Department for Continuing Education University of Oxford

# Containing Eve's Daughters? The education, fashioning and socialisation of women within three elite households of the West Country c.1525-1660.

**Catherine Mary Bowness**

**Kellogg College**

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Local History, Department of Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Trinity Term 2016

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## Short Abstract

This thesis focuses on the education of women in three elite West Country households, the Arundells of Lanherne, the Edgcumbes of Cotehele and Mount Edgcumbe and the Reynells of Forde, in particular Dorothy Arundell (1560-1613), Anne Edgcumbe Dowriche (1560-96) and Lucie Reynell (1577-1652). It also notes the experiences of women in previous generations, which influenced education provision for girls. As early modern English women did not access the formal educational institutions of the universities or the Inns of Court, this thesis encourages a broader definition of education, to include teaching and vocational training in informal settings. It turns primarily to the household, where women spent most of their lives, but avoids a narrow focus on negative aspects of patriarchal society, which would place emphasis on the containment of women and what they could not do. Instead, it

takes a positive approach, using case studies to explore the women's experiences and achievements. These achievements act as pointers towards the depth and breadth of theoretical knowledge and level of practical skills each woman required to accomplish them. It demonstrates that rather than contained, Anne, Dorothy and Lucie were self-contained and confident. This thesis concludes that local and family archives contain more evidence, linked to the educational experiences of women, than many imagine. It encourages local historians to conduct further research, on individual women, in their own regions, to provide further evidence to refute claims that elite women received little or no education in early modern England.

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## Long Abstract

This thesis focuses on the education of women in three, elite, West Country households, the Arundells of Lanherne, the Edgcumbes of Cotehele and Mount Edgcumbe and the Reynells of Forde, in particular Dorothy Arundell (1560-1613), Anne Edgcumbe Dowriche (1560-96) and Lucie Reynell (1577-1652). There are rich sources of evidence linked to the experiences of Dorothy, Anne and Lucie, not least their own writings, since both Anne and Dorothy wrote histories of religious persecution, from opposite sides of a religious divide, whilst Lucie kept a detailed account book and her spiritual biography was published, within two years of her death, by one of her relatives. Letters and diaries provide additional evidence of the women's activities. Where relevant, the thesis also notes the experiences of women, from earlier generations, which inform educational provision within their families.

Early modern English women did not access the formal educational institutions of the universities or the Inns of Court; this thesis therefore encourages a broader definition of education to include teaching and vocational training in informal settings. It turns primarily to the household, where women spent most of their lives, but rather than focusing on negative aspects of patriarchal society, which would place emphasis on the containment of women and what they could not do, it takes a positive approach, using case studies to explore the women's activities and achievements. The latter provide clues to educational experience since they act as pointers towards the depth and breadth of theoretical knowledge and level of practical skills each woman required to accomplish them.

The thesis notes the women's vocations, exploring the educational provision which prepared them for their roles in adult society. It rectifies the view that elite parents made few plans for the education of daughters. It demonstrates that Anne, Dorothy and Lucie were educated, self-contained and confident women, uncontained by men. All three had agency. They developed their own opinions, they expressed them freely and they taught them to others.

This thesis concludes that local and family archives contain more evidence, linked to the educational experiences of women, than many imagine and encourages further research, on

individual women, by local historians, to provide further evidence to refute claims that elite women received little or no education in early modern England.

The first chapter notes the lack of women in many West Country histories. It outlines the reasons behind the selection of women for the case studies, noting their different religious backgrounds and their roles in elite society. Anne and Dorothy were born into the landed elite; Lucie, came from a mercantile background. It defines education, noting it was vocational in the early modern period. With this in mind, it takes a broader view of educational provision, acknowledging the knowledge and skills gained in informal settings as well as that obtained via formal educational institutions. This chapter also introduces the geographical and historical background which impacted on West Country educational theory and practice, noting especially religious change, the worship practices which many West Country people refused to accept and the remoteness of parts of Cornwall, which made it more difficult for the authorities to impose new regulations. It outlines the historiography of women's educational experience and suggests that it is inadequate. Finally it comments on the sources and methodology employed and explains why the concept of containment is a useful starting point when examining women's educational experiences.

Beginning with the theological views expressed in a sixteenth century Cornish drama, the second chapter examines different concepts of womanhood. It outlines religious, philosophical and scientific interpretations of the female condition, explaining why women were viewed as subordinate to men. It cites examples, drawn from local records, of women in troubled circumstances, which indicate that the prevailing view, on the female condition, in the early modern South West, was that women should be contained by men. It explores the concept of women's vocations and concludes that most views on a woman's role, in West Country society, were based on religious arguments.

The third chapter examines the printed debate on the education of girls, noting the arguments of educators and religious commentators and the stress they placed on reputation and virtue. It sets the debate in a local context, by examining educational opportunities available to young people in the West Country and inquiring whether they were available to both genders. It explores the motives behind the setting up of the first West Country schools and notes that the founder of the Red Maids' school and the local authorities who carried out his wishes, appear to have followed the advice of Thomas Becon by giving women responsibility for female educational provision and inspection. In the final section, an examination of printed advice material leads to the conclusion that

religious devotion, private contemplation and the demonstration of household skills were valued as active service to both household and commonweal.

The next three chapters contain the case studies. Chapter four argues that evidence from a number of sources indicates that Dorothy Arundell and her sisters were consciously prepared for religious vocations. Probate documents show that girls were provided with female role models and encouraged to become preservers of Catholic traditions. The entry requirements of the Bridgettine order, which the Arundell sisters were to join, are examined in detail and these show that the sisters were expected to be well read. The chapter outlines events which impacted on Dorothy's family; the prayer book rebellion and the arrest of two seminary priests. Dorothy developed a special spiritual partnership with one of these priests, John Cornelius. From the relative safety of a continental convent, she wrote and circulated an eyewitness account of his life, and was acknowledged as a scholar by other writers. The manuscript, once held in the Jesuit archive at Rome, is missing. However, during the research process, a copy of a translation of Dorothy's work was located at Chideock in Dorset, and this chapter describes how its authenticity was assessed, before outlining the evidence of Dorothy's education contained within it. Set alongside the other sources which indicate Arundell educational provision, this text, referred

to as the *Acta of Dorothy Arundell*, indicates that Dorothy was a scholar in her own right.

The educational experiences of the Edgcumbe family are outlined in chapter five. A special window, commissioned for the family's chapel in 1525, is presented as a statement on female education. Katherine Edgcumbe's copy of John Lydgate's *Troy Book* is discussed before the focus moves to Anne Edgcumbe Dowriche, for whom special educational provision was made in her father's will. Like Dorothy, Anne wrote about religious persecution but the victims in her narrative, *The French Historie* were Protestant. Unlike Dorothy, who circulated her text in secret, Anne published her work in Exeter and London. *The French Historie* is written in verse and contains political, historical and religious commentary on the religious wars of France. Its text is discussed in detail; Anne's Puritan motives, as evidenced in her selection and editing of her sources, are examined. The chapter considers how it was possible for a clergyman's wife to obtain the knowledge, information and rhetorical skills to enable her to produce such an erudite text and concludes that, like Dorothy Arundell, Anne was a scholar.

Lucie Reynell of Forde was the daughter of a London goldsmith. She came to Devon as the young bride of a lawyer. Her husband was a younger son, with no land or estates to inherit and chapter six describes how Lucie worked, in partnership with

her husband, to set up a new household and estate. Two main sources provide detailed evidence of Lucie's life and learning: the Forde household accounts, which contain Lucie's handwritten notes; a spiritual biography, on her life and death, created by her nephew, Edward Reynell, in 1654. The chapter sets the two alongside each other, demonstrating that details of Lucie's interests, activities and knowledge base, found in the biography are confirmed by expenditure and comments found in the accounts. The motives of the biography's author are discussed, noting the activities he edited out of Lucie's life. Comments found in diaries, kept by other members of the family, suggest that Lucie was more animated and less pious than her nephew described. Unlike Anne and Dorothy, Lucie published no religious, political or historical work and though she too used her education and training in the service of religion, her legacy was more practical. She set up a charity, providing houses for the widows of clergy. The chapter shows Lucie as a confident, strong-willed woman, who took control of her own affairs, during a long widowhood. It discusses her relationship with the clergy and the theological debates she had with them. It uses information, drawn from the sources, to outline her interests and activities, in particular her virtuous employment in horticulture and needlework and concludes that an educated and skilful woman emerges from the archives.

Early modern men were advised to contain women to protect virtue and reputation, the qualities regarded as essential and godly in both household and commonweal. In religious terms, women were portrayed as the daughters of Eve and inheritors of her disobedience. However, as more details of the lives of three West Country women emanate from local and family archives, from their own writings and from what third parties recorded about their activities, a different aspect of containment becomes apparent, the confidence of self-containment. The final chapter concludes that examining the achievements of Dorothy Arundell, Anne Edgcumbe and Lucie Reynell provides clues to the education they received. Examining these achievements and recognising the depth and breadth of knowledge required to accomplish them throws light on their educational curriculum and confirms that they were confident, self-contained women. The fact that women received no formal education through official institutions, the universities and Inns of Court, is not disputed but suggestions that the education of girls was neglected in elite households is refuted. This thesis argues that elite women's education was deeper and broader than previously recognised. It suggests that more notice should be taken of women's experience and achievements in informal educational settings. This impacts on the work of local historians, since it highlights the need for further interrogation of family and regional archives seeking information on the lives of other

elite women, in different localities, but searching for what they achieved rather than noting what they could not do. If the achievements of more women are seen together, a more complex and detailed picture will emerge of the education and training accessible by women within the elite households of England's godly commonweal.

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## Abbreviations

BOD Bodleian Library

BRO Bristol Record Office

CM Chideock Martyrs' Museum

CRO Cornwall Record Office

CSPD Calendar State Papers Domestic

DFE Department for Education

DRO Devon Record Office

LLLS Launceston Library Local Studies

NT National Trust

RIC Royal Institution of Cornwall

SYON Syon Collection, University of Exeter

TNA The National Archives

# Chapter One

## *Researching Eve; studying early modern women's education in a South-Western context.*

### *Missing the Girls*

*West Country to World's End*, a large, much celebrated and successful exhibition, was staged at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum Exeter from 26 October 2013 to 02 March 2014. It was introduced to the public as follows

> Celebrating the spirit of adventure and enterprise of South West people, this landmark exhibition explores the West Country in the age of the Tudors. Comprising loans from the Bodleian Library, British Library, British Museum, National Portrait Gallery, National Trust, Royal Collection, Royal Museums Greenwich, Victoria & Albert Museum and private lenders, it will present a compelling account of the remarkable contributions of individuals from the South West from 1540 to 1620.[1]

The purpose of the exhibition was to demonstrate the importance of Devon and Cornwall in the early modern period and to outline the contributions made by Devonians and Cornish to the prosperity of the country at large. The aim was to highlight achievement.

> During the Elizabethan 'Golden Age' West Country folk were famed for their innovation and endeavour. Drake sailed to 'World's End' in pursuit of treasure and glory, while Raleigh took settlers to a New World. Exeter-born painter Nicholas Hilliard and scholar Thomas Bodley found fame beyond their native city which bustled with merchants made rich by overseas trade. Goldsmiths, plasterers, carpenters, masons and lace-makers were

[1] S. Smiles (ed.), *West Country To World's End: The South West In The Tudor Age* (London, 2013), cover notes and exhibition flyer.

> commissioned to provide luxury houses and goods. These local stories are told against the backdrop of historical events – the Reformation and religious turmoil, political unrest, conflict with Spain and intrigues in the Royal Court – that make for one of the most evocative periods of English history.[2]

The exhibition was recognised both locally and nationally.[3] It was commended for demonstrating a rich and complex picture of the West Country's past, which was claimed to be a golden age.

> With respect to historical developments, the variety of roles played by the leading local names of the period as they contributed to regional, national and international concerns is...striking. This was the golden age of the South West and it added a distinctive sheen to the effulgence surrounding Elizabeth I.[4]

In the twenty-first century the West Country is often regarded as a remote region, far removed from central government and administration, so visitors to the museum may have been surprised to learn of the West Country's importance in the early modern period.[5] Wool processing and its associated international trade, seafaring, Exeter's famed goldsmiths and silversmiths, together with Cornish mining and Bristol's mercantile community all ensured strong links with London and the wider world. Those working in rural areas also made strong contributions to local and national economies. West Country

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[2] *ibid.*

[3] As well as celebratory notices in the local press, leading historians, including Oxford University's Steve Gunn, took part in supporting presentations and the museum won the Museum of the Year Award.

[4] Smiles, *West Country*, p. 21.

[5] This remoteness was illustrated when storms and sea surges of 2014 destroyed the main railway connections at Dawlish and flooded parts of the A303, severing connections with London. Organisations linked with government, education and commerce frequently place South West regional offices at Bristol, some 200 miles from West Cornwall, thus South Westerners claim detachment from the rest of the country.

women played their part in this so-called golden age, being closely involved in the work of rural estates and the woollen and lace making trades. However not a single woman was recognised in the 'Who was who' section of the exhibition catalogue. Only two women, apart from the Queen, featured in the displays and these only because they were wives of learned men.[6] A whole section of the exhibition was devoted to education and learning but the experiences of girls and women were not mentioned at all implying, by omission, that girls received no education.[7]

This thesis will redress the balance by recognising the achievements of West Country women, from elite families, between c1520-1660 and using these achievements to examine the breadth and depth of their education experience. The choice of the time-frame is deliberate to allow examination of the experience of girls in times of political and religious change, under monarchy and during the Commonwealth, as they were prepared to take adult roles within both the household and the wider social sphere of an elite family. It avoids religious and political changes after the Restoration, linked to the passing of the Clarendon Code and the Test Act, which added further complications to the Catholic experience and require in depth study beyond the constraints of a local study of early modern education.

[6] Smiles, West Country, p. 113.
[7] *ibid.* pp. 95-103.

***Selection of elite families***

Recognising that elite families took the lead in regional trade and administration, this study concentrates on three contrasting elite West Country families, the Arundells of Lanherne, The Edgcumbes of Cothele and Mount Edgcumbe and the Reynells of Forde. Separate case studies examine the educational experiences of the women within each family. Other elite families offer potential for research but it was seen fit to avoid women recently featured in other research projects, such as Elizabeth Ralegh in Anna Beer's *Bess:The Life of Lady Ralegh Wife To Sir Walter* and Katherine Killigrew in Gemma Allen's *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics In Early Modern England.*[8] Women from other West Country elites, such as the Tregians and the Courtenays, will feature in the narratives of the selected families through marriage alliances and so their families were not chosen as individual case studies. Whilst all three families will be shown to have a goodly share of educated and erudite women within their ranks, the educational achievements of one woman from each family is selected for more detailed analysis namely Dorothy Arundell (1560-1613), Anne Edgcumbe (before 1560-1596) and Lucie Reynell(1577-1652).

It should be noted from the outset, that Dorothy, Anne and Lucie were not regarded by their contemporaries as

[8] Anna Beer, *Bess: The Life of Lady Ralegh. Wife To Sir Walter* (London, 2004); Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2013).

'remarkable'. Nor were they 'celebrated' like Margaret More or the daughters of Anthony Cooke, but the thesis will demonstrate that all three women achieved much and made good use of the education and training they received. All were intelligent, strong-willed and skilled in rhetoric and debate. Each had clear views on religious matters and the three were not shy in expressing their own opinions. These women were not content to remain silent when it came to matters of faith. All three were willing to challenge perceived authority. Two, Anne and Dorothy, wrote at length about what they considered to be the true faith and the responsibilities of believers.[9] Lucie's skill in challenging what she saw as vanity, vainglory and foolishness in some religious experts, is recorded, by one of her relatives, in a biography which was published just two years after her death.[10]

Although the three women have different religious backgrounds, Dorothy's family were active Catholic recusants, Anne's had strong Puritan leanings whilst Lucie despised any form of religious extremism, this thesis will show that there is much that they had in common. At a time of religious change and chaos, all three moved with confidence in religious circles: Anne a clergy wife; Dorothy playing an important role in recusant support networks for undercover Catholic priests and

[9] Dorothy Arundell, *The Life of Father John Cornelius* (Brussels, 1598); Anne Dowriche, *The French Historie* (Exeter, 1589).
[10] Edward Reynell, *The Life and Death Of The Most Virtuous And Pious Lady The Lady Lucia Reynell of Forde* (London, 1654).

Lucie dividing her time between the family estate at Forde and her town house at the epicentre centre of religious activity, in Exeter's Cathedral Close. It will be shown that this confidence sprang from the quality of the education and training they received within households of differing religious backgrounds. As this thesis will demonstrate, their achievements are indications of the depth of their religious and political knowledge. Furthermore these achievements act as pointers to the women's literary awareness as well as their acquisition of practical skills. They suggest that each woman's education had depth and breadth and that it was carefully constructed by their respective families.

In addition to differing religious backgrounds, the women were chosen for their contrasting experiences as members of families belonging to either a town-based, mercantile, elite or the older, established, rural landed-gentry. Anne, Dorothy and Lucie represent differing types of elite women thus enabling speculation on the type of education available for girls in a range of elite South Western situations. However, though this thesis places the elite at its centre, the study will also recognise the experiences of woman of lower status. Although Lucie, Anne and Dorothy were of the elite all three had considerable contact with and influence on women of other ranks, both within their households and estate environs and in their local communities. Most importantly, all three were

clearly aware of the special responsibilities this influential status brought in their roles as employer, teacher, guardian of morals and custodian of significant religious artefacts, books and other resources. In addition each of them could be said to have influenced the education of the generations which followed them since they became role models for other young women.

Given the proximity of the West Country to the coast, it is not surprising that women in all three families had links with the wider world, both nationally and on the continent. As will be seen in the case studies, all had business and social interests in London. Women from the Arundell and Edgcumbe families held positions at court, in the household of several queens. The Arundells had a residence in London, as did the Reynells and Dorothy and Lucie were frequent visitors to the city. Lucie was the daughter of a London goldsmith. Chapter six will show that the Reynells retained strong links with her birth place. Once established in Devon Lucie embraced European contacts through the woollen trade. Dorothy and her sisters were in communication with exiled Catholics and family members, who had taken up the religious life in English institutions in Europe. Dorothy was aware of religious and political struggles at home and abroad. Her family sheltered Catholic priests, smuggled back into England, from the seminaries of Rome. Anne’s view of historical events was

coloured by the experiences of family members and their diplomatic and military service in France. This enabled her to write and publish her book on French history, religious conflict, morality and politics.

Chapters two and three will show how many early modern religious and educational writers extolled the virtues of womanly silence and obedience. In a world where women were expected to defer to male authority, the relationships the women had with the men in their lives are interesting. The case studies will provide evidence to demonstrate that the men who were most important in the lives of the three women believed that educating their daughters, wives and sisters was important. Furthermore, it will be shown, that these men had confidence in their womenfolk, believing that girls had vital contributions to make to the future of the family, the locality and the nation. This necessitated developing the girls' intellects and skills to prepare them for life as responsible adults. Later chapters will show how Anne's Father made financial provision for the education of his daughters, Lucie's husband took care to impart his own knowledge to his wife, sharing his library with her, whilst Dorothy's mentor and teacher, John Cornelius, encouraged her to study so that she might teach others and preserve her own religious traditions for future generations.

***Issues of Gender***

Just as the focus of Exeter's exhibition was male achievement, so too, in traditional studies of early modern communities, men appear as the dominant force. Women, in their various roles as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers become supporters and ornaments on a man's path towards greater status and power. Local history, as traditionally produced by regional studies groups, often mirrors national and international history by placing its emphasis and focus on the role of men in these communities. Popular publications, on the lives of local women, such as Paul Burnham's account of the work of Joanna Grenville (1635-1708), often devote several pages to the political affairs of male relatives.[11]

Patricia Crawford has suggested that the writing of history might be transformed if women and their experiences become a focal point for study.[12] Crawford's work, with its emphasis on female life cycles, rites of passage and clear 'perceived' historical distinctions between male and female, challenges the local historian to attempt to make women less invisible within their local community.

> The inclusion of women's lives and experiences is not an add on extra, but involves a fundamental rethinking of what history is about.[13]

[11] P.Burnham, *Lady Joanna Thornhill; Her Life and Times* (Wye, 2008).
[12] Patricia Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England* (London, 2004), p. 1.
[13] *ibid.* p. 13.

As a contribution to this rethinking, this thesis, with the education of women as its central theme and its focus on elite individuals and their circles during the religious and political upheavals of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, rises to that challenge especially as Crawford further claimed that

> If we take account of gender we can take a fresh view of the impact of the Protestant Reformation.[14]

Chapter four will reflect the truth of this statement as it examines the experiences of West Country, recusant, women in Elizabeth's reign, acknowledging their central role in creating, preserving and handing on a syllabus of Catholic education to the younger generations. In contrast, chapter five will show how a Protestant woman's fear and suspicion of Catholics inspired her to create an historical narrative containing advice for a Protestant queen.

Encouraging a more inclusive regional history by changing the historical focus and unpacking an educational experience other than that of the male, ensconced in formal educational institutions, is challenging when common perceptions of a region's history are dominated by narratives of men. Staff based at the Plymouth and West Cornwall record office report that most enquiries about the area's history, apart from those seeking to research their own family trees or visitors from the United States attempting to link themselves with the

[14] *ibid* p. 7.

Pilgrim Fathers, tend to concentrate their enquiries on narratives of flamboyant men and the latter's influence within the Western community and the nation. Plymouth's most popular early modern figure is Francis Drake. Indeed informal conversations with museum archivists and local librarians tend to suggest that for the South West region a community's relationship with the state is often judged through the number of important men it has provided for national history text books.[15]

For local historians, of the early modern period, it is no simple task shifting the focus of attention to educated women in a period when, despite the gender of several monarchs, women did not hold official office and literate women were in the minority.[16] Local histories certainly shift their emphasis as soon as more attention is given to female experience. In fact, as many early modern women tended to work within the environs of home and estate, the local area becomes more central to a full understanding of national narratives once their experiences are included. Indeed, as chapter four will demonstrate, it would be impossible to present a clear picture of the survival of Catholic traditions in the South West without reference to women's experiences, since many Catholic

[15] Informal conversations with record office staff at Plymouth and Exeter in 2014. In addition an informal poll of 100 people resident in two Cornish towns, Launceston and Bude in March 2015, indicated that when asked to name an influential local person from a previous century only 2 named a woman.
[16] K. Sharpe and S.N. Zwicker, *Reading Society and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 12.

men were either in prison, banished from their estates, or in exile.

Local communities are of course collections of family groupings. Crawford claims that families look different if we take gender into account.[17] It follows therefore that local communities will also look different when gender is considered. Roles within early modern families varied according to gender and status, nevertheless the history of local communities evolves in different ways when women, rather than men become a central point of historical research. This thesis demonstrates how the focus of local history shifts considerably once Dorothy, Anne and Lucie's experiences and achievements are added to regional narratives. Their education gives these three women agency, allowing them to contribute to the dynamics of their communities.

***Formal and informal Education; encouraging a broader view***

Research into the education and fashioning of women is further complicated by the focus, favoured by most historians of education, on formal rather than informal education. This excludes female narratives since women were shut out of formal centres of study. Much has been written on interpreting the customs, institutions and systems which applied to men, for example the university experience, the importance of the 'Grand Tour', legal training and social life at the Inns of

[17] Crawford, *Blood, Bodies* p. 1.

Court. Early modern women's educational experience is often dismissed in a short sentence or paragraph, informing readers of the limitations to female learning and focusing on the subordination of women within the confines of their male-dominated households. In one study of early modern education, in the Cornish town of Launceston, women are not mentioned at all and John Chynoweth states that virtually nothing is known about the education of Cornish girls.[18]

Crawford's call, to draw attention away from the public spheres of men and to refocus on the family as an important part of society, together with her essential argument that we need to look at families in a new way, is an important given for this thesis; furthermore if 'families look different if we take gender into account' then education, within those families, must look different if we examine male and female perspectives and recognise an educational process within informal as well as formal settings.

Today most educational practitioners recognise that education is more than academic and professional achievement. It is the preparation and training of young individuals for adult life.[19] If this wider definition is borrowed from the education field and added to historical perspectives, there is justification in placing more emphasis on the variety of ways early modern

[18] T.H. Spencer, *A History of Education at Launceston* (Cornwall, 1966); J. Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* (Stroud, 2002), p. 63.
[19] DFE, *The National Curriculum for England* (London, 2014), p. 4.

individuals gained experience, knowledge and skills. This thesis acknowledges that education is acquired in informal settings as well as through participation in formal learning. This is particularly important for a study of female education since women were not admitted to university or the Inns of Court. The household was central to women's lives and, as Elizabeth Muzzola reminds us, it must be seen as an important place of learning, teaching and reading.[20] Present day educationalists and politicians often refer to education through a focus on 'life-long learning'.[21] They stress how important it is that every informal experience a young person has, from early play through to the informal observation of parents, older siblings and others as role models, is seen as education. Furthermore it plays at least an equal, if not even a more significant part, in preparing the young to take their place in society as the formal education offered at school and college. When planning a formal curriculum educators promise to provide training which will prepare the nation's citizens for all life's possibilities.[22] To ignore informal education is to omit a major section of human experience, rendering any study of education inadequate.

This thesis examines all aspects of and opportunities for female education in both formal and informal contexts. It

[20] Elizabeth Muzzola, *Learning And Literacy In Female Hands* (Abingdon, 2016), P. 3.
[21] Variations on this theme can be found in DFE individual subject *National Curriculum* handbooks, (London, 2014).
[22] *ibid.*

takes the view that education has always been a preparation for adult life and the roles both genders are required to play as responsible members of society. It therefore includes analysis of traditional educational expectations for early modern women, which were normally outlined by early modern men, alongside other training opportunities available to early modern girls. This enables discussions on both the designed mirroring of selected role models and the more accidental observation of day to day contacts. Of course, perceptions about what exactly is meant by 'responsible member of society' are adaptable and vary much depending on situation and contexts. Indeed, one person may play several roles within a lifetime, sometimes even simultaneously. It can be shown that in many ways, elite West Country women were both consciously fashioned by their immediate families and self-consciously fashioned by themselves. Stephen Greenblatt's work on an increased self-consciousness within the sixteenth century, suggests that education and self fashioning are connected since fashioning.

> describes the practice of parents and teachers; it is linked to manners or demeanour, particularly of the elite; it suggests representation of one's nature or intention in speech or actions.[23]

As will be seen in the three case studies, elements of fashioning are strong features within the education of girls in the three West Country families. The roles each had to

[23] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self Fashioning From More To Shakespeare* (Chicago, 2005), p. 3.

play, both in their individual households and in their local communities, were constantly changing over quite short periods of time, as their families reacted to changes within the religious and political life of the country. Examining their experiences and adaptations provides evidence to uphold Greenblatt's thesis that fashioning is complicated because it invariably crosses boundaries between the

> Shaping of [the women's] own identity, the experience of being moulded by forces outside [their own] control and the attempt to fashion other selves…[24]

Furthermore, it will also be demonstrated that women remain subjects to be fashioned and re-fashioned even in and after death, where longevity is interpreted as a reward for the role one played in life; the Catholic grandmother holding onto the old religion, the virtuous widow remembered for her piety and selflessness, the brave and saintly exiled nun; all re-fashioned into role models whose memory becomes embedded into the education of the next generation.

Unfortunately the historiography of early modern women's education presents today's historians with a somewhat incomplete and limited narrative. As will be shown later in this chapter, in several texts, the learning experience of girls is often dismissed in one or two sentences, either stating that girls received no formal education before moving straight to the male experience of tutors, schools, university

[24] *ibid.*

and Inns of court, or simply dismissing anything which girls were taught, because it took place in a domestic context. Christine Peters's *Women in Early Modern Britain* contains no separate chapter on women's education and the author devotes just one sentence to women's literacy, explaining that it lagged behind men's.[25] The latter view is uncontested, nevertheless a book on the experiences of early modern women which pays scant attention to any educational process seems to have missed some vital evidence. Of course, feminist writers, in various fields, might claim that an undervaluing any activities which take place in the private setting of the home, whilst regarding the external settings of male experience as more important, says as much about writers' values in the modern world as it does about the early modern one. Lisa Isherwood, a theologian, is interested in the ways religious teachings, beliefs and values have been handed down the generations throughout history. She believes that we should read again and reinterpret all religious narratives. This would include a search for new readings of biblical material, especially the stories of creation and fall in Genesis, which played a key part in developing early modern concepts of the roles of men and women, the relationships between them and the education deemed suitable for them.[26] Chapter two considers this suggestion, though imposing twenty-

[25] Christine Peters, *Women In Early Modern Britain 1450-1640* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 132-133.
[26] Lisa Isherwood, *Patriarchs, Prophets and Other Villains* (Abingdon, 2007), p. 153.

first century readings on early modern situations might be problematic.

It is important to acknowledge that education and expectations of what education's function and processes should be changes over time. Whether an early modern woman's learning experience was actually thought to be education, by her contemporaries, is a different matter from whether these experiences can be justifiably classified as education by historians today. Similarly, the value placed on differing roles and spheres of influence, at different times, affects interpretations of women's experience. The belief that women spent their lives confined to the private sphere of the household, whilst their brothers, fathers and husbands moved in the far more important public sphere, has clearly influenced studies of the educational experience and aspirations of women. Much emphasis has been placed on the differences between male and female activities and interests to explain the different educational provision for the sons and daughters of the elite.[27] However, Amanda Vickery rejects totally any arguments for a gradual but consistent development of separate spheres for men and women.[28] Ingrid Tague agrees, pointing out that this theory is merely a product of reading back into history from the nineteenth

[27] Josephine Kamm, *Hope Deferred* (London, 1965), p. 51.
[28] Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter* (London, 1998), P. 6. Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age or Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History' *Historical Journal* 36 (1993), pp. 383-414.

century.[29] Tague believes that most scholarship on separate spheres has developed from the work of literary scholars and opines it must be questioned by historians. Indeed the historians Larminie and Wall[30] have presented case studies of elite families, the Newdigates of Arbury and the Thynnes of Longleat respectively, which prove Tague's point that

> Studies of individual families or groups have suggested that there was a large distinction between ideology and practice and that ideas about separate spheres were largely irrelevant to women's experiences.[31]

***Geographical and Historical Background***

It must be recognised that educational theory and practice is influenced by political and religious changes, both nationally and locally. Before the Reformation the Christianity practised in most West Country elite households was Catholicism. Religion was central to individual and collective lives and therefore, even without an officially recorded curriculum, it is certain that religious education played the major part in an accepted educational, training and fashioning process, from infancy to young adulthood. The ever-changing seasons, rites of passage and local celebrations were marked by traditional religious practices. There were spiritual duties attached to traditional practices.[32] Children learned both formally through

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[29] I. Tague, *Women of Quality, Accepting and Contesting Ideas of Femininity in England* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 5.
[30] Vivienne Larminie, *Wealth, Kinship and Culture: the Seventeenth Century Newdigates of Arbury And Their World* (Woodbridge, 1995); A. Wall, 'Elizabethan Perspective and Feminine Practice: The Thynne Family of Longleat', *History* 75 (1990) pp. 20-38.
[31] Tague, *Women of Quality* p.5.
[32] John Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* (Stroud, 2002), p. 232.

official teaching in church, reinforced by instruction at home and informally, through observing the actions of older generations. They were shown the importance of lighting candles and venerating Saints, especially those connected with the local area. In Cornwall saints of Celtic/Brittonic origin were honoured. The latter were linked with wells, rocks, paths, trees, harbours, seats and islands.[33] A considerable number of these saints were female such as, Morwenna, Endelienta and Minver or Minifred. The Arundell family had male and female local saints, Columba, an Irish Princess martyred in Cornwall and Mauganus or Mawgan.[34] Although Cornwall had more Celtic/Brittonic holy figures than other English regions, this was qualified by devotion to Mary and despite their unusual list of local saints, Cornish worshipers shared much practice in common with devotees in other parts of the country.[35] Children learned to use beads as an aid to personal prayer, the importance of being penitent, marking the hours, hearing a mass and celebrating a holy day or festival. All these activities were part of life's routine. West Country children were expected to believe in God, fear the fires of Hell and to aim, through acceptable attitudes and behaviour, for a place in Paradise. Indulgences, ensuring a direct route to the latter could be purchased, and Dorothy Arundell's

[33] Nicholas Orme, *The Saints of Cornwall* (Oxford, 2000), p. 1.
[34] *ibid.* p. 182 ; Details of other local saints see Nicholas Roscarrock *Lives of The Saints: Cornwall and Devon.* Nicholas Orme (ed.), (Exeter, 1982); Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Cornish Saints* (Penryn, 1998).
[35] Orme, *Saints of Cornwall*, p. 45.

great-grandfather John, bought at least six for himself, his wife, Katherine and some of his friends between 1500 and 1528.[36]

Many elite households had private chapels, attached to their main dwelling, or close by on their estate. It was common, in the West Country, to dedicate these to a significant personal Saint.[37] In 1525, when Piers Edgcumbe married, for a second time, a new south window was commissioned for the family's chapel at his house, Cotehele. Created by Anglo-Flemish glaziers, the window contained an image of St. Catherine, the namesake of his new bride.[38] So sure of the existence of Paradise, but ever concerned for their own inclusion within it, members of the pre-Reformation elite made special insurance provision in their wills, with many leaving funding for a chantry where Masses were sung for their souls. The Arundell chantry, at St Mawgan in Pydar, was founded by John Arundell, in 1512 and there was another Arundell foundation at St. Colomb, founded in 1428, to which was attached a college of four priests, with stipends paid from the profits of four Arundell manors. The Arundells refused to surrender the latter to the Crown in 1545.[39] Founding a chantry was not just a male preserve. Richard Carew, in his 1602 *Survey of Cornwall*

[36] Nicholas Orme, 'Indulgences in Medieval Cornwall' *Journal Of Royal Institution Cornwall* n.s. ii (1992), pp. 149-50,163,166.
[37] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 233.
[38] James Lees-Milne, *Cotehele House Near Callington Cornwall* (Plymouth, 1971), p. 3.
[39] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 252.

describes how wealthy, three times widowed, Cornishwoman Thomasine Bonaventure, Lady Percival(d. C.1530) made such a bequest alongside more practical gifts to her community,

> She employed the whole residue of her lyfe and last widowhood to works no less bountiful than charitable: namely repayring of high waies, building of bridges, endowing maydens, relieving of prisoners, feeding and apparelling the poore, amongt the rest, at this Week St. Mary, she founded a Chauntery[40]…

Since religion, with its promise to reward the devout with a place in paradise, was important to Thomasine she strove to ensure that Christian duties were taught to the young. Educational provision required funding so, in addition to her chantry, she made provision for the setting up of a school in the village of her birth, Week St Mary, near Launceston. Her declared aim was to educate the children of elite households but there was one proviso, those children were to be boys, which she termed 'the best gentlemen's' sons of Devon and Cornwall'[41] Lady Percival wanted these children to learn by example and so she left clear instructions on the character, devout faith and duties she required of the school master. A religious education was not to be simply gained through instruction it was also to be absorbed through the observation of one of good character living an exemplary life.[42]

Daughters of these best gentlemen, at least those not destined for marriage alliances, could enter English convents to

[40] Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall* (London, 1602), P. 120.
[41] *ibid.*
[42] *ibid.*

receive an education. Within the confines of the cloister they could earn respect for their learning and business sense as well as their spirituality. Several West Country prioresses, at St Katherine's Benedictine Priory of Polsloe in Exeter, had both the knowledge required and the authority to grant leases, make gifts and enter various legal agreements. The Priory at Polsloe was the wealthiest priory in the city, with more income than any of Exeter's male communities.[43] Charles Worthy suggests that Polsloe was 'looked upon as a very desirable home' for 'young ladies of quality'. He came to this conclusion because the daughter of a city official appears in the 1538 Dissolution list of members, who were to be provided with pensions of between £2 and 4s per annum for life.[44] Exeter convent life was apparently neither solitary nor uncomfortable, with the community's nuns always accompanied by a companion and having a page to wait upon them. Enclosure was not strictly enforced because sisters were allowed beyond convent walls, into Exeter, provided they were accompanied by their chaplain, a clerk or esquire of good reputation'[45] Most of the Polsloe nuns returned to the homes of their elite families upon their forced retirement. Alice Worthie (d. 1586), whose Aunt had been Prioress of Polsloe up to 1530,

[43] Claire Cross, 'Review of Nicholas Orme The Churches of Medieval Exeter', *The Local Historian* 45 no. 3, (July 2015), p. 256.
[44] Charles Worthy, *The History of The Suburbs of Exeter* (Exeter, 1892), pp. 38-40. Worthy worked from the handwritten transcriptions, made by George Oliver,of Polsloe records. The original manuscripts were lost in Exeter's blitz.
[45] *ibid.*

drew her pension for almost fifty years. The 1538 list, which includes, two Carews, a Kelly, a Worthie, an Ashley, a Cooke and a Sydnam, shows that the Exeter nuns had been recruited from the region's elite indicating that the religious life was a respected one.[46] Within the Arundell family, as chapter four will show, this respect persisted, through the generations, even when there were no convents left in England. For most West Country residents, regardless of status, the Catholic faith and the routines of everyday life were enmeshed. From the mid 1530s, when changes to these routines were declared, those who strove to continue in traditional ways faced considerable confusion and challenge. As Eamon Duffy's regional study, *The Voices of Morebath*, shows, over a period of thirty years, concepts of faith and definitions of orthodoxy were re-written four times, by order of a succession of Tudor monarchs their councils and bishops.[47]

In the West Country the majority of elite households attempted, some more successfully than others, to adapt their way of life according to whatever regulations were in force. In practice, no matter what lay in their hearts, this meant attending the same church but making subtle amendments to whatever religious education provision they had made for their children and being seen to accept whatever new forms of religious belief and practice were required of them by the

[46] *ibid.*
[47] Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath* (New Haven, 2001).

central authorities. In matters of religion, Anne Edgcumbe's father, Richard (1499-1662), made efforts to sail with the prevailing wind. In Queen Mary's reign he aided Thomas Denny's defence of Devon against the Protestant plotters of Wyatt's rebellion but, a few years later, with Elizabeth on the throne, he employed a private chaplain to prove his Protestant credentials.[48]

However, for some, centuries of habitual practice could not be set aside as though unimportant. At Whitsuntide 1549 in Clyst St Mary, Devon, a gentleman on horseback Walter Ralegh, father of the famous Sir Walter, encountered an elderly woman was walking down the road openly telling her beads.[49] This was Catholic practice and forbidden. Ralegh apprehended her, regarding her actions as a criminal offence. The local community rallied to support their neighbour and no further action could be taken against her despite the status of he who apprehended her. However it was not only poor and uneducated lay people who clung on to forbidden practices. In the Cornish assizes during Elizabeth I's reign at least 21 women linked to elite households were indicted for recusancy.[50]

For many reasons, religious, practical and political, most of the Devonshire elite, like the aforementioned Ralegh, strove

[48] Julie Sampson, 'Anne Edgcumbe/Dowriche and The French Historie', *Transactions of The Devonshire Association*, 141 (June, 2009), p. 97.
[49] J Hooker (Vowell) *The Description of the citie of Excester part 2* ed. H. Tapley-Soper (Exeter, 1919), pp. 62-63.
[50] C. Talbot(ed.), 'Miscellania: Recusant Records' *Catholic Record Society* 53 (London, 1961), p. 114.

to demonstrate how they were embracing the new Protestant ways. After all, controlling the actions of one's local community was a good way to demonstrate loyalty to the monarch and to gain recognition, high office and status. In Cornwall, where most Arundell territory lay, however, it was a different story, in some part due to geographical conditions affecting political and religious communications. In John Norden's 1584 *Description of Cornwall* the region is recorded as one

> ...full of hills, rocks and craggy mountains...the rocks are high, huge, ragged, and craggy, not only upon the sea coast, the rocks thereof are very steep and hard, and are as a defensive wall against the continual furious assaults of the prevailing ocean on all sides...But also the inland mountains are so crowned with mightly rocks as he that passeth through the country beholding some of the rocks from afar off, may suppose them to be great cities planted on the hills[51]

Such a bleak description of remoteness illustrates how far Arundell Cornish estates and areas of influence were removed from centres of authority, both temporal and spiritual. Consequently, with regard to religious matters, as there was no separate Cornish diocese and with the Bishops' Exeter seat at least a day's journey away, changes in religious practice could be slow in Cornwall. In Arundell territory the status quo could quietly survive without too much investigation from those in religious authority. Pointing out that Cornwall was linked to its neighbouring county, and therefore to the rest

[51] John Norden, *Speculi Britanniae Pars: a Topograph and Chorograph Description of Cornwall* (London, 1728), pp. 3-4.

of England, by only three roads, Lisa McClain claims that because of the county's

> relative detachment from the rest of England, the Protestant government and church faced a different set of challenges in Cornwall than those they encountered elsewhere when they attempted to reform religion[52]

McClain therefore chastises historians of Cornwall, such as A.L Rowse and A. Duffin for their failure to acknowledge such remoteness and consequently omitting to discuss in detail any 'distinctive aspects' of Cornish religious belief, practice, identity and sense of community. Cornwall's distinctive sense of tradition and identity ensured that religious affairs, particularly those of Catholics, evolved in different ways in this westernmost region than in any other part of early modern England.[53] Chapter four will show that the educational and social experiences of Catholic women, like Dorothy Arundell, were inevitably linked to this unique evolution.

The West Country then, with its various intellectual and physical divisions such as geophysical boundaries of moors and rivers together with political and religious allegiances throughout the early modern period, provides an interesting backdrop for an in depth study of the variety of women's educational experiences, their personal aspirations and the actual opportunities offered to them within the regions elite

[52] Lisa McClain, *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation And Lived Experience Amongst Catholics In Protestant England 1559-1642* (Abingdon, 2004), pp. 171-172.
[53] *ibid.*

households. Although often viewed as a homogenous rural region, West Country political and religious allegiances and affiliations differed widely and changed over time. Women's educational experiences, within individual households, developed in different ways, according to how a changing religious and political climate affected family circumstances. Mary Wolffe's study of peace and war in early seventeenth century Devon shows that during the Reformation, there was no home grown Protestant party within Devonshire elite circles and that Protestant traditions had to be imposed upon the county. However, despite a few pockets of resistance to major changes, such as the events, linked with the 1549 prayer book rebellion, at Sampford Courtney, most Devon elites settled for a middle ground agreement, under a Calvinist bishop who overlooked divisive issues of non conformity, so people could work together to preach the gospel and resist Roman Catholicism.[54] In Cornwall and the coastal regions of Dorset however some elite families, including the Arundells, remained staunchly Catholic despite the consequences for their wealth and estate.

Chapters four and five will show how different religious affiliations offered contrasting expectations and opportunities for women, with Dorothy's family holding on to Catholic ideals and values whilst Anne Edgcumbe's benefited

[54] Mary Wolffe, *Gentry Leaders In Peace and War: The Gentry Governors of Devon in The Early Seventeenth Century* (Exeter, 1997), pp. 257-263.

from the adoption of Protestant educational ways. Lucie Reynell lived under a monarch and through both Civil War and Commonwealth, when loyalties in the region and subsequently views on morality and behaviour were divided. Chapter six will show her striving for a middle way in the midst of religious and political arguments and when suspicion of neighbours and strangers abounded. John Taylor, who travelled throughout the West Country in 1649, staying mostly within the households of the elite noted both that the inhabitants were

> affable courteous people, they are loving to requite a kindness, placable to remit a wrong, and hardy to retort injuries; the country hath its share of huge stones, mighty rocks, noble, free, gentlemen, bountiful housekeepers, strong and stout men, handsome, beautiful women and (for any that I know) there is not one Cornish cuckold to be found in the whole county: in brief they are in most plentiful manner happy in the abundance of right and left hand blessings..[55]

He recorded the hospitality, offered by several elite families, noting the enjoyable time he had conversing with various 'virtuous and beautiful gentlewomen' but warned that in some areas of the region the situation was markedly different.

> There is very strict examinations of persons, and at every town's end, in all the sea towns of parts of Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire...no traveller could pass without catechizing words: as what is your name, whence came you, where dwell you, wither go you, what is your business, and wherefore came you hither? Now he that cannot answer these particular demands punctually, is to

[55] Todd Gray, *Cornwall: The Travellers' Tales* (Exeter, 2000), P. 34.

> be had before governors, captains, commanders, mayors or constables[56]…

All three women, used for the case studies, lived their lives and continued in their daily routines against a backdrop of religious or political discord. This inevitably influenced their educational experiences.

***Historiography***

The historiography, of women's experience of education in the early modern period, is woebegone and somewhat inadequate but it is important to include a summary of developments. The growth of universal primary education for all, regardless of gender, in the nineteenth century led to reconsiderations of the educational experiences of girls in previous centuries, albeit this was not so much an attempt to uncover experiences of the past but rather a chance to contrast past weakness with contemporary strength. Writers exploited traditionally held beliefs, about female educational experience, as a springboard for showcasing new developments in education, arguing how much the female lot had improved in their own times. Alice Zimmern's 1898 *The Renaissance Of Girl's Education* is a good example of this process. Zimmern confidently contrasts the progress made in female education over the past fifty years, with the inadequate provisions for girls' schooling in previous periods. The sub-title of her book 'A record of fifty years progress' suggests that Zimmern is not attempting to

[56] *ibid.* p. 37.

create an accurate historical account of female educational experience, rather she is commending a contemporary renaissance, in late Victorian England, which will improve the lot of the female student. In the excitement about developments in a new age it is often all too easy to dismiss past experiences.[57]

Historians, of the early twentieth century, also looked back on early modern woman's educational experience with some distain. Some believed that women's education had been better provided for in medieval times but pointed to a steady decline from the Reformation onwards. An M.A. thesis, presented to the University of London in 1926, suggests that during the Renaissance elite women received a classical education whilst, at the same time, acquiring training in traditional housewifery skills. It shows elite women receiving a dual education. Margaret More, who received an humanist education, is cited as the best example of a recipient of this parallel curriculum. Elizabeth Morris, the writer of this thesis, declares that this type of learning, which she links to the concept of an ideal Renaissance woman, was replaced by an inferior curriculum, from the seventeenth century, because of developing views on the perceived skills required of an 'accomplished woman.' Unfortunately, claims Morris, this brought about a decline in both women's education and female

[57] Alice. Zimmern, *The Renaissance of Girls' Education: A record of fifty years progress* (London, 1898), p. 14.

aspirations.[58] Morris' thesis relies heavily on Alice Clark's 1919 study on the working experience of women in the seventeenth century, especially Clark's conclusion that as a new, capitalist, industrial society developed women found their roles as key workers, within household centres of productivity, much reduced. With little part to play in the household economy women's economic and social roles declined and they were no longer thought to need a dual education programme.[59]

The first significant and detailed study of the history of female education was published in 1929. Dorothy Gardiner's *English Girlhood at School* has influenced many subsequent studies of the female student's experience.[60] Gardiner's text is still a valuable resource, not least because she did not overlook or dismiss the potential educational experiences available to girls and young women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She also recognised the forward thinking and creativity of early modern exponents of female education, such as Richard Mulcaster, who thought girls capable of learning languages, logic and rhetoric alongside housewifery.

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[58] Elizabeth M.D. Morris, *The Education of Girls in England from 1600-1860* (University of London M.A. thesis 1926), pp. iii-iv, 7-8, 39, 115.
[59] *ibid.* pp. 115-117; Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1919), pp. 306-308.
[60] Dorothy Gardiner, *English Girlhood At School. A Study of Women's Education Through Twelve Centuries* (Oxford, 1929).

> It is indeed no unworthy ideal. Mulcaster's sense of the claim of young girls upon the consideration and protection of society is the most chivalrous possible...in his breadth of view, his anxiety to make a reasonable and not excessive demand on the average woman, while yet calling out her best powers, in his ability to visualise the needs of the wage earner as well as the princess, he has advanced far beyond the pioneers of the opening century.[61]

However concluding remarks, in an epilogue, praising the previous century's development of elementary education and commending contemporary society's aspirations for developing opportunities for women in higher education, appear to revert to the view that previous centuries offered very little educational experience to girls. Late 1920s educational development stands out, she claims

> In impressive relief when it is viewed against the background of history, the long struggle, the disability, the hope deferred.[62]

Gardiner offered a survey of women's education over a very long period, from the early church Fathers through to the early twentieth century. This format was taken up by subsequent historians of women's education. Consequently, though unintentionally, in this pioneering work Gardiner limited the potential for more detailed studies of female experience of learning, over more compact time scales. Sadly, despite making extensive use of the factual narratives within Gardiner's text, many later writers ignored most of her insight, commentary and commendations of early modern

[61] *ibid.* P. 193.
[62] *ibid.* P. 284.

educators and stressed instead the remark on deferred hope, from her concluding paragraph.

In 1965, Josephine Kamm took such inspiration from Dorothy Gardiner that she borrowed these concluding words for the title for her own, longitudinal, study of women's education, *Hope Deferred.*[63] Like Gardiner, Kamm works over a very large time scale. Beginning her account with Anglo-Saxon education, she follows Zimmern and is very dismissive of attempts to educate women before the nineteenth century. Devoting only eighteen pages to Renaissance educators but half her book to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, she declares in previous centuries 'an education which was no education at all continued unabated.'[64] Kamm's views stem from a belief that educational experiences must be purely academic in nature. There is no indication in *Hope Deferred* that a practical training, in an informal setting, was also a valuable education where the experiences offered to a pupil equipped her for adult life.

In educational terms, the 1960s and 1970s can be identified as a time of challenge and freedom. Kamm's approach to a study of education, written in the 1960s, seems at odds with views on modern educational theory and practice which were developing throughout this period. These drew attention to the value of

[63] Josephine Kamm, *Hope Deferred: Girls' Education In English History* (London, 1965).
[64] *ibid.* p. 151.

all experiences, since each had potential to help a young person move through childhood and adolescence towards responsible adulthood. Educational philosophers Paul Hirst and R.S. Peters were amongst many asking serious questions about the aims of education and whether it could ever be value free. There were advances in theories of child development through the work of Piaget. Chomsky examined the acquisition of symbols and language.[65] With hindsight, it seems odd that an historian of education, writing in the mid sixties, continued to examine and present her subject in the same way Gardiner had done almost forty years before.

Working at the same time as Kamm, Lawrence Stone sought a new approach for educational historians. Claiming that the history of education was in a primitive stage, both in the collection of data and the formulation of concepts, Stone was keen to push the boundaries of scholarly debate by moving away from a narrative, chronological history of education.[66] To encourage a new focus on the probable concepts, beliefs and values within educational provision and to provoke discussion, he set up an experimental 'trial balloon' hoping to 'avoid the fate of Icarus'[67] In the twenty-first century, read with hindsight, in our, so-called, classless society, Stone's tone feels dated, with its strong hints of a secondary political agenda. He was

[65] For summary of their ideas see Joy Palmer(ed.), *Fifty Modern Thinkers On Education* (Abingdon, 2001).
[66] Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900' *Past And Present* 42.1 (1969), p. 69.
[67] *ibid.*

scathing about the way a classical education had become 'The reservation of higher culture as the distinctive monopoly of a social elite...' from the seventeenth century onwards.[68] He declared that the education system, developed in England from the sixteenth century to be

> very peculiar...It involved instruction of upper-class youths by a group of bachelors in the mysteries of the tribe and the wisdom of the ancestors expressed in a dead language..[69]

However, when compared with Kamm, Stone's new approach, which relates continuity and change, in educational practice, to what was actually taking place within society as a whole and focuses on the experience of the taught, shows him to have far more awareness of contemporary educational theories. He clearly felt that, throughout history, education was value ridden, claiming that

> The social structure of education in a society is determined by seven factors. Social stratification; job opportunities; religion; theories of social control; demographic and family patterns; economic organisation and resources;... and finally political theory and institutions.[70]

Stone dismisses much of the educational experience of early modern women by declaring that education in the home was temporally, geographically and socially a restricted phenomenon.[71] However, at least four of the seven factors he proposed are still particularly relevant to this study of

[68] *ibid.* p. 71.
[69] *ibid.* p. 72.
[70] *ibid.* p. 70.
[71] *ibid.*

elite women's education in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The first is social stratification, since a study of elite women cannot ignore their relationships with those from other levels of society who come into contact with the household. Social stratification, claims Stone

> Affects the educational system [within any society] by raising or lowering obstacles to expansion and mobility at and between the various levels, by which means the pattern of education is adjusted to the pattern of society.[72]

The second is religion, because the women featured in this thesis belonged to widely different religious traditions and consequently had dissimilar experiences of education. The third, theories of social control, becomes particularly relevant, since the time span of this study covers a period of political and religious change, which impacts on all three women and their households. Fourthly, the three contrasting families, to which the women belonged, had different structures, beliefs and economies. For Stone, the family was vitally important in early modern English society for the passing on of values, to teach religious belief and demonstrate or instil morality. He makes a valid point, since much of the education received and handed on to others, by the women who feature in this thesis, took place within their own family's household setting.

[72] *ibid.* p. 71.

Social structure and education, claims Stone, have a special relationship involving a two-way feedback process whereby each affects and acts upon the other.

> The best example of this process at work is the evolution and function of classical studies in the West and particularly in England since the Reformation. The ostensible function of studying the classics was and is to preserve and foster the humanistic values of the ancient world. In the sixteenth century moreover Latin was an essential means of international communication and the advocates of the classics were middle-class humanists critical of pretentions to inherited authority.[73]

However, he opines, that by the seventeenth century 'the latent function of the classics' had changed. A classical education became the preserve of the privileged few

> It was in the seventeenth century that the gentry drew away from the lower classes, segregating their children either at home or with a private tutor, or in a handful of socially exclusive schools to serve this purpose...[74]

Stone claims, that to understand the development of education in England it is important to recall the important part played by religion in early modern society. The educational experiences, of Dorothy, Anne and Lucie, unpacked in the case studies of this thesis, vindicate this claim.

Stone's summary of educational change, brought about by Protestantism, is worth repeating here. He notes that Protestants saw Christianity as

> a religion of the book, namely the scriptures, and once this book ceased to be a closely guarded secret, fit only

[73] *ibid.* p. 71.
[74] *ibid.* p. 72.

> to be read by priests, it generated pressure for the creation of a literate society..... The historical record suggests that the critical element has been not so much Christianity but Protestantism. In the early sixteenth century the Catholics were fearful of heresy, because of Bible study whereas the Reformers were fearful of superstition because of lack of Bible study.[75]

Educational change had to take place, since Protestant requirements for everyone to be familiar with Biblical texts caused problems in a society where there had been very little tradition of oral memorising and recitation of sacred texts. Latin, Hebrew and Greek, the languages of scripture were foreign and extinct. In other traditions, such as Judaism or Islam, religious texts were in the vernacular and memorising them was common practice.

> Memorising activity has been an effective substitute for reading the written or printed word.[76]

Stone further argues that a new, Protestant, form of education was vital since a complicated Christian theology, with the need to understand its concept of God as three persons in Trinity and the significance of the Eucharistic symbols of bread and wine, depended on the ability to study the text of Scripture. Thus, whilst Catholicism remained a culture of the image, Protestantism became a literary culture which needed a literate society. Therefore new developments in education became essential. An English, Protestant, education valued the reading of the Bible alongside the works of Protestant

[75] *ibid.* p. 77.
[76] *ibid.*

reformers and so over-zealous Protestants 'whitewashed over wall paintings to replace them with the Ten Commandments.'[77]

It can be argued that a deliberate attempt to create a religiously aware and literate society is an attempt at social control. This is clearly illustrated in Puritan agendas, such as those supported by Anne and her relatives. Stone describes such Puritans as 'zealous for universal education'[78]

Accordingly Puritanism

> Argued that ignorance is the root of all evil; not merely of popery and superstition and moral depravity but also of insubordination and rebelliousness. This ignorance could only be cured by three closely linked things: literacy, the Bible and preaching. With these tools they could create a moral, a Christian and an obedient society.[79]

As will be seen in chapter five, Anne Edgcumbe's attempts to re-define society, by re-writing history, make use of all the above tools. Recognising the importance of religion in the formation of educational aims is essential for this thesis.

