the ambivalence of the maternal role in the early modern period, and illustrate that whilst the role of the mother was clearly defined in the early years of the child's life, the adult relationship was less so, resulting in conflict and confusion as to where nurture ended, and control began. This intergenerational tension was exacerbated by Lady Bacon's experience of spheres not usually traversed by women, as the extent of her education, her experience in court politics and estate management, as well as her respected status as a puritan patron all combine to remove areas from which her sons could legitimately dismiss her maternal advice. Although Anne's humanist education and her involvement in the early parenting of her children creates an intellectual affinity between mother and son, her status as a widow and the responsibilities she comes to bear for her sons' financial stability and their professional advancement works to dismantle the empathy between them. The dual impulses of Anne's maternal role, namely the affection and care she desires to extend to them as a result of their biological relation, and the direction she is obliged to provide them for the secure establishment of the family line, create a paradoxical correspondence, one that flickers from love to malice in a flash. In order to unravel the complexity of the maternal role, this chapter, the first of two focusing on the mother-son relationship, will outline how

¹ Rich. p. 101.

the role was conceived in this period, and how Anne's personal experience of motherhood affected her relationship with her sons.

Maternal responsibilities

The primary function of the family in the early modern period was to nurture, socialize and provide for its younger members, and this protection was rewarded by the continuation of the family line and wealth through subsequent generations. Families were authoritarian and patriarchal by nature, and children were expected to show unswerving obedience to their parents, a situation justified by the social values of wider society and by the adherence to the fifth commandment which ordered them to 'honour thy father and mother'.² In return parents were obliged 'to bring up their children' and 'to bestow them when they have brought them up', using kinship ties and practical resources to see their child established in society.³ For upper-class families the practice of primogeniture ensured that there was a clear distribution of power and wealth within the family structure, and all relations between the family were steeped in this dynamic. Beyond the function of the transmission of family wealth, the family also served as an important source for the provision of money and credit, and thus it was important for the family ties to be carefully maintained to ensure future solvency.⁴ Within such a structure the woman's role was primarily to produce offspring and then to care for the child in its infancy. However, the mother's role in the upbringing of her children differed greatly depending on the status of her family, and as a consequence mothering can be seen to perform hugely diverse functions across the social spectrum. A consideration of the general experience of maternal care in upper class families provides a context against which Anne's experience of motherhood can be explored.

Despite injunctions from religious and moral commentators of the importance of the mother to breast-feed her own child, elite mothers preferred instead to

² Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 180.

³ William Perkins, a theologian of moderate puritan persuasion, quoted by Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), p. 108.

⁴ Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: The Verneys, a case study* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 28.

pass their children to a wet nurse, meaning that after parturition the mother was likely to have been separated from her child for at least a year and a half.⁵ This practice seems to have been the result of a strongly prevailing social taboo against the continuation of sexual relations between husband and wife during lactation, as it was feared that sexual intercourse infected the mother's milk and endangered the child.⁶ Such a restriction was incompatible with the demand placed on women to produce as many heirs as possible, and pressure from husbands may have encouraged women to relinquish their baby to another woman for nursing.⁷

Lawrence Stone suggests that once returned from nursing to the family home children of upper class families were cared for predominantly by women, whether by their mother, nurse or governess, until the age of seven.⁸ From this age their education would then have been begun in earnest, and would usually have differed significantly according to gender.⁹ Boys passed from the care of their mothers to the control of male tutors and schoolmasters, while girls usually remained within the household to receive training in domestic skills, which may or may not have included reading and writing. Between the ages of seven and thirteen children of both sexes often went to other households in order to complete their preparations for entry into society.¹⁰ Ideally these host families would be of a higher social status than the child's own direct kin, and their integration into other households helped them to make social connections that would be invaluable for their later advancement.¹¹ At this stage it is difficult to trace the role of the mother, although evidence from letters and diaries suggest that the mother continued to show a concern in the physical, social and

⁵ Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 13.

⁶ King, p. 14.

⁷ Linda Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship: Parents and Children Over Three Centuries* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1987), p. 53.

⁸ Stone, p. 107.

⁹ Linda Pollock describes the different education of boys and girls in "Teach her to live under obedience": the making of women in the upper ranks of early modern England', *Continuity and Change*, 4 (1989), 231-258 (pp. 238-244).

¹⁰ Stone, p. 107.

¹¹ Kenneth Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 126.

academic development of the child.¹² The advent of adulthood was in many ways the most difficult phase to negotiate, and the flourishing genre of advice books indicate a parental model reluctant to relinquish control, and intent on directing their children in both spiritual and worldly matters.¹³ Once the child had fully attained maturity, the parent-child relationship became more equally balanced, with family historian Linda Pollock suggesting that obedience from grown-up children ‘was a privilege and not a right’, and that ‘adult offspring were to be dutiful only to reasonable parents, and were prepared to remind parents of their obligations if it was felt they had failed in their duty’.¹⁴ Making the transition towards a more reciprocal relationship seems to have proved problematic for many parent-child units, and intergenerational conflict is not an uncommon feature in this period.¹⁵ For young men and mothers this signalled a significant change in the balance of power within their relationship, as the higher status attained by boys as they reached manhood placed them in a (technically) socially superior position to their mothers. Lawrence Stone provides an interesting counterbalance to Pollock’s argument, suggesting that the subservience of children to their parents continued well into adulthood.¹⁶ Stone notes how the twenty-eight year old son of Lady Alice Wandesford knelt to receive his mother’s blessing before embarking on a journey, and proffers other instances of outward shows of filial deference that suggest that the relationship retained nuances of its earlier dynamic.¹⁷

This difference of opinion concerning the relative subservience of children to their parents neatly brings us to the diverse manner in which relations between parents and children have been interpreted. The evolutionary theory proposes that there was little development of affective bonds between parents and children until the eighteenth-century, and that preceding this date parents were

¹² See for example Brilliana, Lady Harley’s letters to her son Edward while he is at university, which not only detail her care for him but also relate the progress of her other younger children. *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, ed. by Thomas Taylor Lewis (London: Camden Society, 1854).

¹³ These books are discussed below.

¹⁴ Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship*, p. 248.

¹⁵ Pollock’s chapter in on intergenerational conflict provides examples of children and parents disagreeing over money, marriage, employment, comportment and religion, *A Lasting Relationship*, pp. 259-279.

¹⁶ Stone, p. 171.

¹⁷ Stone, p. 171.

cold, strict and potentially harmful to their infants.¹⁸ In contrast the continuity theory believes that the positive emotional interaction between parent and child was present in early modern family relations, and that evidence of parental affection for their children is abundant.¹⁹ Unsurprisingly proponents of these positions shed a very different light on the role of the mother in their analyses of family relations. Lawrence Stone, arguing from the evolutionary stance, sees the characteristics of early modern motherhood as fundamentally opposed to the creation of a strong bond between mother and child, as the practice of “fostering out” babies to wet nurses and the subsequent passing over of care of the infant to governesses prevented its development.²⁰ Conversely, as one of the champions of the theory of the continuity of parental affection for children, Linda Pollock suggests that even in households where servants were employed to care for the children, ‘the role of the mother was still conceived to be one of paramount importance in a child’s life’, and Rosemary O’Day notes that mothers ‘set great store by their role’, and can be seen as active participants in the parenting of their children.²¹

However, emphasising the continuity theory within family relations risks overlooking the fact that the primary functions on the family were to ensure the continuation of the family line and the retention of accumulated wealth and property, and that these imperatives altered the manner in which parental affection was expressed. While it is understood, both now and then, that the development of maternal feeling can be attributed to instinct, the manner in which this manifested itself in practical terms needs closer consideration. In a useful discussion of the problems of these approaches Barbara J. Harris points out that both the ‘evolutionary’ and ‘continuity’ theories of maternal affection inappropriately apply twentieth-century psychological theories of ‘good-mothering’ to their interpretation of early modern relations. By plotting an alternative method of viewing parental relations in Yorkist and early Tudor

¹⁸ Lawrence Stone is the most prolific proponent of this model, see also Phillipe Ariès, *L’Enfant et la vie familiale dans l’ancien régime*, translated as *Centuries of Childhood* by Robert Baldick (London: Cape, 1962).

¹⁹ Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship*; Rosemary O’Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900* (London: Macmillan, 1994); Charlton, p. 201.

²⁰ Stone, pp. 106-7.

²¹ Pollock, *A Lasting Relationship*, p. 165; O’Day, p. 168.

England, Harris historically contextualises motherhood.²² She suggests that it was one of the many commitments that lay within the remit of the vocation that was aristocratic wifedom, and that affection for the child was expressed in a practical manner, in terms of securing the future of the child both financially and professionally.²³ Harris explains the lack of emotional expression that she finds in letters between her subjects by suggesting that they merely conform to early modern societal prescriptions for obedience and subservience to elders, and that indicating respect can be considered as an example of affection.²⁴ By viewing the emotive elements of the relationship through the lens of the social convention, Harris helps us to see how maternal care does not need to be measured against contemporary notions of 'good mothering', and instead formulates a more historical method by which to understand how this care was enacted.²⁵ Working in the same fashion, Miriam Slater suggests that for a seventeenth-century family 'role differentiation, as determined primarily by gender, birth order, and generation, appears to have been a key variable in affecting interpersonal relations', and that a parent's attitude and behaviour towards their children was 'predicated on their role in the kinship structure rather than on emotional response to him or her as an individual'.²⁶ But whilst this structural approach helps us to historicize family relations, we must also remain alert to the extent to which it can obscure the emotional interactions of parents and children. Such an understanding of family relations needs to be tempered by an awareness that the development of affection also depended upon the particular circumstances of the family, and their personal compatibility.²⁷

Anne Bacon's mothering experience

The competing interpretations of family history indicate that this is an area in which our understanding of the relations needs to be based, as far as possible,

²² 'Property, Power and Personal Relations: Elite Mothers and Sons in Yorkist and Early Tudor England', *Signs*, 15 (1990), 606-636.

²³ Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women: 1450-1550: Marriage, Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 100.

²⁴ Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, pp. 110-111.

²⁵ 'Property, Power and Personal Relations', p. 630.

²⁶ Slater, p. 26, p. 28.

²⁷ O'Day, p. 67.

on the experiences of individual families as opposed to general assumptions about family structures. As the role of the mother was so variable in this period, and dependent upon so many different factors, an examination of the evidence we have about Anne's involvement in the upbringing of her children will help us to assess the nature of their early attachment and how this shaped the later expectations of their relationship.

Crucial for understanding Anne's role as a mother is the impact that her own education had upon her abilities and inclinations to provide guidance for her children. During Anne's lifetime the function of the family had come under heavy scrutiny from both religious and moral commentators, resulting in the widespread redefinition of marriage as a locale for spiritual and intellectual companionship, as opposed to merely an outlet for carnality.²⁸ The household was seen as a microcosm of the state, and became a seminary for the preparation of its younger members for a life of good citizenship; a training that was supervised by the parents.²⁹ While the father retained his position as head of the household, as a sort of 'liliputian monarch', the mother's responsibilities for the religious education of her children became more thoroughly outlined, and the intimacy of the early nurturing stage was seen as the ideal opportunity to embed religious faith in the child.³⁰ As a consequence, humanist theorists advocated maternal feeding of infants, as it was believed that characteristics were imbibed alongside nourishment, with Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives suggesting that 'we sowke out of our mothers teate to gether with the milke nat only love but also condicions and dispositions'.³¹ In his colloquy entitled 'The New Mother', Erasmus argues that breastfeeding developed the 'natural affection' between mother and son, making the son more obedient as he grows older and the mother more attentive to her child's needs.³² The early educative process is linked to breastfeeding, and Vives suggests that 'if the mother can skylk of lernyng, let her teach her litle children her selfe, that they maye have all

²⁸ Margot Todd, 'Humanists, Puritans and the Spiritualized Household', *Church History*, 49 (1980), 18-34, (p. 21).

²⁹ Todd, p. 23.

³⁰ Todd, pp. 18-19; Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 8.

³¹ Juan Luis Vives, *A very frutefull and pleasant booke called the instructio[n] of a Christen woma[n]* (London: Thomas Berthelet, [1529?]), sig. C1^v.

³² Desiderius Erasmus, *Colloquies*, trans. by Craig R. Thompson, 2 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), I, pp. 605-606.

one, both for theyr mother, theyr nouryse [nourish], and theyr teacher' (sig. 13^r v), thus combining the physical and intellectual aspects of nurturing. The continuing popularity of the practice of wet-nursing in upper class families suggests that this advice was not heeded, despite being carried over into English domestic theory texts.

Margot Todd has convincingly traced the debt the early Protestant domestic theorists owed to the humanists, showing how the humanist appropriation of Aristotelian theories on marriage and domesticity filtered down into English social thought.³³ Anne's experience of both learning and teaching ran parallel to this filtration of classical models of the family into English society, and her humanist education had an important affect on her conception of motherhood.

Raised in a household that chose to follow the humanist pedagogical model, Anne and her sisters were educated with the objective of turning them into intellectual companions for their husbands, and pious mothers to their children.³⁴ That the instruction received by the Cooke daughters, as well as the women in the household of Thomas More (another strong advocate of female education) made an impact upon their own abilities and inclinations to teach can be seen from references to the roles they played in the education of their own children.³⁵ Margaret Roper, the daughter of Thomas More, is described as 'full busily teaching her children' even at the point of her husband's imprisonment, and her direction of the advanced education of her children is evidenced in a letter to Margaret's daughter Mary from the educator Roger Ascham, in which he recalls her attempts to lure him from Cambridge 'to teach Greek and Latin to you and the other children.'³⁶ Elizabeth Russell, Anne's sister, constructed her funeral monument around the motif of maternal education, and in her everlasting pose is shown 'schooling her children in their religious devotions': concrete evidence for the importance placed on the

³³ Todd, pp. 19-20.

³⁴ Retha M. Warnicke, 'Women and Humanism in England', in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacy*, ed. by Albert Rabil, 3 vols (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), II, p. 47.

³⁵ For a detailed discussion on the educative role of women see Charlton, pp. 203-214.

³⁶ Roger Ascham to Mary Clarke, 15 Jan 1554, quoted in Ernest Edwin Reynolds, *Margaret Roper: Eldest Daughter of St. Thomas More* (London: Burns and Oates, 1963), pp. 116-117.

educative role by learned mothers.³⁷ In his book of advice to his son, William Cecil describes two separate stages of his son's education, the first of which was conducted by 'your matchlesse Mother, under the wings of whose prudent and Godly govrenment, your infancy hath beene trayned and guided up,' while the second was performed by a 'zealous' and 'Learned a Tutor'.³⁸ This indicates that Mildred Cecil conducted the early stages of her son's education only, although it is possible that her daughter received her more advanced classical education from her mother.³⁹ Mildred's educative role was not limited to the training of her own children, and her household came to be 'recognized as the best private school in England'.⁴⁰ This was partly the result of circumstance – her husband's position as the master of court of wards meant that Cecil became the guardian for many Crown wards, as well as some of his own, and thus his home was organised around the educative needs of future statesmen.⁴¹ Wardship was a throwback from the feudal system of knight service, and it allowed the Crown to take into their possession the lands of a noble if they died before their heir had reached majority. The wardship could then be sold to another party, who benefited financially from being able to exert control over the marriage arrangements of their ward, and often took advantage of their position to arrange matches with family members.⁴² But the assortment of young people who passed through the Cecil doors also reflected the practice of sending young people to other households in order to complete their education. Jane Stevenson suggests that Mildred 'certainly fostered more than a dozen aristocratic children', including Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, as well as the children of her sister, Elizabeth Russell.⁴³

³⁷ Found in All Saints' Church, Bisham, Berkshire. Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities: Crises of Conception in Early Modern England* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), p. 227.

³⁸ William Cecil, *Precepts, or, directions for the well ordering and carriage of a mans life...* (London: [Thomas Harper] for Thomas Jones, 1637), sig. A5^r.

³⁹ Warnicke, p. 46.

⁴⁰ Jane Stevenson, 'Mildred Cecil, Lady Burleigh: Poetry, Politics and Protestantism', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing*, ed. by Victoria E. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 51-73 (p. 61).

⁴¹ Stevenson, pp. 61-62.

⁴² Alan Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry, 1540-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 38.

⁴³ Stevenson, p. 61.

The humanist objective in educating sons was somewhat different from educating daughters, as boys were being trained to become useful citizens to the state, and upholders of morality. In contrast the education of daughters was regarded 'as an ornament – an adornment along with beauty and manners, needlepoint and music'.⁴⁴ For the proponents of reformed religion the breeding of faithful subjects committed to the service of God was particularly important, as they needed to ensure the survival of the new church. Margot Todd suggests that 'the exalted ideal of the family which most Puritans held rather expanded this goal [of procreation] into the production of good commonwealthmen and citizens of the kingdom of God.'⁴⁵ The humanist mother's duty was therefore to produce and raise a son who would become 'an eloquent and cultivated individual equipped with the urbanity and civility necessary for full social participation in the higher echelons of civic life', while at the same time the reformation demanded that Protestant mothers also ensured that their children became active protectors of the new religion.⁴⁶

Marriage and parenthood

It is against this background of humanist educational imperatives and Protestant ideology that we can situate the maternal role of Anne Bacon. Early interest in and affection for her children can be seen in a postscript she appends to a letter sent by her husband to William Cecil:

We at Bedfordes ar no les glad of Wymbledones welfare, and especially of little nans. Trusting For ^all^ this shrewed Fever to se ^her and mine^ play fellows many tymes.⁴⁷

This testifies to her care for both her own daughter and that of her niece, and indicates that the amusement of their infants was one important consideration

⁴⁴ Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and drama in the age of Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 51.

⁴⁵ Todd, p. 22.

⁴⁶ Jardine, p. 51.

⁴⁷ Bedfords was a house on the Gidea Estate of Anne's father. Nicholas Bacon to WC (postscript by Anne), 18 Aug 1557, *HMC Hatfield*, I, no. 534, p. 143. BL Microfilm 152/19.

for both families. The joint responsibility of parenting shared by Anne and Nicholas is reflected by the split authorship of the letter which is signed 'your brother and syster in lawe, and by Nicholas's comments in the main body of the letter in which he also expresses concerns for his daughter's health, writing to Cecil that 'your goddaughter (thanks be to God) ys somewhat Amendyd, her fyttts beyng more easy, but not delyvyred of eny.' Nicholas also mentions the health of the child's nurse, indicating that she was being closely attended by a female servant, and possibly breast-fed by her.

Discussions of the changes wrought by Protestantism on the status of women within marriage seem generally to conclude, as Margaret L. King does, that:

The very age which elevated matrimony as a holy state – by the edicts of Trent within Catholicism, by the cultivation of family sentiment within Protestantism – strengthened, paradoxically, the authority of husband over wife and required her deeper submission.⁴⁸

The influence of humanism is regarded as having a more positive effect on the relationship, and it was believed that 'female learning' could 'create a new bond between husbands and wives'.⁴⁹ This certainly seems to have been the case with Anne and Nicholas, and their relationship conforms to the model of companionate marriage so enthusiastically described by humanist writers.⁵⁰ A tender poem written by Nicholas to Anne celebrates their partnership of minds:

Calleinge to mynde my wyfe moste dere
Howe ofte you have in sorrowes sadde
With wordes full wyse and pleasante chere
My dropeinge lookes turned into gladde,

⁴⁸ *Women of the Renaissance*, p. 38.

⁴⁹ Ralph A. Houlbrooke, *The English Family, 1450-1700* (London: Longman, 1984), p. 32.

⁵⁰ Ian Maclean notes that 'prominent Renaissance texts which treat this rehabilitation of marriage are Erasmus's *Sancti matrimonii institutio* (1526), Henricus Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim's *De sacramento matrimonii declamatio* (1526) and Vives's *De Institutione foeminae Christianae* (1523)'. *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 19-20.

Howe ofte you have my moodes to badde
 Borne patientlye with a mylde mynde,
 Asswageinge them with wordes righte kynde:

Remembringe to myne owne good manne
 A tryed mynde with carke and care,
 Howe ofte you have, howe well you canne
 With modeste mirth of witte not bare
 Refressheinge me, and howe you are
 Gladde by all meanes like a good wyfe
 To breede and keepe a pleasante lyfe:

Thinkeinge alsoe with howe good will
 The Idle tymes whiche yrkesome be
 You have made shorte throwe your good skill
 In readeinge pleasante thinges to me,
 Whereof profite we bothe did se,
 As wittenes can if they could speake
 Bothe your Tullye and my Senecke.⁵¹

Anne's more traditional fulfillment of her wifely role can be seen in her delivery of 'wordes right kynde' to her sad husband, and her willingness to 'breede and keepe a pleasante lyfe'; while the shared reading activity of the couple shows how her education enables her to provide intellectual nourishment. The description of 'your Tully and my Seneck', (Cicero and Seneca), suggests an established personal preference for each of these authors, and is a playful indication of the couple's understanding of each other's tastes and interests. Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart suggest that this poem was written in the last year of Mary's reign (1557-8), probably as a consolation for the loss of the child mentioned in the letter above.⁵² This was the second daughter the Bacons had lost; their first daughter Mary also died in infancy. While showing full

⁵¹ Nicholas Bacon, *The Recreations of his Age. (Thirty-six unpublished poems)*, ed. by C.H.O. Daniel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919), pp. 26-7.

⁵² *HF*, pp. 26-28.

appreciation for the companionship his wife offers, Nicholas wishes 'there might/ Such frute springe oute of theis your sides/ As you mighte reape store due of righte', and Jardine and Stewart interpret the poem as an expression of Nicholas's fears that his virility was fading.⁵³

Anne's marriage to Nicholas had followed swiftly on the death of his first wife, Jane Ferneley, and this speed may partly be attributed to the assistance needed for the care of his six surviving children, aged between three and thirteen. Anne's early married life therefore probably involved organizing the education of her step-children, and would have given her valuable experience when it came to the education of her own children. That her pedagogical abilities were recognized and respected by her stepfamily can be seen from the role she played in the education of Nathaniel Bacon's wife, Anne Gresham, the natural daughter of Thomas Gresham and Mistress Dutton. Nathaniel writes a warm letter of thanks to Anne about the care and trouble she has taken to educate his wife:

Your Ladyship knoweth how, beinge matched in mariage as I am, it stode me upon to have some care of the well bringinge up of my wife, for these wordes of Erasmus are very trewe: *plus est bene instrui quam bene nasci* [it is better to have been well instructed than well born]. Yf she shoulde have the want of both, I had just cause to fear what might befall.⁵⁴

Nathaniel anticipates that his wife will spend between a quarter to a half of a year with Anne, and describes the training as being similar to the upper-class model of sending adolescents to live in other households, reasoning that it is something that 'thei which love ther children best' do, as 'in a short time thei learne better to know them selves then all the time before in which thei [...] were brought up in their parentes houses'.⁵⁵ Anne's teaching is sought despite

⁵³ HF, p. 28.

⁵⁴ Nathaniel Bacon to Lady Anne Bacon, undated, c.1572, *Stiffkey*, I, pp. 22-23. Translation taken from HF, p. 33.

⁵⁵ Nathaniel Bacon to Lady Anne Gresham, undated, *Stiffkey*, I, p. 12.

Nathaniel's ambivalent relationship with her, as 'in this respect I have ever liked of her, though in other thinges, as cause moveth me, it maie be I have great mislikinge of her'.⁵⁶ Nathaniel's letters also hint at the style of Anne's teaching methods, as he puts Thomas Gresham's reluctance to have his daughter placed with Lady Bacon down to her 'sharpnes'.⁵⁷ It seems that Nathaniel's concerns to improve his wife overrode any other misgivings he may have had concerning her tutor, and the importance he placed upon his wife's attainment of an educational standard appropriate to her new rank. The outcome of the instruction seems to have been satisfactory for all sides, as Lady Bacon stood as godmother to the couples' first daughter.⁵⁸

From the knowledge we have of the extent of her own education, and from the comparative experiences of other similarly educated women, it can be assumed that Anne would have undertaken at least the very early education of her own sons. Francis Bacon's intellectual achievements have unsurprisingly engendered an interest in his formative years, and although there is little explicit evidence for the type of education he received, it has been suggested that he was likely to have been taught the primary and grammar school syllabus in the Bacon household.⁵⁹ Although it has been speculated that Anne may have been involved in this part of her sons' education, the employment of the scholar John Walsall as a tutor in 1566, when Anthony and Francis would have been eight and five years old respectively, until 1569, suggests that the bulk of the curriculum would have been taught to them by male tutors.⁶⁰ Anne does, however, seem to have been involved in organizing their tuition, as Walsall's reference to his time in the Bacon household suggests. In his book *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse* (1578) the 'Epistle Dedicatorie' is addressed to Anne, as Walsall recalls the time he was 'first called from the universitie to teach your two sonnes', and praises the Bacon house as a perfect example of a godly seminary:

⁵⁶ Nathaniel Bacon to Lady Anne Gresham, undated, *Stiffkey*, I, p. 12.

⁵⁷ Nathaniel Bacon to Anthony Stringer, undated, *Stiffkey*, I, pp. 10-11.

⁵⁸ ACB to Nathaniel Bacon, 6 August 1573, *Stiffkey*, I, pp. 81-82.

⁵⁹ Markku Peltonen, 'Francis Bacon (1561-1626)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/990>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁶⁰ Virgil Heltzel notes the various assumptions about their education in 'Young Francis Bacon's Tutor', *Modern Language Notes*, 63 (1948), 483-485 (p. 483, note 2).

For by good experience I have comfortably found both in the right honorable my very good Lord your wise and loving husband, and in your good ladyship, his Godly and obedient espouse, such care of Gods glorie in advancing true religion, in demeaning your selves in the education of your children, in governing your family, in countenauncing of vertue and learning, in cherishing of poor and needie⁶¹

The dedication celebrates the Bacons' fulfillment of a model companionate marriage, emphasising their joint governance of the family, yet at the same time showing Anne's subordination to her husband. Walsall received his B.A. degree in 1566, and Virgil B. Heltzel suggests that it was between then and probably until the end of 1569, when he was still known as the chaplain to the Lord Keeper, that he taught Anthony and Francis.⁶² That Anthony and Francis were still being educated at home after 1572 is suggested by Anne Gresham Bacon's reference to them in her letter of thanks to Anne, in which she sends 'commedacions to my brother Anthonie and my good brother Franck', indicating that they were present at Gorhambury when she was under the tutelage of their mother.⁶³ The boys were sent to Trinity College, Cambridge in 1573, matriculating on 10 June, and from this point their educational charge was transferred to the hands of John Whitgift, master of the college and future archbishop of Canterbury. Following in their father's footsteps the brothers were admitted to Gray's Inn in 1576, and this training in law was supplemented by continental travel aimed to introduce them to the art of diplomacy and modern languages.

While their mother's active role in their upbringing had been clearly limited to their earliest years, her personal education and interest in her sons undoubtedly meant that she was keenly aware of their intellectual progress once they had moved beyond the household. Her early supervision of her children, the encouragement by humanist theorists for parental interaction, and the

⁶¹ *A Sermon preached at Pauls* (London: Henrie Middleton for George Byshop, 1578), sig. A5^v.

⁶² Heltzel, p. 485.

⁶³ Anne Gresham Bacon to ACB, [c. 1572], *Stiffkey*, I, pp. 23-24.

prolonged contact that their home education permitted suggest circumstances that would have enabled the development of strong bonds between parent and child. In addition the nature of Anne and Nicholas's marriage promoted the role of the mother as an educative figure, and gave her authority over the spiritual guidance of her children, a sphere of influence that became increasingly more important as her sons matured. Anne's contribution to the education of her children suggests that her specific circumstances had allowed the development of a maternal spiritual authority, one that was also being claimed by several of her contemporaries.

Mothers' advice books

The spiritual responsibilities of the mother toward her child were deemed significant enough to warrant the traversing of cultural boundaries concerning women's authorship, and are the rationale behind the publication of several female-authored mothers' advice books. Elizabeth Grymeston's *Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratives.* (1604), Dorothy Leigh's *The mothers blessing* (1616), and Elizabeth Jocelin's *The mothers legacie, to her unborn child* (1624) were three of the most popular, and each ran to at least several editions throughout the seventeenth-century.⁶⁴ These books provide useful evidence for how mothers conceived of their role, and define the spheres over which they perceived their influence to extend.

The manner in which they rationalize their disruption of the convention of women's silence in the public sphere reveals their awareness of the controversial nature of their authorship, and illustrates the potency and legitimacy of maternal emotion for the rupturing of such taboos. Each author legitimises the writing of their text by arguing that the concern for the spiritual welfare of their children has propelled them to set down their words, and their different religious affiliations (Grymeston was Catholic, Leigh and Jocelin

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Grymeston, *Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratiues.* (London: Printed by Melch. Bradwood for Felix Norton, 1604); Dorothy Leigh, *The mothers blessing* (London: John Budge, 1616); Elizabeth Jocelin, *Mothers legacie, to her unborne childe* (London: Printed by John Haviland, for William Barret, 1624). Travitsky lists four editions of Grymeston's book, notes that the *STC* lists nineteen editions of Leigh's work, and that Jocelin's was reprinted seven times before 1640. *Mother's Advice Books*, ed. by Betty S. Travitsky, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. x-xi.

Protestant) indicate the mother's role as spiritual mentor was by no means a Protestant innovation. All three works were published posthumously, thus removing any taint of unfeminine ambition; however Leigh's text seems to have been prepared with publication in mind, as she justifies its publication in her dedicatory epistles. By dedicating the text to King James I's daughter, Elizabeth, who at the time of the book's publication embodied the hopes of militant Protestants, Leigh indicates that her book may have also been conceived of as a text published to support the aims of the reformed church, another cause for which women were prepared to risk publication.⁶⁵ Each woman is careful to emphasise that she is not seeking to supersede the authority of her husband. Grymeston writes that her uncertainty for her husband's survival had driven her to record her advice, while Leigh writes that her book is the fulfilment of her husband's last wishes, as he asked her in his will 'to see you well instructed and brought up in knowledge' (sig. A6^r). Jocelin's work is bequeathed to her husband, and thus grants him ultimate control over how her words are transmitted to their child.

Leigh opens her dedication by describing how she was 'troubled and wearied with feare, lest my children shoulde not finde the right way to heaven', an anxiety which motivated her to 'writ them the right and ready way'.⁶⁶ This desire for the spiritual well-being of their children is posited as an extension of the natural love that a mother feels for her child, and is also said to legitimize the writing of the text, as Leigh writes 'let no man blame a mother, though she sometime exceede in writing to her children, since every man knowes, that the love of a mother to her children, is hardly contained within the bounds of reason' (sig. B2^{r-v}). Leigh uses what can be defined as a maternal rhetorical strategy, and cites the intensity of her maternal feelings as an excuse for her writing. The theme of excess that recurs regularly in mothers' advice books is also an acknowledgement of the transgressive circumstances of their textual production, as they are thwarting the prescriptions concerning female publication.

⁶⁵ Betty S. Travitsky, p. xi.

⁶⁶ A2^{r-v}. References are to the following edition: *Mothers blessing* (London: Robert Allot, 1627).

The second rationale Leigh puts forward to legitimise her authorship is the imminence of her departure from the mortal world ('seeing my selfe going out of the world, and you but coming in' (sig. A6^v)), and Wendy Wall argues that Leigh 'successfully exploited the rhetoric of the deathbed legacy as a means of presenting her work "abroad"'.⁶⁷ Grymeston claims similar motivations for her writing, and in her dedication writes that 'there is no love so forcible as the love of an affectionate mother to hir naturall child: there is no mother can either more affectionately shew hir nature, or more naturally manifest hir affection, than in advising hir children out of hir owne experience'⁶⁸. Here Grymestone illustrates the inextricable connection of the maternal role to the discourse of advice, and draws on her life experience as a point of authority from which to advise her children.⁶⁹ Grymeston also raises the spectre of her imminent death to justify her writing, as her sickness has impelled her 'to breake the barren soile of my fruitlesse braine, to dictate something for thy direction' (sig. A3r).

Her book is a selection of prayers and meditations compiled to help guide her son, Bernye, after her death. Grymeston therefore chooses to channel her advice through the words of others, reasoning that she could never 'brooke to set downe that haltingly in my broken stile, which I found better expressed by a graver authour' (sig. A3^v). Rather than being simply derivative, Grymeston's use of sources displays the extent of her knowledge and learning, and draws on alternative sources of authority in order to guide her son. This positions her as both a spiritual and intellectual role model to her son. The critic Edith Snook sees this as an attempt to ensure the future intellectual compatibility of mother and son, thus circumventing the rejection of the mother's involvement in the life of the child after the early nursing period is over.⁷⁰ Certainly the inclusion of Bernye's poem at the end of the book points to a literary communication between the two (sig. E4^v).

⁶⁷ Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 289.

⁶⁸ Sig. A3^r. References are to the 1604 edition cited in note 63.

⁶⁹ Kristen Poole notes this relationship between maternity and the discourse of advice in "'The Fittest Closet for All Goodness": Authorial Strategies of Jacobean Mothers', in *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 35 (1995), 69-88 (p. 70).

⁷⁰ Edith Snook "'His open side our book": Meditation and Education in Elizabeth Grymeston's *Miscelanea Meditations and Memoratives.*', in *Maternal Measures: Figuring Caregiving in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 163-175 (p. 165).

Leigh also emphasizes the biological reason from which the mother's authority over the child stems, and depicts an intimacy that has developed from breastfeeding, writing 'will shee not blesse it everytime it suckes on her brest, when shee feeleth the bloud come from her heart to nourish it? Will shee not instruct it in the youth, and admonish it in the age, and pray for it continually?' (sig. B1^v) In a similar fashion to Vives and Erasmus, Leigh shows how the mother's role in the early nurturing of a child leads naturally to education and instruction. Leigh also reminds the reader of the trials of pregnancy, asking if it is possible 'that she, which hath carried her child within her, so neere her heart, and brought it forth into this world with so much bitter paine, so many groanes and cries, can forget it?' (sig. B1^{r-v}). Childbirth was believed to be the punishment dealt to all women for Eve's transgression in the Garden of Eden, but here the pain is rationalised in a different fashion. It is turned into an additional point of authority from which mothers speak, and also enables Leigh to emphasise the biological bond between mother and child. For Leigh a mother's role is to admonish her child, to pray for them, to educate them in religion, whilst at all times remaining subordinate to her husband. She dispenses advice on the raising of children, marriage, religion and the management of servants, indicating areas of authority that lay within a mother's remit. What is different about her advice is that it is *written* advice, a distinction she flags up towards the beginning of the book, asking, 'why I doe not, according to the usual custome of women, exhort you by words and admonitions, rather then by writing: a thing so unusuall among us' (sig. A10^{r-v}). In answer to her own question she continues 'neither care I what you or any shall thinke of me, if among many words I may write but one sentence, which may make you labour for the spirituall food of the soule' (sigs. A10^v-A11^r). Written exhortations are therefore seen to have more authority than spoken ones by Leigh, and are more effective in the battle for the establishment of reformed religion.

Elizabeth Jocelin's text reflects the decline of positive attitudes towards educating women that occurred in the seventeenth-century. As an introduction to her text Thomas Goad describes how Jocelin was educated by her grandfather, a professor of Divinity at Cambridge, as a child, and as a wife she

continued her studies 'of morality and history, the better by the helpe of forraine languages'.⁷¹ Yet in her advice Jocelin proposes that if she had a daughter she should be educated in the 'bible', 'good housewifery', 'writing and good workes', because 'other learning a woman needs not' (sigs. B4^v-B5^r). This denigration of female education is further effected by Jocelin's criticism of her own writing abilities, and as with Grymeston and Leigh she argues that 'motherly zeale' lay behind the reasons for her writing, and further that her work is only fit to meet the level of the children's intellect to which it is directed (sig. B1^v). Again the book uses the strategy of the deathbed trope to legitimise not only the publication of the text but also its initial creation, as Jocelin is shown to have prophesied her demise, and 'un-dauntedly looking death in the face, privately in her closet betweene God and her, she wrote these pious meditations' (sig. A9^r).

These texts enhance our understanding of the emotional experience of motherhood, and the need for each writer to defend her entry into the literary sphere provides us with unusually explicit descriptions of the objectives of maternal care in this period. For Leigh, Grymeston and Jocelin, their writing was prompted by a concern for the spiritual welfare of their children, and this was an extension of the overwhelming natural love they felt for them. Their writing also allows us to see the rhetorical strategies put into practice in order to persuade their children to accept their counsel, such as their use of classical and biblical quotations, and the frequent references to their imminent demise. These maternal objectives and rhetorical strategies are a useful framework against which to examine Anne's maternal role and voice, and offer an opportunity to compare the theoretical advice of the mother's manuals with the practical advice found in Anne's letters. The guidebooks provide an ideal and static image of the maternal advisor, one that goes unanswered by their child, but the correspondence between Anne and Anthony shows us how the conventions pertaining to this role are tested and stretched by the practical realities of a mother-son relationship.

⁷¹ A6^v. Quotations from Jocelin's text come from the following edition: *The mother's legacy to her unborn child* (London: Joseph Downinge, 1724).

The impact of widowhood on motherhood

Another factor needs to be considered in relation to Anne's role as mother, and that is the impact her status as a widow had upon her relationship with her sons. The death of Nicholas Bacon on 20 February 1579 forced substantial re-adjustments within the family unit, both financially and emotionally, and split the two sides of the family irrevocably. Clearly aware of the potential discord that would arise upon his death, Nicholas had carefully assigned properties to his sons in his lifetime, but unfortunately had not lived long enough to do so for his youngest son, Francis, a circumstance that left him reliant on Anthony's and his mother's inheritance. Aware of the potential discord that his death might create, Nicholas's will aimed to set out as clearly as possible the destination of his property and moveable goods, and although he assigned his eldest sons Nicholas and Nathaniel to be the executors of his will, his appointment of William Cecil as overseer was perhaps an attempt to preempt any conflict that might arise between the two sides of the family. In the final outcome, however, Cecil's power seems to have limited rather than prevented family strife, as the eldest sons' interests were pitted against the youngest.

Upon the death of her husband, a widow was entitled to one third of her husband's property for her lifetime. Amy Erickson's survey of wills has shown that widows 'were the principal beneficiaries of their husbands' wills, almost invariably receiving much more than their legal entitlement of one third'.⁷² And such was the case for Anne, who received the life-tenancy of Gorhambury as well as the leases of numerous lands in Hertfordshire, and her husband's interest in York House. She was also left plate and jewels, as well as 'all my lynen, naperie, hangynges, coches, lytters and all other my howsholde stuffe and and howsholde stoore remayninge at London', while she received half the household 'stuff' of Gorhambury, which was to be passed to Anthony upon her death. Nicholas' generous treatment of her was conditional, as he demanded that she take on full responsibility for caring for their sons:

⁷² Erickson, p. 162.

in consideracion of which legacies and in consideracion of suche assurances of mannors, landes and tenementes as I have assuered unto my said wief and for all loves that have benne between us, I desier her to see to the well brynginge upp of my twoo sonnes Anthonye and Fraunces that are nowe lefte poore orphans without a father.⁷³

Anthony inherited three of his father's Hertfordshire manors in Barley (Abbotsbury, Michenbury, and Hores), Colney Chapel in St Albans, and various other leases in Middlesex and Hertfordshire.⁷⁴ Altogether these lands are estimated to have generated him an income of around £360 a year.⁷⁵ Unfortunately for Francis, Nicholas had not completed purchasing lands for his youngest son before his death, and as a result Francis seems only to have inherited Woolwich Marsh and a share in a few leases, bringing him an income of two or three hundred a year.⁷⁶

Despite Nicholas Bacon's careful division of his property, there remained plenty of scope for disagreement.⁷⁷ The brothers argued over where the money for their father's debts should come from, and over certain lands and leases that had not been explicitly discussed in the will. The elder brothers questioned the neutrality of Cecil's position, and Nathaniel accused Anne of manipulating Cecil to arbitrate in her favour, writing to Cecil that 'by my Ladys meanes your Lordship was styrred greatlie againste me'.⁷⁸ Nicholas (junior) also charges her with reneging on her word, 'for my Ladie promysed that no goodes shoulde be embeasuled from us, which she hathe not onelie broken, but also hathe benne in offence with every man which hathe enformed us of them'.⁷⁹ Furious at these allegations and what he reads as their obstructive behaviour, and offended by

⁷³ Will of Sir Nicholas Bacon, *Stiffkey*, II, pp. 25-29.

⁷⁴ Alan Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry, 1540-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 102, note 1.

⁷⁵ Simpson, p. 102.

⁷⁶ Simpson also claims that Francis inherited the manor of Marks in Essex, however Lynne Magnusson has shown that this manor was in fact in the possession of Anne, and she surrendered it to Francis in 1584. Simpson, p. 103; Magnusson, 'Widowhood and Linguistic Capital: The Rhetoric and Reception of Anne Bacon's Epistolary Advice', *ELR*, 31 (2001), 3-33 (p. 16).

⁷⁷ The fall-out between the brothers caused by the will is outlined by *HF*, pp. 67-69.

⁷⁸ Nathaniel Bacon to WC, 13 July 1579, *Stiffkey*, II, pp. 101-2.

⁷⁹ Sir Nicholas Bacon to WC, 19 July 1579, *Stiffkey*, II, pp. 106-7.

their lack of epistolary etiquette in not replying jointly to his letters (the manner in which he had written to them), Cecil remains adamant that the matter can be resolved without resorting to court. He urges Nicholas and Nathaniel to treat Anne with respect, as a stepmother who:

hath so long tyme deserved well of you and yours, and hath ben so good a wife to my Lord your father, and lastely who in the tyme of your fathers death in my sight and hearinge yelded so much unto you for your benefitt as suerly no naturall mother could have yeilded more to hir own childeren.⁸⁰

Cecil depicts Anne as a fair mother to both parts of her late husband's family. His assessment of her virtues encapsulates the contemporary belief that while maternal care was understood to develop in part from natural instinct, it could also be extended to unrelated dependents. This suggests that motherhood was also perceived to be a learnt role, and one that could be claimed by non-biological mothers.

In spite of the kindnesses she had shown to her stepfamily, we can assume that after Nicholas's death Anne did everything in her power to secure a beneficial outcome for her own two sons. Anthony's residence at Redbourn (one of the properties over which the two sides of the families had argued) in the 1590s suggests that the newer family were successful in defending their claims against the older part of the family. Few letters between the two halves of the family survive from after the dispute over the will, suggesting that it permanently damaged their relationship.⁸¹ Anthony and Francis did, however, manage to remain on good terms with the youngest son of their father's first family, Edward, possibly as they were closer in age and had been brought up together.

The continual care of children was considered the primary responsibility of the widow, and Anne clearly enacted this charge from the very start of her

⁸⁰ WC to Sir Nicholas Bacon, 2 July 1579, *Stiffkey*, II, pp. 93-4.

⁸¹ *HF*, p. 69.

widowhood. Anne's authority was heightened in such a situation, especially as her kinship links proved vital in the battle over the will. Notwithstanding the security that Nicholas's bequests had provided her, it should be remembered that her increased importance in terms of the immediate family unit was accompanied by a significant change in personal status. As Nicholas's wife Anne had been accustomed to running large households in both London and Hertfordshire, and was accorded the full respect that befitted her as the wife of the Lord Keeper. While her nominal authority remained after her husband's death, her day-to-day lifestyle was greatly altered. Nicholas's funeral had consisted of a grand procession of mourners, and a sense of the lavishness of the funeral can be gleaned from his allotment of one thousand yards of black cloth for three hundred of his mourners, costing a total of £668 11s. 10d.⁸² The arrangements Nicholas had made for his funeral can be seen as a triumphant celebration of his wealth and professional success, as well as signalling the transference of his wealth to his wider family. Anne would have experienced a significant alteration to her circumstances, and while Nicholas had allocated £100 to maintain the servants for Gorhambury for a month after his death, the household would have been scaled down dramatically after this date.⁸³ The annual income of the Gorhambury estate has been estimated at £150, meaning that there would have been no possibility for Anne to continue living as lavishly as she had done during her husband's lifetime.⁸⁴

Anne's relationship with this estate also changed now that it had become her livelihood, and she now needed to take a more active part in its management. It is hard to ascertain how different her direction of the estate would have been before and after Nicholas's death. The one scrap of evidence detailing her transactions with St Albans aldermen is dated to 1588, during the time of her widowhood, and only details her involvement in the sale of wood.⁸⁵ Her letters to Anthony and Francis detail her involvement with the management of Gorhambury, and this experience placed her in a strong position from which to

⁸² Simpson evocatively reconstructs Nicholas's funeral from the expenses, pp. 22-27.

⁸³ *Stiffkey*, II, p. 26.

⁸⁴ Income from Gorhambury for 1578 as estimated by Simpson, p. 111.

⁸⁵ St Albans town records list the mayor's purchase of two acres of wood 'for the poor', from Anne at the cost of ten pounds, from which Anne 'abated' three pounds. Albert Earnest Gibbs, *The Corporation Records of St Albans* (St Albans: Gibbs and Bamforth, 1890), p. 28.

advise Anthony and Francis in their running of their estates. Alongside more traditional spheres of maternal influence, such as the physical and spiritual welfare of her sons, Anne now added an alternative area of their lives over which she could justifiably exert control. Her desire to ensure the effective management of Gohambury and her sons' estates was an extension of her maternal care, as she wished to see their future secured. However, Anthony and Francis's profligacy and disregard for business matters inevitably meant that her financial care of her sons became a matter of present subsistence rather than future security. To her horror she watched helplessly as her sons gradually sold off the lands that had been so carefully accumulated by her husband. Her letters reveal her anguish at their failure to keep together the family property, as she believed that her sons were failing to uphold their side of the parent-child bargain. From her sons' perspective, in the largely credit-based economy of early modern England, their mother was a source of ready money that could be used to pay-off pressing debts, and by signing away her dower interest to their properties she also enabled them to release more cash. Thus the relationship between Anthony and Anne should be viewed as one that was heavily tainted by the pressures of both financial and legal transactions.

Altered states

Widowhood significantly altered the power relations between Anne and her sons. Anthony was now the official head of the family unit, and had inherited his father's position as one of the most senior gentry figures resident in St Albans. Anne therefore became politically reliant on him, as despite her ownership of Gohambury she was unable to assume any official position of power within the local community, a situation that will be explored in more detail in Chapter Five. Yet her inheritance did enable her to retain a certain amount of independence, as she became the head of her own household and took control of her finances. Barbara J. Harris notes that the death of the patriarch was extremely difficult to negotiate, a fact evidenced by the 'frequency of feuds between widowed mothers and their eldest sons', and while relations between Anne and Anthony do not deteriorate to such an extreme extent, their correspondence shows how

difficult their relationship became after the death of Nicholas.⁸⁶ While Anne fulfilled the role of a dutiful mother and perpetual wife to her dead husband, the change in status she experienced, her increased authority over her income and land, and her retention of lands that would ultimately be inherited by her sons invests the relationship between mother and son with complex and potentially conflicting agendas. By this stage in their relationship their interests had diverged, and the letters between Anne and Anthony reveal the more problematic aspects of the relationship between mother and son, alongside sporadic demonstrations of strong familial affection.

⁸⁶ Harris, 'Property, Power and Personal Relations', p. 630.

Chapter Three

'Your Christian and Naturall mother': Maternal Expectations and Filial Disobedience in the Correspondence of Anne and Anthony Bacon

Mother-love is supposed to be continuous, unconditional. Love and anger cannot coexist. Female anger threatens the institution of motherhood.¹

Anne's involvement in the upbringing of her children and their early education, the conceptualisation of the mother as a spiritual mentor, and the independence afforded by her status as a widow, are factors which had a significant influence upon her later relationship with her sons, and show how the relationship was formulated within the Bacon family. The mothers' advice books provide us with an idealised version of the role of the mother, and indicate the areas of a child's life over which she was granted authority, as well as revealing how a specific maternal rhetoric is harnessed to make the child more receptive to the mother's wishes. An awareness of the written conventions of maternal advice are particularly important for an analysis of the relationship between Anne and Anthony, as much of the evidence we have of their relationship is expressed in the epistolary form. In their correspondence Anne and Anthony replicate, at a basic level, the formal conventions expected of a mother-son relationship. Yet the failure of both sides to fulfil their prescribed role outside the world of letters engenders a fractious tone that reveals the more problematic side of mother-son relations, one that is so lightly glossed over in the mothers' advice books. While Elizabeth Grymestone and Dorothy Leigh convert the excesses of their maternal zeal into written memorials for their children, Anne's passionate maternal instinct is converted into something altogether more negative, as her frustration at her sons is vented in the form of aggressive advice giving and pointed accusations.

¹ Rich, p. 46.

Anthony abroad

Anne's dissatisfaction with Anthony is rooted in his failure to perform the specific duties required of him as her eldest son. In a society governed by primogeniture his role was clearly defined: he was obliged to maintain and develop his patrimony, marry and produce the next generation, and to serve his sovereign and country. Of paramount importance for Anne was also his adherence to and support for reformed religion. However, Anthony had no such intentions of fulfilling all aspects of this prescribed role, and took advantage of his peculiar status as the oldest son of a second family to release himself from these responsibilities, and sought foreign adventure. He went with the approval of his family and friends, yet the indeterminate nature of his mission and his resistance to return ultimately undermined respect for his cryptic assignment. Anthony's twelve-year sojourn was a cause of much distress particularly for Anne, and was exacerbated by his frequent failure to communicate with his homeland. The suspicions cast upon him by his long stay in France had a significant impact on his relationship with his mother, and explain the blanket of hostility and bitterness that envelops their entire correspondence once he returned to England. It is therefore worth outlining Anthony's absence abroad, in order to ascertain how the separation redefined their relationship.