However despite Stone's own efforts and his challenge, to specialists in the field of education history, to widen the scholarly debate, a decade later Phyllis Stock's 1978 *Better Than Rubies*[80] returns to Gardiner's original format of large time-span and shares many of Kamm's dismissive views on the education offered to early modern girls. Claiming several

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[77] *ibid.* p. 78.
[78] *ibid.* p. 79.
[79] *ibid.* p. 90.
[80] Phyllis Stock, *Better than Rubies: A History of Women's Education* (London, 1978).

times that female education was 'neglected' or even 'woefully inadequate' right up to the middle of the nineteenth century[81] Stock's work is not an uplifting read. Also written in the 1970s, Mary Cathcart Borer's *Willingly To School* seems equally downbeat.[82]

Stone worked on producing often contentious and always challenging arguments. His later work, on the nature of the family, remains important for women's history, not least because his theories, on diminishing patriarchal authority in early modern families, were challenged by other historians and the debate, on the history of education, which he had hoped to set off at the end of the 1960s finally widened. By 1995, Fletcher was able to explore the complex configurations of gender and authority and the way women were able to subvert them.[83] Sara Mendleson and Patricia Crawford argued that a dominant patriarchal society was able to adapt so as to preserve a hierarchal structure within society which still had strong beliefs about different roles for different genders.[84]

Examination of how women submitted to, challenged, subverted or overcame patriarchal expectations and control of their intellectual skills, is a refrain to which this thesis will return. Initially however, when searching for evidence of the

[81] *ibid.* pp. 105, 125.
[82] M. Cathcart Borer, *Willingly To School, A History of Women's Education* (London, 1976).
[83] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven, 1995).
[84] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women In Early Modern England* 1550-1720 (Oxford, 2003), p. 432.

educational experience of three early modern women, from different religious backgrounds, one of Stone's 'ten commandments' for those wishing to research women's experience,

> Thou shalt not omit to analyse with care the structural constraints on women created by values, religion, custom, laws and the nature of the economy...[85]

remains remarkably significant.

Rosemary O'Day appears to be taking this commandment very seriously, though she actually wrote before Stone published it. In her 1982 study of the developments within education and society over three centuries she devotes a chapter to the education of girls and women in society, noting that women's education was created to prepare them for the roles which men had decided and women accepted, were suitable for females.[86] Unfortunately, like Kamm and Stock, some of her views on the content and value of this education can only be read as negative.

> It produced, at best, intelligent wives, who could converse sensibly with their husbands, run an efficient household, and bring up literate and moral children or girls who could make an adequate living in the world should they fail to find a husband.[87]

O'Day insists that there were few exceptions to this rule and most early modern women were contented with the status quo. She points to a paradoxical situation, within society, that

[85] L. Stone, 'Only women' in *New York Review of Books* (April 11 1985),p. 21.
[86] Rosemary O'Day, *Education and Society 1500-1800* (London, 1982), P.194.
[87] *ibid.*

was at the same time both civil and religious because women were expected to be active within their religion but inactive and uninvolved in formal education, leadership and government. Most women did not notice this inconsistency, but one who did was Mary Evelyn who noted the conflict between acquiring knowledge and being a good and supportive housewife.[88]

Dorothy, Anne and Lucie, the three women in this study, do not appear to fit the stereotype of subordinated womanhood. Nevertheless, they seem unaware of the inconsistency identified by O'Day. However, they were not content to leave all decisions to men. This thesis will show that they consciously developed active partnerships with the men with whom they come into contact. Dorothy and Lucie debated with religious leaders, Anne published work, approved by her brother, on history, politics and religion, topics normally regarded as a male preserve.

The historical studies outlined thus far have been large scale studies of education over long periods of time. It has been disappointing to discover that very little has been written, in detail, about shorter time spans earlier than the eighteenth century, with most historians of education concentrating their work on nineteenth century developments and the growth of formal education for girls. A trawl through the History of Education Society's journal shows that there

[88] *ibid.*

has been very little interest in English women's educational experience in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, for very few articles on the female experience have been published in *History of Education*. A welcome exception is Norma McMullen's short article *The Education of English Gentlewomen 1540-1640* which recognised women's educational experiences as valuable, although different from men's. McMullen notes that the record left, by educated women, about their educational experiences, is often vague where exists at all.[89] Her article provides a clear summary of early modern male educator's views on the female potential, or non-potential, for learning and uses two short case studies of Grace Mildmay and Lucy Hutchinson to give examples of, but not generalisations on, the curriculum offered to early modern elite women.

As early modern woman's life was dominated by religion, a study of her education cannot be undertaken without appreciating sixteenth and seventeenth century theology and how it developed over the period. Once again Patricia Crawford offers useful advice. Her study of Women and Religion in England from 1500 to the early eighteenth century, demonstrates how important consideration of gender is to our understanding of religious history.[90] The role and experience

[89] Norma McMullen, 'The Education of English Gentlewomen 1540-1640' *History of Education* 6.2 (June, 1977), pp. 87-101.
[90] Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion In England 1500-1720* (Abingdon, 1996), pp. 11-12.

of women in times of religious upheaval, from the Reformation and through the Civil War is particularly significant, since it allows early modern women a stronger voice in historical narratives. Crawford points to the gendered nature of the language of religious beliefs and institutions but it is Kenneth Charlton's *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* which identifies the clearest links between religious tradition and education.[91] Charlton outlines the ways in which girls and women received or provided education in early modern England stressing, like Stone, the importance of the family as an educational institution and centre of religious nurture. Here mothers have central roles, as educators of both girls and boys. Charlton argues that the education of women was closely linked with their perceived place in the religious order. He stresses the need to examine this religious education with an 'inclusive' use of the term education. It is impossible to write a developmental description of educational change because issues were so complex. He notes when changes in the educational process occur they are never straightforward but messy, untidy, even chaotic and produce unintended consequences. Most importantly, Charlton cautions against dismissing women's education because it took place within the household. He warns of the consequences of equating education with formal schooling. His

[91] Kenneth Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (Abingdon, 1999).

assertion that two other institutions, the Church and the family, pre-dated any formal schooling, so the family always have a role as an educative agency, encouraged the focus on individual case studies for this thesis.[92] Charlton's linking of religion and education is especially helpful. Consequently, this thesis will show how an understanding of early modern education is linked to religious concepts of womanhood.[93] Religion generates ideals and the importance of living up to them has to be taught.[94] A study of education must also focus on morality. Learning how to behave correctly in what Charlton calls 'the big wide world' was central to women's education and constantly stressed by those in authority.[95]

In England early modern women's educational experience was varied but for Charlton, women, whatever their experience, become powerful agents for both morality and spirituality.[96] Women's education and agency is a theme developed by Gemma Allen in her thesis, later developed into a book *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics In Early Modern England*.[97] Allen's work, on the education offered to the daughters of Anthony Cooke and how each one of them employed it, highlights the usefulness of examining the work of individual women when exploring women's educational

[92] *ibid.* p. 3.
[93] *ibid.* p. 10.
[94] *ibid.* p. 101.
[95] *ibid.*
[96] *ibid.* p.167.
[97] Gemma Allen, *The Cooke Sisters: Education, Piety and Politics In Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2013).

experiences. Similarly James Daybell's study of individual female correspondence has enhanced our understanding of the lives and the literary skills of elite Tudor and Stuart women.[98] This thesis follows their example and aims to show that a study of individuals from contrasting backgrounds can help to build up a picture of the variety of women's experience in the educational spaces of Charlton's 'big wide world.'

Without doubt, the women in this study gained their education in a variety of educational spaces. Caroline Bowden's work on the way many women continued learning by 'creating their own opportunities and making their own educational spaces in their households' encouraged an examination of all types of learning spaces when identifying the means by which Lucie Reynell, Anne Edgcumbe and Dorothy Arundell and their female relatives gained their education.[99] It is remarkable how these women, officially outside formal education systems, were able to achieve so much. Bowden, like Charlton, challenges historians of early modern education to think outside the box, by setting aside long held views that becoming literate has to involve many years of formal teaching and learning. Instead she suggests it is worth approaching women's education from

[98] James Daybell, *Women Letter Writers In Tudor England* (Oxford, 2006).
[99] Caroline Bowden, 'Women in Educational Spaces' in L. Knoppers (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writings* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 85-96.

another direction and broadening our understanding of the process of becoming literate.[100]

Bowden argues that there are alternative models, from different parts of our contemporary world, which can assist historians to refocus attention on educational opportunities. She calls for an examination of education in the developing world

> where there is little formal state education, particularly for girls, and where educational spaces are found. Research on the effectiveness of literary schemes recently undertaken in areas with little provision of formal schooling, can...help us understand the situation in early modern England.[101]

Approaching a study of girl's education, in early modern England, via the research methodology which educationalists and sociologists have built up over a number of years, when they evaluate current schemes of literacy in developing countries, can help historians to better understand the way that individual determination drove many women to continue to improve their own skills, suggests Bowden. This new approach necessitates the creation of a much wider canvas for women's educational spaces.[102]

***Methodology and Sources***

This thesis does not examine literacy in developing countries but it does participate in canvas stretching, taking up

[100] *ibid.* p. 86.
[101] *ibid.* Bowden cites reports on literacy programmes in Uganda and Sub-Saharan Africa.
[102] *ibid.* p. 94.

Bowden's challenge by approaching the history of early modern women's education in a non-dismissive way. It acknowledges the potential of informal education and argues that elite West Country women had many opportunities to become active participants in an educational process. It will show that learning and teaching was undertaken by girls and women in many different settings, in their households and within communities and religious circles.

This study does not claim to be a feminist re-reading of women's educational experience. It does not attempt to claim that the women in the case studies were in any way proto-feminists. Nevertheless it is important to acknowledge the influence that feminism, as an historical genre, has on reading, research and interpretation. Without doubt the development of feminist approaches to history encourages a re-examination of the past, but some language and concepts from modern feminism cause difficulties when applied, retrospectively, to earlier periods. The term patriarchy is especially problematic, since to label a situation or an attitude patriarchal today, instantly denigrates it, however in early modern society this would not have been the case. This thesis will not provide detailed discussions on patriarchy because, as Anne Lawrence puts it, there are certainly enough of those and 'The debates about the patriarchal and affective family...have provided academics

with employment for decades.'[103] Instead the thesis seeks to draw the emphasis away from a negative focus, which emphasises the restrictions placed on women and what they could not do, to concentrate instead on the positive aspect of women's achievements. It will demonstrate how these achievements act as pointers to the educational curriculum, provided for West Country women, in their elite households. This is possible since the depth and breadth of knowledge and the practical skills required to accomplish such achievements can be uncovered through a more detailed examination of the achievements themselves; a manuscript or book, written by a woman, may indicate that she understood a foreign language, was familiar with classical texts or was able to identify flora or fauna.

When she highlighted the achievements of two early modern elite women, McMullen argued that the fact that there is not a large sample of elite women's first-hand educational experience is not reason to ignore what we have.[104] This is a welcome challenge which this thesis will take further, by suggesting, through its three case studies, that more evidence of elite women's experience of education is available when family collections in local archives are interrogated. This thesis makes use of account books, private letters, probate

[103] Anne Laurence, *Women in England, A Social History* (London, 1994), p. 13.
[104] *ibid.* p. 97. For studies of Grace Mildmay see L. Pollock, *With Faith and Physic: The Life of a Tudor Gentlewoman Lady Grace Mildmay 1552-1620* (London, 1993); for Lucy see N. H. Keeble(ed.), *Lucy Hutchinson's Memoirs of The Life of Col. Hutchinson* (London, 2000).

documents, leases and details of house and garden designs which are located in the Arundell, Edgcumbe and Reynell/Monger collections housed in the Cornish and Devon record offices. Some of these can be supplemented from evidence in State papers, especially if the woman's family came into conflict with the authorities in matters of religion. At first glance these sources appear to be unrelated to education, but close reading reveals evidence of different forms of knowledge, various practical skills and personal interests related to the three women. A detailed study of individual documents offered new insight into an educational process, especially when findings from several documents were brought together creating signposts to the women's achievements.

In addition, the educational experiences of all three women, are drawn out from evidence contained within contemporary printed works and manuscripts. Two printed works are particularly important, Anne's *French Historie*, published in 1589 and Edward Reynell's 1554 biography of Lucie Reynell.[105] These were scrutinised at length to extract evidence of academic knowledge and practical skills acquired by Anne and Lucie. In addition this thesis will make use of a translation of Dorothy Arundell's 1598 manuscript on the life of her spiritual advisor, John Cornelius. This translation was discovered in Dorset during the research process. As will be

[105] Anne Dowriche, *The French Historie* (Exeter, and London 1589); Edward Reynell, *Life and Death* (London, 1654).

seen in chapter four, Dorothy's original manuscript is cited by several historians as being in the Jesuit archive in Rome but officials there cannot locate it so it is recorded as missing. This discovery is therefore most significant.

When working with these early modern texts an awareness of the concepts behind redaction criticism, a method employed by scholars of religious texts to uncover both the intentions of editors and their contemporary political, social and religious situations, was useful.[106] This applied particularly to the Dorset manuscript because, to test it for authenticity, it was important to compare it with quotations from Dorothy's original text, found in the books of later historians, in particular the work of early modern writers, the Spanish historian of Catholic suffering in England, Diego de Yepes and Italian Jesuit historian Danielo Bartoli, whose work was published in 1599 and 1667 respectively.[107] Awareness of redaction criticism was also useful when reading Anne's *French Historie.* By Anne's own admission she used a number of sources to compile it and redaction criticism examines the way various beliefs and traditions are assembled into a final literary composition, by an author or editor, to reveal something their personal intent and background. As this thesis will demonstrate, the education of early modern women is clearly

[106] www.britannica.com/topic/redactioncriticism
[107] Diego de Yepes, *Historia Particular de la persecucion de Inglaterra* (Madrid, 1599); Danielo Bartoli, *Dell'istoria della Compagnia di Giesu: L'Inghilterra parte dell'Europa* (Rome, 1667).

linked to religion and borrowing a method normally employed by scholars of religion is justified.

Much was learned about the women's achievements and activities from written records but other sources of information, linked to female members of the three case study families, was sought during the research process. Information drawn from the built environment, including stained glass, monuments, tombs, brasses and the ruined or surviving houses where the women once lived, helped to create a more complete picture of individual talent and potential and of the resources available for each woman's use. Mount Edgcumbe, Anne's main home, together with many of her family's records, which had not been catalogued, were destroyed by incendiary bombs in 1941. The house was rebuilt, behind the surviving Tudor walls after the war but photographs of the devastation, taken the morning after the fire, were consulted for an indication of the layout of the original house, including the library, built for Anne's father.

The education of West Country women has to be set in both local and national context. Therefore, before examining evidence on the education curricula offered in the South West, it was important to establish more general early modern concepts and principles circulating in England. What a woman was thought capable of achieving informed the provision of educational opportunities. Early modern religious and

philosophical theories, related to the concept of womanhood and expounded in books, homilies sermons and drama, together with regulations devised from such theories, were investigated as well as the differences between male and female capabilities as outlined in scientific or medical works. These will be outlined in chapter two. In addition, since those creating educational programmes acted on advice and inasmuch as a prolific amount of advice, on a variety of topics, including conduct, manners, gaining or preserving reputation, selecting a marriage partner, the upbringing of children and duties within a godly household, was published between 1525 and 1660, a large sample of early modern advice material was consulted to gain a picture of society's expectations of womanly behaviour. Chapter three will outline these expectations. The research then concentrated on the experiences of individual women for three case studies, setting their experiences in context and establishing how the education process in their households conformed to or dissented from proffered advice.

*Containing Eve's Daughters,* the title of this thesis, can be interpreted in three distinct ways. In simple terms Dorothy, Anne and Lucie, together with some their female relatives, friends, acquaintances and co-religionists are contained within its pages. Their experiences will be examined; their aspirations and achievements noted and evidence about their

education will be brought to light. More specifically, in unpacking these experiences and achievements, the concept of containment will emerge as a not insignificant sub-theme, closely related to both the theory and practice of educational provision for early modern women. Early modern men were advised to contain women in order to protect virtue and reputation, the qualities regarded as essential and godly in both household and commonweal and advice on education of girls often touched on this containment. However, as more details of the lives of three West Country women are drawn from local and family archives, from their own writings and from what third parties recorded about their activities, another aspect of containment requires consideration, the confidence of self-containment. This thesis will show that Dorothy, Anne and Lucie were by no means weak or subservient characters. It will demonstrate how they emanate from both primary and secondary sources as autonomous, self-contained and confident women.

***Conclusion***

This study, of the educational experiences of early modern women from elite households of the South West, challenges historians to look beyond the boundaries of formal education and to re-consider the importance of female experience gained through household training, social interaction and the observation and creation of role models. There were many different educational spaces in women's lives and this thesis

will contend that the great variety of women's experiences and training within elite households must not be dismissed as a non-education. The following chapters will show that the learning experiences women encountered within the households of elite families in the South West peninsula was broader and deeper than is usually acknowledged.

## Chapter Two

***Eve's Legacy; religious, philosophical and scientific interpretations of the female condition which impact upon the education and training of early modern women.***

***Containment In Drama; A Cornish statement on Eve's legacy.***

> Tha hena yma gwreghty/Benyn yw henwys Eva;/Gwryes ay ason y fe hy/ Marthys teke a vhe pub tra/ Saw y skeans yw brvttall...To that[man]there is a housewife,/A woman[who]is named Eve;/Made from his rib was she,/Marvellous fair above everything,/But her knowledge is brittle.[1]
>
> In the Cornish Countryside, in front of a large crowd of witnesses, a heated argument takes place. A man shouts at a woman. He calls her stupid. The woman is quick to respond.
>
> Oh yes, now I'll get the blame/From you Adam, just the same/Whatever end of the game./But if we were gods, not men/Damned if you'd be angry then./That much I know for certain.[2]

William Jordan of Helston completed his transcription of a play, which he called *Gwreans an Bys or The Creacion of The World, the first day of plaie,* on 12 August 1611. Literary scholar, Brian Murdoch, believes that the Cornish text, from which Jordan worked, was first created by an anonymous Cornish playwright between 1530 and 1550.[3] Jordan's title implies that

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[1] Whitley Stokes (ed.), *Gwreans An Bys- The Creation of The World, A Cornish Mystery with A Translations and Notes* (London, 1864), pp. 38-40. Lines 448-452. Stokes worked rectifying editorial mistakes from Gilbert Davies, (ed.), *The Creation of The World With Noah's Flood: Written in Cornish In The Year 1611 By William Jordan: With An English Translation By John Keigwin,* (London 1827).
[2] Bodley MS 219, William Jordan of Helston, *Gwreans an Bys or The Creacion of The World: The First Day of Plaie* cited Brian Murdoch, *Cornish Literature (*Woodbridge, 1993), p. 82.
[3] Murdoch, *Cornish Literature* p. 75.

the manuscript is incomplete, with the script for a second day missing. The arguing spouses are the primeval partners Adam and Eve. Although the theme, based on the Judeo-Christian stories of Creation and Fall from Genesis, is similar to medieval mystery dramas, both the original author and Jordan, who added his own, English, stage directions , created an embellished and more dramatic narrative for their early modern audience.

The Cornish Adam and Eve are feisty characters. They argue and reason with each other before and after their infamous act of disobedience. They have more dialogue together than their medieval predecessors and are far less passive than the original Biblical characters.[4] However, even though the plot is more complicated than the original, its early modern Cornish audience was still presented with an old and traditional message on the nature of women and their, divinely ordained, subordinate relationship with men. This message, together with some new arguments and expanded evidence on the frailty and fickleness of all women, Eve's daughters, served to reinforce centuries of belief about the female condition.

In his *Survey of Cornwall*, Richard Carew reports that such plays were very popular, attracting large audiences, so the teaching on womanhood, found in *Gwreans an Bys*, was shared

[4] Gen. II. 4b-III. 24.

with many.[5] Therefore, this Cornish play, presenting the theory of Eve's legacy in a public arena, makes a good starting point when considering a range of early modern beliefs about women and exploring them in the context of educational opportunities for women in the South West.

As the plot unfolds, the female character is constantly presented as weaker than the male. She is shown to be both a physical and a moral danger to him. Consequently, Eve's descendants present jeopardy to all future generations of men. Furthermore, in this Cornish fall, the female sex is doubly hazardous, deceitful as well as weak and gullible, since Eve, the first woman, is tricked into disobedience by believing the words of yet another female, described by Jordan, in the stage directions, as

> a fyne serpent made with a virgin face and yelowe heare upon her head.[6]

In addition, Beelzebub, Lucifer's companion, points out that frail and timid Eve will be too frightened to look upon Lucifer's ugliness, thus belief in female weakness is reinforced.[7] This feminine weakness is further expounded in the next scene, where Lucifer, newly fallen from heaven, bullies an innocent, but foolish, serpent to allow him to possess her physical female body as a disguise. Lucifer speaks through her, adopting a soft feminine voice, in order to deceive

[5] Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall* (London, 1602), p. 71.
[6] Bodley 219, cited Murdoch, *Cornish Literature* p. 82.
[7] Stokes, *Gwreans* p. 41.

simple Eve.[8] The female serpent is weak because she is easily overcome and Eve's weakness is manifested in several ways; she scares easily, she is soon deceived and she gives into temptation once it is linked to personal gain. Initially, face to face with her tempter, Eve is not afraid to argue with the serpent.[9] However this will power does not last and she is cajoled into eating the forbidden fruit. This proves not only her woman's stupidity, because she believes that she has seen an angel, but also her vanity because she admits that she can be tempted when offered the chance to become equal with God.

> To be known to God above/And in every point equal with him/and as wise accounted;/Then by the Saints really/I might rule very gaily/ And ber stately according to my devise...[10]

In contrast, when Adam hears about Eve's angelic visitor he, being male and strong, is suspicious and at first he resists temptation. His will power lasts longer than Eve's, after all a man is not as stupid as a woman. He cannot believe that she has received a divine message. In the face of such male strength the woman must resort to deceit and flattery to lure the man towards sin. Eve changes tactics and suggests that eating the fruit will bring financial reward. However, even this cannot shake his resolve to obey God.[11] Adam remains strong, able to resist all temptation, until Eve makes her final and most persuasive threat to draw him away from God.

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[8] Stokes, *Gwreans* p. 43, line 530.
[9] *ibid.* pp. 51-53.
[10] *ibid.* p.49, lines 603-608.
[11] *ibid.* pp. 60-67.

> Look! Take this apple so fair/or else the love you now share/ with your wife will disappear/if you refuse to eat it![12]

This is deceitful and sinful woman at her most dangerous. As the next chapter will demonstrate, early modern advice writers thought a woman's, latent, sexual power had the potential to ruin a man; he could be led away from godly life and lose his reputation. In this Cornish drama, Adam's will power vanishes and he is defeated for he cannot live without Eve. The latter wins the argument, consequently leading him and all mankind astray. Adam eats the forbidden food. Innocence is lost. Both fall from grace, but the woman falls further than the man. Lucifer slinks away but looks forward to receiving the primeval pair and all their descendants in hell.[13] At the last minute God shows mercy, the sinners and their descendants must be punished, through hardship, but they will be given a second chance of redemption thus avoiding their appointment with Lucifer. However death and the fear of it is the price paid for sin.[14] Just in case the audience has failed to understand these consequences the character of Death appears, as a messenger from God, explaining that had human beings resisted temptation then no-one would die.[15]

It must be stressed that Death's audience was Protestant. Jordan completed his transcription in 1611, coincidentally the

[12] Bodley 219, cited Murdoch, *Cornish Literature* p. 82.
[13] Stokes, *Gwreans* p. 75, lines 929-30.
[14] *ibid.* p. 75, lines 940-41.
[15] *ibid.* p. 81, lines 993-997.

same year the King James Bible was completed, more than half a century after the first events of the English Reformation. Also, assuming Murdoch is correct, even the original Cornish text was created in the mid sixteenth century, in either the reign of Henry VIII or his fiercely Protestant son Edward.Both the original Cornish text and Jordan's translation were definitely post-Reformation products. According to Tara Hamling, the production of mystery plays had been suppressed in the Elizabethan period but in the West Country new versions were created. This could be because the texts were mostly written and performed in Cornish or due to the county's remoteness from the central authorities.[16] However her argument, that the plays were incomprehensible, difficult to regulate and beyond the sight of the authorities is difficult to substantiate since performances of them were common knowledge. The plays were performed at plen an gwari, playing places or rounds.[17] Richard Carew describes both the playing places and the plays, which he calls Guaries. He explains that the Guary

> Is a kind of enterlude compiled in Cornish out of some scripture history...for representing it they raise an earthen Amphitheatre in some open field having the diameter of his enclosed playne some 40 or 50 foot... people flock from all sides, many miles off, to heare and

[16] Charlotte Hodgman, *Elizabethan Drama* interview with Dr Tara Hamling www.historyextra.com/feature/elizabethan-drama cited June 22 2015.
[17] Two plen an gwari survive today. One at St. Just and the other, St. Piran's round at Perranporth.

> see it; for they have therein devils and devices to delight as well the eye...[18]

Carew wrote this description in the present tense. He describes a contemporary, enjoyable, entertainment not a quaint custom from bygone days. The plays appear popular, since the audience he describes is large and people travel a long way to see the performance. Indeed as the passage continues, with descriptions of audience laughter and merriment, notably when an actor says the wrong lines and has a public falling out on the stage with the 'Ordinary' or prompter, Carew appears to be writing about an amusing recent event which he, or someone he knew, had witnessed in a performance.[19] Carew was Anne Edgcumbe's cousin and chapter five will return to the significance of these comments. Carew wrote his account in 1602. Jordan's script was published a few years later in 1611. By 1611 the West Country audience must have been Protestant, nevertheless the Christian beliefs, about womankind, presented to them seem little changed by time and circumstance. These beliefs can be summarised as follows.

Women are lesser creatures than men because of the order of creation, since Eve was created after Adam and made from part of him.[20] All people die because the first humans, led by the woman, disobeyed God. Women must suffer in childbirth because

[18] Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall* (London, 1602) p. 72.
[19] *ibid.* p. 72.
[20] Stokes, *Gwreans* p. 33, line 388.

of Eve's sin.[21] Of the two genders the female is the weaker, since the first woman was more easily deceived than man.[22] Man's desire for the company of woman can be his undoing but the woman's fault is always the greater.[23] Since they are easy to deceive and are skilled in the art of deceit, women present danger to men. Moreover, since humankind fell into sin through Eve's stupidity and vanity and via the temptation she offered Adam, all her descendants, the daughters of Eve, are forever dangerous to men. Each woman inherits the first woman's stupidity, weakness and vanity, together with her skills as a temptress and seducer.[24] As punishment, all women must obey their husbands. Childbirth and the pain and danger it brings to women in travail are additional, unavoidable consequences of Eve's first sin and Satan's deceitful voice emanating from the female serpent.

> Because thou didst hearken unto her/And deceive thy loyal spouse, /Ever subject to her husband/ I ordain woman to be. /Trust thou to my word. /Let her travail increase/ through breaking my command...[25]

From the perspective of the early modern Cornish audience, it was therefore logical, to believe that if humanity sought to grasp a chance of redemption, then men needed to contain Eve's daughters, resisting any temptation they presented. This necessary containment protected the whole human race from

[21] *ibid.* p. 73, line 897.
[22] *ibid.* p. 43, line 526, p. 57, lines 701-704.
[23] *ibid.* p. 69, lines 852-855.
[24] *ibid.* p. 85, line 1053.
[25] *ibid.* p. 73, lines 892-899.

woman's latent moral weakness. Furthermore this precaution was divinely ordained since all women were subjected to male rule as a direct punishment, for female sin, by God Himself.

The messages, both explicit and implicit, in the *Gwreans an Bys* were not original or unique. The Cornish playwrights were simply repeating traditional beliefs about women and their connection to Eve's sin, which had informed Christian views on the female condition, throughout the centuries. Such, mostly unquestioned, beliefs were at the heart of early modern debates on the relationships between the sexes and the nature of authority. In addition, as will be demonstrated in chapter three, they influence perceptions of correct womanly behaviour and inform most discussions on the validity of female education.

*Gwreans An Bys* was created as an entertainment for its West Country audience. However, like most dramas, it contains statements which mirror popular concepts, so the play's comments on early modern womanhood can be seen to reflect prevailing West Country opinion. Therefore, before examining more formal early modern theories, about the nature of womankind, it is worth noting what happened to individual West Country women when real drama and crisis interrupted ordinary lives. The reactions of the authorities, towards the women and their particular situations, throws light on opinions about women prevalent in the early modern West Country.

***Drama and Crisis; containment within life experience.***

Evidence, from West Country records, indicates that the prevailing view, on the female condition, in the early modern South West, was based on the same assumptions found in the *Gwreans An Bys.* That women were subordinate to men and needed to be contained, controlled and regulated was seldom questioned. Frequently stressed was the need for women to be hard working. Idleness was not an option lest it led to temptation and wickedness in thought or deed. In 1647 Margarett Rennell, a spinster, was given a fortnight's warning by the authorities in Exeter to 'gett herself into service or be sent to the Bridewell.'[26] In the same year the Sheriff was asked to consider talking to a woman named Katheryn because she had made known her 'readiness to instructe yonge maydens in the art of making bone lace...'[27] This task would keep girls usefully occupied, whilst making a small contribution to the city's trade. However, there was a time and a place for such industriousness. When Joan Trenickle(her name implies that she was Cornish) was 'taken up as a stranger' she was asked about her Sunday activities. When she admitted that she had not been in church, but had spent the day knitting, she was put in the stocks for working on the Lord's Day. Other common Lord's Day misdemeanours, for which women were censured, include 'entertayning of company...in time of public ordinances' and

[26] W. Cotton and Henry Woollcombe, (eds.), *Gleanings From The Municipal And Cathedral Records Relative To The History Of The City Of Exeter* (Exeter, 1877), p. 146.
[27] *ibid.* p. 131.

'being found in a suspicious manner during sermon time.'[28] Mistress Blake and her sister were even presented to the authorities for walking in the fields on a Sunday, even though they were accompanied by her husband.[29]

Most of the evidence relates to women who found themselves in troubled circumstances or in conflict with the authorities. In many of these cases, religious beliefs inform both the judgement and treatment of the women. Several women found themselves in trouble because of outspokenness and lack of humility in the presence of men. Grace Tithen was summoned for swearing an oath.[30] Eleanor Thomas was imprisoned because she abused an alderman, calling him 'slow'.[31] In contrast, others were thought to be too familiar with men and had to answer charges that they had been seen keeping company and talking with soldiers. When found guilty they were whipped 'at the ring'.[32] Jane Dicker, who was committed to the Bridewell, was even reported, by a witness who was passing the door, for being in her own home 'suspiciously near Francis Hamlin'[33] Many cases, involving women, suggest that neighbours and passers-by were encouraged to keep watch and inform the authorities when women made mistakes. Mistress Densham, the wife of an Exeter

[28] *ibid.* p. 147.
[29] *ibid.* p. 165.
[30] *ibid.* p. 146.
[31] *ibid.* p. 125.
[32] *ibid.* p. 125.
[33] *ibid.* p. 147.

Dyer, was reported for having company at breakfast on the Lord's Day, by the very guest who had enjoyed the meal.[34]

The most poignant narratives concern women who faced death for their alleged misdemeanours. The trials of Agnes Prest and Diana Crosse took place in Exeter. The proceedings were almost a century apart, in 1557 and 1654 respectively. Both women were Protestants but Agnes faced the wrath of the Catholic Church and Diana the city's Puritan-minded, authorities. Agnes was accused of heresy and Diana of witchcraft but the essence of the initial charges against them was similar. Also, both were reported by neighbours. The latter claimed, in each case, that the women's behaviour was offensive to God. Furthermore, since both Alice and Diana were confident, independent, women, unafraid to speak their minds, they broke another religiously influenced ordinance by refusing to be silent and humble in the presence of male authority.

Agnes Prest, from Launceston in Cornwall, was a middle-aged, married woman, with children. A subject of Mary Tudor, Agnes challenged the reinstated Catholic authority in the diocese of Exeter. She paid the highest price for heresy, burned at the stake in 1557 for refusing to give up her Protestant beliefs, thereby earning herself a place in John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs.*[35] Agnes' story appears in all editions of Foxe's work

[34] *ibid.* p. 148.
[35] John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (London, 1563, 1570, 1576, 1683), pp. 1737, 2252, 1945, 2049 respectively.

but the description of her arguments, with the authorities, is far more detailed in later editions and is illustrated by a woodcut print of her execution. Foxe states that she died for her faith but a closer examination of the narrative suggests that the initial crimes were Agnes' independent nature, disobedience to her husband and disrespect of male authority. In other words, Agnes was not contained.

In the 1563 edition Agnes is described as a godly Protestant woman who would not return to Catholicism.

> Being an honest woman, very simple but of good zeale and upright life, being taught by God and learning of his word...[she] quit from her all the popish dregges of superstition and hipocrisie and gave herself wholly to prayer.[36]

Unfortunately for Agnes this prayerful life was difficult because, according the 1570 edition, she was a woman who had

> a husband and children there [in Launceston] much addicted to the superstitious sect of popery was many tymes rebuked of them and driven to go to church, to their idols and ceremonies, to shriffte and to follow the cross in procession...[37]

and since a confident and outspoken Agnes 'began to grow in contempt of her husband and children...[and ] never ceased to utter her mynd...' she decided to leave her family and support herself through spinning wool, thus becoming a disobedient wife, neglecting her family.[38] There was an attempt at reconciliation but her neighbours and husband reported her to

[36] John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments Book 5* (London, 1563), p. 1822.
[37] Foxe, *Actes and Monuments Book 12* (London 1570), p. 2289.
[38] *ibid.*

the authorities. She endured several months imprisonment in Launceston and was eventually sent to be examined by the Catholic authorities in Exeter. The later editions present readers with a complete dialogue, purported to have taken place between Agnes and the Bishop of Exeter. Despite the charge of refusing the sacrament and for speaking against religious images, which Foxe calls idols, the focus of the conversation shifts to the relationship Agnes has with her husband.[39] Agnes claims that he and their children have persecuted her because when she attempted to speak to them, about her faith, they would not listen to her, but instead rebuked her. Under further questioning Agnes argues with the bishop and dean about transubstantiation. However the church leaders resolve the issue by declaring her mad, ordering her to go back to Cornwall. They send for her husband to take her home and place her back under his control. She would again be a woman contained. Whilst awaiting his arrival, Agnes was granted freedom of movement within Exeter but she continued to disregard male authority, arguing with a Dutch stonemason repairing statues in the Cathedral. Moreover she refused to follow her husband home.[40] It is only after this refusal to submit to male authority, that Agnes was returned to prison and sentenced to death.

[39] *ibid.*
[40] *ibid.* p. 2290.

The story of Agnes as a Protestant martyr was recounted for a staunch Protestant readership. It places emphasis on the harsh punishment she received from the Catholic enemy. Nevertheless the loophole Agnes was offered through which she could have escaped death remained part of the narrative. This suggests that the offer of freedom on condition of submission to her husband's authority was actually made. Of course, the reported gesture may be no more than a literary tool, since the order to return home allows Foxe to present Agnes as a heroine, giving her the opportunity to make a strong Protestant statement. 'I will never turne from my heavenly husband to my earthly husband.'[41] Conversely, since Foxe was not in the habit of describing acts of Catholic kindness and the main focus of the *Book of Martyrs* is Catholic cruelty, it is plausible that this was a genuine offer of clemency which reflected local belief that a woman's place was at home under the authority of her husband.

Diana Crosse had no man in authority over her. She was a widow, suspected of witchcraft and committed to trial at Exeter in August 1654.[42] The unfortunate woman had attempted to petition the mayor of Exeter by presenting herself at the door of the council chamber. The Sergeant at Mace refused to convey her petition. According to his testimony, a series of catastrophes befell him a week after his confrontation with

[41] *ibid.* 2291.
[42] Bernard Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and its enemies in the Interregnum 1649-1660* (Oxford, 2012), p. 250.

Mistress Crosse; his wife fell sick, his son broke his arm and the drink that he had brewed would not pour.[43] Others came forward to testify against her, many recalling events of many years passed and linking their misfortunes to the accused. Much of the evidence seems circumstantial but the events, outlined in the testimonies, suggest that it was Diana's outspokenness and temper which made her unpopular. Her neighbours accuse her of harming them after they offended her or refused her requests for assistance. Mr Ezekiel Trible, a pipe maker said that he and one of his young employees were victims of the witch's curse when Diana came to his house for fire, which was given to her, but for the following month he

> could not make or work his tobacco pipes to satisfaction...they were altogether either over or under burnt...[Mistress Crosse] affirmed that he [the employee] should never be well...thereupon the boy grive into a distracted condition and was much consumned and pyned away in body [44]

Mistress Dicker, a neighbour refused to help Diana when the latter came begging at her door. She admitted calling the accused 'an old witch.' Diana used 'menacing words' against her and one of the Dicker children fell sick. Furthermore, when cleaning her house Mistress Dicker found a toad and worms in her chamber. A third witness, identified as the wife of a worsted comber, claimed to have had a similar experience after refusing to assist Diana. The consequence of her refusal was that two of her children became ill. This witness further

[43] Cotton and Woollcombe, *Gleanings* p. 151.
[44] *ibid.* p. 150.

described coming home to find the chimney of her house on fire. Upon discovering that Diana Crosse had entered her room she was no longer surprised by the flames. She further declared that she

> Called to her remembrance that her husband about two years since had fallen sick and had been much pained and grieved in his limbs...[she] consulted Dr. Browne asking for some remedy but the case was so mysterious that he could not give any and the only thing he would suggest was that she should go home and give her husband some hot broth and that he must be wary and have a care...[45]

Diana Crosse's neighbours appear convinced that she was a witch. One, Mary Cleake even resorted to proving Diana's guilt by pricking her a dozen times with a needle and discovering that she felt no pain. Cleake also stated that Diana Crosse had been

> Brought down to the Maudlyn, without Southgate, where one Joan Poole, her sister, is kept, being in a sad and distracted condition...she, the said Poole, fell presently upon Diana and beating her cryed out that she was her adversary.[46]

Despite her 'distracted condition' Joan Poole's actions are seen as further evidence that Diana was involved in witchcraft. Yet, though she was a widow, without the protection of a man, who more than once had resorted to begging, Diana Crosse had once been a person with some authority. Thirteen years before her trial, according to the testimony of Mistress Southcott, Diana ran a school in Exeter. The Southcotts placed their daughter at this school but when,

[45] *ibid.* P. 151.
[46] *ibid.* P. 152.

dissatisfied, they removed her to another school the girl became sick and remained so for five years. Then she died, closely followed by both her father and by Goodwife Woodman who ran the second school. Diana Crosse was blamed for these deaths on the grounds that when the family sought some 'physical remedies' from the wife of a doctor of physic, all the woman could offer was the warning 'have a care.'[47]

These confrontations suggest that Diana Cross's outspokenness made her unpopular. This uncontained, lone, woman easily became the victim of vindictive neighbours when misfortune struck.

These local narratives imply that citizens, in the South West, were encouraged to note women's behaviour and seek opportunities to report misdemeanours. There is nothing to indicate what the reporters of such crimes gained from their prying but the fact that many were prepared to testify against their female neighbours, suggests the belief that women needed to be controlled by men and taught obedience was not uncommon. If a woman was not prepared to be subjected to her husband, like Agnes Prest, or like Margarett Rennell, she was single and uncontained, the penalties were severe. Conversely, women who support their husbands are respected and their opinions valued. In the Diana Crosse case, Mistress Mainwaye, is cited by a witness as an expert in medical cures simply because she

[47] *ibid.* pp. 151-152.

was the wife of 'a doctor of physic'.[48] In this instance the woman's married status placed her under the control of a man but also gave her some authority in the community, since the witness goes to her in search of a cure. The view, that a woman needed to be under the control of a man, almost worked to the advantage of one young Exeter woman. Frances Duffield attempted to persuade the mayor to release her father from prison, claiming that without him she had no-one to guide her, but, when she hit the mayor in the face, her request was declined.[49]

The majority of the women, in these narratives, were censored for outspokenness and idleness, both aspects of perceived unwomanly behaviour, or for sins related either to the temptation they offered to men, or a perceived disobedience to God, through breaking a religious convention such as working on a Sunday. The arguments of the prosecution have one thing in common, a religious base. The evidence in the testimonies, accusing women of disobeying God and men, was treated as factual and for the most part it remained unchallenged. Even the more fantastic, circumstantial evidence against Diana Crosse, was regarded as truth rather than speculation or coincidence. These women were accused of breaking divinely ordained rules. Even uneducated people, testifying before the authorities, acknowledge female weakness and appear to know

[48] *ibid.* p. 152.
[49] *ibid.* P. 59.

and accept rules requiring women's obedience to male authority. How did this understanding of the female condition develop and become so widely accepted? What were the main concepts behind early modern attitudes towards women? To answer these questions the focus moves away from local examples to concentrate on the theories behind early modern concepts of womanhood.

***Early modern attitudes towards women***

In general, early modern understanding of womanhood was shaped by four bodies of knowledge and their related concepts. These were Judaeo-Christian theology, classical philosophy, Roman law and science in the form of physiology and medicine, whereby theories on the structures and functions of the human body were considered.[50]

Judaeo-Christian theology began with Biblical texts, with Christian doctrine further developed from the interpretation of those texts, expounded by the Early Church Fathers and later theologians. In this theology women were characterised as weak, corrupted and sinful like Eve, or obedient like the Virgin Mary. Greek philosophy stressed woman's physical frailty, irrationality and intellectual inferiority. In Roman law women were subjugated to the control of a male representative and were not given legal status as persons in

[50] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 18, 31, 37, 68; Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women Family and Neighborhood* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 15-16.

their own right. In medical theories male bodies were described as hotter and more perfectly formed than females ones. It is important to note that theological and scientific theories were both linked to philosophy and therefore shared a common root. It was a combination of these descriptions and definitions which gave rise to early modern society's commonly accepted belief that women were inferior to men in many ways.[51] This inferiority was viewed as both natural and ordained by God. As women were regarded as dangerous, essentially sinful and irrational it was logical, as well as essential, that they were controlled by men. This would prevent women subverting social, spiritual and economic order and bringing ruin to humanity. Avoiding such ruin was essential, whatever price had to be pai0d. As will be shown in the next chapter, early modern advice literature, aimed at men, frequently warned them of the dangers posed by an uncontained female sex, whilst conduct material, aimed at women, suggested suitable behaviour to prove their worth through silence, modesty and obedience. Amanda Flather remarks that scripture and science were mutually supportive of these conclusions. If moral behaviour could be refashioned and the ethical and social order of the world made whole again then there was a chance that, through faith and grace, a perfect humanity could be re-united with the divine. The main impediments to this reunion were the

[51] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 15-74; Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 1995), pp. 60-82.

spiritual opposition between soul and body, and the distinctions between strong man and weak woman who had inherited her primeval mother's inclination to sin.[52]

***Philosophy and Gender***

Early modern science was linked with both religion and philosophy and, as Kathleen Long points out, all three were rooted in Aristotelian notions of gender, where the male alone was seen as the perfect form of humanity.[53]

Philosophy was frequently duelistic, dividing dark from light, the physical world from the spiritual, rationality from irrationality. Aristotle's views on gender are linked to ideas of binary oppositions and complimentary qualities. The male had a rational soul, the female did not and therefore the male had sovereignty.[54]

> The parts of the soul are present in all but they are present differently. For the slave has no deliberate faculty at all. The female has a deliberate faculty but her faculty is without sovereignty....but the male has a deliberate faculty which is mature and has sovereignty...[55]

The male was active, the female passive, the male was strong, the female weak, the male was public, the female private and the male was a shaper but the female needed to be shaped.

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[52] Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 20.
[53] Kathleen P. Long (Ed.),*Gender and Scientific Discourse in Early Modern England* (Farnham, 2010), p. 2.
[54] William F. MacLehose, 'Aristotle', in Margaret Schaus (ed.), *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* (New York, 2006), pp. 35-36.
[55] Cited Paul Schollmeier, 'Aristotle and Women Household and Political Rules' *Polis*, 20 (2003), p. 23.

Furthermore, since the male was perfectly warm and the female too cool, she was in effect an imperfect male as evidenced by her hidden and incomplete genitals and his external complete parts. Thus, because women were inherently flawed by nature, their sexual inequality was permanent. 'He is made by nature superior and the female inferior, the one rules the other is ruled.' Aristotle therefore allowed women no political or leadership roles. By their nature they were irrational so they belonged to the sphere of the *oikos* or house[56] This was not the case in Platonic thought, where different roles were open to women. In Plato's ideal state, outlined in *The Republic*, physical and biological differences between men and women were not regarded as so important as an individual's capacity to perform well in a social context. Therefore participation in government as guardians and the education required before one could fulfil the guardianship role, was open to both genders.[57]

It is not difficult to discover elements of Aristotelian philosophy within Judaeo-Christian scriptures. The Eve narrative of the fallen, imperfect woman is from the Hebrew Bible. In the Christian New Testament Aristotelian ideas sit alongside a dualism, which owes much to Platonic thought, with suggestions of the world as an imperfect material realm, a shadow of the perfect realm of concept; in Christian terms the

[56] MacLehose, 'Aristotle', p.36.
[57] C.C.W. Taylor, 'The Role of Women In Plato's Republic' in Rachana Kamtekar(ed.), *Virtue and Happiness Essays In Honour of Julia Annas* (Oxford, 2012), p.76.

inferior and temporary earth and the perfect and eternal heaven. Christians are encouraged to focus on the perfect eternal life to come, seeking light not darkness, chastity in place of lust and goodness over evil.[58] Christ, their Saviour and role model, is the light of the world.[59] However there is no trace of Plato's equality of opportunity for both genders in Christian scriptures. Instead, Aristotle's theories of passivity, weakness and imperfectness influenced scriptural directives on women's roles, with women exhorted to remain silent, submissive to male authority and forbidden to teach.[60]

***Medical Matters***

Aristotle's philosophy of a weaker and imperfect sex also influenced early modern medical and scientific theories on the differences between men and women, but it was humoral theory, which, had been central to the teachings of Hippocrates and Galen, that had the most influence on European medical belief and practice.[61] In humoral theory four humours existed within the human body, black and yellow bile, blood and phlegm, each associated with the four elements, earth, fire, air and water respectively. In addition each of the humours was linked with a particular season of the year; blood for example was associated with Spring. In each season too much of its related humour could harm the body. It was essential to know this and

[58] Matt VI.19-20; I John II.15-17.
[59] John I.5,8.12.
[60] I Tim II. 11-12.
[61] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society; Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), pp. 167-168.

to strive to maintain a good balance between all four humours in order to achieve and retain a healthy body and mind.[62] Hippocrates put it thus, with the idea repeated in medical instructions until the 1800s

> Whoever wishes to pursue properly the science of medicine must proceed thus. First he ought to consider what effects the season of the year can produce: for the seasons are not all alike but differ widely both in themselves and in their changes. The next point is the hot winds and the cold, especially those that are universal, but also those that are peculiar to each particular region. He must also consider the properties of the waters; for as these differ in taste and weight so the property of each is far different from that of any other...[63]

To be fully healthy a balance had to be achieved between all the humours within the body and here women were at a disadvantage, for their balance was not as good as men's. Galen saw women as imperfect men in whom a lack of the vital heat of perfection resulted in the retention of their sexual organs.[64] In early modern medical and scientific terms, this inherited theory placed women at a disadvantage. Being cold and moist and lacking vital heat which made men rational, creative, active, brave and strong, women were thought to be weak, passive and full of imperfections. Moreover, women had damp and therefore softer and cooler brains than men. This not only made women less healthy but also meant that their intellectual capacity was weaker; their brains too soft for

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[62] *ibid.* pp. 294-295.
[63] Cited John Wilkins, 'Hippocratic Lessons For Modern Health' *Wellcome History* 41 (Summer 2009), pp. 11-12.
[64] Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender From The Greeks To Freud* (Harvard, 1992), pp. 4, 5-6.

serious intellectual thought. In addition, their incomplete sexual parts, especially the womb which was thought to govern female emotions, were free moving inside the body and could cause instability.[65] As will be seen in the next chapter, theories of softness and instability were accepted by most, theologians, educationalists, sermon writers and conduct book compilers. As Richard Allestree put it *The Ladies Calling*

> Women by nature are more cool and temperate...[they have] less fire...being in softer mode is more pliant and yielding to the impressions of pitty...[66]

Thus Aristotelian concepts of gender, where men alone are perfect human beings, permeated all intellectual theories and religion, philosophy, science and morality shared a common goal, the search for perfection. This required human beings to affect a union with God through the interaction of faith and grace and refashion behaviour to improve mortality and protect social order[67]

In a world where all academic theories and popular assumptions reached the same conclusions on the imperfect nature of females, it cannot be denied that women faced more challenges than men to achieve the same goal. Striving for perfection from a starting point of a perceived state of imperfection was no mean task.

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[65] Flather, *Gender and Space* pp. 19-20.
[66] Richard Allestree, *The ladies Calling* (London, 1673,) p. 49.
[67] Pico, Paracelsus and Dee, 'The Magical Measure of Human Perfection' in Kathleen P. Long (ed.), *Gender and Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Culture* (Farnham, 2010), p. 39.

Recognising that the philosophical roots of theology, medicine and science were shared in the early modern period, makes it less remarkable that beliefs about Eve's legacy of weakness seem little different from beliefs about a woman's physical condition. The two complement each other so the subordination of the second sex is seen as both natural and divinely ordained. This subordination permeated all levels of early modern society for, by both physical and spiritual definitions, the woman was the imperfect gender who needed to be contained. A woman's frailty was a given whatever the academic discipline. Anyone writing about women and their physical or mental capacities took this as their starting point. As many who wrote on this topic were theologians and their readership devoutly religious, it is essential to examine Christian theological concepts of womanhood in more detail. Only then can the mindset of both compilers and readers of conduct literature and treatises on education be fully comprehended. We must return to the anti-heroine of the Cornish stage, Eve, the mother of womankind. It becomes clear that ideas expressed in *Gwreans An Bys* reflected both popular belief and intellectual theory.

***Eve in Christian Theology***

Christian theology, from its earliest beginnings, placed Eve in a central and unique position. This was not confined to the Fall narrative, Eve also appeared in theories of redemption.

As Christianity developed Eve quickly became the representative and type of all women. In time, the Virgin Mary became the new Eve, with her son Christ the new Adam. Thus Eve lies at the heart of Christianity's understanding and estimation of women.[68] Awareness of the Christian arguments, on Eve and her daughters, inherited by early modern theologians and educationalists, in the context of their patriarchal society, is essential for unpacking sixteenth and seventeenth century educational theories on women's capacity to learn. Understanding this inherited theology throws a more empathetic light on early modern debates about female education and woman's abilities.

Early modern theological and philosophical arguments about education are gendered, since understanding of education was mostly based on religious concepts and, as Mary Beard points out

> Gender is constantly being defined within religion; religion and gender are mutually constitutive, not separate poles...[69]

Kenneth Charlton sums this up in his study *Women, Religion and Education* where he notes that a commonplace feature of most discussions about the nature of women was its starting point with Eve/woman the seducer and Adam/man's fall at her hands. Charlton underlines the fact that for the most part early

[68] Deborah E. Sawyer, *Women and Religion In The First Christian Centuries* (London, 1996), p. 149.
[69] Mary Beard, 'Review of R. Kramer Her Share of The Blessings' *London Review of Books* 13 May 1993 pp. 7-8.

modern debates about the nature of woman were determined by constantly focusing on the nature of man, describing women in comparative terms such as weaker vessels.[70] In this comparison the woman's light inevitably shines less brightly than the man's and the focus is often on what she cannot and should not do rather than on her potential achievements. This can be seen in one of the Elizabethan homilies,based on I Peter 3.7, created to be read aloud in churches, which stated

> For the woman is a weak creature, not endued with like strength and constancy of mind...she is the weaker vessel of a frail heart...'[71]

The Cornish audience of *Gwreans an Bys* were shown this frailty when Lucifer prepares the serpent for its part in Eve's downfall. As it is female, Lucifer has no difficulty taking over the serpents' body and it is easy to control

> Though she [the serpent] knows not to speak a drop/I will rule her as I wish...[72]

As for Eve, she is both weak and timid, too frightened to look upon the ugliness of Lucifer, she will welcome the beautiful female serpent because

> She is easier to deceive/Than Adam right truly/And more simple...[73]

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[70] Kenneth Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (Abingdon, 2014) p. 13.
[71] 'An Homily of the State of Matrimony from The Second Tome of Homilies London 1563' in Joan Larson Klein (ed.), *Daughters Wives and Widows; Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England 1500-1640* (Chicago 1992), p. 16.
[72] Jordan, *Gwreans An Bys* line 508 http://archive.org/stream/gwreansbyscreati00stok/gwreansbyscreati00stok_djvu.txt accessed June 22 2015.
[73] *ibid.* lines 471-474.

Here timidity, weakness and stupidity, are accepted components of the female condition, a contrast to the steadfastness and intelligence of men.

According to Sawyer, there were three types of argument specifically related to Eve and universal womanhood, which developed in early Christian theology. The first introduces the notion of a hierarchy in gender, with women as an inferior or second sex.[74] This is based on an Old Testament proof text, Genesis 2.18 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.' Here the focus is on the order of creation, with woman a divine afterthought. She is the second and lesser version of humanity, created, from a bone of the man, simply to provide for the latter's needs when none of the animals prove to be a worthy companion. The Genesis text was cited in the Pauline epistles, where it provided the theological reasons for practical instructions on suitable dress and conduct during worship, covering their heads in Church and remaining silent in the company of men.[75] The suggestion that women were not made in the image of God, in the same way as men were, was also used to explain the need for a hierarchal structure within a Christian family and why women could not take up ecclesiastical office. The man does not have to cover his head because he is made in the image and

[74] Sawyer, *Women and Religion* p.150.
[75] 1 Tim. II. 12-15; 1 Cor. XI.10.

glory of God but the woman is only made as the glory of man.[76] This interpretation, with its assumption that men and women did not carry the image of God in identical ways is central to inherited Christianity which deliberately determines the male as normative.[77]

The second type of argument is linked with Eve's responsibility for allowing sin to enter the world.[78] Here the simple belief that a frail and vulnerable Eve became the originator of sin, because the serpent deceived her, is superseded by the view that she bears more guilt than Adam. Therefore, all women carry far more responsibility for sin than men and they are also more stupid than men. ' And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression,'[79] Furthermore all women inherit both sin and punishments from Eve, since the latter is the embodiment of womankind; only the pain of childbearing, modest dress, chaste behaviour and silence could save them from the consequences of this transgression.[80] Taken to extremes, this view suggests that women, unlike men, are actually excluded from Christianity's soteriological scheme of the death and resurrection of Christ.[81] Woman can only regain paradise through their own suffering, their silence throughout that

[76] I Cor. XI.7; 1 Tim. II.11-12.
[77] Sawyer, *Women and Religion* p.150.
[78] *ibid.* p.153.
[79] I Tim. II. 14.
[80] *ibid.* II .15.
[81] Sawyer, *Women and Religion* p. 154.

suffering and their subjection to men. A condition, which involves suffering, silence and subjection, is not one which actively encourages the possibility of freedom of thought, nor any urgent necessity for developing an educational programme for women.

The third type of argument creates a typological link between Eve and Mary the mother of Jesus Christ. It underlines the importance of their parallel, dual roles in Salvation.[82] Disobedient Eve, thinks she will be like God so she transgresses.Mary, though frail and virginal, remains steadfast in her obedience to God's command as the handmaid of the Lord.[83] Redemption for all humankind comes through Mary's humble obedience and her willingness to give birth to God's son and all generations will honour her.[84] However there is a paradox within Christian teaching, since Eve is linked with both fall and salvation and therefore to Christ himself. Without Eve's sin there would have been no requirement for Mary's obedience or for Christ to provide redemption, thus there would be no Christianity without Eve's sin.

If women inherit Eve's sin then they can also inherit Mary's redeeming obedience. According to Christian tradition the challenge for all women was to overcome the sin they inherited from Eve in order to learn how to become more like the

[82] *ibid.* p. 156.
[83] Luke I.38.
[84] Luke I.48.

obedient Mary. To do this they needed a Christian education to show them the correct way to think and act. This education would have to be devised by men, who were superior, but the belief that a Christian upbringing could show women how to behave suggests an assumption that a woman could and should be educated. This was the starting point for several treatise writers whose views will be outlined in chapter three.

Passages from scripture were not the only religious texts to influence early modern thoughts on the nature of women. Issues related to female sin, guilt and subordination were further complicated by the acceptance of many of the ideas developed by the Early Christian Fathers and later theologians, all of whom had considerable influence on the development of Christian views on gender within early modern society. All societies, which ran on a basis of christian theology, remained androcentric for centuries. Early modern suggestions on the education and training, deemed suitable for women, developed within the framework of this androcentrism.

These three categories of argument provide a useful framework to examine examples of post-scriptural thinking, on the female condition, which impacted upon early modern concepts of womanhood. A few examples must serve here but it is recognised that there were numerous texts, from respected early Christian writers, with whom early modern Christian theorists would be familiar.

John Chrysostom, writing in the fourth century, was an exponent of the first type of argument, namely that a gender hierarchy existed. For Chrysostom, women were the second sex because man was created before them and because women, through the Fall, had lost their portion of the divine image. Taking the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians as his starting point, Chrysostom argued that the stories of Creation and Fall were actually comments about authority, both divine and human and that Paul's instructions to the Corinthians, on the veiling of women, were linked with men's, divinely ordained, authority over women. To make this argument work he uses two different translations of the Greek word *exousia*, veil and authority.

> For the image is not meant in regard to essence but in regard to authority. To grasp the point that the form of man is not that of God listen to what Paul says 'For the man ought not to be veiled, for he is the glory and image of God. But woman is the glory of man. Therefore she ought to have a veil (*exousia*) or authority on her head...'[85]

In answer to those arguing that men and women shared God's image, his response was that men and women did share one form, one distinctive character and one likeness but added that the man was in the image of God and the woman not because image was not related to essence or form but

> The image has rather to do with authority (*exousia*) and this only the man has; the woman has it no longer. For he is subjected to no-one while she is subjected to him; as

[85] John Chrysostom, 'Discourse 2 on Genesis' translated Elizabeth E. Clark, *Women In The Early Church* (New York, 1984,), pp. 35-36.

> God has said 'Your inclination shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you...therefore only the man is in the image of God since he has no-one above him, just as God has no superior but rules over everything. The woman however is the glory of man, since she is subjected to him.[86]

As woman is subjected to man, because she does not share his authority, she cannot possibly hold office outside the household. According to Chrysostom, she would not be capable of outside duties, but then neither would a man be suitable for household work, as he explains in *The Kind of Women Who Ought To Be Taken As Wives*

> This is a work of God's love and wisdom that he who is skilled at the greater things is downright inept and useless in the performance of less important ones, so that the woman's service is necessary. For, if the man were adapted to undertake both sorts of activities, the female sex could easily be despised. Conversely if the more important, more beneficial, concerns were turned over to the woman, she would go quite mad...[87]

A divinely ordained hierarchy of the sexes was a popular belief and it could explain why some early modern educationalists did not even comment on the possibility of educating girls in the same way as boys.

Tertullian and Ambrose, respected church fathers writing in the late second and third centuries respectively, were exponents of the second type of argument, for them Eve and all women were responsible for bringing sin into the world. In his treatise *On The Apparel of Women* Tertullian's condemnation was particularly harsh.

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[86] *ibid.*
[87] Cited Sawyer, *Women and Religion* p. 153.

> And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve... You are the devil's gateway: you are the unsealer of that forbidden tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your punishment, that is death, even the Son of God had to die...[88]

The burden of sin was so great that Tertullian suggested all women should dress in mourning clothes as a constant reminder of their guilt though, metaphorically speaking, they would actually be putting on brighter garb in preparation for the resurrection, when they would, through their recognition of their sin, their modesty and their obedience, eventually be saved.

> Dress yourselves with the silk of honesty, the linen of sanctity and the purple of pudicitia. Painted in this way you will have God himself for a lover...[89]

This metaphorical device, whereby a woman who outwardly shunned vanity and fine clothing for a simple godly humility was inwardly wearing the rich clothing of virtue, which would please God, was taken up by Protestant sermon writers, moralists and biographers, their arguments little changed from those expounded by Tertullian in late second and early third century Carthage. A good example of this can be seen in the biography of Lady Lucie Reynell of Forde in Devon. Written in

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[88] Tertullian, *On The Apparel of Women* 1.1-2 my translation/paraphrase but see also Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, (eds.) *Ante-Nicene Fathers vol iv* (Edinburgh 1989/ Kindle edition 2012), Tertullian part 4, no page numbers or www.tertullian.org/anf/anf04/anf04-06-htm accessed Sept.4 2015.
[89] Tertullian, *The Apparel of Women* 2.13 cited Carly Daniel-Hughes, *The Salvation of The Flesh In Tertullian of Carthage; dressing for the resurrection* (New York, 2011), p. 1.

1654, Edward's Reynell's description of Lucie's efforts to avoid an ungodly life when she was young by

> betaking herself to prayer, reading, meditating, working and such other religious duties as might hinder her from imploying her time in those vanities, which many both of her age and sex about her (forgetting to seek God) spent in painting, patterning and adorning themselves...[90]

suggests the behaviour expected of young Christian women in the second century was similar to that expected of a pious and godly female in the seventeenth. Lucie Reynell's attitude would certainly have met with Tertullian's approval and according to his instructions she would find a place in heaven. Furthermore, the language employed by Edward, when he describes Lucie's widowhood, mirrors Tertullian's suggestion that a well behaved woman, dressing metaphorically in the rich garments of good behaviour, could have God as a lover. According to Edward, the widowed Lucie rejected all proposals of marriage, devoted herself to a prayerful life and took Christ as her husband 'who had promised to defend her...'[91]

Like Tertullian, Ambrose was also fixated on female sin. Atonement for the latter could only come through the acceptance of the guilt of all women. According to Ambrose, not content with her own guilt, Eve had pulled her husband into sin. She was the incentive for man's disobedience and this is why women are dangerous to men.

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[90] Edward Reynell, *The Life and Death Of That Most Pious And Vertuous Gentlewoman The Lady Lucie Reynell* (London, 1654), p. 11.
[91] *ibid.* p. 38.

> The woman, therefore is the originator of man's wrong-doings not the man of the woman's...[92]

Saint Augustine, whose thought influenced Luther, further developed this view. For Augustine, the man only became guilty of transgression because Eve led him astray. It is impossible to read Augustine's writing on the nature of women without looking at the connections he saw between Eve and original sin.[93]

The belief that Eve brought so much trouble into the world and that her descendants continued to tempt men away from God drew Augustine to question why women were even created. If Adam lacked companionship would it not have been less dangerous for God to have created a second man? After all two men would provide each other with company and conversation without any other complications. In fact he concluded that he could not think of any reason for women's existence other than for procreation.[94]

Augustine's fierce androcentrism became the norm, quoted and re-expressed throughout the centuries. Sixteenth century reformer Martin Luther accepts the Augustinian view without question. He restates it bluntly thus

> Women are created for no other purpose than to serve men and be their helpers. If women grow weary or even die

[92] Ambrose, *Hexaemeron* cited Sawyer, *Women and Religion* p. 155.
[93] Kim Power, *Veiled Desire; Augustine's Writing On Women* (London, 1995), p.239.
[94] Augustine, *Commentary on Genesis IX.5.*

> while bearing children, that doesn't harm anything. Let them bear children to death, they are created for that.[95]

Augustine struggled with the relationship between Mary and Eve and how this affected women. Women held in themselves both Mary and Eve and so they represent the tension of a divided will.[96]

However the third type of argument, outlining Eve's typological link with Mary the mother of Christ, can be seen in the works of many early Christian theologians which were still being read in the early modern period. Irenaeus declared

> Eve having become disobedient, was made the cause of death both for herself and all the human race. Thus also Mary had a husband selected for her and nonetheless was a virgin, yet by her obedience she was made the cause if salvation both for herself and for all the human race...the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosened through the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve bound through unbelief, this the Virgin Mary loosed through faith...[97]

Mary as the new Eve was a popular theme in Christian iconography, until the Reformation. Eve might have been tricked into disobedience by a serpent but Christ's mother could be depicted standing upon a serpent's head, crushing evil through her obedience. Saint Jerome had frequently referred to Mary as the woman who triumphed over death and evil 'She it is who shall bruise your [the serpent's] head....' His letters, written in the late fourth and early

[95] Cited Merry Wiesner, 'Luther and Women; the Death of Two Marys' in Ann Loades (ed.), *Feminist Theology; A reader* (London, 1993), p. 123.
[96] Kim Power, *Veiled Desire* p.221.
[97] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* III 22.4.

fifth century to high class Roman women, recommended women to follow Mary's example of humility and obedience. In addition, he offered instructions on how they should educate their daughters, valuing silence, plain clothing, obedience and chastity. He often encouraged women to value an ascetic lifestyle.[98]

Before the Reformation, Mary, women's perfect role model, had a central place within Christianity. She was the approachable intercessor between humanity and God, providing a moral example to girls and women. Mary was a focus of a girl's Christian education. Women were encouraged to emulate her. They could learn the importance of obedience from her. She was Christ's mother but she was their mother too. Furthermore, pre-Reformation images of the young Mary being taught to read by her own mother, such as that found in the early sixteenth century window of the Edgcumbe's private chapel at Cotehele in Cornwall, suggest that although her humility and obedience were important qualities for young women to emulate, they were not required to shun learning in order to become more like the mother of Christ.[99]

After the Reformation, using the Virgin Mary as a moral example became more difficult. No longer sanctioned as an object of devotion, she effectively vanished from religious

[98] W.H. Freemantle (ed.) The letters of St. Jerome, (London, 2016), pp. 49, 66-76, 362.
[99] Pamela Sheingorn, 'The Wise Mother, the Image of St. Anne Teaching' *Gesta*, 32. No 1 (1993), p. 78.

language and sacred spaces. Women lost their main role model until the mother of Christ could be reinstated as a godly woman whose many virtues, especially those linked with passivity and acceptance, could be identified and copied.[100]

***Protestant Reformers***

Serinity Young believes that Protestant reformers redefined the status of women when they made family life the focus of attention and closed the nunneries. Believing that woman's subordination to man had been ordained by God at the time of creation and that the status quo must be maintained if God's will was to be fulfilled, the reformers declared that being a wife and mother was the true female vocation. The family therefore became the cornerstone of early modern society. Fully embracing the patriarchy of their own era and linking it to the patriarchal ideas they found in scripture, reformers stressed that a woman's duty was to her family and that this duty must be demonstrated by chasteness and obedience to her husband.[101] John Calvin wrote of woman as an employee of the man. The man and the woman may have a special relationship, a contract, within marriage but the woman is clearly the junior and inferior partner

[100] Miri Rubin, *Mother of God, a History of The Virgin Mary* (London, 2009) Kindle edition part VI. 21.
[101] Serinity Young, *An Anthology of Sacred Texts by and About Women* (New York, 1993) p. 42.

> Man has been created in this condition that he may not lead a solitary life, but may employ a helper joined to himself...[102]

Luther's interpretation of the Genesis creation narratives follows Augustine's lead, though Luther's comments are more crude and biological. For Luther, Genesis places women securely in the home where, although they are useful as housekeepers, Luther regards them as unfortunate necessities, paradoxically sinful themselves yet actually protecting men from sin.

> Today after our nature has become corrupted by sin, woman is needed not only to secure increase but also for companionship and for protection. The management of the household must have the ministration of the dear ladies. In addition and this is lamentable woman is also necessary as an antidote against sins. And so in the case of the woman we must think not only of the management of the household which she does but also of the medicine which she is.[103]

Luther further developed early Christian claims that a larger portion of divine wrath and punishment, for the first sin, belonged to women and therefore subordination to the male was an essential part of the female condition. The rule 'remains with the husband' he declared, explaining that man has many tasks to do, such as running the state, waging war, looking after possessions, tilling the soil. Luther's man is active and mobile but the woman should be

> like a nail driven into the wall. She sits at home just as the snail carries its house with it, so the wife

[102] John Calvin, *The Institutes* II VIII 41-43. (London, 1562).
[103] Martin Luther, *Works* I pp. 115-118. Cited Denise L Carmody, *Women and World Religions* (New Jersey, 1989), p. 175.

> should stay at home and look after the affairs of the household.[104]

The snail metaphor became popular amongst Protestants. When Robert Wilkinson gave a sermon in 1607 he compared a good woman with this creature not only for her silence and continual keeping of her house but also for the commendable timorousness of her nature.[105]

Here woman's timorousness is an excellent trait to be encouraged and, unlike in the Gwreans An Bys, it is not seen as a weakness to be exploited. However, it could be argued that a focus on timorousness and making the household the centre of women's life, with helping her husband and producing children the main point of her existence, Protestant reformers removed many opportunities for women's development both intellectually and spiritually. The Reformation, with its focus on an individual's ability to read the Bible may have encouraged literate, elite women, to study and read and created opportunities for educational development. However more may have been lost than gained. In earlier times pre-Reformation women were able to study and write from convent bases where intellectual works could be created by women with no domestic ties. In the convents they accessed education and financial support and time to write.[106]

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[104] *ibid.* p. 175.
[105] Cited Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London, 1996), p. 42.
[106] Young, *Anthology of Sacred* p. 41.

According to Protestants, a woman's true vocation was obedience to men within her family so there was no longer any need for girls to enter convent life, nuns could find a new vocation in marriage. Young sees this as the end of female autonomy in religious life, especially when Protestant views are seen in parallel with the actions of Counter-Reformation Catholics in Europe after the council of Trent. Catholics wanted all nuns to be completely cloistered, with no links to the outside world.[107]

Young is right to highlight autonomy in religious matters as a great loss as the convents vanished from English life but a more significant loss was female educational space. Some Catholic families, like the Arundells of Lanhearne continued to send their daughters to religious communities overseas.[108] However once a convent became completely cloistered it was isolated from the outside world. If nuns could no longer teach a female educational space vanished. As for Protestant daughters, the only formal religious role open to them was that of clergy wife.[109] In this role the woman had no authority. She neither preached nor taught, but she was expected to be a role model showing other women how to be an ideal Christian wife. This was a new vocation which, as chapter five will illustrate, some women, like Anne Edgcumbe, embraced and even exploited it. However life as a clergy wife

[107] *ibid.* p. 43.
[108] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 250.
[109] Young, *Anthology of Sacred* p. 43.

was not intended to provide a woman with her own learning space.

***A woman's place and her vocation***

Patricia Crawford argues that changes in views, about the importance of the household, had significant consequences for the position of women in early modern society. Challenging both the views of Lawrence Stone, for over dramatising these changes, and Ralph Houlbrooke for underestimating their significance, she suggests that both Catholic and Protestant beliefs affected the gender order of society and household. Despite Protestant writers condemning the Catholic Church for leaving women confined and uneducated, in the domestic setting, Protestants themselves were guilty of the same. With Protestants clearly believing that there was a rigid division between men and women, the latter designed for domesticity, the former for spiritual leadership, one of the most important developments to spring from Protestantism was an increased authority given to husbands and fathers. However, despite this increased authority it would be wrong to suggest that women could not think for themselves or that they always did what fathers, brothers and husbands told them. Religion and individual beliefs and attitudes have a personal as well as a public dimension. It is clear from the personal reflections of early modern women such as Grace Mildmay, Anne Clifford and Margaret Hoby, that women's spiritual understanding was

different from men's but no less deep.[110] The case studies on Dorothy Arundell, Anne Edgcumbe and Lucie Reynell will show that women from differing religious backgrounds had confidence to evaluate contemporary local, national and international situations, such as religious persecution and civil war and to consider the meaning of life from the perspective of their personal world-view without simply quoting the ideas gleaned from men. Furthermore, it will be shown that in spite of religion defining women as the second and subordinate sex, men frequently turned to Lucie for advice on religious and social matters, Anne took it upon herself to instruct political leaders who, apart from the monarch, were all men, whilst through her writings and her support for an increasingly isolated Catholic community in Dorset, Dorothy acted as both defender and teacher of her Catholic faith within her own household and in the local community. In no circumstances could these three women be described as weaker vessels, one of the most recognised descriptions all females because it was repeated on a regular basis in church services via *The Book of Common Prayer.*

Post-Reformation attitudes towards women and statements about their perceived role within the household, in particular as marriage partners, can be found in each version of the prayer book. First published in 1549, it was revised in 1552 to give

[110] Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion* pp. 40-41.

it a more Protestant tone. Queen Mary abolished its use but in 1559 it was revised and reinstated, remaining unchanged until 1661.[111] It could be seen as a tool of indoctrination, used to reinforce beliefs about the inferiority of women since statements, within its marriage ceremony together with those in the 1563 homily on marriage, about a woman's place, became the norm. These statements were the ones that most early modern English women heard all through life and most other statements were based on them.[112] Women were constantly told that marriage was their vocation and since early modern education was vocational, their early life would be spent learning the duties and skills required in marriage.

In the marriage service it is explained that marriage was ordained by God for three reasons, to create children, to avoid sin and prevent fornication and for the mutual society, help and comfort of each marriage partner. However when they exchange their vows it is clear that the partnership is not one of equals. The woman must promise to obey and serve the man. The biblical reasons for this subjection are explained in detail, with stress placed on man being created in the image and likeness of God but woman taking their beginning from men. The man must therefore honour his new wife 'as unto the weaker vessel' whilst the woman must remember that her husband is her

[111] Brian Cummings (ed.), *The Book of Common Prayer, 1549, 1559 and 1662*, (Oxford, 2013), pp. 64, 157, 434.
[112] Joan Larson Klein, *Daughters, Wives and Widows; Writings by Men About Women and Marriage in Early Modern England 1500-1640* (Chicago, 1992), p. 3.

head in the same way that Christ is the head of the church. Wives must be 'in subjection unto their own husbands in all things.'[113] The official homily on marriage reinforces the same order

> As for their husbands, them they must obey and cease from commanding and perform subjection. For this surely doth nourish concord very much when the wife is ready at hand at her husband's commandment, when she will apply herself to his will, when she endeavoreth herself to seek his contentation...[114]

Alec Ryrie pays special attention to Protestant beliefs about the position of women, their subjection to male authority and their perceived weakness and frailness. He points out that many actions required of early modern Protestants, particularly those in worship were strongly gendered with, for example, women ordered to cover their heads and men told to doff their hats whilst in church, men leading worship within the household and women listening in silence and not encroaching upon their husband's authority no matter how strongly they felt the urge to interrupt.[115]

Protestantism required a public emotional response. Ryrie suggests that early modern women were better at religious practice than men.In many cases woman's perceived weakness was actually advantageous. The frequent requirement to weep during prayer, when contemplating sin, making a meaningful repentance

[113] Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer,* pp. 64, 157, 434.
[114] Library-utoronto-ca/utel/ref/homilies/bk2hom18.html lines 146-151 accessed Aug 10 2016.
[115] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013), p. 370.

and meditating on death was a barrier for men.[116] Women and children were thought to weep quite easily but on the whole men would not or could not weep as the 1625 writer of *A Christian Man's Tears and Christ's Comforts* put it

> Men when they are exhorted to weep are accustomed to say that weeping is more womanish than manly.[117]

In his recent study of the practical aspects of living as a Protestant Ryrie points to a clear concept of a woman's vocation within marriage, suggesting that such vocations were multi-layered and often gender specific.[118]

Such gender specificity is found in the earlier editions of The Book of Common *Prayer,* specifically in the short collection of readings and prayers a woman attended after the safe delivery of a child.

> O Almightie God, which has delivered this woman thy servant from the great payne and peril of childbirth: Graunt, we beseche thee (most mercifull father), that she through thy helpe may both faithfully lyve, and walk in her vocacyon accordynge to thy will in this lyfe presente; and also may be parkater of everlasting glorye in the lyfe to come...[119]

In this prayer, although it is made clear that a woman's place is in the home and her special duty is the bringing up of children, it is also implies that this vocation earns her a place in paradise. Thus via the pain of childbirth and her

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[116] *ibid.* p. 191.
[117] *ibid.* p. 191.
[118] *ibid.* p. 451.
[119] Cummings, *Book of Common Prayer* pp. 91, 175, 457. In the 1662 edition the term vocation has vanished and the prayer simply asks that the woman lives and walks according to God's will.

motherly duties she inherits Eve's legacy simultaneously redeeming Eve's sin. Ryrie cites a similar prayer which was added to the 1578 edition edition of Thomas Becon's 1570 publication *The Pomaunder of Prayers,* where a newly delivered mother is encouraged to look forward to the rest of her life. Ryrie suggests that this is not a passive vocation but an active and positive one when the woman asks

> That I...may both faithfully live and walke in my vocation...[120]

Similar wording is found in other Protestant women's prayer books. John Gee's *The Christian Storehouse* also refers to a woman's calling or vocation. This reflection, for noon, seems to have been useful whether the woman in question had enjoyed a good morning or endured a bad one. Here her vocation is more than bringing up her children, it is a busy one, involving good works or charitable acts and avoiding idleness

> If I have begun well grant that I may persevere; but if I have misspent this morne, let thy grace assist mee in the performance of the dutys of my calling this afternoon...let me now walke on as a child of the day, proceeding from one good work unto another...[121]

Gee provides the woman with prayers for every circumstance, including insomnia, when she can reflect on her vocation and duties. During bouts of sleeplessness, she is allowed to seek respite from vocational duties and is encouraged to set aside

[120] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant* p. 451.
[121] John Gee, *The Christian Storehouse* (London 1631), p. 3.

'business cares and feare' and she is told to pray to 'settle [her] braine' in the quiet of the night.[122]

The dangers women faced by following their vocation as child-bearers is also stressed in prayers Gee provided for use by a pregnant woman and for those who sit with her during labour. Prayers stress childbirth is a punishment for Eve's sin but focus too on the happiness her vocation will bring if she survives the process. They also indicate the belief that a disabled child was a direct result of a woman not following her vocation in the correct way.

> Assure me therefore I beeseach thee of the forgiveness of all my sinnes and punish not my child for the parents sake, but preserve the parent for the childres sake that both may live and praye thy name. Mitigate my feare and sorrowes...that in time I may be a joyful mother and see the fruit of my body sound and perfect, without blemish or deformity...let thy hand which formed my babe in my wombe, keep all partes and members of it in due shape, subsytance and proportion, that the notes of the parents sinne be not seene in the markes, maimes and defects of the child...[123]

Such prayers show that childbirth was a constant reminder of the female condition. It provided a religious lesson which demonstrated woman's physical and spiritual frailty but suggests that women drew closer to God through the experience of labour. Those sitting with a woman in labour were provided with this prayer, which clearly recognises the sin inherited from Eve but also shows that childbirth was recognised as a great work. It also demonstrates that giving life to a child

[122] *ibid.* p. 5.
[123] *ibid.* p. 5.

was seen as a team effort since the sitters pray that the woman will heed their advice

> Wee are here assembled in thy name for the helpe of this our sister who travaileth in paine to be delivered of a childe. Lord look upon her in mercy and mitigate her agony as the judgement which thou has laid upon her and all women for sinne... [give her]Patience and willingness to be advised and ordered by her friends in so great a work.[124]

Since men could not give birth, labour was seen as solely a woman's concern, but her vocation did not end with the birth of a healthy child. Teaching that child and other members of her household how to live a godly life was essential womanly activity. Setting a godly example to members of her household could be done in a variety of ways. Some were active: Margaret Hoby read to her workwomen, Lucie Reynell taught her maids to sew.[125] Some were passive: Ryrie cites silence and chastity as examples which were presented as active godly duties since they set a good example to the household community.[126]

Prayer and meditation were vocational activities. Women mostly did this in private. Margaret Hoby frequently refered to praying in her private closet.[127] Lucie Reynell entertained 'persons of quality' for her husband but did not neglect her spiritual duties which took place when everyone else was asleep

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[124] *ibid.* p. 69.
[125] Ryrie, *Being Protestant* p.452; Reynell Life and Death p. 20.
[126] *ibid.* p. 451.
[127] Dorothy M. Meads (ed.), *The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby 1559-1605* (London, 1930), p. 106.

> Oftentimes hath she been on her knees in her closet when most have thought she hath been in bed...[128]

As part of their marriage vocation, women could also lead household prayers, either when they were widowed or when married, if neither her husband nor any man of better sufficiency was present. If the husband had

> insufficiency of knowledge and understanding... or invisible defects of expression and utterance...or when there is an utter loosness and carelessness in him...[129]

his wife could take his place. A man could also allow his wife to lead prayers, with him in attendance, provided she did not usurp his authority.[130] Leading household prayers, teaching the catechism and meditating in private required a considerable amount of personal study and reflection. Some women took notes whilst listening to or reading sermons. Bridget, the wife of Richard Carew of Anthony, Cornwall, kept a special book for this purpose. In his diary, her husband describes discovering it in her pocket on the day she died. Later he used it as a teaching resource for his children.

> And when she was dead I found in her pocket a prayer book, a true instruction for my poor remaining life, which she had collected out of sermons she had read and transcribed with her own hand, that by David's example we must never look for rest, but always prepare for new trials, each succeeding other in difficulty as well as in time, as the scripture showeth us he did: first encountering a bear, then a lion, after that Goliath and

[128] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 22.
[129] Daniel Rogers, *Matrimoniall Honour* (London, 1643), pp. 128-9, 268-70.
[130] Ryrie, *Being Protestant* p. 370.

> then Saul's persecutions, and after all this...his most fair and wicked son Absolom's treason...[131]

Ryrie sees sermon-noting practice as gendered with more men participating than women but notes that there were many sermon-noting women and evidence of some bringing writing books and ink into church. Some met with disapproval, Ralph Verney thought it was shameful for women to be writing in church.[132] However, from Richard Carew's statement about his wife Bridget's notebook, it is clear that he respected her efforts. The widower described his deceased wife's work as 'a true instruction' for his remaining life. This implies that Richard had no objection to Bridget's note taking and that he valued her ideas, especially as he used them in his children's education.[133] Richard therefore gave Bridget agency even after death. The concept of agency is an important one when examining the lives of early modern women. Amanda Flather suggests that historians should no longer assume that 'all men were autonomous patriarchs and all women simply victims.'[134] Instead they should explore the numerous opportunities for female agency which were created due to a complex, varied and uneven articulation of patriarchal authority which was constantly changing.[135] The households selected for the case studies are good examples of this changing and varied

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[131] Cited F.E. Halliday, *A Cornish Chronicle* (Newton Abbot, 1967), p. 70.
[132] Ryrie, *Being Protestant* p. 358.
[133][133] Cited Halliday, *Cornish Chronicle* p. 70.
[134] Amanda Flather, 'Space, Place and Gender: The Sexual and Spatial Division of Labor in the Early Modern Household' *History and Theory* 52 (October, 2013), p. 334.
[135] *ibid.* pp. 334-335.

articulation of patriarchy. They will show how Anne and Lucie often worked in partnership with their husbands and how unmarried Dorothy took on the authority to teach and preserve Catholic traditions by working alongside her priest. Bernard Capp does not dismiss the constraints of patriarchy in early modern households but he stresses the value of exploring the ways women were able to negotiate them.[136] Capp's focus tends to rest upon the experiences of women from the poor and middling sort rather than upon those of elite women like Dorothy, Anne and Lucie. Nevertheless the points he makes are important since he draws upon a wide variety of secular and religious sources (court records, pamphlets, advice material and personal testimony) to argue that the ideal versions of womanhood found in conduct books and religious writings seldom matched what was taking place in real life. Social circumstances were often at variance with the expectations of conduct book authors.[137] Capp points out that even the assumption that all women had to be under the control of a man did not always reflect reality, since many households were headed by women.[138] This is certainly true in the case of widows like Lucie Reynell who refused all offers of a second marriage. Capp further opines that the assumption that all women spent their time confined inside patriarchal homes is false because women's duties frequently required them to leave

[136] Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet Women Family and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 15-25.
[137] *ibid.* p. 26.
[138] *ibid.* pp. 26-27.

the household to go to markets, visit their neighbours or help friends through the experience of childbirth.[139] This must mean that opportunities for women's agency and networking existed outside the home.[140] This suggestion that female networks of neighbours or 'gossips' provided women with sociability; practical help and emotional support is particularly useful for this thesis.[141] The case studies will outline Anne's link with like-minded Puritan women in Exeter; Lucie's support for neighbours in times of sickness and Dorothy's Catholic networks. These three women did not spend their entire lives confined to their households.

Laura Gowing admits that households were the contexts in which young people learned their specific gender roles at first hand.[142] However she suggests examining the use of space within households to gain insight into both concrete and abstract ideas about the relationships between women and men.[143] Like Capp, she challenges the view that women were always confined to the private space of the household. She suggests that though marriage manuals stressed the household kept both women and family honour safe, under a man's dominance, most statements for a gender division between indoor and outdoor activity were rhetorical since there is no evidence that

[139] *ibid.* p. 27.
[140] *ibid.* p. 50.
[141] *ibid.* p. 51.
[142] Laura Gowing, *Gender Relations In Early Modern England* (Harlow, 2012), p. 31.
[143] *ibid.* p. 39.

conduct books described what actually happened.[144] Therefore she suggests that historians would better turn their focus towards the dialogue between prescription and reality and note the enterprise with which women established agency within early modern society.[145]

The case studies will show that Dorothy, Anne and Lucie saw their activities, both inside and outside their households, as part of their vocation.

Biblical models of virtuous women provided examples of female Christian vocation. The 'Homilie on The State of Matrimonie' reminded all women to follow the example of Sara, who was so obedient to Abraham that she neither thought nor spoke against him and 'she kept herself in silence in all things.'[146] Obedience required correct behaviour and correct thought with both linked to virtue and reputation. According to Edmund Tilney, it was not enough to be good, a Protestant woman had to be seen to be good.

> The flower of estimation, and the pearle of credit, which is so delicate a thing in a woman, that she must not onely be good, but likewise must appeere so...[147]

As chapter five will show, this was especially important for the first generations of clergy wives like Anne Edgcombe who

[144] *ibid.* pp. 39-40.
[145] *ibid.* p. 5.
[146] The Second Tome of Homilies (London, 1563), pp. 253-63.
[147] Edmund Tilney, *The Flower of Friendship*, ed. Valerie Wayne (London, 1992), p. 136.

were responsible for the religious welfare of their own children, creating a well ordered, godly household at the centre of their local community, supporting their husband in his parish activity and leading by example.

Good deeds and charitable works offered vocational opportunities for pious elite women. Lucie Reynell was noted for her generosity 'to strangers and to the poor' and she commissioned the building of almshouses for poor clergy widows. She used her knowledge of herbs and medicine to comfort the sick.[148] After Lucie's death in 1652 she is described in glowing terms as a perfect version of Christian womanhood. She was always cheerful, humble, dressed modestly, kept the Lord's Day, prayed and meditated as a preparation for death, was charitable towards everyone, never idle and she helped the poor.[149] This description is remarkably similar to the pen-portrait Foxe provided on the unfortunate Agnes Prest of Launceston who had died a good Protestant almost a century before.

> She was a simple woman to see as any man might behold; of a very little and short stature, somewhat thicke, about 54 years of age. She had a cheerful countenaunce, so lively as though she had been prepared for that day of marriage to meet the Lambe; most pacient of her words and answeres, sober in apparel meate and drinke, and would never be idle, a great comfort to as many as would talke with her, good to the poore...[150]

[148] Reynell, *Life and Death* pp. 18, 26.
[149] *ibid.* pp. 12-23.
[150] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments Book 12* (London, 1570) p. 2292.

In a hundred years the concept of a perfect Protestant role model had changed but little. Like all true Christians or Saints, the terms were interchangeable, these two women had followed their vocations and would be rewarded in heaven, redeemed of Eve's sin and others should do likewise.

***Conclusion***

The examples in this chapter, taken from a West Country play and from records about women accused of various crimes, show that the prevailing view on the female condition, held by the South West's early modern society, was a religious one. However scientific and medical theories gave messages not dissimilar to religious teachings since the science of the natural world and religious beliefs about the origins of the universe complemented and supported each other. It has also been shown that patriarchal society was accepted as the norm. That women were subordinate to men and needed to be controlled and regulated by them was seldom questioned. When the English convents closed, women's sole vocation was marriage but within this institution vocational activities were multi-layered. Most teaching suggested that by following their vocation, especially submitting to the pain and suffering of childbirth, women would be freed from Eve's legacy and would enter heaven redeemed.

Having thus examined beliefs on the concept of womanhood prevalent within early modern society and discovered them to

be based mainly on religious principles, the next chapter will explore the depth of theological influence on advice literature, through a consideration of practical advice, given to both sexes, in advice material and conduct books. It also examines the theories expounded by a number of early educationalists together with their practical suggestions for the content of a female curriculum. However, knowing the religious texts upon which an argument is based may not necessarily require accepting the whole of the argument and putting it into practice. Whether everyone, the educators and the educated, the advisors and the advised, wholeheartedly accepted the concept of frail womanhood outlined in this chapter remains to be seen.

## Chapter three

***Education, fashioning and reputation; cultural expectations of the woman's role versus social practice in West-Country settings.***

This chapter examines the arguments of early modern educationalists which contributed to the printed debate, on the education of girls, found within formal treatises on education. In addition it will examine exemplar statements, about female duties found in conduct literature. This had a wider readership than educational texts, since there was only one edition of Mulcaster's 1572 *Positions* compared with at least fourteen of Perkin's *Complete Works* and sixteen of Hugh Platt's *Delights For Ladies* by 1640.[1] Arguments within the education debate are investigated within the framework of a local context and linked to practical examples, examining educational opportunities available for young people in the West Country inquiring whether they were made available to both sexes.

In early modern England, there were those who thought introducing girls to the delights of scholarship anathema and those who saw no reasons to exclude them from formal educational opportunities. As the previous chapter indicated, claims that women were weaker than men could be supported by

[1] Suzanne Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women 1475-1640* (San Marino, 1982), p. 20.

religious and philosophical arguments and by medical theory and therefore, for many, the term educated woman was an oxymoron. Believing that women would not be able to cope with the rigors of education, they claimed that too much learning would damage a girl. Therefore, they argued, excluding females from formal education was a way of protecting their bodies and souls; too much study might cause physical damage to soft female brains or, worse still, too much knowledge would corrupt girls and contaminate them with sin. Richard Hyrde refuted such claims, but his 1526 preface, to one of Margaret Roper's translations, provides a useful summary of the arguments of those who would not advocate female education.

> I have heard many men put great doubt whether it should be expedient and requisite or not for a woman to have learning in books of Latin and Greek; and some utterly affirm that it is not only neither necessary nor profitable, but also very noisome and jeopardous, alleging for their opinion that the frail kind of woman being inclined of their own courage unto vice, and mutable at every novelty, if they should have skill in many things that be written in the Greek and Latin tongue, compiled and made with very great craft and eloquence, where the matter is haply sometime more sweet unto the ear than wholesome to the mind, it would be the likelihood both inflame their stomachs a great deal more to that vice that men say they be too much given unto of their nature already...[2]

For holders of such opinions, it followed that an educated woman was a danger to men because she could tempt them into sin. Even those who thought girls could benefit from education set limits on what they should be allowed to do with the

[2] Kate Aughterson, (Ed.), *Renaissance Women: A Sourcebook, Constructions of Femininity in England* (London, 1995), p. 173.).

knowledge and skills they gained. Juan Luis Vives, whose *Instruction of A Christian Woman*, was translated into English by Hyrde in 1540, did not want women to be in charge of schools because, he believed, they would be so sure that they were right, even if their opinions were false, they might draw their students into error. Moreover, if a woman was placed in charge of an institution, it would 'detract from her modesty and decorum'[3]

Arguments, on female education, frequently contained elements of religion and science at their core. As the previous chapter demonstrated, some thought God ordained women's nature to be different from men's.[4] Others used humoral theory to show why women were weaker and less rational than men.[5] Therefore the sexes had different, God-given or naturally decided, roles and duties within society. Whether they sprang from religious doctrine, scientific or medical theories or from ancient philosophies, these perceived differences, led many to conclude that educating girls to the same standards as their brothers was impossible and a waste of resources.In 1652 Sir Ralph Verney wrote to his goddaughter about suitable books for girls.He suggested she needed to read little more than *The Book of Common Prayer* and *The Bible*. However he admitted her

[3] Charles Fantazzi, (ed.), *Juan Luis Vives The Education of A Christian Woman; a sixteenth century manual* (Chicago, 2000), p. 72.
[4] Joan Larsen Klein (ed.), *Daughters Wives and Widows; Writings by men about women and marriage in England 1500-1640* (Chicago, 1992), p. 16.
[5] John Wilkins, 'Hippocratic lessons for Modern Health' *Wellcome History* 41 (Summer 2009), pp. 11-12.

father might not agree.[6] Others, mainly those interested in humanism, disagreed, producing counter arguments, equally based on religion, philosophy, and medicine. They also highlighted classical, biblical and traditional practice but interpreted these in different ways, attacking the inconsistency of arguments against the education of women.[7] Juan Luis Vives declared it nonsensical to claim that women were not capable of learning and that girls would be corrupted by knowledge whilst also insisting that they attended church to hear Sunday sermons and learn about the right way to live.[8]

***A Broader View of Education***

Concepts and definitions change over time and those linked with education are no exception. Before embarking upon any discussion of female education it is essential to acknowledge the wide sense of education which existed in the early modern period. This takes the focus beyond the boundaries of formal institutions into other learning spaces. All early modern education was vocational; its purpose preparing the next generation for the future.[9] In elite households this meant offering young people a wide variety of experiences to provide them with the necessary knowledge, practical skills, social awareness and contacts to assist their smooth passage into adulthood. As members of the elite they would be expected to

[6] Cited T.E.C. jr, *Pediatrics* 51.5 (May 1973), p. 839.
[7] The Catechism of Thomas Beacon ed. John Ayre, (Cambridge, 1884), p. 376.
[8] Fantazzi, *Jean Luis Vives* p. 64.
[9] Rosemary O'Day, *Education and Society 1500-1800; The social foundations of education in early modern Britain* (London, 1982), p. 179.

serve their families, local communities and the nation by taking responsible positions in government, managing their household and estate prudently and caring for those who lived and worked within it. Throughout the period under consideration, 1525-1660, those responsible for an elite child's education had to consider which experiences would best serve their family and bring the young person the most opportunities for advancement. The child was educated and fashioned after careful consideration of future prospects. As the latter were heavily dependent upon reputation, each formal and informal experience the young person encountered was a stepping stone towards their future role as a respected person in adult society. Reputation was everything, a good one opened doors, a bad one closed them.[10]

In educational terms, the aforementioned stepping stones required no personal development plan, since neither formal nor informal education took much consideration of a youth's unique personal qualities and interests. People were not regarded as completely independent individuals. Everyone's activities were directed inwards towards their household economy or outwards towards the successful running of both local community and nation. Educational provision for elite children was directly related to future service and service was valued regardless of its location. The education and

[10] Courtney Thomas, 'The Honour and Credite of The Whole House; Family Unity and Honour in Early Modern England' *Cultural and Social History* 10 no 3 (2013), pp. 330-331.

training provided within the household provided transferable skills to be used in leadership roles in the local community or nation or in support of family members whose duty lay outside that household.[11] As William Gouge explained(1575-1653), household duty was public duty

> A conscionable performance of household duties in regard to the end fruit thereof may be accounted public work...A family is a little church and a little commonwealth whereby trial may be made of such as are fit for any place in authority...[12]

This understanding of duty as public work explains why the epitaphs for many West Country women stress their excellent service as wives and mothers, their meekness, obedience and kindness extolled as good examples of godly living. Elizabeth Butler, the grandchild of an Exeter Alderman, who died in 1644 was 'So good a neighbour, mother, friend and wife/That heaven and earth above her were in strife./Earth was desirous here to have her rest/heaven was desirous there to have her blest.'[13] Whilst Amy Tooker of Barnstaple, who died in 1656, 'preserv'd her name/ a way more sure/ by faith, love, patience/ a meek life and pure/these are spices shall embawime her name/and make it fragrant when the worlds a flame.'[14] Both had served well on earth and would be rewarded in heaven.

[11] O'Day, *Education*, p. 179.
[12] William Gouge, *Works*, I, pp 10-11, cited Kenneth Charlton, *Education in Renaissance England* (London, 1965), p. 200.
[13] St. Martin's Church, Exeter, 1644.
[14] St Peter's Church, Barnstaple, 1656.

Education, for the elite, was therefore the means to prepare a young person for service, either in a good marriage or through a suitable and respectable career linked to governance. Both pathways were valued as service to a well ordered society. Within marriage a woman used her education to look to the welfare of her family and household, supporting her husband's and children's ambitions in local and national life. A rigorous education, which provided both theoretical knowledge and a practical training, served to set secure foundations for successful marriage partnerships. It prepared men for advancement at court, in law, in local government or the Church and gave women the skills required for the successful ordering of a godly household, where a virtuous wife set a good example to others and preserved the family's reputation.

The household was seen, by many, as an educational institution, as Gouge put it 'a school wherein the first principles and grounds of government and subjection are learned...'[15] Within this 'school' education and training began almost from birth. Religious and secular authorities recognised the importance of the family in the early years of education. Within their family children would learn the importance of obedience to their elders, to the rules set out in Scripture and to the laws governing the State. This broad-based, family-provided, curriculum included general

[15] Charlton, *Education in Renaissance*, p. 200.

upbringing, or the socialisation of the child from infancy, together with any formal teaching they might receive and a sound religious education.[16] Thomas Becon wrote at length about education and bringing up of children both in good letters and in godliness so that they might make a good contribution to the whole Christian commonweal.[17]

There is evidence that many elite parents held this broad view of education and that they took their role, as providers very seriously, even believing responsibility, for the breadth of a child's educational welfare, went beyond the grave. Those who made specific provision for children in their wills often used the terms bringing up and education within the same instruction. Being brought up knowing how to live a virtuous life was as vital as academic scholarship when it came to getting on in life and earning that, essential, good reputation. Thomas Harris, the registrar of the archdeaconry of Cornwall, made clear provision for this broad education when he left the sum of forty shillings to his executor Sir Adam White

> Beseeching him at the reverence of Almighty God and as my special trust is in him in that behalf to be good and helping to my said children and specially to Thomas to see him brought up in virtue and learning and other things whereby he may have a living if it please God he come to the age of a man...[18]

[16] *ibid.* pp. 200-201.
[17] Thomas Becon, *A New Catechism* (Cambridge, 1884.), p. 350.
[18] Nicholas Orme, *Cornish Wills 1342-1540* (Exeter, 2007), p. 193.

Within the household, but not necessarily their own, via parents, relatives or friends of similar or higher status, a young person would learn by example and through day to day experience. If they were sent to another elite household they might make good connections and contacts, hopefully ensuring a good future as did the many children taken into the household of Rachel Fane (1613-1680), the Countess of Bath, who lived at Tawstock in Devon. Her monument, in St. Peter's church Tawstock, bears a Latin inscription, which in all likelihood over-estimates the number of protégées but nevertheless praises both Rachel's learning 'In civic and religious affairs she had a genius exceeding that of a man...' and her care of children due to her 'motherly disposition...' Rachel had no children of her own but motherliness was a much admired womanly quality, which could be learned,

> Though she was childless yet she was parent to more than a thousand children, whom in a very genteel manner she brought up, gave portions to, consecrated and even enobled...[19]

A less fortunate girl, in Protestant eyes, was Margaret, the wife of Cornish gentleman Sidney Godolphin and confidante of the diarist John Evelyn. According to the latter, when young in the 1650s, Margaret, a most 'rare child' was 'instituted in the feare of God as she could speake' by her mother. The child became an excellent 'Saint', a pious Protestant Christian.

[19] Church Warden's handwritten twentieth century translation of the monument's Latin on a label next to the monument, St Peter's church, Tawstock.

However, aged 7, she was placed in the care of the Duchess of Richmond, taken to France and according to Evelyn, 'consign'd to the care of the late Countess of Guilford...' who apparently attempted, but failed, to convert the girl to 'popery'.[20]

In godly elite households children observed and were encouraged to emulate their elders, whom they were taught to respect. This meant that adults had to set good examples. As home education and socialisation was the responsibility of nurses and private tutors, good parenting meant careful vetting of potential candidates. In 1656, Piers Edgcumbe of Mount Edgcumbe corresponded with his friend Sir Henry Newton on the habits of a prospective tutor. The latter wanted £50 payment before he began teaching so perhaps it was a wise precaution.[21] It was also important to choose playfellows with care. Anyone having direct contact with children could influence them and those who influenced a child would help to create the young person's reputation. Thomas Becon reminded parents to

> Take heed with whom they do accompany their young ones, both in earnest studies and in merry pastimes; for as great a profit is to be gotten of company-keeping with honest and godly persons, so likewise by keeping fellowship with the wicked and naughty packs all evils

[20] John Evelyn, *The Life of Mrs Godolphin*, ed. Samuel Lord (London, 1847), p. 7.
[21] CRO ME/3043 and ME/3044.

> are possessed...the company of the virtuous is to be recounted more precious than gold or pearl...[22]

In their 1598 *A Godly Form Of Household Government* Dod and Cleaver exhorted parents to be more careful when selecting anyone involved in the education and upbringing of their children. Some parents worried too much about the financial costs involved but the authors explained how money used to secure well-behaved and virtuous offspring would be well spent. They declared, in some exasperation,

> they [some parents] are much more careful that a horse we well framed to valting and leaping than their childe be well instructed in virtue...[23]

For elite boys formal education continued within official establishments such as school, university and the Inns of Court. The doors of most institutions were officially closed to girls, so it is essential to acknowledge the importance of this wider sense of education, recognising that it includes upbringing and socialisation as well as formal lessons, when seeking to explore areas of female educational experience. Both formal and informal education and training provided valuable formative experiences. In this thesis, education includes experience in formal and informal settings. This is not to ignore traditional learning within institutions, but to encompass other learning spaces for general socialisation,

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[22] Becon, *Catechism* p. 349.
[23] J. Dod and R. Cleaver, *A Godly Form of Household Government* (London, 1598),sig. T2r.

encouraging good manners, inculcating a sound morality, providing a religious education and gaining experience in household skills and management techniques. We should also note the opportunities provided for the development of a learned self-conscious fashioning, through which young women, without appearing to draw attention towards them, created observable personalities of perfection. Thus, through their perceived obedience, their silence, modesty and industry they, or their parents on their behalf, could present perfect examples of respectable, godly womanhood.[24]

***Learning good behaviour; manners and courtesy***

The majority of early modern children received some form of socialisation training, learning, from others, on how they were expected to behave. Books on manners, created for those born into elite or aspiring elite households, provide clues on behavioural expectations in the upper levels of society. They show how the sons and daughters of the elite were taught, from infancy, what was deemed acceptable in civilised society. Many lines are devoted to outlining examples of bad behaviour, explaining why it was unacceptable. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that such behaviour was commonplace and required frequent correction. In books of manners much of the emphasis is on behaviour which could be commonly observed and judged, such as how one should behave at table or in company

[24] Steven Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 2005), p. 5.

and the instructions stressed the importance of courteous and civilised behaviour. How one behaved before others had a direct link with acquiring one's personal reputation. Good reputation was essential for all who aspired to leadership roles in adult society. Some books, in common use, were translations of Latin texts created in earlier times. John Lydgates's, *Booke of Curtesie*, a fifteenth century English translation of a thirteenth century Latin text *Stans Puer Ad Mensum* is a typical example. It was printed by William Caxton in 1476. Written in verse, especially for children, it contains many instructions on table manners

> And whare-so ever that thow dyne or soupe,
> Of gentilesse take salt with thy knyf:
> And be wele ware thow blowe nat in the cuppe...[25]

It notes everything a good child should not do, such as overfilling a spoon or fidgeting at table and spilling potage or trying to take the best food on offer rather than leaving it for other diners. However the main lesson is the importance of gaining a good reputation. When discouraging bad table manners, the writer points out that all behaviour is seen by others, so a person who 'bytes on their food too eagerly' will be endowed with the reputation of a greedy person by those who have witnessed their actions at the table.[26] This awareness of the eyes of others is a constant theme in elite education and

[25] John Lidgate, *The Booke of Curtesie* (Deal, 2015), p. 2.
[26] *ibid.* p. 4.

it is always linked to obtaining and maintaining a good reputation. Dire warnings about what others perceive from ones actions, appear in courtesy and conduct material and in religious writings. In Lydgate's text reputation is everything so therefore the reader is encouraged to be honest, to avoid lewd speech, be moderate in the consumption of alcohol and to avoid holding grudges and seeking vengeance. Children are given advice on general politeness in the company of others and on the relationships they should seek to build

> Reverence thy felawe, gynne with hym no stryf
> Be they powere kepe pees all thy lyf.
> Interrupt nat, where so thow wende,
> None other mans tale, til he have made an ende.[27]

The book praises those who read and follow the advice given in the book for they will be seen to be virtuous.[28] Other early books of manners and examples of good behaviour, still in use in early modern England, included the late fifteenth century Simon's *Lesson of Wysedom for All Maner of Chyldryn and The Babees Book.*[29]

The advice offered by books created and published in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, such as *The Book of Nurture, or Schoole of Good Manners*, *The Schoole of Vertue,* and *Book of Demeanor* seems remarkably similar to that provided in the earlier books, suggesting that being observed as virtuous, and behaving politely towards others was what

[27] *ibid.* p.3.
[28] *ibid.* p.5.
[29] F.J. Furnival and E. Rickert, *The Babees Book* (London, 1923).

separated gentlefolk from the lower sort of persons.[30] This was one of the earliest and most important lessons elite children required. Socialisation was equally important as any formal education a child might be offered.

As part of the socialisation process it was important for elite children to learn how to deport themselves in company. Awareness of critical eyes was an essential lesson. Children were constantly reminded of the importance of personal appearance, cleanliness and tidiness.[31] They were required to learn how to act when in the company of adults, their superiors. They were taught the importance of rising early, dressing with care and deporting themselves in the correct way. They learned how to address other people and how to be respectful, including when it was appropriate to remove or put on their hats. Most of the books suggested that it was better for the child, whether male or female, if they refrained from drawing attention to themselves by laughing or playing loudly.[32]

Morality and religion formed an essential part of early education. Children had to learn the difference between good and evil and how to be truthful and obedient. Being seen to be pious and obedient in religious observation was essential.

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[30] Hugh Rhodes, *The Book of Nurture* (London, 1560); Francis Seager, *The Schoole of Vertue* (London , 1557); Richard Wise, *Book of Demeanor* (London, 1619).
[31] Pierre Erondelle, *The French Garden* (London, 1605) contains examples of such teaching. Sig. H2v-I4r.
[32] *ibid.*

Thomas Becon cited numerous passages from Scripture to underline the duty of parents to introduce their children to religious belief and practice 'from their very cradles and tender infancy.'[33] A sound religious education was the best gift a parent could offer a child since it served to protect them from the fires of hell

> ...bring them up in the doctrine and information of the Lord. All these sentences of the holy scripture declare manifestly that parents are bound by the commandment of God, and as they will avoid the danger of everlasting damnation, to teach their children the law of God and the true worshipping of him, that they in their young years drinking in the knowledge of God's most holy will, may learn to serve their Lord God in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.[34]

To this sound religious education Becon also added knowledge of virtue and the sciences, stressing that this syllabus was more valuable for a young person's future than a legacy of a thousand pounds.[35]

As religious instruction was provided from birth then living the godly life became natural. Biographical and autobiographical writers often refer to a virtuous child learning by the example of their godly mother or nurse and 'taking religion in with their milk.'[36] In Richard Whitford's, *A Werke For Householders* (1530) children were expected to kneel before their parents in the evening, before they retired

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[33] Becon, *Catechism* p. 353.
[34] *ibid.* p. 352.
[35] *ibid.* p. 353.
[36] Alice Thornton, *Autobiography 1626-1707,* (Durham, 1875), p. 2; Edward Reynell, *Filings of Gold* (London, 1663) p. 11.

to bed in order to receive a blessing. They were also expected to obey their parents, as instructed in the commandments.[37] After the Reformation they were expected to demonstrate their religious knowledge via the Catechism and the recited prayers which they learned from their parents, mostly from their mothers.[38]

Writing which specifically focused on the upbringing and education of girls and the behaviour required of young women such as *How The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter*, tended to suggest developing the qualities, deportment and manners that a man expected in a wife. Most of the early books of manners, as outlined earlier, were addressed to children in general or for boys. *How The Good Wife Taught her Daughter* is one of the exceptions. Compiled in the mid fourteenth century it was still in use in the sixteenth.[39] A printed version from 1597 survives under the title *The Nortern Mother's Blessing: The Way of Thrift*[40] *How the Good Wife* and books, related to the upbringing of girls, in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, such as Vives' 1523 *Education of A Christian Woman*, concentrate on advising girls and their educators how to develop correct womanly behaviour. This meant a conscious development of modesty, meekness, passivity and virtue, thus

[37] Richard Whitford, *A Werke For Householders*, (London, 1530), sig. Di-Diii.
[38] Cummings, *Common Prayer* p. 58-62.
[39] D.C. Fowler, 'Review of The Good Wife by Tauno Mustanoja' *Modern Language Notes* 68 no 2 (1953), pp. 131-133.
[40] D.lib.rochester.edu/teams/test/shuffleton-codex-ashmole-61-how-the-good-wife-taught-her-daughter-introduction accessed September 29 2016.

fashioning a perfect companion and helper for a successful man. Some of the advice for girls was similar to that given to their brothers, since there was appropriate behaviour for all in public places like church or on public occasions. All children, regardless of gender, were expected to be quiet, not drawing attention to their presence but, from an early age, girls were taught to be more aware of avoiding shame. In two hundred lines, *The Good Wife* taught girls to cast eyes downwards in the company of men and to avoid standing too close to them. A girl was never to allow herself to become drunk nor should she attend places and events frequented by men such as public sporting events. The daughter also learned to refuse presents from men, because it could bring about her downfall since it could ruin her reputation. If she gained a bad reputation she would never achieve a good marriage.[41] Heinrich Bullinger warned parents not to allow their daughters to come into contact with 'unhonest dancing [and]wanton communication' He suggested teaching daughters to avert their eyes from anything which could be regarded as unseemly. They should learn the importance of avoiding idleness through suitable work or reading. This implies that, Bullinger accepted it was important to teach a girl to read in the first place.[42]

[41] Tauno Mustanoja, *The Good Wife Taught Her Daughter* (Helsinki, 1948) P. 135.
[42] Heinrich Bullinger, *The Christen State of Matrimonye* (London, 1541), sig. L viii.

In the early modern period there were notable highly educated women, able to read and write in classical and modern languages. The daughters of Thomas More, Princess Elizabeth, Lady Jane Grey and the daughters of Anthony Cooke were the most famed and celebrated. However Roger Ascham, tutor to Princess Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey, claimed that these exceptional women were really reflections of their, even more exceptional, teacher, since their skills demonstrated his ability to help female minds develop masculine powers of application.[43] Renaissance humanist scholars, such as Vives, Erasmus and Thomas More, who ran a home school for his daughters and their companions, all advocated education for girls. However, it is clear that, despite the inclusion of Classical languages, the girls' humanist curriculum was, when compared to that on offer for boys, somewhat limited since More assumed that the scholarship achieved by the female student provided one of many virtues she could use to assist her future husband. A partnership with a learned wife would ensure that the marriage was companionable, as Thomas More advised a friend via a Latin verse

> May you meet with a wife who is not always stupidly silent, nor always prattling nonsense. May she be learned...or at least capable of being made so...You will find in her an even, cheerful, good-humoured friend and an agreeable companion for life. She will infuse knowledge into your children with their milk, and from their infancy train them up to wisdom. Whatever company

[43] Rachel McGregor 'As witness to our eternal friendship, the construction of scholarly Amicitia and the exchange of women in the letters of Roger Ascham.' paper for *Cultures of Correspondence* Conference (Plymouth, 2011).

> you are engaged in you will long to be at home and retire with delight from the society of men into the bosom of one who is so dear...[44]

***Vives (1493-1540)***

In 1523 Juan Luis Vives published his *De Institutione Feminae Christianae.* This was translated into many languages. It made its first appearance in English in 1540. The translator was Richard Hyrde, who gave it the title *The Education of A Christian Woman.* The number of translations and editions, over forty by 1600, show its popularity and the significant contribution it made to developing printed debates on the validity of educating females. Vives was tutor to Princess Mary and in 1542 he outlined a method of study for her, *Satellitium Sive Symbola*. This was perhaps the first curriculum specifically created for an early modern girl, albeit a royal one. Vives believed that the education of females was desirable and essential and he created sixteenth century Europe's most influential theories on women's education.[45]

Vives advocated early-learning through play as a preparation for the household duties a girl would perform in adult life. Thus her toys must be representations of reality and not frivolous items to amuse her. Toys should never encourage

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[44] Cited George Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (Detroit, 1985), pp. 85-6.

[45] F. Watson, *Vives and The Renascence Education of Women* (London, 1912), pp. xiii-xiv).

vanity but the fact that Vives advocates removing unsuitable toys, suggests that such playthings were popular.

> Take dolls away from her, which are a kind of idolatry and teach girls the desire for adornments and finery. I would be more in favour of those toys made of tin or lead that represent household objects...[46]

Playing was an important first step in education but a girl needed to develop her practical skills alongside her intellectual abilities. The girl child's education was a preparation for household management.

> Let her begin by learning things that contribute to the cultivation of the mind and the care and management of the home...[47]

In Vives' curriculum, virtue was everything. The girl should be kept away from male playmates so she would not learn to take pleasure in the company of men. Striving for virtue was the main focus of female learning and it began early.

> When she has been weaned and has begun to speak and walk, all her playtime must be spent with girls of her own age in the presence of her mother or nurse or good woman of mature years, who will regulate these pastimes and the pleasures of the mind and direct them to goodness and virtue.[48]

Religion was the most important subject for a girl to study. This would ensure that she would become a chaste and obedient woman. Books would influence present and future behaviour therefore Vives recommended that only moral and religious works should be provided. The girl's written work should

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[46] Fantazzi, *Jean Luis Vives*, p. 57.
[47] *ibid.* p. 58.
[48] *ibid.* p. 55.

mirror wise sayings from scripture or philosophy. Under no circumstances should she be encouraged to copy out anything frivolous. Serious quotations, from approved worthy texts, were to be copied many times and should 'be committed to memory.'[49]

So a woman would submit to her husband's authority, without question, Vives recommended her learning should always remain inferior to men's. It would not do for a wife to be wiser than her husband. Men after all needed to be

> Equipped with the knowledge of many and varied subjects, which will be of profit to himself and to the state...but the woman, [who works for household rather than state] learns for formation and improvement of morals.[50]

Therefore, although he valued opportunities for a girl to expand her mind, he placed far more emphasis on morality and virtue. She could develop the latter through the acquisition of practical skills. Vives argued that however high-born she might be, she should be taught the value of useful, activities in addition to the art of household management

> She will learn, together with reading, how to work with wool and flax...I should not wish any woman to be ignorant of the skills of working with the hands, not even a princess or a queen. What could she do better than this when free of all household tasks...[51]

However, Vives thought academic studies, linked to religion and morality, were more valuable than spinning and weaving.