There is no extant correspondence between mother and son from this period, but Anthony's commonplace book compiled during his time in France records the receipt of letters from his mother ('one from my mother my Brother two'; '1 from my mother'; '27 June one from my mother' '11th July one from my mother').² Of all the many drafts of letters the commonplace book contains, only one seems to have been destined for Anne, and tellingly contains a contorted excuse for his lack of communication:

And trulye Madame there could be no greater payne to me, then once to dowbt that your Ladyship did conceiue that I woulde esteeme yt a payne to write euerie daye a letter yf I knew not that many might be as

² EUL Laing MS iii.193, fol. 2^r.

offensiuē as none and that I might as soone ouercharge your Ladyship. wyth ^{^by^} wryting to often, as I could not discharge my duty, yf I should not at tymes wryte some fewe.³

This lack of direct correspondence means that we are reliant on reports from Anthony's servants and associates to reconstruct Anne's state of mind concerning her son's absence, and these letters usefully develop our understanding of the external expectations of their role.

Anthony departed in December 1579, at the suggestion of William Cecil, charged with the mission of supplying reliable evidence of the religious and political affairs of England's friends and enemies.⁴ Like many 'unofficial' envoys Anthony was not formally employed by the government, in the sense that he did not receive any payment for his services, and was therefore obliged to rely on his personal income for all expenses incurred in the pursuit of intelligence, an arrangement entered into under the hope and expectation he would be rewarded with a lucrative position upon his return home. He had left a trusted family servant, Hugh Mantell, in charge of his properties, and the revenue from these estates was to be transferred to him twice a year, at midsummer and Christmas.⁵ Under the direction of Francis Walsingham, Anthony travelled to Paris and then Bourges, and reached Geneva in the summer of 1581, where he took the opportunity to stay with the Protestant divine Theodore Beza, drawing on his mother's protestant credentials to integrate himself into the community.⁶ Even in the first few years of his absence his expenses had proved far larger than his income, and in March 1581 Mantell reported that he was unable to meet Anthony's request to pay Francis the relatively small amount of £140.⁷ Money shortages were not the only reason for his family and friends' disenchantment with his continental residence, and in April of the same year Anthony sent his confidant and fellow spy, Nicholas Faunt, back to England to

³ EUL Laing MS iii.193, fol. 114^v. This draft is undated, but the preceeding and following letter drafts have been dated 1581, which may perhaps suggest that it was written in that year.

⁴ Joyce Treskunof Freedman, 'Anthony Bacon and his World, 1558-1601' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Chicago, 1979), pp. 34-35.

⁵ Freedman, p. 37.

⁶ AB to EE, 12 September 1596, LPL MS 659 fols 24^v-25^f (art. 21).

⁷ Freedman, p. 37.

negotiate for an extension of Anthony's licence to remain in France.⁸ Faunt's report of his meeting with Anne and his success in persuading her to allow Anthony to stay in France is highly revealing of the general objections to her son's actions, as well as Anne's understanding of her motherly duties.

In a letter to Anthony, Faunt described meeting with Anne in William Cecil's garden, and recounts an interview that seems to have developed a strongly interrogative aspect, as Anne demanded a full account of her son's business.⁹ Reflecting some of the more general concerns about travel, she expressed anxiety over his health and the manner in which he was employing his time, and worried at his great expense of living and the ultimate objectives of his work. Contemporary suspicions concerning foreign travel and criticism of Anthony's handling of his affairs combine to create a strong sense of distrust about his mission. Seeming to lecture Faunt in lieu of Anthony, Anne proceeded to reveal her theories concerning the detrimental effects of overseas travel, stating that it made young men 'at their returne more unapt to lyve in their Countrey then before thei were, that they find themselves ever after much discontented'. For Anthony her primary worry was his lack of attention to his home affairs, and she urged that he have 'a speciall care in looking to your priuat estate' and that he should place his trust in good friends otherwise he would find at his return his possessions and things 'out of order'. Faunt realized that his role was 'rather to hearken then to make any answeare', but once she had finished her tirade she began to press Faunt for what he knew of Anthony's 'resolutions or dispositions', indicating her awareness of the intimacy that existed between the two men. Faunt's revelation that Anthony wished to remain in France and was seeking an extension of his licence was met with surprise, yet Faunt's assertions that Anthony's faith was steadfast and the mission of great importance persuaded her to support her son's request. Explaining the reasons behind her change of mind, Anne expressed faith in Anthony's 'speciall care both to avoyd dangers abroade by so well enfourming Yourself before hand of

⁸ Permission to travel needed to be granted by a licence from the Queen or Privy Council, and the document would detail the 'period of absence granted, amount of money taken, size of entourage [...] and places forbidden to the traveller'. *Amazons, Savages, and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing in English, 1550-1630: An Anthology*, ed. by Andrew Hadfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 12.

⁹ Nicholas Faunt to AB, 15 April 1581, LPL MS 647 fols 125^r-126^v (art. 59).

the places and passages whither you were bound, in the choice of your company as well in trayvalinge as in your rest and settlinge', and was sure that his affairs at home would continue to be well-handled by his friends. As well as demonstrating a respect for his general comportment, she also suggested that her support for his prolonged absence was related to her desire to promote his personal happiness, as she wished to help him to continue the 'travayle that you took so great contentment' in. Galvanized by the meeting, she instructed Faunt to arrange for Walsingham to prepare a new licence, and advised that it would be best to have the Queen sign it before she leaves London, as 'shee feared in the progresse tymes her Majestie wold not be drawn so easily to signe such thinges'. Anne herself takes responsibility for negotiating with Cecil. Faunt writes that by the end of the interview she:

showed a resolute good likinge of any course you should like ^you^ upon so reasonable grounds and proceedings: notwithstanding any naturall affection to the Contrary which she is willing shold allwayes giue some place to whatsoeuer shall most directly continewe your good In any respecte.

In this instance we see Anne deferring to the wishes of her son, and she demonstrates the strength of her maternal care by endeavouring to support them through her kinship ties and familiarity with court politics. Francis was less happy with Anthony's decision, and pushed for his return at the expiry of his current licence, suggesting that objections to his extended trip did not only emanate from maternal concerns.¹⁰

Anthony was granted permission to remain abroad for another three years but his deepening financial woes undermined Anne's support, and she began to perceive that his friends were not as dependable as she had hoped. The demands Anthony placed on Hugh Mantell proved unsustainable and Mantell

¹⁰ *HF*, p. 87.

was forced to borrow money from Anne as well as drawing on his own resources in order to pay off Anthony's debts.¹¹

Remonstrating in the politest possible terms with his master in September 1583, Mantell suggests that Anthony's affairs had become unmanageable, and that his presence was needed to rectify matters. The urgency of Mantell's pleas stemmed from Anne's refusal to release Anthony's midsummer payment of five hundred crowns and her threat to keep all of Anthony's future revenues and 'convert the same to her owne proper use' until she has been returned all the money she has lent him since he travelled abroad.¹² Mantell describes Anne's speeches as 'verye sharpe' and writes that she seemed 'verye muche offended with me as well as with your Worships greate chardge you lay at in France'. Her suspicions concerning Mantell's conduct had been aroused, and she 'suspected that I had deteined in my hands much of your Worships Revenues'. In fact Mantell did admit to keeping back some of Anthony's income, but only as a repayment for the money he had already loaned Anthony.¹³ Mantell's attempts to persuade Anthony to return home were partly related to the negative affect his absence was having upon his mother:

I am verelye perswaded that yf you did enter into a Reckninge and consideracion of the greate chardge you haue bene at synce your goinge ouer and the trobling of my Ladyship and other of your Worships frends And also wolde compare your rental and my Reknigne together your Worship would surelye haue greater desire to Retorne in to Englande then you hether to seeme to haue.

The burden Anthony was inflicting upon Anne in managing his affairs was considered improper and this is the first of many instances in which Anthony's friends invoke the image of his harassed mother in their attempts to draw him homewards. Yet despite her strong words, Anne seems to have experienced another reversal of opinion, as in April 1584 Nicholas Faunt communicated to

¹¹ Freedman, p. 38.

¹² Hugh Mantell to AB, 13 September 1583, LPL MS 647 fols 170^r-171^v (art. 80).

¹³ Freedman, pp. 42-43.

Anthony that both Cecil and Walsingham were 'somewhat satisfied touching your longer stay abroad' and he predicted that this would assuage Anne's doubts about the extension of Anthony's travels.¹⁴

Although his time in France remained a point of controversy for those at the English court, Anthony's lengthy stay had enabled him to forge a useful web of contacts, and with the escalation of the religious wars he was in a prime position from which to keep the court abreast of affairs. After the death of François, duc de Alençon in 1584, Henri de Navarre had become heir to the French throne, and was under pressure from King Henri to convert to Catholicism. Elizabeth's support for Navarre's claim to the throne relied on his remaining Protestant, and it was important that the channels of communication were kept open between the Elizabeth and Navarre. Anthony's geographical location and his personal sympathies for the Protestant cause made him the ideal candidate to act as a go-between, and in the summer of 1584 he paid a visit to the court of Navarre in Béarn, where he was warmly received.¹⁵ In October 1584 Anthony established himself in Montauban, and although he was initially welcomed into the community, a falling out with Navarre's chief counsellor, Phillippe Du Plessis-Mornay, quickly terminated the honeymoon period.¹⁶ Despite the strategic importance of his position in Montauban, the sensitivity of his mission made it impossible to communicate directly his reasons for remaining in France, and Anthony was incensed to discover that his mother had not been told of the reasons for his stay.¹⁷ As he predicted, her fears were aroused, and in spring of 1585 Anne undertook a series of actions to try and force him homewards. She prevented Mantell from travelling to Anthony, threatened to request that the Queen or Privy Council order his imprisonment if he disobeyed her, and then petitioned the Queen to recall Anthony.¹⁸ Whether in response to Anne's petition, or due to the wider consensus in diplomatic circles that the unstable political situation in France in the summer of 1585 made

¹⁴ Nicholas Faunt to AB, 14 April 1584, LPL MS 647 fols 183^r-184^v (art. 90). *HF*, pp. 92-3.

¹⁵ Daphne Du Maurier, *Golden Lads: A study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), pp. 58-59.

¹⁶ *HF*, p. 102.

¹⁷ *HF*, p. 104.

¹⁸ Freedman, p. 43; *HF*, p. 106; Du Maurier, pp. 63-64.

Anthony's stay untenable, a messenger was dispatched to fetch him, and a passport from the king acquired for his return.¹⁹

But Anthony's failure to return and his lack of communication with England heightened fears that he was in a perilous situation, and indeed he was, although not that in a way in which anyone back in England could have imagined. In the summer of 1586 Anthony was accused of sodomy, a capital offence in France, and it seems he was tried and found guilty, as Henri de Navarre was forced to intervene in order for the sentence to be commuted.²⁰ His accusers claimed that he had sodomitical relations with one of his servants, and that he tolerated and promoted similar conduct among his household. Although Anthony and Francis have been described retrospectively as homosexual, this incident may perhaps be a reflection of his political and religious vulnerability than of any specific proof of his sexual proclivities.²¹ Anthony's reluctance to marry, his fondness for male companionship, and his own comments regarding his lack of sexual activities, have been taken as proof of his homosexuality, and lend some credibility to the Montauban accusations.²² However, Thomas Betteridge argues that in the early modern period 'sodomy emerged at moments of political and religious tension when an explanation was needed for social antagonism and conflict', and points to instances in Frankfurt and Geneva where a '*de facto* tolerance existed that required outside factors, competition within the pastry trade or a spy scare, for it to be withdrawn'.²³ Similar factors seem to have come into play in Anthony's situation, and external pressures disrupted a domestic situation that would otherwise have gone

¹⁹ *HF*, p. 107.

²⁰ Du Maurier, pp. 65-71. Freedman, pp. 103-110; *HF*, pp. 108-9.

²¹ See Chapter One for the accusations against Francis. Charles Nicholl states that 'the Bacon brothers were homosexuals' and that 'their private circle was gay, filled with dubious young dandies', *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*, rev. edn (London: Random House, 1992), p. 266.

²² A match between Anthony and Dowsabell Paget had been arranged for him in 1575, but for unknown reasons did not go ahead. He also refused Madame du Plessis's daughter's hand in marriage. Alan Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry, 1540-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 101; Freedman, p. 130. In a letter describing his state of health Anthony claimed to never have contracted venereal disease, 'nor committed any act to occasion it', implying he remained a virgin. Whether this abstinence applied to same sex acts is not specified (Freedman, pp. 113-114). Gustav Ungerer also notes that Antonio Pérez made 'indecent and ambiguous allusions' to Anthony's 'celibacy'. *A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez's Exile*, 2 vols (London: Tamesis, 1974-1976), I, p. 216.

²³ 'Introduction', *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Thomas Betteridge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 5.

unnoticed. One argument is that civil unrest in the town may have led to the arrest of Anthony because of his status as a foreigner.²⁴ Or Anthony may have been targeted for his adherence to Calvinism, as one of the witnesses testified that Anthony had claimed that sodomy was not a sin, and that both Theodore Beza and Monsieur Constans (the minister of Montauban) also practised it.²⁵ A further suggestion is that Anthony's clash with the Du Plessis family, and his refusal of the hand in marriage of Madame Du Plessis's daughter, may have led to an attack on his sexual conduct.²⁶ The documents concerning his conviction are incomplete, making it impossible to establish the extent of the truth behind the claim, but it seems to have cast a long shadow over the rest of Anthony's life. The entire episode was kept a closely guarded secret from his friends and family in England, with no reference to it having been found in contemporary documents.²⁷ The effort of hiding such a dangerous secret was to have a significant impact on Anthony, ever aware that his enemies may use it against him, and it may have been one of the reasons that he led such a hermetic life once back in England.²⁸ The psychological stresses may have exacerbated his poor health, and combined with the problems he was now having in obtaining credit in France, and Anne's refusal to send him any more money, his situation was becoming increasingly impossible to sustain.²⁹

A dangerous friend: Thomas Lawson

The severity of Anthony's communication and financial problems drove him to desperate measures, and his actions at this point overthrew any lingering confidence that Anne may have had in his conduct. Anthony needed to send word to England, but in order to ensure a safe passage for his recusant servant, Thomas Lawson, he was forced to turn to the bishop of Cahors for assistance. In return for the conveyance of Lawson and a loan of a thousand crowns, Anthony had to provide a letter of recommendation for two Welsh Jesuit Priests

²⁴ HF, p. 109.

²⁵ HF, p. 109.

²⁶ Freedman, p. 131.

²⁷ The accusation was first unearthed by the team researching for Daphne du Maurier's *Golden Lads*, pp. 65-68.

²⁸ Freedman, p. 134.

²⁹ HF, p. 111

incarcerated in Westminster, an action that inevitably threw into question his religious convictions, and infuriated his mother.³⁰ As soon as Lawson reached London he was imprisoned on Cecil's orders, and in Anthony's later relation of these incidents he accuses his uncle of having given way 'to my mothers passionate importunitie grounded upon false suggestions and surmises authorised by de Plessis and his wyfe, and out of mere envie against the said Lawsons merite and credit withe me'.³¹ Anne's maternal authority is used to very practical effect in this instance, and her objections to the company her son keeps go far beyond the verbal protest that we see in her later letters, and take the form of practical action. Burghley's acquiescence to her demands illustrates his recognition of her parental rights, and is another example of Anne's ability to mobilize kinship connections for her own objectives.

Anne proved immune to any of the methods that Anthony used to try persuade her to drop her vendetta against Lawson. Anthony dispatched Captain Francis Allen to mediate with her, bringing letters of support for Lawson from Cecil and Francis Bacon, but she refused even to look at them.³² The strength of Anne's animosity towards Lawson was evident to Allen, and he wrote to Anthony:

it is in vain to loke for Mr Lawson's retourn for thes ar her Ladyships on words, nono saith she, I hau learned not to imploy it, to do good, and if ther were no more men in England, and although you shuld neuer com home, he shalbe hindered from coming to you

Her resolution was absolute, and Allen suggested that 'it is as unprofitable to perswad my Ladyship to send him, as my self to send you Pauls-stiple.'

Anthony also arranged for an interview between Anne and Thomas Cartwright, an influential puritan preacher. Anthony may have assumed that Cartwright's interventions would be more effective than Allen's, but still Anne

³⁰ *HF*, pp. 111-112.

³¹ AB to EE, 12 September 1596, LPL MS 659 fol. 24^v-25^r (art. 21).

³² Francis Allen to AB, 17 August, 1589, LPL MS 647 fols 245^r-249^v (art. 121).

proved obdurate. Cartwright's account of the meeting shows that the conflict between Anne and Anthony occasioned a redefinition of their relationship, and he outlines the obligations of both mother and son. His mediation attempted to establish the reciprocal nature of the relationship, and he writes to Anthony that:

as there is a duetie of yours towarde her Ladyship in indifferent things rather to liue to her liking then unto your own: so is there dutie of her Ladyship towarde yow in the same things by so much themore springlie to use her autoritie as boeth by age and by instinction³³

Cartwright suggested that whilst Anthony's duty is to submit to her wishes in the case of unimportant matters, so Anne should do the same, and not wield her authority too heavily. He recognized her power over Anthony as emanating from the respect due to her because of her age, as well as from the natural power granted to her by motherhood. Cartwright, however, is no more successful than Allen, as Anne repeats that she will 'never condescend' to allow the release of Lawson.

As well as objecting to the lack of religious orthodoxy that Anthony is demonstrating by fraternizing with Lawson, Anne's suspicions were also aggravated by the obscure nature of Anthony's work in Montauban, which led her to fear that he is no longer working on behalf of England's national interests. Such sentiments are most clearly expressed by Anne in her meeting with Francis Allen. Allen reports that Anne accuses Anthony of being a 'traitre to god and your contry' and that he was the 'hatted of all the Chiffest on that sid and Curst of god in all your actions since Mr Lawsons being with you'.³⁴ As a result of his actions Anne has decided to attempt to 'procure her magistis lettre for to force you to retourne', and suggests that if the Queen gave him his just desserts she would 'Clap you up in Prison'. Anne's affront at Anthony's treachery to his Queen and country is accompanied by a more personal sense of betrayal, as she tells Allen to communicate to Anthony that 'you have undon

³³ Thomas Cartwright to AB, 23 March 1591, LPL MS 653 fols 199^r-120^v (art. 108).

³⁴ Francis Allen to AB, 17 August 1589, LPL MS 647 fol. 245^r (art. 121).

her, you sieke her death, and when you hav that you sieke for you shall haue but on hondered pounds mor then you hau now'. Anne expresses a highly cynical perspective of Anthony's behaviour, suggesting that he is deliberately seeking her death so that he can inherit her wealth. Allen reports that:

my Ladyship saith it is not in your pour [power] to sell any parte espchally of your liuing a bout Godombery, [Gorhambury] and I feare me when it shall come to that extremity for any other parsell, she will sieke by all means possible to with-stand the sale by intercession to her Magestie

The emotional and financial exhaustion that Anthony has caused his mother is clear from her confession to Allen that 'the grife of mind, receaued dayly by reason of your stay wilbe her end also saith her iewlls be spent for you, and that she borrowed the last mony of 7 parsons'. Allen's sympathy for Anne's plight is palpable, for he has 'neuer sien nor neuer shall see a wislady an honorable woman, a Mother more perplexed for her sons absence, than I hau sien that honourable Dame for yours'. Allen shows a respect for her opinions and seems to recognize the validity of the claims she is making against Anthony. Even in the climax of her railings against Anthony, when she wishes that he 'had bin fairly buried' as long as he had died a faithful Protestant, Allen recognizes that these are sentiments expressed in anger, and notes that 'she spoke it in her passion, and repentid immediatly her words'.

In the same month of Anne's meeting with Allen, she managed to persuade Walsingham to issue orders that he must return immediately and to arrange for a passport to ensure his safe passage back to England.³⁵ Yet still Anthony remained in France, and it was not until the death of Walsingham in April 1590 that Anthony left Montauban, and travelled to Bordeaux. The trial, however, was still not over for Anne, as upon reaching Bordeaux Anthony became involved with helping Anthony Standen, an imprisoned English Catholic and double

³⁵ *HF*, p. 113.

agent, employed by both Spain and England.³⁶ Rumours floated back to Anne that her son was actively aiding the recusant cause, the most diabolical of all England's enemies in the eyes of a puritan, and it was this that drove her to make the most extreme rejection of her son. She is reported by Standen, in a letter to another servant of Anthony's, to have 'forbidden all kynde of speeches of him in her presence giving him oute for Illegitimate and not to be borne of her bodye'.³⁷ Anne's rejection of her son was blamed by Standen on 'Lewde fellows' who had been spreading false reports about Anthony, and their 'uncyvill suggestions' had 'hatched in her breast sutche a sinister conceyt of this vertious gentleman her sonne as neither innocency nor reason can there be found vallable to appease her'.

Standen elaborates on her reaction, writing that 'when therefore I enter into consideration of that good lady, her education, nobility of her house, her learning and good nature whereof in times past I have been better acquainted, I cannot but muse at such a change'. He proceeds to criticize the public manner in which she was expressing her grievances:

the checks and admonitions of a mother are to be deliuered motherly in more couert and close maner, to Babes and children proportionable to their tyme, to men of years experience and counsel as he is in a more mylde and wary maner

Standen draws a distinction between the control a mother is permitted over her son before and after he reaches his majority, and implies that her maternal reaction is disproportionate. Such candid sentiments are confined to Standen's correspondence with other parties and his opinion of Anne is expressed in a more delicate manner to Anthony himself.

When asked by Anthony for advice on a letter to Anne, Standen explains away Anne's hostile reaction by resorting to generalizations about women:

³⁶ Paul E.J. Hammer, 'Anthony Standen (*d.* in or after 1645)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/39703>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

³⁷ Anthony Standen to Edward Selwin, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 647 fols 86^r-87^v (art. 51); HF, p. 127.

You haue done exceedynglye well to be playne and specially with a woman which is a vessel so frayle and variable as euery wynde wavereth as you knowe. And although I well knowe my ladye your mother to be one of the sufficientest without comparison of that Sex, yett att the ende of the Cariere [career] il y a toujours de la femme, with the perfytttest [perfectest] of them all.³⁸

However highly educated Anne is, as far as Standen is concerned she is still susceptible to the uncontrollable passions of a woman.

Anne's anger is therefore viewed in two distinct ways. Hugh Mantell and Francis Allen suggested that her behaviour could be justified by Anthony's lack of contact with her and his relentless demands for money. Thomas Cartwright likewise showed an understanding of why Anne had taken such offence at her son's behaviour, and as befitted his role as a spiritual guide, proposed how their relationship could be repaired. It is only Anthony Standen who assumed that her animosity towards her son and his associates were the manifestations of her irrational mind, an opinion that would be later come to be shared by her son.

The soured relations between Anthony and his family seem to have warranted the direct intercession of Standen, who in November 1591 communicated with Francis in an attempt to smooth Anthony's return home:

I hope her motherly affection and wisdom will hereafter be yielded so plyable to that is iust and reasonable as he shall haue subiect to sayle homeward with a ioyfull spirit which as yett hangeth in suspence until he here some good tidings from her Ladyshipp, to which purpose arryving here yesterday three fayer well appointed shippes of our lande he said to me to regret depely their departure thence without him

³⁸ Anthony Standen to AB, 1 September 1591, LPL MS 648 fol. 94^r (art. 58); *HF*, p.127.

Imputing blaming his Lady mothers and brother that through their defect he could not be in a redynes to voyage home with them.³⁹

Anthony is waiting for word that his mother will not attempt to have him clapped in chains as soon as he lands, which shows a remarkable fear of her potential power. Despite having written a letter to Anne in May 1591 (no longer extant), Anthony still remains unsure of what kind of reception he is likely to be greeted with, and in his desperation is driven to seek Standen's help. Standen's references to Anne in this letter deliberately conceal any criticism of her behaviour, implying that he may have anticipated that Anne would eventually have read it. The assurances that Anthony desired must have been finally delivered and in early 1592 Anthony departed for England.

A welcome home?

In the light of such circumstances it is unsurprising that Anne's first letter to Anthony upon his return is less than effusive and seeks not so much to demonstrate motherly warmth as to assert her maternal authority. As has been discussed in Chapter One, the letter was passed to Anthony via Nicholas Faunt. Respected by Anne and a close friend of Anthony, Faunt served as a mediatory figure between the two and despite the tone of the letter Faunt's involvement signalled that Anne's attitude was conciliatory. The letter served as a "social buffer", a function that Gary Schneider assigns to those letters that are used in 'difficult or emotionally charged situations', and the restraint imposed upon Anne by epistolary convention goes some way to limit the expressions of vexation that she has been hitherto communicating to Anthony's friends.⁴⁰ This letter introduces many of the themes that recur through their subsequent correspondence, and can be seen as a template for the future advice she will dispense.

³⁹ Anthony Standen to FB, Nov 1591, LPL MS 648 fol. 130^v (art. 79); *HF*, p. 129.

⁴⁰ Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), p. 132.

Her opening words convey a sense of relief rather than celebration, 'that you are Returned now at length, I am right glad' she begins, but then she describes her reaction to the news that Lawson, as well as Faunt, had gone to meet Anthony upon his arrival in England, 'how welcome that cowlde be to yowr long greeved mother judg you'.⁴¹ The bitterness of this rhetorical question illustrates how she has conceived of the maternal role during his absence as one of endurance and pain, and by a mutual incomprehensibility on the behalf of mother and son. The explicit rehearsal of the role she expected him to fulfill now he has returned is outlined in the rest of the letter, and her forgiveness of him is implicitly linked to his adherence to these instructions.

Unsurprisingly her primary concern is for the state of his soul:

This one cheefest counsell your Christian and Naturall mother doth geve yow even before the lorde. that above all wordly respects yow carie your selff even at yowr first coming as one that doth unfeinedly possess the Tru Religion of christ and hath the love of the Truth now by long continuance Fast settled in your hart

As with the advice dispensed in the mothers' advice books, her spiritual duties to her children are considered the most important objective of her mothering, and she draws a distinction between her natural, biological maternal status and her role as a spiritual mentor. For Anne the sole advantage of Anthony's absence was his long-term exposure to the Protestant communities on the continent, and she exhorts him to be not:

Afrayd or Ashamed to Testify the same by hearing and delighting in those Religious Exercises of the Syncerer sort be they French or Englysh. in *hoc noli adhibere fratrem tuum ad consilium aut exemplum. sed plus dehinc* [In this don't follow the advice or example of your brother]

⁴¹ ACB to AB, 3 February [1591/2], LPL MS 653 fols 343^r-344^v (art. 192).

Anthony is not alone in his failure to live up to his mother's expectations, and her criticism of Francis's behaviour is woven into the letter. It seems that while in a professional capacity he is performing the duties of an ambitious son, in matters of religious practice he falls short. In her postscript Anne urges Anthony to 'use prayor twyse in a day', in contrast to his brother who is 'so negligent herein'. The fact that Anne uses the vernacular to express her discontent at Francis calls into question her reason for placing her earlier complaint in Latin. Francis's fluency in Latin would not have meant that she was attempting to conceal her sentiments from him. The anxiety she voiced about Lawson reading the letter may have meant that she intended to keep the family's business from him, but her use of English to discuss similar matters in the postscript would undermine such an objective. It may therefore be an example of her usage of Latin for purely stylistic effect, and could have been an attempt to lend her words greater authority by drawing on her scholarly knowledge.

After establishing her 'cheefest counsell' she then uses this as a basis for further advice. Her next demand is that he does not talk too openly and carelessly, and that he should not 'talk sodenly but where discretion requireth and that soberly then', as 'familiaritee in talkyng and wordes is veri unprofitable'. She protests about his contact with Lawson, and exhorts him to use the good offices of Faunt instead. She shows concern for his health, and advises that 'god is the forme who is able to heale both mynde and Bodie' illustrating her belief in the interdependence of religious and spiritual health, a recurring theme of her correspondence. This letter can be seen to stand as a template for her further letters of advice, and it illustrates Anne's conceptualisation of the mother as a figure who transmitted spiritual advice, attempted to regulate the practical manifestations of this spirituality, and also attended to the material and bodily well-being of her offspring.

The tone of maternal affection that might be expected in this letter is notably absent, and this cannot simply be explained by epistolary convention. Other mothers make use of the formal elements of the letter-writing process to convey their love for their son, for example Lady Brilliana Harley addresses her regular letters to her son: 'To my deare sonne Mr Edward Harley, Oxford', and opens the main body of the letter text with 'My good Ned', and then signs off 'your

most affectinat mother'.⁴² Even in the most formal letters written by Lettice Dudley, Countess of Leicester to her son Essex she addresses him as 'my good son', and subscribes her letter 'your mother that derlye loueth you'.⁴³ In her most personal correspondence to her son she is even more affectionate, using the term 'Swet Ro' (a contraction of his first name, Robert), which James Daybell describes as 'personal pet name'.⁴⁴ Anne shows no such emotion towards Anthony, even after they had been parted for over a decade, and instead her superscription reads 'To my sonne Anthony Bacon geve this'. She inserts a prayer for his soul rather than referring directly to him in the opening sentence, and signs off with an abrupt 'yowr mother'. The signature is particularly revealing in terms of her attitude towards Anthony, as in the postscript note to her sister Mildred (referred to in the previous chapter), we find that she signs her letter 'yowr loving sister'.⁴⁵ As has been explored in Chapter One, this indicates that she did alter the terms of affection contained within her subscription, and that it would not have been beyond the scope of her conventions to express such sentiments in a letter to her son.

Expressions of maternal care

In her first letter written to Anthony on his return, Lady Bacon places a greater emphasis on her dissemination of spiritual rather than practical advice. However, the sequence of letters that follow reveals how she establishes more practical modes of motherly behaviour, intended to strengthen the bond between mother and son. One of the methods is through the sending of gifts of food and drink to her sons, a familiar practice of mothers in this period. The dynamic of maternal gift-giving was less strictly bound by rules of obligatory reciprocity than gift-giving between people connected by more distant kinship ties, or by friendship, so Anne's flow of edibles did not automatically entail a gift

⁴² Brilliana Harley to Edward Harley, March 22 1638, *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, ed. by Thomas Taylor Lewis (London: Camden Society, 1854), pp. 33-34.

⁴³ Daybell prints transcriptions of letters from Lettice Dudley to her son in 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England, 1540-1603: An Introduction to the Issues of Authorship and Construction,' *Shakespeare Studies*, 27 (1999), 161-86 (pp. 178-179).

⁴⁴ Daybell, 'Women's Letters and Letter Writing in England', p. 179.

⁴⁵ Nicholas Bacon to WC (postscript by Anne), 18 Aug 1557, *HMC Hatfield*, I, no. 534, p. 143. BL Microfilm 152/19.

in return.⁴⁶ But the practice of sending gifts still helped to maintain and stabilize the relations between son and mother, inasmuch as Anthony was obliged to write in return with his thanks.

All the gifts she sent had been grown, caught or brewed on the Gorhambury estate. Yet she was not merely sending surplus products, but carefully choosing the best and most sought after items in order to please her sons. As noted in the previous chapter, strawberries flourished in the Hertfordshire soil, and in the summer months Anne sends baskets to Anthony, informing him that 'all the strawberyes were gathered in the oke woodd. none or as none in garden and orchard'.⁴⁷ That same summer she sends him more, this time assuring him that the 'uppermost strabis are goode to be eaten and were more choycely gatherd For that purpose', and asking him to give some to his brother.⁴⁸ As befits a caring mother, she shows an awareness of their tastes and preferences. When she sends the 'Fyrst Flight of my Dovehouse' to her sons, she specifies that twelve were for Anthony and sixteen for Francis, 'because he was wont to love them better then yow. From A boy'.⁴⁹ The reciprocal dynamic of their gift-giving can occasionally be plainly seen, for example Anne opens a letter by informing Anthony that she has sent him brawn (boar), and closes it by thanking him for his 'deyntries' (dainties), referring to some sort of delicacy he has conveyed to her.⁵⁰ Other times it fits the more flexible pattern of a less strictly regulated exchange, as Anthony's foreign contacts provided him at irregular intervals with access to more unusual gifts. With one letter he sent her 'a tastle of a lnten Spanish daintie, which an honest merchante presented unto me thother day', and asked in the same letter if she desires any 'Gascoigne wine'.⁵¹ Wine seems to be a popular gift to send Anne, as in another letter she writes 'For your bottles I thank yow, the malmesy I tasted a litle. very goode'.⁵²

⁴⁶ In his outline of the spectrum of reciprocities Marshall Sahlins defines a 'generalized reciprocity' that was usually practised among close kin, where gifts are given without the need for the return to be specified. Quoted in Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, c.2000), p. 6.

⁴⁷ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109).

⁴⁸ ACB to AB, 6 July 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 200^{r-v} (art. 122).

⁴⁹ ACB to AB, 8 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 89^{r-v} (art. 54).

⁵⁰ ACB to AB, 31 December 1596, LPL MS 653 fol. 316^{r-v} (art. 173).

⁵¹ AB to ACB, 2 March 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 150^{r-v} (art. 92).

⁵² ACB to AB, 5 August 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 328^r-329^v (art. 211).

Anthony also takes advantage of his position as a senior member of Essex's circle to provide Anne with letters detailing both foreign and domestic news. In his outline of the function of manuscript newsletters in the seventeenth-century, Ian Atherton suggests that 'titbits of news were part of the currency of client patron exchanges', and certainly this is a formulation that seems to fit Anthony's insertion of news into his letters to his mother, where he uses this gift of information as a means by which to gain her goodwill.⁵³ His communication of news occurs predominantly after his move to Essex house in September 1595, suggesting that it was easier for him to gain access to such information from his new location. Letters will often begin with a discussion of their estates or personal issues, before moving on to an update of 'general occurrences' in the last paragraph.⁵⁴ As well as providing Anne with distillations of his own understanding of current affairs, Anthony was also apparently passing newsletters to her. In one such example he writes that 'in lieu of my personall dutie attendance and for your Ladieships wellcome and assurance' concerning 'newes that come so farre of and are subiect to winde and wether', he has sent her a letter from 'Mr Secretary to an honorable friend of mine'.⁵⁵ Anthony requested that it be returned to him sealed, and that she make no mention of it to anyone else. Anthony is providing Anne with exclusive information concerning the English attack on Cadiz, and his possession of such intelligence is of particularly high value to her given her religious inclinations, as the conflict between Spain and England was interpreted in 'eschatological terms'.⁵⁶ Anne was not alone in her desire for news on these important events, and Atherton suggests that it was the war against Spain in the 1580s and 1590s that 'first stimulated the English appetite for news'.⁵⁷ Anthony's transmission of news opens up a topic for discussion that is less hazardous than the eternal debates on Anthony's financial affairs and personal comportment.

The regular exchange of gifts was an important factor in the maintenance of their relationship, as both mother and son attempt to secure the goodwill of

⁵³ "The Itch grown a disease": Manuscript Transmission of News in the Seventeenth Century', in *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain*, ed. by Joad Raymond (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 39-65 (p. 50).

⁵⁴ AB to ACB, 8 October 1596, LPL MS 659 fol. 211^{r-v} (art. 143).

⁵⁵ AB to ACB, 29 July 1596, LPL MS 658 fol. 4^{r-v} (art. 4).

⁵⁶ Atherton, p. 43.

⁵⁷ Atherton, p. 43.

each other. However, at times Anne's generosity engenders a certain level of expectation in Anthony, who assumes rights over her produce. 'I mar-vell yow send to me', she writes, offended at his requests for corn, for 'the last yeres cropp was but small [...] and in dede as I towlde yow having no mony For the poore I have wylled corne to them'.⁵⁸ Her objection to his demand is used to emphasise her own financial plight, one that she explicitly blames on her sons. Despite her protestations, she does agree to send the corn to Anthony, and thus effaces her authority.

Beer was believed to have preservative qualities, and Lady Bacon's efforts to keep Anthony well stocked with the Gorhambury home-brew can therefore be seen as an example of how she attempted to ensure his physical health, another traditional maternal role.⁵⁹ In a culture where women were perceived to be more closely attuned to the processes of the physical body, and in which one of their primary roles was the care of children and other family members, they were accorded a certain amount of authority in the sphere of physical health. Anthony suffered from general poor health for most of his life, interspersed with episodes of more serious illness, and so his physical well-being was, unsurprisingly, one of Anne's main concerns. She dispenses reams of advice, and despite all of their many disagreements, Anne's passionate care for Anthony is most strikingly evident in her advice about his health.

In line with contemporary theory she strongly advocates that moderation is the key to good health, and provides a litany of tips: 'use gestation not violent body exercyse and use your leggs, Ayre, diett, and rest in season. and kepe yowr joints From colde taking in eny wyse. and Ryse not ^in nyght^ drink not late nor especially ^in the^ night. as Frenly to the goute and very hurtfull'.⁶⁰ Sometimes her advice takes a more idiosyncratic turn, as for when she urges him not to listen to music while falling asleep: 'use not yourself to be twanged A slp slepe. but naturallly it wyll grow into a Teadious custome and Hynder yow much'.⁶¹ At times her advice on her sons' lifestyles merges into a more general criticism of their habits, as she writes to Anthony: 'I verely think yowr Brothers

⁵⁸ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fols 254^r-255^v (art. 138).

⁵⁹ ACB to AB, 1 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 107^{r-v} (art. 65); ACB to AB, 23 January 1593/4, LPL MS 649 fols.15^r-16^v (art. 9); ACB to AB, 3 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 105^r-106^v (art. 64).

⁶⁰ ACB to AB, 16 February 1593/4, LPL MS 649 fols. 39^r-40^v (art. 24).

⁶¹ ACB to AB, 18 June 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 206^{r-v}(art. 131).

Weake stomack to digest hath ben much caused and confirmed by untimely ^late^ going to bed, and then musing *nescio quid* [I know not what] when he shulde slepe'. Anne sees Francis' consequent 'late rising and long lyeng in bed' as directly affecting the discipline of his household, as his 'men are made sleuthfull and him self continuall syckly'. The mention of Francis' continual bad habits elicits an outburst of frustration at the lack of attention to her advice, and she laments: 'but my sonns hast not to harken to their mothers goode counsell in time to prevent'.⁶²

The disapproval of Francis's lifestyle seems to arouse an almost hysterical sense of helplessness in Anne, a frenzy that is somewhat alleviated by an obsessive focus on Anthony's ailments. Gout had plagued Anthony for many years, and his return to England did not bring an end to the severe episodes that debilitated him for months at a time. As Anne had nursed her husband through similar episodes, she felt well placed to be able to offer him assistance, and it is in this area of Anthony's life that she could most readily see her advice being put to use. It is important that Anne understood Anthony's gout as a condition inherited from his father, as it became physical proof of his lineage and allowed Anne to draw further comparisons between son and father. It also permitted her to establish a continuity of care from the position of a wife to a mother, and provides her with an outlet for her nurturing impulses. In a letter written in the winter of 1594, she enquires after Anthony's 'gowty Bodye' and then recalls how 'this Tyme of the yeere and in such hard freeing and [...] wether your Father was greuously Tyred and payned with the gowt here at Gorhambury'.⁶³ In giving Anthony advice on how to alleviate the gout, she turns again to Nicholas for comparison, who would not for any pain so 'spoyle' himself as Anthony does with his continual bedkeeping. Anne uses her experience of caring for her husband as a source of authority for her advice to Anthony, and she offers suggestions for the treatment of kidney stones, from which both father and son also suffered, writing that 'yf yow wyll lett me I wyllingly ^wyll^ come and make it For yow with less toyle to you then the poticary I have by experience both of yowr Father and myselff'.⁶⁴ The concern

⁶² ACB to AB, 27 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 172^{r-v} (art. 106).

⁶³ ACB to AB, 5 Dec 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 333^r-333^v (art. 224).

⁶⁴ ACB to AB, 4 February [1593/4?], LPL MS 653 fol. 336^{r-v} (art. 187).

she feels for Anthony in this letter is clear, as she adds in the margin 'I pray lett me heare. and the lorde take care of yow and saffly ease you when Morer [Dr Moorer] is come I wyll come quyckly'. In her concern for his physical state she reveals her most protective and affectionate emotions. She opens a letter of February 1593/4 with the statement: 'I cary A continuall greef For [...] sickness'.⁶⁵ Anthony's illness provokes the utmost anxiety in Anne, 'yowr continuall lack of Health and other no small Hyndrances thereby have gon very nere to me'. 'Yf yow had yowr health my care shulde be much less' she writes in one letter, indicating the extent of her maternal anxiety for him.⁶⁶

Anne's personal experience of sickness also provides her with an area of shared ground with her son, and provides a space for a mutual exchange of sympathy. As well as using herself as an example for Anthony to follow ('Yf I did not warely *sustinere and abstinere* [bear and forbear], I shuld lyve in continuall payn pitifully'), the shared experience of their pain becomes a comfort to her, as she works towards an acceptance that 'the handy work of the lorde' is a sign of 'the lords Fatherly correction to both and desyre grace to make profit of it to our inward healing'.⁶⁷ The worsening of her ill health convinces Anne that her death is imminent, and, in standard mother's advice book style she utilises this to elicit sympathy and obedience from her sons. In a spirit of self-sacrifice she dismisses Anthony's offer to visit her, worried that he will harm himself, 'I pray troble not yowr self and me, yf yow had ben in health and made A stepp I wolde not have mislyked. but I pray yow looke to yowr selff and pray For me'.⁶⁸ She also uses her fragile state as an excuse for her candid language and forthright advice, claiming that 'I fele it to true my going is allmost spent and must be Fain to be bowlde with yow'.⁶⁹ Anthony's response to her predictions of death demonstrates the requisite sympathy of a son to a mother, and he assures her that the 'time is yet to come madame God be thanked' and writes of his hopes

⁶⁵ ACB to AB, 25 February 1593/4 (AB's date), LPL MS 649 fol. 37^{r-v} (art. 22).

⁶⁶ ACB to AB, 16 June 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 206^{r-v} (art. 131); ACB to AB, March 1594 (AB's date), LPL MS 650 fol. 128^r (art. 76).

⁶⁷ ACB to AB, 21 October, LPL MS 652 fol. 128^{r-v} (art. 86); ACB to AB, Jan 1596/7, LPL MS 654 fols 43^r-44^v (art. 29).

⁶⁸ ACB to AB, [September 1593], LPL MS 653 fols 203^r-204^v (art. 110).

⁶⁹ ACB to AB, 27 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 172^{r-v} (art. 106).

that 'your Ladyships time is not so neare' as she suspects.⁷⁰ However, as we saw in Chapter Two, in letters to others he shows a more cynical view of her demise, and rather scathingly describes how she excuses the illegibility of one of her letters by 'protesting that she thinketh it shall be the last'.⁷¹

One of the few extant letters from Francis to Anne is full of concern for his mother's state of health. After expressing relief that she had refrained from travelling in the 'hot and faint' weather, he encourages her to take as much care over her body as she has taken over her soul:

as yow haue done the parte of a good christian and saint of god in the comfortable preparing for your dutie So neuerthelesse I praie denie not your body the dew nor your children and frends and the church of god which hath use of yow but that yow enter not into funder conceyte then is cause and withal use all comfortes and helps that are good for your health and strength⁷²

To comfort his mother Francis explicitly invokes her contribution to reformed religion, as well as referring to the importance of her responsibilities as a mother and a friend. By emphasising her continual value he is also perhaps attempting to bolster her self-worth, and to diminish her oft-expressed view that she has little influence over the world.

As Anne understands that physical health is ultimately directed by the grace of God, the adherence to true religion is seen as a prerequisite for the maintenance of health, and as a consequence she frequently conflates her advice concerning bodily and spiritual matters:

The lorde of grace and health bless yow both. in yowr phisick and allweyes and worke in yow both. A goode ^and fervant^ desyre and A

⁷⁰ AB to ACB, 12 July 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 214^{r-v} (art. 137); AB to ACB, 4 June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 213^{r-v} (art. 136).

⁷¹ AB to EE, 3 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 147^r (art. 106).

⁷² FB to ACB (copy), 9 June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 217^{r-v} (art. 140).

right use of the heavenly phisick to strengthen yow against all Dangerous infection of mynde and bodie ⁷³

As she had so forcefully stated in her first letter to him upon his return, she placed a high value on Anthony's outward performance of religious practice, demonstrated by regular church-going and the direction of a godly household. Her expectations that Anthony would not follow the example of his brother in this respect are crudely shattered by his obstinate refusal to make the nature of the ministry that served his various residences a priority. His move to Bishopsgate Street in London was contemplated with horror by Anne.⁷⁴ After enquiring of a friend about the state of the new location, she discovers that not only was it 'much visited' by the last plague, and that the ministry was 'very mean, The minister there but ignorant', but also that the street was the location for the Bull Inn, which 'with continuall Enterludes had even infected the inhabitants there with corrupt and leude dispositions' and that the 'mean or no Edifieng instruction' in the vicinity encouraged 'voluptousnes'. Physical, spiritual and social threat are all present in the one street, and the thought of her son's residence in such an area tortured Anne 'with greeff and Feare For yow and yowrs to dwell so dangerously every way'. Infection of the mind, soul and body is inevitable, not only for her sons but also for his household, as Anne warns: 'A place haunted with such pernicious and obscene playes and Theatr [theatre] able to pryse[?] the very godly and dowhat yow can yowr servants shalbe entyced and spoyled.' The rejection of her advice in this matter was particularly galling for Anne, not least because she had taken such care over the spiritual guidance of her sons: 'goode lorde thowght I how ytt falleth it owt ^For^ the choyce of the best exercises and commodities in place ^For my chylders^ to dwell .' Anthony's removal elsewhere stimulates a similar response, as she warns him: 'I feare theris no ordinary preaching ministery at ful Chelsy. I can not tell you to lament ^it^ but both my sonnes me thinks do not cast For it where they dwell'.⁷⁵ Considering the importance placed on the mother's role in the spiritual guidance of children and the assurance of the fate of their souls, her

⁷³ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fols 245^r-246^v (art. 133).

⁷⁴ ACB to AB, endorsed 1594, LPL 650 fols 187^r-188^v (art. 114).

⁷⁵ ACB to AB, 1 Apr 1595, LPL 651 fols 108^r-109^v (art. 66).

sons' lack of concern for public worship serves as an indictment of her authority, and is the cause of intense anguish for Anne.

While Anne's sympathy for Anthony's physical ailments was strongly expressed, it was mitigated by her suspicions that his lifestyle exacerbated his ill-health, and that his practice of taking physic, the imbibing of mild opiates, was detrimental to his recovery. As early as 1581 Francis Walsingham had warned him to put an end to his reliance upon physic, as he would 'find in time many incommodities, if you do not in time break it off'.⁷⁶ Likewise Anne showed concern that he was overusing these remedies, and she advises him to 'make not yowr body by violent and uncessant pullying and physick practise unmete and unable to serve god, yowr prince and cowntry'.⁷⁷ Both Anthony's genuine health problems, and his self-inflicted ones were seen by Anne as a barrier to his active contribution to civil and religious concerns. As Anne viewed this as the duty for which he had been raised, it pained her greatly that he did not appear to be fulfilling either of these functions. Her assumption that his time in France had not been for the benefit of his country made his return home an important opportunity for him to demonstrate his loyalty, and she exhorts 'God sende yow above all his true and Feare in yowr hart and goode health to do yowr long discontinued duty to her majestie and cowntry'.⁷⁸ She is particularly frustrated by his failure to present himself to the Queen, pointedly conveying rumours to him that Elizabeth was reported to have been 'marveling yow came not to see her in so long space'. At this point, Anthony had been home for over four years.⁷⁹ It seems unlikely that Anne would not have been aware of Anthony's role in the gathering of intelligence for the earl of Essex, information that was vital to England's effective involvement in foreign affairs. However, she clearly does not see this as a valid contribution to the advancement of national interests, and would have preferred that Anthony had assumed a role of a more public nature, either in the political or religious sphere.

Although Anne wished to see her sons performing the civic duties for which they had been so carefully educated, her ambition for their wordly success was

⁷⁶ Francis Walsingham to AB, 25 March 1581, LPL MS 647 fol. 111 (art. 52); *HF*, p. 89.

⁷⁷ ACB to AB, 14 August, LPL MS 653 fols 303^r-304^v (art. 166)

⁷⁸ ACB to AB, 29 Feb 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fols 6^r-7^v (art. 4).

⁷⁹ ACB to AB, 20 Oct 1585, LPL MS 652 fol. 128^{r-v} (art. 86).

tempered by a concern for their spiritual conduct. Anne keenly perceived the negative effects of Francis' persistent attempts to gain office, and advised her sons to dismiss such ambitions:

yow and yowr Brother specially yow be still occupied and entangled with state and wordly matters above yowr calling to make yow the more unfit to be employed and then yowr gyftes playn appere to yowr own credit. exercise yowr selff in the knowledg of holy and profitable things to please God and then men ⁸⁰

After Francis's second rejection for the position of solicitor-general, Anne assures her sons that 'I had rather yee both with god his Blessed Favor had veri goode health and well owt of Dett, then any offyce', revealing the extent of the scaled down ambitions for her sons, ones for which, considering their unparalleled kinship ties and talents, she must have had such high hopes.⁸¹

Such a resigned attitude had been honed by the repeated failure of the attempts made to obtain an office for Francis. Anne's kinship connections allowed her to intervene in the affairs of her sons at a high level, and in a meeting with her nephew Robert Cecil, Anne attempted to unravel why he was being continually passed over for preferment. She complains to Cecil that Francis 'is but strangly used by mans Dealing God knowes who and why', and that considering his talents and achievements he would be well-suited to the position of solicitor-general. Although Cecil asserts his support for Francis, Anne's description of his tone implies her suspicions as to his sincerity: 'truly his spech was all kindly owtward and dyd desyre to have me think so of him'.⁸² Her misgivings about the Cecils are expressed more candidly in other letters, and once Robert has been appointed secretary she explicitly advises Anthony to be careful, warning him to be 'more circumspect and advised in your troblelous discoorsings doing, and dealings in your accustomed matters' as he 'now hath great Avantage and strength' to act against Anthony, as 'be it

⁸⁰ ACB to AB, 9 August, LPL MS 653 fols 323^f-324^v (art. 179).

⁸¹ ACB to AB, 7 August 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 328^f-329^v (art. 211).