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[49] *ibid.* p. 71.
[50] *ibid.* p. 72.
[51] *ibid.* p. 59.

The latter were useful occupations to prevent idleness but, provided the texts on offer were suitable, then there was no harm in a young woman reading for many hours. Vives deplored idleness in women, since he writes at length about its dangers, but his comments also imply that a young woman was capable of deciding for herself the amount of bookish learning to be undertaken. Doing nothing is a sin and she must always be occupied, nevertheless, Vives grants her autonomy over her timetable; it is her decision to stop reading when she is weary of it.

> Reading is the best occupation and I counsel it first of all, but when she is tired of reading, I cannot bear her to be idle...[52]

Vives wished sober and chaste learning to be available for the whole human race but his writing suggests that virtue was far more important for women than for men. Despite this emphasis on Christian virtue, above all other experiences, there is clear evidence, within the text, that Vives' suggestions for female education were challenged by others. Vives was compelled to discredit the arguments of his critics. He took pains to issue a counter challenge to those who believed that girls and women should be kept in a state of ignorance. It was obvious, to him, that girls and boys needed to be taught the difference between right and wrong, since both sexes were capable of evil and the nature of the human body was inclined

[52] *ibid.* p. 59.

towards sin. Surely therefore, he argued, it would be to everyone's advantage if both men and women were provided with at least a knowledge of what it meant to be good. He thought it foolish that

> Learned women are suspect to many, as if the mental ability acquired by learning increased their natural wickedness and as if men should not also be suspect for the same reason if subtle learning is added to a perverse mind...[53]

Asking rhetorical questions and challenging common practice, Vives responded to detractors. Did they wish their daughters to only have knowledge of evil rather than good, he asked. Was their view of knowledge about good so prejudiced that they thought it more harmful than knowledge of evil?[54] Throughout all his writings Vives argued strongly for developing the minds of girls. Offering them the opportunity to study in order to improve their virtue, for the benefit of society, was a rational and logical decision.

He expanded this argument further in his 1529 *De Officio Mariti* , clearly stating that women were rational creatures.

> The woman even as man, is a reasonable creature and hath a flexible wit both to good and evil, which with use and council may be altered and turned.[55]

Vives' belief in the value of education as a tool to alter and fine-tune women's wit, thereby ensuring that females would conform to society's requirements, suggests that the main

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[53] *ibid.* p. 63, 64.
[54] *ibid.* p. 64.
[55] Cited Watson, *Vives* p. 197.

reason to educate girls was to encourage good conduct, obedience to men and correct action in domestic settings. However, since early modern society was made up of households and the smooth running of that society was deemed to depend on the existence of good order and godliness within those households, it must not be forgotten that the man who governed his wife's household was under even more pressure than she to behave correctly. Acquiring and maintaining an excellent reputation was essential; a man could not achieve high office without it. This is evident in the huge volume of conduct literature aimed at a male readership. Furthermore, it is clear that the accepted view was that men and women required instruction in acceptable behaviour. In households, which made the best contribution to godly society, everyone was required to understand and accept the difference between good and evil. Vives was not a lone voice in the insistence that knowledge should always be seen as superior to ignorance. He was not the only writer to argue that removing women from a state of ignorance could only benefit their households and society.

***Richard Hyrde (died 1528)***

Vives' translator, Richard Hyrde defended a woman's right to be educated in his preface to Vives' work and his introduction to Margaret Roper-More's 1524 translation of Erasmus' treatise on the Pater Noster. Hyrde's arguments make much livelier reading than those put forward by Vives. This is not so

surprising, since his intended audience was wider than Vives' original readership and his post-Reformation translation appeared two decades after the original text. Equally lively arguments for the education of both genders were put forward by Hyrde's contemporary, Thomas Elyot, in his *Defence of Good Women*.[56] For his part, Hyrde claimed that learning was the best way to ensure virtuous female conduct since knowledge was the source of virtue. The need to argue so fiercely for the value of learning as a source of goodness suggests that many were arguing that female scholarship led to sin. However Hyrde warns that if learning did introduce one to sin then they ought to worry less about women and concentrate on the fate of vulnerable men

> Now as for learning, if it were cause of any evil as they say it is, it worry worse in the man than in the woman, because (as I have said here before) he can both worse stay and restrain himself than she. And moreover than that he cometh ofter and in more occasions than the woman, inasmuch as he Liveth more abroad among company daily where he shall be moved to utter such craft as he hath gotten by his learning. And women abide most at home occupied ever with some good or necessary business...[57]

Hyrde identified a double standard within educational thinking, since when men read works by devout and holy writers readers were said to become better persons, but if a woman read the same works she was thought more likely to sin. He dismisses this as unlikely, since readers have no time to fantasise, their minds are too busy. On the other hand a

[56] Thomas Elyot, *Defence of Good Women* (London, 1545).
[57] Aughterson, *Renaissance Woman* pp. 173-174.

woman, who obeys the instruction, to avoid idleness, by keeping her hands busy through mindless tasks such as spinning or sewing has far more opportunity to think bad thoughts. For Hyrde, any person who desires to be 'naughty' will find a means to be so but a woman who reads is likely to be inspired to goodness, especially as women are more virtuous than men. The example of Margaret Roper, both learned and virtuous, must surely be proof.[58]

Unlike Hyrde, Vives had been writing for a predominantly Catholic audience. Therefore when he suggested that, unlike a man, who must learn many things in order to do his duty to the state, the household-bound, woman learned for only for herself or for her children, he had a Catholic vision of female vocation. At the time he was writing, even in England, a Catholic girl's education could prepare her for either of two destinies, service to her husband or service to the Church. Education would help her cope with experiences she would have within marriage or as a member of a religious order. The convent could provide women with a life of learning and contemplation rather than one of motherhood and domesticity. Some religious orders, in particular the Bridgettines, expected their members to enter with a good general education and to continue to study after taking their final vows. As several women from the Arundell family of Lanherne entered

[58] *ibid.*

religious orders, discussions on education within religious communities is reserved for the next chapter but it is worth noting here that, before the Reformation, girls, not destined for the cloistered life, were able to receive an education within convent schools, before returning home to marry. Ironically, one of the best descriptions of the potential of such schools, came from a Reformer rather than a Catholic writer.

***Thomas Becon (1511-1567)***

Thomas Becon had clear views on the education and upbringing of children. He stressed the importance of virtuous living and the need for awareness of Christian duties within a commonweal and saw no reason to dismiss ideas drawn from Catholic practice provided they were not associated with compulsion into superstitious observances.[59]

He dedicated his *A New Catechism set forth in familiar talk between the father and the son* which he wrote during the reign of Edward VI and later revised for a collected publication in 1564, to his children, two sons and a daughter. The dialogue is presented as a conversation between a father and his six year old son with the father declaring

> Thy age is young, thy years are few, thy continuance in study is small...Therefore my mind is only at this present to talk with thee, not of things which far exceed

[59] *The Catechism of Thomas Becon* ed. John Ayre, (Cambridge, 1884), p. 377.

> both thy age and capacity, but of such matters as be meet for children to know...[60]

However, the language employed and the views expounded suggest that the *Catechism* was intended for a wider and older audience, with the text's format a rhetorical tool to proclaim his arguments. Becon believed that a sound Christian education was an important preparation for adult lives which were to be spent dutifully in the service of society. He wrote of the importance of study to profit the commonweal and he included girls as well as boys in his proposed educational system. In order to stem the growth of idleness, dishonesty and lewdness in women, Becon declared it vital that those in government took responsibility for educating the nation's female population.

> Can anything be more necessary or godly in a Christian commonweal, than to bring up maids and young women virtuously...It is expedient that by public authority schools for women children be erected and set up in every Christian commonweal...[61]

And the model for these schools was the former convent school where, contrary to popular opinion, the nuns' young students were not forced to conform to Catholic traditions, wear religious dress, shave their heads, take part in religious rituals or enter the cloistered life

> But contrariwise, they might wear what apparel they would, so that it were honest and seemly, and as such becometh maidens that profess godliness...For all that they were commanded to do of their school-mistresses and

[60] *ibid.* p. 8.
[61] *ibid.* p. 376.

> governesses was nothing else than the doctrine of the gospel, and matters appertaining unto honest and civil manners...[62]

He had nothing but praise for this curriculum and wished fervently that

> There were some consideration of this matter had among the rulers of the Christian commonweal, that the young maids might be godly brought up...

The curriculum he had in mind appears, at first reading, somewhat limited and not dissimilar to Vives' earlier proposals. In order to keep the young maids away from sin, it was necessary for them to learn to be sober-minded, to love their husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, housewifely and obedient. In other words, a girl's learning was for the benefit of the commonweal in which her household was set and linked to reputation and duty. She learned for the benefit and welfare of her husband and family not for herself. Becon describes female household duties. These activities are vocational, suitable for a gentlewoman, yet also as occupations which would assist one of the poorer sort to make her own living. They include working with wool, but, interestingly, Becon describes these godly activities in the wrong order, listing spinning then weaving followed by carding, actually the first part of the process, thus indicating his knowledge of womanly tasks was limited.

[62] *ibid.* p. 377.

Presumably, as a man, knowledge of such things was outside his remit; he simply sees them as tasks to prevent idleness.[63]

It could be said that Becon saw female students as passive recipients of a code of feminine conduct in a curriculum devised by men for the latter's benefit. However this is too simplistic a view since it suggests that household affairs are trivial and of little importance when compared with the responsibilities of men. It fails to take into consideration the essential links Becon makes between household, community and nation within an ordered godly realm. It is therefore worth re-evaluating his suggestions for female education within the context of the whole *Catechism.*

Becon's educational theories appear in the sixth and final part of *The Catechism*, the previous sections cover repentance, faith, the law, prayer and the two Protestant sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. All citizens need knowledge of and belief in the importance of these, so the final section sums up duties in relation to them. Entitled *of the offices of all degrees,* this deals with duties and responsibilities of people of all ages and is set within the framework of the commonweal. In the latter every citizen, regardless of gender, has a vital role. Fulfilling ones duties to the best of one's ability, within the structure of the household or beyond it, is seen as contributing to the welfare of the whole Christian

[63] *ibid.* p. 368.

community. There is no sense of some duties, or the context in which they are set, being of less value than others. It is true that there are offices for all degrees but a woman's duties, though different from a man's are no less worthy; all duties make a contribution to the smooth running of the commonweal 'Is not the woman necessary for the commonweal?' declared Becon, arguing that it was logical and essential to set up schools for girls run by 'honest, sage, wise discreet,sober, grave and learned matrons.'[64]

Becon's proposal for female teachers is an interesting one. He thought the women's role was vital, believing that the role of the school-mistress was equal to that of the schoolmaster, proposing the development of a professional role within female education and advocating that school-mistresses received payment for their work. If the reward was reasonable, then more women would be prepared to work with the girls. This implies his belief that a goodly number of such wise and learned women could be found throughout the country; moreover these women must have already received an education themselves, otherwise it would have been pointless for Becon to propose this model. Becon's proposal would not have pleased Vives, who stated categorically, that a woman should not be placed in charge of a school. Becon recognised the vital

[64] *ibid.* pp. 376-7.

contribution which could be made by women teachers, seeing no reason why they could not be rewarded for their services. Their work would become as vital as any conducted in the all male institutions.

> And verily in my judgement, they do no less deserve well of the Christian commonweal, that found and stablish schools with honest stipends for the education and bringing up of the women children in godliness and virtue, than they which erect and set up schools for the institution of the men-children in good letters and godly manners...[65]

As for the prospective female students, Becon can see no reason to bar females from formal education.[66] He cannot understand why schools exist for boys and not for girls.[67] Everyone appears to be in agreement that boys' schools are a good idea and work, he opines, so what possible reasons could there be to object to the creation of similar institutions for girls? In addition, there cannot be any religious objections, since both women and men are created by God and Christians believe that God loves both sexes equally.[68] There can be no sociological objection either, since both men and women make a contribution to the welfare of the state and furthermore men could not exist without women

> Have not we all our beginning from her? Are we not born, nursed and brought up of a woman? Do not the children for

[65] *ibid.* p. 377.
[66] *ibid.* p. 376.
[67] *ibid.* p. 377.
[68] *ibid.*

> the most part prove even such as the mothers are of whom they come?[69]

For Becon the role of mothers was a vital one for both household and community. Whilst it was true both parents were responsible for ensuring children were well provided for, socialised and kept safe from bodily harm, because a father often had to travel away from home, many educational duties fell to the mother.[70] She had more responsibilities linked to the upbringing of the young.[71] Other writers shared this view. In his *A Preparative to Marriage,* Henry Smith called children 'pledges' and explained that a mother's duty was to love her children in moderation. She also had to catechise them when they were young and teach them by her own example.[72] Smith also provided advice for step-mothers, whom he called sted-mothers, whose duties involved educating the children of their predecessors. His words show that it was common for women to die young and for a new wife to take responsibility for the early-years education of all her husband's children

> As you intreate these children so another may come after and intreate your children for he that hath taken away the first mother and sent you can take away the second mother and send a third which shall not be like a sted-mother to yours unless you be like a sted-mother to these...[73]

Becon stressed if women remained uneducated, husbands could not expect wives to educate their children. Furthermore since

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[69] *ibid.*
[70] *ibid.* pp.348-349.
[71] *ibid.* p. 348.
[72] Henry Smith, *A Preparative to Marriage* (London, 1591), pp. 76-79.
[73] *ibid.* p. 83.

both parents were responsible for teaching their children about religion, including how to pray, the importance of going to church, reading the scriptures and the differences between right and wrong behaviour, how can women be expected to instil virtue in children if they have not been taught properly themselves? A woman cannot take responsibility for a godly household if she has received no formal teaching on the godly life. For Becon, a virtuous education for girls was essential for the commonweal. Female educational requirements needed to be taken seriously and money should be spent on girls' schools.[74]

***Richard Mulcaster (1531-1611)***

Richard Mulcaster was the first High Master of Merchant Taylors School. In his *Positions Necessary For The Training of Children (1581)* he distinguishes between the sexes and their different educational requirements claiming

> The bringing up of young maidens in any kind of learning is but an accessory by the way.[75]

But, nevertheless, he writes in support of formal education for girls and, from his descriptions, it seems that girls had more opportunities for learning provided for them since Becon's time. Mulcaster writes of girls being taught to read and write, to study languages, to sing and to play musical

[74] Becon, *Catechism*, p. 377.
[75] Cited Charlton, *Education* p. 206.

instruments.[76] Like Vives and Becon, Mulcaster also cites the development of virtue and housewifery skills as reasons to make female education desirable and essential. However Mulcaster, a schoolmaster with many years experience, puts forward a more structured, logical argument on female educational rights. Four facts make educating girls essential: the custom of England does not prevent it; a girl's ability to learn has been given to her by God; this means that Christian conscience cannot forbid her to learn and the results, which follow a good education, are observable. Mulcaster declared he was for educated girls 'tooth and nail' albeit, like earlier writers, he continued to see educational training as vocational. His arguments could imply that women, whose families simply required them to make a good marriage, required less practical education than those from mercantile backgrounds and less theoretical knowledge than those, like a queen, who find themselves in government.

> If a young maiden is to be brought up with a view to marriage, obedience to authority and similar qualities must form the best kind of training; if from necessity she has to learn how to learn her own living some technical training must prepare her for a definite calling; if she is to adorn some high position she must acquire suitable accomplishments; if she is destined for government which may be offered her by men and is not denied her by God, the greatness of the position calls for general excellence.....[77]

Mulcaster observed both boys and girls at work. He comments on the quick-wittedness of girls, but thought that they were

[76] Gardiner, *English Girlhood* p. 192.
[77] *ibid.*

sometimes over eager to express and opinion. Boys were less tired by mental tasks and physical activity and those teaching girls would need to show concern for their physical health and mental wellbeing. Although examples of learned women prove that girls are capable of learning at a high level, he advised against developing a curriculum based on the achievements of the gifted because the majority of girls had little aptitude for mathematics or geometry they were not destined for careers in law or medicine. Girls were not allowed to become priests so they didn't need to learn philosophy. An educated gentlewoman would be well prepared for adult life if she could

> Read distinctly, write neatly and swiftly, sing sweetly and play and draw well, understand and speak the learned languages, as well as the modern tongues approved by her time and country, and who has some knowledge of logic and rhetoric besides the information acquired in her study of foreign languages...[78]

Also she needed to understand the importance of living life virtuously and have skills in running a godly household

Despite noting the differences in the way male and female students applied themselves to learning, Mulcaster saw no reason for boys and girls to be separated in the early stages of their education. Both could attend the petty schools, run, as envisaged by Becon, by a matron of good reputation; here both sexes should learn to read. Later however, Mulcaster proposed segregated provision. This was linked to domestic duty or civic responsibility. In their school the boys would

[78] Cited Gardiner, *English Girlhood* p. 193.

learn Latin and the Classics whilst preparing for careers in the wider world. In theirs the girls would be encouraged to improve their reading, learn to write, sing and play an instrument, learn to sew and possibly, if they had aptitude learn other languages, improve their drawing and develop higher skills in needlework. With this, practical and knowledge based, curriculum, a girl's education allowed her to become a perfect housewife, well able to keep household records, read to and teach her children and servants. It prepared her to support her husband and be able to converse intelligently with him and his associates. Girls who needed to earn their own living were equally well prepared and could use these skills to earn a wage. Mulcaster's proposed curriculum was truly vocational but it is also one which, perhaps for the first time, regarded students as individuals with different aptitudes, needs and destinies.

***New Interpretations***

Becon and Mulcaster were not the only educationalists proposing formal institutions for girls. The writings of John Amos Comenius (1592-1670), who developed some of his educational theories from the educational philosophy of Francis Bacon, were being translated into English by the 1640s.[79] Comenius could be said to have developed the first child-centred approach to learning for he developed his own

[79] Gardiner, *English Girlhood* p. 193.

teaching methods to encourage young scholars to enjoy their studies. He created a special picture-book for children and in its preface explained that he envisaged the contents would

> entice witty children to it, that they may not conceit a torment to be in school, but dainty fare. For it is apparent that children (even from their infancy almost) are delighted with pictures and willingly please their eyes with these lights...[so that] scare-crows may be taken out of Wisdom's garden...[80]

Comenius' observations are not gendered, he simply refers to children and a gentle way to draw them into the delights of scholarship. He thought some method of formal schooling would be good for girls as well as boys since he proposed, in his 1638 *Magna Didactica*, the establishment of institutions for both sexes. He used theological argument and statements about his own observations, of children's attempts to understand difficult concepts, to support his proposals. Since women and men were special creations of God and equally loved by their maker, then women must possess spiritual and intellectual equality with men. Therefore they needed and deserved an education. Besides, he had noticed that some girls had minds more agile than their brothers

> Equally are they in God's image; equally are they partakers of grace...equally are they furnished with minds agile and capable of wisdom, yea often beyond our sex...[81]

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[80] John Amos Comenius, *Obis Sensualium Pictus; A World of Things Obvious To The Senses Drawn In Pictures 1657* ed.C W Bardeen (New York, 1887), p. xv.
[81] John Amos Comenius, *On Education, introduction Jean Piaget,* (New York, 1967),p. 66.

This argument, for female equality in education, also features in a 1652 revised translation of Henry Cornelius Agrippa's *The Glory of Women*. This provides a good example of the attempt to widen debates by reinterpreting the position of Eve, thereby challenging the accepted hierarchy which sprang from traditional readings of Biblical texts. Agrippa turns the argument of Eve's creation as an inferior afterthought, and therefore a subordinate supporter of man, on its head. It was quite the contrary; women must be superior to men because Eve was created after Adam. Woman had to be God's final and most perfect creature. Proof was evident in examples of women, from Classical and Biblical eras, equalling and sometimes even excelling male achievement in art and science. Therefore women were not only capable of but also deserving of education.[82]

Not surprisingly, Anna Maria Schurmann (1607-1678), the first woman to attend classes at a European University, though she listened to her lectures from behind a screen out of sight and hearing of the male students, also put forward a spirited defence of female scholarship. Anna challenged centuries of traditional belief that women's intellect was not strong enough to receive a formal, institutional, education. Her arguments, for women's entrance into the realms of academia, were set forth in the style of learned disputations where she employed logic to refute many of the objections made against

[82] Linda Schieburger, *The Mind Has No Sex? Women In The Origins of Modern Science* (London, 1989), pp. 165-6.

educating girls. She proposed fifteen clear arguments in favour of advancing female knowledge, albeit, the education she envisaged was not a universal one. Scholarship was suitable only for the elite, whom she describes as wealthy girls awaiting marriage or rich widows unencumbered by responsibilities. Her main published work, on women as potential scholars appeared in Latin in 1641. This was her dissertation. It was translated into English as *The Learned Maid or Whether a Learned Maid Might Be a Scholar* by Clement Barksdale in 1659.[83]

Including girls in formal education programmes, did not become a major priority in early modern England. Persuading those in authority, within both household and government, in patriarchal society, to redefine roles linked to both genders was not easy. Nevertheless those who made proposals for formal educational opportunities for girls deserve more credit both for the arguments they put forward and for subverting the context in which they had to make them. Whilst those supporting female education argued, as Becon and Mulcaster did, that an educated woman made a better housewife and a more fitting supporter and companion for her husband, they appear to be supporting the status quo; but there is a great deal of difference between having to write and argue, from within the context of a particular society, and accepting that status

[83] Barbara Bulckaert, 'The Intellectutal Achievement of Early Modern Women' in Jean Spence et al. *Women Education and Agency* (Abingdon, 2009), p. 23.

quo. An argument is won by using language and contexts understood by those who need to be persuaded into acceptance. In a predominantly patriarchal society, an appeal for the education of women, based on results of that education being advantageous to men, ensures that the argument is heard and not dismissed out of hand. If those in authority were compelled to agree that offering girls a formal route to education could only benefit the commonweal then the argument was won in principle and formal schooling for girls another step closer. Equally skilful is presenting a theological argument, as Agrippa did, for women's education, based on the very passages of Scripture used previously to deny them scholarship. Vives, Becon, Mulcaster and Comenius presented their readers with logical arguments, for the education of women, based on traditional proof texts but they argued strongly for a re-reading of these texts. For Vives, if women were indeed more susceptible to sin than men then surely they had even more need of an education to lead them towards virtue. For Becon, Mulcaster and Comenius women were, without doubt, beloved creations of God and part of his divine plan. Therefore they were deserving of a more formal education and could use it to better perform their allotted duties within both household and society. By redirecting readers' thoughts away from the differences between men and woman and towards the need to create a working godly commonweal, where all roles are vital for the good of society, the writers ensure that

their proposals are taken seriously. All could be said to have laid the foundations upon which later exponents of women's education could build expanded arguments.

Comenius' ideas would be taken up, developed and championed, in print and in practice, later in the seventeenth century, in particular by Bathsua Makin (1608-1675) indicating that his support for female education and his proposed teaching methods, capturing students' interest and using gentle persuasion rather than compulsion as ways into learning, would soon interest those responsible for curriculum creation. Makin was tutor Princess Elizabeth, Charles I's daughter. She also ran her own schools. Her *Essay to revive the ancient education of gentlewomen* was published in 1675 so detailed consideration of this is therefore outside the scope of this thesis. However, as she ran several schools for girls of gentle birth during a very long career (she was still teaching in her seventies) it is worth noting something about the curriculum she offered in an advert for a new school, added as a postscript to her *Essay.* As Malkin was an educator for most of her long, adult, life it provides a useful indicator to what Makin believed girls could achieve and what scholarship and practical skills she must have attained herself as she lived, under ever changing rules through the reigns of two monarchs, civil war, a republic and a restored monarchy. In her curriculum for girls the emphasis is on godly living,

intellectual knowledge and practical skills. In addition to education into religion and virtue, fifty percent of curriculum time was devoted to languages, namely Latin and French. Greek, Hebrew, Italian and Spanish could be mastered by those who stayed longer than two years at the school. The other fifty percent of the curriculum consisted of Dancing, Music, Singing, Writing and account keeping. Girls were expected to be able to read before they joined classes to follow this rigorous programme.[84]

In the period covered by this thesis most schools were still being created to admit boys rather than girls. Christ's Hospital, in London, a charitable foundation, was possibly the earliest post-Reformation foundation, which provided both boarding and education for girls.[85] However surviving records linked to early West Country foundations are more relevant to this local history thesis so the stated intentions of their founders provide better insight into differing local points of view on the merits and purpose of educating girls.

***Three West Country Schools***

Peter Blundell (1520-1601) of Tiverton, in Devon, a prosperous clothier, was wealthy, generous and pious. Unmarried, with no offspring to inherit his fortune, he was determined to set his affairs in order and left a will which he hoped would be difficult to contest. To ensure that his wealth was used for

[84] Aughterson, *Renaissance Women* p. 190.
[85] Gardiner, *English Girlhood* p. 201.

godly purposes, both in London, the base of his many professional dealings and contacts, and Devon, where he had his home and main business, Blundell's will was detailed and long. It included plans for building projects and biographical information about his beneficiaries, together with remarks about Blundell's personal connections with them through trade, religious practice and friendship. Many women received significant legacies. Several widows such as Devonian Annys Still, a minister's mother, received gifts between £5 and £100. A God-daughter, from London, Mary Parker, whose father had died, received £100. Other women received much larger sums, such as Jone Slee a relative of a friend, who was given a thousand pounds.[86]

Peter Blundell may not have been married, but his will indicates that he had great respect for women in his private and public circles. The details he gives about many of the female beneficiaries, such as remembering and naming their servants, even giving the latter small gifts to recognise loyal service to their mistresses or noting that certain women were the sisters or daughters of friends or associates in Tiverton or London, whilst, at the same time, leaving them larger sums of money than their male relatives, suggest both that women were recognised as personal friends and that he saw no reason to exclude them from his business dealings. Within

[86] Benjamin Incledon, *Donations of Peter Blundell (Founder) and Other Benefactors To The Free Grammar School At Tiverton* (Exeter, 1792), pp. 5,8,10.

the clothing trade it appears that Peter Blundell regarded females with the same trust as their male counterparts. Indeed a legacy, left to the company of Drapers in London, suggests that Blundell, in trade at least, recognised equality between the sexes since the funds were for the use of both 'Brethren and sisters of the mistery of Drapers'.[87]

However, despite his obvious regard for the female sex, when it came to schooling Blundell was not so keen to admit girls to the ranks of scholar. A large section of his will was concerned with education. It contained precise details of a school he wished to fund and Blundell made clear exactly what he wanted. The establishment was to be built at Tiverton. It was to have two floors, glazed windows, protected with iron bars, an oak-floored, heated, teaching room, which was to be one hundred feet long and twenty four feet wide. The school would also house a buttery and a kitchen and Blundell insisted that it would have a garden for the use of scholars and their teacher. The whole place was to be walled and secure with

> goinge in and forthe to be at one only plase, with a fair strong gate with a little dore as is usual in schools...[88]

Blundell was equally precise when it came to the potential students

> There shall not be taught above the number of one hundred and fiftie scholars at any one tyme...[these should be] children born or for the most parte before their age of

[87] *ibid.* p. 4, 6.
[88] *ibid.* p. 37.

> sixe years brought upp in the towne or parrish of Tyverton...and if the same number be not filled upp my will is that the wante shall be supplied with the children of forreyners...[89]

These foreigners' children were to be chosen with the assent of ten Tiverton householders, who could vouch for the formers' God fearing life and honest reputations. However, despite his obvious regard for the female sex, when it came to schooling, his 'little dore' would remain firmly closed to girls. Blundell had no desire to admit them to the ranks of scholarship, declaring

> There shall bee noe scholer bee or continue in the said schoole as a scholar but Boyes...[90]

This ruling seems to be at odds with the generosity shown to women and girls in other parts of Blundell's will and the trouble he took to acknowledge the capability of female acquaintances. Peter Blundell was a traditionalist, the precise instructions he set out for the building of his school, even discussing the arrangement of desks, benches and other furnishings to fit the dimensions of the teaching room, together with the comment 'such as is usual in schools.' which appears after these stipulations, suggests that he may have been modelling his educational foundation upon the schools he had heard about or visited. He was conforming to observable general practice. Nevertheless, it is worth considering why Blundell actually felt it necessary to stipulate the gender of

[89] *ibid.*
[90] *ibid.*

potential students. Taken at face value it could be little more than an indication of the clothier's personal belief that girls should be excluded from formal education, but might it not also imply that female attendance at school was possible or even taking place in Devon with Blundell wanting his school to conform to a more traditional pattern? Surely there would be no need to stipulate only male attendance if that was already a given. Perhaps, Blundell knew of girls who had attended or attempted to attend school. It is possible that he was even acknowledging the ongoing debate about the desirability of educating females; if so his will gave him the opportunity to make a lasting contribution to that debate.

There were very few schools for girls in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in early modern England. However, there is evidence that at least two schools were admitting girl students in Exeter in 1641. Moreover, it seems that women had some say in selecting facilities for their daughters' learning, since a mother declared, in her testimony at Diana Crosse's trial, that she decided to take her daughter away from the latter's school and send her to Goodwife Woodman's.[91] No details of either school survive and there is no way of knowing how long they had been established or whether they were day schools or for boarders, nor do we know anything about the social status of the students who attended. There

[91] Cotton and Woolcombe *Gleanings* p. 152.

are, however, extant records and more detailed evidence of two other West Country schools which were established in the first half of the seventeenth century; the Red Maids' and Blue Maids' hospitals of Bristol and Exeter respectively.

Samuel Butler, the first headmaster of Blundell's School, was still in post and the youngest students of the opening cohort would have been completing their schooling when Elize Hele and John Whitson, two wealthy West Country men, the first a lawyer, the second a wine merchant, were gaining reputations as pious men. Both left large fortunes for educational and charitable purposes. John Whitson himself and the trustees of Elize Hele, decided that girls needed schools of their own, with a curriculum dedicated to preparing them for adult roles in society. Like Peter Blundell, John Whitson included detailed instructions as to the nature of the school he wished to provide and its prospective pupils.[92] Elize Hele, who died in 1635, left his fortune to be allocated by four trustees for 'godly and pious uses.'[93] This was a very wide brief and the trustees had to work out the finer details themselves. Over the next twenty years Elize Hele's legacy funded an Oxford scholarship, improvements to a local prison, small grants to existing schools and a library. By 1650 two trustees had died leaving Sir John Maynard, a relative and Elize Stert, to administer Hele's funds and they sought to establish two new

[92] BRO/04421/3 (a).
[93] Donna Sharp, *The Maynard School; A Celebration of 350 Years* (Exeter, 2008), pp.2-3.

schools, one for boys in Plymouth and one for girls in Exeter. Overseeing a complicated charitable trust and even contemplating the setting up new education foundations could not have been easy during the upheavals and divisions of civil war, nor during the early years of the new republican government, when John Maynard's duties as Sergeant at Arms kept him away from home. Nevertheless, by 1656 Maynard and Stert's Girls' School Foundation of Hele's Charitable Endowment, soon referred to as Hele's Hospital and later Blue Maids' Hospital admitted its first pupils.[94]

The wishes of both testators were very clear but in both cases the charitable donations they wished to be set aside for education and charitable works were contested by distant female relatives.[95] This meant that funding for the school was withheld for several years. Whether those who contested did so simply because they thought that, as relatives, they deserved a larger inheritance or because they objected in principle to the nature of the prospective schools is unclear. In both circumstances the female relatives were not direct descendents of the deceased, because the children of both founders predeceased their fathers before either will was made. As the delay in funding came via challenges from kin rather than leaders in the local community and since, in addition to

[94] *ibid.*pp. 9-10.
[95] *ibid.* p.9; TNA C/78/469/7; British-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol7/ppj48-549 Accessed May 3 2016.

receiving funding from their founders' wills, both schools were supported by and received additional funding from the local elite, it is reasonable to conclude that there was no significant opposition to educating young women emanating from regional authorities. In any case, both wills were upheld and the first students entered John Whitson's Red Maids hospital in Bristol in 1634, with Blue Maids embarking on their educational journey, in Exeter, some twenty years later.

The motives of both Whitson and Hele, their feofees and trustees in envisaging, founding, establishing and running girls' schools can be unpacked from surviving details of their professional, religious and social lives and it is clear that making provision for education and the future of the young is regarded as a godly and pious act.

Like Peter Blundell, John Whitson came from a mercantile background, apprenticed, in 1570, to Bristol wine merchant Nicholas Cutts and employed, after qualification, by the latter's widow, whom he later married. Through advantages gained via his wife Bridget, who had inherited a sizable fortune and several properties from her own family, Whitson was able to develop his own career and quickly gained elite status and a good reputation in the mercantile city, rising to prominence in the region. He became Mayor of Bristol and was five times elected M.P. for the city. He married three times, expanding the family fortunes. His third wife, Rachel, was

executrix for the will which he made in 1627, two years before he died. According to John Aubrey, his godson and step-grandson, who included his godfather in his *Brief Lives,* Whitson was an educated man, noted for both his business acumen and his pious and godly lifestyle. He had been well educated at two Grammar schools and had gained a good proficience in the Latin tongue. As well as a successful mercantile career, dealing in wine, fish and fish oil, cloth, lead, coal, sugar, alumn, salt and licorice Whitson also wrote pious works.[96]

One of these gives an indication of the reasoning behind his insistence in providing an education for girls. In *The Aged Christian's Final Farewell To The World And Its Vanities; A Pious Meditation, which he wrote in 1626,* Whitson expressed his desire to leave behind something more long lasting than simple material bequests.[97] He recognises that his own career was assisted by the great opportunities presented to him. The latter began with a good education and continued because of timely good fortune when he inherited, albeit via his wives, wealth and property which brought him status and the chance to develop his mercantile career. This career earned him respect in a city which owed its wealth to trade. His clearest motive is a religious one. He was thankful for his long life and

[96] John Aubrey, *Brief Lives* ed. Oliver Lawson Dick, (London, 1949),pp. xxxi, 317-318.
[97] John Whitson, *The Aged Christian's Final Farewell To The World And Its Vanities; A Pious Meditation* ed. John Eden (Bristol, 1829,) p.7.

believed it was right to help others less fortunate. Charitable work meant giving others the same chances in life as he had received himself. This charitable work would be a testament to his own character and he would be remembered through it

> Ere I depart this to my long home, I have a great desire to leave some monument of my goodwill to aftercomers; that what my long experience has taught me, may turn to the profit of those whose early years have not as yet afforded them such plenty of observations[98]

That Whitson thought those he termed after-comers could profit through an education and financial support is evidenced in his will which contains, financial gifts for the grammar schools he had attended and support for a schoolmaster at Redcliffe. He also willed sums of money to enable the mayor and commonality of Bristol to lend start-up funding to young merchants at the beginning of their independent careers as they finished their apprenticeships. Whitson does not distinguish between male and female 'aftercomers' and his special concern for women is evidenced by a specific note on the need to support 'poore women in child bed.' but it is the founding of a school for girls that is outlined in the most detail.[99]

Like Blundell, Whitson left detailed directions about the school he wanted for Bristol, the type of students it should

[98] *ibid.*
[99] BRO 04421 (3)a.

support and the most suitable person to provide care for them and teach them. His first priority was to provide a

> Fit and convenient dwelling-house, mansion or habitation for the continual abode and residency from time to time for ever of one grave, painful and modest woman of good life and honest conversation, whether married or unmarried, having a husband well and qualified and of like good life and honest conversation...[100]

This woman, like the matrons envisaged by Becon, was to be responsible for her students' spiritual nurture, physical comfort and learning. She was to be their role model, preparing them for adult life. The mistress was therefore required to possess both womanly modesty and the intelligence to converse, so she could be a moral example to her charges and able to instruct them. In addition, she needed practical skills, or a husband who had them, because she was also in charge of practical day to day living within the school, since all the students would be boarders, though, like the mistress of any large household, she was only required to supervise these domestic practicalities. Whitson made provision for the employment of

> Such servants as shall be necessarily imployed or requisite to attend in or abut the keeping, education and upbringing of the said students[101]

As for the students themselves, they were to enter the school between the ages of eight and ten and would remain there until they were eighteen. Whitson envisaged that they would be

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[100] *ibid.*
[101] *ibid.*

> forty poore women children , whose parents being Freemen and Burgesses of the said city shall be deceased or decayed ...[102]

Here it must be noted that the term poore women children, as used in Whitson's instructions, does not suggest girls born in poverty nor were students to be drawn from the lowest strata of society. Unfortunately this is how nineteenth and early twentieth century writers of the school's history have understood it, leading to assumptions that the school was founded for paupers, who were served badly through an apprenticeship scheme.[103] In fact Whitson appears to use the term poore in the sense of unlucky, since Freemen and Burgesses of the city, most of them merchants, could by no means be described as destitute. The girls are poore because they are unfortunate, either their fathers have died or the latter have become too sick to continue in trade and provide for their children. In other words Whitson's school is providing education for female after-comers who may once have belonged to families of the city's mercantile elite but have fallen on hard time due to circumstances beyond their control. They did not begin their lives as paupers nor had they been abandoned by their families; the terms of Whitson's will encouraged 'their parents' kindred or friends' to make some contribution towards their school clothing and the latter was not cheap. At the time they entered the school

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[102] *ibid.*
[103] Walter Sampson, *A History of The Red Maids' School* (Bristol, 1908) pp. 33-34.

> every of the said children at their first entrance into the said house shall have double apparel allowed them at the proper cost and charge of their parents kindred or friends...every one of the said women children to go and be apparelled in red cloth...[104]

The double apparel meant that each girl would always have clean clothing. In the autumn of 1634, when the school opened, Nicholas Meredith, Chamberlain of Bristol, wrote in the city's account book that that bedding, flock to fill mattresses, blankets and rugs were purchased. Twelve shillings were paid for ropes to cord the beds and for one Goodwife Green, sometimes referred to as Greenwell, the matron of the hospital, to make sheets, towels and smocks 'for the poore maids in Mr Whitson his hospital.' Goodwife Green was also given £4.4s 0d to last until Christmas 'by order of Master Mayor, for the diatt of the poore maides there.' In addition to these essentials Meredith also noted the purchase of 'a looking glasse for the children in the mayden hospital' so the school was not a place from which non-essential items were banned.[105]

Whitson's instructions show that he expected the school to be run on an apprenticeship system. This should not be surprising since he served an apprenticeship himself and the prospective students were the daughters of burgesses in a mercantile city. However the concept of pupils as apprentices had led to some misunderstanding about the school. Regardless of what was to

[104] BRO 04421 (3)a.
[105] BRO 04026. 20.

become custom and practice from the late seventeenth century onwards, it was not Whitson's original intention that female students were to be brought to the school to be trained as servants. This fact was apparently overlooked by succeeding generations of Red Maids governors and benefactors, whose misinterpretation of the foundation documents and subsequent dealings with the students have skewed interpretations of the original curriculum and care Whitson set out for his students. These post 1660 school regimes cannot be discussed here.[106]

In Whitson's experience, being an apprentice offered security and Whitson's own career and good fortune had, according to his *Pious Meditations*, come from his happy experiences in school and in his apprenticeship training. His legacy or 'monument of goodwill towards aftercomers' was specifically aimed at developing their own chance of prosperity. He saw his hospital as a place where girls would be given the chance of a better future through education and apprenticeship training and he set out for them a curriculum path not unlike his own.[107]

Whitson's original Red Maids were in school to be educated so they could develop into useful members of a city community where the majority made their wealth through trade. Their mercantile background, just like that of the young male

[106] Walter Sampson, *A History* details many of these regimes.
[107] Cited Vanes *Apparelled In Red; The History of The Red Maids'School* (Gloucester, 1984), p. 17.

merchants, singled out by Whitson to be offered loans from city governors, had originally given their families status and respectability. Now, according to Whitson, these young women, from backgrounds similar to his own, needed encouragement and a helping hand as they faced life without the financial support of their fathers. In Whitson's experience an education, together with an apprenticeship system was the best way to provide security and stability in a young person's life.[108] He therefore set out the term of the apprenticeships, giving each child a professional link with the mistress through apprenticeships for the term of ten or eight years.[109] This suggests that the girls remained at the school until they were eighteen, since the age of entry was no younger than eight and no older than ten. However any student deemed to be 'unclean or unwholesome' was to be removed.[110] The school was obviously intended to be a godly and virtuous institution. Whitson was keen to link the school with respectable citizens and it seems that he hoped such people of influence would encourage the girls in their religious duties and devotions. The pupils were expected to attend the mayor, alderman and their wives and to hear sermons on the Sabbath and festival days.[111]

[108] Cited Vanes, *Apparelled in Red* p. 17.
[109] BRO 04421 (3) a.
[110] *ibid.*
[111] *ibid.*

The pupils may well have been expected to live pious lives but Whitson did not intend their lives to be uncomfortable. Having found the specified habitation, his feofees were instructed to furnish it comfortably and Whitson's inventory shows that he was already thinking about some of the necessaries long before his death. It included several items, such as a 'great new copper kettle', earmarked 'for the maids' hospital'[112]

Surviving accounts of the Bristol's city Chamberlain indicate that that the mayor and aldermen took their duties seriously. Items of clothing used by the students were replaced frequently and payment of tailors' and shoemakers' bills noted. In 1640, linen, bodices, shoes, rugs and linen was purchased and in 1646 bills for similar items were paid. Repairs and decorations for the house were noted in 1644.[113]

Whitson devised a curriculum for the scholars to prepare them for adult life in a mercantile city. This curriculum, outlined in his will, was both academic and practical and it was to be supervised by women. The girls would be taught to read English and to sew and to do some other 'laudable work' towards their maintenance, as the mayor's wife and the mistress thought fit. The phrase laudable work is an interesting one it could simply refer to the good deeds and charity which were expected of all Protestants in early modern England or even simply avoiding

[112] P. McGarth, *Merchants and Merchandise in Seventeenth Century Bristol* (Bristol, 1955), p.80-89.
[113] BRO/BMC/6/4b fo 86; BRO/BMC/6/4b fo.16.1, 16r.

idleness by sitting silently over needlework or a character-forming, godly book.[114] Thus the founder would be expecting the students to behave in similar ways to girls still living comfortably at home in elite mercantile households. On the other hand, since it is linked to their maintenance, it could be that Whitson envisaged the girls working on a variety of productive tasks, making something useful, which could be sold to add extras funds to the school, whilst avoiding idleness. It is interesting that Whitson chose to deem what work was suitable. Here he is reflecting what would happen in a respectable Protestant household for there are many examples of elite women such as Lucie Reynell, whose activities will be discussed in the third case study, supervising the needlework of other women as well as making garments for the poor.

The women Whitson selected to supervise the work of his students were respectable. He had specified the qualifications required of the mistress. The mayor's wife, as the spouse of the city's leading citizen, would have moved in the same social circles as Whitson, a former mayor, and his wife. She would therefore have been an acquaintance of his wife and of equal status with her. Whitson intended to draw an elite circle of respectable city folk into the life of his school, in effect turning it into a respectable household which would be overseen, like any other large household, by a godly elite

[114] Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant* pp. 157, 444.

woman. This places women at the forefront of the education received by the girls. The inclusion of the mayor's wife in decision making would also act as a safeguard, protecting the girls should a mistress neglect her duties.

Whitson's trust in women and his wishes for the education and welfare of the girls were taken seriously by the mayor and other city leaders. In the early years of the school, those taking responsibility for its funding continued to place women at the centre of its life. In 1654, twenty one years after the school's opening, they appointed female visitors, providing a letter of instructions for them. This gives some indication of the school curriculum. The women, Cicely Hinde and Joane Hobson, were the wives of former mayors. Their duties included the inspection of both the educational opportunities and the pastoral care provided for the girls and these inspection visits were not to be taken lightly nor were they to be infrequent.

> You are hereby authorised and appointed to be visiters of the hospitall of maids wherein you are required to be faithfull and to follow the instruction here underwritten. Imprimis: you are upon two daies in every month in the yeare privately in your owne persons to visit the children...[115]

It is clear that their visits were to the female students and not to the staff of the school. They had to gain first-hand knowledge of the welfare of the girls and their living

[115] BRO 044417 (1) 3.

conditions and they had to do this by speaking to the girls themselves

> You are to enquire into the health of them. You are to take notice of their cleanliness and convenient change soe as they may be kept sweet and free from vermin...[116]

With regular visits, twice each month, the committee was keeping close to the terms of the founder's will, which made much of the physical needs of the students. Whitson had also stressed the importance of a good diet, stressing that the mistress had to ensure that there was always 'convenient mete and drink...'[117] Cicely and Joane were instructed to ask questions about the food provided and having established that the girls were being well looked after, the visitors were then to turn their attention to the curriculum. It is worth noting terminology again here, with the word employment being used to cover all activities rather than paid work. Joane and Cecily were to watch what was happening in lessons, to note how the girls were occupied and to think about the future of the students. These inspectors were checking whether what was on offer was providing those opportunities for 'after-comers' which Whitson had proposed in both his will and his *Pious Meditation*

> You are to take notice of their employment and to see that they be duely taught to read English and work upon

[116] *ibid.*
[117] BRO 04421 3(a).

> those things which may be to their preferment hereafter...[118]

The girls, like all women, were also to be taught to be good housewives and perform their duties without complaint but they also appear to have free time because the visitors were instructed to check that each girl took her turn in performing household duties with two girls employed about household affairs each week, by turn. As there were only twelve students in the school at the time these instructions were given to the visitors, each girl would only be responsible for household duties every six weeks so the task was not overburdening. The visitors were to report any concerns to the Mayor and Aldermen so 'knowing what is amisse remedy may be applied accordingly.'[119]

These simple instructions suggest that the city authorities were taking their role seriously. They appear to be doing their best to meet all the founder's requirements and were prepared to set right anything which caused concern during the inspection visits. The choice of two women visitors protected the students in a way that an inspection by men could not. The boarders' modesty was safeguarded as they did not have to converse with men but were able to talk directly with the women responsible for checking their wellbeing and through the visitors, girls had a direct link with the authorities, who

[118] BRO 044417 (1) 3.
[119] *ibid.*

were prepared to act on their behalf. This implies that the welfare and education of girls mattered to Bristol society.

Whitson did not use the term scholar, instead he used the language of the merchant, which would be understood in a mercantile city, writing about apprenticeships and terms of service. However the original red maids, were prepared for adult life within the security of a safe and well-ordered godly establishment. Like many girls residing within elite mercantile households, they learned to read, to work with the needle and took their turn in the practical tasks required for running a sizable household. Their education was, as the instructions indicated for their 'preferment hereafter' and there is no indication that the founder or the Mayor and Aldermen were preparing them for the life of a servant. Indeed in 1642, when the Mayor and Aldermen met some of Whitson's Trustees, they discussed the possibility of using some surplus funds from Whitson's estate to provide each girl with some money as 'preferrment in marriage' provided that the girls in question had served their apprenticeship to the mistress faithfully and that they could

> Well and honestly demean themselves and continue in good life and conversation...[120]

In other words, like any other girl from a mercantile household, they had learned their lessons well, followed the example of the godly woman in charge of their upbringing and

[120] Vanes, *Apparelled in Red*. p. 21.

education and developed into modest, god-fearing and intelligent young adults, which is another way of saying that they would make suitable wives for young, hardworking merchants within the city.

Fewer records survive from the Exeter Blue Maids' hospital but they indicate that this school was smaller than the Bristol foundation. The foundation documents of 1656 allowed for £10 a year to be spent on each pupil for as many girls as the endowment money 'would reach unto.' The first girls to attend the school did not attend a purpose built or newly-furbished house and may have shared a learning space with the boys of St. John's hospital which had also received funds from Hele's bequest. The young women had to leave the school at the age of fourteen and they were expected to return home or take up an apprenticeship. Unlike the Bristol arrangements which had been so clearly set out by the founder, there were no firm links required between the city authorities and the students and there is no evidence of an inspection programme to safeguard the latter or monitor their education. The girls were meant to be provided with clothes and bedding and schooled in literacy and needlework. In 1662 Maynard and Stert spent £600 of Hele's money on a large house in St. Mary Arches, creating a separate school for the girls and passing the responsibility for the running of the school to Exeter's city council. The latter paid a £20 annual stipend to the school's mistress but reduced

the allowance per pupil to £6. It appears that the city council mismanaged the schools income and that very few pupils attended once the council took over in 1662, although detailed investigation falls outside the scope of this thesis. What is clear however, from three surviving minute books, which list school staff, is that the post of Mistress often passed from mother to daughter.[121]

Maynard and Stert did their best to comply with Hele's wishes but, unlike the trustees of Blundell and Whitson, they had far less detailed instructions about the nature and purpose of the school. They were also trying to create the school during the Civil War and its aftermath; a time of crisis and instability. Exeter was besieged three times between 1642 and 1646, so the fact that the school opened at all is somewhat remarkable.[122] Despite the upheavals of war and the changes in government they did have the support of local elite in their endeavours, Robert Vilvayne providing land and Edmund Prideux additional funding. This suggests that there was no major opposition, in Exeter, to the formal schooling of girls. Vilvayne appears to have been a generous philanthropist who thought that supporting poorer scholars was important. He created four exhibitions at Exeter College, to send and maintain four poor scholars 'of merit' for seven years. Two of these scholars

[121] Donna Sharp, *The Maynard School; A Celebration of 350 years* (Exeter, 2008), pp. 10, 97.
[122] www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/civilwar.php accessed May 6 2015.

were to come from the blue boys of St. John's hospital, the shared location of the Blue Maids' school. His nephew, the executor of his will, was Exeter's Mayor in 1653, the year before Blue Maids opened. This implies the likelihood of the city council being aware of the new foundation for girls and that there was no objection to the education of girls from city authorities.[123]

Blundell's, Red Maids' and Blue Maids' were the result of the vision of godly Protestant men. They were therefore strictly Protestant foundations. However opportunities for Catholic girls to attend school increased with the foundation of English convents on the continent. Lady Mary Percy, accompanied by Dorothy and Gertrude Arundell opened the first one in Brussels in 1598 and there were at least seven others operating by the 1630s, including the school created in 1609 by Mary Ward and her companions at St. Omer. A more detailed discussion of convent education is reserved for the next chapter.

***Informal education and published advice***

Examining the formal curriculum of the few girls' schools in existence in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries does not give the full picture of educational opportunities available for women. To uncover more examples it is necessary to return the focus to the more informal experiences available

[123] Charles Worthy, *History of The Suburbs of Exeter* (Exeter, 1892) p. 134; Richard Gilbert, *Liber Scholasticus* (London 1829) p. 155-157).

for girls within households. Once again the emphasis is on religion, morality and reputation.

As discussed earlier, the destiny of a young woman was set within her household and family where ensuring a virtuous upbringing and preserving her godly reputation was an essential parental duty. Once the young woman passed into the care of her husband it became her duty to ensure the same upbringing and reputation for her own children. Most elite parents strove hard to find a good marriage partner for their daughters. Letters sent between Sir John Arundell, his wife Katherine and their son Thomas in 1536-37 indicate the need for diplomacy when attempting to set up a perfect match. Negotiations were opened by a prospective groom's father as Thomas, who declared that he thought he was 'dreaming' informs his parents

> the Lord Privy Seal has suggested a marriage between his son and my sister Jane offering 700 marks of land at his death. How should I answer?[124]

Despite the impatience of a high-powered prospective father-in-law,

> And as consernying the mater that I wrote to yow consernying my sister Jane my Lord privy seale hath spoyken dyvers tymes to me therin sythe I dyd wryte unto yow and hath askyd me whether I had avertysyd yow theoff...he hath desired me in any wyse that I schuld with as moche spede as I cud wryte to yow wherfor I schall most hertly pray yow that ye will send sume one

[124] CRO AR/25/9.

> schortly whom yew do trust that I may know your plesur...[125]

the proposed marriage did not take place.

Early modern parents took their responsibilities towards their children very seriously. A girl's future depended on providing her with the correct education and training at home. If the parents got this right then their daughters' prospects as future wives was strong. Published advice material provides clues on what this home experience was expected to be and also describes the perfect wife and mother. A girl could then be fashioned with reference to the ideal concept of godly womanhood. As Ingrid Tague suggests, conduct books provide a useful structure to examine aspects of idealised womanhood since they attempted to define every aspect of a woman's life and encourage her to be constantly aware of her sex and her vulnerability.[126]

Conduct material placed much emphasis on the role of the woman as a passive, silent, husband-supporter. Marriage was always viewed as woman's primary vocation, that for which she was created by God. Therefore it was a parent's duty to devise a curriculum for their daughters which would prepare them for the experiences of this honourable estate.[127]

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[125] CRO AR/25/10.
[126] Ingrid H. Tague, *Women of Quality, Accepting and Contesting Ideals of Femininity in England* (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 22).
[127] Joan Larson Klein (ed.), *Daughters, Wives and Widows* (Illinois, 1992), p. ix.

Much has been written on the different genres of conduct publications and advice material, explaining how and why the emphasis and focus shifted from courtesy to civility.[128] It is beyond the remit of this thesis to repeat these theories here. Instead a focus on specific types of publication, advice on the godly household, marriage manuals and books containing either religious theories or practical skills required in housewifery will highlight society's expectations of womanly duties and conduct, since the concepts of womanhood, contained within these publications informed the curriculum developed for girls in their households.

The writers of marriage and household manuals set their ideal woman firmly in the context of a patriarchal family, where she was encouraged to be constantly aware of her station as the weaker vessel and, as Fletcher remarks, these writers

> constantly based their case for household patriarchy upon woman's inferiority, as evidenced by the Fall, and upon God's direction.[129]

Parents were advised to ensure that their daughters developed feminine qualities of obedience and submissiveness and writers on marriage reinforced the concept of woman's weakness. Henry Smith, writing in 1591, reminded men preparing for marriage to treat their wives gently, handling them 'nicelie and softlie' like 'glasses' rather than 'pots' not to expect to find

[128] See for example Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy To Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998).
[129] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale, 1995), p. 76.

> That wisdom, nor that faith, nor that patience, nor that strength in the weaker vessel which should be in the stronger.[130]

However he saw marriage as a partnership where the woman was a helper but not a servant and within this partnership both benefit since

> two are stronger than one and therefore when God made the woman for man he said I will make him a helper; shewing that man is stronger by his wife...[131]

For Smith a good wife was a godly one and he advised wife-seekers to find out as much as possible about a prospective partner. He advised observing the young woman

> Eating and walking and working and playing and talking and laughing and chiding or else he shall have lesse with her than he looked for or more than he wished for...[132]

The importance of including training in modesty in a girl's curriculum, cannot be over-stressed for Smith notes five important things for a man to consider when choosing his wife: the report of her reputation; her modest countenance; her speech or rather her silence; her modest attire and the company she kept. These were the marks of a godly woman who should have learned modesty before her marriage.[133] Thirteen years earlier Thomas Salter's *The Mirrher Of Modestie* had been written for a female readership. In its epistle to all women the author explained that he felt duty bound to provide a guide for young maidens on how to behave and for all women who

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[130] Henry Smith, *Preparation To Marriage* (London, 1591), p. 53.
[131] *ibid.* p. 9.
[132] *ibid.* p. 33.
[133] *ibid.* pp. 28-29.

had charge of the young because not only were maidens who behaved badly endangering their souls but

> By the default of good bringing up, many of our English maidens doe daiely runne into the greate reproche of their parents, hartes greef of the kinsfolke, infamie of their persons...[134]

Salter presented his book as a mirror replacing the crystal ones of vanity, through it a mother would learn how to train her daughter and the girl herself would gain a good reputation. Salter provides a full and detailed curriculum and had no objection to girls learning provided they remained dutiful and modest. Like Vives, he had strong views on the use and abuse of the ability to read because there was so much unsuitable reading available. The girl was advised to read books by godly men and to avoid 'lascivious songs and filthie ballards.'[135]

Suitable reading matter included Scripture, the writings of the Church Fathers and Classical works which provided examples of religious and civic virtue through narratives of women who were loyal to their country and their husbands. These would, he believed, encourage young women to apprentice themselves to the Christian way of life where they would learn to be humble and lowly of heart. Also on the curriculum was music because it appeared in the Bible and the works of Homer. Provided the purpose for using it was correct 'Singing and delicate playing

[134] Thomas Salter, *The Mirrher of Modestie* (London, 1578), sig. Aiiir.
[135] *ibid.* sig. ciiir.

upon instruments and sweet harmony' was allowed and necessary because 'those that be overworne with grief, sorrow, trouble, cares or other vexation, have need of recreation.'[136] Girls were also to be taught needlework, spinning and weaving. Most important for all young women was to understand how a household was run. This did not simply mean taking charge of the servants and supervising their tasks but actually knowing how to perform the office and duties of household servants, including how to clean rooms and prepare and serve meals.

> Let her be present at everything that tendeth to household affairs...all wives ought to be skillfull in all household business...

In addition the girl was to be taught to be truthful, not to be a great talker but to listen to wise older women learning by their example. She was not to envy others and should avoid wearing too much ornament or perfume. Mothers were advised to keep their daughters away from great company and to instruct them to be affable and courteous to all, whatever their station. For recreation a modest girl was encouraged to avoid sitting but to take pleasure in walking in her garden or orchards.[137] This curriculum is full and varied, the young woman is introduced to religious and classical texts, she sews and spins, she learns housewifery and therefore has many practical household duties but her emotional needs are recognised and she is allowed some relaxation. Modest

[136] *ibid.* sig. cvr, cviir, dir.
[137] *ibid.* sig. Diir.

behaviour is required at all times but this appears to be encouraged rather than ordered.

Modesty is still central to a girl's upbringing in Richard Braithwaite's *The English Gentlewoman*, published in 1637. Braithwaite's advice for gentlewomen reflects Vives' position, by now almost an hundred years old, on education as essential for virtue when he advises that a sober and religious upbringing is better than frivolity and suggests that modesty must always be a woman's guide in choice of dress, company, countenance and behaviour since this reflects her virtue and consequently her reputation. In addition she does well to avoid passion.[138] Modesty may have been included on the young woman's curriculum when she was a child, but Braithwaite's gentlewoman is also self-taught, through private contemplation. However when self-training, she must also be aware that whilst privacy is the seat of contemplation it can also be the place of temptation, so she must learn to control her thoughts.

> Privacy may enable you if well employed for better things than toyes tyres or trifles of this age...contemplation or works of piety and devotion ....meditation let it be your companion, it is the perfume of the memory...Let your morning iniciate your purposes for the day, second what your morning purposed, the evening examine your mornings purpose, your days purchase...[139]

[138] Richard Braithwaite, *The English Gentlewoman* (London, 1637), sig. Nn2r, Ppr, Pp2r.
[139] *ibid.* sig. Qq2r.

Braithwaite's gentlewoman was urged to use her private moments to think further on how she could develop outward signs of decency and grace, in her speech and in her habits. This would enhance her reputation for civility and with estimation being a gentlewoman's highest prize, the good opinion of others would be won if she thought about how she could strive for gentility, honour and virtue and avoided fancy.[140]

This practice of contemplation and self-examination, checking one's own behaviour and attitudes, thinking about how this influenced reputation and a self-conscious fashioning and re-fashioning oneself to present the correct pious image to observers is a well-documented practice amongst elite women and as will be shown in chapter six, Lucie Reynell was noted for pious, private contemplation in her closet and whilst walking in her garden.

This private contemplation did not mean a woman could neglect her household duties. There was widespread agreement, within the literature, on the central role of the family in creating and maintaining a well ordered nation. William Perkins wrote of the family as a centre of 'holie and righteous government' which helped to create good order within both Church and Commonwealth. Within the family girls, were taught the basic principles of 'authoritie and subjection'. Most Protestant writers stressed the importance of household duties for both

[140] *ibid.* sig. T1r, Tt2r, Vv, A22r.

men and women. They emphasised the partnership between men and women in marriage but nevertheless placed the final responsibility for ensuring a godly household in the hands the husband. Perkins saw it as the husband's responsibility to ensure that other members of the family and household conformed to expectations and obeyed his authority. Daughters, who were brought up to conform and obey, would make good wives and had the potential to make an excellent match thus bringing credit to their family.[141]

As the husband was responsible for the welfare and morality of his household he was therefore responsible for the education of his children and servants. Furthermore, as a wife was, in Protestant eyes, a helper for her husband, then she must share responsibility for the education of these children and servants, indeed if a husband's duties took him away from home then it was likely that she would have more contact with them than he. As Becon suggested it was essential for a husband to educate his wife so that she could help him educate others. An ignorant wife would be no fit help-meet because she could not fulfil the, oft stated, mother's duty of inculcating correct morality and belief in their offspring. To assist her education, an ever increasing amount of printed advice on marriage responsibilities, household duties and practical tips on housewifery was published in the sixteenth and seventeenth

[141] William Perkins, *Christian Oeconomie* (London, 1609), pp. 2-3.

centuries. Gertrude Noyes compiled a biographical list of 477 titles from the Seventeenth century with many running into numerous editions, which gives some indication of their popularity.[142] However popularity does not necessarily mean reader-friendly. Whilst it is possible to estimate, from the number of editions published, how many books were sold is not always easy to deduce how such offerings were read and owning a book does not necessarily imply avid reading of it. It is difficult to establish whether men, women or both made up the readership. Most were written by men, for a male audience since they were often addressed to the head of the household, but they frequently describe the duties of women.[143]

Many of the books were overtly religious, reinforcing the belief that the welfare of Christian society was dependent on the smooth running of the godly household. In Dod and Cleaver's 1612 *A Godlie Forme of Household Government* the social structure has the same overarching framework as the one envisaged by Becon in his *Catechism with* the well-ordered godly households contributing to the wellbeing of the commonweal. Dod and Cleaver's woman appears to have a limited role since the husband's duties run to several pages but the wife's duties could be summed up in three phrases: reverence;

[142] Gertrude E. Noyes, *Bibliography of Courtesy and Conduct Books in Seventeenth Century England* (New Haven, 1937).
[143] Joan Larson Klein, *Daughters Wives and Widows* p. X.

obedience and awareness of place.[144] Amongst the womans 'Particular duties' was to 'nurse her owne children' rather than provide them with a wet nurse. This was so that they could take in the correct virtues with their milk. After nursing her offspring the mother was to assist her husband with the education of their children but was to be aware that their education would be hindered by too much 'cockering' so parents should not 'love them too much.'[145]

But the woman's responsibilities are not as insignificant as they first seem. It is essential to refocus on the belief that the education of children and leading them towards a life of virtue enabled them to earn the all-essential good reputation. As the woman had more contact with children than her husband, and it is she who supervises their early upbringing, this was no mean responsibility. It placed the woman in a position of trust since the reputation of the whole family was influenced by what she taught her children and since it is difficult to teach without knowledge of one's own then a husband must have either expected his wife to have had some form of education before her marriage or found the means himself to provide her with the skills she needed.

Many marriage manuals dealt with the needs of women and offered guidance on female tasks and duties even if these

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[144] William St Clair and Irmgard Maasen, *Conduct Literature for Women 1500-1640* vol 3 (London, 2000), p. 28; Dod and Cleaver, *Godly Form* sig. O4r.
[145] *Dod and Cleaver, Godly Form* sig. P4r, Tv.

assumed needs and suggested duties were directly related to making life less onerous for the men. Nevertheless, the titles of some of the books such as William Whately's *A bride-bush or a direction for married persons. Plainely describing the duties common to both and perculiar to each of them. By performing of which marriage shall prove a great help to such, as now for want of performing them, doe find it a little hell,* did little to suggest that all marriages were harmonious partnerships.[146] The advice provided for women suggests that Whately recognised and commended women for the knowledge and skills they brought into a marriage but these commendations are tempered by the need to remind both men and women of their religious duties.

Religious duty permeates all the advice given in *A Bride Bush*. Whately provides a sermon showing how in marriage both the man and his wife must concentrate on the best ways to develop love, pleasingness and faithfulness. The husband's duty is to maintain and govern the family but the wife's main duty is acceptance of subordination.

> She must acknowledge her inferiority, she must carrie herself as inferior----show reverence to his person both outwards in her speeches, to him, before him to others, of him behind his back...And in her gesture and countenances and whole behaviour...Also she must practice the virtue of subjection to his directions... and that by obeying him in all things willingly...[she] must bear his reproofs and chastisements patiently.[147]

[146] William Whately, *A Bride-bush* (London, 1619), Title page.
[147] *ibid.* contents page.

However the husband is advised to avoid the need to chastise his wife by using praise, which will encourage correct behaviour. For her part, the woman will earn her husband's praise by always acknowledging his superiority, even if she is more skilled than he

> [If] in gifts thou art his better, having more wit and understanding, more readiness of speech more dexterity in managing affaires.....yet understand for answer that so may thy servant exceed thee in as much as thou dost him....Know then that a man may be superior in place and power to one to whom he is inferior in gifts and sufficiencies....[but she must still say] 'my husband is my better'[148]

Women must learn these practical skills of communication, understanding and management and there is no doubt here that Whately is acknowledging that women possessed them, using them every day, even if the secret of a good marriage was, in his opinion, to acknowledge the husband as head of the household in word if not in deed.

Patricke Hannay had offered similar advice directly to women in 1618 when he wrote his guide, in verse, on how to find and keep a husband. *The Happy Husband* acknowledged that skilful women performed many duties as they went about the routines of housewifery but he reminded them of the importance of recognising the man's responsibilities outside the household and resisting the temptation to ask too many questions about his business. The woman had enough to keep her occupied without worrying about the outside world and a happy husband

[148] *ibid.* sig. Ccr.

was one whose wife carried out her duties without taking too much interest in his. 'Be not too curious in his waies to prie' he advised.[149]

To understand all the duties of 'huswifery' and the skills required in order to perform them we must turn to handbooks on domestic tasks such as Thomas Tusser's *A Book of Huswifery*, published with his *A Hundreth Good Points of Husbandrie* (1557), Hugh Platt's *Delights for Ladies* (1615) or Gervase Markham's *The English Housewife* (1615) Tusser wrote his advice in verse, with helpful instructions on a variety of female tasks including washing, malting, baking, cooking and physic. Platt suggested ways for women to 'adorne' their persons, tables, closets and still rooms, with useful hints on numerous household tasks such as removing stains or making almond butter.

Markham aimed to improve a woman's general knowledge in physic and surgery and her skills in cookery, distillation, perfuming, wine-making, brewing, spinning and dyeing. He provided helpful hints on storing food and described how to administer cures and first aid such as cooling down sunburn.[150]

All three books illustrate the vast amount of theoretical knowledge and practical skill the housewife was expected to

[149] Patricke Hannay, *The Happy Husband* (London, 1618), sig. C4v-C5r.
[150] Thomas Tusser, *A Hundreth Good Points of Husbandrie with A Book of Huswifery,* 1557, ed. W. Furdyce Magor, (Cambridge, 2013), p. 329; Hugh Platt, *Delights For Ladies*, (London, 1615), sig. A57r, D3r; Gervase Markham, *The English Housewife*, (London, 1615), sig. ixr, C31r, D3r, D22r.

achieve and serves as a reminder that the household was a learning space wherein women became experts in all manner of subjects as they prepared for their vocation in marriage. Gertrude Noyse points out that these domestic duties were invested with a great dignity in early modern England, with cooking described as an art and receipts for both food and cures referred to as 'pearls' or 'secrets'. The number of subjects covered in housewifery was vast and the breadth and depth of knowledge a woman had to acquire took years of study and practice.[151]

As we have seen, Mulcaster and Salter thought singing and learning to play an instrument were suitable recreational activities for young women but parents were sometimes advised to keep their daughters away from dancing. From the later seventeenth century onwards, the ability to dance and play an instrument came to be associated with accomplishments, the additional artistic skills a woman might find helpful in social settings and frequently, described, in later periods, with some disdain.[152] However, in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, skills in dance and music were held in much higher esteem. In *The Governor* of 1531, Thomas Elyot declares dancing a suitable form of exercise for those of gentle birth, linking it to prudence and circumspection. A man and woman dancing together in the correct manner was a symbol

[151] Gertrude Noyes, *Bibliography* p. 12.
[152] Rosemary Baird, *Mistress of The House* (London, 2003), p.18.

of harmony which balanced the strength of the man with the grace of the woman. It was therefore 'a necessary study and a noble and virtuous pastime.'[153] Sir John Davies devoted a whole poem to its virtues, linking it to the observable order of the heavens, the four elements and tales from the Classics.[154] Dancing manuals such as Fabritio Caroso's *Il Balarino* and *Nobilita di Dame* of 1581 and 1600 respectively and Cesare Negri's *La Grazzia d'Amore* of 1600 contained elaborate dance steps, rules of behaviour and lute tablature. Throughout each manual dance was presented as a noble activity. Jehan Tabourot, a French cleric, writing under the name of Thoinot Arbeau, presented a dialogue between a dancing master and his pupil which asserted that dancing was an essential part of education, which both men and women should learn.[155]

The following chapters will show that Arundell, Edgcumbe and Reynell families moved in high circles. Richard Edgcumbe was noted for his hospitality and the family home was often the centre of lavish entertainment. Lucie Reynell and her husband welcomed Charles I into their house at Forde on two occasions and women from the Arundell and Edgcumbe familes had places at court. Dancing was required in all these situations and, since choreography in dance manuals was set and complicated rather

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[153] Thomas Elyot, *The Book Named The Governor* (Letchworth, 1962), pp. 69-88.
[154] John Davies, *Orchestra* (London, 1595).
[155] Fabritio Caroso, *Il Balarino* (Venice, 1581)and *Nobilita di Dame* (Venice 1600); Cesare Negri, *La Grazzia d'Amore* (Milan, 1600);Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchesographie* (Langres, 1588); Diana Cruickshank, *Dance Through History*, (Salisbury, 1996).

than spontaneous, it must have featured in learning programmes.

***Female writers***

Most of the commentaries on the role of women in society, their duties within the household and the subjects suitable for females to study were written by men. However the views of a few early-modern women have survived. Dorothy Leigh's *The Mother's Blessing* was left as a message to her sons and published posthumously in 1616. In it she writes about the promises she made to her husband, before she was widowed: to make sure that their children were 'well instructed and brought up in knowledge'; to ensure that their sons live godly lives.[156] Encouraging them to write down guidance for their own children, Dorothy provides advice for these sons.[157] She leaves very few clues about her own education but her religious beliefs conform to the tradition of seeing women as weaker than men. She exhorts women 'not to be ashamed to show their infirmities, but to give men the first and chief place...'[158] She acknowledges an inherited sin and stresses the need for women to seek Christ in order to cast it out.[159] Her sons are advised to find themselves godly wives, considering the prospective bride's character and upbringing to ensure she is

[156] Dorothy Leigh, *The Mother's Blessing* (London, 1627), p. 6.
[157] *ibid.* p. 24.
[158] *ibid.* p. 17.
[159] *ibid.* p. 17.

suitable to be their helpmeet.[160] However she does suggest that they marry for love and remain loyal to their chosen partner and she counsels them to bear with their wife as with a weaker vessel for 'Here God sheweth that it is thy perfection that maketh thee to beare with her.'[161]

Elizabeth Jocelin's *The Mother's Legacy,* another posthumous publication, contains a message for the unborn child Elizabeth never saw. In different passages to the potential boy or girl differing advice, according to the sex of the infant, is provided. Some information about Jocelin herself is found in the approbation which comes before her own text. She was taught and nurtured by her grandfather, a bishop; she had knowledge of languages and history plus some skill in poetry. Her domestic duties were taken seriously but her main study was of piety and morality. Elizabeth was aided by the gift of an excellent memory and she could remember whole sermons, transcribing them in the privacy of her room.[162]

Jocelin asks her husband to send a male child to school but suggests he entrust a female child to the care of her own mother so she can join her young aunts, in their learning of the Bible, housewifery, writing and good works. 'Other learning a woman needs not' she declares whilst admitting that she admires learning in some woman, provided that God has

[160] *ibid.* p. 49.
[161] *ibid.* p. 54.
[162] Elizabeth Jocelin *The Mother's Legacy To Her Unborn Child* (London, 1624), pp. 2, 3, 4.

blessed them with 'discretion.' A woman who has more learning than wisdom is useless but if 'both learning and wisdom meet in a virtuous disposed woman…' then she is 'a well-balanced ship.'[163]

Jocelin leaves her daughter's education in the hands of her husband, telling him that his will is what she wishes and she has no objection to her daughter's scholarship provided that her religious upbringing is not neglected. Jocelin has no objection to a girl receiving an education but this education is not as important as living a godly life. Her instructions to a daughter conform to the advice within the conduct literature with modesty, humility and a good reputation being more important than scholarship and silence being better than having too much to say. She hopes that a son would also be taught humility but worries more for daughter because the sin of pride is 'being now rather accounted a virtue in our sex...' In a message for her daughter she affirms, as a mother, she loves and cares for her child's salvation whatever sex they may be but she fears more for a girl than a boy because 'Thy taske is harder because thou art weaker and thy temptation to this vice [vanity] is greater.'[164]

Neither Leigh or Jocelin speak out against the education of women but scholarship is not essential. For Jocelin academic

[163] *ibid.* p. 6.
[164] *ibid.* pp. 7, 33, 69.

learning is acceptable provided it is put to good use and linked with wise and modest action. The women in the case studies which follow make good use of their education and training but all of them give higher priority to their religious activities.

***Conclusion***

This chapter has shown that education in the early modern period was vocational and linked to service, duty and reputation. Debates about the necessity of educating girls developed slowly after Vives produced his *De Institutione Feminae Christianae* in 1523. A universal, formal, education was not under consideration but early modern debates shifted from biblical and medical based beliefs in female inferiority and weakness to ones which suggested that girls had abilities which might be fostered for the good of the commonweal. Becon suggested setting up girls' schools throughout this commonweal, run by educated women. Founders of the first West Country schools for girls follow this advice by placing women in charge of their students. Furthermore, as they too were God's creatures, women deserved an education.

Much was written about and for women. Some works were more theoretical than practical, concentrating on the state of womankind as the weaker vessel and her duty of obedience to God and to man. Others provided detailed descriptions of the qualities a gentlewoman should strive to develop and suggested

ways she could contemplate these and achieve perfection. More practical advice was given in handbooks related to household tasks and skills such as cooking, working with herbs and treating minor illness. These household guides, as evidenced by the examples in this chapter, provide the best examples of a woman's expected knowledge base and it appears that her curriculum was required to be broad and varied.

Books written for men, about women, tended to suggest that men should contain women within the confines of their households. Examination of advice material written for women suggests that through religious devotion, private contemplation and by constant demonstration of practical household skills, a woman became self-contained, following a personal timetable of reflection, meditation, prayer, reading and household activities. Furthermore she and her family saw all the above activities as vocations, active service to both household and the commonweal. In this service, which she performed dutifully, forever conscious of the eyes of others upon her, she fashioning herself as a godly, pious and virtuous woman whose reputation would be an example to others and therefore enhance her family's good name.

The following chapters will examine the containment of women within three households. Examining individual and collective experiences should help to ascertain the depth and breadth of the women's knowledge base and the extent of their practical

skills as evidenced in different aspects of their lives. Examining how women used both theoretical knowledge and practical skills will throw light on formal and informal educational opportunities accessible by girls and young women within elite households. It will also show how, despite the advised containment, the women themselves were confident, capable and self-contained individuals rather than the theoretical weaker vessels found within the pages of much of the printed advice.

## Chapter Four

***Faithful daughter, Dorothy Arundell of Lanherne. (1559/60-1613) Educational opportunities and challenges for women in an elite Catholic household.***

As the previous chapters demonstrated, with early modern education linked to vocation and a girl's vocational destiny frequently limited to marriage, her access to education would often depend on the social aspirations of her family and her parent's personal judgement on the skills she would need to support a husband. In a society where good esteem was essential and where the containment of women was seen as a sensible precaution when fostering and preserving good reputation, there were many challenges facing aspiring female scholars. Female learning was valued if it enhanced reputation. The respect her family garnered, within their immediate neighbourhood and throughout their wider networks, played a vital part in enhancing a girl's future prospects. She added to the latter through her own behaviour by learning to be obedient, silent and virtuous.

Virtue, both observed and reported, informed judgements on reputation. However what happened to reputation, vocation and education when one was born into a household which, because of adherence to the Catholic faith, was suffering penalties for non-conformity, with its loyalty to the state under constant

scrutiny? Teaching daughters to be silent and obedient, when household role models felt compelled to disobey the authorities creates a paradox. How could obedience be defined in this situation and whom or what would a girl be taught to obey? Furthermore, would there be any advantages in conforming to the traditions of a patriarchal society, following advice books and teaching a daughter to acknowledge her place as a weaker vessel, encouraging her to practice silence, meekness and passivity or would it be better to abandon this traditional female curriculum? After all recusant activity was frequently neither silent nor passive.

This chapter examines the experiences of Dorothy Arundell, a Catholic woman born into a family facing the challenges of recusant life. It acknowledges her achievements and reflects upon the knowledge and experiences required to accomplish them, whilst considering the nature and content of the educational curriculum which she and her female relations accessed.

Dorothy Arundell was born into one of the wealthiest Catholic families of the South-West peninsular. She was the daughter of Sir John Arundell of Lanherne (1527-1590) and his wife Anne the widow of Lord Stourton and daughter of the Earl of Derby. Both parents were prominent recusants and key supporters of the West Country Catholic community throughout the reign of Elizabeth. Dorothy's father served several terms in prison and

house arrest for supporting Catholic priests and for his alleged support of England's enemies in Spain.[1] However in Cornwall and Dorset, where the family owned estates, he is remembered for loyalty to his country, a belief supported by his command of the Cornish muster during the rising of the northern earls in 1569/70 and professing his willingness to defend Queen Elizabeth against the Pope.[2] Sir John stressed his allegiance to Queen and country nevertheless his family offered the strongest support to Catholicism in Cornwall and Dorset and they were frequently compromised by strong attachment to their faith.[3]

As religion and education were closely entwined, it is reasonable to conclude that Dorothy and her siblings were consciously fashioned preservers of Catholic lifestyle. Consequently, their whole education programme, within an active recusant household, was created to prepare them for religious service. It provided them with spiritual strength and gave them practical skills to employ in supporting recusant communities. Their education was a deliberate construction, contributing to the preservation of faith and providing a defence against pressures to conform to Protestant ways. As this chapter will show, the family educated the

[1] Kate Aughterson, 'Arundell, Dorothy (1559/60–1613)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/68019, accessed Aug 13 2015.
[2] P.D. Cooper, *Propaganda and The Tudor State*(Oxford, 2003), p. 107. Clare Talbot, *Miscellanea: Recusant Records* (London, 1961), p. 115. CSPD Ed VI, Mary, Elizabeth 1547-1580 p. 60 no 27, p. 369 no 57.
[3] A.L. Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* (Redruth, 1941), p.343.

younger generations in preparation for the eventual rebirth of their church in England.

There is little doubt that the curriculum offered to Dorothy and her sisters influenced the choices they made as adults. Three of the sisters, supported by their family, rejected social conformity and the vocation of marriage by becoming nuns. Since there were no convents left in England, the three Arundell women deliberately chose exile to achieve their vocation. Embracing a convent lifestyle, leaving family behind, with the prospect of never returning to England, was a life-changing decision, but it appears that the religious life had been a long-considered vocation. Moreover, this vocation was a direct result of the education they received. Their curriculum prepared them for a religious life of study and contemplation. This was, perhaps, a sensible strategy, since the family's recusant leanings would have made it difficult for its girls to find vocations in marriage with the sons of local, Protestant gentry. However, even before this decline in marital opportunities and prior to the introduction of penalties for non-conformity, which made following religious vocation more challenging, remaining single in secular life was another option for Arundell women. As noted in chapter three, Jane, Dorothy's Great-Aunt, a prospective bride for Thomas Cromwell's son, remained unmarried, supported by the family. There is no indication that single-women were regarded

as failures. Jane's epitaph indicates that she was well respected. She achieved high position at court where she

> served five queens [four of Henry VIII's consorts plus Queen Mary]...lived three score years and twelve...[and she was] esteemed in life...[4]

Jane died in 1577 and judging by the extensive collection of jewellery distributed by her brother to various family members, as directed by her will, she was a wealthy woman unhampered by her single state.[5] Earlier generations of Arundell women had taken the veil.[6] But by the time Dorothy and her two sisters, Cecily and Gertrude determined to enter convents, in the strongly Protestant realm of Elizabeth I, the continental option was all that was available to them and the chance to embrace the life of a choir sister was extremely narrow. Even with the chance to profess overseas, the only order specifically for English women on the continent was the exiled remnant of the Bridgettines of Syon. Attempting to join this order was fraught with difficulties as evidenced by the Syon community's own contemporary account of the order's history in exile, copied and recopied by generations of sisters. The Syon community relate how they arrived at a new base in 1594, explaining that it was

[4] St Mawgan in Pydar Church.
[5] TNA PROB 11/59/515; Christine North, 'The Will and Inventory of Edward Arundell of Treveliew and Lanherne 1539-1586' *Journal of The Royal Institution of Cornwall*, (2001) p. 38.
[6] George James Aungier, *The History and Antiquities of Syon Monasteries*, (London, 1840), p. 50; Syon MS. Morgan/necrology.

> in the kingdom of Portugal, the eighth time they have changed their habitation and country in the space of 37 years. All which time they have been in exile and banishment from their greatly beloved monastery of Sion, these journies being 3 or 4 times by sea and as often by land...[7]

Notwithstanding some degree of hyperbole, this personal account, written mainly in the first person plural, suggests that the journey was perilous. The community had difficulty finding ships, met awkward local governors who, because the nuns claimed to be English and were seen to be disobeying rules for complete enclosure, viewed them with suspicion. Sometimes the group had to take imaginative and desperate measures to avoid contact with anyone who could have been working for the English authorities as their description of an encounter at sea indicates

> We met five Scotch ships...thanks be to God we easily passed them, yet the same morning we saw nine English ships...having just cause to be afraid our Master hoisted his flag as a sign of a man of war and prepared his cloths about his ship like those who get ready to fight...we all put red caps on our heads and pikes in our hands like mariners to make a show that we were many to affright them...[8]

Notwithstanding their limited option and its perils, the sisters remained determined to follow a religious vocation. The latter was held in high regard by Dorothy's father for, according to Dorothy, when he discussed dowries for her and her sister Cecily, he promised the family's priest that

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[7] Syon MORGAN MS 498 p. 8. (*The Wanderings of Syon).*

[8] *ibid.* p. 135.

> their dowry would be even greater if they entered religious life than it would be if they remained lay.[9]

Cecily was the first of the sisters to be professed. She was already a member of the Syon Bridgettines in Lisbon when Dorothy and Gertrude left England to seek their own vocation in 1598. Thomas Robinson noted Sisly Arundell was a choir sister in his, damaging, publication *The Anatomy of The English Nunnery at Lisbon* of 1622.[10] Dorothy promised her confessor, John Cornelius, that she too would become a Bridgettine. However the two sisters chose not to travel to Portugal to be reunited with Cecily, deciding instead to join Lady Mary Percy in Brussels and with her founding a new Benedictine community, the first continental convent created specifically for English exiles.[11]

Breaking a promise which was both religious and vocational, rejecting a sisterly reunion and helping to create a new foundation were serious, life-changing, decisions but the motives behind this are linked to a biography of Cornelius, which Dorothy wrote and circulated from exile. Examining the text of this biography together with an exploration the entry requirements for continental convents and the activities of choir sisters will provide evidence of the educational curriculum Dorothy and her sisters were mostly likely to have

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[9] CM/Craddock Jones folder/*The Acta Of Dorothy Arundell* p.72. (henceforth referenced as *Acta)*. A full description of this folder and its contents is given on page 253p.
[10] G.J. Aungier, *History and Antiquities Of Syon Monastery*, (London, 1840) p. 100.
[11] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* pp. 366-367.

followed before they entered their respective religious houses.

***Rebellion and Martyrdom***

Before unpacking this evidence of Dorothy's education and how the latter led to exile and influenced her Benedictine vocation, it is necessary to set the sisters' experiences within the context of three events which impacted upon their family and drew the attention of the authorities towards Arundell activities: the Prayer Book Rebellion of 1549; the 1577 arrest of Cuthbert Mayne the first seminary priest to be charged with treason; the apprehension of Jesuit John Cornelius in 1594.

In 1549, ten years before Dorothy's birth, the Cornish stood firm against the establishment and protested fiercely against Cranmer's Protestant prayer book. One of the leaders of this protest, Humphrey Arundell was the nephew of Dorothy's Great Grandfather Sir John Arundell.(1474-1545)[12] Under examination, Humphrey protested that he had become leader under pressure from the local community; but this did not spare him from a traitor's death. The direct involvement of a member of their family in an infamous religious protest inevitably marked

[12] J.P.D. Cooper, 'Arundell Humphrey (1512/13-1550) ODBB http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/717 accessed March 28 2016.

future generations of Arundells, as possible disloyal subjects who needed to be watched.[13]

The prayer-book protestors claimed the format of the new services and prayers did not meet the needs of the Cornish. In their eyes the book was not fit for purpose. The reasons in their petition, signed by Humphrey Arundell, could be considered educational, since the protesters stress the need to understand the prayer book's contents.

> We will not receive the new service book because it is like a Christmas game, but we will have *our* old service of Matins, Mass, Evensong and Procession as it was before. And we the Cornish, whereof certain of us understand no English, do utterly refuse the new service[14]

Whether the Cornish claim, that some understood no English is a moot point, since most outside elite circles were not likely to have understood the original Latin used in the old services either. It is likely the real issue was that the original Latin words were familiar to all and part of the rhythms of everyday life. The use of the term 'our old service' shows the petitioners believed Catholic traditions to be part of regular routine. However it was watching and listening that mattered the most, and as theological historian James White points out, for the majority of people, taking part in the services through seeing rather than through reading the liturgy was very important. Mass had acquired a highly numinous quality focusing on the presence of Christ in the consecrated

[13]Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* pp. 281, 288.
[14]A.K. Hamilton-Jenkin, *Cornwall And It's People* (London, 1946), pp. 166-7.

elements. In terms of piety, this meant a focus on seeing Christ visibly present in the bread after consecration. Participation meant basically seeing the host, what is known as ocular communion.[15]

Thus it was an act of witness, being present, seeing Christ lifted up, rather than an intellectual understanding of the words, which was important. This concept of ocular communion and witness played a part in religious education handed to the next generation and it was in Dorothy's mind in the 1590s, when she wrote descriptions of Masses, held in secret, emphasising the importance of being there, seeing with her own eyes and becoming a witness.[16] The petitioners were objecting to change. With the old service, they knew what was expected of them, standing, sitting and praying at the correct time, a situation alluded to, two years before the protest, by Bishop Stephen Gardiner, when he wrote about 'times past' in 1547

> the people in church took small heed what the priests and the clerks did in the chancel, but only to stand up at the Gospel and kneel at the Sacring, or else every man (sic) was occupied himself severally in several [individual] prayer...And therefore it was never meant that people should indeed hear the Matins or hear the Mass, but be present there and pray themselves in silence.[17]

Led by Arundell, the petitioners were demonstrating that change for change sake was not acceptable in their local

[15] J. F. White, *The Sacraments In Protestant Practice And Faith* (Abingdon, 1999), p. 74.
[16] *Acta* p.59.
[17] S. Gardiner , *Letters* ed. J. A. Muller. (Basingstoke, 1933), p. 355.

communities. Furthermore they remind the authorities that if the Protestant church required them to read and understand the words of its services, then those in authority should have thought to provide a text which had the potential to be understood. It is indeed an educational argument. It is not insignificant that the petitioners claimed the old Latin services as their own, declaring 'We will have our old service...'[18] Traditional faith and its rituals belonged to rural communities because of familiarity and connection with the seasonal aspects of country life. It was part of local identity and, as a member of a family which owned a rural estate, it was also informed the Arundell's world-view and it is not surprising that Dorothy's upbringing was strongly linked to respect for traditional Catholic teaching and the preservation of old practices.

Before the Reformation the Arundell family had close connections with the religious authorities, one of Dorothy's ancestors was a bishop, included in Carew's list of

> Cornishmen, whose industrie in learned knowledge hath recommended their fame to their posterity...[since] King Henry 7 promoted John Arundel for his learning, to the sea of Exeter[19]

So careful is Carew to stress the status and esteem of this family, little surprising since his wife was an Arundell, he draws little attention to Humphrey Arundell. With the family's

[18] Hamilton-Jenkin, *Cornwall* p. 167.
[19] Richard Carew, *The Survey Of Cornwall* (London, 1602), p.59.

recusant leanings, Carew avoids drawing attention to earlier Arundell misjudgements. In fact, Humphrey Arundell had been a younger son of a younger son so the Lanherne Arundells managed to hold onto their high esteem for several years. Men and women from the family continued to gain positions at court, secure good marriages for their children and despite their religious affiliation, remained respected by their local community. Carew notes

> The Country people entitle them, The great Arundels; and greatest foke, for love, living and respect, in the Countrey heretofore they bare'[20]

Carew's careful use of the term 'heretofore' might indicate that by 1602, respect for the Arundells had waned, but he avoids any direct suggestion that they had fallen under suspicion and, if he knew the extent to which they Arundells were under the surveillance of the authorities, he chose to remain silent.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, despite their well connected networks, as Dorothy's family continued to worship as devout Catholics, they paid a high price for their persistent loyalty to old traditions, especially the Pope's excommunication of Queen Elizabeth in 1570 when, as Jessie Childs remarks,

> it became more and more difficult for English Catholics to maintain a duel allegiance to their God and their Queen and...acts of religion became to be treasons.[21]

[20] *ibid.* p. 144.

Accusations of involvement in treasonable activity were soon to catch up with Dorothy's family. In April 1570, her Father, refused to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity but, making recognisance to be of good behaviour, he remained, in post as a Deputy Lieutenant.[22] At this stage Arundell appears to have remained on good terms with other local gentry, apart from a falling out with one of the Edgcumbe family in 1576. Richard Grenville intervened, by letter, to affect reconciliation between his 'cousins.[23] However, the following year, Protestant Grenville's attitude was not sympathetic when a notable treason, the harbouring of the seminary priest Cuthbert Mayne, was linked with Dorothy's close kin. Mayne was arrested at Golden Manor, the home of Dorothy's cousin Francis Tregian. Francis was doubly related to the Arundell's, being the son of John's sister Katherine and the husband of his step-daughter, Dorothy's half sister. Following a search of the property, which was led by Grenville himself, Mayne was arrested for treason. Tregian was accused of misprision, the punishment of which was loss of both land and liberty. Rowse suggests that Grenville acted in malice because of envy over marriage alliances and because Tregian and Arundell had upset Grenville and his associates when, on a commission on piracy, both supported men of inland interests against those with interests

[21] Jessie Childs *God's Traitors Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England* (London, 2014), pp. 4-5.
[22] CSPD 1547-80 p. 369 no 57.
[23] CRO AR/25/27.

at sea. Grenville had born a grudge and waited until the Tregian and Arundell's religion delivered them into his hands.[24] Whatever Grenville's motive, it is clear that the raid on Golden was a turning point for the residents of Lanherne. Dorothy was seventeen when the events, which began at Golden and culminated in the execution of Mayne, at Launceston took place and the aftermath affected her vocation.

Connected to the Tregians by blood and marriage, Dorothy's family were now under suspicion and when, at his execution, Mayne spoke of her father as a 'good and godly man' it was the excuse the authorities needed to arrest Sir John. He was released without charge but, from this time onwards, he was instructed to live in London and could not return to his Cornish estates. This made it difficult for him to manage his affairs, as evidenced by a letter sent in 1584 from William Killigrew to Thomas Randall, in which Killigrew explained that 'Sir John is unable to follow his business as he has in the past'[25] It was to become more difficult. A note in the 1586 will of Edward Arundell, John's youngest brother, makes Richard Tremayne a 'friendly assistant for the better performance of [the bequests in the will] for 'the more ease of my brother John' The head of the Lanherne Arundells was now imprisoned.[26] With John absent from his estates, Edward, as the former's only surviving brother, began to divide his time

[24] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* pp.345, 347.
[25] CRO AR 17/10.
[26] CRO AR 21/21.

between Cornwall and London, where John had a Clerkenwell property, but Edward had properties and interests of his own so it fell to the women of John's household to take on more responsibilities for the running of both household and estates.[27]

Women made a concerted effort to preserve the family's religious traditions, provide support for the recusant community and assist fugitive, missionary priests. For a while, according to an anonymous local historian, the women were cushioned by large revenues from the family's tin mines but in the later years of Elizabeth's reign, when seminary priests were proclaimed traitors, the women's

> Catholic traditions steadily affected both wealth and social standing, especially once it was known, unofficially by locals and officially through informers, that they often harboured one or more Catholic chaplains under their roof.'[28]

However even with this knowledge, it seems that the authorities could not weaken the women's resolve to live and worship according to their own consciences.

> Through harassment, fines, examinations [of their male relatives] before the Privy Council and prison sentences [for the men] they [the authorities] tried to wipe out this great family and force them to recant their beliefs but they found that the Arundells were too wealthy to be extinguished and too loyal to be proscribed.[29]

[27] North, 'Will and Inventory' p. 39.
[28] Chideock Martyrs' Museum Arundell exhibition note, 2014.
[29] *ibid.*

This irritated Richard Grenville who told the Privy Council that priests were being hidden by the Arundells at their Chideock property in Dorset.[30] This was likely true but it took until 1594 before a priest could be arrested on Arundell property. This was John Cornelius, the family's chaplain and Dorothy's spiritual advisor. Cornelius, previously known as John Mohun, grew up in Cornwall and was a protégé of Dorothy's father. Sir John encountered Cornelius as a child and had been impressed with the boy's dedication to study, the child preferred reading to play. Consequently the Arundells took him into their household providing for his education.[31] He and Dorothy grew up together as Sir John prepared and encouraged Cornelius for entry to Oxford University. It is possible that they were educated together. Dorothy's account of the events at Chideock implies that Cornelius and she had a special spiritual and educational relationship and his final letter to her confirms this.[32] The two young people took their religious faith seriously and Cornelius became Dorothy's spiritual advisor. According to Yepes, Dorothy was Cornelius' spiritual daughter, whilst Bartoli calls her a disciple. It was Cornelius who persuaded her to follow her religious calling.[33] The family supported Cornelius whilst he was at Exeter

[30] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 239.
[31] Henry Foley, *Records of The English Province Society of Jesus*, Vol I (London, 1875), p. 435.
[32] *Acta* p.69.
[33] Diego de Yepes, *Historia Particular* (Madrid, 1599), p. 637-8; Danielo Bartoli, *Dell'Istoria Della Compagnia di Giesu L'Inghilterra* (Rome, 1667), p. 352.

College, Oxford and at the English College in Rome. In the eyes of the state, Cornelius committed a treasonable act by training overseas and returning to England to mission. He lived, secretly, with the Arundells for eleven years, mostly with Dorothy's Father, at Clerkenwell.[34] In 1590, he made his base Chideock Castle, where, at his suggestion, Lady Anne and her daughters resided after John Arundell died.[35] It was here, shortly after Easter 1594, that he was arrested. At his arrest, Dorothy challenged the arresting officers and claimed that she alone was responsible for hiding the priest.[36] After various examinations and a trial at Dorchester, Cornelius was condemned to death. Whilst awaiting execution he and Dorothy remained in contact and Cornelius sent messages to Dorothy in his final hours, exhorting her to become a Bridgettine nun, promising to mention her to Saint Bridget once he reached heaven and signing the letter as her friend and teacher.[37]

***New Responsibilities***

Further narrative histories related to Dorothy's family and the struggle to remain Catholic in Protestant England are accessible in regional studies, traditional guide books and local hagiography. It is beyond the remit of this thesis to rehearse them here. However, what is clear from these narratives is the ease and confidence with which Dorothy's

[34] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 358.
[35] *Acta* p. 60.
[36] *Acta* p. 63; Bartoli *Dell'Istoria* p. 355.
[37] *Acta* pp. 68-69; Yepes, *Historia Particular* p. 637-638.

mother Anne, Dorothy herself and other Arundell and Tregian women took over leadership roles when their male relatives were forcibly absent.[38] This raises questions, about how the women were able to perform these extra duties with authority. There is a great deal of difference between supporting a husband or father and taking over all his responsibilities alongside one's own. Even with stewards to keep track of accounts, the women must have learned household and estate management. As well as these duties, it was now essential to maintain kinship and community networks and find ways to preserve the family's wealth. This was no easy task since, as the biographer of Cuthbert Mayne puts it, Dorothy's generation, labelled recusant, was different from its predecessors with fewer opportunities.

> No hope of Court preferment and a satisfactory marriage alliance for many of them. Daughters of a family conspicuous for its refusal to conform, they were shut out of the charmed circle.[39]

***Education for Religious Vocation***

As chapter three demonstrated, education was vocational. Considering this, was the curriculum offered to Arundell girls deliberately constructed to provide them with skills for what was, in essence, a non-conforming vocation? Answering this question is not without difficulties since there are no educational programmes or subject listings within the family

[38] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* 342-379; Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* ( pp. 232-251; Anon, *Chideock Its Catholic History and Its Martyrs* (Chideock, 2008).
[39] Helen Whelan, *Snow On The Hedges* (Leominster, 1984), p.84.

records. However by taking the experiences, reported activities and achievements of Dorothy as a starting point and noting the skills and acumen she must have employed in order to accomplish them, it becomes possible to glean information on her knowledge and practical skills base.

After her father's imprisonment, Dorothy worked alongside her mother becoming an active and confident leader of the recusant community. Dorothy taught newly reconciled women, at the behest of John Cornelius and it is highly unlikely that a learned man would entrust this teaching to a woman unless he considered her competent.[40] This further supports the suggestion that Cornelius and Dorothy learned together in their youth. Since Cornelius was Dorothy's spiritual advisor she continued to learn in partnership with him as an adult. Instructing the faithful and teaching their children was a serious undertaking and there is evidence of the existence of a home school at Chideock, where Dorothy and Cornelius taught. Adults and children of both sexes studied there and several students are recorded as having found religious vocations. At least four women became nuns. [41] John Tremaine attended the College at Rome; in his resume he declares that he first studied at Chideock.[42]

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[40] *Acta* p. 59.
[41] Elizabth Patton 'From Community To Convent' in Caroline Bowden and James E. Kelly (eds.) *The English Convents In Exile, 1600-1800 Communities, Culture and Identity* (Farnham, 2013), p. 26.
[42] *Responsa Scholarum* ed. Anthony Kenny, CRS, 54 (London, 1962), p. 283.

One aspect of Arundell girls' educational provision is clear; loyalty to religion took precedence over obedience to local and state authority. Neither does their curriculum appear to have stressed the womanly virtue of silence nor could it have followed the advice of Vives, to encourage girls to avoid drawing attention towards themselves. Arundell women were not silent and obedient. Both Dorothy and her younger sister Gertrude appear confident in their recusancy, making no effort to hide it. The pair were each fined £140 for not attending church and they are both reported to the authorities for attending sermons, talks and secret Masses in London.[43] Openly, they visited Catholics in prison, including the Jesuit priest and poet Robert Southwell. Walsingham's secretary received a spy's report of a sermon on Mary Magdalene, given by Southwell at a 'banquet' in the Marshalsea. Amongst the guests were 'three gentlewomen, very brave in their attire two of them daughters of Sir John Arundell.'[44] Southwell demonstrated his admiration for Dorothy, her knowledge, her faith and her support of recusants, by dedicating a version of this sermon, to her in 1591. Entitled *Mary Magdalene's funeral tears* it contains descriptions of the qualities Southwell ascribes to

[43] TNA Recusancy Roll 3-36-7 Elizabeth; SPD Elizabeth 1591-94 p. 176 no 35.
[44] Christopher Devlin, *The Life of Robert Southwell; Poet and Martyr* (London, 1956), p. 119.

the Magdalene, who, through faith, feared no encounters, but these could also be found in Dorothy herself.[45]

Working with her mother, Dorothy continued to support the Catholic community after Cornelius' arrest. The women contrived to support recusants by stressing that their actions are simply womanly duties of hospitality. This tactic indicates that their actions were planned not whimsical. The family, realising that Sir John would no longer be at the helm of affairs, made contingency plans and invested much in the knowledge and skills of its women. The actions of Lady Anne and Dorothy were a major source of irritation to the local authorities. Ralph Horsey, George Trenchard and John Williams reported to Lords Puckering and Buckhurst in June 1594, whilst preparing for the trial of John Cornelius

> notwithstanding he [Cornelius] is accounted harmless by his favourites; his repair, with that of the others not yet taken, to the lady's house has nursed up many ill imps and given comfort to ill subjects, whereby the country is drawn back from the service of God; [We] desire the lady may be removed to her friends or placed with the sheriff of the county; if she continue where she is now resident, it will breed further mischief, for under colour of great hospitality and bounty to the poor many are driven to her faction...[46]

The activities and experiences of Dorothy, her mother and sister mirror those of numerous women within recusant households, who in the absence of their male relatives, found the strength and moreover, had the necessary wit to defy the

[45] Robert Southwell, *Marie Magdalen's Funerall Teares* (London, 1823) pp. iii, 199-200.
[46] CSPD Elizabeth 15 11-94 p. 521 no 15.

authorities. These women transformed their houses into miniature churches, housing priests and providing resources, namely, vestments, devotional items and religious books. They were able to use the common perception of women as weak and the instruction to obey to confound male authority; since they were simply being obedient and performing womanly duties. In addition Arundell women were virtually immune from prosecution, despite family assets; according to common law, their property and possessions technically belonged to the family's, absent men, who could not be held responsible for the activities at Chideock since they could not reside there.[47]

***Preparing for Bridgettine Life***

Three of John Arundell's daughters became nuns in exile. Education, preparing the girls for this vocation required active encouragement of disobedience. Sending children overseas to train as religious was a treasonable act so all Catholics who chose exile abroad for the sake of their religious vocation were, in legal terms, rebels, fugitives and traitors.[48] Fulfilling ones vocation within the cloister was fraught with difficulties, especially as seeking to become religious was synonymous with perpetual exile.[49] Nevertheless, in John Arundell's eyes, religious life remained estimable and

[47] Alice Hogge, *God's Secret Agents* (New York, 2005),pp. 200-201; Marie Rowlands 'Recusant Women 1560-1640' in Mary Prior (ed.) *Women In English Society 1500-1800* (London, 1985) pp 149-80.
[48] Claire Reid, 'Anthony Copley and The Politics of Catholic Loyalty 1590-1604' *Sixteenth Century Journal* XLIII no. 2 (2012), p.396.
[49] Laurence Lux-Sterritt, *Redefining Female Religious Life* (Aldershot, 2005) pp. 12-13.

achievable. He was prepared to provide large dowries to support his daughters' convent life. It is reasonable to assume that, to match this monetary commitment, a good part of the educational provision made for the girls included preparation for the vocation of choir sister. If Dorothy and her sisters wished to be members of a convent of fellow Englishwomen, then their only option was to prepare to enter the community of the Bridgettines of Syon, the only surviving English community. Therefore, examining the entry requirements of the Bridgettine order together with some of the activities expected of its postulants, novices and choir sisters must provide clues to the content of the education syllabus offered to the Arundell girls. It is not inconceivable that their parents created a programme of instruction to ensure that their daughters were perfect candidates for the Bridgettine life, investing in their education and including the subject matter, recommended by the Bridgettines. At the very least this would involve encouraging the girls to read widely, since members of the Bridgettine order had always been connected with scholarship and learning. The Bridgettine sisters had a pronounced reverence for books.[50] Furthermore, it is likely that their studies included Classical languages since the Bridgettine novices of Syon Abbey were having Latin lessons, from priests, before the community was forced into exile and

[50] Elizabeth Perry, 'Petitioning for Patronage: An Illuminated Tale of Exile From Syon Abbey, Lisbon' in Bowden and Kelly *The English Convents* P.165.

some of the oldest extant books and manuscripts belonging to the community's library are Latin texts.[51] The Arundells owned numerous books in Latin including an edition of *Aesop's Fables*, a text often used for introducing young people to the language and especially favoured by Thomas More for use in his home school for girls.[52] Dorothy and her sisters had plenty of resources available to them.

The Bridgettine's founder, St. Bridget, placed study at the centre of convent life when she compiled her version of the monastic day. Reading, to assist contemplation and prayer, was central to the Bridgettine life.[53] Bridgettine nuns took a vow of poverty, nevertheless the order's rule allowed and expected its sisters to have an unlimited supply of books for personal study. Preparation for entry was assumed because women were supposed to equip themselves with suitable books before entering the community. A number of the nuns are known to have owned books in English, French or Latin.[54] This is not surprising since most of the Syon nuns were from wealthy families. Eleanor and Dorothy Fettypace, the half-sisters of the humanist writer Sir Thomas Elyot were Bridgettines and in families, like theirs, learning could be afforded as well as prized. Some of the nuns, like the Fettypace sisters, appear

[51] David N Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Medieval English Nunneries* (Michigan, 1995); University of Exeter SYON MS 262.
[52] CRO AR21/22; John Guy, *A Daughter's Love* (London, 2008), pp. 15-16.
[53] Virginia Bainbridge, 'Syon Abbey:women and learning C 1415-1600' in E A Jones and Alexandra Walsham (eds.) *Syon Abbey and Its Books; Reading, Writing and Religion c. 1400-1700* (Woodbridge, 2010), p. 177.
[54] *ibid.* p. 84.

to have been educated via a humanist syllabus prior to their clothing.[55] The Arundell sisters were preparing for life in a community where female reading and writing activities were cultivated. Education was a central part of convent life. Bridgettine sisters were trained, by members of the college of priests, for a contemplative vocation in which reading, philosophy and theology were important components. The sisters were required to meditate on prayers, passages of scripture and other devotional texts. As they progressed they were expected to master more complex theological works. Texts were provided to help them perfect their skills. *The Orchard of Syon*, an English version of the *Dialogues of St. Catherine of Siena*, was printed for the nuns in the early sixteenth century.According to Sister Mary Denise RSM the orchard was printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1519 which is when it received it's title.[56] It was divided into sections for regular meditation.[57] *The Myroure Of Oure Ladye* was created for the sisters, by a priest.[58] This outlined the rigorous study methods required for advanced contemplation and literacy.[59] Bridgettine sisters were encouraged to be erudite; many of them owned copies of devotional treatises. Their reading was prescribed, with books chosen for them and ways to study them

[55] M Hutchison, 'What The Nuns Read' *Medieval Studies* 57 (1995) 206-22; Bainbridge 'Syon Abbey' pp.84,90.
[56] Sister Mary Denise RSM, 'The Orchard of Syon An Introduction' *Traditio* 14 (1958), pp. 269, 273.
[57] Bainbridge, 'Syon Abbey' pp.86, 91.
[58] Thomas Gascoigne, *The Myroure of Oure Ladye*: very necessary for all relyggous persons (London, 1530).
[59] Hutchingson, 'What The Nuns Read' pp. 208-13.

set out by spiritual directors.[60] As Dorothy's spiritual director, aware of her vocation, John Cornelius was preparing her for this Syon practice. Bridgettine sisters were encouraged to make notes from their reading. Notes, made by individual nuns, from the Lisbon community, can still be seen in many of their books and some of their personal notebooks survive.[61] Bridgettine scholarship was well known; it was deliberately publicised with the skills of the community advertised beyond the walls of the cloister before exile. A woodcut, showing the community's founder seated at a writing desk whilst listening to an angel dictating, appears in early to mid sixteenth century books linked to Syon.[62] Until exile, the community was involved in the production and circulation of printed books destined for a wide readership beyond the cloister, including works of a religious nature and conduct books for householders. The community's high regard for learning as an activity for both sexes was therefore known in Catholic circles.[63] As his daughters were serious in their intentions to join Syon and engage in the convent's scholarship, their parents would have enabled them to have wide reading experience.

[60] Caroline Bowden, 'Books and Reading at Syon Abbey, Lisbon in the seventeenth century' in Jones and Walsham *Syon Abbey* p.181.
[61] Syon BOX 28.
[62] E.A Jones, *England's Last Medieval Monastery Syon Abbey 1415-2015* (Leominster, 2015), p.37-39.
[63] *ibid.* p. 37.

Dorothy Arundell was born just as the Syon community was establishing itself in the Spanish Netherlands. Throughout her childhood and adolescence, since the Bridgettine vocation was important to her, she must have been aware of the importance of education and what depth of study would be required of her. She must also have taken note of the nuns' European travels. If the Arundell sisters were potential members of its convent it would be logical for the family to remain informed on the whereabouts of the community. The group moved to Rouen in 1580 and from here the nuns kept in contact with their families via missionary priests, who called to say Mass before carrying personal messages back to England. From exile, information about the sister's routines was reaching the Catholic community and informing would-be members about the scholarship to which they must aspire.[64]

Fourteen years later, on 8 April 1594, twenty two Bridgettine sisters and eight brothers left Rouen for Newhaven from whence they embarked for Portugal. They arrived at Lisbon on 20 May. Amongst their most valuable possessions were five crates of books which the sisters took with them across Europe.[65] Since we know that Cicely Arundell, a member of the Lisbon community, preceded her sisters into holy orders it is likely that she was one of the twenty two book-carrying sisters. During their exile the nuns of Syon continued to be actively

[64] SYON MORGAN MS 498 MS p. 172 p. 146 *Wanderings of Syon.*
[65] Jones, *Last Medieval Monastery* p.72.

involved in scholarship. Their library, of manuscript and printed books, included psalters and books of hours but some nuns owned theological works.[66] Surviving works, include handwritten books produced, by Syon brothers, for the sisters. These are in English but there are books in other languages as well as translations by members of the community. The nuns selected books from their library for personal study and borrowed texts from Syon brothers. A handwritten book of English prayers, created in 1627, contains a list entitled 'Bookes of my owne handwriting lent to the sisters.' This includes books suitable for advanced study and works for those new to religious life. The sisters were reading spiritual biography, *The Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury*, books of meditations *The Little Handbasket of The Mother* and *The Indulgences of The Girdle of St. Augustine*, theological works, *The Epistles of St. Bernard* and *The Soliloquies of Thomas A Kempis*. Sister Dorothie, new to study, has borrowed *A Little English Catechism,* whilst Sister Ursula is reading an account of The Campaigne of Navare.[67] Handwritten instructions to help the nuns in study and contemplation were also provided. These show that much of their learning was expected to be conducted on a self-study basis. In some texts, such as *A Posy For A Virgin's Bosom* the women are provided with a study-guide.

[66] Bainbridge, 'Syon Abbey' p.86.
[67] SYON Box 28 MS 2. As these books are recorded, by the writer of the prayers, as handwritten the copies must have been created over several years before 1627. Angela Mandriol from Exeter University Special Collections dates other handwritten books produced for the nuns as early 17th century. SYON listing provided by Mandriol August 4 2016.

> Briefe and chosen rules for meditation, very useful for those that are not sufficiently instructed in how to meditate.[68]

In some works short passage of scripture, in Latin, followed by an English translation and then a series of structured activities under headings such as read, consider, thanksgiving, petition, offering and conclusion are provided. In others guided reading leads to more personal meditations linked to changes in behaviour. The reading nun is instructed to 'reflect, ponder, learn, imitate and find yourself.'[69] Private reading was seen as a spiritual duty and a light was always left burning until the morning was bright enough to read without it. Learning was to be encouraged at all times, with the education of young sisters spurred on by the example of the old.[70] Caroline Bowden points out that the Bridgettine nuns were not passive readers, they had a complex relationship with books. They bought and collected them, read them privately and aloud. They annotated books, translated, edited collections and dedicated books to other people. They cared for books in their library, repairing and re-copying them when necessary.[71] Dorothy and her sisters were studying in preparation for membership of a pro-active literate community.

Bridgettine sisters also engaged with political and religious debates becoming named authors of books and pamphlets in

[68] SYON MS 262 add 1/60. P.10.
[69] *ibid.* p.12; SYON Box 28 no 17.
[70] SYON MS 262 add 1/30 p. 65ff.
[71] Bowden, 'Books and reading' p.180.

support of their order's continued survival and about questions of national and religious identity. Included in their library were books to facilitate writing of defiant, explicitly political texts and histories in both print and manuscript.[72] Cecily Arundell was living in the Syon community when the community composed and illuminated a manuscript telling their own history. Part of this manuscript was written in the first person plural voice, speaking as a confident, collective body. The nuns of the order of St. Bridget were skilled in the rhetorical pen and engaged in written political debate.[73]

It is inconceivable that John Arundell, aware of the activities of the exiled sisters, would not have ensured his daughters developed these skills, in order to be fully participant in the Bridgettine community. Learning to read widely, in more than one language, write fluently and present a reasoned argument would have prepared Dorothy and her sisters for the challenges which lay ahead in exile. This education would have also given Dorothy the skills she used to write a biography of of Cornelius, which was quoted and copied by other writers. Moreover, being in possession of these skills explains why Dorothy was so confident in challenging those in authority when her home in Chideock was raided and

[72] Jenna D. Lay, 'The literary Lives of Nuns: Crafting identity through exile' Bowden and Kelly, *English Convents* pp.77-79.
[73] *ibid.* p.77-79.