⁸² ACB to AB, 23 January 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 33^{r-v} (art. 21).

Emulation or suspicion you know what Termes he standeth him in toward your self'.⁸³ Anne's wariness extends to William Cecil, and she claims that 'Father and sonne are ^Affectionate^ joyned in power and policy', and will block the advancement of the Bacons. Her strong belief that Anthony lacks the experience and knowledge to be able to negotiate cut-throat court politics leads her to offer advice on his conduct:

yow are sayd to be wyse and to my comfort I willingly think so but surely sonne on thother syde For want of home experience by Action and your Teadious unacquaintance For your own country by ^continuall^ chamber and bedkeeping yow must nedes myss of considerate Judgment in your verball onely travayling.

Anne reiterates the damage his absence has done to his political capabilities, and highlights how his physical disabilities have affected his prospects. Her criticism of his 'verbal onely travayling' also suggests that she believes letter-writing to be a lesser mode of communication than face-to-face interaction, and that she does not approve of the reclusive nature of Anthony's lifestyle.

Anne believes herself to be in a position to offer political advice because of her past experience: 'I think For my long attending in coorte and A cheeff counsellors wyffe Few *preclare Femine mea sortis* [women of my position] are able or be Alyve to speak and Judg of such Proceadings and worldely doings of ^men^ But'.⁸⁴ The 'but' is added to signal that she knows her sons will not listen, despite her extensive acquaintance with such matters. As with authors of the mothers' advice books, Anne believes that part of her maternal authority stems from her seniority and life experience, and justifies her intervention into the affairs her sons.

Advising Essex

⁸³ ACB to AB, 10 July 1596, LPL MS 658 fols 28^f-29^v (art. 21).

⁸⁴ ACB to AB, 12 May 1595, LPL MS 651 fol.156^{r-v} (art. 95).

Anne's familiarity with court politics appears to have legitimised her dispensation of advice towards her sons' patron, the earl of Essex. A sequence of letters written in response to the rumours emanating from the court concerning Essex's sexual misdemeanours demonstrates how the maternal voice of censure and care was an equally valid epistolary tone when utilised in spheres beyond the mother-son relation, and the positive reception of this tone indicates the wide acceptance of the traditional power of the mother. These letters also show how her maternal authority coalesced with other points of influence, namely her reputation as an influential puritan patron and as a 'learned' woman. Anne's harnessing of the attributes associated with all of these roles allows her to shape a persuasive persona that Essex, on paper at least, responds to obediently, and offers us an example of the ideal reception of motherly advice.

In 1595 Anthony had taken possession of rooms within Essex house on the Strand, a move that was strongly disapproved of by Anne. She believed it would implicate Anthony further in Essex's affairs, and she warned her son that 'yow have hetherto ben Estemed as A worthy Frende now shalbe Accounted his Follower'.⁸⁵ This change in circumstance did bind Anthony even more tightly to his patron, and it was the existence of a physical and emotional intimacy between these men that allowed Anne to write such a candid letter remonstrating with Essex for his alleged infidelity. As Paul E. J. Hammer has shown, the English court in the 1590s was rife with love intrigues and illicit sexual liaisons that infuriated the Queen, who wished to have some control over the unions of her courtiers.⁸⁶ Essex played a not insignificant part in these affairs, and despite his marriage to Frances, the daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham and widow of Sir Philip Sidney, Essex conducted multiple affairs at court. In 1591 a maid of honour, Elizabeth Southwell, gave birth to an illegitimate son, and it was not until 1595 that Essex was confirmed as the father, a revelation which 'caused him significant political embarrassment', and hindered his chances of succeeding William Cecil as Secretary of State.⁸⁷ In the

⁸⁵ ACB to AB, August 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 326^{r-v} (art. 210).

⁸⁶ 'Sex and the Virgin Queen: Aristocratic Concupiscence and the Court of Elizabeth I', *The Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 31 (2000), 77-97.

⁸⁷ Hammer, pp. 83-84.

mid-1590s he seems to have embarked on an affair with Elizabeth Stanley, countess of Derby, the daughter of Anne Cecil and the earl of Oxford, making her Anne Bacon's grand-niece.

Anne had alluded on several other occasions to the earl's unchaste behaviour in letters to Anthony written in April 1595 and August 1596.⁸⁸ In both instances the language of her letter changes from English to Greek when she makes these criticisms. Through this technique she attempts to limit the circulation of her meaning to those trained in classical languages, and by implication tries to exclude the lower-status members of Anthony's household from being privy to her opinion on this matter. Anne's partial concealment of the topic in these cases contrasts starkly with the letters addressed to Essex, in which she refers in an explicit manner to his infidelities with Elizabeth Stanley. This can be explained by the different circumstances under which the letter has been composed and sent. In the opening line of her first letter to the earl, she refers to her recent residence at court, which was based at Westminster at this point.⁸⁹ This places Anne at London rather than at Gorhambury in St Albans, her usual residence, and would have enabled her to pass her letter directly to Anthony, thus bypassing the prying eyes of messengers.⁹⁰ Anthony then sent her letter, as well as a letter from himself, to the earl, in a 'pacquett', which would have been most likely to contain other documents.⁹¹ In this way, although Anne could not be completely assured that her letter would only be read by Anthony and the earl, she seems to have felt more at liberty to express her objections to Essex's lifestyle.

Although Anne's intervention may have been undertaken by reason of her family connection to the lady in question, her own rationale (as expressed in the letter) seems to stem more strongly from her desire to protect Essex's reputation and interests. Her partiality is stated frankly in the letter:

⁸⁸ ACB to AB, 1 April 1595, LPL MS 651 fols 108^r-109^v (art. 66); ACB to AB, 12 August 1596, LPL MS 658 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 114).

⁸⁹ John Nichols includes a document entitled 'The Proceeding to the Parliament of Queene Elizabeth, from her Majestie's Royal Pallas of Whitehalle to Westminster, 1596', and a payment for the charges of this removal is dated to 27 August 1596, in *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols (London, 1788-1821), III, pp. 409-10. Documents in the CSP, 1595-1597 are written from 'Westminster' on 30 November 1596, vol. 160, no. 113 (p. 308) and 2 December 1596, vol. 161, no. 1 (p. 313).

⁹⁰ ACB to EE (copy), 1 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 149^r-150^v (art. 108).

⁹¹ AB to ACB, 5 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 123^{r-v} (art. 86).

I am bould upon some speeches of some and withe some persone at the courte where latelie I was, to imparte somewhat hereof to your Honor, bycause it concerned a partie there more nere to me than gracious to her stocke ⁹²

Shocked by a 'reporte' emanating from court about his inclination towards 'carnall dalyance', Anne rehearses the traditional cultural objections to his relationship with a married woman, rules in place to maintain the general stability of society. She counsels that his behaviour could result in illegitimate pregnancy, a feud between himself and Stanley's husband, and negatively influence other courtiers to behave in the same fashion. In voicing such complaints Anne is acting as a spokesperson for the older generations at court, and fulfilling the (traditionally female) role as an arbitrator of morals, in an attempt to maintain family relations.

Anne's accusation also reveals another motive behind her admonition, as her implication that such action is 'dangerous to yowr self' suggests that she is concerned that his behaviour will jeopardize his political reputation, and her intervention is not solely related to the protection of his eternal soul. Paul E.J. Hammer suggests that 'Essex had flirted with the idea of setting himself up as the new, political champion of puritanism', but was discouraged by the recent success of the ecclesiastical authorities in clamping down on nonconformist activities.⁹³ He continued to offer personal support to a number of puritans, but no longer believed their corner was worth fighting at the expense of his political career. But court puritans, such as Anne Bacon, remained optimistic about the extent of his backing, and projected upon him the image of the ideal Protestant prince, delivered to them to enact further reformation on the Church of England. Her advice can therefore be seen as reflective of her aspirations for the increased influence of Essex. Anne's moral imperatives are thus entwined with politics, and indicate her awareness that, in order to establish the puritan

⁹² ACB to EE (copy), 1 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 149^r-150^v (art. 108). Lytton Strachey dramatises this exchange in *Elizabeth and Essex*, pp. 121-123.

⁹³ 'Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex (1565-1601)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/7565>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

movement as a viable faction, political skill as well as religious fervency was necessary.

Anne draws on biblical authority in her attempts to try and persuade Essex to desist in his provocative conduct, a tactic that she uses when attempting to advise her own sons.⁹⁴ She quotes three verses of Thessalonians in full, and then offers 'more yf it please you to reade and marke well', and proceeds to paraphrase several other passages that condemn adultery.⁹⁵ Anne would seem to be offering him advice from her own readings of the Bible, and her conflation of different verses from at least three different books from the New Testament demonstrates her confidence in her knowledge of her sources. Anne ends the letter by excusing her forthrightness as an outpouring of her impassioned belief: 'with verie [...] inwarde affection haue I thus presumed ill fauoredlie [to] scribble I confesse beinge sicklie and weake manie waies.' 'Inward affection' describes the emotional experience of God's grace, the inner assurance that those who believed themselves to be one of the elect, would feel. Concomitantly this sensation impelled believers to attempt to draw other non-believers, or those who may have strayed, back to the 'godly' path. Anne's letter is the result of such an impulse, and in combination with the attention she draws to her frail physical state serves as an excuse by which she can admonish Essex as a surrogate mother.

The earl of Essex responded promptly to Anne's letter, and the manner in which he writes to her skilfully reinforces her notion of herself as a pious matriarch. In his discussion of the nature of the pastoral role of clerics, John Morgan suggests that 'occasional criticism of the well-born and the powerful became an important feature of the ministers' social function', and that this dynamic reinforced each subject's belief that they were of the elect.⁹⁶ Errors of judgement apparently justified the authority of the clerics, as 'puritan ministers seem to have considered the willingness of the gentry to accept criticism (and appropriately reform their conduct) as a mark of godliness'.⁹⁷ This dynamic

⁹⁴ See her later dated 12 August 1595, LPL MS 658 fol. 167^r-168^v (art. 144).

⁹⁵ | Thessalonians 4. 3-5. She paraphrases Hebrews 13. 4, Ephesians 5. 5-6, and Colossians 3. 5-6.

⁹⁶ *Godly Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 83.

⁹⁷ Morgan, pp. 83-84.

would seem to be applicable to Anne and Essex, as his response shows that he positively embraces her criticism:

Madame. That it pleasethe yow to deale thus freeilie with me in lettinge me know the worse yow heare of me, I take it as great argument of gods fauour in sendinge so good an angell to admonishe me, and of no small care in yowr Ladyship of my well doinge.⁹⁸

By depicting Anne as an 'angell' Essex grants her an extraordinary authority over spiritual matters, and suggests that her intervention affirms the significance of his role in earthly religious affairs. Essex writes that he would rather confess his sins, 'than pharisaically to iustifie myself', and admits 'howe needful these summons are to all menn espec-tiallie to those that liue in this place'. Part of his defence is to deliberately emphasise his failings but also to demonstrate his desire to change: 'worthy Ladie thinke me a weake man, full of imperfections, but be assured I doe endeauour to be good and had rather mende my faultes then couer them.'

Essex also draws on Anne's reputation as a highly educated woman in order to ingratiate himself with her, and he ends the letter by writing 'Plutarke taught me longe since to make profit of my enemies, but god teachethe it me muche better nowe'. The merging of classical and biblical authorities reflects the method by which Anne makes sense of the world, through the application of classical and scriptural knowledge, as well as personal religious experience, to everyday life. By presenting himself as one who uses similar such intellectual and spiritual tools in his negotiation of life, Essex illustrates the validity of her world-view, and effectively flatters her. Such a tactic actively echoes Anne's self-fashioning of herself as a learned and religious gentlewoman and Essex's response represents the ideal circumstances of dispensation and reception of 'maternal' advice, a situation that occurs less frequently with her sons.

⁹⁸ EE to ACB (copy), 1 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 281^{r-v} (art. 188).

Essex's ploy is entirely successful, and Anne's response to him, written a few days later, shows her to be suitably flattered by the manner in which he accepts her criticism.⁹⁹ The jubilant relief of Anne's tone to Essex also demonstrates the risk inherent in the sending of her original letter, and indicates that the confident tone of the original belies hidden anxieties that her words are inappropriate. Anne is charmed by the trouble Essex has taken in writing the letter himself, rather than dictating it to a secretary, as 'A lettre even with your own hande is Favor more then my poore thanks or desarts can reach vnto.' Having responded to Anne's godly exhortations in a suitable manner, Anne is emboldened to elaborate upon Essex's potential as a figurehead for the puritan movement, and positions him as a channel through which God will enact change: 'God doth [in] diverse wayes make manifest his love towards yow wherof his church heare and owr state do Feale the swete Benefytt'. The state of Essex's soul thus has a wider implication than merely his personal salvation, but is relevant to the success or failure of the movement for further reform. In its fulsome praise and humble tone, this letter deviates significantly from the mother-son epistolary dynamic that was established in Anne's first letter, and indicates how her application of that tone was a performance necessary for her to fulfil her purpose. Embracing a role of censure provided Anne with a platform from which to dispense criticism, and once this aim had been achieved and was apparently successful, Anne reverts to a tone more suited to writing to a social superior.

Essex's reasons for reacting so positively to Anne's letters may also have related to the nature of his relationship with Anthony. The intimacy that existed between the two men made Anne's letter to him possible and acceptable. Essex seems to have thought kindly of Anne, as the mother of one of his close friends, and also may have wished to cultivate her goodwill with a view to the benefits that could accrue for Anthony. Anthony's reliance on his mother to meet his day-to-day expenses resulted in her funds being used to pay for Anthony's fuel bill while resident at Essex House, and if this level of support was to be sustained then it was necessary for her to continue to approve of

⁹⁹ ACB to EE, with note to AB, 4 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 151^r-152^v (art. 109).

Anthony's patron.¹⁰⁰ It would have therefore been in both men's best interests for Essex to present himself as the stalwart puritan that Anne longed for, sent to rescue reformed Protestantism from institutional oblivion.

Dutiful sons

The earl of Essex's amenable reception of Anne's advice indicates that, for Anthony's sake, maintaining a positive relationship with her was necessary, and derived from financial imperatives as well as a complicity with the conventions of social relations. This exchange shows that Anne's primary authority is derived from the cultural acceptance of a mother's role, and by continually enacting traditional motherly duties towards her son sons she ensured that they were obliged to perform the requisite filial duties in return. For the most part Anthony seems to have absorbed Thomas Cartwright's advice, and submitted to Anne's will when it concerned inconsequential matters. However, over certain crucial points he chose to hold his ground, and it is within the correspondence relating to these crises points that we can see the most explicit interrogation of the extent and justification of maternal power.

The unstable financial position of her sons was a source of much distress to Anne, as has been discussed above. Despite Anthony's income from leases and rents, money that he put towards the financing of his brother, both overspent significantly and were forced to live on credit. Obtaining an office was the only way to be assured of an income, as the office-holder could accumulate the income from patents and monopolies granted to them, but as we have seen, the securing of such a place continued to elude Francis. As Craig Muldrew has shown, the limited amount of gold and silver in circulation necessitated that most economic transactions were conducted by the extension of credit, in the form of moneylending, bills and bonds, bills of exchange or mortgages.¹⁰¹ The reputation of the family name, Anthony's patrimony, and the prospect of Francis's employment were the factors that enabled the brothers to maintain extensive credit networks, ones that were continually played off each other in

¹⁰⁰ ACB to AB, 18 March 1596, LPL MS 656 fols 47^r-48^v (art. 29).

¹⁰¹ Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 96.

order to prevent foreclosure.¹⁰² Although it was considered a ‘last resort’ to sell off a family’s patrimony, as it depleted the family’s status, the Bacon brothers had no qualms in using such tactics, and on Anthony’s return to England they whittled away at the family estates that their father had acquired.¹⁰³

The selling of patrimonial lands was a complicated and lengthy process, with the legal custom of inheritance affecting any transaction, and Joyce Freedman shows how Anthony managed to alter the status of his Barley estate from entail (meaning that the property could only be passed to his descendents), to fee-simple (meaning that he could bestow it upon whoever he wished), thereby removing the need to obtain his older brother Nicholas’s consent to the sale. As Freedman notes, the legal complexity necessary to undertake such a transaction reveals Anthony to be an able administrator when so inclined.¹⁰⁴ Similar releases were also required from Anne when either of her sons wished to sell off their lands, and it is within the tangle of one such negotiation that we find an example of how her sons manipulated the conventional attributes of the maternal figure (so eagerly claimed by Anne) to their own advantage.

In searching for ways to repay his debts Francis had singled out Marks, a manor of Essex in the possession of Anne, as one possible property that could be sold to raise cash. However, acquiring the transfer of the ownership of the estate from his mother to himself was no easy matter, and required delicate arbitration by Anthony, who skilfully exploited her maternal anxieties to achieve their aims. His letter of persuasion begins by reminding her of a promise she had made in regard to Marks:

I assure myself that your Ladyship as a wise and kinde mother to us both wyll neyther finde it strange nor amiss, yf tenderinge first my Brothers helth, which I knowe by myne owne experience to depend not a little upon a free mynde and then his credit I presume to put your

¹⁰² Freedman, p. 179.

¹⁰³ See Muldrew on the problems of selling of inherited lands, p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ Freedman, pp. 184-5.

Ladyship in remembrance of your motherlie offer to him the same day
yow departed ¹⁰⁵

Anthony implies that her action as a mother will have a direct impact on Francis's health, thereby mobilizing her maternal concerns for his own interests. Defining the motherly role as one that exudes affection and knowledge, and by making her position as mother explicit, he taps into the idea of the relationship as she conceives of it, creating more leverage for his request. By describing the transference of property as a 'motherlie offer', he illustrates how maternal care is perceived as being expressed through material means, whilst also retaining the voluntary notion of her action.

Anthony continues to list the financial penalties Francis will incur if she does not relinquish control of the estate, writing that unless she does this 'I haue iuste cause to feare that my Brother wilbe put to a verie shrewd plunge, eyther to forfeyt his reuercyon to Haruie, or els to undersell yt verie muche', referring to the reversion of the Clerkship of the Star Chamber.¹⁰⁶ The prevention of this is down to Anne, and Anthony delivers an ultimatum of sorts, 'I see no other remedy then your Ladyship surrender in tyme'. To circumvent the suspicion that Francis is involved, Anthony suggests that the request is initiated on the behalf of himself, on the grounds of his 'Brotherlie care and affection', and emphasises their close relations even further by suggesting how distressed he would be by the unnecessary prolonging of Francis's financial worries:

Beseechinge yow to belieue that beinge so neare and deare unto me as he is, yt cannot but be a greefe unto me, to see a mynde that hath giuen so sufficient proof of yt self, in hauinge brought forth in time good thoughts for the general, to be ouerburdened and cumbered with a continuall care of clearinge his particular estate.

¹⁰⁵ AB to ACB, 16 April 1593, LPL MS 649 fol 103^r-104^v (art. 67).

¹⁰⁶ LL, I, p. 243, note 4; HF, p. 200.

By drawing on the Bacon family ambitions for Francis's advancement, he attempts to persuade Anne to release Marks. He also seems unusually receptive to her advice concerning his lifestyle, and he tells her that not only has his diet 'wrought good effect', but that also that he has been advised 'to continewe this whole month not medlinge with anie purgative phissicke more then I must needes, which wilbe but thrise duringe my whole dyet'. His submission to her direction concerning his health is therefore used as a bargaining chip in order to secure success in this more significant matter.

Anne's response to this request is a superb illustration of the contradictory impulses of her maternal feeling, as on the one hand she is swayed by their pleas to her natural instinct to help them, and on the other she is protective of the financial interests of the family, and seeks to maintain authority. The material structure of the letter reflects this confusion, as, unusually, it is written on two separate leaves, and while the first leaf rails against their ingratitude and lack of responsibility, the second leaf, which functions as a discrete postscript, shows her submitting to the request.

The letter opens with a direct response to the fraternal bond that Anthony had evoked in his letter: 'For yowr brotherly care of yowr Brother Francis state yow are to ^be^ well lyked and so I do as A christian mother that loveth yow both as the chyldern of god', thereby establishing from the outset that any criticism of them has to be set against the base of her maternal affection.¹⁰⁷ This serves as a foil against the next section of the letter, in which she protests at the 'state of yow Both' that has caused her much 'disqwiett', and threatens to not make them the executors of her will. She proceeds to blame Francis's men for his actions, 'he was A towards yowng gentleman and A sonne of much goode hope in godliness. but [...] he hath norished most synfull Prowd villans wylfully'.

Anne's affront at the request can be seen in the last few lines written in the margin, where she writes 'I know not what other Answer to make', which acts as an external commentary on her main letter. The unconventional manoeuvre of adding another note on a separate leaf, suggests that the anger of her initial response has cooled. In a dramatic *volte-face* she agrees to sign over the

¹⁰⁷ ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653 fols. 318^r-319^v (the letter and postscript are bound separately as articles 175 and 176).

interest to Marks so that Francis can pay off Mr Harvey upon the condition that he 'reqwyre it him ^selff^' and that he 'make and geve me A true note of all his detts and leave to me the hole order of the receipt of ^all^ his mony For his lande to Harvy and the Just payment of all his detts thereby'. She emphasizes her role in the resolution of the situation, as 'it shalbe performed by me to his qwiet discharge without combring him and to his credit'. This decision to help him financially is clearly seen as a method by which she can exert control over him and strike a blow at the associates she disapproves of, and she continues: 'For I wyll not have his cormorant seducers and instruments of satan to him committing Fowle synns by hys his cowntenance to the displeasing of god'. As noted in relation to this letter in Chapter One, such vitriolic comments on her son's company can be taken as an implicit admission that Anne is aware of the rumours circulating about her son's sexual practices.

Her financial aid carries obligations, and Anne underestimates the extent to which her sons are willing to accept her involvement, as becomes clear from the next letter in the sequence. Francis seems to have strongly objected to her terms, and although the letter he wrote to her is no longer extant we can glean from the next letter in the sequence some of its contents. Obviously too shocked to deal directly with Francis, Anne writes to Anthony enclosing the letter from Francis 'constru the enterpretation I do not understand his enigmaticall fowlded writing'.¹⁰⁸ This is a rare instance when she specifically refers to the trouble she has comprehending the complex writing style of her sons. Her letter implies that Francis has accused her of treating him as A Ward, and she denies this charge, writing that the 'scope of my so called by him circumstance which I am sure he must understand was, not to use him as a warde, A remote phrase to my playn motherly meaning'. The practice of wardship could be highly beneficial to the wardship-holder, and often detrimental to the ward. Francis is therefore placing this business-like mode of guardianship in direct opposition to the affective mode of parenting found in maternal care, and implying that Anne's behaviour is unmotherly and self-serving.

¹⁰⁸ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653, fols 301^r-302^v (art. 165).

She goes on to defend her behaviour, basing it yet again on the danger of his network of servants and hangers-on:

my playn proposition was ever and is to do him goode but seinge so manifestly that he is Robbed and spoyled wyllingly by his base exalted men which with welch [Welsh] wyles praye upon him [...] I dyd desyre onely to receave the mony to discharge his detts in dede. and dare not trust such his riotus men with the dealing with all.

Her 'playn proposition' is in reaction to his 'enigmaticall fowlded writing' suggesting a battle of rhetorical styles as well as wills, and her assertion that she wanted the money only to 'discharge his detts' indicates that she considers that she has been accused of wanting to take more control than she should as a dowager. She continues:

I am sure no precher nor lawyer nor Frende wolde have mislyked this my doing For his goode and my better satisfieng. he perceaves my goode meaning by this and before too but percee [Percy] had wynded him

By casting herself in the role of alternative advisory relationships – preacher, lawyer, friend, she is attempting to move away from the maternal advice structure in order to give an alternative validity to her words. In order to accept his behaviour she assumes that he has understood what she means, and that it is only the machinations of Percy, his servant, that have persuaded him to think ill of her. Her conditional submission to their demands is justified by the greater family imperative to promote Francis, as she writes 'he was his Fathers first chis [choice] and God will supply yf he trust in him and call up upon him in truth of hart. which God grant to mother and sonnes', and she thereby turns to the absent patriarch in another attempt to secure her authority.

The nature of the deal she forges with them also reveals her reluctance to submit completely to their demands. Although she passes the ownership of Marks to Francis for 'the naturuall love and affecion' she bears for him, she inserts a clause that allows her to retrieve her control of the manor for the token price of ten shillings. Lynne Magnusson suggests that this 'proviso' establishes 'an often-repeated rhythm of at once giving support and withholding to control' that is symptomatic of Anne's relationship with her sons.¹⁰⁹

Anthony's most explicit rejection of Anne's advice occurs in relation to his friendship with Thomas Lawson, which Anne continued to oppose once both men were settled in England. Despite attempts to keep Lawson out of the sight of his mother, occasional errands demanded that she come into contact with him on behalf of Anthony, and although he hoped that Lawson 'maie procure and confirme your Ladyshipps good opinion', her repeated tirades against him seem to have stirred Anthony to confront her.¹¹⁰ Having asked God's 'councell and leaue' he has:

founde my self imbouldened withe warrant of a good conscience, and by the force of truthe to remonstrate unto your Ladyshipp with a moste dewtyfull minde and tender care of your Ladyships Soule and reputation ¹¹¹

In a complete reversal of roles it is the son in this instance who is seeking to protect his mother's spiritual and public interests. Anthony makes use of a technique Anne often used – that of drawing attention to negative public perceptions of behaviour – in order to try and control her behaviour. He then directly challenges her maternal authority, by accusing her of a misjudged reasoning:

¹⁰⁹ 'Widowhood and Linguistic Capital: The Rhetoric and Reception of Anne Bacon's Epistolary Advice', *ELR*, 31 (2001), 3-33 (p. 9).

¹¹⁰ AB to ACB, 22 June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 212^{r-v} (art. 135).

¹¹¹ AB to ACB, 12 July 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 228^{r-v} (art. 150).

that howsoever your Ladyship dothe pretende and alledge for reason your motherlie affeccion towards us in that which concernethe Lawson yet anie man of Judgement and indifferentry must needes take it for a meere passion, springing eyther from presompcion (that your Ladyship [words deleted] can only iudge and see that in the man which neuer anie man yet hath seene or for shame dare saie) or from a Soueraigne desire to ouerrulle your Sonnes in all thinges how little soeuer yow understande eyther the groundes or the circumstances of their proceedings or els from lack want of harty abandoninges your minde continuallie to most strange and wrongfull suspicions notwithstandinge all most humble submissions and indeuours possible on his parte to procure your Ladyships satissfacion and contentment

Anthony accuses her of using her 'motherly affeccion' fraudulently, as an excuse for untrammelled self-expression. Anne's opinion is defined as 'meere passion' in contrast to the 'Judgement and indifferentry' of others, and suggests that her behaviour stems from either a desire to control the lives of her sons, or, from an irrational and paranoid state of mind. Her excessive maternal outpourings are seen as a form of madness, particularly because she refuses to be soothed by Lawson's 'humble submissions' and 'indeuours' to secure her 'satissfacion and contentment'. The extremity of Anthony's reaction suggests that his continual attempts to placate her have taken their toll. Understanding that the letter 'will at the first by sight be offenciue to your Ladyship', he writes that he would rather:

receiue and indure your blame for performinge that dewty with free filliol respect to this my bounde dewty. than your thankes or likinge for soothing or allowinge by silence so dangerous humours ^and uncharitable misconceits^ in your Ladyship

This familiar trope excuses the forthright words of the advisor by suggesting that they would rather be thought badly of than allow the recipient of his advice to

carry on in ignorance. Anne employs this same trope in a later letter to Anthony.¹¹² He chooses this moment to emphasise his role as a dutiful son, again to appease her, and by suggesting that her impassioned words against Lawson are in fact the result of ‘dangerous humours’ he emphasises the protective role of the son while maintaining that her behaviour is partly out of her control. Replies from Anne do not survive, but the fact that Anthony is writing to her on the same matter two years later indicates her refusal to accept his advice.

In this letter of June 1596 Anthony begins by claiming that, as befits the role of a good son, he is prepared to accept her advice, and he writes that: ‘As from a mother sicklie and in yeares I am content to take in good parte anie [...] causeles humorous threates whatsoeuer’, but that yet again he must point out that she is failing to fulfil her side of the mother-son bargain, and remonstrates with her:

that your sonnes poore credite dependeth upon iudgement and not upon humour and that your Ladyshipp cannot utter anie thinge in your passion to your Sonnes lacke, so longe as god giues him the grace to be more carefull in dutie to please and reverence your Ladyship as his mother then your Ladyship seemeth manie times to be towarde me as your sonne And so I besech god to preserue your Ladyship¹¹³

His subscription reads ‘Your Ladiship in all filial-duties’, emphasising his role in an attempt to appeal to her caring maternal side. In this he is demanding the impossible, as he wants her to convert the excessive affection of motherly love into a more moderate, reasonable expression of her affection. Just as the mothers’ advice books had provided an ideal model of the mother-child relation in which the writing was instigated by maternal zeal, Anne’s letters provide an example of how this can be converted into a discourse of maternal frustration. Her voice of maternal complaint can be seen as the violent opposite to the

¹¹² ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 331^r-332^v (art. 223).

¹¹³ AB to ACB, 16 June 1596, LPL MS 656 fol. 257^{r-v} (art. 175).

boundless affection that the mothers posit as the reason for their authorship and authority.

Family conflict

This close study of the relationship between Lady Anne Bacon and her sons enables us to go some way to understanding the reasons behind the apparently paradoxical nature of their correspondence. Anne's alternations between expressions of maternal love and threats of disinheritance can be traced to her experience of mothering, which developed her affection for her sons. At the same time the structural pressures of the early modern family and her status as widow altered the objectives of her care and demanded she take a more directing role in their lives. Aware of the authority that was accorded to her as a mother, Anne utilized the common code of maternal advice to such an extent that she was considered by her sons to have transgressed the boundaries of motherhood and received the admonitions of her son in a parent-child role reversal. Whilst her sons may have correctly performed superficial filial duties, their corruption of the most essential responsibility, namely the care of their family estates, validated Anne's excessive reactions to them. But ultimately her vociferous objections were inversely proportionate to her actual power, and by 1597 Anthony had begun attempting to sell off Gorhambury, a final encroachment of Anne's position and power that was prevented only by his death.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Justifying a suit to the Queen for the gift of certain lands Francis writes 'I have just fear my brother will endeavour to put away Gorhambury, which if your Majesty enable me by this gift I know I shall be able to get into mine own hands'. *LL*, II, pp. 165-166.

Chapter Four

'The fruite of your motherly admonicions': The Constructive and Protective Uses of Print Publication

*It must be also borne in mind that in primordial terms the vessel is anything but a 'passive receptacle: it is transformative – active, powerful.'*¹

Of all the areas from which Anne claimed her authority over her sons her incarnation as a wise, learned and pious lady proved the most idiosyncratic construction of female power for Anthony and Francis to circumvent. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Anthony's correspondents frequently drew on this characterisation of his mother, referring to her as a 'wislady', as a figure known for her 'education' and 'learning'.² In doing so they utilised an image of Anne that had been in circulation since her youth, and one that had been most explicitly developed through her role as a published translator of religious texts. Alongside a small group of similarly educated women, Anne had participated in cultural activities that allowed her to exercise her linguistic skills in the public realm, beyond the domestic sphere for which they had been intended. Although women were widely discouraged from entering the world of print, as 'to do so threatened the cornerstone of their moral and social well-being', the publication of female-authored mothers' manuals discussed in Chapter Two indicates that restrictions were not total, and that there were circumstances in which women could legitimise their publication activities.³ One such reason was for that greatest of all causes in the sixteenth-century – that of religious truth, and the ideological tumult of the reformation saw the mobilisation of women writers for this purpose. By drawing on the specific iconography of the learned and pious female, Anne's position as translator protects, mediates and disseminates reformist texts to a wider audience.

¹ Rich, p. 98.

² Francis Allen to AB, 17 August 1589, LPL MS 647 fols 245^r-249^v (art. 121); Anthony Standen to Edward Selwin, 5 September 1591, LPL MS 647 fols 86^r-87^v (art. 51).

³ Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 280.

Although by its very nature the process of translation restricts the content of the text to that which has been created by a previous author, the practice of prefacing the main text with introductory material allowed the translator some room for personal exposition. This was an opportunity that was particularly valuable to female translators, and it is where we find the most explicit comments by women writers on the scope of their intellectual and spiritual roles. It was common for prefatory material to be presented in the form of dedicatory epistles, a conceit that was used to promote the sense that the text was the product of a private endeavour shared between friends. For women authors this framing device added an extra layer of protection against accusations of unfeminine ambition, and it was often used as a space within which they could claim that the responsibility of the publication of the text lay with another (male) figure. The use of manuscript letter-writing conventions in printed books provides a link between this and the previous chapters, as all but one of Anne's entries into the public literary sphere are channelled through the epistolary form. Although the letters appear in different mediums, the printed form still carries with it some of the complexities inherent to the genre, and consequently the dedicatory epistles need to be contextualised carefully.

Through this conversion from manuscript to print the private maternal bequest of spiritual knowledge is converted into a public practice of spiritual guidance. Anne's active promotion of reformed doctrine and practice, and the scholarly and public acceptance of her translations, confirm her role as a learned woman, and provide an explanation for the references to her learning that we see in later documents. The ultimate success of the construction of her role in print can be seen by the handful of books that are subsequently dedicated to her, in which authors make use of her cultural value for the promotion of their own texts. But her contribution to the reformist cause was not only symbolic, and evidence provided by her letters and printed works allows us to see the extent to which some of the laudatory dedications addressed to her reflected her personal involvement with the authors of the dedications. By establishing an actual rather than abstract connection between author and dedicatee, it is possible to speculate that Anne had some influence over her appearance in print. The dedications advance an image of someone of a significantly less unorthodox nature than her personal letters would suggest, and indicate that

she was intent on constructing a conformist persona in print to counteract her puritan reputation.

PART ONE: THE VALUE OF WOMEN IN PRINT

Limitations on expression

Injunctions against women's participation in published literary culture stemmed directly from social conventions that limited women's presence, voice and influence to the domestic sphere. The ideal woman was 'chaste silent and obedient' and her appearance in print risked leaving each of these qualities open to question.⁴ For the majority of women their lack of education was a significant obstruction to their ability to publish, even if they were willing to jeopardize their reputations. And those women who had been educated in the humanist arts, such as the Cooke sisters, had been schooled for domestic purposes only and were not expected to make use of their learning for civic reasons, as was the case with male students.

Precedent for the limitations placed on female humanists had been set in fifteenth-century Italy, where a number of educated women such as the sisters Angela, Isotta and Ginevra Nogarola, and Battista Montefeltro and Laura Cereta, were prevented from giving full voice to their talents.⁵ As Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine note (in a chapter pertinently entitled 'Women Humanists: Education for What?'), while humanist studies were regarded as 'an appropriate occupation for a noblewoman', their learning could not be expressed publicly without the woman being accused of 'indecorous' behaviour.⁶ They argue that 'study, for her, consigned her to marginality, relegated her to the cloister', or in Margaret L. King's term, to a 'book-lined cell'.⁷ In order to limit the power of the learned woman further, and to emphasise that the development of such skills was a rarity, commentators transformed the 'individual talented woman into a *genus* of representatives of female worth', which saw them celebrated either 'in terms of an abstract intellectual ideal' or as

⁴ Suzanne Hull, *Chaste Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women 1475-1640* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1982).

⁵ As discussed by Margaret L. King in 'Book-Lined Cells: Women and Humanism in the early Italian Renaissance', in *Beyond their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*, ed. by Patricia H. Labalme (London: New York University Press, 1980), pp. 65-90.

⁶ *From Humanism to the Humanities* (London: Duckworth, 1986), p. 32.

⁷ Grafton and Jardine, p. 45; Margaret L. King, p. 74.

an embodiment of a 'social ideal'.⁸ This also occurred in sixteenth-century England, and Elaine V. Beilin notes how 'commentators consistently praised a few English women for their learning and virtue, thus initiating the habits of isolating them as exceptional women and insisting that women's intellectual attainments consort with their feminine goodness'.⁹

Ironically, the consignment of learned women to the literal and metaphorical cloister had prepared them well for the climate of religious debate that intensified during the reformation, and they now became trenchant voices in the ideological battle. The religious woman writer was perceived as a 'pivotal figure', and was called upon by both sides to support their cause.¹⁰ The validity of their position in this cause stemmed from their traditional association with spirituality, and Ian Maclean notes that this was one of the few 'domains in which woman's superiority to man is conceded', as the 'female sex is [...] thought to possess devoutness in greater measure than the male'.¹¹ This celebration of women religious was not wholly positive, with some theologians implying that their devoutness resulted from their propensity for 'credulity rather than rational belief'.¹² Similarly instances of virtuous female actions were celebrated with fervour because such behaviour was considered so out of character for the weaker sex, and by emphasising their exceptional nature limits were placed on the opportunity for other women to follow in their path.¹³ As the print industry developed, those women who did exhibit signs of virtue as well as intellectual skill displayed their extraordinary talents in the literary marketplace for the edification of the wider reader.

The focus on Protestant texts in this chapter is by no means indicative of the full history of female-authored religious translations.¹⁴ Indeed women's

⁸ Grafton and Jardine, p. 53 and p. 55.

⁹ Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. xvi.

¹⁰ Jennifer Summit, *Lost Property: The Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 110.

¹¹ *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 20-21.

¹² Maclean, p. 21.

¹³ Maclean, p. 21.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the shared features of Catholic and Protestant religious translation see Jonathan Gibson, 'Katherine Parr, Princess Elizabeth and the Crucified Christ', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing*, ed. by Victoria E. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 33-49.

authorship of devotional works extends deep into the medieval period, and Julia Boffey wisely stresses that early printed translations (discussed below) should not be used as entirely innovative constructions, as:

the survival of their [scholarly women's] productions is no doubt partly due to the coincidence of their chronological association with the spread of printing, and with printers and publishers who were anxious to add to their lists reputable works by reputable figures.¹⁵

It comes as no surprise that one of the earliest examples of the publication of a female-authored translation emerged from the household of Thomas More. His linguistically talented daughter, Margaret Roper, published her Latin to English translation of Erasmus's *Precatio Dominica* as *A devout treatise upon the Pater noster* in 1524.¹⁶ The book was published 'quasi-anonymously', as although she is not named as the interpreter, the description of the translator on the title page as a 'yong vertuous and well lerned gentywoman of .xix. yere of age', and the intimations made by Richard Hyrde in his preface, provide strong clues as to her identity.¹⁷ This was not the first translation by a woman to reach print, Lady Margaret Beaufort had published translations of parts of the *Imitatio Christo*, which ran through several editions from 1504 to 1519; and in around 1506 her interpretation of Jacques de Gruytrode's *Speculum aureum animae peccatricis* was published as *The mirroure of golde for the synfull soule* (c.1506).¹⁸ While both of these texts were attributed to Beaufort, the implications

¹⁵ Julia Boffey, 'Women authors and women's literacy in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England', in *Women and Literature in Britain 1150-1500*, ed. by Carol M. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 159-182 (p. 173).

¹⁶ Desiderius Erasmus, *Devoute treatise upon the Pater noster* (London: Thomas Berthelet, [1526?]). For a fuller discussion of how the text came into print see John Guy's biography of Margaret Roper, *A Daughter's Love* (London: Harper Collins, 2008), pp. 149-152.

¹⁷ Sig. A1'. Her authorship of the translation was confirmed by 'a case involving the regulation of the book trade in 1525-26', Elizabeth McCutcheon 'Life and letters: Editing the writing of Margaret Roper' *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985-1991*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Text and Studies (vol. 27) in conjunction with the Renaissance English Text Society, 1993), 111-117 (p. 114).

¹⁸ Alexandra Barratt outlines the history of translations into English by women in 'Women Translators of Religious Texts', in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, vol. 1: to 1550*, ed. by Roger Ellis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 284-295.

of her role as a female translator were not explored in either text.¹⁹ In contrast Hyrde's dedicatory epistle to Roper's text took the opportunity provided by the gender of the translator to embark on an extensive defence of female education, and was the first female-authored translation in which the translator's gender was alluded to explicitly.²⁰

The role of Protestant female translators

Richard Hyrde's emphasis on the gender of the translator may have reflected a growing interest in 'women as subject-matter', and certainly this focus is apparent in most of the translations examined in this chapter.²¹ Suzanne Hull's research into the growth of books by, for, and about women, leads her to argue for the 'emergence of a female reading public with its own small but identifiable body of literature', and women writers came to serve diverse functions as this field expanded.²² How the female-author came to be of particular use for the reformation cause has recently piqued the interest of a number of literary historians, and their research illuminates various issues that are relevant to a consideration of Anne's translations.

Kimberly Coles argues that some women writers were 'central to the development of a Protestant literary tradition', as their authorship embodied in literal terms Luther's concept of 'the priesthood of all believers', which ended the need for the mediation of a priest between the individual and God.²³ In theory this put women's experience of faith on equal footing to that of men's and their involvement in the publication of religious texts symbolised the universal access to God that Protestants expounded. However, in order to be effective this usage of the female-author 'partly traded upon cultural notions of female inferiority – the egalitarian impulses of reform are conveyed through the

¹⁹ John A. Gee, 'Margaret Roper's English Version of Erasmus' *Precatio Dominica* and the Apprenticeship Behind Early Tudor Translation', *The Review of English Studies*, 13 (1937), 257-271 (p. 260).

²⁰ Barratt, p. 289.

²¹ Maureen Bell, 'Women writing and women written', in *The Cambridge History of the Book*, ed by John Barnard and D.F. McKenzie, with the assistance of Maureen Bell, 5 vols, (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), IV, pp. 431-451 (p. 438).

²² Hull, p. 1.

²³ Kimberly Anne Coles, *Religion, Reform, and Women's Writing in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 1 and p. 6.

vehicle of women *because* of their status'.²⁴ Coles suggests that 'the figure of the religious female became a powerful mediating symbol through which women could engage the public role of authorship, and through which they themselves would be read', and sees their texts as having a much greater influence on 'religious, political and poetic reform' than has previously been understood.²⁵

Jennifer Summit suggests that one of the main reasons for the exclusion of women from print culture in the medieval period – their disassociation from academic and clerical institutions – became, during the reformation, a positive asset, as they embodied a pure voice, untainted by centuries of collusion with the Catholic church. Examining the works of the Protestant polemicist John Bale, Summit reads his editorial framing of Elizabeth Tudor's translation *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle* (1548) and his production of the *Examinations of Anne Askew*, as attempts to present 'the woman writer as a potent figure of opposition to the Catholic medieval church, and thus the unexpected representative of a native, proto-Protestant English literature.'²⁶ In their recourse to the vernacular, the result (in most cases) of their lack of education in classical languages, women writers became important figures in 'English literature's very invention', assisting in the development of a native tradition.²⁷

Summit argues that Bale deliberately positions the woman writer as a "lost" figure in order to create an alternative inheritance for English literature. Casting aside classical and patristic models, he suggests that the thread of true religion can be traced back through the writings of religious women, and that these women provide evidence of the nascent Protestantism that had long been present in English culture. In providing a list of the learned women of the past, and by claiming 'that true nobility comes from the qualities and inner virtues that he finds exemplified in learned women', he offers Queen Elizabeth, a figure so

²⁴ Coles, p. 6.

²⁵ Coles, p. 16 and p. 7.

²⁶ Summit, p. 15. *A godly medytacyon of the christen sowle* ([Wesel]: [Dirik van der Straten], 1548). John Bale, *The first examinacyon of Anne Askewe* ([Wesel: Dirik. van der Straten, 1546]; *The latter examinacyon of Anne Askewe* ([Wesel: Dirik. van der Straten, 1546]).

²⁷ Summit, p. 16.

vexed by questions of genealogy, an alternative lineage, and one that is carried through the generations by women's textual productions.²⁸

Summit also argues that Bale's model of female religiosity inspired Thomas Bentley to create a longer genealogy of 'Queenes, godlie Ladies [...] vertuous women of all ages, which in their kind and countrie were notablie learned' in *The Monument of Matrones* (1582), a collection of writings gathered for a female readership.²⁹ Summit suggests that Bentley sees the learned women of the sixteenth-century (whose register of names includes Anne Bacon) as the 'contemporary fulfillment of an age-old line of female literary descent', and uses them to 'create a model of posterity and heritage that is explicitly feminized', thereby sketching a 'literary genealogy of mothers and daughters'.³⁰ The figure of the individual woman religious writer becomes part of a generic collection of women, all of whom perform the same function. By channelling the emotional piety that had previously been associated with the Virgin Mary and other female saints into the image of the learned Protestant women, Bentley effects an artificial clustering of these women, in order to reduce their individual potency.³¹

However, although this technique fits the model of the reductive attitude towards learned women prevalent in the period, women religious writers also seem to be active in their creation of a self-conscious group. By dedicating their texts to other women, and by choosing to translate female-authored texts, they suggest if not a genuine participation in a female literary movement, at least a desire for one. Rather than representing a blanket feminine piety, these women instead positioned their works carefully and intended them to perform a specific function within the complex field of religious publications. Warren Boutcher suggests that although a 'restrictive tokenism' is present in most renaissance attitudes to learned women, 'extreme insistence on the piety of learning' can be

²⁸ Summit, p. 151.

²⁹ *Monument of matrones* ([London]: H. Denham, 1582).

³⁰ Summit, p. 158.

³¹ John N. King, 'The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 38 (1985), 41-84 (p. 41).

seen to signify 'religio-political differences', and this would seem to be the case for Anne, Lady Bacon's, translations.³²

The religious woman writer therefore became a potent tool for the reformist cause. The continuity of her association with the transmission of devotional texts and yet her exclusion from institutional spheres made her the perfect combination of the familiar and novel, a dynamic of which the burgeoning print culture took full advantage of. The absorption of the traits previously attributed to female saints was an easy way to emphasise the continuity of her role, yet by recalling her alternative heritage she became representative of a new model of religious worship. As useful as these general qualities were for the promotion of Protestant ideology, the acceptance of the female-translator also allowed women an arena for self-expression. Although editors attempted to defuse their involvement in religious politics by defining them as abstract models of female piety, the specific details concerning the translation and dedication of the text were evidence for their active efforts to participate in this sphere.

Translated texts

In the search for proof of the existence of female intellectual activity in the early modern period, women's translations have frequently been relegated to a position of secondary importance in comparison to so-called original texts. The desire kindled by the feminist movement of the 1980s to recover the voices of women writers has steered feminist literary historians away from translated texts, as these are by their very nature seen as a simple regurgitation of another (often male) writer's words. As an important corrective, Diane Purkiss suggests that even when considering ostensibly female-authored works that would seem to provide evidence for the existence of proto-feminist ideology, such as *Jane Anger her Protection for Women* (1589), and *Ester hath Hang'd Haman* by Ester Sowenam (1617), critics need to be aware that 'what we recognize in these texts may be the processing of woman as a theatrical role or masquerade which can never be equated with an essential woman or audible

³² "A French Dexterity and an Italian Confidence": New Documents on John Florio, Learned Strangers and Protestant Humanist Study of Modern Languages in Renaissance England from c.1547 to c.1625', *Reformation*, 2 (1997), 39-109 (p. 70).

authorial voice but which, rather, troubles the very existence of such a self-identical figure'.³³ In a more material readjustment of expectations concerning women's authorship in the medieval period, Julia Boffey questions the fundamental problems of identifying female-authored texts that have arisen from 'modern preconceptions' of how texts were composed.³⁴ These ideological and material perspectives both draw on the readjustment modern readers need to make when considering the role of the author in the period, and show how an awareness of the collaborative nature of the process of producing a text is vital. This is particularly important when considering translated texts, as the large number of people involved in such a project, both male and female, indicate that even when a text is ascribed with a female signature, its production is never simply the work of the female translator. But rather than seeing this as limiting the possibilities of investigations into the involvement of women in printed works, the study of translations allow us to see how women interacted with the network of agents behind a publication, and made use of their role as a mediator for religious truth to enable their self-expression.

The critical assumption concerning translation is, as Suzanne Trill argues, 'that translation was a gender-marked activity which reflected contemporary Renaissance conceptions of male and female social value', and that translation is a 'secondary [...] activity, which is correspondingly defined as a "feminine" activity; it is a "defective" re-presentation of an original work, not a creative act in its own right'.³⁵ Rather than providing an area in which educated women could display their learning, Sherry Simon suggests that 'translation offered an opportunity for women to become involved in literary culture in a way that did not openly challenge social or literary power arrangements'.³⁶ Likewise Margaret Hannay describes translation as a 'degraded activity', and sees that female-authored translations were controlled to a large extent by male relatives, as women were used to promote works that could be particularly useful to the

³³ 'Material Girls: The Seventeenth-Century Woman Debate' in *Women, Texts, and Histories*, ed. by Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 69-101 (p. 69).

³⁴ 'Women authors and women's literacy', p. 162.

³⁵ 'Sixteenth-century women's writing: Mary Sidney's *Psalmes* and the 'femininity' of translation', in *Writing and the English Renaissance*, ed. by William Zunder and Suzanne Trill (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 140-158 (p. 141).

³⁶ 'Gender in Translation', in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, ed. by Peter France (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 26-33 (p. 27).

state, or to serve a particular political function.³⁷ However, Micheline White notes that although it is widely thought that 'women published religious translations much more frequently than original religious works', her examination of a bibliography of women writers between 1500 and 1640 shows that 'between 1559 and 1625 there were approximately the *same* number of original religious works by women printed in London as there were translations'.³⁸ Both Trill and White argue that translation was an activity highly respected by both men and women, forming an important part of the humanist curriculum.³⁹ The efficacy of translation for the promotion of religio-political aims was widely recognised in the reformation, and was a vital practice for both sides of the schism, with translators offering their texts as 'weapons in the international struggle between Protestants and Catholics'.⁴⁰ Similarly the domestic struggle over the development of the newly established church also instigated the translation of various theological texts, as different parties attempted to influence popular opinion.⁴¹

Trill and White therefore advocate for a more thorough historical investigation of the translated text in order to establish the purpose the translator envisioned for their new version. In doing so it is possible to recuperate the nature of the translator's agency, and the translation begins to resist being considered a 'passive' replication of another text.⁴² Warren Boutcher notes that while translation into English in the sixteenth century is a 'receptive process', this reception is 'active and explicit':

The translator ostentatiously receives, socializes, and re-employs a highly resourceful but potentially suspect representative of classical or continental culture in new English circumstances. There is a sense

³⁷ Hannay, 'Introduction', in *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. by Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent University Press, 1985), pp. 1-24 (p. 9). Discussed by Trill, p. 145.