Cornelius was arrested. Coincidentally, on the same day, two Arundell sisters were directly involved in the preservation of Catholic faith, the task for which they had both been fashioned; Dorothy was enduring the first search of Chideock and Cecily was en-route to Lisbon with her Bridgettine sisters.[74]

Dorothy and Gertrude became Benedictines, founding a new community. Recent studies on nun's 'distributions of time' have shown that in new foundations too, scholarship and reading became central to daily routine.[75]

***Further evidence of female education***

The academic requirements for membership of the Syon community provide a guide to the vocational preparation required of Arundell girls but other primary sources cast additional light on the educational experiences of female family members, illustrating how the education of the young became vital in a family which was increasingly drawn into the struggle to preserve Catholic traditions. They show how the women's experience of education changed, during periods of crisis. When personal conscience was at odds with the requirements for outward demonstrations of loyalty to the state, the education of the young took on new significance.

[74] *Acta* p. 61.
[75] Heather Wolfe 'Reading, Bells and Loose Papers: reading and writing practices of the English Benedictine nuns of Cambrai and Paris' in Victoria F. Burke and Jonathan Gibson (eds.), *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Writing* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 124-56: Caroline Bowden, 'A Distribution of Tyme: Reading and Writing Practices of The English Convents in Exile' *Tulse Studies In Women's Literature* 31 no 1/2 2012 pp. 99-116.

Evidence on Arundell values can be gleaned from probate documents. Several wills, directly or indirectly, refer to education or the acquiring of knowledge. Some of the testators are women and male testators refer to women. Comparing the instructions of pre-Reformation and post-Reformation will makers shows the extent of Arundell accommodation to religious and political change but also highlights beliefs and practices which could not be given up lightly. These, the testators handed down to the next generation. Studying their wills throws light on a religious curriculum preserved for Dorothy and her siblings.

The will of Katherine Arundell makes a good point of reference. It provides a detailed example of a pre-Reformation will. When compared with the last wishes of Elizabeth Arundell, Dorothy's grandmother, set out in 1564, the two documents show how the family adapted their thinking on personal possessions, disposing of them in different ways, once a traditional Catholic lifestyle was no longer the norm. Katherine Arundell died in 1479. She was the second wife of John Arundell of Lanherne (d.1473) Katherine married again, but was widowed once more. In her will she makes no mention of her third husband but styles herself 'late wife of John Arundell, knight.'[76] Nicholas Orme points out that Katherine's continued use of the Arundell name indicates that her chief

[76] CRO AR/217.

loyalties lay with that family. This is understandable because her son Thomas Arundell was the lawful heir of her castle in Chideock, the property central to Dorothy's story.[77]

As a devout Catholic, a major part of Katherine's will consists of instructions for her formal burial obligations, spanning three counties, placed on the friars of Exeter, Dorchester and Bodmin to say masses for her soul. Katherine gave churches, in all three counties, gifts which she describes in great detail. Her daughters Margaret and Dorothy are to have all her gowns, with anything they do not require going to a servant. Two books feature in the will, both of a religious nature but these she does not pass on to family members. Her Mass Book is left to the church of St Mawgan-in-Pydar and her psalter book is handed to William, another servant.[78]

In wills made by later generations requests for complicated burial and remembrance rituals disappear but books, especially those of a religious nature, become far more significant. They are listed and described in great detail and, unlike Katherine's books, they never pass out of family hands. By the time Dorothy's grandmother Elizabeth Arundell compiled her will in 1564 individual objects are invested with new meaning. They become agents of education since the recipient is placed under specific obligation to care for them and to remember

[77] Nicholas Orme, *Cornish Wills* 1342-1540. (Exeter, 2007), p. 212.
[78] CRO AR/217.

everything they represent. They are educational resources, ensuring the preservation of Catholic faith. Elizabeth Arundell's will shows that she was determined to die a devout Catholic. In 1564, some six years into the reign of a Protestant queen, Elizabeth defiantly bequeaths her 'soul to God and Blessed Virgin Mary' and sums of money 'to the store of the church'. To one of her younger sons, Edward, she leaves her personal religious books. These were clearly precious and in daily use, for she kept them 'in her chamber' and included psalters in French and Latin.[79] Elizabeth's personal items appear again in Edward's will, made over twenty years later in 1586, where they take on a new importance and value. It is though Edward's will that we begin to understand their new worth and significance, both as family heirlooms and as educational artefacts.[80] Elizabeth leaves her daughter Cecily a 'primer' but the bulk of her reading material, listed, in her inventory as 'one boke of gold and one library conteyning certeyne bokes' went to her eldest son John, Dorothy's father.[81] The term 'certeyne' is significant. If these books were of a religious nature then it may have been unwise to name them individually. However the fact that Edward received named religious books is thought provoking. It could be that Elizabeth judged him to be the most devout and therefore the best custodian of cherished religious items but equally it

[79]CRO AR/21/15.
[80]CRO AR/21/21.
[81]CRO AR/21/16.

might have been a decision made of practical necessity. As a younger son and not the heir to Arundell estates, Edward was in a better position to protect religious artefacts; he would not be the focus of attention for investigation into illicit Catholic activities at the Arundell's main manor of Lanherne. Edward's will implies he may have been particularly devout. The value he places on the family's Catholic faith and his hope that younger relatives will hold fast to traditions becomes clear in remarks made about individual items. The devotional books, bequeathed by his mother, together with other items inherited from her, are given enhanced status and extended religious significance when they appear as his bequests. They become metaphors for the survival of family belief and practice, tools to educate the next generation, fashioning them into loyal Catholics.

For post-Reformation testators, individual items are worth more than their simple monetary value. They are significant because of a previous owner but this significance is more than sentimental. A gift of a psalter obviously has religious significance but Elizabeth's bequests of beads to daughters, daughters-in-law, granddaughters and goddaughters could refer to religious items, such as rosaries. When gifting devotional items to female beneficiaries, Elizabeth is passing on a message, asking the women to hold fast to their faith, just as she did. Moreover, when Edward gifts items, to female kin,

which had previously belonged to Elizabeth, he is most specific, attaching religious and moral obligations to them, though he is careful to substitute the world virtue for religion.

> I give to my niece Dorothye Arundell my rope of pearls that was sometime her granddames my mother and a little diamond ring that was also hers and forty shillings to make her a signet and before God to make her a follower of that good grandame's life. Also I give and bequeath to my niece, my goddaughter, Elizabeth Arundell my best diamond ring.....that was her granddames, my mother, trying likewise that she will remember to follow the virtue of that granddame...[82]

Fashioning oneself, in order to be seen as one living virtuously, was essential for a woman's reputation and, as evidenced in the advice books, it was not uncommon for women of a previous generation to be presented as role models; nevertheless Edward's will contains far more emphasis on special tokens than his Grandmother Katherine's pre-Reformation document. Edward's wishes turn every gift into an aspect of a continuous religious and moral education. They represent spiritual guidance and reminders of the family's Catholic heritage. Each bequest is a lesson for the next generation. By asking the young women to 'follow the virtue' of his mother Edward is encouraging his young relatives to live openly as good Catholics, no matter how difficult this might be in the realm of a Protestant Queen. The testator matches many of the significant items with the most suitable

[82] CRO AR/21/21.

female recipient. The latter is required to respect and cherish it and in addition she must contemplate its deeper significance. These gifts are now religious artefacts, the care of them an educational task. As teaching aids, filled with significance related to the values of Catholicism, they betoken the memory of a devout woman, who persevered in her faith despite all pressures to conform and change. Edward invokes the memory of Elizabeth and transforms her into a role model and moral example for Arundell women. When they remember Elizabeth they are learning about their role in preserving inherited beliefs and values. This reinforces their responsibilities as Catholic women, the family's religious educators.

It is not altogether surprising that a Catholic family took steps to ensure that religious education remained a vital component of the upbringing and socialisation process. Edward's will is a strong statement of Arundell commitment to Catholicism; in essence a miniature religious education syllabus, for the next generation of Catholic women.

Whilst providing children with religious education was of immense importance to Dorothy's family further examination of post-Reformation probate documents shows other subject areas were not neglected.

Statements and bequests indicate that Dorothy's family valued acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Wills and inventories show that women were encouraged to participate in learning. Books and musical instruments are handed down the generations, with individual items described in detail. Frequently the beneficiaries are women. Edward Arundell was conscious of his religion but he had other interests, including the arts. He owned Dutch paintings and amongst the secular items in his will was his 'best lute'. Owning more than one musical instrument suggests more than a passing interest in music, especially as Edward also owned an instruction book and score. This best lute is left to his nephew John, Dorothy's brother, but, significantly, Edward instructs that the instrument is to be 'bestowed' on John's wife, Anne Jernigan. Why Anne was not the named beneficiary is a mystery. Perhaps Edward wanted to ensure it did not pass out of the family should his brother pre-decease her. The lute was a fine instrument, looked after with care and kept in a case of crimson velvet embroidered all over with gold. This suggests that the best lute was a valued and protected item, rather than one left out for show.[83] Edward's inventory gives this lute a value of £1 and a second lute was noted which was worth 2s. The inventory also includes a 'book for the lute'[84] Isidoro Roitman, performer, researcher and teacher of renaissance lute, believes this musical bequest to be significant, an acknowledgement of a woman's ability to play

[83] CRO AR/21/21.
[84] CRO AR/21/22.

it, otherwise why express the need for her to have it. Anne must have been a good musician since women and girls were frequently encouraged to favour the 'easier' female instruments such as the virginals or harp.[85]

Information is gleaned on the types of books favoured by the Arundell family from a list of titles in Edward's inventory of 1586. Whilst some of this reading matter was kept at Edwards house in Treveliew, most of the collection was housed at Lanherne, where it could be accessed by all the Arundells. Significantly, it was not locked away unlike books and documents Edward wanted to remain private which he kept in a locked trunk and a painted box and were only to be perused by John Arundell and Mr Tremayne, secretly, after Edward's death.[86] Edward was not the only reader in the family, since he inherited at least two books from his mother and the latter's will refers to her own library. It is therefore not implausible to suggest that all family members had a wide reading experience and that some female readers were as interested in as wide a variety of subjects as the men. Indeed Edward's copy of Machiavelli's *Il Principe*, now held by the Bodleian library, contains inscriptions and comments from him, Mary and Jane Arundell.[87]

Included in the book collection are

[85] Isidoro Roitman, *La Pazzia Del Ballo* Performance (Saltford, 2016); Steph Haxton, *Tudor Women's Lives*, lecture at Trelissick (January, 2009).
[86] North, Will and Inventory of Edward p.43.
[87] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il Principe* (Firenze, 1532),BOD 4° M 48(3).

> one old cronacle with cover gilte. A cronacle of parchment in metre [a poem] which was Lady Lumley's. A French Cronacle of England and Scotland. A French Treatise of the three Marys, A French History of Theseus, An old French boke of Pears Forest, One hundred considerations of love in French, The Life of Christ in French, 2 psalters, The dial of princes, the History of Italy, Plato in French, a French dictionary, Clement Maralte in French, a New Testament in Latin, the commentaries of Alphansus in Spanish, Justine [Justinian?] in French, Marcus Arelius in French Cicero's Tullies Epistles in French, Tresure of bokes of love in French, Theature of the worlde in French, Diognes of the life of philosphie in Latin, The recreations of Bonaventer in French, a chronicle in French, A book for the lute, A treasise [no title] of French and Englishe, Aesop's Fables in Latin A paraphrase and the psalmes in French, another little French book, old, Summa Geographie in French…[88]

Also listed is 'A pair of spectacles' which indicates that the books were read rather than artefacts as a demonstration of wealth. The lutes and their associated book plus lute strings are included, which also suggests, that this was a practical collection. In addition, when officials apprehended Cornelius at Chideock, they confiscated a whole library of books, carrying them away to use as potential evidence.[89] This, added to the information on the Castle's home school suggests women had access to the wide variety of subjects covered in the collections.

Religious books and commentaries on Scripture form the majority of the collection, nevertheless other titles suggest interest in the ancient and contemporary world, since classical works and geographical texts, including, *Theatre of*

[88] CRO AR/21/22.
[89] *Acta* p. 62.

*The World* an expensive atlas, feature. Readers were able to read in several languages including Latin, Spanish and French, though sometimes they required a bilingual dictionary. They read poetry. If the *Recreations of Bonaventure in French* refer to the French humanist Bonaventure Des Periers' short stories of 1588 *Nouvelles Recreation Et Joyeux*, or *Novel Pastimes and Merry Tales,* readers had a sense of humour and were not offended by crude remarks and jokes aimed at Catholic priests.[90] If the Bonaventure in question was the thirteenth century Italian, Franciscan philosopher who wrote theological treatises, then Dorothy and her family had access to reading matter approved by the Bridgettines of Syon. The anonymous 'cronacles' suggest engagement with English, Italian, Scottish and French history. Aesop's Fables was basic early reading matter for children beginning their humanist education.[91] The number of philosophical titles further indicate more than a passing engagement with a humanist educational syllabus. The family had access to a wide selection of classical, theological and educational texts so Dorothy and her sisters had plenty of resources at their disposal as they prepared for Bridgettine life.

***Agency and authorship***

Dorothy Arundell, with younger sister Gertrude at her side, did more than follow the virtue of her grandmother, playing a

[90] Britannica.com/biography/Bonaventure-Des-Periers accessed 2.11.15.
[91] Guy, *Daughter's Love* pp.15-16.

leading part in recusant activities. She encouraged reconciliation, supported priests and taught members of the local community. Unbeknown to her, spies were reporting her activities to local and state authorities as she attended secret Masses and sermons and visited imprisoned priests and lay Catholics, including her cousin Francis. 'A mass was said...at Mr Pale's house Clerkenwell...Mrs Arundell and her maid and the woman of the house were present.'[92] These visits were not difficult to accomplish. Dorothy's step-sister, the wife of Francis Tregian was able to visit her husband and allowed to live alongside him in the Fleet, giving birth to several children during their sojourn there.[93] The prisons were so mismanaged that Catholic prisoners could receive 'Correspondence from without, repair from one to another...perform mass and be...relieved with meat and money.' because servants and wardens were easily bribed.[94]

When the two sisters finally left England, to work with Lady Mary Percy, founding the first Benedictine convent created especially for English exiles, their motives are unclear. There are several possible reasons why the sisters became Benedictines rather than joining Cecily in Lisbon. According to Dorothy, Cecily died before taking her final vows, so the sisters believed she was dead.[95] This mistake is understandable

[92] CSPD Elizabeth 1591-94 p. 176 no 35.
[93] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* pp 353-354.
[94]CSPD 1581-90 p. 555 no 61.
[95] *Acta* p. 72.

since contact with Syon would have been lost when the community was travelling to Lisbon in 1594. Communication between the Bridgettines and their families, via missionary priests, ceased when they left France. On the other hand, the records of their Benedictine community, suggest Dorothy and Gertrude set out from England for Lisbon but were driven to Flanders by poor sea conditions. This account notes Dorothy and Gertrude living at an Augustinian convent before seeking the support of the Jesuits.[96] In 1596, whilst living, under vows of chastity and obedience in Brussels, under the spiritual guidance of William Holt, the sisters met Mary Percy. They lived with other elite English women exiles who had taken a similar vow.[97] Dorothy believed she had received a vision of Cornelius releasing her from her Bridgettine vow and approving her Benedictine vocation.[98] It seems more likely that joining Mary Percy more suited her purpose of encouraging the English recusant community. The Bridgettines encouraged sisters to study in order to enhance their personal relationship with God. From the outset, the new Benedictine community had a more public and political profile, better suited to Dorothy's mission. This community was founded with the eyes of Europe upon it and the clothing of its first eight nuns, including Dorothy and Gertrude, in 1599 was a

[96] *Chronicle of The First Monastery Founded at Brussels* (Bergholt, 1898) p 3.
[97] Paul Arblaster, 'The Monastery of Our Lady of The Assumption in Brussels 1599-1794' *English Benedictine Congregation History Symposium*, 25 (1999), pp. 56-59.
[98] *Chronicle* p. 52.

deliberately constructed display of ceremony and patronage. The event was attended by Archdukes, the Infanta Isabella and the Papal Nuncio. The Infanta led Dorothy and Lady Mary by the hand to their clothing in a public gesture of defiance from the English exiles. News of it soon reached England.[99] Mary Percy encouraged the Benedictine nuns to write, translate and publish, developing collaborative authorial strategies.[100] Within this community of fellow writers, Dorothy used her scholarly and religious education to compose, for circulation, a spiritual biography of Cornelius, her personal mentor.[101]

The text of this biography would provide useful evidence of Dorothy's achievements, her skill as writer, theologian, historian and political commentator. The language and vocabulary used should indicate the depth of her education and furthermore, whilst the biography concentrates on the spiritual life of Cornelius, narration concerning events which took place in her home, whilst she was a resident eyewitness, should contain details about her personal experience and education. It would be an invaluable primary source throwing as much light on the life of its female author as it does on its subject.

[99] CSPD 1598-1601 p.343. no. 27.
[100] Jamie Goodrich, 'Translating Lady Mary Percy: Authorship and Authority Among The Brussels Benedictines' in Bowden and Kelly *English Convents* pp. 109-122.
[101] Rowse,*Tudor Cornwall* p. 367.

There is no doubt that Dorothy wrote such a work since historians, her contemporaries and those of later centuries, refer to it in their own work.[102] So impressed by her account was Danielo Bartoli, that he cited Dorothy's original words in his own historical tome on the history of the Jesuit missions in England. Bartolli wrote his *Dell'istoria della Compagnia di Giesu: L'Inghilterra parte dell' Europa* in 1667. In it he refers to Dorothy as the 'historian of her master's life and death' frequently acknowledging quotations from her own narrative in his text.[103] Since Bartoli openly despised plagiarism, devoting a chapter in his *The Learned Man, Defended and Reformed* to defining the three main types of plagiarist, all sinners for stealing by design or accident another's original ideas, the fact that he takes such care to acknowledge Dorothy as an author is highly significant and evidence that Dorothy was an educated woman.[104] As a published and respected male author recognises the scholarship of a woman then Dorothy's educational achievement must be acknowledged. As a respected author himself, Bartoli accords the Cornishwoman esteem as a worthy author in her own right, carefully avoiding plagiarising Dorothy's work by providing citations to the original text, using such phrases as 'Let us hear it from herself in her own words.' Furthermore he sees

[102] Yepes, *Historia Particular* pp. 633-640; Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* pp. 331-342, Foley, *Records* pp. 435-473;Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* pp. 361-367.
[103] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 352.
[104] Danielo Bartoli, *The Learned Man Defended and Reformed*, Englished by Thomas Salusbury (London, 1660), pp. 130-137.

Dorothy's work of equal value to his own. Indeed, as an eyewitness account, from a martyr's 'disciple', Dorothy's martyr text is more important than his own narrative for Dorothy is 'she who saw it' and 'left a record.' That is why 'her own words' are so important. Dorothy is both scholar and witness.[105]

Dorothy's work would not have been unique; it was one of many in a genre devoted to the memory of martyrs. In the later years of Elizabeth's reign, as Dillon has demonstrated, martyr texts were in circulation within English Catholic circles in exile and smuggled into England, as secret texts, to be passed around the remaining Catholic community. These texts served a dual purpose, as instruments of encouragement for faithful Catholics facing hardship and as counter propaganda against the English authorities. They challenge official descriptions, of the 'just' execution of traitors, by providing comfort and encouraging Catholics with eye witness accounts of the bravery of martyrs who faced death and torture without recanting their faith.[106] Sometimes these eye-witness narratives circulated in manuscript rather than print and, as they were smuggled into England, it seems likely that Dorothy's text, written from the safety of her European convent, was intended for a Catholic audience at home. However Elizabeth Patton suggests that Dorothy wrote more than one narrative, with an initial draft

[105] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 363.
[106] Anne Dillon, *The Construction of Martyrdom In The English Catholic Community 1535-1603* (Aldershot, 2002), p.77-79.

created for a Spanish audience at the request of the Jesuit Joseph Creswell.[107]

Dorothy was well known in recusant circles, as a member of one of the wealthiest Catholic families and as a supporter of imprisoned priests. Moreover, her relationship with her subject had flourished since childhood and she was the recipient of the priest's final letter. Therefore, in the eyes of her Catholic contemporaries, Dorothy had perfect qualifications as an eye-witness to the atrocities, committed by the state, against Cornelius the martyr.[108]

Dorothy's biography is valuable not so much for the narrative of Cornelius but more for an insider's account, of the furtive activities of elite female Catholics during the English missions. Elizabeth Patton, considers Dorothy's text, the first and 'only spiritual biography of a priest authored by an early modern Englishwoman' to be a highly significant document, since it is testimony to the collective spiritual life of post-Reformation Englishwomen.[109] It is also an immensely useful source of evidence of an elite woman's educational achievements, within a Catholic household, whilst under suspicion from local and national authorities. Dorothy did not write to highlight her personal scholastic

[107] Elizabeth Patton, 'From Community to Convent'pp.21-22.
[108] Yepes, *Historia Particular* pp. 637-638.
[109] Elizabeth Patton, 'Dorothy Arundell's "Acts of Father John Cornelius" "We should hear from Her, Herself, She who left a record of it in these Words" ' *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* Vol 24 no 1-2 (2011),pp. 51-62.

achievements but embedded in her text are clues pointing to her daily routines and to the knowledge and skills she possessed to enable her to work alongside Cornelius and to produce the biography.

There is some mystery surrounding the fate of Dorothy's original manuscript. Its text has been cited frequently by historians in a wide variety of contexts. Foley notes that the document is held in the Jesuit archives in Rome.[110] Rowse, who records Cornelius appearing to Dorothy in a vision, admitted to relying heavily upon it, 'Here she wrote down Cornelius' Acts from which our information chiefly comes...' but omitted to state where he encountered it.[111] Others simply state that Dorothy's work is 'missing' or 'lost'.[112] Dorset historian, Craddock Jones, searching for the document in the 1990s, reports that

> After communicating with Authorities in the Vatican, the English College in Rome, the Society of Jesus and the Benedictines in the Abbeys of Buckfast and Stanbrook, I am forced to the conclusion that her original manuscript is no longer extant.[113]

Elizabeth Patton attempted to locate the original but was told, by the Archivist to the British province of the Society

[110] Foley, *Records*, vol I pp. 435-73.
[111] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 367.
[112] Kate Aughterson, 'Arundell, Dorothy (1559/60-1613' http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk: 2167/view/article68019 Accessed May 3 2015.
[113] Craddock Jones, *Chideock. Plausible Historical Inferences* (Bothenhampton, 1992), p. 46.

of Jesus, that although the manuscript is listed in archival records, it is missing.[114]

According to Patton, who is attempting to reconstruct Dorothy's text from cited quotations in the work of later writers, Dorothy wrote two versions, the first draft created in the immediate aftermath of the Cornelius affair in 1594 a second version after joining Mary Percy in Brussels. Patton believes the first draft, was included in Diego de Yepes' *Historia Particular de la Persecucion de Inglaterra.* Yepes, assisted by Jesuit Joseph Creswell, collected details of the recent history of the sufferings of Catholics in England. The words acknowledged as Dorothy's and quoted by Bartoli are taken from the second version.[115]

If the advice, given to Patton, is correct then the original text is lost or mislaid for the foreseeable future. Whilst this conclusion is undoubtedly frustrating it seems wrong to conclude that there are no extant copies of Dorothy work. If, as Dillon has suggested, martyrdom texts were produced in manuscript form for circulation amongst Catholics, it is plausible that copies were created by other hands; though the secrecy surrounding the circulation of illegal texts means no information is yet available to guide researchers, the content of Dorothy's work might be preserved even if her original

[114] Patton, 'Dorothy Arundell's Acts' p. 52.
[115] Patton, From Community to Convent' p. 21 and 30; D. M. Rogers Introduction to the 1971 facsimilie of Yepes *Historia Particular de la Persecucion de Inglaterra* (Madrid 1599) unpaginated.

manuscript is lost. Since the content of Dorothy's narrative would provide clues to the writer's education this alternative was considered and enquiries made into the possibility that a copy of Dorothy's text had been overlooked. Dillon's suggestion, that martyrdom texts were created to encourage Catholics in England, placed the search for the Cornelius narrative back in its local context and made Chideock the most obvious place to conduct a search.[116] In this village the story of the Arundells and their relationship with John Cornelius and other persecuted Catholics is preserved and commemorated in the landscape and within written and oral traditions.

The Church of the Martyrs is set just outside Chideock village. It shares a boundary wall, linked to a traditional barn, with the manor house. According to the present owner, Howard Coates, Elizabethan Catholics went to Mass in Dorothy's home. After the destruction of the castle, by parliamentary forces in 1645, the barn became the centre of secret Catholic activity in Chideock.[117] The barn, with a convenient loft space, was attached to a farmhouse, known as Dame Hallett's. Catholic services took place, in secret, in this loft. In 1805, when the present manor was built on the site of Hallett's the barn was converted into a chapel. Later in the 19th century it was incorporated into a new Catholic church.[118]

[116] Dillon, *Construction of Martyrdom* p. 77.
[117] Howard Coates speaking to visitors at Chideock Manor on Dorset Gardens Trust open day June 27 2010.
[118] National Open Gardens Scheme visitors' leaflet (2014).

The cloister of this church contains a museum of Chideock's Catholic history. Leaflets in the church and museum make reference to a document entitled *The Acta of Dorothy Arundell*

> which make interesting and terrible reading...an eye-witness account [of the]awful events which took place in the last year's of Elizabeth's reign'[119]

Contact with Gaby Martelli, the custodian, revealed that in the 1970s Craddock Jones, a local historian made a concerted effort to find Dorothy's original manuscript.[120] In 1976, whilst volunteering at the church, Jones met a visitor from Rome, one Ann Ashforth who had been working in conjunction with college authorities. On her return to Rome, Ashforth and Craddock Jones entered into correspondence which resulted in the latter receiving

> a photographic record of the Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesus, Anglia 31.1 from Ashforth and a 'rough copy in Italian of the *Acta* from Father Paolo Molinari SJ,the Postulazione Generale, together with an invaluable translation of it into English by Benedictine sisters...[121]

Mrs Martelli regretted that since the death of Craddock Jones the original correspondence and photographs had been mislaid but the historian's typed copy of the English translation he had received from Molinari survived.

The Craddock Jones folder consists of a brief essay, written almost two decades after his correspondence with Ann Ashforth

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[119] Anonymous , undated leaflets from Our Lady Queen of Martyr's,Chideock. May 2014.
[120] Phone calls and subsequent meeting with the custodian at Chideock Martyrs Museum. July 2014.
[121] Craddock Jones, *Chideock* p. 46.

and the authorities in Rome.[122] This summarises the writer's thoughts about Dorothy's life and work, presenting his outline of the arrest and execution of Cornelius and speculations on Dorothy's activities. Jones had kept a complete copy of the English translation of *The Acta*, received from Paolo Molinari S.J. in 1976. This proved invaluable, as it contains an eye-witness account of the events of 1594. The source of this document is reliable. Father Paolo Molinari (1924-2014) was a Jesuit scholar of renown and held the office of 'Postulator General For The Causes of Saints' from 1957 to 2012.[123] That he believed the text to be a genuine translation of Dorothy's work is significant, since he had been directly involved in research and checking the authenticity of manuscripts and narratives in the canonisation process of the forty English martyrs.[124] It is unlikely that he would have released a copy of an unreliable document to an historian connected with a martyr's memorial museum. As Dorothy was a Benedictine sister, the fact that members of her own order completed the English translation may also be indicative of the text's link with her original narrative.

The text, as translated, is written in the first person by someone with an insider's knowledge of the workings and layout of Dorothy's household at Chideock and of her family's

[122] Craddock Jones, *Chideock,Plausible Historical Inferences* (Bothenhampton, 1992).
[123] Cindy Wooden, 'Obituary Father Paolo Molinari SJ' *St Louis Review* May 7 2014.
[124] *Jesuits Around The World* vol xviii no II (Rome, 2014) p. 1.

complicated kinship networks. It must be recognised that this text is a translation of one or more translations, or as Craddock Jones himself commented 'How can one be sure of the accuracy of a translation from, in this instance, Italian into English, preceded by Latin into Italian?'[125] Craddock Jones believed that Dorothy, writing the biography in a Benedictine convent, would have used Latin for her text, 'Assuredly, this would have been scripted in Latin-the language of monastic orders...'[126] It seems more likely, however, that if Dorothy produced her narrative to send to England with other martyr biographies being smuggled from the continent for circulation amongst English Catholics, it would, as Dillon suggests have been written in English.[127] Therefore the Chideock *Acta* is simply a translation from one language to another and back again. The search for Dorothy's original manuscript is ongoing. It was not within the remit of a local history thesis to conduct a full literary study of the Chideock *Acta*, nevertheless, it was important to establish a link to Dorothy's original work since the Chideock document contained information on Dorothy's education and activities during the time she and her mother sheltered Cornelius in their Dorset home.

A comparison was made between passages in the *Acta* and Bartoli's extensive citations of Dorothy's text in his 1667

[125] Craddock Jones, *Chideock* p. 55.
[126] *ibid.* 46.
[127] Dillon, *Construction of Martyrdom* pp. 77-79.

*Dell'istoria della Compagnia di Giesus; L'Inghilterra parte del'Europa*. Bartoli clearly acknowledges Dorothy as an historian of note, recognising her as an eye-witness to Cornelius' life and death. As Patton makes clear, Bartoli gives Dorothy considerable prominence as the author of a significant work.[128] Moreover he provides extensive marginal attributions for each of his references applying the same 'rigid standards of scholarly accuracy to inform his approach to Arundell.'[129] This indicates Bartoli's certainty that the text, to which he referred, was genuinely written by Dorothy. An historian himself, Bartoli regarded Dorothy as a fellow historian, who, he says, recorded the life and death of her teacher and mentor. Her biography will be accurate since she has authority as the priest's 'spiritual disciple'.[130] Acknowledging a woman as an historian, citing her work as the best account of an historical narrative, whilst borrowing from it extensively, suggests that Bartoli had genuine respect for the quality of Dorothy's work. Such respect was not often accorded to early modern women so Bartoli's professional recognition of Dorothy is evidence that she was indeed a scholar in her own right. It also recognises Dorothy's agency. Bartoli acknowldges her as an active defender of Catholic faith via written word and practical action. Since Bartoli admits almost every word in his account is taken from

[128] Patton, 'Dorothy Arundell's Acts' p. 52.
[129] *ibid.* 53.
[130] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 352.

Dorothy's text, if passages in the Chideock *Acta* match sections of Bartoli's text, attributed to Dorothy, this would suggest that the *Acta* is indeed a retranslation of Dorothy's missing manuscript. Until the original is rediscovered it is the closest we can be to her original work. This is plausible since the *Acta* reached Chideock via an official Jesuit source, the Postulator General who had been deeply involved in official research on English martyrs. Father Molinari had included a copy of an Italian translation of Dorothy's original manuscript; the *Acta* was a direct translation from this.

In comparing the texts, adopting the redaction criticism method favoured by some theologians was helpful.[131] This examines the work of editors. It notes how a narrative, passing through different hands, changes over time according to the knowledge of the editor, the religious and political situation at the time of their edit and the message they wanted the narrative to convey to contemporary society. Comparing texts and stripping away anachronisms added by later editors, can point the way back to the original manuscript. The simpler text is frequently closer to the original source. This method suits Dorothy's Cornelius narrative, since so many later historians use it in their own work.

[131] Norman Perrin, *What is Redaction Criticism?* (Eugene, 2002).

The *Acta* is written in the first person, as from an eyewitness to Cornelius' activities. The writer promises to 'give a brief account of his virtues which were outstanding during the time he lived in my parent's house.'[132] This narrator has good knowledge of the geography of the local community and of the layout of Dorothy's Chideock home. It mentions local landmarks, such as the parish church 'so near that he could have seen it from the window of his room'and the location of the main hall and the room where Cornelius studied, when he was not hiding in the special space created for him.[133] The writer used to clean and tidy this room 'out of devotion' to Cornelius and throughout the narrative a close relationship with Cornelius is implied. Daily routines within the household are explained together with a detailed account of the Cornelius' priestly activities.[134] In addition the writer knows much of Arundell family kinship networks. The text refers to the Stourton family and describes Thomas Bosgrave as the writer's cousin. This relationship is confirmed in family wills where Bosgrave is a beneficiary.[135]

Passages, similar to those cited by Bartoli as Dorothy's, are found in the *Acta*. In most cases the *Acta* account is simpler, more urgent but less dramatic than Bartoli's but the essence of the narrative is the same. This can be illustrated by

[132] *Acta* p. 55.
[133] *ibid.* p. 59.
[134] *Acta* pp.58, 55, 59, 62.
[135] CRO AR 21/15; AR 21/21.

comparing descriptions of Dorothy's initial examination, by the arresting officers, in the castle's hall after Cornelius is discovered. The *Acta* provides a basic report of Dorothy's answers; Bartoli's account is almost poetic, though Dorothy's argument is the same.

*Acta*

> When it was my turn the Justice did not ask me if I knew him but angrily upbraided me saying how could you have dared to hide such a traitor and enemy of Her Majesty in your house? I answered that 'I did not know anyone who was an enemy of her Majesty'[136]

Bartoli

> Traitors said she and enemies of the Queen. I sustain them? I hide them? If you have men of this sort I do not know them. I know that I do not know any such [men][137]

Latin quotations, attributed to Cornelius but also evidence that Dorothy understood Latin, are identical in both narratives, such as Cornelius describing a vision of Baron Stourton, which Dorothy witnessed him receiving

> Miseremini mei, miseremini mei saltem vos amici mei quia manus Domini tetigit me.[138]

In both accounts Dorothy claims that she alone was responsible for hiding the priest. The other members of the household knew nothing about it. She says Cornelius was only at the castle

[136] *Acta* p.63.
[137] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 355.
[138] *Acta* p. 58; Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 366.

because he was visiting and comforting his sick, elderly mother.[139]

Other parallel passages, which are remarkably similar, include the reasons given for the arrest of Thomas Bosgrave, who gave his hat to Cornelius whilst announcing that the priest was not a traitor and the Arundell women moving to Dorset upon the advice of Cornelius.[140]

Two sections are worthy of further comment. In the *Acta* the writer mentions two letters sent to her from Cornelius, one from London, another from Dorchester. She describes being summoned by Cornelius, via his jailor's daughter, to make a final visit to prior to his execution. The description is detailed, telling how Dorothy took a lively puppy to cheer the priest and noting the final advice which Cornelius gave her; that she should enter religious life as soon as possible and that she could seek help from Jesuits on the continent. 'And these were his last words to me in this life.' the writer states.[141] However these are the last spoken words for Cornelius, later, sends his Dorchester letter to Dorothy, via a servant. In this he promises not to forget his student, reminding her he will speak to Christ and St. Bridget about her in paradise. He asks her to remember her vow to join the Bridgettines, stressing how he has written to her twice on

[139] *Acta* p. 63; Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* 355.
[140] *Acta* 64,60; Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* pp. 351,365.
[141] *Acta* pp. 68-69.

this matter, with no reply. This suggests that there were three letters. He requests Dorothy write to him and confirm that she will keep her promise so that he can tell St Bridget about it.[142] Bartoli reports that Cornelius wrote twice to Dorothy about her vow but writes that in the final letter Cornelius tells his 'spiritual daughter' to make haste to enter the convent in Brussels. The latter did not exist the day Cornelius wrote this letter. Moreover the Brussels convent was Benedictine not the Bridgettine community Cornelius expected her to enter. Bartoli edits the original narrative adding information, available to him, on Dorothy's eventual Benedictine vocation, but this distorts the narrative for in 1594 Cornelius could not instruct Dorothy to join a community which did not exist until 1598. This implies that the *Acta*, which makes no mention of Brussels in the final letter, contains an earlier original account.[143]

The most significant passage is termed postscriptum in the *Acta* . This appears almost verbatim in Bartolli, who repeats the narrative in the first person. In the *Acta* the writer explains that she did not write about Cornelius 'in a rash moment, but after mature consideration'. She confesses the final part of the account is personal and she was originally 'unwilling to reveal' it. This implies that Dorothy wrote more than one version, adding the postscriptum to her second

[142] *ibid.* p. 69.
[143] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 361.

account. This describes her visit to the site of the execution, to view the head of Cornelius 'still attached to the gallows where he died.'

> When I came to within an arrow's throw, to the honour and glory of God I am saying this, I saw it surrounded by light similar to that I have often seen around the moon. At first I thought it was due to my eyes wavering, although it was a dull and overcast day. I stopped to look at it seated on horseback...until I was prevented by passing travellers...and thus I took my leave as reverently as possible and continued on my way'[144]

Bartoli's version adds a preamble, still in the first person, about Dorothy preparing to take her religious vows. Bartoli uses hindsight to expand the original which suggests that the simpler Chideock version is closer to Dorothy's own account. The final paragraph, which Bartoli claims contains Dorothy's own words is remarkably similar. This suggests that Bartoli had access to Dorothy's original text and that the *Acta* itself is close to the original.

> Having come fairly close to it, about an arrow's flight away, I saw it crowned with light, exactly like the moon as I have often looked at it. I doubted that it came from a trick of my eyes or misunderstanding although the day was dark and overcast... I stopped there and looked at it on horseback until I was prevented by by-passers from going onwards ...and I left..[145]

In the Spanish narrative of Yepes much of the personal material present in the *Acta* appears including Bosgrave's hat and the text of the final letter to Dorothy. However, the personal version of Dorothy's vision at the gallows is

[144] *Acta* p. 72.
[145] Bartoli, *Dell'istoria* p. 363.

missing. This supports Patton's view that Dorothy wrote two drafts and that Bartoli used an amended version.[146] Centuries later, Foley embellishes Dorothy's simpler narratives for dramatic effect. The *Acta* describes how Cornelius was found when local officials conducted a second search after becoming angered by a rash remark. Having confiscated books and other religious artefacts but finding no priest they were about to leave until somebody

> made a rash remark that all they had found was hardly worth the expense of so much effort on the part of people of their [the officials'] standing...[147]

Foley's version is far more dramatic

> In an evil moment one of the servants of the house grinning and mocking at the departing justices cried out 'What a riot, what an army, what a demolishing of walls and of doors, what a confusion of the whole castle, as though carried by the enemy after an assault of six hours: and yet all the booty you are carrying away-a cartload of books! Grand gain for men of such account! Go and divide your plunder, give each man a book, since you cannot become rich thereby, you may at least become learned!'[148]

Rowse too, admits to using Dorothy's narrative ('She wrote down Cornelius' Acts, from which our information chiefly comes') but he cannot resist appending his own comments to Dorothy's vision at the gallows.

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[146] Yepes, *Historia Particular* pp. 634,637-638. Patton, 'From Community to Convent' pp. 21, 30.
[147] *Acta* p. 62.
[148] Foley, *Records* pp. 451-452.

> Brave Dorothy Arundell, visiting the gallows, saw it surrounded with rays of light doubtless, poor woman, through her tears.[149]

Historians acknowledging Dorothy as an author are also, indirectly, acknowledging the scholarship she required in order to produce it. Additional textual work must be left to literary scholars. Nevertheless there is enough common material in the *Acta*, Yepes and Bartoli and copied and adapted by later writers to suggest that the Chideock document is a valid translation, not far removed from Dorothy's original account. This justifies close reading of the *Acta's* text for evidence of Dorothy's education.

From the outset the *Acta* stresses the close relationship between the writer and Cornelius. The opening page explains that the narrative was written to show gratitude for the kindness Cornelius showed to Dorothy, when he lived at her parents' house, and to record her observations of his outstanding virtues. The narrator's words certainly reflect the authentic voice of John Arundell's daughter as there is constant use of personal pronouns with references to 'my parents' 'our house' and mention of elder and younger siblings.[150] There are numerous clues pointing to the writer's education and since the personal details, linking the narrative to Dorothy, are too numerous to be discounted, it is reasonable to suggest that the *Acta* indicates the knowledge

[149] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 366.
[150] *Acta* pp. 55, 59, 72.

and skills which enabled Dorothy to produce a biography. The tone of the text indicates it was written by a woman since, like many women of the period, the writer is self-depreciating,

> As far as I am concerned, I acknowledge that I am utterly incompetant and unworthy to proclaim [his] reported virtues and graces...[151]

Moreover the writer admits that though much more could be written about the priest, many details are missing because of her own neglect and ineptitude prevented her from observing all the things he did.[152] In addition we read that she carried out simple domestic duties, normally associated with women, for the priest, tidying up and cleaning his room.[153] However she claims authority and authenticity for her narrative as an eye-witness to several miracles, exorcisms, reconciliations and conversions performed by Cornelius. There is confidence in her statements and behind her arguments: through them she affirms his work 'I know that he helped many poor souls.'; she records the priest's special praise for her household 'You, he told us, are all well established Catholics.' And she attests her visual and aural witness to his deeds and words 'This was all that I personally saw and heard.' 'We [who heard this] were more than eighty in number.'[154]

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[151] *ibid.* p. 55.
[152] *ibid.* p. 72.
[153] *ibid.* p. 58.
[154] *ibid.* pp. 56, 58-59, 63.

The writer has agency. She is confident on her mission alongside the seminary priest and assumes all who read the text must be in no doubt that what she records is true. In fact many details in the narrative match official reports found in The State Papers such as Dorothy being in London and attending religious meetings. '[Cornelius] was in the house of a Catholic gentleman in Mile End...I was with my elder brother when I met Father...' and the justices viewing Chideock castle with suspicion over a long period because of the number of recusants receiving hospitality there.[155] Sometimes the writer misunderstands the actions of those on the side of the state. When describing a visit made by Walter Raleigh to Cornelius, the writer stresses how impressed Raleigh was with the priest and that he promised to help him. What the writer does not know is that Raleigh had written to William Cecil, referring to Cornelius as 'notable Jesuit, a knave and a stout villain' and had no intention helping traitors.[156] Such misunderstandings adds authenticity to the text.

Information on the depth of knowledge the writer possesses is scattered throughout the narrative. She understands religious

[155] *Acta* pp. 57, 60; CSPD Elizabeth 1591-94 p. 176 no 35; CSPD Elizabeth 15 11-94 p. 521 no 15.
[156] *Cecil Family/GB Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Calendar of the Manuscripts of The most Hon the Marquis of Salisbury preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire* part IV (London, 1892), p. 510-511; *Acta* p. 65.

concepts explaining metaphorical meaning behind actions.[157] She understands English law and is able to explain it to readers

> I am a priest of Queen Mary' said Father. He said this because as far as the laws go this allows amnesty to those who became priests during the reign of Queen Mary...[158]

The account of the writer's examination shows further understanding of the law. She is prepared to protect her family, taking sole blame for sheltering a priest, but she claims to have done this for practical rather than religious reasons. She let the priest in to visit his mother who was both sick and elderly.[159] Therefore no religious or political crime has been committed. In her examination she argues with confidence and competence, using the tools of rhetoric to enable her to tell the truth and lie at the same time. She can claim, honestly, that since she knows no traitors she could not possibly shelter one.[160] She knows no traitors, because she does not believe that Catholic priests are traitors. She has given shelter to a priest but she only answers the question she has been asked; the questioner did not use the word priest, he accused her of helping a traitor.[161]

The most information about Dorothy herself is embedded within general details about daily routines. Cornelius is reported to

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[157] *Acta* p. 58.
[158] *ibid.* p. 63. Statute 27 Eliz.c.2. only applied to seminary priests who it forbade to enter England under pain of high treason and not to priests ordained in England in or before the reign of Queen Mary I.
[159] *Acta* p. 63.
[160] *ibid.*p. 63.
[161] *ibid.*p. 63.

have taught doctrine to all the family, 'not only on feast days but almost every day.' However he held special education sessions for 'those who were to renounce the world and become religious.' The aim of this study was to encourage vocation. The sessions took place in the early afternoon and lasted two hours and there was an additional half hour of study, in the evening after Vespers.[162] As a potential Bridgettine Dorothy participated in these study periods, when the priest would read with or to his students. In addition to this the writer describes how she was

> Given the task by Father of instructing and teaching Christian doctrine to those single women whom he had reconciled to the Holy Church...

This teaching great responsibility implies that Dorothy was not simply reading religious passages to the women; she was discussing deeper aspects of faith and explaining doctrine. Furthermore she was also teaching Protestants who had not yet reconciled since

> In this way we drew others, who were not Catholics but came to listen...[163]

Thus the *Acta* shows a woman using her education to contribute, in a practical way, to the Catholic mission. Surely, Cornelius would not have entrusted it to Dorothy if he had any doubts about her theological knowledge or teaching skills. A personal faith would not be sufficient to complete this challenging

[162] *ibid.* p. 59.
[163] *ibid.*

task; imparting Catholic doctrine to potential converts required confidence and competence if it was to be effective. In the *Acta* Cornelius engaged women in religious debates which suggests that he had a special rapport with them. When under house arrest, he is offered the use of a libary belonging to the wife of the Justice. Here he discusses the finer points of religion with men and women. However not all women were accorded the same respect as Dorothy.

> One day the wives of two [Protestant] ministers came and tried every means to start a discussion with Father...Father said that they would do better to talk of spinning than to discuss the Holy Scriptures and so they went away.[164]

At Chideock Dorothy and Cornelius were working together on the most important task of their lives, restoring the Catholic faith to England. When Dorothy wrote her eye-witness account she was using her religious faith and her education to continue that task. The *Acta* is but a translation of an Italian text made from her original work but Dorothy's character and abilities are reflected clearly within it. The Dorothy Arundell of the *Acta* is more than a devoted, loyal Catholic, she is the chosen, educated, co-worker of an Oxford educated priest who believed in her abilities and encouraged her to achieve her vocational goals.

[164] *ibid.* p. 65.

Elizabeth Patton believes that the mission in Chideock was wound up shortly after the death of Cornelius.[165] In this she is mistaken. Records show that Chideock remained a centre for recusant activity long after Father John's execution. A letter, dated 15th June 1699 from John Warham to a later John Arundell at Somerset House, suggests that the village's Catholic community is active but struggling, though it had been supported by the Arundell family, until their Castle was destroyed in the Civil War. In 1699 'the flock is extraordinary numerous but extraordinary poor.'[166] An hundred years had passed since Dorothy went into exile but the recusant community, which she left behind, continued its relationship with her family. The letter implies, Chideock Catholics remained faithiful because John's ancestors, Dorothy's contemporaries and the generation which followed them, supported their community. The letter implies Arundells have a duty to support the surviving community because many families became Catholic due to the persuasive powers of Dorothy's family and suggests a suitable amount of money to help the Catholic community. There is no record of a reply from the John Arundell of 1699 but this evidence of the survival of a practising Catholic community, within a largely Protestant county, is testament to the education and teaching

[165] Patton, 'Community to Convent' p. 20.
[166] CRO AR/28/21.

skills, which John Cornelius recognised and mentored, in his spiritual daughter, Dorothy Arundell.

***Conclusion***

Whilst there are no details of a formal education programme undertaken by Arundell women, evidence from a number of sorces indicates that Dorothy and her sisters were consciously prepared for religious vocations. Family wills show that girls were provided with female role models and encouraged to care for and reflect upon special items, which had once belonged to these devout women. These tasks reminded girls of their duty, as Catholic women, to preserve old traditions and teach them to others. The Bridgettine order, which Dorothy was expected to join, required prospective members to be well read. In her household Dorothy had access to books covering a wide variety of subjects and the family was aware of Bridgettine scholarship.

Three events impacted on Dorothy's family. The Prayer Book Rebellion and the arrest and execution of two seminary priests. With the head of their household banished from their estates Arundell women were entrusted with the preservation of Catholic traditions. Womanly meekness and timidity, found in advice books, was not reflected in the educational of Dorothy and her sisters, since they were encouraged, by the activities of their recusant parents, to disobey the authorities in

matters of religion. In partnership with her spiritual advisor, whom she had known since childhood, Dorothy taught in a home school, using her knowledge of Scripture and doctrine. She visited London and attended Catholic sermons. Becoming a Benedictine choir sister, in a community she co-founded, she used her knowledge and skills to produce and circulate a biography of her spiritual advisor. Although the original text is reported missing, citations of it in the texts of later writers plus the acknowledgement they give her as a scholar and author, a role usually undertaken by men, indicates that she was a confident woman. The discovery of a translation of the text of *The Acta of Dorothy Arundell* (which was sent to Chideock from a reliable Vatican source) is highly significant. By unpacking this translation and comparing it to passages cited from her work in the writings of other authors, who had access to Dorothy's text, this thesis takes us closer to a Catholic woman's personal interpretation of the highly charged religious and political events of late sixteenth century England. It also highlights Dorothy's personal contribution to the preservation of Catholic traditions and it notes her scholarly background.The text of the Acta indicates that she was a confident woman, able to read Latin and employ rhetoric to write persuasively. Furthermore she understood points of English law and was sufficiently skilled in Catholic doctrine to provide instruction for converts and the newly reconciled. This suggests that Dorothy's education was

thorough, giving her agency to act for Catholicism in a dual vocation, as nun and historian. The next chapter explores the experiences of another female historian, whose historical perspective was shaped by her Protestant background.

## Chapter Five

***Erudite sister, Anne Edgcumbe(before 1560-1596); education in an elite Protestant Household.***

In this chapter the focus shifts to women living in an elite Protestant household, conforming to society's religious expectations. In particular, it will note the achievements and experiences of Anne Edgcumbe; a woman born at the same time as Dorothy Arundell but, by the time the two women reached adulthood, on opposite sides of the religious divide. This is remarkable since their families were closely linked through marriage. Anne's mother was Elizabeth Tregian, the sister of Dorothy's recusant Uncle. Francis Tregian was imprisoned, for twenty four years, after sheltering seminary priest Cuthbert Mayne in his home at Golden, where Anne's mother spent her childhood.[1] The first wife of Anne's father's was Elizabeth Arundell, Dorothy's Aunt.[2] As elite women, from families with large estates, Dorothy and Anne were of similar rank, but their religious convictions and allegiances could not have been more different. As Dorothy was beginning to play her part in recusant activities, defying the authorities, Anne was conforming to society's expectations by fulfilling the, Protestant woman's vocation as a wife and mother. In fact Anne

[1] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 249.
[2] J. Polsue,*Lake's Parochial History*,vol. I,(Truro,1867), p. 181; see appendix for Arundell and Edgcumbe family trees, source Pamela Stanton, 'Faith, families and rebellion in South West England.' *Past Imperfect* 7 (1998), pp. 53-54.

was to take on more onerous duties than most wives and mothers because she became a clergy wife. This was a relatively new opportunity for godly women, since prior to the Reformation priests did not marry. Anne was therefore a member of a new social category.[3] This role brought extra responsibility; life within a clergy family required the practice of exemplary piety. The minister's wife had to be regarded, throughout the parish, as an example of the perfect godly woman. She assisted her husband in his vocation, by running his household as a model of good order and as a centre of charity to their neighbours. Anne needed to be a perfect helpmeet for her husband, Hugh Dowriche, whom she married in 1580. Hugh is recorded as matriculating, at the age of 19 from Hertford College, Oxford, in 1572. He was awarded his B.A. on 18 February 1573/4 and his M.A. on 21 May 1576. He was awarded his B.D. on 11 December 1581. His first parish was Lapford and he became rector of Honiton, in East Devon, in 1587.[4] Anne bore Hugh at least six children.[5] She acted as scribe and editor for Hugh's published work and presumably carried out all the duties expected of a minister's wife, as outlined by George Herbert (1593-1633)

> His wife is either religious, or night and day he is winning it to her. Instead of the qualities of the world, he requires only three of her. First, a training up of her children and maids in the fear of God, with prayers,

[3] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, pp. 451-2.
[4] J. Foster, *Index Ecclesiasticus* (Oxford, 1890), p. 30.
[5] Alan Taylor, 'The Wives and Issue of Sir Richard Edgcumbe' LLLS Box 2, p. 78.

> and catechizing and all religious duties. Secondly, a curing and healing of all wounds and sores with her own hands; which skill either she brought with her, or her takes care she shall learn it of some religious neighbour. Thirdly, a providing for her family in such sort, as that neither they want a competent sustentation, nor her husband be brought in debt.[6]

Recusant Dorothy rejected wifely duties, to follow her religious vocation but it is likely that Anne saw her wifely activities as a valid religious vocation. Individual women interpreted vocation in different ways. Post-Reformation women's vocations were gender specific but they were also multilayered. Even obeying exhortations to silence was presented as vocational activity, an active good which could set an example of godly and ordered obedience to the rest of the household and in Anne's case to the whole parish.[7] However, Anne did not choose a vocation of silence. Notwithstanding her responsibilities as minister's wife, she, like Dorothy, found time to express her views freely, writing a narrative poem about conflict and violence between Catholics and Protestants. Dorothy's narrative focussed on Protestant brutality towards Catholics; Anne creates an equally graphic account of Catholic tyranny, in which Protestants become innocent victims. In Anne's eyes Dorothy and her kind become the enemies of God, followers of Satan who 'could not beare to see a new reformed life.'[8] Dorothy's work was circulated secretly and illegally; in contrast Anne's writing was made public, printed and

[6] George Herbert *A Priest To The Temple* (Oxford, 1941), p. 239.
[7] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, p. 451.
[8] Anne Dowriche, *The French Historie* (Exeter and London, 1589), p. 4.

published' This was a great achievement for an elite early modern Englishwoman in the late sixteenth century.

This chapter acknowledges this achievement, examines Anne's experiences and her published work, reflecting upon the knowledge and practical skills required to fulfil her dual vocation as published writer and minister's wife. From her achievements it is possible to find clues pointing back to the nature and content of the education available to her and her female kin within a Protestant household.

As noted in chapter three, the correct place for the fashioning and education of women was thought, by many, to be the confines and seclusion of the private home, away from public gaze. Two perfect settings for such education were the family homes belonging to Anne Edgcumbe's family. The first, Cotehele, was hidden away, in the river valley on the Cornish side of the Tamar, reached only via an intricate network of narrow winding lanes. Designed, built and adapted between 1485 and 1560 as an inward looking house, with three internal courtyards and only small external facing windows, Cotehele was created as a functional and defensible family home. The Edgcumbe family owned the surrounding estate lands from 1353 but they found the means to create their new house when Sir Richard Edgcumbe (1443-1489), Anne's Great-Grandfather, found favour with Henry V11, gaining social esteem and financial reward for his loyalty to the first Tudor monarch. Richard and

his wife Joan Tremayne, spent the last four years of their married life remodelling a much older pre-existing dwelling.[9] Their son, Sir Piers Edgcumbe, was able to complete his parents' project due to vastly increased wealth gained through two prestigious marriages. His first wife, the heiress Joan Durnford, brought the family new Devonshire estate land, where their son, Richard, Anne's father, would build and complete by 1553, the family's second and much grander home, Mount Edgcumbe House, set in the family's deer park on a peninsula overlooking Plymouth Sound, accessible more easily by water than over land. Anne and her siblings grew up at Mount Edgcumbe but, since her brother, another Richard, continued to live at Cotehele it is likely that she spent time at both houses.[10]

Anne's childhood and adolescence was concurrent with Dorothy's and the historical events, outlined in chapter four, experienced by the Arundell family, such as the Prayer Book Rebellion and the arrest of Cuthbert Mayne, were also witnessed by the Edgcumbes. The latter, as Protestants, were firmly on the side of the reformers but Anne's mother, Elizabeth, the sister of Francis Tregian, had grown up at Golden, where Mayne was discovered by the authorities.[11]It seems likely that Anne was aware of religious divides and how

[9] James Lees-Milne, *Cotehele* (London, 1971), p. 6.
[10] Crispin Gill, *Great Cornish Families* (Tiverton, 1995), pp. 26-27.
[11] Taylor, *Wives and Issue*, p. 76.

they played out in a local context.[12] It is not implausible that this awareness of division and violence, linked to maternal kin, may have influenced her later writing.

***Katherine Edgcumbe***

Before considering Anne's education and vocation in more detail it is important to comment on the experience of Edgcumbe women of previous generations, who may have influenced the education provided for Edgcumbe children. This means focusing on Cotehele, where evidence survives about her Grandmother, Joan and Step-Grandmother, Katherine, who were married to Piers Edgcumbe. Of the two, the latter was more likely to have influenced Anne's educational experience, since she took on the role of step-mother to Anne's father Richard, supporting him, when he became head of the household after his father's death in 1539, until her own demise in 1553.

At Cotehele, Anne's grandmother Joan's contribution to the creation of a family home and her importance as a wealthy Edgcumbe wife is marked in a heraldic panel in the east window of the family's chapel and in the inclusion of her arms in English embroidery on an altar frontal.[13] However, there is more surviving evidence of the interests of Piers' second wife, Katherine. It is possible to discover something of the character of this second heiress and to tease out her

[12] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 347.
[13] Jeremy Pearson, *Cotehele House*, (Swindon, 1991), p. 14.

influence and contribution to the fortunes and education of later Edgcumbe wives, sisters and daughters.