³⁸ 'Renaissance Englishwomen and Religious Translations: The Case of Anne Lock's *Of the Markes of Children of God* (1590)', *ELR*, 29 (1999), 375-400 (p. 375 and p. 376).

³⁹ Trill, pp. 144-5; White, 'Renaissance Englishwomen and Religious Translations', p. 377.

⁴⁰ White, 'Renaissance Englishwomen and Religious Translation', pp. 378-9.

⁴¹ Francis M. Higman, 'Ideas for Export: Translations in the Early Reformation,' in *Renaissance Culture in Context: Theory and Practice*, ed. by Jean R. Brink and William F. Gentrup (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1993), pp. 100-113 (p. 109).

⁴² Trill, p. 143.

that special arrangements have to be made at every point to relocate the book in England, and to guarantee that its contents are worthwhile, harmless and, above all, useful and vivid for English readers.⁴³

In some cases the 'special arrangements' made in order to make the publication of a book more effective may also be the choice of a female translator. This chapter will consider why Anne was considered an appropriate figure to facilitate the mediation of foreign language texts into English, and how far she contributed to the production of these books.

The impact of prefatory material

The prefatory apparatus framing a book provides the reader with important clues about its intended purpose. Features such as dedicatory epistles and the address to the reader take on an even more important function in the case of translations of texts by foreign authors, as the interpreter and publisher attempt to carefully introduce their author to an English audience. The space afforded by the preface also allows the translator to comment explicitly on the process of translation and often indicate their rationale behind their decision to convert their text into print. This opportunity proved particularly important for female translators, and Mirella Agorni suggests that it 'offered a space for women to find their public voices and develop new means of self-expression.'⁴⁴

The choice of dedicatee was also highly significant to the potential meaning of the text, and in his theorisation of paratextual material, Gérard Genette suggests that:

The dedication always is a matter a demonstration, ostentation, exhibition: it proclaims the relationship, whether intellectual or personal, actual or symbolic, and this proclamation is always at the

⁴³ Warren Boutcher, 'The Renaissance', in *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, pp. 45-55 (p. 51).

⁴⁴ Mirella Agorni, 'The Voice of the "Translatress": From Aphra Behn to Elizabeth Carter', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 28 (1998), 181-195 (p. 182).

service of the work, as a reason for elevating the work's standing or as a theme of commentary.⁴⁵

Women translators often chose to dedicate their texts to other women, thereby creating a sense of the existence of a female intellectual community. Even if this is an illusory association, or a 'rhetorical strategy in which "woman" became a marketing device', these same-sex dedications serve an important function in the justification of female authorship.⁴⁶ Natalie Zemon Davis suggests that by dedicating their texts to other women, female authors managed to maintain a sense of 'womanly modesty', as just as they were wary of appearing in public without the company of another woman, so to were they conscious of the suspicions that their appearance in print as a lone woman may have aroused.⁴⁷ As well as offering them the protection of female companion, the dynamic that this dedication created is also used more productively as it provides a platform from which to discuss matters concerning female participation in literary culture. Anne Cooke's dedication of her translation of Bernardino Ochino's sermons to 'Lady F.' (discussed in detail below) shows how a woman translator made use of the dedication to promote, as Genette suggests, the standing of their text. One of the most notable features of Anne's dedication is that she makes no direct defence of her position as a female translator, as by dedicating it to another woman she removes the necessity of having to justify her endeavour. The choice of a female dedicatee is then allowed to direct the content of the dedication, which proceeds to discuss female education and spirituality, and serves as a wider legitimisation of the involvement of women in religious and scholarly spheres.

That other female translators also chose to dedicate their texts to women shows that the preface was recognised as a place in which a dialogue between women could be established. Anne Locke, a religious activist who published translations in support of the reformist cause, dedicated her translation of

⁴⁵ *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 135.

⁴⁶ Bell, p. 431.

⁴⁷ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London: Duckworth, 1975), p. 217.

sermons by John Calvin, to Katherine Bertie, dowager duchess of Suffolk.⁴⁸ Locke makes no reference to her gender, preferring instead to discuss salvation. On the standard of her translation she merely writes that 'I have rendered it so nere as I might possibly might, to the very wordes of the text, and that in so plaine Englishe as I could expresse' (sig. A8^r), and omits many of the traditional denigration techniques so often used by translators.

In 1590 Anne Locke, now publishing under the name of Prowse, dedicates her translation of Jean Taffin's *Of the Markes of Children* to Anne Dudley, countess of Warwick, another Protestant patron, yet here she refers specifically to her gender, writing:

Everie one in his calling is bound to doo somewhat to the furtherance of the holie building; but because great things by reason of my sex, I may not doo, and that which I may, I ought to doo, I haue according to my duetie, brought my poore basket of stones to the strengthening of the walles of that Jerusalem, wherof (by grace) we are all both Citizens and members (sigs. A3^v-A4^r).⁴⁹

Here Prowse is establishing that her mode of literary production is in fact directed by her gender, and that this textual edification is seen as a contribution to the establishment of Protestantism in England. Indeed Micheline White convincingly argues that Lock's translation was published in response to the suppression of radical Protestantism by the government, as an attempt to direct and encourage the behaviour of nonconformists.⁵⁰ While Taffin's text was written as a support for persecuted Protestant communities across Europe, White argues that Lock's prefaces shows that she directs the reader's gaze away from European politics and to the domestic power struggle over the

⁴⁸ John Calvin, *Sermons of John Calvin*, trans. by Anne Locke (London: John Day, 1560). References to this text are made to a facsimile of the copy held at the Folger Shakespeare library, printed in *Protestant Translators: Anne Lock Prowse and Elizabeth Russell*, ed. by Elaine V. Beilin, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

⁴⁹ John Taffin, *Of The markes of the children of God and their comforts in afflictions*, trans by Anne Prowse (London: Thomas Orwin for Thomas Man, 1590).

⁵⁰ 'Renaissance Englishwomen and Religious Translations', p. 382.

Protestant church.⁵¹ She appropriates the text and uses it as an intervention into religious affairs, something that her choice of dedicatee supports as well.

Anne's sister, Elizabeth, also dedicated a translation of a Latin work of bishop John Ponet to her daughter, Anne Herbert.⁵² In this instance, although Elizabeth can be seen to be engaging in religious politics through her promotion of a text by a renowned evangelical author, her aims are perhaps of a more earthly intention than she leads her readers to believe. After the death of her husband, Lord John Russell, she had brought a lawsuit against Anne Dudley, the sister of her late husband and the same patron to whom Locke had dedicated her work to, accusing her of disinheriting Elizabeth's daughters.⁵³ Despite the fact that the lawsuit was settled in favour of Dudley, Russell uses the space of the title page to continue to argue her point. Elizabeth's work indicates how a religious translation can serve more political means, as by presenting the book as a legacy to her daughter she highlights her excision from her rightful inheritance. The prefatory space preceding a religious translation is therefore perceived as a permissible location for female self-expression.

PART TWO: ANNE'S TRANSLATIONS

The Italian connection: Bernardino Ochino in London

The publication of Anne's translations of Bernardino Ochino's sermons in 1548 were an endeavour symbolic of the youthful enthusiasm for the reformation cause that, as Susan Brigden has noted, was so prevalent in this period.⁵⁴ Under the protectorate of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, the court of Edward VI had become a vibrant locus for evangelism, as the boy king and his courtiers sought to complete the partial reformation that his father had imposed on England. From the age of six Edward had been educated by a group of

⁵¹ 'Renaissance Englishwomen and Religious Translations', p. 384.

⁵² John Ponet, *A way of reconciliation of a good and learned man*, trans. by Elizabeth Russell (London: R. B[arker], 1605). Beilin claims the original text is John Ponet, *Diallacticon viri boni et literati, de veritate, natura, atque substantia corporis et sanguinis Christi in eucharistia* (Strasbourg: [J. and T. Rihel], 1557), and asserts that Anthony Cooke was associated with this publication (p. xi).

⁵³ Simon Adams, 'Anne Dudley, née Russell' (1548/9-1604), *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/69744>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁵⁴ 'Youth and the English Reformation', *Past and Present*, 95 (1982), 37-67. Also A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 2nd edn (London: B.T. Batsford, 1989), p. 334.

humanist scholars, including Anne's father Anthony Cooke, who proceeded to lay 'the foundations of the sort of humanist education that Vives and Erasmus had prescribed for the ideally trained Christian prince'.⁵⁵ The scholarly activities undertaken by Edward as part of his humanist education, and the strong affinity that he displayed for Protestant doctrine, were activities and interests that, naturally enough, courtiers attempted to imitate. The practice of translation proved an ideal way to combine the two, as it displayed the linguistic skills of the translator, and through a considered choice of text it also attested to their reformed sensibilities. However, translation functioned as more than merely a fashionable occupation for idle noble hands, and Anne Overell suggests that the practice 'helped to turn attention outwards, to make this perhaps the most European of all Tudor Courts'.⁵⁶ In training their gaze upon the experiences of other countries in this tumultuous period, the early English reformers were particularly interested in the fortunes of reform in Italy, the rumblings of which added much fuel to their arguments for the moral bankruptcy of the established church. Despite the suppression of the movement in Italy, the experiences of a small band of men who had rejected the tenets of Catholicism despite residing in its 'epicentre' proved powerful examples of the need for reform.⁵⁷

Two of these men, Bernardino Ochino and his compatriot Pietro Martire Vermigli (also known as Peter Martyr) attracted the attention of archbishop Thomas Cranmer, who was actively seeking ways to cultivate the energy emanating from the Italian reform movement.⁵⁸ In his drive to secure the establishment of Protestantism, and in an attempt to enthuse the movement, Cranmer had begun to invite various foreign divines to come to England, and Ochino and Vermigli were the first theologians to accept his offer.

Bernardino Ochino had begun his life of varied religious associations by joining the Franciscan Observant order in about 1503, where he became an influential member, before defecting to the Capuchin order in 1534, and then

⁵⁵ Dale Hoak, 'Edward VI (1537-1553)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.oxfordjournals.org/view/article/8522>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁵⁶ *Italian Reform and English Reformations, c. 1535-c.1585* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 83.

⁵⁷ Overell, p. 15.

⁵⁸ Overell notes that Giannetti da Fano, 'reformer, book merchant and agent for the English government' was visiting England for the second time in 1546, and Pietro Vanni was serving as Edward VI's Latin secretary, p. 44.

renouncing Catholicism in 1542.⁵⁹ Widely known for his talents as a 'powerful and persuasive preacher', his conversion sent shockwaves through the Italian Catholic community.⁶⁰ Fleeing Italy he sought refuge in Geneva, where he married and obtained a licence to preach to the city's Italian residents.⁶¹ His success as a preacher and his popularity with audiences led to the publication of seven volumes of his sermons, known collectively as the *Geneva Prediche*, in which he vindicated his conversion and discussed theological issues.⁶² By 1549 many of the sermons were collated in a two-volume work published in Basel, and a third volume was published by 1551.⁶³ After spending time in Basel and Strasbourg, Ochino accepted a preaching post in Augsburg, and evidence of the payments received indicate that he was residing there by December 1545. But by January 1547 the city was under siege and in the hands of the army of Charles V, and the inflammatory nature of Ochino's sermons placed him at risk of arrest.⁶⁴ Escaping back to Basel, Cranmer's invitation came at an opportune moment, and provided an escape route for both Ochino and Vermigli, whose post-conversion experiences had resembled Ochino's.

Both men were warmly received and after only one month Ochino was commissioned to set up an independent congregation in London for Italians and other 'strangers'.⁶⁵ Ochino was also awarded a non-residentary prebend at Canterbury and a royal pension of one hundred marks, indicating his full acceptance into both royal and ecclesiastical circles, and the financial outlay incurred by their presence was indicative of the respect and admiration accorded to both men.⁶⁶ Ochino's appearance was 'the perfect exemplification of the medieval saint – austere, emaciated, frail, venerable, with the rapt and ethereal look of a Moses descending from the Mount', and his winning

⁵⁹ Taplin, 'Bernardino Ochino (c.1487-1564/5)', *ODNB*, (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/20489>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁶⁰ Michael Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 90.

⁶¹ Taplin, 'Ochino', *ODNB*; Overell, p. 43.

⁶² The publication details of these works are listed in the Appendix in Carl Benrath, *Bernardino Ochino of Siena: A contribution to towards the History of the Reformation* trans. by Helen Zimmern (London: James Nisbet, 1876), p. 301-302.

⁶³ These volumes are undated, and the suggested dates are Benrath's. Appendix nos 27, 28 and 31, pp. 302-303.

⁶⁴ Taplin, 'Ochino', *ODNB*.

⁶⁵ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Allen Lane, 1999), p. 79.

⁶⁶ Overell, p. 45.

demeanour combined with his impassioned preaching made him hugely popular with audiences.⁶⁷

To signal their appreciation for their newly arrived Italian preacher, scholarly courtiers embarked on a series of translations of his works, which were produced so rapidly that Overell suggests they may have been set into train before he reached England.⁶⁸ Princess Elizabeth's translation of one of his sermons from Italian to Latin, presented to her brother as a New Year's gift, was dated 30 December 1547, only two weeks after Ochino's arrival in London.⁶⁹ Although this work was not published, and therefore cannot be proved to have directly influenced Anne's decision to translate his sermons, the existence of this manuscript proves that Ochino's sermons were considered an expedient choice of text for translation in evangelical circles.

Ochino's reputation at this point has often been unduly overshadowed by his later disgrace, and as a consequence the wide acceptance of his writings in this period has been underestimated.⁷⁰ While Diarmaid MacCulloch describes Ochino as a 'maverick', and although his future support for unorthodox views such as polygamy and anti-trinitarianism meant that Ochino was firmly excised from the early Protestant history of England (the one that was so carefully described by John Foxe in *Actes and monuments*) his presence had a significant impact on the English reformation.⁷¹ During the brief reign of Edward VI, Ochino was a celebrated and exotic figure; a man whose life history and popularity was being put to the use of the furthering of the reformation, and the flurry of translations that appeared during and after his visit testifies to his value to the reformist cause. Anne Cooke's translations do not reveal whether or not she ever saw him preach, but her decision to interpret his work for a wider audience indicates that she was aware of the popularity of his sermons. Her

⁶⁷ Roland H. Bainton, 'Feminine Piety in Tudor England', in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in honour of Gordon Rupp*, ed. by Peter Brooks (London: SCM Press, 1975), pp. 183-201 (p. 195); Overell, p. 42.

⁶⁸ Overell, p. 47.

⁶⁹ F. Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*, 7 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), V, no. 27877, pp. 378-379.

⁷⁰ After Mary's accession Ochino left England for Zurich to take up a position as a minister. But he began to express increasingly idiosyncratic opinions on the doctrinal interpretations of the reformed churches, including (notoriously) his support for polygamy, and was expelled from Switzerland. He died in Moravia in late 1564 or early 1565. Taplin, 'Ochino', *ODNB*.

⁷¹ MacCulloch, p. 27; Overell, p. 183.

translation therefore responds not only to the circulation of a continental text, but also to the circumstances of Ochino's sojourn in London. She was also responding to a genuine literary need, as Ochino delivered his sermons in Italian, a language that only a limited number of people in the congregation would have understood. The syllabus of Anne's humanist education had been tailored to her gender, and so had included instruction in modern languages, a skill that her male contemporaries, schooled at universities, often lacked.⁷² Anne's dedicatory epistle to the sermons explicitly refers to contemporary anxieties surrounding Italian, and she deflects the accusations of the dedicatee that it is an unprofitable language to learn. The justification she makes suggests a different attitude between generations towards the language, and one that was altering under the pressures of religious change. While Elizabeth's translation (which of course was not meant for publication) chose to render the text in Latin, Anne's English translation allowed her to offer his work to a wider audience, and suggested an awareness of the market for such works. The close proximity of the production of both Anne and Elizabeth's translations to the date of Ochino's visit to London indicates that their interpretations were deliberately intended to function as a tribute to the foreign preacher.

The defence of Ochino's language contained in Anne's dedication reflects an awareness of his insecure status as a 'stranger' in London. As we have seen from Ochino's time in Augsburg, he was considered a sworn enemy of the Holy Roman Empire, and his residence in London had the potential to worsen relations between the powers. The English were conscious of the possibility that allowing Ochino sanctuary could be perceived as a provocative gesture, and in their most paranoid fantasies feared his presence may have even led to a declaration of war.⁷³ The slightest change in the balance of power between the Emperor and the Queen therefore had the potential to affect the security of his position as a privileged foreigner. Ochino was also susceptible to the vagaries of court politics, as his authorship of a play published in 1549 illustrates. The

⁷² Modern languages were not part of the official curriculum at schools and universities until the sixteenth-century, to rectify this omission students often employed language tutors who answered 'the need for [a] personally directed course of cultural education broader than that expected in the university statutes', Warren Boutcher, 'Florio's Montaigne: Translation and Pragmatic Humanism in the Sixteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 1991) p. 99; Wyatt, p. 163.

⁷³ Overell, pp. 56-7.

only printed version known is John Ponet's translation from Latin to English, *A tragoedie or dialoge of the unjuste usurped primacie of the bishop of Rome*.⁷⁴ In this work Ochino dramatised the pope's corrupt control of the church, and England's success at re-establishing Christ's true church through the efforts of the Edward, the 'young Josiah'. Originally published before the fall of Protector Somerset, the text contained positive allusions to Somerset's role in the establishment of the new church, which had to be swiftly edited away in the second edition printed after his downfall. However, Overell's analysis of the text reveals that pro-Somerset sentiments were discernable in the main body of the text, and she suggests that this is evidence that Ochino 'backed the wrong horse'.⁷⁵ The consequences of his affiliation with the losing side were not as severe as they could have been, in part because the leader of the coup against Somerset, the earl of Warwick 'favoured exiles and presented himself as a friend to reform'.⁷⁶ But this incident demonstrated how perilous Ochino's involvement in the publication of religious texts could be, as he was enmeshed in a patron-client relationship that obliged him to produce works that promoted the agendas of his hosts, while lacking the requisite knowledge of English court politics needed to negotiate such a dangerous terrain.⁷⁷ As the act of translation signified the translator's implicit support for the author, Anne Cooke's literary response to Ochino's visit indicated her political support for him. His association with her also connected him to her wider kinship network, and the powerful connections forged by the marriages of her sisters served as a 'capacious umbrella of patronage and protection'.⁷⁸ Ochino's potentially controversial position is therefore somewhat defused by Anne's status as a well-connected, learned gentlewoman. The traits associated with such a figure aided the effective mediation of the text to an English audience, as her family lineage and education infused the expression of evangelical beliefs with social respectability and intellectual authority.

⁷⁴ *A tragoedie or dialoge of the unjuste usurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome, and of all the iust abolishyng of the same* (London: [N. Hill] for Gwalter Lynne, 1509).

⁷⁵ Overell, p. 52.

⁷⁶ Overell, p. 52.

⁷⁷ Overell, p. 50.

⁷⁸ Overell, p. 91.

The complicated publication history of Ochino's sermons

Attempts to promote reformed religion through the presence of continental theologians formed part of the wider evangelical objectives of Somerset's Protectorate. In order to disseminate these new ideas to a wider audience, the regime mobilized the developing print industry for their cause, by lifting restrictions concerning the printing of religious works.⁷⁹ Those in power also actively supported printing projects of a reformist nature, and Andrew Pettegree suggests that 'printers, authors and members of the Privy Council operated within a tightly knit circle of friendship, patronage and personal connection', that enabled the publication of a coherent selection of texts promoting evangelism.⁸⁰ This led to a huge increase in the number of religious works printed in the early years of Edward's reign, and within this body of literature the translations of continental reformers proved to be a popular choice for publication.⁸¹ The favourable publishing conditions for writers such as Ochino, compounded with his reputation as an exotic 'stranger' and his popularity with linguists, resulted in the publication of six editions of his sermons between 1548 and 1580, all except one published in the octavo format.

Three different interpreters turned their hand to translating Ochino's sermons: Anne Cooke, Richard Argentine and William Phiston. This resulted in several editions that contained various combinations of the sermons, all of which were translated from the Geneva *Prediche*.⁸² The texts cannot be seen as the work of lone translators, however, as the production and reception of the text was heavily shaped by the network of printers, compositors, publishers and booksellers, all of whom contributed to its creation. These roles were by no means strictly delineated in this period, and individual interest guided the measure of involvement each figure played in the production of a text. W.W. Greg outlines the contribution of each of these roles, and their interconnectedness to each other:

⁷⁹ Andrew Pettegree, *The French Book and the European Book World* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), p. 315.

⁸⁰ Pettegree, p. 316.

⁸¹ Pettegree, p. 315.

⁸² Overell, p. 46 note 31.

Thus three agents are involved: the capitalist, who finances the operation, and whom we call the publisher, the craftsman, who produces the article, namely the printer; and the tradesman, who undertakes the distribution, in other words the bookseller. But these several functions might be, and often were, combined in a variety of ways.⁸³

Just as the name of the translator changed, so did those involved with the physical production of the text, generating an even higher opportunity for textual and material variation. While the changing shape of the book makes for a highly complex publication history, the alterations that occur between editions allows for a more productive assessment of the different agendas of the figures involved. It also suggests how those involved with the printing responded to the reception of earlier editions, in order to increase the success of future versions.

The first English translation of Ochino's sermons appeared in February 1548, a few months after his arrival in England. Printed in Ipswich by Anthony Scoloker, the book contained six sermons translated by the school-master and clergyman, Richard Argentine.⁸⁴ These sermons all focus on knotty theological matters, such as 'What thing God is'; 'How we ought to use the holye Scriptures, in attayning the knowledge of God'; 'If to be good devines it behove us to have the human science or not'. The sermons are preceded by a substantial amount of prefatory material, all of which provide much evidence for the intended audience of the book. Argentine dedicates the text to Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, and describes how Somerset has been appointed 'for the comfort of the faithful as the necessary hande of a Kinge gyven unto us by God. And to that purpose these syx Sermons of the famous Clerke Barnardinus Ochinus are translated out of the Italyan tongue' (sig. A4^r) Argentine's choice of text and dedication is therefore intended to ingratiate himself with the protectorate, and he aligns Somerset's guardianship of Edward

⁸³ *Some Aspects and Problems of London Publishing Between 1550 and 1650* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 84.

⁸⁴ *Sermons of the ryght famous a[n]d excellente clerke Master Bernadine Ochine*, trans. by Richard Argentine (Ipswich: Anthony Scoloker, 1548), STC 18765. To avoid confusion I will cite the STC numbers of the translations of Ochino and John Jewel discussed in this chapter, as well as for texts that have been dedicated to Anne.

with his own custodial role in guiding the words of Ochino to a wider audience. Argentine adds a preface addressed to the Christian reader, indicating the identity of his ideal readership. The printer, Anthony Scoloker, also weighed in with his own dedication to the reader, in which he describes how God has sent 'unto us hys Prophetes oute of straunge countries that the congregation therby may be edifyed' (A4^v). This suggests that he had a strong interest in the intellectual content of the text as well as its physical reproduction, and points to particularly collaborative partnership between printer and translator. In the same year in Ipswich they also published translations of the work of two other reformist writers, Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli, dedicated to Sir Thomas Wentworth and Edward Grimston respectively.⁸⁵ Both dedicatees were known for their patronage of evangelical causes, and the consistency of Scoloker and Argentine's printing projects in this period suggests that they were attempting to build themselves a reputation as specialist team dedicated to the translation and publication of reformist works.

In July of the same year five sermons translated by Anne Cooke were published anonymously in London.⁸⁶ Cooke seems to have taken non-consecutive sermons from Ochino's volumes that are concerned with practical and spiritual issues arising at the time of death, including such topics as 'How a Christian oughte to make hys laste wyll and testament'; 'How he shuld answere the devell, when he tempteth us and namely in the ende of our life'. The didactic purpose of these sermons suggests that the text is intended for a readership unsure of the implications of the new belief system on their everyday lives. Anne Overell also notes that whereas Richard Argentine chose to interpret sermons covering 'hard-core theology', in contrast Anne Cooke selected 'more dramatic topics' to translate.⁸⁷ Anne's distinct choice of sermons points to her agency in the process of publication, and she elaborates on the rationale for her creation of a little handbook of death in the preface that is addressed to the 'gentle reader' from 'interpretour' (sig. A3^v). Anne writes that she thinks 'nothyng

⁸⁵ The joint efforts of Argentine and Scoloker are noted in J.M. Blatchly, 'Richard Argentine (1548/9-1604)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/643>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁸⁶ *Sermons of Barnardine Ochine of Sena godlye, frutefull, and uery necessarye for all true Christians*, [trans. by Anne Cooke], (London: R.C[arr]. for W[illiam] Redell, [1548]). *STC* 18764.

⁸⁷ Overell, pp. 48-49.

can be a greater staye to the concience of man then to know how he ought to go out of thys present lyfe' (sig. A3^r), and that as a consequence she has chosen to translate these five sermons for their benefit. The book was 'Imprinted at London by me R.C. for Wyllyam Reddell dwellyng at the signe of the George in Pauls chyrch yarde' (sig. E8^r), and the printed *Short Title Catalogue* identifies R.C. as Roger Carr, a printer who had also been involved with the publication of the works of another reformer, Wolfgang Musculus.

The publication of Ochino's sermons now entered its second phase, which coincided with the ascendancy of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, Duke of Northumberland from October 1551. Fourteen new sermons, all translated by Anne, were published by John Day and William Seres, in either 1550 or 1551.⁸⁸ The identity of the translator was confirmed by the appending of her initials to the title page and the dedicatory epistle, a common attribution practice of the period. In her discussion of the 'Paradox of Initials', Marcy L. North suggests that in the early stages of the publishing industry, initials were 'exceedingly useful, fairly reliable, and modest markers of identity', but the rapid rise in publications made them more problematic.⁸⁹ The combination of Anne's initials and the information provided in the dedicatory epistle may well have provided a knowledgeable reader with enough clues as to her identity, and the use of initials may have only have been a superficial attempt to conceal her name. However, North also suggests that 'in many publications where both the author's name and discretion could prove attractive to readers, initials could serve both functions simultaneously and work as a subtle sign of a book's status and ambition'.⁹⁰ Placing Anne's name in initials thus worked to hint at her identity, itself a marketable feature of the text, yet its semi-concealment also titillated the reader by alluding to the prohibitions that her status and gender placed on her explicit claim of authorship.

These sermons focused on the subject of predestination, with headings such as 'If we maye knowe in thys presente lyfe whether we be of the electe and in the grace and favour of God or not'; 'Wherefore God hath elected us'; 'If man

⁸⁸ *Fourtene Sermons of Barnardine Ochyne, concernyng the predestinacion and elleccion of god*, trans. by A[nne] C[ooke]. (London: J.Day and W.Seres, [1551?]). STC 18767.

⁸⁹ *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 70.

⁹⁰ North, p. 70.

have liberty or not, and in what manner'. Anne Overell suggests that by 1550 the doctrine of predestination had become a 'marker of godliness', and Anne's decision to translate sermons on this topic and have them published under her name indicates that she was 'allying herself, her famous family and Ochino to those who were prepared for complete reformation'.⁹¹ This edition also contains Anne Cooke's dedication to 'Lady F.' and the 'address to the Christian reader' by 'G.B.', initials which Overell argues stands for Gulielmus Baldwinus, or William Baldwin, a writer and printer with strong Protestant leanings.⁹²

Shortly after the publication of these fourteen sermons, in either 1550 or 1551, John Day collated all of the previously published sermons in one book, starting with Argentine's on the knowledge of God, then Anne's on dying, and finally Anne's on predestination.⁹³ This was, however, published anonymously, although prefaced with Argentine's address to the Christian reader that had originally appeared in the 1548 edition printed in Ipswich. John Day's association with the Duke of Northumberland, and the nature of the subject matter, suggests to Overell that this edition was devised to promote the 'brave, new, radical world of Northumberland's regime'.⁹⁴ Indeed Anne's participation in the production of the text can be seen to have evolved from her engagement with the learned humanist activities of the court, however there are further connections which may have aided Day's publication of her translation.

John Day's some-time printing partner, William Seres, was a member of William Cecil's household.⁹⁵ The marriage of Cecil to Mildred Cooke in 1545, and the subsequent kinship ties this created, meant that Cecil may well have played some part in suggesting that Seres publish Anne's translations. Andrew Pettegree argues that following the demise of the Duke of Somerset, Cecil's influence over the publication of Protestant works became increasingly significant.⁹⁶ It is therefore likely that Cecil would have gained some experience in such a process in the years preceding Somerset's fall, and may have been

⁹¹ Overell, p. 54.

⁹² Overell, p. 55.

⁹³ *Certayne sermons of the ryghte famous and excellent clerk master Bernardine Ochine*, [trans. by Richard Argentine and Anne Cooke], (London: Jhon Day: [1551]. STC 18766.

⁹⁴ Overell, p. 54.

⁹⁵ Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 66.

⁹⁶ Pettegree, p. 316.

receptive to the publication potential for Anne Cooke's private studies. The first printer of Ochino's translations, Anthony Scoloker, also had connections with William Seres, and they had collaborated on the printing of two books in June 1548.⁹⁷ As Scoloker tells us from his preface to his 1548 edition, he intended to 'set forth the rest very shortlye (yf these shalbe thankfully receaved)' (sig. A4^v), and perhaps these intentions were fulfilled by the receipt of Anne's translations.⁹⁸

The printing of further editions of Ochino's sermons in the reign of Elizabeth I suggests that interest in the texts of early reformists continued throughout this period, and in 1570 Day re-published the sermons he had originally printed in his composite edition of 1550/1551.⁹⁹ In this edition he reordered the sermons (predestination, knowledge, dying), named Anne as the translator, and prefaced the text with Anne's dedication to 'Lady F.'. In his unravelling of the complicated publication history of the sermons, Alan Stewart convincingly argues that by identifying Anne as the sole translator, Day was deliberately obscuring Argentine's contribution, and emphasising the collection's association with a specifically female translator.¹⁰⁰ Day may also have intended to utilize her elite status to differentiate this translation of continental theology from others in circulation.

It is impossible to say exactly what Anne's involvement in the publication of her sermons could have been. The popularity of Ochino with the circle of court humanists within which Anne moved suggests that her interpretations may have been the result of her personal interest in the preacher, and this coincided with the a boom in printing stimulated by the Protectorate. The connection of William Seres to William Cecil may indicate that the printers had a channel through which to approach her at the outset; whether she was involved in the process

⁹⁷ Janet Ing Freeman, 'Anthony Scoloker (d. 1593)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/24850>, accessed 12 Sept 2009)

⁹⁸ *Sermons of the ryght famous a[n]d excellente clerke Master Bernadine Ochine*, STC 18765.

⁹⁹ *Sermons of Barnardine Ochyne (to the number of .25.)*, [trans. by Anne Cooke], (London: J. Day, [1570?]) STC 18768. Another version of the sermons was published in 1580 by Thomas East, and these were attributed to a completely different translator, *Certaine godly and very profitable sermons, of faith, hope and charitie*, trans. by William Phiston (London: Thomas East 1580). STC 18769.

¹⁰⁰ Alan Stewart, 'The Voices of Anne Cooke, Lady Anne and Lady Bacon', in *This Double Voice: Gendered Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. by Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 88-102 (pp. 89-90).

beyond providing the translations seems unlikely. However, her dedicatory epistle clearly frames the sermons for publication, and her translations of coherent groups of sermons indicates a careful consideration of what she wished to achieve through their publication.

The construction of 'A.C.'

From the evolution of this text it would seem that the printer-publishers' decision to use a translation by a gentlewoman was a significant factor in the attempt to disseminate effectively Ochino's sermons. Yet through her editorial decisions concerning the translation of the sermons Anne Cooke also took an active role in determining how they would be received. Anne's notion of her role is therefore somewhat different from that of her editors, and this tussle over the function of the female translator is expressed most pertinently in the prefatory material to the two editions of the sermons printed by John Day in 1550/1551 and 1570.

Anne Overell persuasively identifies G.B., the author of the address 'to the Cristen Reader', as William Baldwin, reasoning that his professional ties with John Day and Edward Whitchurch (an evangelical publisher), and his past involvement in the translation of Italian reformists texts, made him an ideal candidate to provide the introduction to the sermons.¹⁰¹ Overell also argues that this knowledge and experience in reformist doctrine enables G.B. to 'utter the only whisper of criticism of Ochino in the whole of Edward's reign'.¹⁰² In his marginal notes to the third sermon, in which Ochino discusses the doctrine of assurance and implies that 'the elect' will be saved even if they sin, G.B. writes that 'this must be warily read', and attempts to caution the reader against Ochino's extreme beliefs.¹⁰³ Patrick Collinson sees Ochino's sermons as signalling the point at which 'he began to wander far from protestant orthodoxy', and Overell points out several other 'eccentricities' that G.B. did not gloss,

¹⁰¹ Overell, p. 55. Critics such as Alexandra Barratt and Micheline White misread these initials as 'B.B.', which is perhaps one of the reasons why he the writer of this preface has remained unidentified for such a time. Barratt, p. 293; White, 'Renaissance Women and Religious Translations', p. 380.

¹⁰² Overell, p. 55.

¹⁰³ Overell, p. 55.

allowing his doctrinal inconsistencies to pass into the public realm.¹⁰⁴ Overell suggests that the English reading public was only just grasping the nuances of some of the more controversial reformist doctrines, and that Ochino's 'theological swerves and emergency stops' would most likely have gone unnoticed.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps Anne was unaware of the implications of the sermons, or perhaps her translation signalled her alignment with the extreme reformist position that Ochino was espousing at this point in his career. Either way the power G.B. claims over her interpretation is significant, as in his critique of the text he implies a superiority of knowledge to the translator. This dynamic alerts us to the potential dangers faced by writers who decide to publish their work, as once it reaches the printed form it is adapted and reshaped by other agents. G.B. appears to be at liberty to gloss her translation as he pleases, and Anne has no recourse to respond.

G.B.'s desire for overall control of Anne's translation is also evident in the manner in which he frames her role in the preface, as by drawing on stock stereotypes concerning female authors he attempts to reduce her agency as a translator. Serving as the self-styled intermediary figure between the translator and the printers, G.B. narrates the journey of the text from manuscript to print in a familiar manner. He describes how the text has 'come to myne hand' as if by chance, and that the translator's 'shamfastnes would rather have supprest theym, had not I to whose handes they were comytted halfe agaynst hyr wyll put them fourth' (sig. A2^r), thereby removing Anne's agency from the publication process. This device defends her from accusations of any unfeminine ambition to see her work put into print.¹⁰⁶ G.B. declines to pass judgement on the quality of Anne's version in the preface, entreating the reader to excuse any errors by reason of her gender. He also does not need to 'defend' Ochino's sermons, as 'the authour lyvinge and here amongst us', is able to do so himself (sig. A2^{r-v}).

While Anne's reputation is carefully safeguarded by these manoeuvres, this protection is reciprocated as her status as a gentlewoman helps to cushion the reception of the sermons. They are inflected with her attributes, with G.B.

¹⁰⁴ Patrick Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism*, Patrick Collinson (London: Hambledon, 1983), pp. 135-153 (p. 150); Overell, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ Overell, p. 56.

¹⁰⁶ Agorni notes how 'publication was equated with sexual licentiousness', p. 181.

describing them as the work of a 'wel occupied Gentelwoman, and verteouse meyden' (sig. A2^r). Her social status and chastity is of paramount importance, and invests the sermons with respectability. The uniqueness of Anne's scholarly endeavours is emphasised by contrasting her with the majority of gentlewomen, who 'comenly are wonted to lyve Idelly' (sig. A2^v). The preface also deliberately opposes Anne's 'godly labor' (sig. A2^r) to the self-serving and hermetic scholarship of 'Docters of divinitye' (sig. A2^r), who waste their time 'speakyng in pryvt lyke parates wyth solemne countenances, debate matters of importaunce, and grave weight, as though the ordre of realms appartained to them' (sig. A2^v). This recalls Jennifer Summit's theory that the authorial status of female translators and writers is useful exactly because of their difference from learned clerics, as this moved the text away from associations with the corrupt clerical and academic orders. It also positions Anne as a mediating figure; her words will bring knowledge to the unlearned, as the 'Godly Apostolyke doctrine should not be private to those onely whych understande the Italian tounge' (sig. A2^r). Readers will then be able to 'use hyr labor to the amendement of thy life' (sig. A2^v), indicating that her scholarly efforts have a specific evangelical purpose. G.B. is very careful to make sure her education is seen as a respectable pursuit, and in a direct reflection of beliefs that associated 'gadding' with harlotry, he assures the readers that she 'never gaddid farder then hir fathers house to learne the language' (sig. A2^v).¹⁰⁷ The potential dangers of female education in general, and the Italian language specifically, are therefore neutralised by her containment within the domestic sphere.

G.B.'s preface encapsulates contemporary objections to the appearance of women in print, but it also provides us with an example of how the specific resonances attached to female translators could aid the dissemination of foreign texts into English, particularly texts that could be considered 'potentially suspect'.¹⁰⁸ The biblical quotations on the title page also indicate that the book was being marketed specifically as a work by a female-author, as the verse from Isaiah emphasises the equality of belief for both men and women: 'I wyl saye to the north, let go and to the southe, kepe not backe: but brynge my

¹⁰⁷ Wendy Wall discusses this association, p. 221.

¹⁰⁸ Boucher, 'The Renaissance', p. 51.

Sonnes and Daughters from the endes of the world, namely all those that be called after my name'.¹⁰⁹ Likewise the inclusion of a verse from the Book of Tobit ('It is good to hyde the kinges secretes, but to deccleare and prayse the workes of god, it is an honorable thing') can be read as a defence of the need for female-authored texts in times of ideological conflict.¹¹⁰

However, whilst G.B.'s preface frames the reception of the text, Anne's dedication to Lady F. presents a different portrait of a female translator. This dedicatory epistle makes use of what Wendy Wall has called a "literary pseudomorph", a term which she uses to describe the elements of printed books that are constructed to resemble their manuscript counterparts.¹¹¹ Through this visual echo to manuscript culture the stigma of print is reduced, creating a 'rhetoric of familiarity' that aids the patron's reception of the text.¹¹² Cathy Shrank applies this concept specifically to dedicatory epistles, suggesting that:

It is in the prefatory matter, as a significant site for authorial self-fashioning, that the greatest onus is put on a device such as the literary pseudomorph, be it through the recurrent practice of recording and retaining the time, place, and mode of composition, or through the evocation of the origin of the work¹¹³

Shrank notes that the 'mid-sixteenth century also saw a burgeoning endeavor to mimic in the dedicatory epistles of printed works the material form of manuscript letters', and Anne's dedication is printed in a form that reflects several of these features, such as the manner of address to her dedicatee and her the subscription of her initials at the end of her dedication.¹¹⁴ The encasing of her preface in a letter is of particular importance for Anne as a female-author, as it

¹⁰⁹ Isaiah 43. 6-7.

¹¹⁰ Tobit 12.7.

¹¹¹ Wall, pp. 231-234.

¹¹² Cathy Shrank, "These few scribbled rules": Representing Scribal Intimacy in Early Modern Print', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67 (2004), 295-314 (p. 302).

¹¹³ Shrank, p. 302.

¹¹⁴ Shrank, p. 306.

utilizes the inflections of (relative) privacy associated with letters in order to further protect her foray into print.

There is some debate over whether 'the right worshypfull and worthily beloved Mother, the Lady. F.' refers to Anne Cooke's mother, or to the third wife of her maternal grandfather, Sir William Fitzwilliam. Anne's mother was born Anne Fitzwilliam, and it is conceivable that Anne Cooke would be using her mother's maiden name for the dedication. Roland H. Bainton, however, argues that it refers to Lady Fitzwilliam, born Jane Ormond, an opinion with which I concur.¹¹⁵ To whichever woman it is dedicated, it allows Anne to draw on the conceit of the parent-child dynamic throughout, and she creates an implicit analogy between her role as a mediator of knowledge from writer to reader, and her mother's role as disseminator of spiritual knowledge to her daughter:

Since the orygynal of what so ever is, or may be converted to ani good use in me, hath frelye proceded (thoughe as the minister of God) of youre Ladyshypes mere carefull, and motherly goodness. (Sig. A3^r).

In the same way that the translation of Ochino's text serves a tribute to his assistance in the development of the reformed church in England, so Anne's dedication shows an appreciation for the spiritual guidance of Lady F. Rather than defending her decision to translate and publish the text, Anne uses the dedication to provide a rationale for her study of Italian, to which the dedicatee objected, reproving her 'vaine studye in the Italyan tongue, accompting the sede thereof, to have bene sowen in barayne, unfruitful grounde' (sig. A3^v). Anne alludes to the concern that all learning needs to have a godly objective, and that Italian was not considered a worthwhile language for study. She links the content of the text specifically to Lady F.'s teachings on predestination, suggesting that her translation will show 'that your so many worthy sentences touching the same, have not utterly ben without some note in my weake

¹¹⁵ Franklin B. Williams in suggests that it might be her mother in *Index of dedications and commendatory verses in English books before 1641* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1962), p.64. Alan Stewart plumps for Lady Fitzwilliam, Jane Ormond, though adds that 'the precise identification is beside the point in considering the impact of the dedication', p. 92.

memory' (sig. A4'), thereby converting the oral transmission of religion into a written form. The spiritual influence of older generations, that in earlier periods would have remained unrecorded, is commuted into print as a result of the development of the publishing industry and the reformist desire to forge a new and respectable spiritual heritage.¹¹⁶

Unlike many other translators, Anne does not heavily denigrate her interpretations, owning that while the sermons 'be not done in such perfection as the dignities of the matter doth requyre', she hopes that:

Ye wil accept the humble wil of the presenter, not weghing so much the excelnecy of the translacion, althoughe of ryghte it oughte to be such as should not by the grosnes thereof deprive the author of his worthynes. (Sig. A4^r).

She is claiming a certain competency for her translations here, which is then tempered by her modesty regarding her imitation of Ochino's style:

But not meanyng to take upon me the reache, to his hygh style of thealogie, and fearyng also, least in enterprisyng to sette forth the bryghtnes of hys eloquence, I shuld manyfest myself unapte, to attaine unto the lowest degre therof. I descend therefore, to the understanding of myne owne debilitye. (Sigs. A4^{r-v}).

While echoing the contemporary custom of deprecating the quality of the translator's work in comparison with the author's, the manner in which she does this explicitly disassociates her work from that of learned male scholars. Anne Cooke maintains the persona of a modest young gentlewoman, yet it is important for the proficiency of her translation to be emphasised if the text wishes to have any clout in the promotion of reformist ideology. The accuracy and authenticity of the evangelical position had to be assured if readers were to

¹¹⁶ Michael Clanchy's seminal work of the transition from oral to written culture outlines many earlier models for this idea. *From Memory to Written Text* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979).

be persuaded to this new way of believing. Cathy Shrank notes that 'the prefatory matter of early modern books was a site of negotiation: often a dialogue between humility and subservience on the one hand and authorial autonomy on the other.'¹¹⁷ Not only is this tension expressed between the two different prefaces, but also within Anne's dedication.

Anne Cooke ends the dedication by emphasising her productive function as a translator, asking Lady F. that:

thys my smal labor may be alowed at your handes under whose proteccion only it is committed wyth humble reverence, as yeldyng some parte of the fruite of your motherly admonicions, in this my wyllinge servyce. (Sig. A4').

By combining the two familiar tropes of translation as labour and of creativity as reproduction, Anne skilfully links cultural modes of understanding concerning the process of translation to the more personal relationship between dedicator and dedicatee, making the dedication more pertinent. It manages to highlight the benefits of female education for the transmission of religion, and adds weight to the importance of the female (and maternal) influence in this process. Cooke's respect for the 'motherly admonitions' is particularly interesting in relation to her later admonitions to her sons, and demonstrates an alternative, more productive manner by which maternal advice can be received.¹¹⁸

Defending the Church of England

Anne Cooke's translation of Ochino's sermons illustrates one method by which a learned woman could respond publicly to contemporary religious debates, and how her linguistic skills could be put to use for evangelical purposes. Her translation also demonstrated the opportunity the preface offered for an exploration of the issues surrounding female authorship and learning, an arena

¹¹⁷ Shrank, p. 302.

¹¹⁸ Lynne Magnusson, 'Widowhood and Linguistic Capital: The Rhetoric and Reception of Anne Bacon's Epistolary Advice', *ELR*, 31 (2001), 3-33 (p. 9).

that was much used of by other female translators. However, the space offered by the preface for self-expression is also highly dependent on the type of the text it precedes. While the developmental characteristics of Ochino's work seems to have allowed Anne to take full advantage of the preface for the espousal of her own opinions, the official nature of her next published translation greatly limited the type of contribution that she could make to its dissemination. Her role as translator may have embedded her in a political discourse, but the officially sanctioned nature of the organisation and publication of her translation of John Jewel's *Apologia ecclesiae anglicanae* (1562) removed any such opportunity for personal commentary on the text or the process of translation. The book instead provides an example of an instance where the iconography of the female translator is harnessed explicitly for political purposes, at the expense of her individual and personal contribution to the text.

Just as Anne's first translation had been heavily informed by the religious ideology of the Edwardian court, her second translation was also a reflection of the religious outlook of the Elizabethan court. In the decade and a half that had intervened between Anne's two translations, the official religion of England shuttled back and forth, turning from the evangelical reformism of Edward VI to the restored Catholicism of Mary I, before settling once again upon Protestantism after the accession of Elizabeth I. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 cut England's ties once again with Rome, and established a new system of church government. It was imperative for the stability of the realm that this latest incarnation of the Church of England be securely established, and Conyers Read notes that while 'in the ecclesiastical controversies of the reign, government propaganda was usually handled by the churchmen [...] there are plain indications of secular prodding, particularly by Cecil in the first decade of the reign'.¹¹⁹ Jewel's book was one such example of this 'prodding', pushed through by Cecil as a retort to those who accused England of promoting unnecessary schism.

¹¹⁹ 'William Cecil and Elizabethan Public Relations', in *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale*, ed. by S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, C.H. Williams (London: Athlone Press, 1961), pp. 21- 55 (p. 25).

The text was ostensibly produced as a response to the Papal bull issued by Pius IV in November 1560 summoning a third meeting of the Council of Trent, and limiting participants to those who submitted to papal authority.¹²⁰ The Queen's refusal to acknowledge the Council, and the subsequent accusations of immorality and heresy directed at the English Church and its clergy, motivated William Cecil to commission a defence of England's position. The task fell to the suitably qualified John Jewel, bishop of Salisbury, to produce such a work. Jewel had spent the first part of his career as a successful scholar at Oxford University, where he was strongly influenced by Pietro Vermigli (Ochino's fellow exile), who had been awarded the post of regius professor of divinity by Thomas Cranmer.¹²¹ Upon Mary's accession Jewel initially attempted to make concessions to the new ruling party that would allow him to retain his position as a scholar, but his previous alliance with the reformist movement made his position untenable, and he was forced to flee to Strasbourg. Here he was welcomed by a large group of Marian exiles (including Anthony Cooke, Anne's father) before moving to Zurich where Vermigli had settled. After the death of Mary he returned to England, and despite the fact that his only previous clerical experience had been as a vicar of a small parish church in Oxfordshire, he was quickly promoted to the position of bishop.¹²² His scholarly and personal experiences, and his commitment to the Elizabethan settlement, enabled him to become an effective spokesman for the government. Although Jewel privately expressed concerns that the church had not undergone satisfactory reformation, in his public capacity as a bishop he fully supported the official line.¹²³ Jewel had defended the settlement from the pulpit through the repeated delivery of his 'Challenge sermon' between 1559 and 1560, and in print through the *Epistola* published anonymously in 1561, which made little impact in the field of ecclesiastical debate.¹²⁴ However, his experience in espousing the cause of the Church of England made him the ideal candidate to

¹²⁰ John Craig, 'John Jewel (1522-1571)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.oxfordjournals.org/view/article/14810>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹²¹ The following account of Jewel's life is based on John Craig's outline in the *ODNB*, unless otherwise stated.

¹²² Gary W. Jenkins, *John Jewel and the English National Church: The dilemmas of an Erastian reformer* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p. 61.

¹²³ Jenkins, p. 56.

¹²⁴ Jenkins, p. 57 and p. 86.

front the text that Cecil had in mind. Drawing on his earlier sermons, the *Apologia* refuted the accusations of heresy directed at Protestants, made significant counter-accusations about the immorality of the papists, and clarified the theological position and hierarchical structure of the Church of England.

Gary W. Jenkins suggests that the work may have been conceived as early as May 1560, linking its inception to an evening when Jewel had dined with William Cecil and Nicholas Bacon, and believes that a section specifically concerned with the Council of Trent was added after the original text had already been composed.¹²⁵ The archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, is also highly likely to have had some part in the organisation of the book, as his preface to Anne's translation suggests. It is therefore apparent that a high-powered network of men lay behind this project, connected by similar ideals and bonds of friendship. Apart from the kinship ties that linked Nicholas Bacon and Cecil, the men had been close allies for their entire political careers, and shared similar professional outlooks. Bacon's friendship with Parker had developed from their time at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and continued throughout both their lifetimes.¹²⁶ Cecil and Parker's friendship towards Bacon also extended to his wife, and the degree to which Anne was involved in the affairs of this group can be seen from the way she acted as a mediatory figure in resolving a later disagreement between her husband and Parker.¹²⁷ It is therefore entirely possible that Anne's role in translating the text arose from her close association with the instigators of the project.

The *Apologia* was published anonymously in 1562, printed by Reyner Wolfe, a London printer specialising in Latin, Greek and Hebrew texts.¹²⁸ As befitted its status as a serious contribution to European theological debates, the work was written in Latin. But Wolfe's publication that very same year of an anonymous English translation entitled *An apologie, or aunswere in defence of the Church of England* indicates that an English version had been imagined from the

¹²⁵ Jenkins, p. 88.

¹²⁶ Alan Simpson. *The Wealth of the Gentry 1540-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 32.

¹²⁷ Matthew Parker to ACB, 6 Feb 1567/8, printed in *The Correspondence of Matthew Parker, DD., Archbishop of Canterbury: comprising letters written by and to him, from A.D. 1538, to his death, A.D. 1575*, ed. by John Brice and Thomas Thomason Perowne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1823), pp. 309-316.

¹²⁸ *Apologia ecclesiae anglicanae* (London: Reginald.Wolfe, 1562), STC 14581.

outset.¹²⁹ This was superseded by Anne's translation of 1564, and it was her interpretation that became the authoritative version of this widely read book.¹³⁰ The reason for this speedy production of a second version was, according to Matthew Parker in his preface, because of the need to correct the mistakes made in the first translation. However, Alan Stewart has argued convincingly that this seems an unlikely reason, as the 'first translation bears traces of revisions and corrections that must have been officially authorized (i.e. by Parker) and which, in any case, remain in Bacon's rendering'.¹³¹ This exercise in repackaging leads Stewart to believe that Anne Bacon's role as translator was specifically emphasised in order to invest the translation with a less official quality, to imply that the text was a 'spontaneous englishing by a pious and leisured lady', rather than 'politically motivated intervention in church affairs'.¹³² The attributes associated with the figure of the female translator, those that had been developed in Anne's previous translation, prove exceptionally useful for such a purpose.

Matthew Parker's dedicatory epistle is pivotal in shaping the reception of the book, and performs an inversion of the traditional dedication dynamic in order to underscore Anne's role.¹³³ Instead of allowing Anne to formulate a dedication for her own translation, which as we have seen was the contemporary practice, Parker assumes the voice of an editor and pens an epistle in which he dedicates Anne's translation back to her, addressing her as 'the right honorable learned and veretuous Ladie A.B.' (sig. π2^r).¹³⁴ Not only does this prioritise her role in the production of the book, but her status as a learned woman also provides a 'theme of commentary' for his preface.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ *An Apologie, or aunswer in defence of the Church of England*, [Anon. trans], (London: Reginald Wolfe, 1562), STC 14590.

¹³⁰ *An apologie or answere in defence of the Churche of Englande*, trans. by Anne Bacon (London: Reginalde.Wolfe, 1564) STC 14591.

¹³¹ Stewart, p. 93.

¹³² Stewart, p. 94.

¹³³ Stewart, p. 93.

¹³⁴ Stewart, p. 93. The first gathering of Jewel's text containing the preliminaries is unsigned, and will therefore be assigned the *pi* symbol (π), according to the practice recommended by D.C. Greetham in *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (London: Garland Publishing, 1992), p. 165.

¹³⁵ Genette, p. 135.

Parker neatly structures his dedication around a traditional conceit of removing the impetus for the publication of the text from the translator. In the opening sentence of the preface he claims that Anne sent the translation to him 'for that it liked you to make me a Judge' (sig. $\pi 2^r$), and in the closing paragraph he explains his role in the transmission of the text from manuscript to print, 'where your Ladishippe hath sent me your booke writen, I have with most hearty thanks returned it to you (as you see) printed' (sig. $\pi 3^v$). This narrative of how her interpretation came to be printed is used to infer the private and personal nature of the original translation. Parker wishes to stress that, as with other female translations, this text began as a domestic activity, as the learned woman deemed the original text of such importance that it warranted its conversion from Latin into English. Her education is put to the use of a religious cause, and he describes how her 'studious labour of translation' has been 'profitably imploied in a right commendable work' (sig. $\pi 2^r$).

By using a female translator Parker is forced to justify the appearance of her text in the public sphere, and this allows him to reiterate the qualities of the work, as through her translation she has:

expressed an acceptable dutye to the glorye of GOD, deserved well of this Church of Christe, honorablie defended the good fame and estimation of your owne native tongue, shewing it so able to contend with a worke originally written in the most praised speache (sig. $\pi 2^v-3^r$).

The implicit doubts concerning the abilities of women to undertake such intellectual work allows Parker to emphasise another aspect of the text important for its effective dissemination – its accuracy. The putative manuscript sent to Parker has been checked by 'bothe the chiefe author of the Latine worke and I', who after careful checking have 'without alteration allowed of it' (sig. $\pi 2^v$). Parker further conveys the author's approval, notifying Anne that she has:

done pleasure to the Author of the Latine booke, in deliveringe him by your cleare translation from the perrils of ambiguous and doubtful constructions: and in making his good woorke more publikely beneficiall (sig. π3^r)

This praise of her translation serves as an indirect endorsement of the original, thereby helping Parker to shape the public reception of the text.

The female identity of the translator also had a wider significance in relation to contemporary politics. John N. King suggests that in the *Apologia* 'Jewel places Elizabeth's settlement of religion in the tradition of iconoclastic and reforming kings and prophets of the Old Testament', and thus the innovations and freshness of a female figure of authority are reflected in Anne's role as translator.¹³⁶ Anne's intellectual achievements are also equated with Elizabeth's, and Parker sees her translation activities as serving as an example for other young women, and because of her worthwhile activities:

youre and ours moste vertuous and learned soveraigne Ladie and Mastres shal see good cause to commende: and all noble gentlewomen shall (I trust) hereby be alured from vain delights to doinges of more perfect glory. (sigs. π3^r-4^v)

As Stewart notes, the connection between the legitimacy of Anne's role as translator and Elizabeth's as Queen is clearly forged by Parker's preface, and illustrates how the decision to have Anne's name on the translations serves multiple purposes.¹³⁷ The comparison drawn between Elizabeth and Anne perhaps explains the lack of reference made to Anne's marital status beyond the opening address (quoted above). The virtue of chastity is the one trait associated with female translators that is not applicable to Parker's dedication, but whereas one may expect to find a reference to her role as a faithful wife of a highly esteemed senior figure in the Elizabethan court, none is made. Parker

¹³⁶ John N. King, p. 43 note 4.

¹³⁷ Stewart, p. 94.

therefore glosses over her status as wife, seeking to place her at a distance from the official bodies in order to elide her collusion with such a piece of state propaganda.

A familial intervention

Roland H. Bainton has described Jewel's text as a 'vindication of Canterbury *versus* Rome with no reference to the internal divisions of the Anglican Church', and by translating this work Anne actively supported of the Church of England as it stood in the 1560s.¹³⁸ However, as the decade progressed, differences of opinion regarding the structure and practice of the church became more extreme. Those Protestants who believed that the church needed to undergo further change were vocal about their dissatisfaction, drawing attention to the inadequacies of the English church in the pulpit and in print, and lobbying parliament to instigate modification. Other Protestants were horrified at the display of opinion so contrary to the wishes of the Queen, and potentially detrimental to the unity and order of the country. So dismayed was Elizabeth at the increasing evidence of nonconformity amongst the clergy that she ordered archbishop Parker to enforce discipline, and his attempts to do so over the wearing of clerical vestments gave rise to the Vestiarian controversy (outlined in the next chapter). This clash crystallised the differences within the Church of England, and demonstrated to nonconformists that their wishes for change were not going to be easily granted. Supporting the puritan movement (as the nonconformists now began to be described) became a fraught task, and Anne's next literary endeavour illustrates on several levels how the evolving religious climate altered the manner in which she could express her support. While Anne's close association with influential figures had previously enabled her participation in religious debate, as her beliefs began to deviate from the mainstream those familial bonds started to restrict the scope of her activism.

In 1572 the puritan preacher, Edward Dering, delivered an inflammatory sermon to an audience (including the Queen) in which he blamed the sovereign for the failings of the church. As a result of his impetuosity, Dering lost his

¹³⁸ Bainton, p. 196.

licence to preach and fell out of favour, but his popularity with puritan courtiers, including the Cooke sisters, led to a campaign to rehabilitate his reputation.¹³⁹ Their efforts to reinstate him included the production of a manuscript version of a scientific treatise *Il giardino cosmografico* by Bartholo Sylva, an Italian doctor who had recently arrived in England.¹⁴⁰ The work was dedicated to the Earl of Leicester, and prefaced by dedicatory verses by Dering, the four Cooke sisters (Anne, Mildred, Elizabeth and Katherine), and Anne Locke, as well as others, and was lavishly illustrated. The collective nature of this project shows how literary projects in the Renaissance 'were produced as part of the self-fashioning and dynastic establishment of families rather than individuals', and how literature and identity were understood as 'collaborative familial and social projects' rather than individual ones.¹⁴¹

Louise Schleiner suggests that the 'whole production was to stress without explicit statement that Dering and the reformist party supporting him are learned, cultivated, internationally respected, and loyal to the queen', and it deliberately drew on the linguistic skills shared by all involved.¹⁴² Anne's Latin hexameters, translated here by Connie McQuillen, play on the name of the treatise:

By the title this book declares itself, its wealth of aids
 Stored up it shows, on its own name relying.
 It offers the world, offers the stars, but what man
 Will not such names themselves enrapture?
 Heaven does not shudder at darkness, nor earth at thorns.
 For each perceives the crafting hand.
 What first was a SYLVAN wood is a more amenable garden, so

¹³⁹ Dering was particularly close to Anne's younger sister, Katherine Killigrew, His letters to Katherine, dated 1575, were printed in his *Godly Letters* (1614). Caroline M.K. Bowden, 'Katherine Killigrew, née Cooke (c.1542-1583)', *ODNB*. <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/15531>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁴⁰ Held at Cambridge University Library, MS li. v. 37.

¹⁴¹ *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, ed. by Diane Purkiss (Penguin: London, 1998), p.

xv.

¹⁴² Louise Schleiner, *Tudor and Stuart Women Writers* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 41.

Whoever you are, you may stroll off your path into roses.¹⁴³

While the dedicatory verses written by Anne's sisters are clearly identified as their own work, the name ascribed to this verse has been partially erased, leaving only the initials 'A.B.'. Schleiner suggests that the spacing of these letters indicates that her full name, rendered as 'Anne Baconia', would have originally fitted these gaps.¹⁴⁴ She goes on to argue that Nicholas Bacon's involvement in the persecution of Dering the year after the manuscript's completion made Anne's association with such a protest inappropriate, and as a result her contribution was concealed.¹⁴⁵ In this instance Anne's political associations worked against her religious interests, and her domestic responsibilities severely limited the extent of her public activism. Her marital ties and the polarized religious climate limited the way in which she could offer support to her chosen religious causes, and her commitments to her husband made it inappropriate for her to identify wholly with the Cooke clan in this instance. The curtailing of her name to only her initials signalled a change in the nature of her support for reformists, and it was not until she became a widow that her name became once more publicly associated with proponents of puritanism, albeit in a distinctly moderated fashion.

PART THREE: PROTECTIVE PREFACES

Making use of dedications

By re-positioning Anne as the dedicatee rather than just the translator of Jewel's text, Parker had effectively elevated her role, and enabled her reputation as a learned woman to influence the reception of the work. That the status of a text could be enhanced by its association with Anne was a method quickly seized upon by other writers and publishers, and resulted in the production of a handful of texts dedicated to her. The different nature of these texts reflects her different roles, and while Anne's transition from a maiden to a

¹⁴³ McQuillen's translation is printed in Schleiner, p. 42.

¹⁴⁴ Schleiner, p. 42.

¹⁴⁵ Schleiner, p. 42.

wife was barely noted in Parker's dedication, other writers capitalised on the different traits associated with her status as wife, mother and widow in order to promote their works. But these representations also served a useful purpose for Anne, as her association with alternative roles distracted from her connections with religious radicalism. She was still framed as a committed Protestant, but this element of her personality was tempered by emphasising her other qualities.

As the majority of dedicatees show evidence of having had a personal relationship with Anne, and it is known that some were reliant on her for financial support, we can assume that their dedications were put into print only with her permission. The way in which she allows the authors of works of a moderate Protestant nature to print her full name, while her association with radical works was limited to a vaguer appellation, perhaps indicates that she was careful to ensure that these associations shaped a conformist Protestant persona, one that is distinctly at odds with the more radical character of her religious belief as presented in her letters. The dedications therefore perform a protective function for their patron, as they deliberately distance her from accusations of involvement with nonconformist activities.

Anne's domestic talents

The texts dedicated to Anne consist of translations, sermons and devotional works, genres that have a clear connection to her personal interests and publishing history. Whilst most focus entirely on her role in the dissemination and upholding of religious virtues, in certain cases it seems that it is her association with humanist learning which makes her a suitable subject for the dedication.

Thomas Drant, a poet and clergyman, dedicated his translation of Horace's Satires, *A Medicinable Morall* (1566) to Anne and her sister Mildred: 'To the right honourable my Lady Bacon, and my lady Cicell, sisters, favourers of learning and vertue' (sig. A1^v).¹⁴⁶ However, he does not elaborate on this and makes no reference to them in his preface. This suggests that Drant is using the general

¹⁴⁶ *A medicinable morall* (Thomas Marshe: London, 1566).

reputation of the sisters as able translators of classical languages to bolster the authority of his work, rather than to reflect a deeper patronage relationship. Drant's translation of the satires was included in a larger edition of Horace's works a year later, but here the dedication was reassigned to Thomas Butler, tenth earl of Ormond and third earl of Ossory, demonstrating the tenuous nature of the link between Drant and the sisters.¹⁴⁷

Anne's prominence as a translator and her religious connections meant that she was an appropriate choice of dedicatee for one of the many verses of Andrew Willet's emblem book, *Sacrorum emblematum centuria una* (1592).¹⁴⁸ A clergyman and widely published author who had links with the nonconformist community, Willet's book contained emblems dedicated to various prominent puritans, and the entire work was dedicated to Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex.¹⁴⁹ Using classical and biblical sources, emblems communicated a moral story through a 'hybrid' form that contained both image and text.¹⁵⁰ They usually consisted of three parts – a short motto, an image, then an explanation.¹⁵¹ However, the lack of experienced engravers and designers working in the English book trade meant that Willet was forced to publish what he described as "naked emblems", or verses without pictures.¹⁵²

Under the heading 'Materfamilias' ('The Mistress of the Household', sig. F1'), Willet adapts Proverbs 31.10-31 to create a verse that demonstrates the virtues of a godly housewife. His verse is dedicated to '*Doctissimae foeminae and prudentissimae Matronae Domines Baconae*' ('To the most learned woman and most wise matron, Lady Bacon', sig. F1'). The domestic imagery creates a version of Anne that seems less familiar than the ones propounded in other texts, and it is worth quoting in full:

¹⁴⁷ Horace his arte of poetrie, pistles and satyrs (London: T. Marshe, 1567).

¹⁴⁸ *Sacrorum emblematum centuria una* (Cambridge: T. Legate, 1592), STC 25695.

¹⁴⁹ Anthony Milton, 'Andrew Willet (1561/2-1621)', ODNB (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/29445>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁵⁰ *The English Emblem Tradition*, ed. by Peter M. Daly with Leslie T. Duer and Mary V. Silcox; co-editor for classics Beert Verstraete assisted by Rudiger Meyer, 4 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), II, p. xi.

¹⁵¹ Peter M Daly, *Emblem Theory: Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre* (Nendein/ Liechtenstein: KTO Press, 1979), p. 21.

¹⁵² Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), p. 55.

That house is blest where a woman wise
 Doeth rule, as figure here doeth deuse,
 She turneth the wherne [wharve], her handes doe spin,
 She giueth the taskes ere the day begin.
 She buyeth a feld and there plants doeth set,
 She as by shipping her food doeth get,
 She sel'eth to marchants, to poore doeth lend,
 Her happie broode doeth her commend,
 Your praise exceedes, to studie bent
 As time in huswifery there is spent
 The poore she, you the learned feede,
 The house doeth hers, your fame they spread
 If Gods worde all did delight
 They would not then godly spight. (sig. F2^y)

Willet's dedication of this particular emblem to Anne suggests that her commitment to religion manifested itself in the fulfilment of the traditional female domestic role. It draws on her duties as a manager of a large estate in order to separate her religious activism from the more controversial literary and political spheres. The image of the wholesome and innocent homestead that Willet creates jars sharply with what was actually taking place at Gorhambury, as Anne's home provided sanctuary for clerics who had been disciplined for their nonconformist beliefs. The author's decision to emphasise these particular traits may have been because he was familiar with her in a local context. His father, Thomas Willett, was rector of Barley in Hertfordshire, where Anthony Bacon owned several estates, and upon his father's death in 1598 he assumed the living there himself, indicating a personal connection between the patron and dedicatee. His familiarity with Anne may suggest that he was aware of the support she offered clerics, and therefore his representation of her innocent home life can be seen to deliberately conceal the extent to which she assisted puritan preachers.

As we have seen in Chapter Two, John Walsall's dedication to Anne of his work *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse* (1578) also draws heavily on her

domestic role, particularly her position as a mother.¹⁵³ In the same manner as Willet, Walsall emphasises her fulfilment of a stereotypical feminine role, perhaps in an attempt to draw attention away from the more controversial manifestations of her religious belief. Addressing her as ‘the Right worshipfull, vertuous, and his verie good Ladie, the Ladie Anne Bacon’, he describes his choice of dedicatee as a ‘cause of admiration’ (sig. A2^r) for the reader, and proceeds to position her as a devout exemplar for a less enlightened audience. Ian Green suggests that while dedications can provide a useful insight into the author’s intentions, they cannot be taken at face value, particularly when they concern religion, as ‘where the praise lavished on the piety and virtue of the dedicatee or dedicatees was as fulsome as it often was - in works by ‘godly’ and dissenting as well as conformist authors - it is hard to decide where the author’s own priorities lay’.¹⁵⁴ Walsall makes grand claims for her reputation, stating that ‘this your care of God his glory is so universally knowne to the whole realme, and so joyfully acknowledge of the godly therein, that I neede not produce my self for an experienced witness of the same’ (sig. A5^v). However, he cannot resist referring to his experience of living within the Bacon household, and this also enables him to offer a more authentic version of this appreciation of his patron’s piety. By choosing not to fashion a joint dedication to Anne and her husband, despite referring to Nicholas within the main body of the dedication as a ‘wise and loving housbande’ (sig. A5^v), Walsall emphasises Anne’s individual standing as a senior figure within the Protestant community, and hints at a relationship particular to patron and protégé.

There are further suggestions in the text that Walsall’s tribute has its roots in a genuine association. He describes how he seeks to communicate God’s glory ‘by exhorting privately, by preaching publikely’ (sig. A2^v), and in his subscription he identifies himself as ‘your Ladieships heartie orator’ (sig. A7^v), suggesting that he preached in a private capacity to Anne. The support for his preaching that these encounters imply is fundamental to his decision to dedicate his text to her, as his verbose preface is centred around his defence of his decision to

¹⁵³ *A Sermon preached at Pauls Crosse* (London: Henrie Middleton for George Byshop, 1578). STC 24995.

¹⁵⁴ Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 10.

commute his sermons into print. Anne's social stature and pious reputation therefore lends more support to his justification for the publication of his sermons. In turn, the dedication directly associates Anne with this respected divine, and although his sermon emphasises the importance of an erudite clergy, it is not overly critical of the Church of England. However far they may have agreed in private as to the need for further reform, in public such sentiments were alluded to in a more delicate fashion. Walsall's name does not crop up amongst those clergy disciplined for nonconformist activities during Elizabeth's reign, and the stability of his appointment records indicate that he was managed to exist peacefully within the English church.¹⁵⁵

Celebrating personal piety

Thomas Wilcox's dedication to Anne of *A Short, yet sound commentarie; written on that woorthie worke called; The Proverbes of Saloman* (1589) similarly posits a textual relationship that is a reflection of actual, rather than desired, patronage.¹⁵⁶ Wilcox was a notorious advocator of further reform, who had been imprisoned for his involvement (with fellow religious controversialist John Field) in the publication of *An Admonition to the Parliament* (1572), a text Patrick Collinson describes as 'the first popular manifesto of English Presbyterianism'.¹⁵⁷ After his release he continued to agitate for reform, though he was careful to promote his aims in a less inflammatory manner than those he had used previously. Collinson suggests that 'most of his published works were concerned with the cultivation of individual piety and show him to have been one of the first of the puritan pastoral casuists', and as a result Wilcox developed close relationships with many of the leading lay puritans, including

¹⁵⁵ Walsall was rector of Eastling in Kent from 1577 to 1618, and vicar of Appledore with Ebony, also in Kent, from 1590 to 1607. John Walsall (CCEd Person Record ID 46258), CCEd accessed 27 July 2009.

¹⁵⁶ *A short, yet sound commentarie; written on that woorthie worke called; the Prouerbes of Salomon* (London: Thomas Orwin for Thomas Man, 1589), STC 25627.

¹⁵⁷ Patrick Collinson, 'John Field and Elizabethan Puritanism', in *Elizabethan Government and Society*, ed. by Bindoff, Hurstfield, Williams, pp. 127-162, p. 133.

Anne.¹⁵⁸ By focusing on an individual's spiritual experiences rather than debating the organisation of the church, he positioned himself on less contentious ground, and this allowed him to reconfigure his public reputation as a milder, less disruptive, puritan.

Wilcox's dedication is a direct reflection of the patronage relationship between him and Anne, as he appears to be one of the clerics to whom she offered hospitality at Gorhambury during her widowhood.¹⁵⁹ His dedication seeks to offer her assurance of her elect status, and encouragement as she comes to the end of her life. This may perhaps seem presumptive of him, but as we have seen in Chapter Two, Anne perpetually believed her demise was imminent throughout the 1590s, and Wilcox may have been responding to anxieties she had expressed to him in person. He asserts that 'the lengthning of your life', has been done for God's glory to for the 'good of his church' (sig. A4^r), giving Anne's life a clear purpose. The dedication also functions as a thanksgiving to Anne for her support of the godly 'for kindness towards whom, and particularie towards my selfe, I doo humblie here in all our names thanke GOD, and you as his gracious instrument' (sig. A3^v), and he connects her 'sundrie favours' (sig. A4^r) to the publication of the text, as her help has enabled him to publish a work that will assist the spread of true religion. Wilcox's spiritual succour is therefore reciprocated by her material support for him and other likeminded clergymen.

Wilcox's dedication seems to be an embryonic form of the 'Godly Lives' genre that was popular in the early modern period, where clergymen outlined the lives of their patrons in order to provide an example to others.¹⁶⁰ To emphasise her piety, Wilcox traces how she has conducted herself as an exemplary Christian through the different stages of womanhood:

¹⁵⁸ Collinson, 'John Field and Elizabethan Puritanism'. Collinson notes that the list of Wilcox's correspondents noted in 'Letters of eminent persons', Dr William's Library, Morrice MSS, 2.617(2) reads like 'an Elizabethan *Who's Who*'. Unfortunately these letters are no longer extant. Collinson, 'Thomas Wilcox (c.1549-1608)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/29390>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁵⁹ See reference to her giving him gold in the next chapter.

¹⁶⁰ See Collinson, "A Magazine of Religious Patterns": An Erasmian Topic Transposed in English Protestantism', in *Godly People*, pp. 499-525. On examples of female subjects of this genre see Peter Lake 'Feminine Piety and Personal Potency: The "Emancipation" of Mrs Jane Radcliffe', *Seventeenth Century*, 2 (1987), 143-165.

For though to be borne not onlie of worshipful parents, but of a sanctified stock, be some thing both before God and man: and though learned and holie education bee a good healpe towards the reformation of our corruption [...] and though to be richlie joyned in holy matrimonie be a token doubtless of Gods great favor and love: and though to have in the undefiled mariage bed, a blessed seed and lawfull issue, be a special blessing and mercie from God [yet] many bee degenerate and start aside from their ancestors godliness. (Sig. A3^r).

Unlike many others who have received the same manner of blessings as Anne, she has maintained an unblemished record of virtue. Anne's Protestant lineage is heavily stressed in this passage, and this hints at the contribution the Cooke and Bacon families made towards the establishment of reformed religion in England. Turning from her domestic piety, Wilcox then refers to her public role as a figurehead for reformed religion, both 'at home in the midst of Gods saints and faithfull servants here, and these not onlie common professors, but many worthie ministers' and 'abroad in forraine Churches and countries, and highly revered of many worthy men there' (sig. A3^v). This would seem to imply that Anne's influence extended into the European arena, and is probably a reference to Theodore Beza's dedication of a book to her (explored in detail below).

Wilcox's dedication positions Anne as one of the leading puritan lay figures with whom he was closely associated, and it clearly aligns her with the movement for further reform of the Church of England. Although his dedication implies a dissatisfaction with the state of religion ('yet the strength of sinne hath so not onely obscured, but as it were defaced, though not the fight, yet the power and efficacie of Gods favor, with the frutes and effects which should followe thereupon' (A2^r)), he makes no overt criticism of the ecclesiastical system or the Elizabethan government. His emphatic rehearsal of Anne's 'godly' feminine traits, particularly her chastity and purity, helps to promote an image of her as a woman who is unlikely to disobey the laws of the realm by supporting those who have displeased the government.

However, a further dedication from Thomas Wilcox and John Field intimates the true extent of Anne's collusion with the movement. Although her identity is camouflaged, the internal and external evidence pertaining to the text make it possible to identify her as the dedicatee. The context of the publication of this text, and the manner in which she is positioned as a dedicatee, reveal the restrictions placed on printed support for the puritan cause.

The energetic publication of puritan literature between 1583 and 1586 had resulted in a stiffening of press censorship of nonconformist works.¹⁶¹ In an attempt to record and publicise their position, the nonconformists gathered various documents that explained their cause and detailed their experiences and collated these for surreptitious publication. In 1593 some of these documents were printed overseas as *A parte of a register*, but it proved such a dangerous enterprise that the rest of the documents they had collected for publication remained in manuscript form, a collection known as 'The Seconde parte of a register'.¹⁶² Of the clerics that appear in *A parte of a register*, either as authors of sections defending their beliefs, or as subjects of interrogations by the ecclesiastical authorities, several were known associates of Anne. This has led William Urwick to argue that it was 'probably issued with the sanction, and at the expense of Lady Bacon', and Collinson to assert that after the material for the register had been collected under the direction of John Field (who died in 1588) it was prepared for publication by Wilcox at Gorhambury.¹⁶³ Anne's letters unsurprisingly make no reference to any such undertaking, however in one tantalising exchange she tells Anthony that she 'wolde have the two kallenders very saffly returned ^hether^', a reference which can be only very speculatively linked to the registers.¹⁶⁴

Anne's support for this collection is also implied by the dedication printed in *A parte of a register* by John Field and Thomas Wilcox, which Urwick believes

¹⁶¹ C.H. Frith 'Introduction' to *The seconde parte of a register*, ed. by Albert Peel, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), I, p.10.

¹⁶² *EPM*, p. 440.

¹⁶³ William Urwick, *Nonconformity in Herts* (London: Hazel, Watson and Viney, 1884), p. 86; *EPM*, 440.

¹⁶⁴ ACB to AB, 9 July, LPL MS 653 fol. 317^r-317^v (art. 174).

refers to Anne.¹⁶⁵ There are numerous signs within the text that suggest the 'Honorable, and vertuous Ladie' (sig. Vvv4^r) is indeed Anne Bacon. Field and Wilcox (their names partially disguised by the use of their initials) thank 'your good Ladieship, to whom in many respects we acknowledge our selves very much bounde', a reference that hints at the provision of practical support that their dedicatee has supplied them with, which Anne had. The authors offer their dedicatee the following 'Confession of faith' so that she might have 'at all times in a readinesse by you, some short writing of ours, by which you might stop the mouthes of such persons' who condemn them as 'wicked men and heretikes' sig. Vvv4^r). However, they are careful to emphasise that they have not written it 'to minister matter of instruction to your Honor because we are perswaded that your Ladiship is alreadie fully instructed in the points and principles of Christian religion' (sig. Vvv4^r), a sentiment that intimates they are writing to a learned woman such as Anne. They are reluctant that 'your Honour should, for defending of us, either run into discredite, or loose any part of your honorable estimation' (sig. Vvv4^r) hinting once more at the support the subject had offered them, and referring perhaps to her elevated social status and reputation within the puritan community. The final part of the dedication prays that God 'will blesse [your honor] with increase of true godliness and honor in this life, and (when the dayes of this wearisome pilgrimage are ended) with life everlasting in the world to come' (sigs. Xxx1^v-Xxx2^r), which implies that the dedicatee was old. Wilcox and Field's references to the attributes of their dedicatee therefore allow us to positively identify Anne as the subject, as the characteristics they outline match those referred to in other dedications in which she is named.

In the letter they define their nonconformist position, and explicitly disassociate themselves from separatists, claiming that 'we are not (as they say) Puritanes, Anabaptists, Donatists, Libertines, of the Family of Love, or anie such like', and 'daily pray for, and duetifully reverence Magistrates' (sig. Xxx1^v). By affirming the longevity of their acquaintance with their dedicatee ('your Honor [...] haue always had this good opinion of vs, that wee have been of sounde and sincere judgement in matters of Religion', (sig. Vvv4^r) they illustrate

¹⁶⁵ *A parte of a register* (Edinburgh or Middleburg [?]: 1593). Quotations from facsimile copy printed in *The English Experience, its record in early printed books published in facsimile*, 509 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York: Da Capo Press, 1973).

her sympathy with their aims, and indicate how extensively she was involved with the active defence of their ideology. This is why, despite their claim that 'wee make no separation from the Church of England', they still need to protect her from explicit association with their movement, as they are claiming a long association with her. The dedicatory epistle is also described as a 'copie of a letter', therefore indicating the existence of a personal correspondence between patron and authors, which again links the dedicatee and authors. The personal connections suggest that Anne may have had some influence over the decision to include the letter in *A parte of a register*, and if so she clearly desired that they draw some semblance of anonymity over her involvement with the puritan movement.

European reputation

While the dedications of Thomas Wilcox and John Field authenticated Anne's reputation as an influential elder of the English nonconformist community, Theodore Beza's dedication of his work *Chrestiennes meditations sur huict pseumes du prophete David*, first published in 1581, secured her pan-European Protestant credentials.¹⁶⁶ Of all the authors who chose to dedicate a work to Anne, Beza is by far the most distinguished figure. However, because of his seniority within the Protestant community and his personal agenda, it is perhaps one that is the least reflective of a genuine personal relationship.

Upon the death of John Calvin in 1564, Beza had succeeded him as the spiritual leader of the Protestant community in Geneva, and was a widely respected scholar and preacher. Continuing the work begun by Clément Marot, Beza translated the Psalms into French, a task that was finally completed in 1562.¹⁶⁷ Beza also wrote and published his reflections on the penitential psalms as *Chrestiennes méditations*, which he dedicated to Anne Bacon.¹⁶⁸ The dedication of this work was, however, of a slightly second-hand nature, as it had

¹⁶⁶ *Chrestiennes meditations sur huict Pseumes Du prophete* (Geneva: Jacques Berion, 1581).

¹⁶⁷ Scott M. Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the Quest for Peace in France, 1572-1598* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 15.

¹⁶⁸ There are seven penitential psalms traditionally, numbers 6, 32, 51, 102, 130 and 143, however Beza chooses to include his meditations on psalm 1 as well, which explains the reference to eight psalms in the title.

originally been undertaken (as he recalls in the dedicatory epistle) at the behest of a 'grande et vertueuse Princesse'. This 'princesse' has been identified by Eugénie Droz as Marguerite de France, sister of Henri II and wife of Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, who was renowned for her support for Protestantism.¹⁶⁹ After her sudden death in 1574, Beza claimed to have left his meditations unpublished, until Anthony Bacon's visit to Geneva in spring of 1580 impelled him to dust them off and fashion a new dedication as a tribute to the mother of his visitor. The fact that Beza so readily assigns a different virtuous woman as dedicatee, signals the inherent feminine qualities of the Psalms, rather than any personal association with Anne.¹⁷⁰

This text appears to have been popular, as four different editions are listed in an index of early modern French vernacular books.¹⁷¹ A dedication from such an eminent theologian to an English gentlewoman undoubtedly made the book ripe for translation for an English market, and its conversion was swift. By May 1582 a version was published in London as *Christian meditations upon eight Psalmes of the Prophet David*, translated by John Stubbe and printed by Christopher Barker.¹⁷² Stubbe was a lawyer and religious writer, who had been charged with conspiracy to excite sedition for his publication of *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf* (1579), a tract strongly critical of Elizabeth's proposed marriage to the duke of Anjou, and her failure to support Protestantism. As punishment for this transgression he had his right hand chopped off, after which he signed his name 'John Stubbe, scaeva' ('the left-handed').¹⁷³

Droz suggests that Beza's dedication to Anne was part of concerted effort to ingratiate himself with leading Protestants in another countries, in the event that he fell out of favour in Geneva.¹⁷⁴ He had dedicated *Les pseumes de David et les cantiques de la Bible* to Henry Hastings, earl of Huntingdon, and his *Icones*

¹⁶⁹ Eugénie Droz, *L'originale des chrestienes meditations de Bèze*, offprint from *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Protestantisme Français*, 112 (1966), 236-249, p. 241.

¹⁷⁰ For an outline of the significance of the psalms to women see Trill, p. 148.

¹⁷¹ *French Vernacular books: books published in the French language before 1601*, ed. by Andrew Pettegree, Malcolm Walsby, Alexander Wilkinson (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), entries 4165, 4170, 4172, 4180.

¹⁷² *Christian meditations upon eight Psalmes of the prophet David*. [trans. John Stubbe], (London: Christopher Barker, 1582), STC 2004.

¹⁷³ Natalie Mears, 'John Stubbe c.1541-1590', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/26736>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁷⁴ Droz, p. 242.

to James VI of Scotland, published in 1581 and 1580 respectively, and so perhaps Anthony's visit to Geneva suggested to him the subject for a similar dedicatee. Evidence from letters written from Anthony to Anne suggests that Beza's attempts to procure support from the Bacon family continued into the 1590s. Anthony informs Anne that he is sending her a book 'as a remembrance and token from good Mr Beza', and that if she wishes to 'wright anie thinge' in return he will convey it to Beza.¹⁷⁵ Anne does not seem to respond to this offer, and in a later letter Anthony explains that Beza's messengers had:

desired to know yf your Ladyship would wright or commande anythinge to mr Bezea, who ^both^ to be plaine with your Ladyship gaue me at their first cominge and now likewise to understande that mr ^bezea^ expected more then a lettre from your Ladiship¹⁷⁶

As the result of Anne's failure to offer a monetary contribution to Beza, Anthony is obliged to acknowledge the gift of the book on her behalf, and he writes that:

I was bould to sende him in your Ladyships name and myne owne a ~~girdle of gould~~ a present ^not of spare monie^ ~~to the value of xx markes~~ but otherwise imploied to the valewe of xx markes accompanied with a lettre of myne owne to himself

The insertion 'not of spare monie' implies Anthony's annoyance at his mother's failure to contribute to the coffers of the continental Protestants, but he clearly values the connection enough to part with his own funds.¹⁷⁷ Anne's money is perhaps earmarked for domestic causes, rather than European ones, and the episode shows that her support is distributed with consideration. Her decision

¹⁷⁵ AB to ACB, 2 June 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 190^{r-v} (art.123).

¹⁷⁶ AB to ACB, 8 June 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 187^{r-v} (art. 120).

¹⁷⁷ Anthony's compliance with Beza's request relates to other, non-religious motivations, and Jardine and Stewart note that 'Beza was a linchpin in a network which Anthony established linking funding for the activities of the Protestant community of Geneva, intelligence, and the shipping of books back to England', *HF*, p. 84.

may also reflect the lack of the existence of a genuine relationship between her and Beza, despite his claims to the contrary (explored below), and her awareness that her name is being touted as part of a wider political project.

Beza's dedication would have also come at an opportune moment for Anthony, as it demonstrated the consistency of his beliefs while he was abroad, which, as we have seen, were under scrutiny. Indeed Anthony's role in procuring this dedication later becomes a piece of evidence he uses years later when his aunt, Elizabeth Russell, voices doubts about his faith. In a letter to the earl of Essex that recounts the interview with Russell, Anthony recalls how 'going to Geneva and being lodged with late Father Beza it pleased him to dedicate his meditations to my mother for my sake'.¹⁷⁸ Alan Stewart suggests that this was typical of Anthony's deliberate exploitation on his travels of his mother's 'iconographic significance', and that Anthony's version of the how the book came to be dedicated to Anne underplays her validity as the subject for such a dedication.¹⁷⁹ However, while Beza does pay homage to her individual talents, his emphasis on the development of her learning and virtue within a wider family line indicates that it is what she signifies in terms of a Protestant lineage that is of most concern.

By referring to letters Anne has sent him, Beza provides evidence of a direct personal relationship between himself his dedicatee:

knowing by the latin letters wherewith it hath liked you to honour me, the great and singular, yea extraordinarie graces wherewith God hath indewed you, and whereof I acknowledge a very paterne in your said sonne.¹⁸⁰

Yet this praise of Anne is linked inextricably to his extolling of the talents of her wider family and detracts from her individual contribution to the Protestant cause. This contrasts with the other dedications to Anne, all of which are careful

¹⁷⁸ AB to EE, 12 September 1595, LPL MS 659 fols 24^v -25^f (art. 21).

¹⁷⁹ Stewart, pp. 94-5.

¹⁸⁰ Sig. A4^v. This and the following quotations are taken from Stubbe's translation.

to delineate her personal involvement separately from that of her family. She is less the genuine subject of the dedication than a symbol that allows Beza to develop his praise of early English Protestantism.

Beza suggests that he hopes this book will offer her some 'consolation' now she has entered 'this estate of widowehode' (sig. A5^r), which then leads him to praise the worthiness of her late husband. To ensure he has ingratiated himself with all the family connections Beza then speaks of the:

constancie and Christian patience wherewith God hath so beautified you, that in you is verily acknowledged that Christianly high minded courage which I sawe in these partes shining in the deceased, of very happy memorie, Syr Anthony Cooke Knight, during those great calamities publike to the realme, and particularlie to him and his whole familie. (Sig. A5^{r-v}).

Cooke had visited Geneva during his period of exile from England, and Beza draws on the memory of their association at this time as proof of Anne's spiritual inheritance. It could also be seen as a reminder of the religious persecution suffered by Protestants, and of the succour that the continental churches offered. Beza's 'small volume, carying your name upon the browe', is offered to Anne 'in testimonie of the honour and reverence I beare to the vertue of you and yours' (sig. A5^r). The work thus becomes a more general token of his respect, generated by his desire to seek favour with leading English Protestant families, and which focuses on her role as a vessel for the transference of Christian virtue from one generation to the next.

Beza's dedication to Anne was apparently a highly marketable aspect of the book, as John Stubbe retained it in his English edition of the work, and explicitly developed it by dedicating his translation to Anne's step-daughter-in-law. Anne Bacon, née Butts, was the wife of Nicholas Bacon, and Stubbe takes advantage of this mother-daughter connection to fashion a clever continuation of Beza's original assignation.

Stubbe says his choice of dedicatee was 'not so much to content my selfe, but to goe rather as nere as possible to the continuance of the Authours owne verie meaning' (sig. A2^v). Stubbe suggests that although Anne is the sole subject of the dedication, Beza's references to her husband, father and son indicates that he was dedicating the book to the entire family, and he extends this group address by dedicating the text to a member of the next generation. His work seems a clear plea for patronage from the Bacons, 'I confesse my selfe of verie duty to love all that good Brotherhoode', and he defines the text as a sort of lost family member, that he is returning to the family, as 'in giving this to their eldest brothers wife, and so to them all, I neither give them nor pay them ought, but yield them their owne' (sig. A3^v). The family connection is made even more emphatic by the fact that the book was printed at Bacon House near Foster Lane in Aldersgate, and Stubbe suggests that the book 'seems a very heirloome properly belonginge to Bacon House' (sig. A3^v). Stubbe's dedication to the younger Anne Bacon seems an inspired choice in commercial terms, and the fact that a translation of the same text by Julius Caesar, dedicated to another female translator, Dorcas Martin, did not make it into print indicates the power a particularly pertinent dedication could have in the book trade.¹⁸¹

Anne's power in print

Anne's translations can therefore be situated within the wider field of the publication of religious works by women, one of the few contexts in which they could legitimately intervene in politico-religious affairs. The iconography of the religious woman writer proved a convenient way for printers and publishers to frame and promote their texts, as it allowed them to emphasise the integrity, purity and uniqueness of their work. Anne's name is used in this fashion to bolster the reception of Ochino's sermons, as her status and gender protects their mediation into English as well providing the text with a unique selling point in a market saturated with religious works. However, the various different

¹⁸¹ Micheline White notes that Julius Caesar's translation was approved for publication by Robert Crowley, but was never entered into the Stationer's Register, and suggests that 'it seems likely that its value was diminished by the fact that John Stubbes had recently completed a translation of the very same text'. 'A Biographical Sketch of Dorcas Martin: Elizabethan Translator, Stationer, and Godly Matron', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 30 (1999), 775-792 (p. 789 note 63).

manifestations of the sermons and the forthright nature of her prefatory material suggests that her translations were also a reflection of her personal involvement in the vibrant religious culture of the court of Edward VI. In contrast her role in the circulation of Jewel's *Apologia* seems entirely circumscribed by the symbolism of the figure of the religious woman, as Matthew Parker uses her to name to infuse the text with the de-politicised and domestic qualities traditionally associated with women's translations. This text was published after Anne's marriage to Nicholas Bacon, and after the birth of her sons, indicating that Anne's intellectual ambitions and profile were not yet curtailed by her family life. The reason for her failure to publish any further translations can perhaps be seen as a result of her increasingly extreme views and the change in the political climate; the semi-censorship of her poem in support of Dering suggests the potential danger of her support for nonconformists, and the embarrassment it could cause to her husband and family. Subsequent to this incident, Anne began to take advantage of the dedicatory convention of early modern books in order to fashion a less extremist persona for herself, possibly in an attempt to distract from her religious activism. Print had become too dangerous a medium for her to show her support, and instead she turned to alternative means by which to promote the reformist cause. Thomas Wilcox and John Field's dedications to Anne provide a clue as to this new method, and their gratitude for her financial aid suggests that local patronage of nonconformists now became the chief method by which she attempted to exert her control over ecclesiastical affairs.

Chapter Five

The Religious Patronage of Lady Anne Bacon

Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men – by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. It does not necessarily imply that no woman has power, or that all women in a given culture may not have certain powers.¹

The previous chapter has established Anne, Lady Bacon's puritan credentials at both a national and European level. This chapter will consider how she utilises the powers available to her as a widowed gentlewoman to further the cause of the puritan movement both at court and within her local community. Although she had been able to enter the debate over the direction of the English Church through her publications of religious translations, it became impossible for her to vocalise her opinions in this manner once the government had quashed the validity of the nonconformist position. This forced the focus of her support to shift to from the national level to the local, and necessitated that her backing became to be altogether of a more personal nature.

Through her family connections, her control over advowsons, her puritan connections and her financial power, Anne exercised her patronage and sought to provide a preaching ministry for her community. In doing so she came into direct conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities and her letters testify to her continual efforts to circumvent the restrictions placed on those whom she patronised. Anne's efforts were pro-active and considered: she attempted to appoint ministers to the parishes over which she had control, and sought to create informal posts for clerics when her choices were thwarted. Her letters demonstrate her close connections with the puritan community of St Albans, and hint at her involvement with the controversial separatist elements. Her

¹ Rich, p. 57.

employment of household chaplains became one further way by which she could support nonconformist ministers, and her home became a sanctuary for those who had been suspended or deprived. Tracing Anne's support also reveals a more pragmatic side to her religious fervour, as it is apparent that on certain occasions her religious beliefs gave way to the pressures and obligations of the wider patronage system, forcing her to sue in support for a cleric for whom she had little respect. Her negotiations to secure and protect clerical positions for her protégés also reveal a different side to her relationship with Anthony, as he actively co-operated in order to help her to achieve her aims. By stitching together the many different aspects of her patronage it becomes possible to build a stronger sense of her individual agency in this area. It also complicates those interpretations that read her support as stemming entirely from her 'puritan partisanship' as opposed to a more considered defence of her powers, a balance that is only achieved by examining other sources alongside her correspondence with Anthony.² But whatever other powers she could marshal to support her cause, ultimately it was her letter-writing that became her keenest weapon, as she bombarded enemies and friends with protests and pleas in her fight for further reformation.

PART ONE: THE CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND TO THE PURITAN FIGHT

Women's religious activism

The prominence of women's activism within nonconformist movements has proved perplexing for historians of the early modern period, as their vocal championing of such causes seems at odds with the prescriptive ideals that supposedly directed their behaviour. Keith Thomas's influential essay 'Women and the Civil War Sects' is one of the earliest examinations of this contradiction, and argues that the attack made upon political institutions in the civil war period had a concomitant effect on the structure of the family, and led to a 'redefinition of the limits of paternal power' that allowed women more freedom of action and

² Patrick Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism*, Patrick Collinson (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), pp. 135-153, p. 150.

speech.³ Questioning the prominent involvement of women in separatist sects, Thomas suggests that the spiritual equality of men and women propounded by these groups provided women with an opportunity for activism and self-expression that they were prevented from taking in either the Catholic Church or the Church of England. Groups such as the Brownists, Quakers, Baptists, and Familists had formed during Elizabeth's reign, but the incompatibility of their practices with those of the official church drove them underground. They re-emerged during the Civil War period and garnered significant support from women.

The high numbers of female members within these sects is often attributed to a 'theory of the greater natural religiosity of women'.⁴ This supposes that women's enthusiasm for religion stemmed from their lack of alternative outlets of self-expression, and their limited education meant they were more reliant on the guidance of others for their theological understanding, which made them more active participants within religious groups. The ever-present perils of childbirth gave a different intensity to their contemplations of mortality, which in turn contributed to their greater interest in spiritual matters. Thomas disagrees with this assessment, and argues that it was instead the 'greater opportunities' for church governance offered by separatist sects that attracted women to their folds.⁵ In some sects, women were allowed to participate in debates and could help to organise the groups. They were also allowed to prophesy – a form of public religious expression that Thomas describes as tantamount to preaching.⁶ The enthusiasm with which they grasped these roles is indicative of an underlying desire to play a more practical role in the promotion of their religious beliefs, and as these opportunities were not available to them during Elizabeth's reign, they turned to other, less official means by which to effect their support.

Noticing this similar preponderance of women religious activists in the sixteenth-century, Patrick Collinson suggests that it was not only Protestantism that attracted intense female support, as studies of the suppression of Catholicism in the period have 'recognised that the staunchest and most

³ *Past and Present*, 13 (1958), 42-62 (p. 57).

⁴ Thomas, p. 45.

⁵ Thomas, p. 44.

⁶ Thomas, p. 46.

zealous recusants were often women'.⁷ Collinson relies on the assessment of the theologian Richard Hooker, to explain contemporary beliefs concerning women's religious activism. Hooker believed that the puritans deliberately tried to convert women to support their cause, as their judgement was perceived to be weaker than men's, their enthusiasm acted as a persuasive force on family and friends, and their caring natures made them more sympathetic to impoverished preachers.⁸ Focusing on evidence of numerous close relationships between elite women and Protestant divines, Collinson conjectures that this dependency arose from the complex nature of the doctrine of election, 'which most of these ladies seem to have found perplexing', and the intellectual and emotional companionship offered by such friendships.⁹ Collinson mentions the engagement of Anne Bacon and her sisters in the promotion of Protestantism, and traces the involvement of Anne Locke (noted in the last chapter for her publication of religious translations) with various nonconformist communities. But he implies that the chief influence of women upon Protestantism occurred within the domestic sphere, and does not fully explore the more practical and political means by which women could assert their authority in matters of religion.¹⁰ In contrast, Pauline Croft argues that the 'careers' of the Cooke sisters 'can [...] be seen as essentially religious: a mutual interest group of trusted allies collectively dedicated to manoeuvring Queen Elizabeth towards a securely puritan form of Protestantism'.¹¹ By illustrating how the literary, educative and charitable enterprises of the Cooke sisters were inextricably linked to their religious beliefs, Croft shows how such activities had a political function that has not always been recognised.

Richard Greaves looks at the importance of the role of women in the home for the development of the religious beliefs of the family and servants, yet he also interrogates the other means by which elite women could enable the

⁷ 'The Role of Women in the English Reformation Illustrated by the Life and Friendships of Anne Locke', *Godly People*, pp. 273-287 (p. 274).

⁸ Collinson, 'The Role of Women', p. 274.

⁹ Collinson, 'The Role of Women', p. 275.

¹⁰ Collinson, 'The Role of Women', p. 273.

¹¹ Pauline Croft 'Mildred Cecil, Lady Burleigh: Poetry, Politics and Protestantism', in *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing*, ed. by Victoria E. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 24-40 (pp. 52-53).

establishment of their preferred religious ideology.¹² Greaves draws specifically on Anne Bacon's efforts to sustain and promote the puritan movement as evidence for women's engagement with religious activities, arguing that 'women contributed substantially to the growth of the Puritan and Separatist movements, not only in terms of their active participation in the spiritual life of the congregation but by providing religious instruction as well as patronage and hospitality to ministers'.¹³ The influence of women on religious matters can therefore be seen to encompass both public and private spheres.