When Lady Joan died in 1525, Piers wasted no time in seeking another spouse. Of course he needed a step-mother for his young children, but a new marriage, to another heiress, would bring the family extra finance to assist in the expansion and consolidation of Edgcumbe estates. Furthermore it would offer the opportunity to link the family to other elite networks beyond the Tamar. Such networks could be financially and socially useful and were very important to West Country elites, with the majority of Cornish, Devon and Somerset families linked through marriage.[14] Piers' mother was a Tremayne; his sister Elizabeth was settled, within the wealthy Raleigh family in East Devon.[15] Piers now had full control of Joan's Durnford estates and the ideal marriage candidate would bring more wealth to his family whilst her own family connections might extend his social networks. Edgcumbe reputation and status could be enhanced by another good marriage. The new Lady Edgcumbe arrived at Cotehele, a few months after Joan's death, in 1525. She was welcomed with a gift of fine wine sent from the City Council at Plymouth.[16]

[14] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, pp. 80-84.
[15] J. Polsue, *Lake's Parochial History Of The County of Cornwall*. Vol. I (Truro, 1867), p. 181.
[16] 'Chronology for Cotehele and Edgcumbes' in NT *Buildings Report; Cotehele*, (London, 2004), appendix I p.4.

Lady Katherine St John, daughter and heiress of Sir John St John of Bletsoe and widow of Welsh knight Sir Gruffudd ap Rhys; came to Cotehele as an experienced housekeeper, wife and mother. Perhaps it was this experience as well as her wealth which encouraged Piers to marry so quickly, since his children would benefit from a confident step-mother. The marriage was convenient for both husband and wife since she brought wealth to Piers but he gave her the support she needed for her own child Mary's vocational education. He later provided funding for Katherine to arrange Mary's marriage into the wealthy Luttrell family of Dunster in Somerset.[17]

Whilst married to Joan, Piers started to refurbish Cotehele's chapel, replacing the original of 1411, which was dedicated to St Cyricus and St Julitta.[18] A new marriage provided the opportunity to add additional features to welcome Katherine. A special feature was a new south window containing, in stained glass, the figures of St Catherine and St Anne teaching the Virgin Mary to read. According to local oral tradition, which refers to the chapel as St Catherine's, Katherine was involved in selecting the window's theme. It is perhaps not surprising that a new wife, whose predecessor's arms already adorned the chapel's walls, screens and altar cloths, should want her own influence to be seen in the building. This was achieved by setting her personal name Saint as a focal point. However the

[17] CRO.ME/831; RIC transcript of TNA, PCC Dyngerley 30.
[18] Lees-Milne, *Cotehele,* p. 17.

Cotehele window is unusual. A more common portrayal of Catherine would be as a solitary figure carrying her spiked, broken wheel. In Cotehele's window, she is an interloper in a different story and she takes a male Saint's place. Johiachim, according to legend the father of the Virgin Mary, often stands alongside St Anne, as exemplified in fifteenth century windows and manuscripts. Sometimes Anne and Mary are the only figures.[19] Anne was the patron saint of housewives, women in labour and grandmothers so she would be a suitable subject to commemorate a new bride.[20] However, at Cotehele, Catherine is an anachronistic, trespasser in a scene from an apocryphal tale on the early life of Mary. She does not fit into the narrative. This raises several questions about the intentions of the second Lady Edgcumbe and her husband.

Why did Katherine and Piers decline to select the more popular scene for Katherine's namesake, the story of the martyr Saint's triumph over the wheel of torture? As noted in chapter one, many Cornish worshippers were devoted to Mary, but if Katherine wished to encourage devotion to the Virgin why did she spurn a more traditional Marian window, the annunciation, the nativity or Mary weeping over the body of her dead son? It would certainly be fitting for a new bride to focus her

[19] Great Malvern Priory; Blackburn window, All Saints, York; *Breviary of John The Fearless*, BL Harley 2897 ff.154-452v, f; Official seal of Stanley Abbey, collections.vam.ac.uk/item/0178991/st-anne-teaching-the-virgin-group-unknown, accessed 30 May 2016.
[20] *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, 2011). pp. 20-21; lordcalls.com/prayers-to-saints/prayer-to-St-anne accessed 3 Sept 2016.

attention on Mary's motherhood. Does this unusual choice of tableau have a different significance? The image has an educational theme. It places a book and the implied ability to read it, into the ownership of women. Was Katherine making a conscious statement of intent as the new mistress of the Edgcumbe household? If Mary, the most godly of women, venerated as the perfect role model for wives and daughters, was taught to read, then surely these wives and daughters must strive to follow her example. Pamela Sheingorn has made an iconographic study of portrayals of St. Anne with Mary. She believes that the image, of the two bent over an open book, is a clear statement on female education. Especially significant is the open book, which is being read by females, since, in most religious images and secular portraits, books are usually depicted closed. Anne and Mary's concentration on the opened pages of their book shows the importance of girls learning from their mother at home. The image encourages other mothers to follow the example of Anne, who gives her daughter the power of literacy in addition to the woman's ability to spin and weave which is sometimes depicted in other mother and Virgin images.[21] The placing of Katherine's personal saint alongside the open book, helping Saint Anne teach her willing pupil, suggests that Katherine and Piers believed in the importance of female learning and commissioned a visual

[21] Pamela Sheingorn 'The Wise Mother-the image of St. Anne teaching' *Gesta*, 32. No 1 (1993), pp. 69-80,78.

statement about it for the household to see. It informs women of the importance of reading. The St Anne image is a direct statement on female literacy, encouraging mothers to teach their daughters.[22]

Katherine owned at least one book and valued it enough to inscribe her name, Kateryne Eggcomb, upon it. Her copy of John Lydgate's *Troy Book*, is now held at the British Library.[23] This is not a pious religious text and at first seems an unusual literary choice for an early sixteenth century woman. It is an early English translation of the *Historia Destructionis Troiae* of Guido delle Colonne describing Hector's struggles at the end of the Trojan wars and the final destruction of Troy. It is written as a poem and contains five books. The main theme is the tragic death of the hero, Hector. Lydgate drew on the work of other writers to expand Guido's original story, including Ovid, Fulgentius, Isidore of Seville, Jacobus de Cessolis, John Trevisa, Chaucer and Christine de Pisan and familiarity with these writers would have greatly assisted the reader.[24] The volume is beautifully illustrated in bright colours and gold. It would have been expensive. Katherine valued it enough to establish it as her possession, marking it with her name. If she read it she must have been interested in a variety of subjects for, in addition to the colourful illustrations *Troy Book* contains a variety of information on

[22] *ibid.*
[23] BL Royal 18 D ii f1.
[24] www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/troyint.htm accessed 15 Jan 2011.

ancient history, classical mythology, cosmology, philosophy and provides instructions on how to play chess.[25]

Modern literary scholars still recognise the value of Lydgate's translation. They also acknowledge its place in the libraries of the learned renaissance elite. Pearsall calls the book 'a homily first, an encyclopaedia second and an epic nowhere... a more consciously learned book than its contemporaries'.[26] Examining Katherine's copy, which was exhibited at the British Library in 2011, it is not difficult to see that its classical theme, together with an exciting narrative and comments on morality would have attracted educated, wealthy readers. It has subject matter to suit all tastes since art, poetry, religion and education are all contained within it. Schirmer's study of Lydgate's work notes how sixteenth century readers viewed the narrative of the Trojan wars as educational tales, since historical work was thought to contain both moral and political lessons.[27] *Troy Book* even included comments on architecture, complete with practical arrangements for plumbing in a perfect, purified city.[28] Katherine's book was a text for an elite, humanist scholar. It was not a devotional text or a conduct book, such

[25] www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=8704&COIIID accessed 15 January 2011.
[26] Derek Pearsall, John Lydgate (London, 1970), p.129.
[27] W. Schirmer, *John Lydgate; a study in the culture of the XVth century* (London, 1961).
[28] Paul Strohm, 'Sovereignity and Sewage' in Lisa H Cooper and Andrea Denny-Brown (eds.), *Lydgate Matters* (Basingstoke, 2008), p. 59.

as those referred to in chapter three, which were traditionally associated with women.

This does not mean that there was nothing to inspire devotions in *Troy Book*. It was not a theological work; nevertheless a strand of morality was embedded within the narrative. Katherine could have read about the virtue of prudence, a much admired godly attribute during her lifetime. The poem's hero is killed but is immortalised as a moral example. Hector was wise because he was prudent able to govern wisely, since prudence brings wisdom and with it the practical skills of fine judgement and the ability to debate with others. The hero of Katherine's book is therefore a fine example for leaders of local communities. 'He had in hym sovereine excellence, and governaunce medlid with prudence, that nought asterte hym, he was so wis.'[29] In a world where status and reputation was highly valued, mirroring and meditating on Hector's wisdom was a virtuous thing to do.

Katherine's book could be read or enjoyed in many ways, in a variety of settings. The text of the poem could be admired for the writer's skill and use of language; it could entertain, after all it was an exciting story of war, of conquest and defeat. It could be taken at face value as an historical account. However it was also a work of art. The book, with its tooling, binding and illustrations was beautiful to touch and

[29] BL.Royal 18 D II. 3.489.

to see, inviting admiration of Katherine's wealth and status, since beautiful illustrations were expensive. During Katherine's life time there is evidence that the elite admired Lydgate's work and saw it as a valuable asset. A copy of *Troy* appears in a 1545 Derbyshire inventory for the Markeaton Hall household.[30] Books were viewed as valuable assets as evidenced in Cornish wills made by Arundell women, discussed in the previous chapter. Descriptions of books of 'gulde' suggest they were expensive, as well as educational, religious or recreational possessions.[31]

There is no way of knowing how Katherine used her book, whether she saw it as an ornamental status symbol or something she read frequently for moral guidance. If she valued reading and saw it as a worthwhile task for women, as the iconography in the chapel window implies, it is still impossible to know what *Troy Book* meant to her. It was definitely no light read and it would be interesting to know what she made of its challenges, inconsistencies and contradictions, especially as Lydgate praises Hector's prudence and morality but also encourages readers to admire the hero's cunning, lies and trickery, not really the attributes of godly role-model. If she chose to she could focus on the doomed romance of Troilus and Cressida, as a diversion from housekeeping and accounting.

[30] University of Manchester, Rylands English MS1.
[31] CRO AR21/15.

To fully understand and appreciate the book required knowledge, of Latin, Aristotle's philosophy, modern languages and religion. It is possible that Katherine possessed some of these skills. Her first husband's Welsh name (he was not Gruffudd Rhys but ap-Rhys) implies that he was a Welsh speaker, since ap, meaning son of, is attached to his name a practice usually employed by Welsh speakers.[32] As her husband was head of a Welsh household it is likely that Katherine would need to be conversant in the Welsh language in order to manage household and estate servants, who would not all be able to speak English. She was therefore, at least, bilingual. The furnishing she brought with her to Cotehele would support this since a surviving panel from a bed of the period is carved with Welsh texts.[33] Katherine held high office. She gained a position at court, serving in the privy chamber of Anne of Cleves and it is likely that she had some knowledge of French.[34]

After Piers died Katherine remained in residence on the Edgcumbe estates, assisting her stepson Richard in the day to day running of estate business, whilst he was commissioning the building of his new home, and earning revenue from her own tin mines.[35] This implies a good relationship between the pair

[32] *'ap'* is a contraction of *'mab'* which means son. www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/society/family_03welshnaming accessed September 13 2016.
[33] Pearson, *Cotehele*, p. 21.
[34] Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 243.
[35] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 153; NT *Building*, appendix I, p. 6.

and suggests that, by the broad definition of education and training outlined in chapter three, she was an educated and intelligent woman to whom he could turn for advice. As Richards step-mother, in the absence of his father, she may have assisted him in the choice of his marriage partners: he married three times. Furthermore, as Dowager she was in an ideal position to offer advice to these wives, two of whom became step-mothers, as she had been in 1525, on the education and fashioning of Richard's children. She may also have used her family networks to introduce him to suitable partners for these children. Her daughter, Mary, from her first marriage, married into the influential Luttrell family from Dunster Castle and her step-grandson Piers eventually married Margaret Luttrell.[36]

***Anne and Her Circles***

It is to Anne, her step-granddaughter, that the focus now returns. Anne's father, Richard, was described by his grandson, Anne's cousin Richard Carew, as man of 'diffidence and wisdom.'[37] In 1554, a year after Katherine's death, Richard hosted a large gathering of the elite at Mount Edgcumbe. It was attended by the Admirals of the Flanders, Spanish and English fleets and various ambassadors, who were visiting Plymouth preparing to mark the occasion of the Queen's wedding

[36] CRO ME/831; CRO ME/834; Polsue, *Lake's Parochial*, p. 181.
[37] Carew, *Survey,* p. 100.

to Philip of Spain.[38] This event was costly but Richard had a reputation as an excellent and prudent housekeeper and could well afford to pay; the prudence extolled in his step-mother's *Troy Book* is evident in his character. According to Carew's *A Friendly Remembrace of Sir Richard Edgcumbe,* Richard always made sure that the household had enough provisions 'in all things' to survive for two years and he always kept £100 in ready cash in case of emergency.[39] This prudence seems to be part of the education handed down through the family because in 1602, Anne Cary, the wife of Richard's grandson, is praised by her sister-in-law as a 'good housewife and very wary in her expenses.'[40] Carew describes his grandfather as an educated man, learned in the arts and an expert in the composition and writing of letters to suit any occasion. He also had a very good grace in making English verses, with the words flowing easily from his pen. He took part in dancing and fencing when he entertained foreigners at his home. Carew explains that Richard often entertained because he lived so near to Plymouth and there were many foreigners arriving at the port on a regular basis.[41]

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[38] Llewellyn Jewitt, *History of Plymouth* (Bideford, 2001), p. 75.
[39] *The Friendly Rememberance* was found amongst Carew's Papers after his death in 1620. Polwhele reproduced Carew's text in full and suggested it had been printed and circulated many times.
R. Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall, Civil, Military, Religious* (London, 1816), p. 68.
[40] Cited Polwhele, *History* p. 68; Mt Edgcumbe Collection, (2014) Notes accompanying portrait of Margaret Denny.
[41] Polwhele, *History*, pp. 68-69.

As an educated man himself, Richard must have wanted his daughters to share his love of scholarship. When he made his will, in 1560, he took special care to make provision for his younger daughters, Anne and Honour, both of whom were under age at the time of his death. He set aside funds to ensure that they would be educated, though he did not specify the form that education would take.[42] However, in a period when formal education was a male preserve, this final request must be seen as the result of a considered and deliberate decision and a good example of what Carew called Richard's 'deliberateness of undertaking.'[43] In most West Country wills, as exemplified in the Arundell wills of the previous chapter, where daughters are beneficiaries, sums of money were most often left to become part of a marriage or religious dowry or to assist in the upkeep of an unmarried woman and not for specific educational projects.

As Richard took delight in poetic composition, it may have pleased him, had he but known that one of his younger daughters, Anne, put the education he provided to good use by becoming a published poet herself, under her married name, Dowriche, in 1589.[44]

When Anne married Hugh Dowriche, they first lived at Lapford and then moved to Honiton, a small town some ten miles east of

[42] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 63.
[43] Carew, *Survey*, p.100.
[44] Anne Dowriche, *The French Historie* (Exeter and London, 1589).

Exeter. Living closer to a cathedral city must have been quite a contrast to the seclusion of Mount Edgcumbe House. In Exeter, the seat of the Bishop, religion played a far more central role in life. Micheline White believes that more attention should be paid to this Devonshire locality which impacted on Anne's daily life and influenced her writing.[45] As the wife of a clergyman Anne was directly and indirectly drawn into theological and philosophical fields in Exeter, where debates and disputes were frequent. So intense were some disputes that, by the early seventeenth century, plans had to be drawn up to divide the Cathedral by a wall to separate two Protestant groups with widely different definitions of appropriate worship. Only lack of funding prevented the building of the wall.[46] White suggests the Dowriches were active members of religious and literary networks and that Anne developed strong connections with other women engaged in literary activities, including another writer Anne Vaughan Locke and her daughter Anne Moyle, both praised for their knowledge of Classical languages, and Ursula Fulford who was acknowledged for her composition of prayers and songs and praised in sermons for her godliness.[47] This suggests Anne was not working in isolation. Moreover, the fact that her *French Historie* was published simultaneously in Exeter as well as

[45] Micheline White, 'Women Writers and Literary Circles in The Elizabethan West Country' *Modern Philology* 103 no 2 (2005), p. 189.
[46] Cotton and Woolcoobe, *Gleanings*, p. 172.
[47] White, *Women Writers*, pp. 189-191; John Charldon, *A Sermon Preached at Exeter* (London, 1595), sig. Aiir.

London suggests that she had a local readership which would imply Devonian support and acknowledgement for her literary endeavours. White believes the Exeter version to have been widely circulated amongst elite reading circles in the diocese of Exeter. She contends that Anne and Hugh became part of a growing theological and literary group where they both developed friendships. This group contained female writers, the wives of successful merchants, women from elite estates and some of the middling sort.[48] Like Dorothy Arundell, Anne had a dual vocation. She was clergy wife and mother and a published writer of history. In her father-in-law Thomas's will she is acknowledged as a loving and dutiful daughter so she performed well as a clergy wife.[49] However, in addition to this traditional role of Christian wife and mother Anne also worked in partnership with her husband in the creation and editing of historical treaties, verses and sermons. She contributed verses to *The Jaylor's Conversion* (1596), Hugh's commentary on St. Peter's imprisonment in the *Acts of The Apostles* taken from a collection of his sermons. The final version of this work was published, posthumously, in 1596.[50] The religious fervor present in the writings of both husband and wife suggest a shared enthusiasm for Puritanism, which had an authoritative view on divine providence and justice, in

[48] White, *Women Writers*, p. 213.
[49] Julie Sampson, 'Anne Edgcumbe Dowriche and the French Historie' *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* 141 (2009), p. 100.
[50] Hugh Dowriche, *The Jaylor's Conversion* (London, 1596).

which Christ was a role model for humanity and God was the controller of history.

Anne's Puritan leanings did not come from her mother, whose family was Catholic and recusant, nor did they spring from her father, who had been interested in astrology and the occult in his youth. Richard managed to keep all parties content during the religious upheavals of his life time. He did not support the prayer book rebels of 1549, but in Queen Mary's reign he assisted Thomas Dennys in the defence of Devon against the Protestant plotters of Wyatt's rebellion and once Elizabeth was on the throne he employed a chaplain to prove he was of sound orthodox faith.[51] Carew comments that it was difficult to describe Richard's feelings on matters of religion but claims his upright dealing bore witness to his beliefs.[52] However Anne's brother, Piers, who became head of the Edgcumbe estates, had been satirized in his youth as a Puritan and the diarist, William Carnsew describes him as 'bounding in the hill of God.'[53] Piers was much older than his youngest siblings. As Anne was young when her father died, Piers and his wife, Margaret, looked after Richard's younger offspring and educated them alongside their own children. Anne was of similar age to her nephews and nieces. Anne was influenced by her elder brother and therefore followed his religious

[51] J. A. Froude *The Reign of Mary Tudor* (London, 1919),p. 96; Pearson, Cotehele, p. 39.
[52] Cited Polwhele, *History*, p. 68; Chynoweth *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 234.
[53] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* pp. 244-245.

persuasions. Another brother, Richard, who lived at Cothele, was known to have patronized Puritan ministers and Pier's daughter, Catherine married Edmund Prideux a lawyer who advised leading, non-conforming puritans including Melanchthon Jewell who was imprisoned in Exeter for refusing to accept the prayer book. Catherine and Edmund lived a few miles away from Anne and Hugh's Honiton parish, at Farway in east Devon. Many of Anne's kin had Puritan convictions.[54]

Anne dedicated her French Historie to Piers. As he was Anne's substitute father, this explains why her brother's approval of her work was so important to her. It would also explain the Puritan nature of the religious comments, which are so prominent in her work. Her husband, Hugh, had kept company with outspoken Puritans whilst at Oxford, including Valentine Knightly, whom he describes as his 'first friend' and to whom he dedicated *The Jaylor's Conversion*. Knightly was MP for Tavistock but was penalised, with his father, for supporting two radical Puritan preachers.[55] When Anne took her own religious convictions into her marriage, there must have been a meeting of minds, since husband and wife shared common religious values. This shared faith is reflected in the name they selected for their eldest son, Elkana, meaning created by God.[56] Puritanism placed emphasis on sainthood within ordinary life, stressing the contribution the godly elect could make to

[54] White, 'Women Writers' pp. 195-196.
[55] White, 'Women Writers' pp. 194-195.
[56] *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, 2007), p. 95.

Christian society. It enhanced the status of women since it allowed them to participate in the godly community, as spiritual advisors to fellow saints, since godliness, rather than gender gave the saint authority to interpret God's truth.[57]

As editor of her husband's work Anne was fulfilling the traditional vocation of supportive dutiful wife but, through her writing, she became an active agent for the Protestant faith, using her scholarship to offer counsel to her godly readership and daring to advise a queen. Hugh must have recognized this scholarship. He included Anne's writing, albeit anonymously, as the verses of 'a gentlewoman', alongside the writing of Oxford scholars, in the preface of his own publication.[58] When Hugh and Anne's writings are compared her narrative verses are more complex and detailed than his, with clearly constructed religious, moral and philosophical arguments. This indicates that Anne was a scholar and sophisticated writer. Her verses reflect a breath and depth of knowledge which Hugh's work lacks. Her arguments reflect competence in classical studies, ancient and more recent history, philosophy and politics. She acknowledges her sources but admits to selecting, editing and reordering them for a specific religious and political purpose, uncovering the

[57] Diane Willen, 'Godly Women in Early Modern England: Puritanism and Gender.' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43, no 4. (October, 1992), pp. 577-578.
[58] Dowriche, *Jaylor's Conversion*, preface.

motives for human action.[59] This suggests that her mind, with its ability to reason, to reflect and to link ideas from several disciplines, was more agile than her husband's. Anne must have been well educated and followed a humanist syllabus.

Where had she learned her writer's craft and from whence came her political awareness and her understanding of French history? Were these skills part of her father Richard's educational legacy to her or did she exploit the educational experiences she shared with her brothers children? The latter were certainly provided with a good education since surviving correspondence between Anne's nephew Piers Edgcumbe and Sir Henry Newton, about the provision of a French tutor for her nephew's children, reflects the education with which Piers was provided. Sir Henry described Piers to the prospective tutor as a good father who had made good use of his own travels and studies.[60]

Although many of the Edgcumbe family records, and the original house at Mount Edgcumbe were destroyed by incendiary bombs in 1941, it is known that the house contained a library which Anne and her nephews and nieces could have used, since a photograph, taken the morning after the fire, clearly shows its location.[61] It is likely that this would have contained classical, religious and historical texts; another Cornish

[59] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to Pearse.
[60] CRO ME 3044.
[61] Mt Edgcumbe collections, Photograph, taken from the air, March, 1941.

house, Lanhydrock contains the library of Hannibal Gamon (1582-1651) the rector of St Mawgan, who was also of Puritan persuasion, and the subject matter is wide ranging. As the curator of this collection explains, a Puritan needed to read widely, including classical and religious texts in Greek and Latin, to be able to 'know the [Catholic] enemy'[62]

With most family records destroyed, the best way to establish Anne's knowledge and skills base is a study of the published text of the *French Historie*, her main achievement. To date, Anne's work has, in the main, made little impact on historians but a number of literary scholars have acknowledged her contribution to English literature, including the French writer, Armel Dubois-Nayt. The latter believes that historians of early modern England would do well to examine Anne's work since, regardless of the title, it contains an early modern woman's understanding of English history as well as her knowledge of events in France.[63]

Using literary scholarship as a guide and remembering the importance of studying an editor's employment of sources stressed by redaction critics, it was possible to read Anne's text in a new way and to consider the light it could cast on both the formal and informal education experiences which enabled her to produce it. This education, influenced by her

[62] www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/whats-in-a-name-books-at-lanhydrock accessed 15 July 2016.
[63] Armel Dubois-Nayt, 'Anne Dowriche et l'histoire de France ou d'Angleterre?' *Etudes Episteme* vol 17 (2010) pp. 11-29.

step-grandmother, paid for by her father, and provided by her brother must have assisted her path to publication, circulation and acknowledgement as an author.

Anne's poem is lengthy. Her religious interpretation of recent French history is established from the outset in the work's full title: *The French Historie. That is, a lamentable Discourse of three of the chiefe, and most famous bloodie broiles that have happened in France for the Gospell of Jesus Christ*. In her dedication, to her brother, Anne makes her geographical location known, citing both Honiton, where she composed her poem and Mount Edgecombe, where she grew up, which was at the time of writing in Devonshire.

> To the right worshipfull her loving brother Master Pearse Edgecombe of Mt Edgecombe in Devon esquire. Mercie and peace from Jesus Christ.[64]

Anne, a clergy wife, writing in a man's world, recognised the importance of support from a male relative, especially one of standing in the community. The support of a well respected gentleman, linked to London, to court and parliament was vital if her work was to be circulated and taken seriously. In a letter to her brother she acknowledges that need, but asserts, with authority and an unusual lack of modesty, for a clergy wife, that her work is good

> I saw that the simplicitie of it required a patron; and the often remembrance of your former curtesies inforeced

[64] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to Pearse.

> me to make bold with you... I assure you it is most excellent and well worth the reading...[65]

This implies her confidence that her brother, who provided her education, will recognise her academic achievement and thus be happy to be her patron. Anne explains how she created the history for recreation and that it took her a long time to write. The concept of recreation for a rector's wife and mother of numerous children might seem surprising, but in the context of a devout Puritan life, free time and recreation often meant performing religious duties and exercises such as spiritual meditations. Anne's text could be described as a religious commentary on historical events and was therefore, in this Protestant context, a fitting recreational activity for a minister's wife.[66] Besides, Hugh's family was wealthy and his position, as rector of Honiton, gave him a reasonably high status so presumably Anne had other women in her household responsible for some of the care and practical upbringing of her children. Anne acknowledges that her brother may have reservations about being linked to her poem. These he should ignore, instead he should remember how hard his sister worked to create it. Again this reflects traditional Puritan views on the importance of female diligence, patience and hard work as a servant of God, all desirable qualities for a minister's wife.[67]

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[65] *ibid.* Epistle to Pearse.
[66] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, p. 444.
[67] *ibid.* pp. 451-2.

> This has been my ordinary exercise for recreation at times of leisure for a long space together...Consider not therefore the worthiness of the work, but rather the will of the worker... If you find anie thing that fits not your liking, remember I pray, that it is a woman's doing.[68]

Acutely aware of the traditional status quo, with women regarded as the weaker vessel, Anne plays on the fact that her education and understanding may not be equal to a brother's and uses the female state to excuse any weakness. Publically acknowledging weakness, whilst in reality knowing one's own strength, was a tactic employed by other early modern women. Dorothy Arundell employed the same strategy in her biography of Cornelius and Lady Anne Clifford often played on her status as a helpless woman in her various legal battles.[69]

The dedication page contains Piers' name and a special message in the form of an acrostic play on words using their family name and her married name. Erudite Anne was obviously familiar with the conceits and codes popular in the period.

> The sharpest EDGE will soonest PEARSE and COME unto AN end yet DOWt not but be RICHE in hope and take that I do send. A.D.[70]

Anne's poem is some 2,400 lines long and composed in poulter's measure, rhyming couplets of twelve and fourteen syllables.[71] It recounts the recent history of the French wars of religion,

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[68] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Dedication to Pearse Edgecombe.
[69] David J.H. Clifford (ed.), *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford* (Stroud, 2003), pp. x, 39, 106.
[70] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Dedication to Pearse Edgecombe.
[71] Susanne Woods, 'Narrative Poetry' in Laura Lunger Knoppers(ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writings* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 224.

which took place earlier in the century. It contains details of Protestant suffering under the Catholic rulers of France, emphasising in particular the evil motives of Catherine de Medici and the Guise family. It provides an especially gruesome account of the massacre of the Huguenots on St Bartholomew's eve 1572. War and massacre seems a strange choice of subject matter for a poem created by a member of the perceived weaker sex. Anne's narrative verse is confident and reflects her ability to comprehend religious and political history. As such comprehension usually develops from sustained study and practice in the fine-tuning of arguments this suggests that Anne was employing her humanist education which she received at Mount Edgcumbe.[72]

***Anne as Theologian***

As we saw in the previous chapter, religious knowledge played a vital role in preparing the Catholic Arundell sisters for their eventual vocations. Anne too must have received a good grounding in Biblical knowledge and Christian doctrine. From the outset she sets her work in the context of the history of Protestantism, which she calls God's Truth, 'whose joyful beames in Germanie at this time shone full cleer.' and she expresses joy that England is a Protestant country ruled by a Protestant queen. 'O happie England, thou from God art

[72] Dubois-Nayt 'Anne Dowriche' p. 12.

blessed/ which hath the truth established with peace and perfect rest.'[73]

The text refers to many Old Testament narratives, which Anne reinterprets to suit her moral purpose. She uses tales of the miserable fate of weak biblical Kings and infamous sinners as evidence of the similar fate awaiting all those who turn away from God and she compares the Kings of Spain and France to Herod and Pilate.[74] She stresses the importance of hearing the word of God and acting upon it in the appropriate godly way, only the truth and fear of God will bring salvation.[75] But Anne does more than repeat verbatim Scriptural quotations learned in childhood; she imbues her Biblical material with intense Puritan symbolism. Anne is a skilful and educated theologian whose understanding of the philosophy behind the Puritan concept of the Christian elect, their relationship with God and their redemption is evident throughout her text. Anne's re-telling of recent history comes from the pen of one convinced of her own understanding of religious truth. Her work expresses the Protestant vision of God as both avenger and redeemer in the martyrdom of saints.[76] Her historical account stresses Puritan providentialism, where God's purpose is revealed with each historical event. His action gives

[73] Dowriche, *French Historie*, p. 3.
[74] *ibid.* p. 17; 12; 9.
[75] *ibid.* Dedication to Pearse Edgecombe.
[76] Woods, 'Narrative Poetry' p. 233.

meaning and unity to history.[77] The suffering of the elect is part of that purpose and the fate of Protestant martyrs mirrors the suffering of the Puritan's role model, Christ.

Anne writes history as moral narrative where agency and accountability are central to unfolding events and an understanding of God as the Lord of time is essential. As history unfolds God's elect will be saved, though they will suffer in the process. The wicked, Catholic enemies, who persecute the Protestant martyrs, will be punished. In Anne's world-view everything that happens has deep religious significance. To interpret history is to find God's message, sent to true believers.[78] It is a Christian duty to learn from the past and amend one's ways in the present.

This understanding and complex interpretation of the past suggests that Anne was practised in discussing and debating religious matters in some depth. She could have developed this skill by learning from her husband, as she supported him in his ministry, but she could equally have drawn from her own education at Mount Edgcumbe, drawing on her religious knowledge and skills, in arguing a case, learned in the humanist curriculum provided for Edgcumbe children. Her writing exemplifies the rhetorical skills which humanist

[77] Megan Matchinske, 'Moral Method, and History in Anne Dowriche's The French Historie'in Garrett Sullivan et al, *Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature* (Oxford, 2004) p. 181.
[78] Chris Laoutaris, 'Translation/Historical Writing' in Caroline Bicks and Jennifer Summit (eds.), *The History of British Women's Writings 1500-1610* (Basingstoke, 2010) p. 317.

scholars strove to develop for she is able to manipulate a variety of texts to set up and support her religious and philosophical arguments. As well as biblical examples of strength and weakness, she employs her knowledge of classical literature, referring to Pluto, Egidius and Minardus.[79]

Anne is clearly writing for like-minded readers, other Puritans who share her interpretation of history, since she assumes that her readers will understand her message and be familiar with the passages she cites. These readers are assumed to be godly gentlefolk, of which there were many in the Cathedral city of Exeter. As noted in chapter three, gentle breeding and faith went hand in hand since gentle and godly behaviour was a vital part of an elite child's upbringing. For Anne those with faith were the elect, chosen by God; she sees them as the greater sort. She writes for the elect, encouraging them to empathise with the French victims of Catholic tyranny, who are the same sort of people as her readers. Some of the first characters she introduces to her readers are of 'the greater sort' and it is the 'the common sort' who attack them.[80] Anne's godly readers may use her poem for spiritual exercise. It becomes their Christian recreation as well as hers because she encourages self examination where readers and the writer strive to develop the same unquestioning faith, as they cope with their own problems and

[79] Dowriche, *French Historie*, p. 10.
[80] *ibid.* p. 4.

contemplate death, as the French martyrs have in their suffering.[81] The poem, reflecting Anne's faith and her learning, is a teaching device for people of faith and could even be used as a sermon.

As a clergy wife, Anne was a frequent attendee at sermons and was part of an active religious and literary community.[82] White believes that Anne and Hugh worked in partnership, inspiring and encouraging each other in their individual writing projects. She includes them in her study of West Country Protestant 'power couples' who share their work and their religious convictions with others.[83] It is possible that Anne was inspired to create her history by her husband's preaching. However her work is far more nuanced than his implying he needed her assistance more than she required his.

***Anne's Historical and Political Knowledge***

Anne's poem deals with public, international history rather than the private history found in the letters, diaries and mothers' advice of other early modern women.[84] To create her poem Anne drew on an extensive knowledge of recent French history. In a society where, according to the advice books, women were expected to concentrate on the workings of the household and leave national and international affairs to

[81] Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, pp. 444,463.
[82] White, 'Women Writers' p. 214.
[83] Michaeline White, 'Power Couples and Women Writers in Elizabethan England; the public voices of Dorcas and Richard Martin and Anne and Hugh Dowriche' in D Wolfthal and R Voaden (eds.) *Framing The Family* (Tempe, 2005) pp. 119-38.
[84] Matchinske, 'Moral, Method', p. 178.

their men-folk, from what or from whom did Anne gain inspiration? She may have heard accounts of events in France from close members of her family. Her brother Piers, who served in six of Elizabeth's parliaments and was the M.P. for Totnes for almost thirty years, may have shared his political opinions with his young sister.[85] However by the time Anne was writing he had become quite reclusive, having lost almost £4,000 in failed mining ventures and according to Christopher Harris, a fellow MP, he seldom left his house.[86]

Anne's elder sister, Catherine, was married to Henry Champernowne, a fervent Devonian Protestant, who was closely involved with events in France. This brother-in-law led a group of supporters, from South West elite families, to France to support the Huguenot cause and he had also been involved in negotiations on behalf of French Protestants. He met his death whilst fighting for the Protestant cause at Rochelle in 1570.[87] It is reasonable to suggest that Anne gained some knowledge about French events directly from her sister, the wife of a supporter of the French Protestant cause. Furthermore, living and supporting her husband and family in Honiton, Anne was likely to have come into contact with members of the community of Huguenot exiles, weavers who had settled in the town to work in the woollen trade who could have related their

[85] Dubois-Nayt, 'Anne Dowriche' p. 11.
[86] Cheynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 245; historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/edgcombe-peter-1536-1608 accessed Sept.3 2016.
[87] Sampson, 'Anne Edgcumbe/Dowriche' p.103.

histories to her. The narratives' relating the murder of men, whilst their wives and children watched in horror, certainly bears the hallmark of eyewitness accounts. 'What rolling teares, what shrikes, what piteous cries/between the wife and loving babes were sent to airies skies...'[88]

Anne's knowledge of court life and behaviour may have come to her via her female relatives who had been ladies in waiting, including her Step-Grandmother, Katherine and her niece Margaret Edgcumbe, who married Edward Denny in 1585. Margaret was reputed to have been one of Queen Elizabeth's favourite ladies. The Queen gave her and her husband a 21 year lease on a house, in Bishop's Stortford, as a wedding gift.[89] Margaret was almost the same age as her Aunt and the two grew up together at Mount Edgcumbe. As previously indicated, they would have shared the same educational programme. It seems likely that the two remained in contact by letter when Margaret was at court. Margaret is known to have written letters and was a correspondent of Sir Philip Sidney.[90]

***Anne's Linguistic skills***

Anne also appears to have been a competent linguist. The text implies that she understood the Biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew or that, at the very least, she comprehended the sense of words from those languages as used in biblical

[88] J.R.W. Coxhead, *The Romance of the Wool, Lace and Pottery Trades in Honiton* (Honiton, 1978) pp. 7-18; Dowriche, French Historie, p.34.
[89] Stortfordhistory.co.uk/guide/0/lady-denny accessed June 5 2016.
[90] Pearson, *Cotehele House*, p. 40.

symbolism. She frequently employs the concept of the Greek term *kairos* when explaining the presence of God's relationship with time.[91] Anne shows the divine ruler as Lord of time, the agent of all activity from creation, through to the present and on to the future. She also quotes from Latin texts, including Josephus' account of Aristobulus, who killed his mother and his brother, which she says she has read in Josephus'*Antiquities of The Jews*. At the time Anne wrote her history, Antiquities had not been translated into English, so she must have been familiar with Latin. This is further evidence of her receipt of a humanist education.[92] Further hints of linguistic skill come from Anne's cited sources. She claimed to be inspired from original material compiled in French, citing in particular Innocent Gentillet's interpretation of Machiavelli, *Discours, sur les moyens de bien govverner et maintenir en bonne paix un Royaume...Contre Machiavel Florentin* (1576), sometimes called the 'Contra-Machiavelli'[93] This was not printed in English until 1602, which implies that she could read French or that she read it in a Latin translation.[94] Although Anne used Gentillet's, unfavourable, interpretation of the Florentine writer she

[91] E. Goodrick and John Kohlenberger, *Exhaustive Concordance* (London, 1990), p. 1736.
[92] Dowriche, *French Historie*, p. 37.
[93] Randal Martin, 'Anne Dowriche's The French Historie, Christopher Marlow and Machiavellian Agency' *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 39 no 1 (1999), p. 70.
[94] N. W. Bawcutt, 'The 'Myth of Gentillet' Reconsidered; an aspect of Elizabethan Machiavellianism' *The Modern Language Review* 99 no 4 (2004) p. 872.

appears to have some knowledge of Machiavelli's original work, *The Prince*, which had also not appeared in English translation at the time she wrote her poem, which might imply that she understood vernacular Italian as well as Latin. She quotes a famous phrase from this work, 'For wisdom doth allow the Prince to plaie the foxe and Lion-like to rage'.[95] Anne's other sources, which she calls chronicles, are Thomas Timme's 1574 translation of Jean de Serres *Commentaries* called by Timme *The Three Partes of Commentaries, Containing the whole and perfect discourse of the Civill warres of France and* François Hotman's *De Furoribus Gallicis.*[96]

***Manipulating Historical Narratives***

The background knowledge, wide reading and linguistic skills Anne drew upon in order to write and publish an historical narrative are impressive for one barred from entry into formal educational institutions. However, the *French Historie* is more than a narrative history which relates events in chronological order. The full depth and breadth of Anne's education is demonstrated not by what she knew but rather by how she employed her knowledge to create a political and religious commentary on historical events. If the ability to make use of factual knowledge and background information, to select from a variety of sources, including some written in classical and

[95] Dowriche, *French Historie,* p. 23.
[96] Thomas Timme,(trans)*The Three Partes of Commentaries, Containing the whole and perfect discourse of the Civill warres of France*. (London, 1574); François Hotman *De Furoribus Gallicis* (London, 1573); Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to the Reader.

foreign languages and weave material together, in support a coherent and carefully constructed argument, is a sign of true scholarship, then Anne was indeed a scholar. When Joan Kelly remarked that women did not have a renaissance and that humanism made women subservient to a 'patriarchal and misogynous past' she must have been unaware of the depth of Anne Edgcumbe's humanist scholarship.[97]

Anne's scholarship is exemplified by her admitted manipulation of source materials. This, she claims, serves a specific purpose. From the outset she acknowledges that she has chosen and edited her resources with care. She describes this editing process as one of 'collecting and framing' She does this consciously, to fulfil specific aims which were to

> edifie, comfort and stirre up the godlie minds unto care, watchfulnesse, zeale and firventnesse in the cause of God's truth.[98]

Her motivation is multi-layered, educational, religious, moral and political. Anne does not allow her readers to be passive; she stirs them to react to her narrative, taking positive action, in the Protestant cause. She bombards their emotions as they read about the fate of French Protestants; she provides them with faith rousing speeches from the condemned saints and the pitiful cries of babies deprived of their fathers. Futhermore, through her poem, she intended to offer

[97] Joan Kelly, 'Did Women Have A Renaissance?' in *Women, History and Theory: The essays of Joan Kelly* (Chigago, 1984), p. 35.
[98] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Dedication to Pearse Edgecombe.

advice to Queen Elizabeth herself, whose character and determination she will have heard of via her niece, Margaret.[99] Her strategy is to employ a sophisticated mix of historiographical selection and political commentary to create and influence an anti-Catholic initiative, naming specific enemies of truth, the Pope, The King of Spain, the Queen-Mother of France and all of 'Popish' persuasion. Events in the recent history of France are made relevant to all godly folk and crucially, to the cultural and political situation in England. This is why she advises a queen with such confidence, on her final page.[100]

But Anne also had an artistic aim. Anne wrote her warnings in verse. She did this, she claims, as a student of poetry, learning to write verses. Thus at one level her writing is for her 'owne exercise, being a learner in that facultie...' but she also intends to change the way her readers view poetry, for her second motivation was

> to restore again some credit if I can unto Poetrie, having been defaced of late so many waies by wanton vanities...[101]

Here perhaps Anne is referring to crude ballads and fictional tales of romance whereas she expects poetry to have a far more serious educational purpose[102] Anne intends to make poetry the

[99] *ibid.* p. 38.
[100] Laoutaris, 'Translation/Historical' p. 297.
[101] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to the Reader.
[102] Elaine Beilin, 'Writing Public Poetry, Humanism and The Woman Writer' *Modern Language Quarterly* 51 no 2 (2007), p. 262.

tool of the godly, religious and political commentator. It is imperative that poetry contains a serious message which demands action from Protestants. She admits that the narrative she will relate may have been encountered before because it has already been translated into English prose, but the narrative must be read more deeply. It needs re-telling in a novel way to engage readers in the fight for truth. Anne's poem will retell recent French history in a new, distinctive way 'for the more noveltie of the thing'. The poetic form will become an 'apt facilitie in disposing the matter framed to the better liking of some men's fantasies...[103] Here, Anne uses a technique beloved of educators, she attempts to relate history in an exciting and dramatic way to more appeal to readers. This is seen most clearly in the final section of the poem, which she writes in dramatic form, creating speeches for her main characters, putting words into their mouths to explain their motives.

Elaine Beilin suggests that Anne's work can be divided into three different types of historical writing. The first contains the factual details of three historical events which she draws from her sources, namely murders of Protestants in the Rue St. Jacques, the martyrdom of Annas Burgues and the Massacre of the Hugenots on St Batholomew's Eve. The second is a religious history, overlaid with a providential

[103] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to the Reader.

interpretation of events. The third is a dramatic presentation where Anne creates imagined speeches for her main characters.[104] However, in Anne's eyes, these speeches are an essential component of her historical narrative; imagined speeches are justified because her readers need them in order to understand the motivation of the main players on the historical stage. Anne knows and understands her sources, since she is able to take their basic narrative and add a more detailed and overtly religious interpretation to them. Historical figures spoke in the original narratives but their speeches were 'Onely in substance lightly touched, and the summe set downe without amplifying the circumstance...' Anne rectifies this lack of amplified circumstances by creating longer speeches for the leading characters but claiming that she only does so because of hints in the original text, 'And yet here is not more set downe than there is signified...'[105] The words she puts into the mouths of

> The Martirs, and of the King, the Queen, the Guise, and all other that have speeches in this booke, marke that of purpose the nature both of the person that speaks and also the matter that is spoken, are lively set downe: so that here are not bare examples of virtue and vice, but also the nature and qualities of those vertues or villanies are manifestly depainted to them that will seeke for it...[106]

[104] Beilin, 'Writing Public Poetry', p. 262.
[105] Dowriche, *French Historie*, Epistle to the Reader.
[106] *ibid.*

The phrase ' to them that will seeke for it' indicates that Anne expects her readers to appreciate her providential approach to history, working through her text, just as she worked through her sources, applying their own religious understanding of history to the narratives. In Anne's eyes, historical events must be seen as a duel between good and evil, but understanding the motivation of human beings, both godly and ungodly, is essential if one is to learn from the past, act in the present and prepare for a better, Protestant, future. Anne, of course assumes that her readers will share her world-view; like many of her Protestant contemporaries, she was a conspiracy theorist, since she saw the events in France as a manifestation of a larger, international plot by Catholics, who were motivated by Satan and funded by Rome, to destroy the true and reformed faith. This perceived plot is exemplified in the words of Sir Walter Mildmay.

> As the waves of the sea, without stay,do one rise and overtake another, so the Pope and his…ministers be never at rest, but as fast as one enterprise faileth they take another in hand…hoping at last to prevail.[107]

The political rulers of France, Catherine de Medici and the Guises become the agents of Satan, using the guile of courtesy to devise unspeakable acts of cruelty against God's elect. Throughout she will assist her readers to uncover

[107] Cited Alice Hogg, *God's Secret Agents Queen Elizabeth's Forbidden Priests and the Hatching of The Gunpowder Plot* (London, 2005), p.1. See also Jessie Childs, *God's Traitors Terror and Faith in Elizabethan England* (London, 2014), pp. 4-5.

> The policie and crafte of Sathan and his members in devising by subtiltie to circumvent the godlie; under the shadow of trust, to exercise tyranny; under the colour of courtesie to practice crueltie; and under the vaile of a sacred oath, to cover most shameful villanie...[108]

Anne turns historical figures into dramatic characters. Each is clearly identifiable as working for God or acting for Satan. It could be argued that others had done this before her. John Foxe's *Booke of Acts and Monuments*, and Timothy Bright's *An Abridgement of The Booke of Acts and Monuments of The Church*, published the same year as French Historie, had encouraged readers to know more about characters from the recent past and to engage with their suffering. Anne would no doubt have been familiar with these texts. However her work goes further than these martyr narratives. She creates a performance piece, an affective drama, using two narrators, a French exile and a sympathetic English Protestant. This is a clever device, for the former can explain the horror that took place in France and the latter can add an English response. This is a key role because Anne wants her English readers to feel the Englishman's pity, then they will be watchful, learning not to trust Catholics. Anne's selection of male personas has been seen as a way of concealing her female authorship, scholarship and ability to offer counsel, but since Anne declares her authorship at the end of the poem, just after her advice to the queen, 'Lord Jesus Christ, the

[108] Dowriche, *French Historie* Epistle to the Reader.

praise be thine; for blessing of this work of mine. Anna Dowriche.' it is more likely that she was simply following a conventional Elizabethan literary framework.[109] Next, she applies rhetorical skills, perfected through her humanist education, to place reasoned and skilfully developed arguments in the mouths of her main characters, the faithful Protestant martyrs, the evil Queen-Mother and Satan.

Interestingly, although her narrators are male, Anne places women at the centre of her poem and of history: the two queens Catherine de Medici and Elizabeth I of England. The two are on opposite sides of the battle between good and evil: the first is a tool of Satan, the second the 'chief pastor of [God's] sheep'.[110] It is worth considering whether Anne drew inspiration from the cycle of Cornish drama's described in chapter two. They were still being presented in her locality in 1602, when her nephew Richard Carew wrote about performances of them.He remarked that many people went to see the plays and his comments about incidents during the performance imply that he saw them himself. Anne may have also seen performances and been familiar with the plays' content. Two women, Eve and Mary, were central to these dramas, one representing sin the other obedience. As noted in chapter two, in the *Gwerin an Bys* a translation of the original Cornish

[109] Elaine Beilin, *Redeeming Eve; Women Writers of The English Renaissance* (Princeton, 1987) p. 103; Kim Walker, *Women Writers of The English Renaissance* (New York, 1996), p. 53; Dowriche, *French Historie*, p. 38.
[110] Dowriche, *French Historie*, pp.23, 38.

texts, Eve became the tool of Satan, arguing with persuasive authority to encourage her husband to act against God. In Anne's work Queen Catherine becomes an agent of Satan and in a long monologue persuades others to agree to a heinous crime but like Eve, her words are fair and womanly, even though she is working against God

> But here the prologue ends, and here begins the plaie
> For bloodie minds resolved quite to use no more delaie.
> The Mother Queen appeares now first upon the stage
> Where like a diverlish sorceresse, with words demure and sage...[111]

Catherine becomes the agent of Protestant suffering. The Queen Mother's Florentine background had led to her being stereotyped, by commentators, as one who came under the influence of Florentine writer Niccolo Machiavelli.[112]

Anne exploits this further by presenting the Queen Mother as a student of Machiavelli's methods. Her mind is filled with the cunning associated with the Florentine writer. This is why, in the speeches Anne creates for her, she uses phrases taken directly from Machiavelli's work. This reflects Anne's reading of Gentillet, who portrayed Machiavelli as untrustworthy and cunning, but may also suggest familiarity with Machiavelli's own text. If she read the 1577 Latin translation of Gentillet, which contained an open attack on Catherine de Medici, blaming her for all the bloodshed in France and accusing her of introducing Machiavelli's work to France, it may have

[111] Dowriche, *French Historie*, p. 23.
[112] Laoutaris, 'Translation/Historical Writing' p.318.

encouraged her to write the queen as a follower of Machiavellian principles.[113] In Anne's drama Catherine becomes what is now known, in literary circles, as a Machiavel, a cunning, scheming and unscrupulous, but persuasive, dramatic character. Christopher Marlowe is generally credited with the invention of this type of character and the device was used by Shakespeare. However since Anne's *French Historie* predates Marlow's *Jew of Malta* and his *Massacre at Paris*, which drew on the same sources as Anne's *French Historie*, this assumption can be challenged, with literary scholars suggesting that Anne's representation of Catherine de Medici influenced Marlowe.[114] According to Marion Wynne Davies, Anne's Catherine encapsulates an English version of Machiavellian villainy and elements of Anne's evil queen can also be seen in Shakespearian characters such as Lady MacBeth.[115] If this is indeed the case then Anne's education had far reaching consequences and suggests that her scholarship is worthy of greater recognition.

***Conclusion***

Education was valued in Anne Edgcumbe-Dowriche's family. Her step-grandmother, father, brother, nephews and nieces were all involved in learning and special provision was made for Anne's education, in her father's will. Anne shared her brother's

[113] Bawcutt, 'The Myth of Gentillet' p. 873.
[114] Martin 'Anne Dowriche's 'The French Historie'. p. 75.
[115] Marion Wynne-Davies (ed.), *Women Poets of The Renaissance* (London, 1998) p.355.

Puritan beliefs and when she found her vocation, as a clergy wife, she shared her husband's religious convictions. Anne bore her husband's children, supported him in his work and gained the admiration of her father-in-law. Anne and Hugh Dowriche were members of West Country religious and literary networks and Anne edited her husband's publications and one of her own poems was included in the preface to one of his sermons.

Anne's greatest achievement was her long narrative poem on recent French history, published, under her own name in both London and Exeter. This poem, *The French Historie*, reflected her religious beliefs, which stemmed from her Puritan, world-view, with providentialism at its centre.

Anne could not have created this poem without a scholarly background. The poem reflects her extensive knowledge of the classics, biblical texts, Christian doctrine, languages and the skills of rhetorical argument. This suggests that she was provided with a humanist education programme. The poem also illustrates her ability to select, interpret and edit a variety of sources, in English and in other languages to suit her own purpose. She encouraged her readers to examine the actions of historical figures, discovering the motives behind their actions. To do this she employed poetry in new ways and used the format of a play, giving her main characters emotive and persuasive speeches. She has been credited with creating

the Machiavel character, which was taken up by Marlowe and Shakespeare.

By unpacking a late sixteenth century woman's views on religious conflict through an examination of her published literary work, this thesis demonstrates Anne's determination to share her views with a wide public audience. *The French Historie* has been largely ignored by historians to date. This thesis suggests that Anne's text is highly significant as a political and religious commentary on both historical events and the contemporary state of the society in which she lived. Unlike the women who wrote private guidance for their children, Anne deliberately wrote a serious interpretation of history for publication. This thesis' focus on Anne's work as an editor and manipulator of sources provides insight into the motives behind her writing for a wider public audience. It therefore draws the emphasis away from a woman's passive studying in private and enables us to focus on the agency that Anne's education gave her.

Though Anne was self-depreciating in the introductions to her text, she wrote with confidence, using a well-planned structure and logical arguments. As a clergy wife and a published author she, like her Catholic contemporary Dorothy Arundell, had a dual vocation but Anne employed her education and scholarship to the service of her Puritan faith.

Lucie Reynell of Forde was another woman who employed her education and training in the service of religion. Anne Edgcumbe and Dorothy Arundell were West Country born but Lucie, a goldsmith's daughter, came to the region as a young bride. Anne and Dorothy wrote and circulated their works from opposite sides of a religious divide. In contrast, Lucie, who disliked religious extremes, did not produce work for a public readership. Her life was spent in charitable works and these were recorded, by one of her relatives, in a biography. The next chapter examines Lucie's experiences and achievements, seeking evidence the education and training, which enabled her to take charge of both household and estate during a long widowhood.

## Chapter Six

***Dutiful wife; Lucie Reynell of Forde, Evidence of achievement in a mercantile household.***

Lucie Reynell was born in 1577 so was seventeen years younger than Dorothy Arundell and a child of eleven or twelve when Anne Edgcumbe-Dowriche was embarking on her publishing venture. Anne and Dorothy were born into established land-owning families. In contrast Lucie is representative of an expanding set of women from mercantile backgrounds who joined the elite through marriage. Daughters of wealthy merchants brought wealth to younger sons of established families. These men, with nothing to inherit in their own right, sought to develop new personal wealth, esteem and influence in their local communities. A wife who could bring an injection of funding into a marriage made the purchase of land and property possible. The married couple could then create their own independent estate. There are several examples of such partnerships in Devon, in particular where a younger son has attended the Inns of Court and established himself in a legal career in London before his marriage. Frequently the marriage is followed by the purchase of a new property in the Devonshire countryside.[1] Unlike Anne and Dorothy, Lucie was not a writer but, two years after her death, a relative published

[1] Vincent Calmady's 1564 purchase of Langdon Hall at Wembury, Plymouth provides a good example. devonruralarchive.com/LangdonCourt.html accessed 12 Sept. 2015.

her biography.[2] Lucie died in her seventies, achieving much in her long life. This chapter will acknowledge her achievements, linking the biography with details in surviving household accounts to establish her interests and her knowledge base.

The daughter of Robert Brandon, a London goldsmith and his second wife, Elizabeth, Lucie had useful connections to import to a prospective husband's family.[3] Her father, first a freeman and then a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, served as the queen's own goldsmith, from 1558 to 1580 and advanced to become its Prime Warden, chairing its governing body, the Court of Wardens.[4] He became Chamberlain of the City of London in 1583.[5] Lucie's sister, Alice, married their father's Exeter-born apprentice, Nicholas Hilliyard, who later rose to fame as the painter of fine portrait miniatures and had contacts in the French and English Courts.[6] Although there are no details of any formal education programme undertaken by Lucie before her marriage, there are indications that her father recognised her knowledge and skills. Whilst still in her minority at her father's death on 30 May 1591, she was nonetheless named as his executrix, alongside executor Robert

[2] Edward Reynell, *The Life and Death of The Most Virtueous And Pious Lady, The Lady Lucie Reynell of Ford* (London, 1654).
[3] Mary Wolfe, 'Reynell Family (per. 1540-1735)' http://ezproxy-prd.Bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article accessed July 17 2016.
[4] Betty R. Masters, *Chamber Accounts of The Sixteenth Century* (London, 1984), pp. xxxii-xxxvii.
[5] *ibid.* p. xxxviii.
[6] Roy Strong, *Artists of the Tudor Court; The Portrait Miniature Rediscovered 1520-1620* (London, 1983), p. 71.

Smith, a solicitor and deputy comptroller of the City.[7] She was left half the net income of Robert Brandon's personal estate. In contrast, her sister Alice and brother-in-law Nicholas, her father's erstwhile apprentice, appear to have earned little trust.[8] Robert left instructions that monies he bequeathed to them were to be administered by the Goldsmiths Company and not the couple themselves.[9] As Nicholas was imprisoned, for debt, in 1599, perhaps this was a wise precaution.[10] The fact that Lucie was entrusted to assist in the carrying out of her father's wishes and that Robert Brandon made no request for the Goldsmiths' Company to take charge of her affairs, suggests that her father recognised she possessed intelligence and integrity despite her youth.