Although Diane Willen recognises that women's religious activism traversed religious boundaries, she attempts to unravel why puritanism in particular attracted such devotees of the female sex.¹⁴ Willen suggests that

Puritanism offered women enhanced status and reciprocity without demanding a cloistered life, martyrdom, or mysticism. In its attempt to integrate godliness into daily practice, its emphasis on a type of sainthood within ordinary life, and its creation of a godly community of lay figures, Puritanism offered women new opportunities to redefine traditional relationships and roles.¹⁵

Willen identifies a class of 'elect ladies' who embraced the role of spiritual matriarch within the community. In a similar fashion to the iconography of the learned woman, Willen suggests that this role allowed women to adapt the established construction of gender identity, and points to the activities of Lady Brilliana Harley and Lady Judith Barrington as evidence for how religious belief galvanised women to act in the public sphere. It also allowed them to become 'spiritual authorities and advisers' to others in their godly community, and puritan preachers 'recognised that godly women performed a public role by

¹² Richard Greaves, 'The Role of Women in English Non-conformity', *Church History*, 52 (1983), 299-311.

¹³ Greaves, p. 311.

¹⁴ Diane Willen, 'Godly Women in Early Modern England: Puritanism and Gender', in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43 (1992), 561-80.

¹⁵ Willen, pp. 577-578.

virtue of their moral stature, influence, and example'.¹⁶ Once again religious women become useful promotional tools for the puritan cause, and the large number of godly lives and funeral sermons published in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century testifies to the efficacy of elect ladies as role models.¹⁷ Rather than seeing this genre as merely responding to the desires of protestants of high status 'to have their memory commemorated and their dominant social position legitimated through the literary and rhetorical skills of their clerical clients', Peter Lake sees these laudatory texts as reflective of the 'active godliness and patronage of particular lay women'.¹⁸ Focusing on the life of Jane Radcliffe, written by preacher John Ley, Lake suggests that Protestantism did offer women an alternative role within their local community, and one that allowed them an element of self-determination that had hitherto been blocked. As with Willen, Lake argues that the ultimate authority of God over the patriarch of the family created a 'chink in the otherwise all-encompassing authority of the husband', that allowed Radcliffe to take 'advantage of this loophole in patriarchal authority in order further to assert her independence of mind'.¹⁹ Lake looks at Radcliffe's small acts of resistance to her husband's command, such as the refusal to wear a certain dress because it would "make her more fine than she desired to be", as examples of her religious activism.²⁰ This act embodied her rejection of the traditional female trait of vanity, and illustrates how women without high-powered kinship networks or vast property rights could still manage to express their support for the reformist cause in a public manner.

Scholarship concerning women's religious activism has therefore expanded the realms within which women are seen to operate, and usefully much of this historiography takes into account Anne Bacon's involvement in such activities. Her role as an influential matriarch was not anomalous within the period, and can be seen as part of a collective campaign driven by Anne and her sisters to nourish puritanism. Although there is no godly life or funeral sermon pertaining

¹⁶ Willen, pp. 578-579.

¹⁷ Peter Lake, 'Feminine Piety and Personal Potency: The "emancipation" of Mrs Jane Radcliffe', in *Seventeenth Century*, 2 (1987), 143-165 (p. 145).

¹⁸ Lake, p. 145 and p. 161.

¹⁹ Lake, p. 152.

²⁰ Lake, p. 151.

to Anne extant, the eulogistic tone of Thomas Wilcox's dedication to her (discussed in the previous chapter), and the focus of his appreciation on her godly traits, suggests that she could be identified as one of the 'elect ladies' of the period. But as with Lake's analysis of the life of Jane Ratcliffe, the use of such a term did not necessarily suggest an abstract godliness, but often had its roots in very specific acts of support and activism.

Nonconformist activism

The succession of Elizabeth embodied the hopes of all English Protestants, who believed that as their new Queen she would implement a significant structural and doctrinal overhaul of the English church, fully completing the changes instigated during Edward's reign. However, the church that emerged from the Elizabethan Settlement fell far below the expectations of many Protestants. Through the acts of Supremacy and Uniformity the state of the church was returned to the position it had been at the death of Edward, with three exceptions. First, the monarch's title was changed from Supreme Head of the Church to Supreme Governor, a step taken to avoid the potentially inflammatory situation of having a woman named head of the Church.²¹ Secondly liturgical ornaments, such as the use of vestments in services, were retained, much to the horror of radicals who deemed such rituals as reminiscent of Catholic practice.²² Thirdly, the wording of the Eucharist combined elements of the two Edwardian Prayer Books, the effect of which was cleverly ambiguous, and suggested 'on one hand a real presence to those who wished to find it, and on the other, the idea of communion as memorial only'.²³ This did not placate Mary's bishops as had been hoped, and all but one resigned, leaving Elizabeth with many senior positions to fill. She was therefore forced to recruit bishops from the Protestant clergy, and out of twenty-five bishoprics, seventeen were allotted to Marian exiles.²⁴ Their time abroad is most likely to have supplied

²¹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603*, 2nd ed., (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 26.

²² W.J. Sheils, 'Reformed Religion in England, 1520-1640', in *A History of Religion in Britain: Practice and Belief from Pre-Roman times to the Present*, ed. by Gilley Sheridan and W.J. Sheils (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 151-167, (p. 157).

²³ Sheils, p. 157; MacCulloch, pp. 26-27.

²⁴ MacCulloch, pp. 27-28

them with many ideas concerning how they could bring the Church of England more closely in line with the continental models of Protestant worship. However, to the surprise of many, there were to be no further alterations, and the Elizabethan Settlement became the permanent solution. Adhering to the 1552 construction, it took no account of the changes wrought on Protestant doctrine by continental theologians in the intervening years, and retained the basic episcopal structure of the Catholic church. Diarmaid MacCulloch describes this as 'the unique ambiguity of Elizabeth's Church. Her father had knocked down one of the twin pillars of the Catholic system, papal authority, while leaving the other pillar, the traditional devotional system, largely intact'.²⁵ The retention of pre-reformation elements within this supposedly reformed church engendered three decades of debate and conflict amongst English Protestants, with some pushing for further reform, and others believing it more important to retain the version established in the Settlement out of loyalty to the Queen, however idiosyncratic it may have been.

Efforts to implement further changes upon the church foundered as Elizabeth refused to countenance any alteration, relying on her bishops to fend off the unwanted advances of the more extreme Protestants. Disillusioned with the lack of official change, by 1563 some clerics began openly to object to the continuity between the pre- and post-reformation churches, and refused to continue wearing clerical vestments.²⁶ Riled by these displays of non-conformity, Elizabeth ordered archbishop Parker to enforce discipline, and he ordered that regulations regarding the wearing of the surplice and outdoor clerical dress must be obeyed.²⁷ Those who refused to obey Parker's instructions were disciplined, and in March 1566 thirty-seven London ministers were suspended.²⁸ The Vestiarian controversy, as it came to be known, was a watershed in the relations between nonconformists and bishops, and resulted in the printing of one of the earliest Puritan manifestos, a *Briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell*.²⁹ This argued that the issue of dress was not merely an indifferent matter, but that it signalled the Church's reversion to a Catholic state

²⁵ MacCulloch, pp. 28-29.

²⁶ *EPM*, p. 68.

²⁷ *EPM*, pp. 69-70.

²⁸ *EPM*, p. 73.

²⁹ *EPM*, p. 77.

it had fought so hard to be free from.³⁰ The line was drawn between the factions, and this episode marked the end of 'fraternal disagreement' between fellow Protestants.³¹

However, those who wished to see the Church adopt more explicitly reformed measures had reason to be confident that they would achieve their aims in the 1570s, as a number of attempts to 'remedy the Church's defects' had been instigated by ecclesiastical bodies, and pro-reformist clerics such as Edmund Grindal, were placed in influential positions.³² But as the new generation of clergy gained prominence, the changes demanded began to be of a more radical nature. When Cambridge academic Thomas Cartwright delivered a series of lectures outlining how different the structure of the Church of England was from the ideal version outlined in the New Testament, and that the continental churches had attempted to put into practice, he caused uproar. The bishops were horrified, and even those with reformist sympathies saw this as an extreme development, as despite their desire for change they had still envisioned a place for the episcopacy in their future Church.³³ However, the Queen's refusal to allow the parliament of 1572 to pass a Bill that proposed moderate changes to the Prayer book inadvertently triggered a fresh wave of radicalism, as nonconformists decided they needed to change tack.³⁴ John Field and Thomas Wilcox vocalised the complaints of their fellow radicals in their manifesto an *Admonition to the parliament*, which pushed for the creation of a Presbyterian system of church government, and was unsurprisingly met with fury by the episcopacy. Under the explicit direction of the Queen the attention of the church authorities now turned away from the Catholic threat and towards the dangers of the disruptive elements within their own ranks.³⁵ Edmund Grindal had been elevated to the position of archbishop of Canterbury in 1576 after Parker's death, but even his senior support for the activities of nonconformists could not defend them from the Queen's wrath, and he was ignominiously placed under house arrest for his unwise criticism of the Queen's opinions. His

³⁰ *EPM*, p. 77.

³¹ *EPM*, p. 77.

³² MacCulloch, p. 33.

³³ Claire Cross, *Church and People, 1450-1660: The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1976), p. 142.

³⁴ MacCulloch, p. 34-35.

³⁵ MacCulloch, p. 35.

successor, John Whitgift, was of an altogether different ilk, and his elevation heralded a period of uncompromising suppression of non-conformism.

Whitgift's battle

Upon being appointed archbishop of Canterbury in 1583, Whitgift released a series of orders pertaining to Episcopal reform, and demanded that the clergy subscribe to three articles. To retain their positions clerics had to recognize the Royal Supremacy, swear that the Book of Common Prayer contained 'nothing contrary to the word of God' and make use it for all their ministrations, and pledge their adherence to the thirty-nine Articles of Religion approved by Convocation in 1562 and parliament in 1571.³⁶ All clergy easily subscribed to the first article, and the third was palatable to those clergymen of a more Puritan persuasion as it complied with the 1571 statute. However, the second article was anathema to many clergy, who regarded the Prayer Book as promoting a fundamentally unreformed liturgy. Through this uncompromising stance Whitgift aggravated large numbers of ministers, who, whilst they may have had reservations about the Book of Common Prayer, were content to remain within the church as long as they did not have to subscribe to articles that went against their conscience.³⁷ Rather than targeting the more corrosive elements of the church body, Whitgift tarred those clergy who could be described as 'moderate nonconformists' with the same brush as the radical puritans.³⁸

Between three and four hundred ministers refused to subscribe, and were either suspended or threatened with suspension.³⁹ The protests did not only come from the clergy, but also from the parishioners, who saw their most effective preachers censored.⁴⁰ Among the parishioners with more leverage were, of course, lay patrons such as Anne, one of the 'many such holly

³⁶ M.M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 266; Cross, *Church and the People*, p. 148; *EPM*, pp. 244-245.

³⁷ *EPM*, p. 245, p. 251.

³⁸ *EPM*, p. 246.

³⁹ *EPM*, pp. 253-254.

⁴⁰ Paul Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: The Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560-1662* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), p. 17.

matrones' raised up by the lord 'for the control of his poore afflicted churche'.⁴¹ In a letter to Anthony, Nicholas Faunt describes Anne's involvement in the campaign to reinstate suspended preachers:

I haue bene a wittenes of her earnest ^{care} and travaile for the restoring of some of them to their places by resorting often unto this place to sollicite those causes and whom otherwise I haue not often seene in Court and am thoroughly perswaded therein not to take any comfort or delight except to see her Majestie and other good frends.

Faunt is careful to emphasise that Anne's purpose in attending court is supplicatory and not social, which hints at an earlier incarnation of Anne – one that may have been less than whole-heartedly committed to matters of religion.

The barrage of petitions Whitgift received, the result of organised puritan agitation, as well as the pressure of members of the Privy Council sympathetic to the puritan element, forced him to make concessions. The result was that ministers were required to subscribe to the first and third articles, and agree to use the Book of Common Prayer and none other, with only those newly ordained ministers or ministers new to benefices required to subscribe in full.⁴² Such a compromise allowed the majority to sign without offending their conscience, and to see their suspensions lifted, leaving only the most extreme ministers to remain outside the fold of the national church.

Faced with such widescale opposition to his measures, Whitgift altered the direction of his attack on non-conformity, and instead focused on only the most recalcitrant of puritans, exposed by their refusal to concede to subscription. Instead of seeking a blanket subscription, Whitgift developed twenty-four articles, which were to be answered under the *ex officio* oath by those whom had been identified as suspect by the High Commission. Whitgift made effective use of the Court of High Commission, a powerful cohort of clergymen and

⁴¹ Nicholas Faunt to AB, LPL MS 647 fol. 145^r (art. 69); *EPM*, p. 257.

⁴² *EPM*, pp. 263-4.

laypeople, to prosecute recusants and nonconformists.⁴³ This body enabled the Crown to intervene in matters of ecclesiastical discipline and, unlike the church courts, it had the power to fine, imprison and deprive offenders. The exercise of the controversial method of interrogation, questioning under the *ex officio* oath, was peculiar to the High Commission, and meant that defendants 'did not know the charges but still had to swear to answer any questions truthfully - before they knew what those questions were'.⁴⁴ Conscientious Puritans detested this tool, and they strove to prove that it contravened the common law.⁴⁵

By targeting extreme rather than moderate puritans, Whitgift was able to discredit the protests from the laity and clerics that he was preventing the majority of law-abiding puritans from continuing their work within the church. Instead he turned the focus back upon those who he considered to be the most disruptive elements to the Church of England.⁴⁶ From Anne's close association with several of the men considered to be of this group, such as Percival Wiburn who was deprived of his living in the diocese of Rochford, and John Field, we can see her loyalties lay with the radical side of this movement, and her direct intervention into the controversy created by Whitgift's articles illustrates the extent of her support.⁴⁷

The puritan response to the Parliament of 1584-85

Stung into action by Whitgift's heavy-handed attempts to force subscription to his articles, 1584 saw the denouement of a unified Puritan campaign to try and reclaim lost ground. Harnessing the presses of the committed puritan printer, Robert Waldegrave, they embarked on a propaganda campaign to express their side of the debate, arguing for the validity of a Presbyterian form of church government. In tandem to this print offensive the meetings of like-minded

⁴³ On the High Commission and the *ex officio* oath see V.C. Sanders's definition in *Historical Dictionary of Tudor England*, ed. by Ronald H. Fritze, Geoffrey Elton, Walter Sutton (London: Greenwood, 1991), pp. 237-239; MacCulloch, pp. 94-95.

⁴⁴ Sanders, p. 239

⁴⁵ For an account of how deprived minister Robert Cawdry enlisted the support of lawyer James Morice in order to dispute the legality of the oath, see John Guy, 'The Elizabethan establishment and the ecclesiastical polity', in *The reign of Elizabeth I: Court and culture in the last decade*, ed. by John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 126-149.

⁴⁶ *EPM*, p. 272.

⁴⁷ *EPM*, p. 266.

ministers taking place across the country (known as conferences, or *classes*) were commissioned to produce documents on the state of their parishes, designed to persuade MPs and lay supporters to back their cause.⁴⁸

When the Parliament convened on 23 November 1584 the House included a substantial number of high profile puritan members, a presence that would undoubtedly have encouraged the clerical agitators. Despite the Queen's explicit instructions that no matters concerning religion were to be debated in this Parliament, on 14 December three MPs presented petitions from their constituencies bemoaning the quality of the clergy in their areas, and objecting to the silencing of effective preachers by the enforcement of Whitgift's articles.⁴⁹ At the suggestion of Sir Walter Mildmay, a Privy Councillor and Puritan supporter, the House decided to organise a committee to summarise the three petitions, and they duly conflated the concerns into sixteen clauses.⁵⁰ These points called for relative modest changes to the processes of appointing ministers, but also requested a complete reversal of Whitgift's policies of the previous year.⁵¹ The Commons then attempted to gain the support of the House of Lords. Although the Lords agreed in theory to the presentation of the petition to the Queen, they desired assurances from the Privy Council that their actions would not offend her majesty, in consideration of the clear restrictions she had placed on the discussion of religion in the House of Commons.⁵² At this critical point the Parliament broke for Christmas recess, and it was not until 22 February 1584/5 that the Lords were satisfied with an answer. William Cecil duly reported that, while certain complaints would be investigated by the ecclesiastical authorities, the Queen had rejected any implementation of further measures concerning the reform.⁵³ Cecil then handed the floor to Whitgift, who gave the petition short shrift, methodically rebutting the clauses one by one. He took particular objection to the five clauses which sought to defend the rights of ministers not to subscribe, to ensure their freedom from persecution from

⁴⁸ *EPM*, p. 280.

⁴⁹ J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957), p. 26 and p. 61.

⁵⁰ The petition is printed in John Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift*, 3 vols (Oxford: 1822), III, pp. 118-124.

⁵¹ Neale, p. 63; *EPM*, p. 282.

⁵² Neale, p. 64.

⁵³ *EPM*, p. 284.

ecclesiastical disciplinary authorities, to restore suspended and deprived ministers to their positions, and to revoke the use of the *ex officio* oath. Whitgift argued that these requests 'did tende to such a libertee and freeing of ministers from all kinde of subiection, as no subiect in the land did enioy: and as in deede is most intolerable in any settled state or well governed church', thus setting the objectives of the puritans against the needs of an ordered state.⁵⁴

An epistolary intervention

Following Whitgift's rejection of the main substance of the petition, Anne attempted to intercede on the behalf of the members of the campaign, and petitioned Cecil to allow a delegation to be heard by the Queen or the Privy Council. Her letter reveals a fascinating fact: that she was allowed into the House of Commons to hear the petition debated, admitted by the authority of Cecil. Such an unorthodox action indicates her level of interest in the reception of the petition and the importance of the outcome for those supporting the nonconformists. The letter seems to have been deemed significant, as a copy can be found in the same MS collection as the original.⁵⁵ This version has been copied in a neat italic hand, and although the vocabulary is an accurate duplication of the original, much punctuation has been added, perhaps to make the sense easier to derive (but could also reflect the scribal practices of the copyist). It shows no signs of further readership, but commissioning a duplicate might indicate that it was circulated, perhaps as an attempt to gain support for Anne's request. The fact that it has been rendered in a more legible form would add weight to this suggestion; it would have been in the best interests of her suit if her letter was as easy to read as possible.

Anne's letter, dated 26 February 1584, begins by noting the exceptional circumstances of her entry to the House of Commons, as she writes of how she was 'extraordinarily admitted' by 'yowr Lordship Favor'. Frustrated by the restrictions of such unusual circumstances ('Fearing to stay to long I cowlde not so playnly speak') she has written 'to enlarge the same more playnly and to

⁵⁴ 'Whitgift's answer to the Commons' petition, (his own version), 22 February 1585', printed in *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, ed. by T.E. Hartley, 3 vols (London: Leicester University Press, 1981-1995), II, p. 50.

⁵⁵ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, (copy) BL MS Lansdowne 115 fol. 125 (art. 55).

what ende I did mean'.⁵⁶ Hindered by the restrictions of communicating with Burghley in a public context, and aware of the controversial nature of her opinion, she enlarges on her fears that the ecclesiastical authorities have been guilty of maliciously disparaging the validity of the puritan campaign. The context for this objection is the circulation of propaganda concerning a meeting between the puritan faction and the bishops, which took place at Lambeth Palace in December 1584.⁵⁷ The earl of Leicester had arranged for a delegation from the nonconformists, Walter Travers and Thomas Sparke, to meet with Whitgift and two of his bishops (Sandys and Cooper) in the presence of Leicester, Cecil and Francis Walsingham. That the nonconformists were allowed such an opportunity was a coup for the campaign, but it proved less successful than they had hoped and in the end prolonged discussion of controversial passages in the Book of Common Prayer distracted from more pertinent issues concerning church government. According to the church historian John Strype, the debate was won by the bishops, as the puritans, 'after four hours arguing, observing the strength of the archbishop's reasons, and the weakness of theirs, persuaded them to conform themselves.'⁵⁸ Strype's interpretation reflects the version of events publicised by the ecclesiastical authorities but a puritan counter-attack to these rumours was presented in a pamphlet entitled *The unlawful practises of prelates*.⁵⁹ Patrick Collinson suggests that the continuing support of the same 'honourable personages' present at this meeting for the puritan cause makes it unlikely that they were persuaded to change allegiance.⁶⁰

However, the existence of Anne's letter implies that lay supporters may have believed that the puritan cause had been somewhat damaged by the publicity surrounding this meeting, and felt that the printed propaganda campaign of the puritans needed to be bolstered by handwritten testimonies of support from influential figures. Anne writes that the ministers have been offended by 'the report of the late conference at lambeth', a report that has been 'so handled to

⁵⁶ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fols 119^r-120^v.

⁵⁷ Walter Travers's account of this meeting is printed in *The seconde parte of a register*, I, pp. 275-83; Collinson describes it in EPM, pp. 269-270.

⁵⁸ Strype, *Whitgift*, I, p. 335.

⁵⁹ Reprinted in *A parte of a register* (Edinburgh or Middleburg [?]: 1593), sigs. Mm4^v-Pp4^r; see also EPM, p. 269.

⁶⁰ EPM, pp. 269-270.

the discrediting of those learned that labor For right Reformation in the ministry of the gospell that it is no small greff of mynd to the Faythfull prechers.⁶¹ Anne encapsulates the chief grievances of the nonconformists by accusing the 'othersyde' of having claimed that the puritan cause 'cowlde not net sufficiently be warranted by the worde of god', but she pleas that they be allowed to prove the correctness of their interpretation of the scriptures:

yf they can not strongly prove before yow owt the worde of God that Refor-mation which they so long have called and cryed For to be according to christ his own ordinance, then to lett them be reiected with shame owt of the church For ever

This ultimatum reveals how Anne does not support the development of the separatist movement, but instead like many moderate puritans, wishes to see appropriate and legitimate changes to church government incorporated into the established Church of England. As with other nonconformists, Anne expresses her confidence that the Queen is not obstructing the alteration of the church, as her heart 'is in god his hande to towch and to turne', thereby releasing her from any blame over the failure of the puritan campaign.

Anne continues to construct an image of the puritans as a persecuted flock, and she claims that they have not been allowed to 'assemble and consult together purposely [...] For avoyding suspetion of privat conventicles', and that they are called upon to argue their case without warning, making them 'unprepared' and unable 'gravely and moderatly to be hard to defend their right and good cause'. Her excuses for the ministers imply that their presentation of their argument has been somewhat lacklustre, and she rather unconvincingly (considering the ability of the puritans to collaborate effectively in other circumstances) suggests that their meetings have been effectively curtailed, preventing them from adequately preparing the defence of their position. But Anne is, of course, highly partisan in this instance, defining the bishops as '^judges^ who are parties partiall in their own defence because the [they] seek

⁶¹ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fol. 119'.

more worldly Ambition then the glory of Christ Jesus.' To counter the failure of the Lambeth meeting, she requests that several of the ministers be given permission to 'obtein qwiet and convenient Audience ether before her majestie her self [...] or before your honors of the cownsell whose wysdome they greatly Reverence.' By making use of her kinship connections she is seeking to find them an alternative pathway to a sympathetic hearing at the point at which the validity of their cause appears to be severely under threat.

Anne's justification for her support for the ministers stems from her gratitude to them for their enlightening preaching, and in the same year of her letter to Cecil she attended one of Walter Travers's sermons at the Temple church, alongside her youngest son.⁶² Edifying preaching appears to have been behind a conversion experience that she refers to in her letter to Cecil:

I confess as one that hath Fownde mercy that I have profyted more in the in warde Feeling knowledg of God his holy wyll though but in A small measure. by such syncere and sownd opening of the scrypture by ^an^ ordinary preaching, which in these 7 or 8 yers then I dyd by hearing ^odd^ sermons at powles well nigh 20 yers together ⁶³

Here she reflects the puritan belief in the power of preaching, and cites this as the real reason behind her suit to Burghley, mentioning the effect their preaching has had on her 'rather to excuse this my bowldeness toward yowr lordship.' The time frame she outlines indicates that she has developed a closer association with these preachers in the last '7 or 8' years, a period that coincides with the first six years of her widowhood. This claim may also allow us to pinpoint tentatively the moment at which Anne made the transition from the moderate Protestantism that she espoused in the first part of her life to the radical puritanism that she would adhere to in the latter.

Despite the fact that the letter identifies Anne as someone who shares the ideology of the reformists and who is closely involved in the political activism of

⁶² Nicholas Faunt to AB, 14 April 1585, LPL MS 647 fol. 183^r (art. 90); *HF*, p. 79.

⁶³ ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fol. 119^r.

the group, she is still careful to claim a certain distance from the puritans, writing in the last lines of her letter that 'in dede though I heare them, yet I see them very seldome'. She also emphasises that she has acted on her own behalf in putting forward their suit as 'none is prevy to this', and reveals her wariness that her plea will be misconstrued 'I trust your Lordship wyll accept in best part my best meaning'.

The deferential tone of her letter indicates Anne's awareness of the sensitivity of the issue and makes this the most humble of Anne's extant letters. As discussed in Chapter One, Anne works within epistolary conventions to create a formal letter of petition that frames a potentially inflammatory question in a deferential language and style. This letter is evidence of her attempts to achieve the aims of nonconformist movement by using the influential channels available due to her status as a gentlewoman and her family connections. Her objections to the treatment of the ministers by the bishops and her claims that they are victims of a smear campaign places her allegiances clearly with the puritan party. Her faith in the Queen's potential receptiveness to their ideas indicates her optimism that the Church of England can be adequately reformed to the satisfaction of the faction. Anne indicates an awareness of many aspects of the campaign that testifies to the depth of her involvement in the movement, although she carefully stops short of confessing personal familiarity with its members.

There is no evidence that Anne's attempts to seek a further interview for the puritans bore fruit, and the campaigners' attempts to enact further change to the order of the church were ultimately thwarted, with Elizabeth concluding the Parliament in March with the statement that she would not 'tollerate new-fanglenesse'.⁶⁴ Whilst this defeat animated the puritan cause for the next few years, the death in 1588 of their most effective organiser, John Field, and their most powerful apologist in court, the earl of Leicester, finally enabled Whitgift to clamp down on the radical elements of the movement that had for so long

⁶⁴ '[House of Lords] Queen's speech at Close of Parliament, 29 March 1585', Hartley, II, p. 32. William Urwick suggests that Anne's letter did in fact encourage Cecil to write to Whitgift and Aylmer on behalf of the puritans, though he provides no specific reference. Urwick may be using the letters Cecil wrote to the bishops as evidence for his puritan sympathies in general, rather than for any direct action taken on behalf of Anne. *Non-conformity in Herts* (London: Hazel, Watson and Viney, 1884), p. 89.

managed to escape censure.⁶⁵ The faction had not helped itself, as in October 1588 saw the publication of the first tract written under the pseudonym of Martin Marprelate, which provided a satirical and powerful platform for the presbyterian movement to voice its views against the church. It was, however, clues within a Marprelate text that led the ecclesiastical authorities to the homes of leaders of the presbyterian movement, and on discovering incriminating documents they were then able to construct a case against Thomas Cartwright and eight other ministers, who were tried first by the High Commission and then by the Star Chamber. Although they were imprisoned and stripped of their clerical offices, the paucity of evidence pertaining to their seditious activities and the support the puritans received from skilful lawyers meant that the case against them failed.⁶⁶ Whitgift managed to impose a level of outward uniformity upon his clerical subordinates, but this did not by any means signal the complete destruction of the movement, rather a move away from attempts to achieve change in the church through parliamentary means.⁶⁷ Instead the movement retracted into those pockets of England where they could be assured of lay support, and made efforts to bring about change by circumventing the traditional structure of the church.

PART TWO: THE POWER OF PATRONS

The appointment of livings

It was through the ownership of advowsons, the right to present a clergyman to a living, that the laity could exert the most control over the local character of the church. Until the dissolution of the monasteries, advowsons had belonged to religious houses or to manors, and control over parish livings was split between the laity and the ecclesiastical authorities.⁶⁸ After the dissolution, the Crown sold

⁶⁵ Cross, *Church and the People*, p. 150.

⁶⁶ Collinson, 'Thomas Cartwright (1534/5-1603)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/4820>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

⁶⁷ Cross, *Church and the People*, p. 153.

⁶⁸ Rosemary O'Day, 'Ecclesiastical Patronage: Who Controlled the Church?', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I*, ed. by Felicity Heal and Rosemary O'Day (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 137-155, p. 140.

much of the land it had acquired to the laity, giving it control over a significant number of benefices.⁶⁹

The Crown retained more advowsons than the church, and laity combined however, and the role of distributing these livings to candidates fell to the Lord Keeper, an office held by Nicholas Bacon for the first half of Queen Elizabeth's reign.⁷⁰ Although Bacon presented an average of 113 benefices a year, the bureaucracy that this created meant that he relied heavily on his administrative staff and could not have personally directed each presentation. Instead suits for livings were made through the household staff and chaplains resident at Gorhambury, a circumstance that gave the laity and churchmen influence over the distribution of patronage that they were not legally entitled to.⁷¹ Percival Wiburn, a returned Marian exile, had been appointed chaplain to Nicholas Bacon in 1560, and although he received only one living from the Lord Keeper (albeit an affluent one) he successfully petitioned for the appointment of sixteen other clerics between 1560 and 1575.⁷² Undoubtedly Anne was familiar with the process by which incumbents were appointed, and may well have been a channel through which suitors approached Nicholas Bacon. Her close relationship with Wiburn, explored below, might also imply that she may have been more involved than it is possible to measure in suggesting suitable candidates for livings.

In an analysis of the religious leanings of the clerics appointed under Bacon's watch, Robert Tittler argues that Bacon took a more 'latitudinarian position on the matter of doctrine' when granting livings to those positions in the Crown's possession, as the sheer number of posts that needed to be filled demanded a less stringent assessment of the candidate's abilities.⁷³ In contrast Tittler suggests that twenty-four clerics he appointed to livings in his own possession would have been chosen 'with far greater discretion', and 'at least six are known to have been among the leading puritans in those shires'.⁷⁴ The tenor of his

⁶⁹ O'Day 'Ecclesiastical Patronage', p. 140.

⁷⁰ Rosemary O'Day, 'The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Lord Keeper, 1558-1642', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 23 (1973), 89-109 (p. 90).

⁷¹ O'Day, 'The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Lord Keeper', p. 105.

⁷² O'Day, 'The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Lord Keeper', pp. 101-2.

⁷³ Robert Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon: The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (London: Cape, 1976), p. 157.

⁷⁴ Tittler, p. 157.

protégés was distinctly puritan; Thomas Fowle was suspended for non-conformity, and Robert Johnson was also suspended for refusing to sign articles in support of the prayer book, although he subsequently relented, and both of these men had been presented to prebendary stalls at Norwich Cathedral by Bacon.⁷⁵ Wiburn's nonconformist activities have been observed, and the extremist activities of another cleric appointed by Bacon, Thomas Smyth, may have accounted for the discord between archbishop Matthew Parker and Bacon referred to in the previous chapter.⁷⁶ Indeed, Tittler suggests that Bacon 'continued his support of at least one such protégé long after it became a political burden to do so', indicating his personal interest in supporting radical Protestantism.⁷⁷ Tittler also notes that Bacon's patronage of such clerics seemed to intensify in the last decade of his life, and that although 'much credit must go to the lady of the house[...] the master of the house did more than acquiesce in the preferences of a demanding wife'.⁷⁸ This is in sharp contrast to Collinson's assessment of Nicholas's personal beliefs, as he advises 'not to read too much into those episodes and circumstances which sometimes linked him with the puritan clergy and their cause'.⁷⁹ For Collinson, Anne 'was probably the reason for much of the hospitality and patronage which her husband extended to puritan divines, both in a private capacity and as lord keeper'.⁸⁰ It seems unlikely that Anne would have been able to promote such clerics without the full support of her husband, and the consistency of Nicholas Bacon's patronage of nonconformist candidates implies, at the very least, that he was not unhappy at their presence within the Church of England.

The advowson was regarded as a property right, even by the most devout patrons, and could be granted or sold to another if the patron so wished.⁸¹ In theory this meant that puritans seeking to influence the character of the church could potentially take advantage of the fragmented nature of this patronage to buy up advowsons or grants of next presentation and install clergy of the appropriate character. Such was the behaviour of some of the most prolific

⁷⁵ Tittler, p. 212 notes 22 and 23, p. 158.

⁷⁶ Tittler, p. 158.

⁷⁷ Tittler, p. 169.

⁷⁸ Tittler, p. 169.

⁷⁹ Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People*, p. 147.

⁸⁰ Collinson, 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People*, p. 149.

⁸¹ Rosemary O'Day, *The English Clergy* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979), p. 86.

puritan courtiers: the earl of Warwick controlled many livings in Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Suffolk and Essex; Henry Hastings, the earl of Huntingdon owned seven in Leicestershire and ten in Somerset.⁸² However, in practice this policy was prevented by the status of the advowson as property, as the pressures of wider obligations to family, friends and neighbours, overpowered the desires of even the most committed reformists to present livings purely in promotion of their ideological beliefs.⁸³ They were also limited by the restrictions placed on their choice by the ecclesiastical authorities. Whilst lay patrons could nominate their candidate to the bishop of the diocese, this candidate would only be instituted provided they fulfilled certain requirements.⁸⁴ Patrons were not allowed to present a man without a degree or a preaching licence, issued by one of the universities, to livings worth more than £30 per annum.⁸⁵ There was a strict process of application, with the patron presenting the candidate to the bishop, who then assessed the candidate's suitability for the role, and either approved or rejected him.⁸⁶ Candidates were questioned on their knowledge of scripture and their religious opinions, and if they had been ordained by a bishop from another diocese they were required to provide letters of dimissory, which served as a reference.⁸⁷ Rosemary O'Day suggests that the rejection or acceptance of a candidate depended to some extent on the status of the owner of the advowson, as rejecting a nomination was seen to 'encroach upon the rights of patrons'.⁸⁸ Hence the bishops had to pick and choose which presentations they obstructed, and would be more likely to prevent the institution of a patron of a lower status than that of an influential one.⁸⁹ This concurs with William Sheils's research into puritan patronage in Peterborough. Sheils suggests that bishops were unwilling to reject nonconformist candidates presented by the local gentry, for fear of displeasing them, thus reducing the

⁸² O'Day, *The English Clergy*, pp. 86-87; M. Claire Cross, 'Noble Patronage in the Elizabethan Church', *The Historical Journal*, 3 (1960), 1-16, (p. 3).

⁸³ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, p.86.

⁸⁴ 'Advowson', *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by F.L. Cross, 3rd edn, rev. by E.A. Livingstone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁸⁵ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, pp. 76.

⁸⁶ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, pp. 76-77.

⁸⁷ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, pp. 49-50.

⁸⁸ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, p. 54.

⁸⁹ O'Day, *The English Clergy*, p. 54.

amount of control the ecclesiastical authorities could wield over the diocese.⁹⁰ The pattern of Anne's presentations do not quite fit this analysis, as although some of her choices were accepted and instituted to the livings in her possession, other choices proved too controversial to be protected by her status and placed her in direct conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities.

Anne's control of advowsons

The extent of Anne's influence over presentations during the years of her marriage to Nicholas Bacon is impossible to trace, as the law of coverture commanded that all property rights passed to a woman's husband upon marriage. But upon becoming a widow in 1579 Anne was able to hold property in her own name, and her inheritance of the manor of Gorhambury included the advowson of St. Michael's, the parish church closest to her residence. Nicholas Bacon had also owned the advowson of St Mary's church of the manor of Redbourn, and after his death this was passed to Anthony. While Anthony was abroad it seems as though Anne was given the right of next presentation for Redbourn, so for the period between 1579 and 1591 she had control of two advowsons.⁹¹ Both parishes lay within the Archdeaconry of St. Albans, part of the diocese of London, and had been fairly 'self-regulating' until John Aylmer became bishop of London in 1577, when it then became subject to a much tighter episcopal discipline.⁹² This involved ensuring that the clergy were adequately educated for their role, as well as tracking the nonconformists within the archdeaconry, through a regular series of visitations conducted by Aylmer or one of his officials.

One of the most significant points of contention between the puritan faction and the ecclesiastical authorities was over the quality and nature of preaching. Protestant doctrine, as defined by Calvin and subsequently incorporated into the Church of England, placed a high value on the preaching of the word for the

⁹⁰ Discussed by O'Day, *The English Clergy*, p. 91.

⁹¹ The living of Redbourn is described as being 'in the gift of her Lady Bacon' in March 1584. *HRO*, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/5/47. I have standardised the name of this parish to Redbourn except when quoting from manuscript sources.

⁹² *Conferences and Combination Lectures in The Elizabethan Church: Dedham and Bury St Edmunds 1582-1590*, ed. by Patrick Collinson, John Craig, Brett Usher (Woodbridge: Boydell & Church of England Record Society), p. xl.

obtaining of salvation, indeed preaching and the right administration of the sacraments were seen as the marks of the 'true Church'.⁹³ The bishops did not deny the primacy of preaching, however, in practice the task of filling the thirteen-thousand parishes in England with incumbents whose abilities met the increasingly high standards of the puritans proved impossible.⁹⁴ Partly for such practical reasons, but also for political ones, the puritans' and the bishops' comprehension of what the role of the preacher should entail had diverged significantly.

While restrained by the lack of qualified clergy, the bishops were at the same time acutely aware of the need to communicate the tenets of reformed religion as quickly as possible to the general population. They therefore prescribed the use of the *Book of Homilies*, which contained sermons for ministers to deliver to their congregations, and restricted more expansive preaching to be delivered by a small number of highly educated members of the clergy on infrequent occasions. In contrast, the puritans believed that preaching should be an altogether more rigorous and intellectual affair for both the ministers and parishioners, and one that was a regular part of the church-going experience. They demanded 'exegetical and evangelistic sermons painstakingly prepared for each service of worship by preachers trained in biblical scholarship and delivered in plain language that would connect with the daily lives of ordinary people', a tall order for many of the clergy.⁹⁵ Sermons lasting between one to one-and-a-half-hours were to be delivered *extempore*, and consisted of a reading of a biblical passage, an explication of the passage, a discussion of the doctrine expounded by the text, and suggestions as to how this doctrine could be applied to the every day lives of the parishioners.⁹⁶ This was what puritans described as an edifying sermon, and stood in stark contrast to the version of preaching proposed by the authorities. The mere reading of sermons was considered inadequate, and had a reductive effect on the minister's role 'as

⁹³ MacCulloch, p. 61.

⁹⁴ Neale, p. 71.

⁹⁵ Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, 'Practical divinity and spirituality', in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. by John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 191-205 (p. 195).

⁹⁶ Hambrick-Stowe, 'Practical divinity and spirituality', p. 195.

special intermediary between God and penitents'.⁹⁷ For puritans, 'proper preaching therefore served as the central task of the ministry, even above the administration of the sacraments and the establishment of a proper discipline within the church'.⁹⁸ The puritan style of preaching would therefore potentially offer parishioners a wide range of different interpretations of the scriptures, a freedom of thought that the authorities did not wish to encourage.

The problem faced by the bishops in maintaining an adequate level of sermonizing, while at the same time discouraging the more enthusiastic preachers, is encapsulated by a tirade directed at them by the Queen. In the aftermath of the 1584-85 parliament, she complained that the bishops had not managed to eradicate those ministers that 'be of such lewd life and corrupt behaviour' as to be not worthy ministers, yet they also continued to 'suffer many ministers to preach what they list and to minister the sacraments according to their own fancies [...] I have heard there be six preachers in one diocese the which do preach six sundry ways'.⁹⁹ She emphasises the need for a standardized communication of theology over personal insight:

I wish such men to be brought to conformity and unity: that they minister the sacraments according to the order of this Realm and preach all one truth; and that such as be found not worthy to preach, be compelled to read homilies...for there is more learning in one of those than in twenty of some of their sermons.

That the authorities needed to check for both extremes of clerical misbehaviour, from the negligent to the over-zealous, is borne out by the appointment history of the parish of St Michael's.

The visitation records show that the vicar of St Michael's, Thomas Wethered, was one of the eleven 'unlearneder sort of ministry' required to be examined by the archdeacon in October 1586.¹⁰⁰ Resident since 1534, when the parish still

⁹⁷ John Morgan, *Godly Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 85.

⁹⁸ Morgan, p. 85.

⁹⁹ Quoted from Neale's account of the meeting, p. 70.

¹⁰⁰ HRO, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/2/61.

belonged to St Albans Abbey, the Archdeacon describes Wethered in a letter of 1588 as 'of no degree [...] a man of 80 years or thereabouts, and never preacheth'.¹⁰¹ Providing a link between the old and the new order in a pastoral sense, Wethered was untrained for the role that was now required of a cleric, but as incumbents could only be removed if they had breached church regulations, Anne could do nothing about his residency.¹⁰² By inviting the puritan William Dyke to preach in the parish, Anne attempted to counteract Wethered's incompetent ministry, and the presence of an additional preacher (also known as a lecturer) for the parish of St Michael's indicates how the reformed church worked within the established order to provide a learned ministry for the parishioners. These preachers were also carefully regulated as well, and in the same letter the archdeacon notes that 'Mr Dyke preacheth at St Michael's but hath no cure, he is of no degree, he is only a deacon, and licensed to your Lordship as he saith'.¹⁰³ Wethered probably died sometime in 1590, as Anne presented Richard Smith to the living in that year, but he was rejected as he failed to produce 'neither letters of orders not testimonial not dimissory'.¹⁰⁴ Although failure to produce letters of dimissory was a valid reason to deny someone admission to a living, Rosemary O'Day notes that there is evidence for candidates being conditionally accepted upon the promise of the future production of these letters, although those from another diocese were not treated so leniently. The status of Anne must have weighed in Smith's favour despite the absence of references; however, either because of Aylmer's efforts to ensure the clergy's possession of the correct qualifications, or because of his suspicions of Smith's character, her reputation was not enough to carry through this particular presentation.

The appointment of Erasmus Cooke proved altogether more successful, and Anne and Anthony seem to have been able to protect his nonconformist actions from serious censure. Cooke was instituted by Aylmer to the vicarage of St Michael's in June 1591, and although there is no record of Anne's nomination of Cooke, her ownership of the advowson and her friendship with him indicates

¹⁰¹ *HRO*, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/2/88.

¹⁰² Seaver, p. 93.

¹⁰³ *HRO*, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/2/88.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Smith, *CCEd* Record ID 72349, *CCEd*, accessed 22 July 2009.

that she most probably influenced the placement. Urwick also conjectures that his name 'suggests a kinship to Lady Anne Bacon', a speculation that unfortunately remains unconfirmed.¹⁰⁵ Having previously been licensed as a preacher by Aylmer in 1587, Cooke was a clergyman suited to the fulfilment of both pastoral and preaching roles. Cooke is described by the Archdeacon as 'of good learning he preacheth and catechiseth diligently: of good conversation: never detected of any notorious crime'; and from the testimonies of some parishioners in 1603 we discover that he 'doth preach diligently and painfully on every Sunday twice, and upon holidays he preacheth once'.¹⁰⁶ Enquiries into Cooke's performance as a vicar reflects the close attention being paid to clergy in St Albans, and in another instance Edward Stanhope, a member of the High Commission, demands proof that Cooke is making use of the Book of Common Prayer in his services. The sensitive nature of this request leads to the intercession of Anthony Bacon, who uses his loose kinship with Stanhope (Sir Anthony Cooke's father was the brother of Beatrix Cooke, Edward Stanhope's maternal grandmother), as a platform from which to intercede on behalf of Erasmus Cooke. Bacon addresses Stanhope as his 'very good cosen' and asks him to accept the enclosed certificate, signed by the churchwardens and sidesmen, on behalf of Cooke's peace of mind and his mother's 'Satisfacion'.¹⁰⁷ Anthony has been moved to write by his mother's entreaties, and implies that this is not the first time he has written to Stanhope on 'the behalf of Mr Cook'. Anne clearly supported and respected Cooke in his role as vicar of St Michael's she is friendly enough with him to tell Anthony that on one occasion she 'wyll stay at Mr Cookes house [...]till the holy dayes be spent'.¹⁰⁸

His nonconformist activities did not go unnoticed by the authorities, and Cooke was disciplined by the High Commission for his part in the hosting of a large meeting of puritan ministers in autumn 1593.¹⁰⁹ On Whitsunday in 1597 he organized a fast, where he delivered three sermons over six and a half hours, to an audience that included both William Dyke and Percival Wiburn.¹¹⁰ This was in

¹⁰⁵ Urwick, p. 117.

¹⁰⁶ HRO, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/3/117, 161.

¹⁰⁷ AB to Edward Stanhope, 6 December 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 414^{r-v} (art. 285).

¹⁰⁸ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fols 252^r-253^r (art. 137).

¹⁰⁹ EPM, p. 440.

¹¹⁰ HRO, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/5/291.

spite of specific instructions from Richard Fletcher, who had succeeded Alymer as bishop of London in 1594, forbidding unauthorized fasts.¹¹¹ Fletcher appears to have been less intent on driving puritans out of the diocese than his predecessor, and Cooke may have been less fearful of the consequences of his actions. Perhaps this attitude was bolstered by the nature of Anne's relationship with the new bishop, as she describes him as 'A grave and comely man [...] and is learned [...] he used me courteously and Mr Cook and Mr Wylblud comfortably.'¹¹² Assured of his patron's complicity with the bishop, Cooke may have been galvanised to organise events of a radical puritan tenor. Although he participated in the puritan culture in St Albans, Cooke was perhaps a less controversial cleric than some of Anne's other protégés. He seems to have maintained a balance between being seen to conform to the requirements of the church, and providing his more zealous parishioners with a sustaining ministry for a substantial length of time, although Urwick claims he was eventually silenced for his nonconformist beliefs.¹¹³

A controversial appointment: William Dyke

The preacher invited by Anne to provide St Michael's with a learned ministry, William Dyke, was a religious controversialist already known to the ecclesiastical authorities. As preacher at Coggeshall in Essex, Dyke had supported a vicar of similarly reformist convictions, Laurence Newman, who had been presented to the living by Robert, Lord Rich, another active puritan patron.¹¹⁴ Both vicar and preacher were taken before the High Commission on 7 November 1581 and imprisoned for their 'irregular activities'.¹¹⁵ Dyke therefore arrived at St Michael's with a reputation as 'one of the hottest of puritan preachers', and as someone who had already been noted by the authorities as troublesome.¹¹⁶ Aylmer, who described Dyke as 'a verie disordered man, & a violent innovator', waged relentlessly to have Dyke silenced, and the letters and

¹¹¹ *EPM*, p. 440.

¹¹² ACB to AB, September 1595, LPL MS 652 fol. 20^{r-v} (art. 11).

¹¹³ Urwick, p. 118. He was imprisoned and examined (for unspecified reasons) by Sir Edward Coke, the attorney-general, who described him as 'weak and simple' in March 1604/5; *HMC Hatfield*, XVII, p. 98, p. 107.

¹¹⁴ *Conferences and Combination Lectures*, p. 238.

¹¹⁵ *Conferences and Combination Lectures*, p. 270.

¹¹⁶ *EPM*, p. 373.

petitions generated by this campaign shed much light on the parish life of St Michael's.¹¹⁷ They also illustrate how Anne attempted to influence the character of her local church by enlisting popular support for her cause.

Aylmer suspended Dyke in 1589 for several reasons. First, he claimed that Dyke was only a deacon, and was not sufficiently qualified. Secondly he argued that the incumbent of the neighbouring parish, St Peters, was a learned man and supplied the area with sermons of a sufficient standard. Thirdly and more generally he accused Dyke of exposing the parishioners to 'newe fangled innovacons [innovations]' that kept the people 'exceedingly [...] occupied'.¹¹⁸ Aylmer's actions elicited a petition to William Cecil from the parishioners of St Michael's, pleading with him to act on their behalf to have him restored. Thirty-four of the inhabitants of St Michael's claimed to have 'lived without anye ordinarye preachinge, untill within these foure or five yeares', indicating that Dyke had been preaching there from either 1584 or 1585, which is earlier than the visitation records show him to be present in St Michael's, suggesting the authorities may have taken some time to catch up with him.¹¹⁹ That this situation has come about is:

through the godlie endeavours of our verye good Patronesse the Lady Bacon, at her speciall and almost onlie chardge we enjoyed one Mr Dyke, a preacher authorised, who according to his function hathe bene paynefull [painstaking] and profitable and both in lyfe and doctryne hath caryed himself peaceablye and dutyfullye amongst us

The responsibility of organising and funding Dyke's lectureship has fallen 'almost' entirely on Anne, suggesting that whilst there may be some contribution towards his wages from the parishioners, the brunt has been borne by her. Whilst the letter purports to be solely from the parishioners, we cannot see it as an independent manifestation of their protest; it must be seen as the outcome of the activities of a highly organised puritan community. Patrick Collinson has

¹¹⁷ *Conferences and Combination Lectures*, p. 239 note 4.

¹¹⁸ John Aylmer to WC, 9 November 1589, BL MS Lansdowne 61 fol. 7^{r-v} (art. 4).

¹¹⁹ Parishioners of St Michael's to WC, 1589, BL MS Lansdowne 61 fols 70^r-71^v (art. 23).

shown that the letters of petition written by lay communities in protest at the suspension of non-subscribing ministers were not 'spontaneous', as the minutes to the Dedham meetings show that such supplications were regarded as the "duty" of the parishioners.¹²⁰ Although Anne's connection to Cecil is used as a channel through which to approach him, and the reference to her patronage is an obvious reminder of her interest in this case, it is considered more effective if the letter is written by the community and not by an individual patron. This leads Aylmer to claim that, among other reasons, he is ignoring the petition because 'The multitude of the supplicants for him are of the meanest and basest sort, dubbed with the titles of yeomandry.'¹²¹ However, Aylmer's distaste for such men does not prevent him from commissioning one parishioner, Innocent Reade, to compile a list of complaints against Dyke and to enlist others to support his accusations.¹²² Dyke's defence against these charges, and the enquiry into his suspension ordered by Burghley, provide us with much information on the activities of the puritan community within St. Michael's. Taken as a whole the incident also shows how both parties enlisted the parishioners to fight for their respective causes, turning them into mouthpieces for their arguments.

Their battleground is the matter of preaching. The petitioners claim that through Dyke's preaching the parishioners have greatly benefitted:

many have bene broughte from their ignorance and evyll ways to a better lyfe, to be diligent herers of Gods word willinge to [do] everye servyce of the prynce, readye to distrybute to the poore, havinge our servants in better order and government then in then in tymes past.¹²³

The emphasis on the proper obedience to Queen and country that preaching establishes anticipates the most potent argument made by conformists against zealous preaching. While proponents of puritan preaching felt assured that this

¹²⁰ *EPM*, p. 256.

¹²¹ John Aylmer to WC, 9 November 1589, BL MS Lansdowne 61 fol. 7^{r-v} (art. 4).

¹²² BL MS Lansdowne 61 fols 72^r-73^v (art. 24).

¹²³ Parishioners of St Michael's to WC, 1589, BL MS Lansdowne 61 fols 70^r-71^v (art. 23).

manner of exposure to the word of God reinforced the Elizabethan social order, conformists worried that the freedom of expression granted to preachers would generate disorder among parishioners.

Reade lists a variety of examples taken from Dyke's sermons that prove he is a 'filthie preacher', and indeed the word 'filthie' becomes his refrain throughout the document, emphasising Dyke's disreputable reputation.¹²⁴ Dyke's behaviour is consistent with the puritan model according to Reade; he speaks against the churching of women, against football, against feasts and entertainment. Dyke is also accused of criticising the non-preaching vicar of his parish by 'nippinge and goadinge speches', as well as calling the ministers of Redbourn 'dumb dogges damned spiritts'. But more seriously Reade accuses Dyke of wishing to 'pull the Quene out of her seate', and attempts to prove that Dyke is:

an adherant and member of the faction within our Realme, desiringe the alteration of Church government, and consequently the derogacion of ecclesiasticall authoritie from her majestie.

This encapsulates the fears of the authorities that the puritan movement threatened the order of church and state through such politicised preaching.¹²⁵ Dyke is faced with a common argument made by opponents of the puritans: that their concept for the restructuring of the church embodied anti-authoritarian sentiments akin to those proposed by the separatists. Puritans strove fiercely to divorce themselves from any association with the separatist movements active in England, as they still believed that reforms to the church should be made under the direction of the Queen, and they did not wish to break away from the church.¹²⁶ However, persistent and vocal non-conformism, such as that displayed by Dyke, was an easy point of attack for those who wished to suppress public debate about the state of the church.

¹²⁴ BL MS Lansdowne 61 fols 72^r-73^v (art. 24).

¹²⁵ Seaver, p. 19.

¹²⁶ Cross, *Church and the People*, p. 148.

After establishing the treasonous nature of Dyke's words, he then turns to focus on the more immediate social consequences of his preaching, writing that:

Since that this dike hath byn preacher at St Michaells and that the people in and about st Albans haue harde hym, and haue had conference with hym, many haue shewed (as male contents) disobedience to the orders of the Church sett forth by authority and other misbehavior.

Dyke is drawing a larger audience than merely that of St. Michael's parish, and Reade also makes references to sermons Dyke has delivered at Redbourn. This reflects another key anxiety of the authorities concerning preaching, as it showed that his dangerous words could not be contained by the parish boundaries. The desire of people to hear Dyke signalled a privileging of the words of an individual over the standard religious practices that would be found in any local church, which the bishops believed undermined loyalty to the local and national church.¹²⁷ This enthusiastic audience is evidence of the spiritual dissatisfaction of those living in parishes without a preaching ministry, and exposure to Dyke has diminished their respect for their local ministers to such an extent that 'divers would not haue their Chyldren baptized of their owne ministers because their ministers were not preachers'.

Reade voices the familiar worry that travelling to sermons allowed a dangerous amount of unregulated contact between young men and women as 'so many of this gaddinge people came from farre and went home late'. The sociability that sermon-going entailed as groups of like-minded people crossed the parish boundaries together, singing psalms and discussing the sermons, posed a threat to the established order, as it could engender hostility in those who were not involved in these close-knit groups.¹²⁸ Dyke's zealous preaching is

¹²⁷ Seaver, pp. 42-43.

¹²⁸ Patrick Collinson, 'Elizabethan and Jacobean Puritanism as Forms of Popular Religious Culture', in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700*, ed. by Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 32-57 (p. 48).

also blamed for the increase in conflict within the community as it arouses such extreme strength of feeling. As Reade notes 'some haue fallen to boxinge and buffetinge one another for religion matters' and 'diuers when they haue mett other haue refused to use Christian salutations unto them, because they were not of their faction'. When the passionate and affective preaching of someone such as Dyke achieves its aims and converts the religiously obedient into godly adherents, it also fragments the community and creates opposition and strife.

In the petition the parishioners claim that the charges against Dyke are the work of some 'ill-disposed' persons who, as they:

cannot abyde to here their faults reprov'd by the word of God, do for that cause set themselves against him, by sclanderers, and such practizes, labouring in all practices to their uttermost to discredit him, and hinder the course of his ministry¹²⁹

Ultimately this assessment of Dyke's accusers is vindicated, as charges brought against him were thrown out of the court, his accuser 'confessing her lewdness in slandering of him'.¹³⁰

Dyke is not reinstated however, and recognizing that Aylmer refuses to give way despite this evidence, Anne instead negotiates for him to be placed in a parish under the power of a less antagonistic bishop. To do this she makes use of a newer influential connection – Anthony's relationship with Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex. By enlisting Essex's help she manages to see Dyke placed at the vicarage of Hemel Hempstead, which although in Hertfordshire and bordering St Michael's, fell under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Lincoln, who was at this point William Wickham. Essex's letter to Wickham, dated 19 October 1594, indicated that Dyke had lived and preached in Hemel Hempstead for the last three years, assisting the minister Richard Gawton 'at the request of the said Mr Gawton and the people of that parish'.¹³¹ Some five years had elapsed

¹²⁹ Parishioners of St Michael's to WC, 1589, BL MS Lansdowne 61 fols 70^r-71^v (art. 23).

¹³⁰ John Strype, *Historical Collections of the life and acts of...J. Aylmer, Lord Bishop of London in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, etc* (London, 1701), p. 204; Urwick, p. 113.

¹³¹ EE to William Wickham (copy), 19 October 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 287^r-288^v (art. 192).

since Aylmer suspended Dyke, and his success in an informal post had paved the way for Essex's request that Dyke be promoted to minister of Hemel Hempstead. The groundwork for this proposal has clearly already been carried out, as Gawton has 'agreed to geve up the said place and desireth to resigne the same to the bearer hereof Mr William Dike'. Gawton seems to have been recompensed for his compliance with the benefice of Redbourn, as by 1603 he had been installed as minister there.¹³²

This request was successful, but the Bacon family's support for Dyke did not end there. As mentioned above, Richard Fletcher had been appointed bishop of London after John Alymer's death, a promotion that he owed largely to Essex's campaigning on his behalf.¹³³ It is perhaps no coincidence that shortly after his translation Essex wrote to Fletcher requesting an extension of Dyke's ministerial powers, asking that he be allowed to administer the sacraments as well as to preach.¹³⁴ One of Essex's reasons for this petition is that he has been 'moued by the instante request of my speciall good frend Mr Anthony Bacon who is a neighbor to ye place, and a well willer to ye partie', Although Anne is not mentioned in either of Essex's letters, her past and future close involvement with Dyke suggests that she was the instigator *sub-rosa* of this suit.

In March 1596/7 Anne again intervened on behalf of Dyke, who appears to have offended the ecclesiastical authorities once again for unspecified reasons. Anne's letter to Anthony illustrates how a petition worked its way through many different layers of patronage in the attempt to achieve its aims.¹³⁵ We can assume that Dyke had approached Anne for assistance in the first place, and that she then wrote a letter to Anthony, informing him that 'the learned man hath great chardge' and 'he desyreth your carefull Furtherance to help his sute to the Earle'. This letter is perhaps conveyed to Anthony via Dyke, as (unfortunately for later readers) instead of explaining the cause of his appeal she writes that 'Mr Dyke him selff wyll declare the matter to yow'. Once Anthony has been enlisted, she hopes that 'yf my lorde may by his Favourable ^letters^ Further his

¹³² Wilton Hall, *Records of the Old Archdeaconry of St Alban's: A Calendar of Papers A.D. 1575-A.D. 1637* (St Albans: Gibbs and Bamforth, 1908), p. 114.

¹³³ Brett Usher, 'Richard Fletcher (1544/5-1596)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/9739>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹³⁴ EE to Richard Fletcher (copy), 22 January 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 14^{r-v} (art. 14).

¹³⁵ ACB to AB, 1 March 1596/7, LPL MS 656 fol. 49^{r-v} (art. 30).

sute it wyll comfort him [Dyke] in his godly payns.’ Another letter from Anne to Essex also reveals her attempts to facilitate communication between the two parties, as she encloses a letter from Dyke that she entreats Essex to read ‘bycause it concernes ^{^yow^}’.¹³⁶ Frustratingly this letter is missing from the Anthony Bacon Papers, but it may have been connected to his later appeal. Likewise there is no information regarding whether or not Essex did attempt to help Dyke, and to what results, but the correspondence proves the extent to which Anne could use her son and his connections to protect her interests.

Anne’s suit illustrates her respect and support for Dyke, and the occasional informal references to him in her letters reveal the close contact that existed between patroness and preacher. Bemoaning the state of her coach she writes:

Mr Dyke but A yeare past wolde nede borow your Fathers owlde coch I towde him the weaknes of it but nedes he wolde venture and after vi myles going his wyff and chyldern had lyke to take ^{^hurt^} and were compelled to make other provision by the way with much comber.¹³⁷

Not only does this show that Anne is still helping Dyke in 1595, some time after his suspension from St Michael’s in 1589, but her detailed account of this incident shows the depth of interaction with each other’s daily lives. While her patronage of Dyke seems to stem from a personal connection with the man and an affinity with his ideologies, and while the letter of petition from the people of St Michael’s indicates that parishioners could be used as tools to promote the cause of a patron, the details provided by the documents imply that a vigorous group of puritans were active in St Albans. Anne’s plantation of Dyke amongst her local parishes can perhaps be seen as a genuine response to the desires of at least some of the community, rather than just the selfish imposition of a favoured protégé.

PART THREE: CLASHES WITH AUTHORITY

¹³⁶ ACB to EE (copy), 15 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655 fol. 215^{r-v} (art. 152).

¹³⁷ ABC to AB, 15 July 1596, LPL MS 658 fol. 27^r (art. 20).

Defending the puritans of St Albans

The evidence of radical religious practices in St Albans and Anne's defence of her local community of fellow puritans also develops a fuller picture of how she exerted her influence on local ecclesiastical politics. Most of the evidence indicating Anne's support for puritan lay-people in St Albans comes from her defence of them against accusations of non-conformity made by the church authorities. In extreme circumstances, such as with the case of William Dyke, the bishop is involved, but it is more common for the authority of the bishop to be wielded through lower level officials in day-to-day matters of discipline. Anne's status and gender protects her from any disciplinary measures that the ecclesiastical authorities might make, however, many of her local puritan associates could not claim such advantages, and were duly corrected for their puritan activities. Her reports of the charges made against such people, and the punishments administered to them, reveal the extent of her involvement with the godly community, and is evidence for the wide social network to which her religious beliefs connected her.

Supporting John Clark

One of the local puritans investigated by the authorities was John Clark, a citizen of St Albans who was elected mayor in 1592.¹³⁸ Clark is charged by the High Commission of deliberately disregarding the orders of church officials and of allowing an unlicensed preacher 'to be priuately exercised in prayer and preaching, expoundinge or exhortinge uppon som place of scripture by the space of an houre or more'.¹³⁹ Clark had played host to this unnamed preacher in his own home, and present at this private exercise were 'diuers others men and women of the same towne', who could on that same day have been listening to Roger Williams, 'your own pastor a man learned'. Aylmer's approval of Williams's ministry of St Peters has been noted above, which enables us to identify in which parish Clark was resident. That he has aided or organised a meeting led by another preacher is deemed to be an example of his

¹³⁸ Urwick, p. 93; A.E. Gibbs, *The Corporation Records of St Albans, with lists of Mayors, High Stewards, Members of Parliament, and etc.* (St Albans: Gibbs and Ramforth, 1890), p. 292.

¹³⁹ LPL MS 650 fol. 347^r (art. 232).

disobedience to state and church, as the day had been 'especially appoynted by her maiestie for the meeting of the congregacion'. He is also charged with having housed other unlicensed ministers in 1593 and 1594, including John Penry, who was executed in May 1593 for his authorship and publication of texts in support of the presbyterian movement.¹⁴⁰ As well as meeting with Penry just before his arrest, Clark is accused of owning Penry's 'sedicious books' and of having 'dispensed or imported them or som of them to others such as you durst best trust or liked of'.¹⁴¹ Charged with attempting to interfere in the disciplinary measures taken against another puritan, Thomas Newton, who had been imprisoned for 'diuers contempts of Ecclesiastical Authoritie', Clark negotiated with his keeper to release the man, and subsequently assisted him to defend himself against the charges of the local officials. He attempts to strike back at these officials, and it is claimed that he charged them with committing 'diuers wrongs' against Newton and other men.

Clark was undoubtedly at the centre of the local puritan community, his house providing a haven to those who craved a more radical style of preaching than that offered by the parish incumbent. Clark is also accused of travelling to hear William Dyke's sermons, as well as using his powers as mayor to persuade the minister of his own parish to allow Dyke to preach. Clark's support for Dyke indicates that his religious sympathies were akin to Anne's, and indeed he is one of the very few local officials that she demonstrates any respect for. In a letter to Anthony that discusses local politics, Anne refers to John Clark as 'An honest man and so hath ben cownted even in yowr Father's tyme For an *oppidanus* [towns person]', opposing his conduct to the 'undiscrete doings' of the other aldersmen.¹⁴² However, the manner in which she hides his name in the form of Greek letters illustrates her wariness at confessing her friendship with him in writing. Shortly after her reference to Clark she beseeches Anthony

¹⁴⁰ Penry was imprisoned for one month for treasonable sentiments expressed in his tract *A treatise containing the aequity of an humble supplication which is to be exhibited unto hir gracious maiesty and this high court of parliament in the behalfe of the countrey of Wales, that some order may be taken for the preaching of the gospell among those people* (1586). He continued to publish works critical of the Church of England, but managed to elude capture until March 1593. Claire Cross, 'John Penry (1562/3-1593)', ODNB (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/21894>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁴¹ LPL MS 650 fol. 347^r (art. 232).

¹⁴² ACB to AB, 27 January 1596/7, MS 654 fols 47^r-48^r (art. 32).

'I pray you ^not my^ writing be rede of eny but your selff', attesting once more to her fear of confirming the existence of any alliance between herself and Clark.

The way Anne shows esteem for a townsperson who shares her religious beliefs, and the manner in which Clark uses his position as mayor to block the actions of the ecclesiastical authorities, illustrates how the power struggle between the church and puritans is played out at the level of local politics, and how strongly personal allegiances influence the maintenance of order. The urgency of the puritan cause and the climate of persecution under which the more extreme members were now suffering combined to create a strong feeling of antipathy towards those members of the community aligned with the ecclesiastical authorities. The personal relations of the community were inseparable from their religious predilections, which had become the paradigm through which the puritans understood the world. No leeway was given to any of those officials who acted on behalf of the authorities against the puritans, as Clark's (alleged) actions show.

Local discord

As Anne was exempt as a woman from taking any official role within the local political community, her objections to the actions of church officials are confined to the expression of personal opinion and attempts to get those of a more powerful standing to intercede on her behalf. Having been told by one of her servants that a Mr Kempe had been seen going on his way to see Anthony at Redbourn with 'one cheined [chained]' she warns him to be wary as 'he belongeth to the Bishopp. and dyd hurt in Mr Dykes and Mr Cookes tyme and was ^then^ as the officiall now in manner'.¹⁴³ This clearly identifies Kempe as a sworn enemy of Anne's, due to the part he has played in the disciplining of her protégés. This character can possibly identified as Nicholas Kempe, who is listed as a Steward of St Albans in 1588, a date that matches the period of

¹⁴³ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 362^{r-v}(art. 204).

Dyke's persecution.¹⁴⁴ Kempe appears to be bringing a suspect to Anthony for examination, and Anne writes that 'had I thought he had come to yow I wolde have desyred some motion to him For poore Newton prisoned by such as he and others now in place.'¹⁴⁵ Unable to take action herself over the imprisonment of Thomas Newton, she bemoans the fact that she has missed the chance to put forward his case via Anthony. The sympathy she expresses for Newton indicates, if not a previous personal contact with the man, than at least an awareness of his plight, and both this contact and knowledge links her firmly to the local radical puritans. This incident also reveals how reliant she is upon Anthony's position of power as a senior gentry figure, to influence matters within the local community.

Anne reserves her most vituperative language for Kempe and his associates, describing them as 'byting vipers. the hole pack of them. They can Flatter and hit too their venom'.¹⁴⁶ Anne sees their enactment of the orders of the ecclesiastical authorities to suppress puritan activities as fundamentally opposed to the development of a true godly community. She accuses them of being 'all For them selff and hindrerers of goode men and matters privy', suggesting that she believes that the religious practices of the puritans should not be open to judgement. Another official, Thomas Rockett, the registrar of St Albans and mayor in 1590, is also the target of her anger, and is described as one of those that trouble 'good and quiet subiectes'.¹⁴⁷ Anne's objections against the sub-letting of Bacon lands to Rockett are connected to his previous role, and he is defined purely in terms of his part in the prosecution of puritans;

¹⁴⁴ There were two Kempes involved in the religious politics of St Albans. The other figure was David Kempe, the archdeacon of St Albans. However, his promotion of 'prophesyings' - gatherings at which ministers debated sermons, a practice detested by Queen Elizabeth - in the area make it unlikely that he would be participating in the disciplining of puritans. *EPM*, pp, 171-172.

¹⁴⁵ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 362^{r-v} (art. 204).

¹⁴⁶ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 362^{r-v} (art. 204).

¹⁴⁷ ACB to AB, 3 August 1596, MS 653 fol. 354^{r-v} (art. 199). Thomas Rockett is identified as the Register to the archdeacon in January 1592, in *HRO*, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/2/116. He is listed as Mayor of St Albans in 1590, 1599, 1615, Gibbs, p. 292.

For the official with all the pack of them seek only ungodly gain little good do it them. I write so even with A tru christian hart by experience of their unlawfull dealings in my tyme¹⁴⁸

These foot soldiers of the 'back gon Bishop' are a more acceptable target for her insults than the bishop of the diocese, and she seems reluctant to explicitly criticise Aylmer.¹⁴⁹ She rounds off this section of her letter with an expression of her trepidation in confessing to such views, writing 'burn this though I wryte to tru. beware of liberall speches'. Although she claims to be fearful of expressing her opinions concerning religious politics, the inclusion of tirades against men such as Rockett and Kempe imply that she felt less circumscribed than she perhaps claimed by the powers of the ecclesiastical authorities. Her impassioned reportage of the punishments inflicted on fellow puritans serves to bolster her claims that the group is being unjustly punished, and substantiates her conviction that she is susceptible to similar such disciplinary action, although none is actually taken against her. As explored in Chapter One, the greatest stimulus to her use of cipher stems from her wish to conceal information concerning local affairs. This is consistent with the manner in which she disguises the name of John Clark by using Greek letters, rather than censoring her frustration with the bishops in any fashion, illustrating that her primary concern was to protect her puritan associates rather than to obscure her own sentiments.

PART FOUR: SHARED PATRONAGE

Joining forces over Redbourn

Anthony's retrieval of control over his estates after his time abroad was problematic for Anne, particularly in terms of her loss of power over the religious tenor of the Bacon parishes. Whilst mother and son were generally unified in their promotion and support of ministers, when differences of opinion did occur Anthony's exercise of his hereditary rights seem to have jarred with Anne.

¹⁴⁸ ACB to AB, 3 August 1596, MS 653 fol. 354^r-355^v (art. 199).

¹⁴⁹ ACB to AB, undated, MS 653 fol. 362^{r-v} (art. 204).

Redbourn lies adjacent to St. Michael's, bordered on the north and east by Lincolnshire. Anthony had inherited property in this parish on the death of his father, which had been only secured after a fight with his half-brothers, as outlined in Chapter Two. This inheritance included the advowson to the church of St. Mary's church in Redbourn, which provided a particularly small living, described as 'not fit for a preacher' in the records of the archdeaconry of St Albans.¹⁵⁰ Sir Nicholas Bacon had appointed the radical puritan Nathaniel Baxter to the position of vicar in 1577, but this arrangement proved short-lived as in July 1579, five months after Bacon's death, Edward Spendlove was made vicar 'according to the appointment of the archbishop'.¹⁵¹ Spendlove was ordered to pay Baxter 'a certain some of money' to compensate him for the loss of the post. Though there is no evidence for why Baxter gave up the post, a glance at his appointment records shows that he moved rapidly through six livings in thirteen years, suggesting he was bent on progressing his clerical career.¹⁵² The smallness of the Redbourn income may also have been one of the reasons for his short-lived employment, which contrasts sharply with Spendlove's comparative longevity – he remained vicar there until 1588. The name Spendlove is local to Redbourn, which suggests that Edward Spendlove may have been from the parish originally, and would go some way to explaining his contentment to remain in the position.¹⁵³ Local origin was still an important factor in the choice of incumbent, as kinship attached the vicar more tightly to the community. The replacement of a puritan activist for a stable conformist is especially interesting because it occurs after Nicholas Bacon's death, and indicates, at this point anyhow, a circumscribing of the Bacon family attempt to infuse a puritan tone to their local area. It is not until 1589 that we see a reversion to the earlier attempts to provide a preaching ministry to the parishioners, with the appointment of Barnabas Saule and George Philips as preachers, and Humphrey Wilblud as minister. This suggests that Spendlove

¹⁵⁰ Redbourn is described as being 'in the gift of Lady Bacon' in March 1584. HRO, St Albans Archdeaconry Records, ASA 5/5/47.

¹⁵¹ Guildhall MS 9531/13 (CCed record); Hall, p. 7.

¹⁵² Andrew Hadfield, 'Nathaniel Baxter (1569-1611)', ODNB (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/1733>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁵³ The name crops up in the description of the parish of Redbourn in *The Victoria History of the County of Hertford*, ed. by William Page, 5 vols (London: Archibald Constable, 1902-1923), II, p. 366.

probably died sometime in or before 1588, as at this date Redbourn is listed as vacant, and this opportunity gave Anne the chance to re-establish her influence in the parish.¹⁵⁴ Wilblud was deprived from this post for non-conformity in 1592, after which Anne employed him as her household chaplain, and her many references to him, explored below, testify to the close relationship that existed between patron and protégé.¹⁵⁵ Any cleric given such a position would undoubtedly have been of the same religious ideology as Anne, and therefore we can assume that in his capacity as minister at Redbourn he would have brought a certain zealotry of belief to the pulpit.

Pragmatic patronage: Rodolphe Bradley

The extent to which Anne treated advowsons as a property right can be illustrated by her co-operation with Anthony in securing the living of Redbourn for an incumbent whom she did not entirely respect. Although Anthony had possession of the advowson, Anne's support of Rodolphe Bradley against the church authorities indicates that she also used her influence for pragmatic as well as ideological measures.

Bradley succeeded Humphrey Wilblud as the minister of Redbourn in 1592, and was apparently of a more moderate temperament. He asserted the congeniality of his ministry to both the conformist and the reformist members of the parish, claiming that he 'wolde fainly winne them bothe unto god'.¹⁵⁶ Whether or not he managed to satisfy all groups from the wide spectrum of Protestant believers in his parish, he did manage to antagonise Anne, who complains that he failed to preach on a Christmas Day, and therefore accuses him of being 'two careless of his charge'.¹⁵⁷ Anne expresses significant misgivings about Bradley's proficiency, and the unearthing of a past sin after his appointment suggests that Bradley was not one of her close associates. Although there is no detail concerning what Bradley is accused of, Anthony's assertions to Anne that Bradley 'hath had full satisfaction and that he hathe caried himself honestly ^and studiously^ since he hathe bene with me' and has

¹⁵⁴ Hall, p. 4.

¹⁵⁵ Urwick, p. 118.

¹⁵⁶ Rodolphe Bradley to AB, 10 Feb 1596, LPL MS 655 fol. 33^r (art. 24).

¹⁵⁷ ACB to AB, 25 December, LPL MS 653 fol. 366^{r-v} (art. 207).

shown 'a manifest change and resolution to spende his tyme well' suggests that penitence has been made for a previous misdemeanour, and that Anne's concerns over his current character are unfounded. Bradley cultivated Anthony's patronage over Anne's, appealing on numerous occasions for Anthony's help in securing him a better living, and in turn Anthony used Bradley to watch over his household in his absence.¹⁵⁸ The absorption of Bradley into Anthony's household at Redbourn is proof of his stronger link to Anthony than to Anne, and the movement into Anthony's circle may well have been part of the reason for Anne's dislike of him.

In such circumstances it is surprising that Anne leapt to his defence when he was threatened by the ecclesiastical authorities, and indicates that Anne regarded her ownership of advowsons as a property right as much as an ideological tool. The incident that sparked this protection was the failure of Bradley to send a certificate to Edward Stanhope. What this certificate was to contain is unspecified, but it was possibly along the similar lines as the one Erasmus Cooke was required to provide, testifying to his conformity of practice as vicar of St Michael's. Bradley claimed that the document had been sent in good time, but that 'through the negligence of my messenger yt was not deliuered until the day after', and as a result Stanhope had excommunicated him.¹⁵⁹ Hearing of this circumstance Anne wrote a forthright letter to Stanhope, written with very little of the respectful caution that we had seen her using with Cecil when she petitioned for the nonconformists in 1584/5. 'Sir I cannot but maruell what aile yow Mr doctor still to vex ye godlie Ministers of Christ' she begins, emphasizing that this is one of many aggressive actions made by Stanhope against the puritans.¹⁶⁰ For the sake of her current argument, Bradley becomes 'an honest man and carefull by his godlie paines to make the gainsaying Spaniard peo-ple to become the people of god'. Anne praises Bradley's ministry and draws attention to the moderate nature of his preaching practices, claiming that he is neither a 'proud man ne[ither] carelesse of his

¹⁵⁸ Referring to prebendships: Rodolphe Bradley to AB, 1 May 1595, LPL MS 651 fol. 139^f (art. 85); 23 February 1596, MS 655 fol. 25^f (art. 18); 18 November 1596, MS 660 fol. 25^f (art. 21); 2 April 1597, MS 661 fol. 162^f (art. 110). Bradley's report on Anthony's men: 9 October 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 294^f (art. 196).

¹⁵⁹ Rodolphe Bradley to AB, 10 February 1596, LPL MS 655 fol. 33^f (art. 24).

¹⁶⁰ ACB to Edward Stanhope, 14 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655 fols 95^f-96^v (art. 68).

famelie, nor contentious'. Any reservations she may have had about his suitability to the role are banished in the face of official opposition, and Bradley's excommunication becomes an opportunity for her to vent her opinion concerning Stanhope's religious policies. Stanhope's action is also an affront to her rights as a patron, and she considers it her duty to defend Bradley as 'he was lawfully placed by me'. The aggressive and superior tone of the main body of the letter is markedly different from her final line, where she describes herself as 'your sicklie and antient Cosin late lord keeper's widow', alluding to their kinship connection in an attempt to gain more leverage for her argument. The reference to her husband's status is a rare example of Anne attempting to use the shadow of his authority to influence anyone other than her sons, and by referring to her widowed status she is utilizing the more traditional mode of persuasion used by female petition writers. The incongruity of the reminder of both her powerful status and pitiable status suggests that Anne finds the notion of writing a fully humble letter of petition to Stanhope rather difficult.

This letter is, however, a more toned down representation of her real opinion of Stanhope, as a candid letter to Anthony indicates the extent of her fury at his actions. In seeking a placement for a servant at the Doctors Commons, the college of ecclesiastical lawyers, Anne has written 'to my cosin Thomas Stanhopp in sted of Doctor Stanhopp, to whome I wyll never more write againe', as 'For though cosins he is A sore man to all ' and 'A Fylthy Adulterer yf not Fornicator too according too his Profession'.¹⁶¹ Anthony, unsurprisingly, approaches the situation with rather more tact than Anne. In attempting to persuade Stanhope to lift the excommunication, he informs him of Bradley's reason for the delay, and then leaves it to Stanhope's 'wyse consideration' whether or not the decision should be reversed, asking that 'yf yt please yow to agree the rather at my mothers request and mine' they would both be beholden to Stanhope 'in regard of the interest we share in the place whereof Mr Bradley holdeth the chardge.'¹⁶² Anthony presents the case as a joint appeal on the behalf of him and Anne, and despite Anne's reservations about his suitability for

¹⁶¹ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 248^r-249^v (art. 134).

¹⁶² AB to Edward Stanhope, 16 February 1596/7, LPL MS 655 fol. 1^{r-v} (art. 1).

the role, mother and son are united in their protection of their clerics from the reaches of the ecclesiastical authorities.

Household chaplains

Following Humphrey Wilblud's deprivation from Redbourn in 1592, Anne appointed him to the position of household chaplain at Gorhambury, an indication of the high value she placed on his ministry. In addition to Wilblud she also extended her hospitality to Percival Wiburn, who despite having been suspended on numerous occasions had retained canonries in Rochester and Westminster.¹⁶³ In return for her patronage, Wiburn seems to have taken on an informal chaplaincy role, visiting for extended periods throughout the year rather than remaining permanently at Gorhambury.¹⁶⁴ Wiburn's relationship with Anne extended back many years, and his long connection to the family endowed his position with a unique form of authority.¹⁶⁵

Those of gentry status had to acquire a licence from the bishop to appoint a chaplain and these seem to have been fairly easy to attain.¹⁶⁶ Domestic chaplains had to be registered with the Faculty Office of the archbishop of Canterbury, and they also had to obtain a dispensation to hold two benefices in plurality, which was a significant perk of the role.¹⁶⁷ Although there was a certain formality to these appointments, they were not subject to the same assessment that potential incumbents were, and provided a household with a religious figure not directly accountable to the bishop. The chaplain also provided freedom in terms of day-to-day religious practice, as they led prayers and read sermons in the household chapel, removing the necessity for the patron to attend the local

¹⁶³ C. S. Knighton, 'Percival Wiburn (1533/4-1606)', *ODNB* (<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/29346>, accessed 12 Sept 2009).

¹⁶⁴ Anne's references to Wiburn are most prevalent within specific timeframes, suggesting his presence at Gorhambury was occasional. Wiburn seems to have been staying with Anne in August 1593: ACB to AB, 14 August, LPL MS 653 fols 302^r-304^v (art. 166); ACB to AB, 9 August, LPL MS 653 fols 323^r-324^v (art. 179); and over the 1596 Christmas period: ACB to AB, 31 December 1596, LPL MS 653 fol. 316^{r-v} (art. 173). ACB to AB, 12 Jan 1596/7, LPL MS 654 fol. 297^{r-v} (art. 199).

¹⁶⁵ C. S. Knighton, 'Percival Wiburn', *ODNB*.

¹⁶⁶ William Gibson, *A Social History of the Domestic Chaplain, 1530-1840* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997) p. 15.

¹⁶⁷ Gibson, pp. 4-6. The register of the domestic chaplains held at Lambeth Palace Library runs from 1660, Gibson believes that records for before this date were lost in a fire so there are no records relating to Anne's formal appointment of chaplains. (Gibson, p. 199 note 21).

parish church.¹⁶⁸ They became a figure of authority for all members of the household, including their employees, offering them religious and moral guidance. Indeed household chaplains were seen to hold a very important role in providing a moral influence on members of the nobility, who were seen as particularly susceptible to worldly corruption.¹⁶⁹ William Gibson suggests that only rarely did the relationship between chaplain and patron break out of this 'master and servant' or 'spiritual guide and penitent' structure and move into the realm of 'mutual respect and friendship'.¹⁷⁰ For the women who developed these close relationships with their spiritual guides this friendship was often seen as potentially suspect by contemporaries, who thought opportunistic divines were taking advantage of women's natural propensity for religion for their financial gain.¹⁷¹ The suspicion aroused by these friendships in the early modern period is mirrored in the twentieth-century's eroticization of the patroness-chaplain relationship, with even Patrick Collinson being 'tempted' to describe these relationships as 'affairs', and Amanda Porterfield describing them as 'erotically charged'.¹⁷² While there may be a note of truth to this understanding of the link between the pair, as in the case of other zealous women such as Lady Margaret Hoby, it seems to be a modern solution to the problem caused by the failure to accept or understand how religion can be the key motivation behind these pairings.¹⁷³ Certainly for Anne this interpretation of the relationship seems entirely inappropriate and her contemporaries understood her relationships with

¹⁶⁸ Gibson, p. 70.

¹⁶⁹ Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 184.

¹⁷⁰ Gibson, p. 74.

¹⁷¹ Collinson, 'The Role of Women', in *Godly People*, p. 274.

¹⁷² Patrick Collinson *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p. 75; Amanda Porterfield, 'Women's attraction to Puritanism', *Church History*, 60 (1991), 196-209 (p. 199). The sexualisation of this relationship can be found in private contemporary comments as well, as this unpublished note from Ben Jonson shows: 'A gentlewoman fell in such a fantasy or frenzy with one Mr Dod, a puritan preacher, that she requested her husband that, for the procreation of an angel or saint, he might lie with her; which, having obtained, it was but an ordinary birth'. Quoted in Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters*, 2nd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 175.

¹⁷³ Hoby's intimate relationship with her chaplain is recorded in her diary entries, printed most recently as *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady: The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1633*, ed. by Joanna Moody (Stroud: Sutton, 2001).

the preachers in economic terms.¹⁷⁴ Edward Spencer, a servant at Gorhambury describes how she falls out with everyone in the household:

but with priests, which will undo her. There is one Page which had six pound on her. Mr Willcockes had a paper with a great deal of gold in it. Willblod had two quarterns of wheat. Dicke had something the other day; what I know not.¹⁷⁵

Thomas Wilcox, Humphrey Wilblud and William Dyke are the beneficiaries of Anne in financial as well as political terms. By emphasizing Anne's generosity in his letter to Anthony, Spencer reveals that the relationship between patron and chaplain induces anxiety because it diverts money away from the Bacon family.¹⁷⁶ Anne's financial incontinence is the real threat in this situation, and her hospitality towards both domestic chaplains and visiting preachers suggests that the speculations of Spencer may well have had an element of truth in them.

Anne's chaplains were been given access to the finest food and wine at Gorhambury, as she writes to thank Anthony 'For yowr Delicate wyne as Mr Wyborne sayth who tasted Fyrst it'.¹⁷⁷ It is not only the chaplains who are entertained so well. She asks Anthony if she can 'pearce 1 vessell of yowr owlde claret wyne' because 'I offer the white wyne but learned men and some others ask for claret'.¹⁷⁸ Although she claims this is an unusual request and 'not my custome but upon some neighbourly occasion', her hospitality extends beyond the mere provision of whatever is customarily available in the household to items specifically requested by her guests. That her offers of hospitality and material aid are regularly accepted by various clerics can be

¹⁷⁴ Daphne Du Maurier's speculation that Anne's contemporaries felt 'she might fall prey to one [suitor] of pronounced uritan tendencies, perhaps even a preacher of slender means' shows this eroticisation of that relationship at work, although this is in reference to the earliest period of her widowhood when such an outcome may have been considered more possible. *Golden Lads: A study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), p. 47.

¹⁷⁵ Edward Spencer to AB, 16 Aug 1594. LL, I, 312.

¹⁷⁶ HF, pp. 166-7.

¹⁷⁷ ACB to AB, 12 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654 fol. 297^{r-v} (art. 199).

¹⁷⁸ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 245^r-246^v (art. 133).

gleaned from her objection to her sons' retaining of one of her horses, which means she is without a horse 'For Frennd or A preacher'.¹⁷⁹

The chaplains appear to have been a shared resource travelling between the Bacon households to administer spiritual and practical advice. In one instance Anne writes to Anthony 'I thank yowr Brother For Mr Wylblud', and in another she asks whether she should send Wiburn to Twickenham 'to do goode unto my sonnes living without publyck ministry and private and holsome conference To styrr yow upp to remember the lorde and to serve him'.¹⁸⁰ The implication that Wiburn is being sent to provide moral guidance to her sons is not welcome news to her sons, and Anthony manages to deflect the visit by pleading ill health. Although Anne is 'sory' for 'this great chang of your health' she accepts his excuse, and writes that Wiburn's spiritual support of Anthony by letter will have to suffice for the moment.¹⁸¹ Ever the astute politician, Anthony's response to Wiburn reflects everything his concerned mother would wish to hear, reasoning that even though he has 'never felt so sorrier by paine' God has thought to 'sweeten it with some greater portion of inwarde comforte'.¹⁸²

Anthony may not wish to play host to Wiburn as much as Anne, but it is in his best interests to maintain a good relationship with him, not only in order to keep Anne satisfied of his religious convictions but also because of the role the chaplains play in caring for his mother. Anne frequently expresses her gratitude toward her chaplains for their care of her, writing on one occasion that 'I have ben more comfortable this christyd by the speciall Favor of God to me and my howshold by Mr Wybornes Fatherly and holsome heavenly instruction besyd the publick'.¹⁸³ And in another letter she thanks God for the 'comfortable company of Mr Wyborn and Wylblud'.¹⁸⁴ The general companionship they provide her with is just as important to her domestic welfare as their spiritual support, and they seem to offer her a quality of solace that Anthony and Francis are unwilling or unable to provide. Undoubtedly her sons recognize the

¹⁷⁹ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 320^r-321^v (art. 177).

¹⁸⁰ ACB to AB, 29 June 1592, LPL MS 648 fol. 177^{r-v} (art. 109); ACB to AB, 9 August [1593], LPL MS 653 fol. 323^r-324^v (art. 179).

¹⁸¹ ACB to AB, 14 August [1593], LPL MS 653 fol. 303^r (art. 166).

¹⁸² AB to Percival Wiburn, 15 August 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 162^r (art. 172).

¹⁸³ ACB to AB, 12 January 1596/7, LPL MS 654 fol. 297^{r-v} (art. 199).

¹⁸⁴ ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 103).

importance of Wilblud and Wiburn's role in caring for Anne, and can see that they release some of the burden of attending to her, hence the respect with which they treat them.

Anthony and Francis also attempt to take advantage of this close relationship between their mother and her chaplains by enlisting them to try and defuse domestic conflict. When Anne falls out with her servant Edward Spencer Anthony attempts to use the influence of Wiburn to persuade her to take him back, writing that 'I hope mr wyborn and mr wilplet [Wilblud?] will trewlie and indifferentlie aduertice to your Ladyship' how sorry Edward is of her 'displeasure and readie to acknowledge and repaire his faults'.¹⁸⁵ Anne finds this method of persuasion deeply offensive, responding that 'it is but cownterfayt whatsoever he [Spencer] moveth yow and mr wyborn to write'.¹⁸⁶ Anthony seems to have overestimated the extent of their influence over his mother in terms of domestic matters, and this suggests that their instruction over her was limited only to the spiritual realm. Although Anne's respect for her religious guides is deep, their godliness does not override their position as her social inferiors, a situation that has been noted in the case of relationships between other puritan peers and their protégés.¹⁸⁷

Effective patronage

Anne Bacon is often dismissed as a fanatical puritan patroness, indiscriminate in her support for nonconformist ministers and entirely lacking in the sort of political acumen needed to influence such situations. However, as I have demonstrated, her utilization of the resources available to her as a widowed gentlewoman instead reveal her to be a careful negotiator of the complex system of ecclesiastical appointments, within a fraught political climate. By making use of the power available through her control of the advowsons she attempted to install ministers compatible with her religious beliefs in her local parishes, and when this influence was curtailed she sought alternative means by which to maintain the reformist dynamic through her funding of lectureships.

¹⁸⁵ AB to ACB, 22 May 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 132^r-133^v (art. 85).

¹⁸⁶ ACB to AB, 25 May 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 121^r-122^v (art. 79).

¹⁸⁷ Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 745.

Her close contact with the local puritan community shows she was reacting to the religious climate of the region, rather than dictating what form it should take, and indicates the collaborative nature of the puritan laity's fight for reform. Presenting a united front with Anthony when faced with an external threat to their patronage rights illustrates that her behaviour was more politic than has previously been acknowledged. The strength of her kinship ties provided her with another method by which to petition for her cause, and her willingness to make use of newly formed connections shows a flexible approach. The emotion expressed in her letters, so often read as the outpourings of an hysterical fanatic, can therefore be rooted in the context of the very real threat to the personal liberties of her family.

Conclusion

Anne, Lady Bacon's life as understood through her letters presents a picture of a powerful, intelligent and verbally dextrous woman, but one who did not suffer fools gladly. Her reputation has been unjustly haunted by accusations of madness, and whilst it is fair to assert that she was certainly eccentric and forthright, her letters from the period 1592 to 1596 demonstrate a figure very much in control of her mental faculties and aware of the opposition she faced in achieving her religious and political aims. Patrick Collinson has interpreted Anne's irascible tone as a consequence of her 'intellectual frustration', and perhaps her epistolary style would not have altered even if her sons had behaved impeccably.¹ However, my thesis reads this tone of maternal discontent as a direct result of Anne's dissatisfaction with the actions of Anthony and Francis, and has provided an alternative rationale for her epistolary style.

Recognising that Anne's letters have not been accorded the full attention that they warrant, I have transcribed her letters as far as possible and provided a thorough outline of her epistolary habits in order to fully contextualise their production, conveyance and reception. Through such an assessment Anne is shown to be a sophisticated letter-writer adept at modifying her writing to suit the context within which it is produced. Anne altered her content and mode of expression in response to the identity of the bearer, a practice that demonstrates how her letters were shaped by the pressures of the wider epistolary culture, and an aspect that I consider throughout the thesis.

One of the first questions that arose when I began to read Anne's letters was how far the lack of affection expressed towards her sons reflected wider maternal practice, or whether it indicated the existence of an uncaring relationship. To unravel this problem I sought to contextualise the maternal relationship in the period, and to compare the terms of address and expressions of affection used in other mother-son correspondences. Having explored the historiography of family relations I discovered that, apart from certain

¹ 'Sir Nicholas Bacon and the Elizabethan *Via Media*', in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism*, Patrick Collinson (London: The Hambledon Press, 1983), pp. 135-153 (p. 151).

conventions dictating modes of address and social courtesy, the nature of the relationship was peculiar to each mother and son unit. Although there are expressions of care and warmth found within the letters, the failure of both parties to fulfil the expectations pertaining to their role is what creates a tone of discord that tends to dominate their correspondence, and which has overshadowed her other modes of expression.

Anne's brother-in-law, William Cecil, understood that the nature of her control over her sons stemmed in part from her education and status, and he assures her that 'your care for them is no lesse then they both deserue, beinge so qualified in learninge and vertue'.² Such an opinion illustrates how pivotal Anne's earlier forays into print publication were to the authority she wielded in the later part of her life. Investigating her agency in the production of these texts has shown how she mobilised the space of the dedicatory epistle to demonstrate her support for the evangelical cause. Anne's awareness of humanist literary conventions meant that she recognised the efficacy of printed letters for moulding public reputation, and consequently harnessed the form to fashion a less extreme Protestant persona for herself.

By providing a chronological account of her appearances in print I have been able to show how the erosion of public spheres available for the expression of nonconformist sentiment pushed Anne from literary patronage towards more covert means to promote puritan aims. It is in this area particularly that her letters prove highly revealing, as they detail how she used every available avenue of power to achieve her aims of protecting and promoting puritan clerics. They also provide a more personal perspective on the nature of her relationship with her protégés, and offer insight into the religious practices a local puritan community. The surprise outcome of this area of research was the extent to which Anne and Anthony colluded in their placement of clerics. Anthony's support for his mother's desires in this area demonstrates the existence of a more co-operative aspect of their relationship that has often gone unnoticed, and illustrates that by focusing on Anne's role as a puritan patron it is possible to draw out a different interpretation of her relationship with her son.

² WC to ACB (copy), 29 August 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 276^{r-v} (art. 180).

This thesis has contributed to the wider field of the study of the Cooke sisters and their intellectual achievements. The discussion of her epistolary habits sheds light on Anne's early education, and provides a context for investigation of her sisters' letters. By outlining the nature of her religious patronage it has been possible to reject the claim that Anne was the less politically active of the siblings. Anne's letters show evidence for her continued association with her sister, Elizabeth, and although this relationship has not been explored in my thesis, it is apparent that they offered support and friendship to one another. My research has also added to the studies of women's writings, and Anne's letters can be set alongside the diaries of Anne Clifford, countess of Pembroke, Dorset, and Montgomery, and Margaret, Lady Hoby, and the letters of Honor, Lady Lisle and Brilliana, Lady Harley, as a fruitful source for the discovery of the intellectual, spiritual and quotidian practices of early modern gentlewomen. My research offers fresh insight into the role of the mother in the period, and provides examples of the intensity of the parent-child bond that supports the theory of the continuity of emotion between the pre- and post-1700 period. The analysis of one subject's epistolary habits, and particularly my focus on the impact of the practical elements of the letter-writing process, provides a useful case study for research into all types of letters in the early modern period.

There are, however, several areas that fall outside the scope of this thesis, and an examination of these subjects would be important for the establishment of an in-depth outline of Anne's life. An investigation into her estate management would, I believe, yield much information regarding the scope of the widow's role in this capacity. Such a focus would also allow for a fuller assessment into her relations with her servants and tenants, who are mentioned frequently in her letters. It would also be interesting to analyse her legal activities, as there are references to several different attempts at lawsuits in the letters. Assessing her conceptualisation of her legal identity would provide another sphere of her influence which to investigate, and I suspect this would reveal an additional area where Anne and her sons can be seen to act in a unified fashion.

Our knowledge of the biographical details of her earlier and later life is scant compared to the period in which the letters have been written, and it would

require some intensive archival sleuthing to piece together a satisfactory bookend to her life in the 1590s. Such an endeavour is long overdue, and although this thesis was never intended to be a work of biography I have come across intriguing references to her earlier life in her letters, which could (with external verification) be used to flesh out the skeleton of her life history. Another potential area for development would be a methodical examination of the Anthony Bacon Papers, as some of the most enlightening comments about Anne appear in letters by writers who were not her close associates. The size of this collection may inhibit such a line of research, however it may be made more possible by the growing number of studies of individuals that feature within the collection.³ But the biggest obstacle by far to studying Anne Bacon remains the lack of an edition of her letters. Producing an electronic edition would be the logical next step to this project, and could make this unique correspondence widely accessible for scholars from different fields.

A larger problem that my thesis grapples with is one of hermeneutics. For while my entire project is based on the premise that it is possible to infer historical evidence for Anne's roles from her letters, it is important to recognise the often shaky nature of the source material. In an article arguing for the importance of poststructuralist critique to renaissance studies, Karen Newman suggests that 'the histories the letters effect can, of course, never be fully readable', and cites a passage from the Lisle letter collection that contains 'traces of what may perhaps be, but then again may not be, sexual practices that adumbrate a chapter in the history of early modern sexuality'.⁴ Newman continues:

The rhetoric of the letter prompts us to attend to the inevitable gap between text and what we term history. Between any scriptural "I" and its historical subject there is always a distance foregrounded by epistolarity, and particularly by the material practices of the sixteenth-

³ Doctoral and Masters level studies are currently being conducted of Thomas Bodley and Nicholas Faunt respectively at the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters, Queen Mary, University of London.

⁴ 'Sundry Letters, Worldly Goods: The Lisle Letters and Renaissance Studies', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 26 (1996), 139-152 (p. 148).

century letter, the product of many hands, an intercourse that circulates from hand to hand, thereby foregrounding the signature's insistent declaration of the nonpresence of the signer ⁵

Newman therefore reads the Lisle letters 'rhetorically, in terms of how textual effects constitute history, ideology, politics', and this is a methodology that my thesis has mostly shied away from.⁶

In discussing the limitations of my work Newman's argument seems pertinent for Anne's letters on several levels. Anne's free-flowing writing style combined with minimal punctuation and idiosyncratic spelling often produces disjointed passages that skip from one topic to another in a seemingly unrelated fashion, making her meaning ambiguous. In Chapter Five I noted the passionate manner in which Anne articulated her fury at Edward Stanhope, the High Commissioner who was attempting to block one of her clerical appointments, by calling him a 'A Fylthy Adulterer yf not Fornicator too according too his Profession.'⁷ I suggested that this slur could be explained by his actions, and seems to refer specifically to his obstruction of Bradley's position. However the following sentence casts a different light on this interpretation, as she continues, 'Blackwells wyffe is noted in the strete as she goeth & pointed at as his harlot.' Read beside my original interpretation this may show how Anne's description of Stanhope's actions in terms of metaphors of sexual incontinency has triggered an association with a similar sort of misbehaviour, and has impelled her to slip in a sentence on an apparently unrelated subject. On the other hand it could be a reference to the publicly acknowledged fact of Stanhope's sexual activities, and an implication that Stanhope is understood to be conducting a relationship with another man's wife. The evidence to prove Anne's claim for Stanhope's literal fornication might always prove elusive, but it is perhaps important to acknowledge that such an ambiguity exists. The disjunction of these sentences illustrates how her writing practice owes more to stream-of-consciousness mode of expression than to a linear thinking and writing process, and a closer

⁵ Newman, pp. 148-149.

⁶ Newman, pp. 149.

⁷ ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 248^r (art. 134).

analysis of her style could perhaps reveal more about how these connections are formed, and whether they are in any way illustrative of the manner in which she interprets the world.

From a more material perspective, the problem of interpreting Anne's letters extends beyond the rhetorical and to the difficulty of her handwriting, which adds another layer of obfuscation. With Anne (as with other letter writers) there are words and passages that remain illegible, sentences that are incoherent, references that remain obscure. But rather than being entirely disheartened by this state of affairs it seems to me that it is important to not be deterred from reading and analysing her letters, and instead to accept them as an imperfect and unstable resource, that can still illuminate pockets of knowledge about her life. In practical terms the more areas of her life are explored, the greater our vocabulary and terms of reference grows, which often helps to complete words that had until then proved utterly puzzling. The rewards of the letters definitely outweigh their frustrations.

Letters are a particularly fruitful source for understanding social relations, as substantial letter-collections are likely to contain letters multiple recipients. It is therefore possible to see how the writer changes their persona depending on the identity of the addressee, a modulation that emphasises the dangers of reading letters as an uninhibited example of the writer's self-expression. Anne's correspondence is particularly vivid in this respect, and her letters to William and Robert Cecil and the earl of Essex demonstrate how significantly her tone alters in relation to the status of the addressee. In writing to the earl she is careful to emphasise his noble and worthy state, even when she is reprimanding him for immoral behaviour, yet this deferential tone is sharply undercut by her negative appraisal of his character in her letters to Anthony and Francis.⁸ Likewise the respect accorded to Robert and William Cecil in her letters to them is converted into splenetic diatribe about their supposedly all-powerful union in her letters to her sons.

In contrast her terms of address towards Anthony are consistent across her entire correspondence - her complaints about his behaviour are expressed in

⁸ For her praise of Essex see ACB to EE (copy), 1 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 149^r-150^v (art. 108); for her criticism see ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fols. 331^r-332^v (art. 223).

the same fashion whether she is writing to her son or to another recipient. This suggests that Anthony acts as a neutral epistolary subject with whom she does not need to inhibit her self-expression. Her epistolary relationship with her son therefore provides her with a space to articulate her candid opinions, and her letters offer a version of her character that is less distorted by the confines of social convention than other biographical sources. Although her letters are complex documents, both materially and rhetorically, they nevertheless enable an unconstrained voice to emerge, one that is so rarely found in the writings of women of this period.

APPENDIX

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1. ACB to WC, 26 February 1584/5, BL MS Lansdowne 43 fols 119^r-120^v.

/fol. 119^r/ I know well, myne speciall goode Lorde, it becommeth me not to be troublesome unto your ^{^honor^} tto at eni other tyme, but now cheffly in this season of your greatest affayrs and small or no leasure but yet because yesterdayes moving spech, as in that I was extraordinarily admitted yt was your Lordship Favor so Fearing to stay to long I cowlde not so playnly speak ner so well receive your Answer therto as I wolde truly and gladly in that matter, I am bowlde by this writing to enlarge the same more playnly and to what ende I did mean. yt may like your good Lordship, the report of the late conference at lambath hath ben so handled to the discrediting of those learned that labor For right Reformation in the ministry of the gospell that it is no small greff of mynde to the Faythfull prechers. because the matter is thus by the othersyde caried away as though the ^{^ir^} cause cowlde not ~~net~~ sufficiently be warranted by the worde of god. For the which proffe [proof] they have long ben sadd sutors and wolde most humbly crave still both of god in heaven whose cause it is and of her majestie their moste excellent sovereign here in Earth that they might obtain qwiett and convenient Audience ether before her majestie her selff whose hart is in god his hande to towch and to turne or before your honors of the cownsell whose wysdome they greatly Reverence. and yf they can not strongly prove before you owt the worde of god that Refor-mation which they so long have called and cryed For to be according to christ his own ordinance, then to lett them be reiected with shame owt of the church For ever. and that this may be the better don to the glory of god and tru understanding of this great cause, they reqwyre Fyrst leave to assemble and to consult together purposely, which they have Forborn to do. For avoyding suspetion of privat conventicles. For hetherto though in some writing they have declared the state of their yea god his cause, yet were they never allowed to conferr together and so together be hard Fully. but now some one and then some two called upon a soden unprepared to Fore prepared, to catch them rather then gravely and moderatly to be hard to defend their right and goode cause, and therefore For such weyght weyghty conference they appeale to her majesty and ^{^her^} honorable wyse cownsell whom God hath placed in hyghest authority [authority] For thadvancement of his kingdom and Refuse the Byshopps ^{^For judges^} who are

parties partiall in their own defence because the seek more wordly Ambition then the glory of Christ Jesus. For myn own part my goode lorde I wyll not deny but as I may heare them in their publick exercyses as A cheff duty commanded by God to [bee done]⁹, also I confess as one that hath Fownde mercy that I have profyted more in the in warde Feeling knowledg of God his holy wyll though but in in A small measure, by such syncere and sownd opening of the scrypture by ^an^ ordinary preaching, which in these 7 or 8 yers then I dyd by hearing ^odd^ sermons at powles well nigh 20 yers together. I mencion this unfaynedly the rather to excuse this my bowldeness toward your lordship. humbly beseching your lordship to think upon their sute and as god shall move your understanding hart to Further yt. and yf opportunitie wil not be had as they require, yet I once again in humble wyse am a suter

For thinnes of the paper I write in thother leaff For myn yll eyes

/fol. 120^v/ A suter unto your lordeshipp that you wolde be so goode as to chewse ij or iij of them which your lykes best and lycence them before your own selff or ether at your pleasure to declare and to prove the Troth of the cause, with A quiet and ^an^ attentyve ware. I have harde them say or now they wyll not come to dispute and argew to brede contention which is the maner of the Byshopps hearing, but to be suffred pateently to lay down before them that shall command they they Excepted, how well and certainly they can warrant by the infalliable towchstone of the worde the substantiall and mayn grownde of their cause. Surely my lorde I am perswaded you shulde do god acceptable service herin and For the very entier Affection I owe and do beare unto your honor, I wysh From the very hart that to your other Rare gyftes sundry wyse you were Fully enstructed and satisfied in this princypall matter so contemned of the great Rabyes to the dishonoring of the gspell so long amongst us. I am so much bownd to your lordship. For your comfortable dealing towards me and myne. as I do incessantly desyre that by your lordship meanes God his Glory may more and more be promoted the greved godly comforted and you and yours abowndantly blessed. none is prevy to this. and in dede though I heare them, yet I see them very seldome.

⁹ These two words are unclear from the original letter, and are supplied by the copy, BL MS Lansdowne 115 fol. 125 (art. 55).

I trust your Lordship will accept in best part my best meaning.

in the lorde dutifully and most hartely

ABacon

/fol 120^v/ To my very goode lorde the lorde Tresurer of England

Endorsed: 26 Feb 1584

The Lady Bacon

too ij prechors

that they might bee copied allowed to shew their reasons before the Queen and her Counsel.

2. ACB to AB, 3 February [1591/2], LPL MS 653 fols 343^r-344^v (art. 192).

/fol. 343^r/ The grace of God be dayly multiplied in yow, with mercy in Christ owr Lorde.

that yow are Retorned now at length, I am right glad. god Bless it to us both. But when I harde with all that Lawson, who I Foresuspected stale hence unto yow, and so belyk hath wrought upon yow again to to yowr hurt to serve his own Turn as heretofore, how welcome that cowlde be to yowr long greeved mother judg yow. I can hardly say whether yowr gout or his company was the worst tidings I have entreated this gentleman mr Faunt to somuch kindeness For me as to Jorny to yow, because yowr Brother is preparing yowr logging at grayesInne very care Fully For yow. I thanke god that Mr Faunt was willing so to do and was very glad because he is not only an honest gentleman in civill Behavior, but one that Feareth God in dede, and is wyse with all having experience of owr state, and is able to advyse yow both veri wysely and Fren-ly[?] For he loveth yowr selff and needeth ^not^ your L as others have and yet dissemble with you: he doth me pleasure in this, For I cowlde not have Fownd Another so very mete For yow and me in all the best and most necessary respects. use him therafter goode sonne and make much of such and of their godly and sownde ^Frendly^ counsell. This one cheffest cownsell your Christian and Naturall mother doth geve yow even before the lorde. that Above all wordly respects yow carie yowr selff even at yowr first coming as one that doth unfeinedly possess the Tru Religion of christ and hath the love of the Truth now by long continuance Fast settled in yowr hart and that with Judgement, wysedome and discretion, and are not ether Afrayd or Ashamed to Testify the same by hearing and delighting in those Religious Exercises of the syncerer sort be they French or Englysh. in *hoc noli adhibere fratrem tuum ad consilium aut exemplum. sed plus dehinc yf* yow wylbe wavering which god Forbid God Forbyd, you shall have example and ill encorage to many in these dayes. and that αρχ Βισσ since he was βουλευτης εστι απολεια της εκκλησιας μεθ ημων φιλεια γαρ την εαυτου δοξαν πλεον της δοξης του Χριστου.¹⁰ Beware therefore and be constant in godly profession without Faynting and that From yowr hart.

¹⁰ 'That Archbishop since he was a councillor, is the destruction of our church, for he loves his own glory more than the glory of Christ.' Transcription and translation, *LL*, I, p. 112.

For Formalitee wanteth none with us but to ^{^to^} common. Be not readi of spech nor talk sodenly but where discretion reqwireth and that soberly then. For the propertie of owr worlde is to sownd out at First coming and after to contemn [?]. Curtesy is necessary, but [æmm] to common Familiaritee in talkyng and wordes is veri unprofitable and not without Hurttaking *ut nunc sunt tempora*. Remember yow have no Father. And yow have litle inowgh yf not to litle Regarded yowr kinde and no symple mothers holsome advyse From time to time. and as I do impute all most humbly to the grace of god whatsoever he hath bestowed upon me. So dare I affirme it had ben goode For yow everi way yf yow had Followed it long er this. But god is the forme who is able to heale both mynde and Bodie. whome In Christ I besech to be yowr mercyfull Father and to take care of yow gwyding yow with [høly] his holy and most comfortable spirit now and ever. *Amen* [Hebrew?] let not lawson that foxe be acqwanted with my lettres. I disdayn both it ^{^and^} him he commonly opened undermyningly all lettres sent to you From counsell or Friends I know it and yow may to much yf God open your Eyes. as I trust he wyll send it back to be sure by Mr Faunt sealed. but he wyll pry and prattle so Fare you well and the Lorde Bless you and kepe you From evell.

3 February yowr mother ABacon

I trust yow with yowr servants use prayor twyse in a day having ben where Reformation is. omitt it not For eny. it wilbe yowr best credit to serve the lorde duly & reverently. & you wylbe observed at the First now yowr Brother is so negligent herin. but do yow well & Zealously it wilbe lookt For of the best ^{^learned^} sorte. & that is best.

/fol. 344^v/: To my sonne Anthony Bacon geve this

Endorsed: Lettre de Madame

3. ACB to AB, 29 February 1591/2, LPL MS 648 fols 6^r-7^v (art. 4).

/fol. 6^r/ Gratiam et salutem in christo

I am looking For Redborn writings. yow will not think how loth most part of the neybors be you shulde sell it Away. some counsell rather to lease it as much better. They counsell to sell colneyey chappell, and meriden lease or some such smaller thing. though less did ryse yet one might borow some. god sende yow above all his true and Feare in yowr hart and goode health to do yowr long discontinued duty to her majestie and cowntry. I pray yow be carefull. and kepe goode diet and order. it is here marvelous colde and sharpe, too sharpe yet For yow I think. on Thursday or ~~wens-day~~ Fryday I mean to be at London yf the Lorde wyll be so. many syck hereabouts and one of my howsholde since I came. Yf I come not shortly I wyll send yowr Boy who is trobled with colde and wylling to be with yow I wolde gladly yow had well seene her majestie but be in some good state of health Fyrst and regard it carefully For eny. with god his blessing The lorde kepe you Both From evell and gwyde your wayes to please him and encrease yowr health. looke well to your servants and ^{^to^} yowr own things. Gorhambury *ultimo* February 1591 yowr mother ABacon

/fol. 7^v/: To my sonne Anthony Bacon at Grayes Inn

Endorsed: lettre de madame 1591

4. ACB to AB, 17 May 1592, LPL MS 648 fols 167^r-168^v (art. 103).

/fol. 167^r/ God bless yow dayly more and more both in sowle and bodie I send to know how yow do. For my selffe I am but *languescens* but in goode chere and comfort I thank god. The goodeman Rolff my Tenant at Burston but lately recovered is desyrous to see yow. he is An honest man and a kinde Tenant. and of discretion and dealing. I sent my man Bury to direct him and to see yow and your Brother how it is with yow both. I humbly thank god For the comfortable company of Mr Wyborn and Wylblud. Thei may greatly be Afraide of God his displeasure which works the woefull disapointing of god his worke in his vineyard by putting such to silence in these bowlde stirring dayes *haud impune Ferent* come when it shall. god encrease in yow true knowledg and stablish your hart in the love of his Eternall truth. *cura ut valeas* Gorhambury 17 Maii 1592.

Your mother ABacon

Think on your dett. wysely. be not overruled still by subtile and hurtful hangers on.

/fol. 168^v/ To my sonne Anthonie Bacon

Endorsed: lettre de madame ma mere de Gorhambury receue ce 18eme May 1592

5. ACB to AB, 17 April [1593], LPL MS 653 fols 318^r-319^v (arts. 175 and 176).

/fol. 318^r/ For yowr brotherly care of yowr Brother Francis state yow are to [^]be[^] well lyked and so I do as A christian mother that loveth yow both as the chyldern of god but as I wrote but in Few wordes but yesterday by my neighbor. The state of yow Both doth much disqwiet me as in greeke wordes I signified shortly I am sure ye both do or shulde remember what I sayde to and of yow both at my coming hether speaking of myn own syckliness and styll langwishing strength strength and [^]so lyke[^] of but short continuance. that I was in mynde allmost to make none of [^]yow both[^] myn executors as well For my Buriall as I dyd wyll as also that those that greatly abused and spent yow both and with whome yow were so besotted to [^]my[^] very harts greeffe shulde beare eny stroke in my appointed matters [^]and hows[^] after my death. and truly but For evydence I am still in the same mynde. and how god wyll dispose my mynde herein as yet I know not goodes shall I leave none as mony or plate. as I may with god his leave I wyll geve to my servants before as I am able. I have ben too ready For yow both till nothing is left. and surely though I pitie your Brother. yet so long as he [^]pitieth not him selff but[^] keepeth that Bloody peerce as I towlde him then, yea as A coch companion and Bed companion A proud [^]prophane[^] costly Fellow, whose being about him I verely [^]Feare[^] the lorde god doth mislyke and [^]doth[^] less bless yowr Brother in credit and other wyse in his health. surely I am utterly discouraged [^][and] make A conscience^{^11} Further to undoe my selff to maytein such wretches as he is. [^]that[^] Jones never loved yowr Brother in dede but For his own creditt lyving upon your Brother [^]and thankless braggs[^] though [^]but[^] your brother wylbe Blynd to his own hurt. and picking such vyle his wycked cowntry men to supply [^]in[^] his absence. The lorde in mercy remove them From him and evell From yow both. and geve yow A sownd judgment and understanding to order yourselffs in all things to please god in tru knowledge and in his tru Feare. unfeyned and to harken to his worde which onely maketh wyse in dede. besydes yowr Brother towlde me before yow twyse [^]then[^] that he entended not to parte with markes. and the rather because mr mylls wolde send him 500^{li} and as I remember I asked him how he wolde

¹¹ Scruple.

come out of dett. his answer was meanes wolde be made without that. and I mencioned Jeningsⁱⁱ and cornellis. it is most certain tyll First Enney A Fylthy wastfull knave and his Welch men one after Another For take one and they wyll still swarm ill Favoredly ^did so lende him as in a train^ he was A towards yowng gentleman and A sonne of much goode hope in godliness. but [words illegible] he hath norished most synfull Prowd villans wyfully

[right margin] I know not what other Answer to make. God bless yow both with his grace and goode health to serve him with truth of harte. make not errors in your phisyck tyme

Gorhambury 17 April ABacon.

/fol. 319'/ [art. 176] yf yowr brother desyre A release to Mr Harvy let him so reqwyre it him ^selff^ and but upon this condition by his own hande and bonde I wyll not. that is that he ^he^ make and geve me A true note of all his detts and leave to me the hole order of the receit of ^all^ his mony For his lande to Harvy and the Just payment of all his detts thereby. and by the mercy and grace of god it shalbe performed by me to his qwiet discharge without combring him and to his credit For I wyll not have his cormorant seducers and instruments of satan to him committing Fowle synns by hiss his cowntenance to the displeasing of god and his godly true Friends otherwyse I wyll not. *pro certo*.

AB

Endorsed: Lettre de madame receue ce 17 eme Auril

6. FB to ACB (copy), 9 June 1594, LPL MS 650 fol. 217^{r-v} (art. 140).

/fol. 217^r/ my humble dewtie remembered I was sorry to understand by Goodman Cotheram that your Ladyship did finde anie weaknes which I hope was but caused by the season and weather whiche waxeth more hot and faint I was not sorry I assure your Ladyship that yow came not up in regard that the stirringe at this tyme of year and the place where yow should lye not beinge very open nor freshe mought rather hurt your Ladyship then otherwise. And for any thinge to be passed to Mr Trot suche is his kindness as he demandeth it not and therefor as I am to thanke your Ladyship for your willingness, so it shall not be needful But uppon suche an occasion as maie be without your trouble which the rather be bycause I purpose to [^]god willinge[^] come to downe and it be but for a daie to visit your Ladyship and to doe my dewtie to yow In the meane tyme I praie your Ladyship as yow haue done the parte of a good chrrstian and saint of god in the comfortable preparing for your dutie So neuerthelesse I praie denie not your body the dew nor your children and frends and the church of god which hath use of yow but that yow enter not into funder conceyte then is cause and withal use all comfortes and helps that are good for your health and strength, In treuth I hard Sir Thomas Scidmore [Scudamore] often complaine, after his quartein had left him that he founde suche an heauiness and swellinge spetiallie under his ribbes that he thought he was buried under earthe half from the waste and therefore that accident is but incident. Thus I commend your Ladyship to gods good preservation from Greaise Inne this 9th of June 1594.

Your Ladieship's most obedient sonne

Fr Bacon

It maie be I shall haue occasion bycause nothings is yet done in the cheyce of a Solicitor to visit the courte this vacacion which I haue not nowe done this monethes [word obscured] in which respecte bycause carriadge stuffe to and fro spoylethe it. I would be glad of that light bed of stryped stuffe which your Ladyship hath yf you haue not otherwise disposed it

/fol. 217^v/ Mr Fr Bacon to my Lady Ann Bacon 1593

Endorsed: Copie de la letter de monsieur francois bacon A madame le 9eme de Juin 1594

7. ACB to AB, 25 May 1593, LPL MS 649 fols 121^r-122^v (art. 79).

/fol. 121^r/ it is but cownterfayt whatsoever he moveth yow and mr wyborn to write. in dede as I might I kept him From his Former starting to the Town to Tiple which liberty he will craftely seeke and loves to well he is but an Irefull pevish Fellow yf he be looked into and checked For his loose [*word illegible*]. from which I restrained him. and how yowr houskeper and others ryght emboldned him I know not but sure I am he purposely wrangled to be gone diverse tymes. but that he was For a soldior I had parted with him or this and I care not For his servyce let him go lyke A prowde ignorant varlot. let him be talking and stepp abroad ^{^unseasonably^} and cloake ^{^it^} with lyes. he is lyke him selff. I trust to have some honest man For my horses never prospered since he came to them he wylbe ready to borow and pay at leasure. that which he had of me fownd him well in my service but he had a secret nawghty vent¹² and so wyll still warrant yow yf he once may after A while dissembling get A litle credit. god send yow encrease of his grace and Favor and health. how doth Barly. The linen sometyme next weeke, Pierre weepes for new cloths. I wyll pay For it and let his apparell be made here except his cote or elce made more large, the last was but spoyled by redborn Taylor made so scant. and Taylors now so abhominably scant both mens and boyes hose before that there Fylthiness is readye to be sene upon every stepp going or stopping. A most beastly and sinful custome now. so ungodly becomes England under the holy and pure gospel yf yow wolde have your horse here in the soyle. send worde how to be ordred in writing and how long. onselow mendes slowly yf he do. god helpe me.

Your mother AB

/fol. 122^v/: To my sonne Mr Antony Bacon at Grayes Inne

Endorsed: lettre de madame recue ce 25 may 1593

¹² Way to dispose goods by sale.

8. AB to ACB, 8 June 1593, LPL MS 649 fol. 187^{r-v} (art. 120).

/fol. 187^r/ my duty most humblie remembred: with late thankes to your Ladyship for increasinge my ^{^small^} store of lynninge: according to your Ladyship's wyse counsell I haue begone and thankes be to god thefore and meane to continewe to ineure my selff as much I can to ^{^the^} open ayre: Mr Crewe is not yet returned from Twitnham [Twickenham] which is the cause I keepe Sir Thomaa Brockets letter to show unto him, mr Castor the French minister, and the Printer of that booke which Mr Bezea sent your Ladyship and to me at the same ^{^tyme^} that Bashford desired to know yf your Ladyship would wright or commande anythinge to mr Bezea, who ^{^both^} to be plaine with your Ladyship gaue me at their first cominge and now likewise to understande that mr ^{^bezea^} expected more then a lettre from your Ladiship, in consideration whereof as also to reviuie my ancient acquaintance with the good ould father, I was bould to sende him in your Ladyships name and myne owne ~~a girdle of gould~~ a present ^{^not of spare monie^} ~~to the value of xx markes~~ but otherwise imployed to the valewe of xx markes accompanied with a lettre of myne owne to himself and two more to two other of my especiall frends at Geneue and so I most humblie take my leuve beseching God longe to preserue your Ladyship: Graise Inne the 8th of June.

hauinge ended my lettre mr Crewe ariued after supper from Twytynham who after I had redd Sir Thom Brockets lettre said, he _____ he looked for as mucche at his handes and yet seeinge yt hath pleased your Ladyship to make choice of him your Lady must now expect what his Cosen will doe of him self or by his procurement may yt please your Ladyship to excuse Bashford for staienge for my only occasion.

/fol. 187^v/ **Endorsed:** Une lettre A Madame le 8eme Juin 1593.

9. AB to ACB, 22 September 1593, LPL MS 649 fol 312^{r-v} (art. 208).

/fol. 312^r/ My most humble dewtie remembred. as I thought it my parte by my last letter first aduer ^{^first to^} advertised your Ladyship of my purpose to goe to the Bath and then to present my humble and trewe excuses, that I could not absent myself from ~~this~~ place hence for that like tyme, I am to remaine here, by reason of the continuall occasions I haue eyther to sende unto or to heare from the Earle of Essex and my Brother in Court, so havinge understood my your man Winter to my great greef the continuance of your Ladiships sickness, I am most humble to besech your Ladiship to let me knowe whither my presence maie be anie waie seruicable to your Ladyship before my departure, beinge no lesse redie then bounde to preferre the performance of such a dewtie before the respects [?] aboue mentioned, maie yt please your Ladiship herefore not to make anie difficultie to command my personall attendance, for your ladyships service and contentment, otherwise with your Ladyships good leaue, I continue my resolution purposed iourney so soone as I haue harde from my Brother Bacon as for the litter I humblie thanke your Ladyship ~~I haue no nedefull hereof~~ ^{^It shall not need^} hauing otherwise accommodated my self: the service of Richarde ^{^the Cooke^} seinge it pleaseth your Ladyship to spare him I shall be willinge to imploie and will sende for him after I haue harde out of Suffolk my Brother cam yester nyght from the Courte unlooked for in my Lord of Essex Coatche and is returned hether againe this morninge, I cannot tell in what termes to acknowledge the deserte of the Earles unspeakable kindness towards us both, but namelie to him now at a pinche [?], which by gods helpe shortlie will appeare by good effects surlie madame I must need confesse that ~~he will~~ besechinge god to giue us the ^{^grace and ^}meanes to be thankfull therefore, the earle declareth him self more like a father then a frende unto him and doubte not, but yf that he that should be first doe but seconde the Earle, that these gifts which god hath bestowed of my Brother shall lie no longer fallowe, And so besechinge the Almightye to giue your Ladiship spirituall strength and ~~comfor~~ comforte whereby yow maie supporte with a Christian patience thyne bodelie Bodelie visitation what euer it shall please him in mercie to laie upon yow I most humblie take my leaue.

Twicknam Parke this 22 of September

Anth Bacon

Twicknam Parke this

/fol. 312^v/ Endorsed: Lettre a Madame mere de monsieur le 22eme de
septembre 1593

10. ACB to AB, 31 May 1593, LPL MS 653 fols 363^r-364^v (art. 205).

/fol. 363^r/ Grace and health *in Christo*

I have sent yow some linnen. The parcells herein closed. parte of myne From london and part From Gorhambury as the ij payr of fyne shets and the v pilloberes almost all I have. For Edward I leave to yow god send yow A better servant of him then I have had. but I have had but his carcase A goode whyle. but yet yf necessite do constrean I wyll use his soldiors servyce yf he be not at Bathes. though against my wyll. upon A soden he is but An ignorant irefull wrangler yf Fawt be Found howsover he depruth [deprove]. and loveth shippis conningly. he wyll peradventure dishable A while and now he may Talk and Tiple and have his nose over the manger [^]idlely[^]. seme somewhat a [^][word illegible][^] he cam For his cloths yesterday. I denied not For the value For his best he had [^]in[^] my service and mony in his purse yf he Typled not it way. but that I denyed him was to make him know his pevish pride. For greeved yet with the loss of my speciall noble horse *ut in dinam* and onslow not well in talk in justly [^]of[^] his carelessness, he both lyed and wrangled disdaynfully with me whereupon loth to troble my selff I bad with these words, A man master wolde go ny to breake thy head for this spech. but I byd the get the owt of my syght lyke A lyeng prowde verlett. Wherupon glad belyke he went Immediately to the stable and took his cloake and sworde and Jetted away lyke A Jack. he was here both christianly and too well used here. I wryte this to tell yow the trowth howsoever he lyeth. yet yf yowr necessite compelleth yow take him as yow think goode and kepe him in in order For your servyce. god geve yow much goode of the Bathe. young Mr Alexander here. doth say they dyd him no goode. and some think yf yowr gowt be hote the heate of that water doth rather farther the gowt then the prevent. I trust you have well consulted and considered before to Mr Crew hereafter.

[Left margin]

and the lorde in mercy be with yow and geve goode and blessed success in christ our Lord and health and hart *ultimo Maii* 1593 Gorhambury Your mother ABacon I hope your horse comes to yow sound and well

/fol. 364^r/: Endorsed: lettre de madame

11. AB to ACB, 2 November 1593, LPL MS 649 fol 399^{r-v} (art. 274).

/fol. 399^r/ To the honorable his very good ladye and mother the Ladye Anne
Bacone widowe at Gorhamburie in Hertfordshire

Madame ~~my moste~~ I thank most humbly thank your Ladyship for your letter and
sendinge your man Bashforde to visit me who purposeth with Gods helpe so
soone as purposeth I can to doe my dewtie to your Ladie but the sonest I doubt
wilbe tomorrow or next mondaie come senight. my Brother I thinke will goe to
St Albones soner with my Lord Keeper who hath kindly offered him home in
his owne lodginge there; as he hath ^{alredy} of late resigned unto him the use of
his[^] chamber in the Courte. God forbid that your Ladiship shall trouble yourself
~~any what more~~ with anie extraordinary care in respect of our presence which yf
we thought shoulde be the leste cause of ^{your} discontentment we would
rather absent our selues then occasion ~~your~~ anie waie your Ladys disquietness.
As for Gotheram I haue bene and shalbe alwaies redye to heare dewtyfully your
Ladyships motherlie admonitions touchinge him or any other man or matter and
to respect them as I ought. And so with remembrance of my humble dewtie I
beseech God to preserue and comfort your Lady.

Twicknam parke this 2 of nouember 1593

/fol. 399^v/ Endorsed: A Madame le 2me de novembre 1593

12. ACB to AB, March [1593/4], LPL MS 650 fols 117^r-118^v (art. 69).

/fol. 117^r/ I came yesterday home I thank god well though very weary by that missing the right way. we roaved and made it longer I Fownd A very syck and soare alterd man. one might by him see what is *mutatio dextr~~e~~ manus Excelsi* in correcting he hath ben as you know A strong Armed man and active in such exercyses of strength as shooting wrestling casting the Barr. and whyllst he was with me I never used Footestoole to horsback. but now god healpe him weake in voyce. his Flesh consumed, his hands bones and synewes. but his Belly up to his very chest swoln and hoved upp and as hard with all as though one towched wenscott I thank the Lord that put me in the mynd to visitt him with a christian desyre to comfort his sowle which I trust Mr Wylbluds spirituall counsell and comfort with harty prayor was A means to it god I trust working with his Admonitions in the syck body to the reviving of his sowle. he hath his memory perfect and well and glad of godly exhortation god graunt him and my selff all ^{^so^} his continuall swete comfort and Feeling mercy to the ende. Amen. For yowr yowr going yow spake of to London and wyll have the ij bedds hence For your servants let me know in tyme I wolde yow had here Taries tyll that remove. you shulde have spared much wast expences which yow need not[?] and have been better provyded. Surely yf yow kepe all your Redborn howshoulde at London yow wyll undoe yowrselff mony is very hard to come by and sure Friends more hard and yow shalbe still in other Folkes danger not yowr own man and yowr detts wyll pinch you though yow may hope. but yowr continuall syckliness with all is A great hindrance and yf yow make shew of A howse keeping in the cytie

[left margin]: Yow shall quickly be overcharged much disqwiete and brought not over the ears but over sholders therefore at the begning be very ware and wyse as it <was> said *tibi ipsi sapere disce* one sayde he sayde he had rather be envied for goode state then pitied For [word illegible] consult *Deus* and *ne quitt temere* I coulde not charge[?] and advise as heretofore god gwyd yow to take the right and best cowrse

/fol. 118^v/ Endorsed: lettre de madame mars 1594

lettre de madame recu en mars A Redbourne 1594

13. ACB to AB, March [1593/4], LPL MS 650 fol 127^{r-v} (art. 75).

/fol. 127^r/ one of the prophetts Naom I think ^{^sayth^} that the lorde hath his way in the Hurle Wynd the storme and Tempest and cloudes are the dust of his Fete. The wynd hath had great power it hath Thrown of a number of Tyles, some Frute Trees and one or two other pales postes and all, and stone pinnacle and that I am soriest For, hath blown upp A shete of lead on one syde of the gate where the Diall stands but in my conscience your French contall [?] Jacques and all had before loosened it with hacking leade For pellets I pray burn this let them not see it. but hurtfull they ^{^were^} I desyre to know how yow dyd and do. I prai be care Full to be well to yowr own comfort and goode desyre of yowr Friends with avoyding coldetaking continually and preventing by warines *sustine and abstine.* and be cherefull and slepe in due tyme I lyked nothing my cosin Kempes lettre I sent yow. I wyll not grant my tyme is gods hande and not his Appointment he ever stood upon A moneths warning in my lyffe. some unknown Tryck thereis. it wyll not serve with me doutless and shall Elsdon and Brocket thus dayly and mock still. Yf god geve me strength I wyll to london For these two cawses. by his mercyful gwydeng.

AB

/fol. 127^v/ Endorsed: lettre de madame mars 1594

14. ACB to AB, [May] 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 187^r-188^v (art. 114).

/fol. 187^r/ having some spech with Mr Henshew after yow went hence towching yowr house taken in Bishopsgate ^{^strete^} he very soberly sayde god geve him well to be there For this last plage that strete was much visited and so was Colman street. large and wyde stretes both and asking him what ministry there. he answered itt was very mean, The minister there but ignorant and as commonly with all careless. and he thowght yow shulde Fynde the people thereafter geven to voluptousnes and the more to make them so having but mean or no Edifieng instruction, the Bull Inne there with continuall Enterludes had even infected the in habitants there with corrupt and leude dispotions and so accownted off. he was ever sory on yowr behalff I promiss yow sonne, it hath Runn in my mynde since with greff and Feare For yow and yowrs to dwell so dangerously every way. I marvell yow did not Fyrst consider of the ministry as most of all nedefull considering of strete then to have so neere A place haunted with such pernicious and obscene playes and Theatr able to pryse[?] the very godly and dowhat yow can yowr sevants shalbe entyced and spoyled goode lorde thowght I how yll Falleth it owt ^{^For^} the choyce of the best exercises and commodities in place to dwell ^{^For my chylders^} For no minister at Twittnham [Twickenham] nether. surely I am very sory yow went From Grayes Inne where was very good Agre [agreeable?] christian company in comparison. to change and venture yowrself. yowr lymmes no better. but yowr men ever overrule yow and seek them selffs and not yow indede when yow over trust.

god bless yow and kepe you from evell.

AB

/fol. 188^v/ **Endorsed:** lettre de Madame 1594

15. ACB to AB, 7 September 1594, LPL MS 650 fols 331^r-332^v (art. 223).

/fol. 331^r/ I send yow herein Crossbyes lettre because yow may better understand by him ^{^the^} words of the shryff [sheriff] to him selff. Yf the state be brought in Question I am sory of the last Act yow so earnestly required. Whertoo I was hardely drawn as yow know For dowl of Dangers. doutless your Brother Nico [Nichlas?] hath don somewhat in Thexquqor yow thought it cowlde not come to his care so sone, but yow see ^{^yow^} are deceived. yow shall do well to send For the Atornye and myne marsh I do mean If he shuld strein upon the manors [?] to troble me and my tenants. I have browght my selff in goode case by yowr means. Mr Crew is not in citie I heare. it is the worse. The shryff Threateneth to strayn before the next Audite which is before Michaellyd which is not iij weeks hence at uttermost. yow had had not nede to slack this as Brockets matter is to my Hindrance Some mony I had nede of for to ^{^have^} pay the sute ^{^by his cosoning^}. I have not of myne own at this present For my howse and others charges vi^{li} in mony I am ready to borow x^{li} of my neyghbors yf I can. I send purposely. I pray yow lett me know certainly what way yow take to helpe it with spede. yf it once came in checqor [?] sute, one Troble wyll Follow Another. prevent therfore I wolde Fayn have gon to London for phisick next weeke but I perceave I cannot. being weakish to Ryde so Farr and the way is but yll for a cotch For me. besyd the well wether I wyll desyre Mr Moorer to be with me here For that time. yf yow prove yowr new in hande phisick god geve yow goode of my lord Tresurer about 5 yeres past was greatly preased by the graunt vaunt of soden staruþ startupp glorious stranger, that wolde nedes cure him of the gowt by Boast but quoth my lord, have yow cured eny let me know and see them nay sayd the Fellow, but I am sure I can. Well concluded my lorde. and sayde go go and cure Fyrst and then come again or elce not. I wold yow had so don. but I pray God Bless it to yow and pray hartely to god For your goode recoverye and sownde [?] I am sory your Brother and yow charge your selffe with superfluous horses the wyse wyll but lawgh at yow both being but unable For besyd yowr Dets Long Jornyes and privat persons. earles be Earles.

[*Left margin*]: The heavenly preacher sayth, ech thing hath his opportunitie and due season. well may yee do as Blessed in the Lorde. 7 Sept 94.

/fol. 331^v/ yowr vain man stretly by his sleuth and prowde quarell piking conditions setts all yowr house at Redbourn owt of quiett order by generall complaint as I heare. lately yowng moorer was smot in the eye by him and I pray God yow heare not of some mischeff by him. but my sonns have no Judgment. They wyll have such about them and in their howse. and wyll not in Tyme remedy it before it break owt in some manifest Token of god his displeasure. I cannot cease to warn as long as I am A mother that loveth yow in the lorde most dearly and as Seneck by phisophy onely cowld say. *in Amico admottendo mallem success 'quod tamen nolle' quam Fidem Desse.*

Your mother ABacon

/fol. 332^v/: To my sonne Mr Antony Bacon

Endorsed: lettre de madame le 8me de septembre, recue 1594

16. ACB to AB, 14 August [no year given], LPL MS 653 fols 303^r-304^v (art. 166).

/fol. 303^r/ I was and am very sori when I understoode by Mr Trott yowr returned payn of the gowt more paynfully. I pray the lorde sende yow the best counsell and goode success with all as I wrote before unto yow beware of Issues never without danger and be well advised. I am of an opinion that yow with A constant order ^{^do not^} prevent taking colde in the affected lymmes. and that yow kepe yowrselff to close and to much owt of the Ayre. which maketh yow apter to be Towched. For it is not almost possible but yow must be Tender with keeping in and ^{^in^} yowr Bed so continually. The gowt is named [word illegible] *morbis* because it lyketh softness and ease. goode sonne call upon god and to take patiently his correction and using ordinary goode meanes have comfort and hope yet of better and enoblor [?] it as you may with yea with some Travell of body more then hertofore. yow eate late and slepe litle and very late. both ememies to A sownd and short recovery. make not yowr body by violent and uncessant pullying and physick practise unmete and unable to serve god, yowr prince and cowntry but procure next care of tru godliness yowr health of body. and make not night day nor day night by disorder^{^ly^} discowrsing and watching to hinder ^{^and decay^} both mynde and Body. god Bless yow, counsell and comfort yow. I had gotten Mr Wyborns goode ^{^wyll^} to have come unto yow as I wrote before. but this ^{^great^} chang of yowr health and other syck too there, makes him ^{^and^} me dowl of eny opportunittee now. So he stayeth I am sory, and wyll shortly return to his own howse. Mr Trott conti-nueth Frendely wylling to take paine and care For yowr matters. I desyre to know how it proceadeth with Barly come not to unequall nor unusuall conditiones in no wyse it may be god wyll sende helpe For mony borrowing yet not known. and I wyll prove all my Friends rather with his grace and ayde

[In left margin] he took small rest here and interteynment in goode part and hasted early hence. 14 August. kepe you your house in Christian order exercyse. Your mother Bacon χηρα

/fol. 304^v/ To my sonne Mr Anthony Bacon

Endorsed: lettre de madame

17. ACB to AB, 14 July [no year given], LPL MS 653 fols 326^r-327^v (art. 181).

/fol. 326^r/ grace and health

I sende ^to^ yow sonne by this boy bearer to know yowr determination with god his mercy and Favor. when, what, and how in dede I mistooke it when yow. spake of one yowr page as yow called. but after I remembered he is tall and not one of your litle boyes. write what yow wolde I send and when. and whether yow have eny stuff sent upon monday that I may send For it upon Tewsday to the Town. make it readi yf yow do send. upon saturday ~~to-morrow~~ because of the sabbath. knight knowes the order. I send you pescodds. I think ~~not-veri~~ good better For yowr Frende then yowr selff byd they be Tenderly sodden because they be great I wolde be loth to encrease your hi payn eny way but yf yow tast let it be at diner and not at night and soden in good care A few strawburie pease of the First and those of the last almost had God bless yow both and kepe yow From synn and evell. wryte yowr mynde and Forbyd the boy of speche. peter and the other must nede go on Foote. yow wyll go but softly. let me know perfectly as yow may. I look for the boy at night dispatch him I pray yow. many wycked stalkers abroad. 14 July Gorhambury. your mother AB

/fol. 327^v/:

Endorsed: *lettre de Madame*

18. ACB to AB, [1593], LPL MS 653 fols 330^r-331^v (art. 183).

/fol. 330^r/ ever since I cam to my loging save that I wrote A Few words to my Lorde to that purpose as yow know. I have wayted at my lordsships chamber to have it delivered this night with promys For his so doing. For my lordship is both ill handled with the gowt & stomack syck with all. & tyll ^{^now^} lettres owt of France cowlde not be delivered to him whereabowt he now is. I dyd not use Mr Maynarde. but another whome I have used when occasion served. & he promiseth yf it may well he wyll this night. Mr Maynarde Refuseth to deale with the person as unfitt he sayth For that or eny other ^{^such^} thing now I desyred him to say nothing of my motion. thus for that. yowr Brother presumeth to much, he knoweth too well upon what late cause I have cause to geve not onely motherly but godly advise. his profession is not ^{^or^} owght not to be of vayn devises & unprofitable. Be ye holy as I am holy sayth God by his prophett. let him reade the Sermon to the Ephesions towching unclean speache & thowghte. Trust in the lorde with all this hart sayth the wysedome of god. & not in thin own read the 3rd of the proverbes. The Apostle sayth or rather the holy gost yf eny man think him selff, let him be a Foole in this world that he may be wyse. on tre [untrue?] gwydance mark many or disgrace many goode gyfts. God geves grace to the humble. God bless yow both geve yow upright myndes to live in ^{^his^} Feare & walk in his Truth the sownd. preaching wheroff consisteth not all in ^{^the wordes^} ~~wysdem of words~~ wysdom but in the power & evidence of the spirit. Which god graunt

your mother ABacon

read not my lettres ether scoffingly or carelesly. which hath ben used to much For I humbly thank god I know what I write & counsell

/fol. 331^v/ **Endorsed:** Lettre de Madam sans date

19. ACB to AB, undated, LPL MS 653 fol. 332^r-332^v (art. 184).

/fol. 332^r/ I thank yow sonne For yowr paynes to make good agreement betwixt the wombe and Frute therof my neighbowr smyth came to me to desyre yow also to make an indifferent ^{^ende^} For both parts betwixt wydow Finch and him he sayth he made sodenly A foolysh bargain and can be content with some loss to warn him I wolde not hynder her but yet not extremytes God encrease your health with his favor.

Your mother A Bacon

/fol. 332^v/ Endorsed: *lettre de madame*

20. ACB to AB, 10 July 1596, LPL MS 658 fols 28^r-29^v (art. 21).

/fol. 28^r/ Now that sir Robert is Fully stalled in his long longed For secretary place I pray god geve him a Religious wyse and an upright hart befor god and man. I promiss yow sonne in my ^{^coniecturall^} opinion. yow had more nede now to be more circumspect and advised in your troblelous discoorsings doing, and dealings in your accustomed matters ether with or For yowr selff or others whome yow hartely honor *nec sine causa* he now hath great Avantage and strength to intercept prevent and to say [?] where he hath ben or is in sonne be it Emulation or suspicion you know what Termes he standeth him in toward yowr self and wold nedes have me tell yow so. so very vehement hee was then yow are sayd to be wyse and to my comfort I willingly think so but surely sonne on thother syde For want of home experience by Action and yowr Teadious unacquaintance For yowr own country by ^{^continuall^} chamber and bedkeeping yow must nedes myss of considerate Judgment in yowr verball onely travayling yf all were scant sownd before betwixt the Εαρλ [Earl] and him. Friendes had nede to walk more warely *in his diebus* For all Doing elce ^{^may^} hurt through pretending goode. The Father and sonne are ^{^Affectionate^} joyned in power and policy The lorde ever Bles yow in christ still I harken For yates I dowt somebody Hindreth his coming to me. it were small matter to come speake with me yow know what yow have to ^{^do in^} in Regard towching the Spaniard I reak not his displeasure. god graunt he marr not all at at last with spanish popish sutellty. Alas what I wrote towching the poore summ of 5ⁱⁱ to yowr Brother, I ment ^{^but^} to lett yow know plainly. I wolde rather norish then eny litle way weaken nere Brotherly love. as appereth manifestly to yow both. god Forbyd but that yee shuld allwys love hartely *invicem* and kindly ^{^to^} God commmandeth love as Brethren. besyd Bonde of nature This pescod Tyme but Bruing but ^{^For^} hasty and sommer drinking in Truth yf I shuld purposely make a Teerse of somewhat stronger for yow I know not how have it caried through yt were pitie that yow and I both shuld be disapointed. *Annotiacall* Burn Burn in eny wyse 10 July AB

/fol. 29^v/ Endorsed: De Madame Bacon le 13me Juillet 1596

21. ACB to Essex (copy), 1 December 1596, LPL MS 660 fols 149^r-150^v (art. 108).

/fol. 149^r/ Hearing my singuler good Lord of your Honors returne from the sea coastes this daie, and I goinge hence to morowe yf the Lord so will. I am bould upon some speches of some and withe some persone at the courte where latelie I was, to imparte somewhat hereof to your Honor, bycause it concerned a partie there more nere to me then gracious to her stocke, I will not denie, but before this great suspicion, of her unwiflike and unshamfast demeanour hath been brought to me euen into the Contrie but lothe to beleue, I laid it up with secret sadnes in my brest And trulie my good Lord I did not a litle but greatlie reioyse in harte, that it pleased ^{^god^} of his mercie and goodnes, with the [word deleted] famous honor he gave yow in your late martiall exploits with renowned good successe, he did also worke in yow such a change of yowr minde before by reporte enclined to coorte carnall dalyance. that that honorable and Christian brule [bruit] was carried aboute ioyfullie, to the much gladdinge of manie that unfay-nedlie loued your Honors treu prosperitye But ^{^proh dolor^} my good Lord. I perceued by some eyewitnesses here, and which must needes heare and marke, that of late a backsliding to the ^{^impudent^} foule ^{^incontinent^} incontinent doth plainlie appeare, and thoughe they did mervail and muche blame your dishonorable and dangerous to yowr self course takinge to the infaming a noble manes wyffe and so more aboute her Majestie yet she was utterlie condemned as to bad both unchast and impudent with as it were an incorrigible unshamfastnes, the lord speedelie by his grace amende her, or cut her of before some suddane mischeef. yt hath hathe alredie made her antient noble husband to undoe his howse by felling as one out of comforte. But yf a disperate rage as commonly followeth he wilbe revenged his provoked ielosie and most intollerable iniury euen desperatelie. And the more bycause it is so said he loueth her, and greatlie as with greef laborethe to winne her. yt is great pittie she is not deliuered to him and the courte to be clensed by sendinge awaie such an unchaste gaze and common by word, in respecte of her place and husbnde. But yow my good Lord haue not so learned christe and harde

his holie words in the 3d.4.5. verses of the 1 chapter to the first Thessalo
[Thessalonians]

/fol. 149v/ yt is written this is the will of God yt ye shoulde be holie and abstaine
from fornication and euerie one knows how to keepe his owne vessell, in
hollines and honor, and not in the luste of concupiscence as doe the gentiles
which knowe not god: and more yf it please you to reade and marke well, yt is a
heauie thret that fornicators and Adulterers god will iudge and that they shalbe
shut out, for such thinges saith ye Apostle commonlie cometh the wrathe of
god uppon us. good lord remember and consider your greate danger herebie
both of soule and bodie, greue not the holie spirit of god that honored yow but
honor god and reward him not with suche euell for his greate kindness
towards yow good my lord sinne not against your owne soule My Ladie
Stafford said upon occasion in her talke the good vertuous Countess your wyfe
was with childe. O honorable and valliant noble, make great accompte of this
god his blessinge to yow both, and make not her harte sorrowful to the
hindrance of her younge fruite within her. for it was thought she tooke before
to harte and that her last did not so comfortablie prosper, yf you be with the
Lord in deede he wilb[e] with yow and make your uerie enemies to reuerence
yow. bestronge in the Lord yowr and our good patient god, fear him and walke
upritelie in his truth and for his promise in Christe he will assist you and looke
favorablie uppon you and prosper yow and increase his blessing uppon you
and yowrs[?] which mercie and grace. I humblie doe as I am most bound calle
uppon him to graunt yow ever my dere and worthy Lord in Christ Jesu with verie
inwarde inwarde affection haue I thus presumed ill fauoredlie scribble I
confesse beinge sicklie and weake manie waies. *Boni consulas te vehementer
oro et quam optime vivas et valeas, vir insignissime et quantum decet mihi
charissime.*¹³

In Christo ex animo [words deleted]

primo decemb

A Bacon χηρα

¹³ Birch's transcription, *Memoirs*, II, p. 219.

**/fol. 150/ Endorsed: De Madame Ann Bacon au Comte Essex le premier de
Decembre 1596**

22. Earl of Essex to ACB (copy), 1 Dec 1596, LPL MS 660 fol. 281^{r-v} (art. 188).

/fol. 281^r/ Madame. That it pleasethe yow to deale thus freelie with me in lettinge me know the worse yow heare of me, I take it as great argument of gods fauour in sendinge so good an angell to admonishe me, and of no small care in yowr Ladyship of my well doinge. I knowe howe needful these summons are to all menn espec-tiallie espetiall-to those that liue in this place. And I had rather with the poore publican knocke and my brest and ly prostrate, or with the confesse [?] when I haue donne all I can I am as unprofitable servant, than pharisaically to iustife my self. But what I write nowe is for the truthes sake and not for mine owne, I protest before the Majestie of god, and my protestacion is voluntarie and aduised, that this chardge which is newlie laide uppon me is falce and uniust. And that since my departure from England towarde Spaine I haue bene free from taxation of incontenency with anie woman that liues. I neuer sawe or spake with the Lady yow meane but in publicke places, and others beinge feerers and hearers, who yf they woud doe me right could iustifie my behaviour. But I liue in a place where I am howerly conspired against and practised uppon what they can not make the word[word] beleue that they perswade the Queen unto, and what they cannot make probable to the Queen, that they giue out to the word [world?] they haue almost all the howse to serue them for instruments. Yea the verie Oracles (I meane those that are accounted to be plaine and sincere) doe [^]φιλιππισειν[^] *phillippisein*¹⁴. Doe speake the earnest language- of the strongest faction. Plutarke taught me longe since to make profit of my enemies, but god teachethe it me mucche better nowe worthy Ladie thinke me a weake man, full of imperfections, but be assured I doe endeauour to be good and had rather mende my faultes then couer them. I wishe your Ladyship all trewe happiness and rest at

At your Ladyship commandment

Essex

Burne I praye yow

i. December 96

¹⁴ Birch, *Memoirs*, II, p. 220.

Endorsed: To the honoroable Ladie the Lady Ann Bacon

23. Tables of Clerical Appointments

St Mary, Redbourn		
Date	Vicar	Other
1577	Nathaniel Baxter	
1579	Edward Spendlove	
1589	Humphrey Wilblud	George Phillippes (curate)
1592	Rodolphe Bradley	
1603	Richard Gawton	

St Albans St Michael		
Date	Vicar	Other
1534	Thomas Wethered	
1584 (?)		William Dyke (lecturer)
1591	Erasmus Cooke	Humphrey Wilblud (lecturer)

Family Tree of Sir Nicholas Bacon

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distributa, quarum prima emblemata typical, siue allegorica: altera historica, siue re gesta: tertia physica, à rerum natura sumpta continet. Omnia à purissimis Scripturae fontibus derivata, & Anglolatinis versibus reddita
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