By 1600 Lucie was married to successful Islington lawyer Richard Reynell. Richard was the third son and fourth child of Devonshire parents, Thomas and Agnes Reynell, whose household was East Ogwell Manor, near the wool-processing town of Newton Abbot. Richard had a reputation for learning and good taste, and his young bride was able to continue her education and training under his mentorship.[11] As a third son, Richard stood to inherit no family land and he was perhaps typical of younger sons who sought careers in either trade or the

[7] TNA PROB 11/77 ff.339-43; 491.
[8] Strong, *Artists*, p.72.
[9] TNA PROB 11/77 ff 339-43; 491.
[10] Strong, *Artists*, p. 58.
[11] P.F.S. Amery, J.S. Amery and J. Brocking Rowe (eds.)*Devon Notes and Queries* Vol IV (Exeter, 1907), p. 40.

professions which, according to Wrightson, could help them retain or recapture the status of gentleman by means other than the inheritance of family lands.[12] Educated to a high standard, first at a school in Ashburton and then at Exeter College, Oxford, Richard entered the Inns of Court where he joined the Middle Temple, becoming a barrister.[13] By 1617 he must have had at least fifteen years qualified experience and gained a good reputation because he was chosen to be the Inn's Autumn Reader and lawyers required years of good practice, at the bar, before being granted this status.[14] He had been married to Lucie for seventeen years by this time.

It is likely that Richard made the acquaintance of Lucie's family through his legal practice. Lucie's father, Robert Brandon, as Chamberlain of the City of London and as an officer of the Goldsmiths' Company, would have needed the services of the legal profession. Richard may have deliberately sought a wife in London; a marriage contract with a wealthy merchant's daughter would be advantageous to a younger son and the marriage could have been arranged for social and economic considerations'[15] Their partnership, together with his undertaking of a successful legal career, worked to his advantage; shortly after the marriage Lucie's

[12] Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (Abingdon,1993), p. 30.
[13] DRO/4625MO/F1 (Thomas Reynell's Booke ), p. 183; Amery, *Notes and Queries*, pp. 40-43.
[14] A.W.B. Simpson ,'The Early Constitution of Grays Inn' *Cambridge Law Journal* 34. (1975), pp. 145-146.
[15] M. Slater, 'The Weightiest Business; marriage in an upper-gentry family in seventeenth century England.' *Past and Present* 72 (1976), p. 26.

wealth, half her father's fortune, and Richard's professional endeavours, enabled the couple to buy their own manor-house and land in the heart of the Devonshire countryside. Lucie moved to Devon and together the newly married couple established their new household at Forde House, not far from his family's original manor of East Ogwell.[16]

Bill of sale and other legal documents indicate that from the early days of their marriage, Richard and Lucie worked in partnership, buying not only Forde House but also, making joint purchases of property and land. These purchases were by separate small negotiations through which they added pasture, orchards and at least two established herb gardens to their estate.[17] The newly-weds made great efforts to retain and expand their wealth, by creating a self-sufficient household and estate. They developed farming interests, establishing a fair-sized flock of sheep, 167 in total by 1628, as well as owning their own cattle.[18] They were also involved in wool processing, employing the services of male weavers and female spinners on a regular basis.[19] They grew in status and won respect in their local rural community whilst, at the same time, through Richard's legal work and contacts, they maintained their links with London, sometimes visiting the

[16] newtonabbot24.co.uk/item-40-forde-house accessed 1 September 2016.
[17] DRO/D1508M/Monger/151.
[18] *Todd Gray (ed.), Devon Household Accounts 1627-59* (Exeter, 1995), *p. xxxi*.
[19] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.3v, fo.4v, fo.12r.

city for several weeks at a time and on one occasion spending a total of £135 in the process.[20]

Together Lucie and Richard set up and maintained a separate household, within the Cathedral close in Exeter, which they visited on a regular basis. This is confirmed by notes added by their steward to bills which he passed through the accounts of Forde marked 'whilst your Lordship was in Exeter.'[21] By 1628, at least 17 staff were employed within the Forde Household and services of other servants, such as a laundress, were required at regular intervals. They also employed a miller named Jeremie on their estate and had their own carriage complete with a coachman named Matthew.[22] With the goldsmith's daughter's assistance, Richard had re-entered the ranks of the landed elite, whilst, at the same time, keeping his professional interests alive in the city of London. But had Richard married an educated wife as well as a wealthy and hard-working one?

Evidence of Lucie's long life, her successful partnership with her husband and the godly reputation she earned during a long widowhood comes from several sources. The most useful of these is the aforementioned account books of Forde and a biography of Lucie, written by a member of the Reynell family. These surviving records were not created to preserve details of

[20] *ibid.* fo.6r.
[21] *ibid.* fo.3r, fo.4v, fo.26r, fo.29r.
[22] *ibid.* fo.15v, fo.17r, fo.29r.

Lucie's educational prowess but examination of their content throws light on her achievements and skills. Lucie emerges from the records as practical, spiritual, social, philanthropic and scholarly.

The Forde household accounts are written by three different hands; Richard and his steward both make regular entries until Richard's death when Lucie take all responsibility herself. From this point, the style of the entries changes completely, as Lucie adds comments on her purpose and intent. The accounts give a good indication of the Reynell's lifestyle and show them moving between their three bases: Forde, Exeter and London. Todd Gray has transcribed the accounts for the Devonshire Association but so far little attention has been paid to Lucie's role within them and no detailed attempt has been made to compare the content of the accounts with her posthumous biography.[23] This chapter takes up this task.

Edward Reynell's *The Life And Death Of The Most Virtueous and Pious Lady the Lady Lucie Reynell of Ford* could be more accurately described as a spiritual reflection on Lucie's life.[24] It was compiled in 1654, two years after Lucie's death. Edward was Richard Reynell's nephew. At the time he created the biography, he was the Rector of East Ogwell, close to the manor house where he was born and where his eldest brother and

[23] Todd Grey, Devon Household Accounts, 1627-59. Part I (Exeter, 1995), pp. 1-110.
[24] Edward Reynell, *The Life and Death Of The Most Virtueous And Pious Lady The Lady Lucie Reynell of Forde* (London, 1654).

his family still lived. Within the biography, there are hints of Lucie as a willing pupil, first as a quiet, pious, child who spent time praying, reading, meditating and working. She

> Came earely into the Lord's vineyard in the dawn and morning of her daies, sucking in the milke of God's truth with the milke of her nurse...learning the scriptures from a child and remembering her creator in the daies of her youth...[25]

Next, as a young wife Lucie observed and worked alongside her new husband as he conducted estate and household affairs, learning much from him. Edward explains that Richard had an extensive library which Lucie accessed for her husband 'plentifully allowed her all furtherances thereto and had for many years...showen her the way...'[26]

As noted in chapters two and three, for religious and scientific reasons, a wife's education had to take second place to her husband's other duties. In the early days of their marriage Richard was required to spend a considerable amount of time in London, working in legal practice. In legal documents he is sometimes still referred to as Richard Reynell of London or Islington.[27] As Autumn Reader, seventeen years into his marriage, he was playing his part in the training and induction of younger barristers of the Middle Temple. This gave him teaching experience, which he could employ to encourage his young wife's learning, supporting her as she

[25] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 10.
[26] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 37.
[27] DRO/1508M/Monger/152, DRO1508M/Monger/153; DRO/1508M/Monger/336.

developed and maintained her practical skills. This was an investment for the good of their new estates because, albeit with a steward's assistance, his wife needed to keep a watchful eye on household and estate matters when Richard's legal work drew him away from home. According to Edward Reynell, the marriage was harmonious and Richard, although much older than Lucie, took pleasure in

> Spending such time [with Lucie] as might be dispensed with from the employment of his place and service of his country.[28]

Surviving contracts between parties in the sales and purchases of property and land, bought as the Reynells expanded their holdings, always include Lucie as co-owner and party to agreements.[29] Her mercantile background had given Lucie the numeracy and literacy skills to make her an ideal partner as they ran both household and estate. John Edwards has demonstrated that although early modern accounting education was 'gendered' women were not entirely excluded from acquiring knowledge of the accounting craft.'[30] Indeed, in the section of accounts kept by her husband it is clear that Lucie's input into the general running of day-to-day affairs was regular and valued; Lucie used her knowledge and skills to good effect. Many entries, written by Richard, refer to payments, large orders, direct decisions and clear instructions made and given

[28] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 37.
[29] DRO/D1508M/Monger/151.
[30] John Richard Edwards, 'Accounting Education in Britain during the early modern period' *Accounting History Review* 21.1 (2011), pp. 37, 46.

'by my wife.' In particular Lucie appears to have been granted sole responsibility for negotiating with butchers for sales and exchanges of livestock, as well for the household's large and continuous supply of meat.[31]

Richard, twenty years older than his wife, predeceased her in 1633, leaving his widow experienced in household and estate management. His nephew recorded in his diary

> My unkell Sr Richard Reynell died 24 January 1633 his office was found at the castle of Exon, April 1634.[32]

The office, to which his nephew refers, was Richard's will; proven in 1634, it made Lucie his sole executrix and left her outright the town house in Exeter.[33]

After her husband's death Lucie took over the management of the whole estate, moving frequently between her Exeter and Newton Abbot houses. It is clear, from the moment her handwriting appears in the account book that Lucie asserted her authority, taking full control of the household. The style in which household expenditure is recorded changes for Lucie made a great show of keeping firm, personal, control of all financial transactions. She personally supervised the handing over of her husband's bequests and she insisted that each beneficiary signed, or made their mark on, a statement of receipt.

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[31] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.14r, fo.16v.
[32] DRO/4625MO/F/5/1 p. 30.
[33] DRO/D1508M/Monger/364 and DRO/D1508M/Monger/341.

> Delivered Mary Hearder her legacy given by my husband £2, received by me, my mark MH, the sign of Mary Herder paid... George Browne the miller my husbands legacy £4 paid, the mark of George Browne X[34]

Lucie even insisted that monies left to relatives, including her son-in-law, the parliamentary general Sir William Waller, be signed as 'received'.[35] Sir William is mentioned several times in Lucie's accounts, mostly in connection with his carrying out financial transactions for Lucie, but whilst he may have offered advice, it is clear that she had given him detailed instructions, making her purpose unmistakable. The sums of money involved are considerable.

> Sent up to Sir William Waller 13 hundred and £10 that is £2000 he has given George Trose £10 this 21 of June-which I bid him lend my cousin Lowman for which he hath her hand to be paid at Christide, given my husband's godson, George Carye's son to help him to his fellowship 20m nobles, given Crimes £4.40s for a suit and 40s for a gift...[36]

Lucie was an observant woman and there was little which took place of which she was not aware

> she either saw or heard of any object of pittie (which she usually did if there were any within many miles of her she relieved them...[37]

Observation of financial aspects in the personal and business dealings of her birth family must have impressed upon her the importance of careful accounting, record keeping and remembering to keep promises. Lucie knew her sister Alice's

[34] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.33r.
[35] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.34br.
[36] *ibid.* fo.34br.
[37] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 18.

husband, Nicholas Hilliard, had spent time in Ludgate prison in 1599, owing money after standing surety for someone else's debt and then being unable to pay it.[38] She must also have witnessed her father's unfortunate experiences, as Chamberlain of the City of London, when there were several challenges and demands for investigation into financial discrepancies during his time in office. There was concern over the city's orphanage fund and 'how the chamber might best be brought out of debt.'[39] Robert Brandon was not charged with any offence but investigations were undertaken, causing enough personal concern for him to deem it necessary to make a statement of denial in his will to silence rumours about his conduct.

> I certify and make known to my said executors and overseer, and to all others to whom the same may appertain, and desire them to take knowledge for as certain truth, whatsoever rumours may be blazed abroad to the contrary that touching my state accounts and reckonings appertaining to mine office of chamberlainship of the city of London I stand clear without any just cause of accusation and so I am well assured I shall do unto the end.[40]

Whether Robert Brandon taught his younger daughter the finer points of account-keeping is unproven but she appears to have had a good understanding of the importance of recording debts redeemed and monies outstanding. Throughout Lucie's accounts, compiled when she was a widow, there is evidence indicating determination to be recorded as dealing honestly. On several occasions she added additional notes on the sums she owed to

[38] Strong, *Artists* p. 58.
[39] Masters, *Chamber Accounts*, pp. xxxii-xxxviii.
[40] TNA Prob 11/77 ff.339-43.

other people and on monies they owed her.[41] The names of witnesses to the transactions were included whenever she recorded a personal loan to a named person.[42] In these cases, so that there was no room for misunderstanding, she invariably included by whom the monies loaned had been passed to the borrower.[43] In addition, to ensure that everything was clear, from the outset, she noted the date payment was due 'Lent Mrs Edmondes £4 to be paid at Candlemas, given to her son...'[44] When debts were paid, she expanded entries, noting what monies were still outstanding to explain which debt the payment released.

> february the 2 the miller paid me for his quarter's rent but £16 19s 6d being due £21 10s besides he owned me of his last quarter's rent £11. 10s so is due to [me, crossed out] me £16,...£3 received of the miller he now owes me £13.[45]

Lucie dealt firmly with trades-people. There may have been rumours about Robert Brandon's record keeping, but there would be no cause to bring challenges to his daughter's accounts. Lucie emerges from these accounts as a strong-willed woman, who would not be crossed and who knew what services she required. She made every effort to ensure that the standards of those services never slipped. She made her wishes and intentions clear. No bill would be paid from her household budget unless she was satisfied with the quality of the work.

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[41] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.34br.
[42] *ibid.* fo.35r.
[43] *ibid.* fo.34br.
[44] DRO/4652M/F4/4 fo.34br.
[45] *ibid.* fo. 35r.

Upon commissioning a tomb, for her husband, including a space left for her own effigy, she noted the price she agreed with the 'tomb man' but added 'if he performs it well to my liking, else £10 is to be deducted.'[46] This was not an isolated incident; she is equally forceful on other occasions including the purchase of a new coach and when making arrangements for building her 'new house' this being the four almshouses she commissioned between 1638 and 1640, for clergy widows.[47]

The section of accounts, which Lucie kept herself, after her husband's death, are in italic hand, in contrast to the secretary hand of her husband and his steward but it is clear that she is used to writing for she is competent with her pen. From the outset her writing is clear, bold and neat, though it became smaller and spidery by 1647. This might indicate failing eyesight or a tremor of the hand as she grew older.

***An account of Lucie's virtuous life***

The Forde household accounts provide a glimpse of Lucie Reynell as a confident and educated woman. However, it is when her nephew Edward Reynell's biographical account is set alongside these hints of expertise that a clearer picture of Lucie's knowledge and practical skills emerges. Using both sources, together with some fragmentary evidence from handwritten, typed and self-styled 'fair copies' of long-lost Reynell family diaries and a commonplace book of one of

[46] *ibid.* fo. 34br.
[47] *ibid.*

Lucie's brother-in-laws enables a clearer pen portrait of a woman, who was without doubt both educated and strong-willed, to emerge.[48] However, before examining this evidence in more detail it is important to set the spiritual biography in context, especially as the author, Edward Reynell, has been recorded, somewhat accurately if rather unkindly, as a 'florid writer in his time' and one whose family 'rather desired that his name be forgotten...and what he had done might be buried in the pit of oblivion'.[49] It is necessary to note some of Edward's own biographical details, to uncover his motives as a writer before deciding whether his work as a biographer is accurate. Only then can an informed decision be made on the actual value of any evidence, on Lucie's education and training, found within Edward's outpourings and exhortations on the long life of his Aunt.

Comments about Edward first appear in the diary of Richard Reynell who lived at the Reynell family's main house in East Ogwell. Like Edward, he was also a nephew of Lucie's husband Richard Reynell of Ford, being the eldest son of Lucie's oldest brother-in-law, Thomas. Edward was the youngest son. In his diary Richard describes his father's death thus

> My dear and loving father Sr Thomas Reynell knight sickened the Wednesday before Easter and died the

[48] DRO, 4625M0/F/5/1.
[49] J. Prince, *Danmonii Orientales Illustres or The Worthies of Devon* (Exeter, 1701), p. 524.

> Wednesday sennight, about midnight being the eighth of April 1618...[50]

He next recounts that the aforesaid Thomas had made good provision for all his family apart from his youngest son Edward, to whom he left a mere £20 a year. The explanation for this small provision, which was not as ungenerous as it first appeared, runs thus

> Hee gave his youngest sonn Edward, wh[om] he had by his second wife that was Sr Jonathan Trelawneys widow only an annuity of 20£ yearly, assuring himself his mother would do much more for him, having a fair jointure though from my father only fower score pounds yearly-But she gave herself to one Mr Nick Lower in Cornwall who being a yonger brother and worth very little made a fortune of the old lady, and as her reason and nature did not provide for the sd sonne when it was in her power (viz) before the marriage wth Lower, soe her power was afterwards restrained in that direction.[51]

Thomas was not to know that his widow was soon to make other plans which would not include provision for Edward. Another entry about Edward's mother remarks

> My mother-in-law (sic) stayed with me at Ogwell until midsummer and then went to her own house of Poole, In Menhe ott parish in Cornwall and fell in liking wth one Mr Lower a yonger brother of Sr William Lowers; a man of small means, and married him before November, without acquainting any friends therewth, or doing any good for any childe.[52]

It would seem therefore that with almost no legacy from his father's estate and forgotten by his mother, Edward had little means to establish himself and make his way in the world though, according to Prince, Edward was 'from his childhood

[50] DRO, 4625MO/F/5/1.
[51] *ibid.* p. 175.
[52] *ibid.* p. 180.

much addicted to learning' At the age of seventeen he went up to Oxford and was

> admitted fellow commoner of Exeter College on 30th May in the year 1629, where he continued some years, under the care of a noted tutor, I suppose his brother-in-law the famous Dr Prideux, who had married that virtuous Gentlewoman his sister Mrs Mary Reynell.[53]

However Edward did not take his degree because Prince reports that in the summer of 1632 Edward

> transplanted himself from there into one of the Inns of Court, most likely the Middle Temple...now how he came to apply himself to this study I know not, but he never much delighted in it for his genius led him another way; and inclined towards divinity...[54]

Despite not having a degree Edward became a Church of England Minister.[55] Whilst in ministry Edward devoted much of his time to writing. He published several godly works in addition to his biography of Lucie.[56] By the end of his life he was Rector in his original home parish of East Ogwell. An entry in *Magna Britannia* dismisses him, and indirectly his aunt Lucie in two lines

> Edward Reynell, rector of East Ogwell, who died in 1663, published The life of Lucie Lady Reynell, who founded the

[53] Prince, *Worthies,* p. 524.
[54] *ibid.*
[55] There is no record in Exeter College archives of Edward ever completing his degree. In a letter to the author dated October 8 2013 Dr. Rachel Cosgrave, Senior Archivist Lambeth Palace, confirmed ordination without a degree was not uncommon. 'Men without a degree had to be judged by their bishop to possess sufficient learning to qualify for ordination *literatus*.'
[56] Edward's godly works include *Eugenia's Tears For Britain's Glory* (London, 1642), *An Advice Against Libertinism* (London, 1659), *Bracteola Aurea or Filings of Gold* (London, 1663), and *Celestrial Amitias or A Soul Crying For Her Saviour* (London, 1660).

> widows' houses, "Eugenia's Tears for Britain's Glory," and other works.[57]

Prince remarks that Edward was 'a person of curious parts' who led 'a single life'[58] and that he was 'greatly addicted to melancholy'.[59] In fact so great was this addiction that in 1663 he took his own life. This was

> accomlished by the improbable assistance of a single bason of water in his chamber...how very weak and feeble the spark of life quenched by such unlikely means as a little bason of water. He breathed his last at the parsonage-house of East Ogwell.[60]

Thus Lucie's biographer appears, at least in psychological terms, a rather damaged individual; disregarded by his immediate family, he fails to take his degree, tries his hand at law but rejects his legal training in favour of a religious calling, then suffering from depression, closes his chamber door to the world before breaking both civil and religious law by ending his life before it has run its natural course. Suicide, as an act of self-murder, was an unspeakable crime in 1663, suicides could not be buried in hallowed ground.[61] This was a pitiful end for a man of God. This explains the Reynell family's wish to bury Edward's activities in 'the pit of

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[57] D. Lysons and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia; Being a Concise Topographical Account of The Several Counties of Great Britain VI,* (London,1822), pp. 370-381.

[58] Mary Wolfe's DNB essay on the Reynells states that Edward had two children and that he died not long after their deaths but Joanna and Richard, were the children of his nephew, both buried at East Ogwell Church. M.Wolfe, 'Reynell Family (per. 1540-1735)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* first published 2004; on-line edn, Jan 2008 accessed 23 March 2013.

[59] Prince, *Worthies* p.524.

[60] *ibid.* p. 540.

[61] Jeremy Hart, 'Maimed Rites: Suicide Burials in the English landscape' *Time and Mind* 43. (2011), pp. 279-280.

oblivion.'[62] Does Edward's fragility have any bearing on the nature of his deliberations on the life of his Aunt? If so does it devalue the evidence contained in the biography? Perhaps not, indeed it could be argued that understanding something of Edward's life throws new light on his sense of purpose when creating the biography and may help to explain his motive in publishing the work and presenting it to a wider audience.

Edward dedicated the finished biography to another member of the Reynell family, Richard and Lucie's granddaughter Margaret Courtenay. Margaret was the daughter of the Parliamentary General Sir William Waller who had married Lucie and Richard's only surviving child Jane. Through her marriage to William Courtenay Margaret had become a very important woman, the Countess of Devon in all but name; her husband had refused to take up the title.[63] Edward, in a lengthy introduction addressed to Margaret, explained that in writing her grandmother's biography his motive had been a godly one. He saw the biography as a tool which could be used to encourage others to imitate his aunt's actions, convinced that the story of Lucie's life

> will instruct, her death teach and her works (which follow her) will never be silenced.[64]

[62] Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensus* vol. II (London, 1813), p. 225.
[63] J.Burke, *A General and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire* Vol. 1 (London, 1832), p. 358.
[64] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 6.

Edward claimed that he wished his Aunt to be celebrated and remembered. He thought that her behaviour and good works were exemplary. Recording and publishing Lucie's life and death stories meant more than simply preserving memory. The work was his attempt at 'making her alive again.'[65] He used episodes from his aunt's life and death, writing more on the latter than the former, to create, for readers, an aspiration; Lucie was a female Christian's role model. He hoped that other women would try to live their lives as Lucie lived out hers; so that they, just as he believed Lucie did, would find themselves on the right path towards salvation and union with Christ. In particular, Edward believed, Margaret as Lucie's granddaughter and heiress, herself already also a 'truly honoured and virtuous lady' would want, with him, to remember and honour their kinswoman 'this great pillar of our country'.[66] Edward here stresses his own relationship to both Lucie and Margaret, placing great emphasis on their joint sorrow, whilst hoping that Margaret will make every effort to follow their relative's example. Margaret has her grandmother 'for a pattern' and Edward recommends her

> to better thoughts in imitation and practice of her most precious example, who began so soon to live to God and is therefore living with him.[67]

He hopes that Margaret's eyes will be 'often upon her' [Lucie] and she and others will

[65] *ibid.*
[66] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. A4.
[67] *ibid.* p. 3.

> see the picture of a gracious heart and her right frame of a sober gospel spirit; in the description of a whole life we may see to what a height of grace a spirit may reach[68]

Edward is therefore writing a spiritual, rather than a factual and chronological, biography of Lucie. In it he presents his Aunt as a godly woman, who uses her skills wisely, avoids vainglory and lives her life in the service of her maker and redeemer.

Of course, though he does not admit it, Edward has an additional motive. Through his re-telling of Lucie's life and death and his outpouring of grief at her passing he can claim empathy and kinship with Margaret, now one of the most important women in Devon and seek her patronage. Claiming kinship with Margaret, helps Edward, the rejected and forgotten Reynell son, to reclaim his place within his family structure. This is not a kinship claim which lacks truth. In Richard Reynell's diary, entries show that as a young man Edward had, like his cousin Jane Reynell, Lucie's daughter and Margaret's mother, taken on god-parenting duties for his elder brothers' children, though in Edward's case he may have actually been representing another brother rather than making the godfather's vow on his own behalf.

> Sunday the 28th of October 1621 aboute noone my wife was delivered of a sonne named Richarde by my father-in-law, my cosen Mr Doctor Clifford and my cosen Jane Reynell

[68] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 3.

> daughter of my unkell Richard Reynell hee died wthin a month after he was born[69]
>
> she was delivered of two sonnes the Wednesday before the firste aboute six of the clok att night att whose baptism weare witnesses, my brother Thomas Tuckfield that married my wifes second sister, and my brother Edward Reynell in ye place of my brother Walter Reynell whose name it had.[70]

As acknowledged kinsman to Margaret Courtenay, presenting Lucie Reynell, their kinswoman, as a well known, much loved and respected person with a good reputation across her county would do no harm to Edward's own reputation and status within the Devonshire community; Edward wanted everyone to recognise his high connections. Through his writing he attempts to demonstrate how close he felt to Margaret and how this closeness helped him through his own sorrow.

> These flouds of teares which have been lately occasion'd through the death of this much lamented lady, have been greatly stinted in the thought of your ladyship's nearness...[71]

Thus he can claim an emotional and familial bond with Margaret stressing their shared feelings; the purpose of writing the biography is 'comforting our souls in time of sorrow' whilst at the same time presenting his writing to a wider and presumably paying readership, under the patronage of the county's most elite woman. Lucie Reynell is a role model for her grand-daughter but also for all humankind. Christian Englishwomen in particular will be encouraged to buy the book because Margaret Courtenay has acknowledged its worth.

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[69] DRO/4625MO/F/5/1 p. 21.
[70] *ibid.* P. 28.
[71] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 4.

This theme, of deceased worthy females as role models for the whole of humanity rather than just a focus for would-be godly women, forms a common motif in all of Edward's writings. It could be argued that he championed and celebrated the lives of women who were the opposite in character to his own mother. Unlike Elizabeth Killigrew-Trelawney-Reynell-Lower, who deserted her son and rushed immediately into a disastrous third marriage after the death of Thomas Reynell, Edward's ideal women chose virtuous widowhood. Thus they respect the memory of their dead partners by requiring no other husband but Christ. Edward records that other suitors pay court to Lucie Reynell but she had decided to become

> a scriptural vestal, a godly Lucrece, to all thoughts of a second match, which were so cold and icie towards any new engagementing as they seemed to make love to snow that courted her.[72]

Edward addressed aspiring godly women throughout all his published works. In his *Celestrial Amitias or a Soul Sighing For Her Saviour* he dedicated his thoughts to 'All the ladies of our time' and addressed his female readership with kind words of praise for their potential good conduct.[73] He had no wish, he said, to be like other writers of the time, forever scolding and upbraiding women for sinful behaviour. Instead, he claimed, his intention was to provide them with female Scriptural role models, such as all the Marys of the gospels,

[72] *ibid. Life and Death* p. 37.
[73] Edward Reynell, *Celestrial Amitias Or A Soul Sighing For Her Saviour* (London, 1660), p. 164.

Sara, Judith and the good woman of the Book of Proverbs, as well as some women from classical literature. The faithfulness of widowed women who choose to reject all thoughts of a second marriage is highly commended. These women, just as Edward will later describe Lucie, deliberately turn to Christ as their second husband. This is because it is natural for their souls to long for comfort but the best comfort comes from a saviour rather than a husband.[74]

Such passionate descriptions, of female souls crying out for a saviour, do not appeal to modern tastes but it is a mistake to reject them outright for this would ignore important information woven between the strands of high emotion and rhetoric. Edward values the achievements of women. He assumes that they can make their own choices and he recognises that that they have the ability to read and understand biblical and classical material. Unlike many popular advice writers of the day, he does not judge women for perceived sins, rather he comments on their potential for performing often unacknowledged good works. For Edward women are the embodiment of both the biblical sisters Martha and Mary, able to work hard and hear the voice of Christ through study, prayer and meditation.[75]

On closer examination, the biography, despite Edward's fragile state of mind, his religious beliefs and his motives for

[74] *ibid* p. 8.
[75] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 50.

personal social recognition, which require him to emote at length on his own grief, has embedded within it interesting evidence on the skills Lucie acquired during her long life. His attempts to describe the life of a 'jewell in Christ's diadem' can be verbose but, once untangled from the rhetoric, the evidence is valuable and can be linked with details of Lucie's activities which emerge from the Forde account books and other sources. When viewed together these sources help to provide a fuller picture of her life experiences. They show that she possessed and cultivated both intellectual knowledge and practical skills. She was an educated and well informed woman.

Edward did not know the young Lucie so it would have been difficult for him to provide details of her formative years. Nevertheless, as a former student at the Inns of Court, he would have been familiar with London; the city where Lucie spent her youth. Edward was not enamoured of London. Throughout the biography he refers to it as in a somewhat disparaging way as 'that place'. Compiling the biography in 1654, he writes from the standpoint of a witness to her later life rather than that of a true biographical researcher. His outline of Lucie's childhood and early youth is brief and written with hindsight or from what Lucie herself may have told him.

If Lucie was a perfect role model in her middle years and old age then, for Edward, it follows that she must have also been a perfect child. He cites no direct information about any tutors employed by her father, though, in an attempt to present Lucie as a saintly child from even her earliest years, claims that she was

> sucking in the milke of God's truth with the milke of her nurse...learning the scriptures from a child...[76]

This might, as well describing an infancy befitting a good christian, hint at the possibility of Lucie's nurse having an official role as her first teacher. As, among the elite, few mothers took practical responsibility for the upbringing of their children, the influence of a nurse upon her charge throughout all the years of childhood was not uncommon. In her autobiography Alice Thornton, born into the elite Wandesford family, writes at length about her nurse Sara Tomlinson. She describes how the latter was chosen, by her parents, as much for her potential moral influence, on Alice and her brother, as for her practical skills in child rearing.[77] As Lucie's mother, Elizabeth, died in Lucie's infancy it may be reasonable to assume that her nurse replaced her mother as an early-years teacher and role model, setting the foundations for the infant's godly life. On the other hand Edward may have chosen a phrase in common usage which might simply be a way to

[76] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 10.
[77] *The Autobiography of Mrs Alice Thornton of East Newton Co. York*, ed. C. Jackson (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 1-2.

indicate that a child was particularly open to spiritual teaching or was given a good grounding in religion from a very early age. Biographies and autobiographies of godly women, such as the aforementioned Alice Thornton, also refer to children who have a good grounding in religious education drinking in the message of God almost from birth. 'I had the principles of grace and religion instilled into me with my milke.'[78]

Whoever taught her, the Lucie of the biography appears to be a serious child who passed time wisely, even though others around her were offering temptation and pleasure. For members of the elite shaping of character was a vital part of education and Edward's description of the young Lucie's efforts to avoid an ungodly life by

> betaking herself to prayer, reading, meditating, working and such other religious duties as might hinder her from imploying her time in those vanities, which many both of her age and sex about her (forgetting to seek God) spent in painting, patterning and adorning themselves...[79]

suggests that she was following the correct curriculum. However it also implies that she came into contact with wealthy and less god-fearing women but, despite growing up in London which offered much temptation for the young, she made a deliberate choice to avoid emulating them.

[78] *ibid.* p. 2.
[79] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 11.

Edward felt the need to stress that his Aunt was 'descended from the ancient family of Brandons...'[80] The hint of a royal connection is intentional, avoiding description of her mercantile background. Charles Brandon was the second husband of Princess Mary Rose, the sister of Henry VIII. It was far more impressive to be related to the cousins of Queen Elizabeth than to be a goldsmith's daughter, albeit a wealthy one. Even though Lucie shunned the finery that riches and status could have brought her to concentrate on living a christian life, it was important for her nephew to present a high born role, model for Margaret Courtenay, first lady of Devon. Therefore Lucie is shown to be innocent, wise, beautiful *and rich*; a perfect child

> Endowed as she was as with the innocence of childhood, so with the beauty of youth; and rich as well in the endowments of nature as fortune...[81]

who made a deliberate choice of a godly lifestyle. She was wealthy but 'delighted not in the excels of apparel nor the pomps and riches of the world...[82]

By his own admission Edward edited much detail out of his Aunt's life. His intention was to show how godly she was and thus he has to concentrate on her many virtues

> I shall pick out some of the choicest of them, there being many good parts of a Christian and this lady having them all.[83]

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[80] *ibid.* p. 9.
[81] *ibid.* p. 12.
[82] *ibid.* p. 12.

Thus from the outset young Lucie appears to be following the gendered Christian guidelines outlined in chapter two. Demure and submissive, she is a perfect woman who studies what Edward calls humility but we recognise, from our earlier survey of conduct literature, as courtesy or civility.

> She made it her study to be respectful to those above her: Courteus to her inferiors and very cautious in giving offence to any, either in word or gesture.[84]

In addition, like Margaret Hoby, who frequently referred to meditation and self-examination in her closet, Lucie appears obsessed with self examination.[85] Edward describes her constantly striving to

> take survey of her daily defects, weaknesses and infirmities. And as for her known perfections she sought modestly to cloud and obscure them, remembering that if anyone thinks he knows anything, he knows nothing.[86]

Of course Edward unwittingly describes a paradox here for if Lucie was totally successful in obscuring her perfections then no-one would have known that she had any and Edward would have had nothing to write. Edward's real intent is to demonstrate that Lucie had knowledge of many things and that this knowledge, even though she attempts to disguise it, is actually one of her perfections.

Knowledge, of course, comes from education, training and study but Edward does not expand on the practicalities of this in

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[83] *ibid.* p. 11.
[84] *ibid.* p. 12.
[85] Meads, *Diary of Lady Margaret*, p. 106.
[86] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 13.

great detail. He justifies this by explaining he did not know Lucie as a child, though he does indicate that she was literate for reading books was one of her 'pleasures'. He notes that she read the Bible along with other such works that would help her 'remember her creator in the days of her youth' despite

> being bred in a place [London] which largely afforded and too much invited the extravagancies of youth.[87]

Edward himself, as a student of the Inns of Court, had his own experience of 'the place' that offered so many opportunities for advancement of career and status alongside the growing temptations of conspicuous consumption. Therefore, in his eyes, Lucie is even more godly for closing her eyes to much that London offered.

Despite apparently shunning the world and all its vanities Lucie married a successful lawyer. Her husband barely features in the biography. There is neither mention of the couple's wedding nor of the purchases of their fine house, estate and gardens in Devon.[88] Edward comments on Richard's library, but does not name any of the books he owned but he describes Richard Reynell as a patient man who taught his young wife many things.[89] This teaching, Edward explains, took place when Richard was not busy with his own affairs: presumably Edward refers to the amount of time Lucie's husband needed to spend

[87] *ibid.* p. 10.
[88] DRO/D1508M/Monger/81. DRO/D1508M/Monger/151.
[89] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 37.

back in Islington and the City of London, with his work in legal practice.[90] This city time would be crucial in 1617 with the extra duties and lectures which came with his Autumn Readership in Middle Temple.[91] However, Richard is of secondary importance in a biography of a godly woman. Edward's Lucie is presented as an independent, female role-model, capable of studying and meditating alone once her daily work was done, examining herself for sin, checking all her faults and

> further alone in her severall hours retirement much time being daily employed in the reading of goode books especially the Bible and such as tended to mortification.[92]

The Richard of the biography is a shadowy, but wise, figure who plays but little part in his wife's journey towards salvation, other than allowing her to use his library, presumably the 'goode books' came from there, and showing her

> the way...as in the duties of religion so in the well ordering of economical affording...'[93]

Thus Richard's professional employment and the efforts he made to assist and teach his wife about the running of a household are dismissed in a few words. There is no mention of their joint enterprises in the woollen trade, or that they purchased herb gardens and orchards together, or even that they entertained people of importance, including royalty, in their

[90] *ibid.* pp. 37,57.
[91] Mary Wolffe, 'Reynell Family (per. 1540-1735) http://ezproxy-prd.Bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/74992 accessed September 3 2016.
[92] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 23.
[93] *ibid.* p. 37.

houses. In the biography Lucie is her own woman, managing her time wisely, preparing her own way towards acceptance in heaven. In contrast the Forde household accounts evidence a much stronger, practical partnership between husband and wife and a greater sharing of common interests, riding out together in the carriage, spending several weeks at a time in London and entertaining there and in both their Devon houses.

***Gardening, reading and Needlework***

Although the purchasing of the Reynell's gardens are not mentioned in the biography, Edward's account confirms that the creation, use and enjoyment of them was an important part of his Aunt's life. It seems that she spent much time outdoors

> As for her recreations; her greatest outward delight was in her garden; where she was the best plant the root of faith growing in her, Grace and flowers making a good mixture...[94]

For Edward, his Aunt's garden is a tool for spiritual meditation. Lucie prays and meditates there in its privacy. Gardens and orchards were special spaces for women. Ryrie describes them as the outdoor equivalent of prayer-closets, ideal places for prayer because they were solitary, convenient and filled with nature, albeit nature controlled and managed by human hand. Ryrie notes how Lady Anne Clifford often retreated to pray in a 'standing' housed in her garden.[95] According to Edward it is within her garden that Lucie learns

[94] *ibid.* p. 35.
[95] Ryrie, *Being Protestant* p. 166.

to die, but, this preoccupation with death is not morbid or pessimistic. It is a conscious preparation for meeting with Christ and achieving eternal life beyond the grave. Contemplating human frailty was a positive spiritual activity. Lucie's very choice of plants becomes a deliberate effort to help her focus on her own mortality. She used flowers as a metaphor for death, one of her favourites being Napell, which, in a marginal note Edward reminds readers, bears a flower known to resemble a death's head or a skull.[96] This additional information is indeed interesting. Why did Edward feel the need to include it and how did he know about the symbolism of this particular plant? It is not implausible to suggest that Edward learned this metaphorical interpretation from Lucie herself. In the biography, he makes much of knowing his Aunt well in her middle and later years and much of the work suggests that he was a frequent visitor to her house thus making him an eye-witness to some of her more private activities. It could be argued that Edward's passages describing his Aunt as a moral example for others are telling comments on his own personal relationship with Lucie. Did the latter take her husband's young, motherless, nephew under her wing and become his spiritual mentor and teacher? That would explain aspects of Edward's own behaviour such as his career change from lawyer to clergyman, his pre-occupation with

[96] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 35. According to thepoisongarden.co.uk/atoz/aconitum_nepellus.htm Napell is more commonly known as 'Monks Head'or 'Wolfbane' and it is highly toxic.

death, his melancholy writing and his great outpouring of grief when Lucie died and there would be reasons, other than patronage, for his keenness to develop a stronger relationship with his Aunt's granddaughter Margaret. If Lucie inducted Edward into the spiritual nature of garden design it would explain why he is able to describe her intensely personal meditations in such detail. The garden passages certainly give the impression of walking alongside the meditating woman, fully understanding the nuances of each thought. Edward explains clearly how the fact that all flowers fade and die were helpful aids to Lucie's meditations, perhaps they also became aids to his spiritual journey.

> Each fading blossom and drooping head shewed her how quickly outward glory was ended.[97]

And if flowers were visual aids, to meditation on the process of dying, then the soil represented the finality of death itself. According to Edward, when Lucie walked in her garden as soon as she crushed and smelled the earth beneath her feet she thought of death. So gardening was therefore a lesson in her own mortality. Soil smells of decay and by its very nature is comprised of dead things so, for Lucie, it had to symbolise death and the return of the human body to the earth. However this lesson in the frailty of the body was welcomed. Lucie, according to her nephew, sought out all chances to meditate on

[97] *ibid.* p. 35.

the end of her earthly life and future of her soul. Her garden was therefore a comfort.

> The smell of the fresh earth which for some held so wholesome for the body being no sooner trodden on by her but made a cordiall for her soul.[98]

It could be argued here that Lucie was a competent philosopher, since to use symbols within a garden to meditate on death required quite detailed understanding not only of the use of metaphor but also of that which the metaphor was said to represent. A detailed knowledge of Scripture and some theological argument was surely implied. The idea of learning to die was not new. Homilies provided for clergy to read to their Sunday congregations from the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI contained many exhortations on preparing for death and welcoming it without fear.

> Let us studye daily and diligently to shewe oure selfes to be the true honorers and lovers of God, by kepynge of his commandments, by doinge good dedes unto our nedy neighbours...comforte their weaknesse with our strengthe and authoritie, calling all men back from evil doynge by godly counsayll and good example... So shall we not need to feare death...But contrary, considering the manifold sickeness, troubles and sorowes of this present lyfe, the daungers of this perilous pilgrimage and the greate encombraunce which oure spirit hath by this sinful fleshe and frayle body...considereth that blessed and comfortable state of heavenly lyfe to come...[99]

Sixteenth and seventeenth century inscriptions found in West Country churches often encourage the passer-by to pause, think and prepare for death. An inscription, on a sun-dial at the

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[98] *ibid.* p. 35.
[99] R.R. Bond (ed.) *A Homilie against the feare of deathe, in Certain Sermons or Homilies 1547; A Critical Edition* (Toronto, 1987), p. 157.

church porch in St. Breward, Cornwall, is a succinct example, where the passing Christian is instructed to 'Guard the minutes as they fly, seek to live and learn to die.'

Metaphor was the tool of sixteenth and seventeenth century gardeners and knowing how to read and understand codes and secrets devised with purpose within a designed landscape was almost as important as botanical knowledge. A true gardener had to have an active and educated mind. Gardens were full of symbols and conceits. Roy Strong suggests that to understand a renaissance garden is to understand a renaissance mind, since 'not only are these gardens important in the history of art and architecture but they also provide abundant material in relation to the history of literature, theatre, science and ideas.[100] In *Dance and The Garden* Jennifer Neville, explores the complicated symmetry of Early Modern gardens. Reading a garden was an art, patterns and shapes representing an understanding of the known universe. The garden replicates patterns also woven into dances of the period, showing the positions of the sun moon and stars in relation to the earth and representing humanity's life under God the lord of heaven. The patterns were an aid to thinking about one's place under heaven and they were works of art. Neville cites Hugh Platt, a writer of seventeenth century gardening manuals who commented that 'drawers, embroiders and dancing masters' may 'pretend to

[100] R. Strong, *The Renaissance Garden In England* (London, 1979), p. 223.

such nicities' as 'shaping or fashioning a garden or orchard.'[101] For Platt, gardening was one of the arts and any educated person could be a gardener. Conversely therefore a gardener would be an educated person.

Edward implies that Lucie takes sole charge of the garden. This suggests that she plants all the flowers and herbs and walks in it alone. However the account books show that a full-time gardener was in employment and that in addition, at regular intervals throughout the year, a number of named women were brought in to assist with the weeding. Lucie was therefore not required to do all, if any, of the back-breaking work required in garden tending, she even employed cabbage, bean and pea planters. Therefore she was free to spend time planning her garden as a spiritual artefact and then meditate within it without concern for weeds or crops.[102]

By the time Lucie and Richard set up their estate useful manuals on gardening were being published, reflecting the new renaissance passion for gardens adopted by the elite. Indeed it seems that the newly married couple were following clear instructions for the setting up of orchards and gardens as set out by William Lawson in two illustrated books *The New Orchard*

[101] J. Neville, ' Dance and The Garden' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 52.3 (1999), pp. 805-836.
[102] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo.18, fo.19, fo.20, fo.21.

and *The Country Housewife's Garden*.[103] The second book, deliberately aimed at a female audience, contains simpler language than the longer *New Orchard*, nevertheless the two books are cross referenced and so female readers, like Lucie, were obviously intended to have access to both volumes. Lawson declares that a good household would have two gardens, partly because it would disgrace the flowers should they have to be grown alongside onions and parsnips but partly because with two gardens there was scope for spacing out harvests as one garden's crop could be ready at a different time to the other's yield.[104] Lucie and Richard purchased two separate herb gardens so perhaps this was common practice or they were following Lawson's advice. Lawson favoured setting out a summer garden using a mix of flowers and herbs and his book contains helpful diagrams showing how to mix the two but he allows that 'there are as many devices as gardeners braines' and leaves 'every housewife to herself.[105]' Lucie's choice to mix herbs and flowers in her garden and to select plants to assist her own meditation as well as medication might mean she was using a gardening handbook, even a version of Lawson and following its advice[106]. Other members of the Reynell family were drawn to gardening for both recreational and economical reasons. Lucie's brother-in-law Thomas, the father of Edward,

[103] The texts were published together in one volume in 1618 but previously had been circulated separately as W.Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden* (London, 1617) and W.Lawson, *The Country-Housewife's Garden* (London, 1618).
[104] Lawson, *Country-Housewifes Garden* sig. G3v.
[105] *ibid.* sig. F8r.
[106] *ibid.* sig. G4r.

made many notes in his diary about planting flowers, vegetables and fruit trees. In particular he notes the planting of a pear tree and drawing up new designs for a terraced garden.[107] As he grew up with a horticulturalist father and saw the gardens the latter created, it is reasonable to suggest that when Edward describes his Aunt's garden his descriptions on her choice of plants, her medicinal use of them and her meditations upon their symbolism are accurate.

Despite the fact that Edward continually employs spiritual metaphors and uses Lucie's love of the garden as yet another symbol of her piety rather than an example of her horticultural expertise, he provides evidence which suggests that she had a sound botanical knowledge and an understanding of the medicinal properties of herbs.

Another popular book was *The Gardener's Labyrinth* which, according to the title page, gave advice on the 'phisicke benefit of each herb, plant and flower, with the virtues of the distilled waters of every of them.' As noted in chapter three, household advice books expected women to have knowledge of herbal lore and medicine.[108] In the biography, Lucie provides herbal medicine as well as spiritual care to servants and neighbours. Edward remarks that she did not send for doctors or use their 'antiquated drugges' but used her own

[107] DRO4625MO/F/5/1 p. 174.
[108] Thomas Hill, *The Gardeners Labyrinth* (London, 1577), title page.

knowledge to help the afflicted and she had enough knowledge to be able to recognise plants in their natural state which had been grown by others

> most of her cures proceeding from her owne store or the patients' garden.[109]

Lucie's actions are similar to those of Grace Mildmay, whose own writings evidence not only Grace's sound and detailed knowledge of surgery and medicine but also her belief that these should be part of a woman's education. Grace recommended books on these subjects which should be read by women: William Turner's *New Herball* and a translation of John Vigo's work by Bartholomew Traheron.[110]

There are parallels between Lucie's education and spiritual life and the experiences described by Lady Grace Mildmay; although, from Grace's description her marriage to Sir Anthony Mildmay was nothing like the warm and affectionate partnership which Lucie appeared to share with Richard. The spiritual journey of both women follows similar paths as they provide examples of godly living for their households and for their grand-daughters. Both women practised their faith from a very early age. Grace believed that faith was part of a long educational process.[111] She stresses her early nurturing in faith under the supervision of a relative and recalls how the

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[109] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 15.
[110] R. M. Warnicke, 'Lady Mildmay's Journal; A Study In Autobiography And Meditation In Reformation England' *Sixteenth Century Journal* XX no 1 (1989) p. 58.
[111] *ibid.* p. 59.

latter taught her to be modest, chaste, silent and heedful of personal words and actions.[112] Both women shunned lavish clothing and jewelry.[113] Grace's meditations contain similar botanical imagery to that employed, by Edward, of Lucie with Grace describing the soul as a 'well watered garden and fruitful orchard.'[114] Lucie's studying of good books mirrors Grace's reading of 'heavenly' books described in her journal[115]. Grace remembered that four of her books were purchased specifically for her education, by her mother, who had encouraged her daughter to read and study religious works every day.[116] In doing this she was following a tradition set by her grandmother.[117] Grace names these books as *The Bible*, Foxes *Book of Martyrs,* Wolfgang Musculus' *Common Places* and Thomas a Kempis' *Imitatio Christi*.[118] Edward does not name Lucie's books but her husband's library is described as a large godly collection, possibly containing the works recommended by Grace. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was popular amongst West Country Protestants. It was included in Hannibal Gamon's personal library at St Mawgan and its influence on Anne Edgcumbe was noted in chapter five.[119]

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[112] Linda Pollock , *With Faith and Physic; The Life of A Tudor Gentlewoman Lady Grace Mildmay 1552-1620* (London, 1993), pp.25, 27.
[113] *ibid.* pp. 28-29; Rendell, *Life and Death* p. 11.
[114] Pollock, *With Faith and Physic* p. 55.
[115] *ibid.* p.28; Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 23.
[116] Pollock, *With Faith and Physic* p. 28.
[117] *ibid.* p.60.
[118] *ibid.* p.28.
[119] NT 3042119.

It is not only in spiritual life-style that Lucie's experiences mirror Grace Mildmay's. Grace wrote of taking pleasure in needlework. She often spent time sewing or creating original designs for patterns. Here she combined her horticultural skills with an embroiderer's eye, using detailed knowledge of plants and flowers to incorporate botanical details into her patterns.[120] Biographical descriptions of Lucie at her needlework are collaborated by evidence from the Forde accounts where expenditure on many kinds of fabrics and silks is regularly itemised, most often bought when Lucie was visiting Exeter. In the city, Lucie's spending on sewing materials was not modest. She bought four yards of scarlet silk in May 1635 and, on the same occasion, paid £3. 16s on eight yards of green mohair, to make a petticoat, and £2 for silver lace to bind it.[121] Edward's description of his Aunt and the women who sewed alongside her is animated; if he wished to bring his Aunt back to life through his writing, this is the closest he reached to achieving his goal. Although Edward stresses that, through her industrious employment of her needle, Lucie is following a religious calling, there is a glimpse of a joyful, lively, woman, contrasting with the quiet contemplative character of the rest of the biography.

> [Lucie] consciously imployed in the works of her particular calling; and what was that? Even, (which the good woman of the proverbs) sometimes to make herself

[120] Pollock,*With Faith* p. 35.
[121] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo. 34bv.

> coverings of tapestry and clothing of silke and purple; to looke well to the waies of her household and to cloath her family in scarlet: but especially reaching out to the needy in making all kind of garments for them. So that whenever any came to visit her they should find her like a princess in the middle of her maids of honour, triumphing on the throne of the affections of such as where about her; or rather making her house (wherin she was the heart) a concleave for religious worship; a gracious soul consecrating all places into a chappell.[122]

This Lucie is not a solitary meditative figure, instead she is popular, sociable and lively, enjoying the company of other women. The detailed comments above, including mention of visitors finding a princess, surrounded by cheerful women, suggest that this is a scene familiar to Edward, that he was one of the visitors. Here too is a glimpse into the lives of other women within the Reynell household and suggests that Lucie may have been teaching some of them to sew. The account books confirm the sewing activities, the purchase of materials and the persons involved.[123] Sometimes the names of children and adults for whom garments were made are included.[124] The accounts name some of the women employed, to use Edward's imagery, as Lucie's 'maids of honour'.[125] Several of these women receive a regular weekly or quarterly wage; they include Sara, Kate, and Agnes.[126] Mary Helmer, appears in the accounts every week, indicating a life-long relationship with Lucie, as servant or trusted companion.[127] Other women are paid for

[122] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 20.
[123] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo. 1r, 5r, 8r, 17v, 19r, 19v, 22v.
[124] *ibid.* fo. 16v, 20r, 31r, 32v.
[125] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 20.
[126] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo. 18r, 25r, 29r.
[127] *ibid.* fo. 3v, 5v, 14v, 28r.

actual days worked.[128] Sewing was a communal activity and the image of Lucie sitting centre stage, surrounded by other woman implies that it was an enjoyable occupation. Furthermore, account expenditure on silks and tapestry, used in fine embroidery, suggests that the women involved were talented with their needle and received some form of training in design and execution of intricate needlework as well as in the making of ordinary garments.[129]

In early modern England employment at needlework was a sign of industry and virtue. In Edmund Tilney's *A Brief and Pleasant Discourse on Marriage*, women were encouraged to sew so as not to waste time. As noted in chapter three, making good use of time was a religious imperative for women. Tilney advises them

> not to sit always ydle, but to spend hir time in some profitable exercise, as with hyr needle'[130]

Thomas Salter also regarded sewing as a suitable occupation for godly women. He saw this more valuable than undirected reading, in case the weaker sex were 'drawn to works other than examples of godly lives...'[131]

It was also more worthy than writing,

> 'how far more convenient the distaff and spindle, needle and thimble were for them with a good and honest reputation, than the skill of well using a penne, or

[128] *ibid.* fo. 15v, 20r.
[129] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo. 10v, 17v, 19v, 31r.
[130] E. Tilney, *A Brief And Pleasant Discourse* (London, 1568), p. Ciiii.
[131] T. Salter *The Mirrhor Of Modestie* 1579 ed. J. P. Collier, (London, 1866), p. 11.

> writying a loftie vearce with a diffame and dishonour, if in the same there be more erudition than virtue[132]

However, Rozsika Parker suggests that employing the needle was a useful and empowering skill for elite women and it was a subversive activity. Although the position required for sewing suggested subjugation, because a woman sat with her eyes lowered and head bowed, concentrating on needlework could give the outside appearance of the obedience and silence required of wives by scripture but the embroiderer's silence and concentration, also suggests a self-containment, a kind of autonomy.'[133] Lucie has autonomy; though she is obeying the expectations and rules set out for godly wives, industriously bent over her needlework and employed, in reality she is the centre of the action, holding court, enjoying the companionship of other women, but also an ever-present observer of comings and goings in the household.

When a woman was praised for her learning the praise was often accompanied by words of admiration for her skill with a needle.[134] Working on tapestries, especially if, like Grace, Lucie designed them herself, allowed women to develop their education in private and to show it in public. It provided a creative outlet, in Grace's case through botanical designs but for others an understanding of classical literature, since

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[132] *ibid.* p. 20.
[133] Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch And The Making Of The Feminine* (Abingdon, 1984), pp. iv, 10.
[134] Parker, *Subversive* p. 74.

many themes for designs came from Greek or Roman mythology.[135] Edward, does not portray Lucie's needlework as scholarly activity. He regards sewing as another example of her charitable disposition. Lucie's sewing is a practical necessity, an outlet for her good works. It is further evidence of her Christian virtue so she is an excellent moral example for other women. Although he presents a lively and convivial scene, he passes no comment on the costly materials she used to clothe her family neither does he mention any designs in which the expensive resources were employed. This might draw attention to vanity and contradict his previous comments on Lucie spending

> little of her time, as of her youth so of her following years, in what she would account for happiness or in decking herself with the outward ornaments thereof, as being no way affected with the vanities of foolish fashions and wanton dress.[136]

Instead Edward uses the sewing scenario to show Lucie at the centre of her household, caring for all and mirroring the perfect wife of the Book of Proverbs by obeying the commands of God. His aim was to present her as worthy of imitation. As a Church of England cleric, Edward's religious knowledge was sound. Some of the religious arguments and actions, he attributes to Lucie, may have been his own particular interpretation of those actions rather than a reflection of his Aunt's motivation. Nevertheless, evidence on her Exeter

[135] Pollock, *With Faith* p. 35.
[136] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 35.

expenditure, in the account book, indicates that she frequently spent time in the cathedral city, purchasing her lace and silk and this confirms sewing as a life-long interest and occupation.

***Relationships with the Clergy***

Lucie was not a clergy wife but residing, as she did on a regular basis, in her house in Cathedral Close, the South West's centre for theological debate and religious practice, Lucie, like Anne, played her part in Exeter's ecclesiastical circles. Edward writes of Lucie's enthusiastic support, spiritual, financial and practical of the clergy. Lucie had a special

> affection to God's saints (especially the ministers of Christ) to whom she was ever a friend...few that ever came to visit her went away empty handed[137]

and she seem enjoyed the company of clergymen, even in her old age since 'when any spiritual phisitian came to visit her... what comfort have I heard her express to have received his company...' For a Christian widow, with a reputation to uphold, being hospitable to the clergy was an approved way of conversing with educated men. Lucie was held in high esteem by the clergy; even the Dean of Exeter, William Peterson, celebrated her piety, Christian works and religious knowledge in her funeral sermon.[138]

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[137] *ibid.* p. 13.
[138] *ibid.* p. 46.

Lucie's special relationship with the clergy of Exeter provides the most clues to her scholarly activities. Woven into Edward's anecdotes of Lucie's dealing with the 'ministers of God' and of shared journeys on the 'road to paradise' between cleric and laywoman, are clear statements on Lucie's academic abilities. Lucie was a feisty woman, with excellent theological knowledge and a will of her own. Anne Edgecumbe-Dowriche dared to offer advice to all God's saints, including the Queen of England; Lucie's biography shows her daring to challenge theological experts.

> she ever loved and they her not only in regard of the great helps and favours towards them but chiefly by reason (of) that spiritual help and refreshment, which they might get by conversing with her in the choicest passages of sanctification.[139]

In this passage the roles of clergy and laywoman are reversed. It is not the clergymen advising a silent and obedient woman how to read scripture and live as God intended, but an educated woman discussing religious matters and expounding the scriptures to them. The clergy are debating with Lucie not preaching to her. This implies a meeting of educated minds. Many, saw her as 'a speaking judicious oracle.'[140]

Another clue, to Lucie's academic prowess, might be present in Edward's remark, that Lucie 'studied the Thessalonian language' If Edward's description is taken literally, since the Thessalonian language was Greek, he is implying that she

[139] *ibid.* p. 14.
[140] *ibid.* p. 24.

understood classical languages.[141] This would not have been impossible, considering the large library owned by her, classically educated, husband, to which Lucie was given access. Furthermore, in an epilogue, appended to the biography, additional details of the theological, legal and educational activities which took place in their house and of Lucie's role in the academic proceedings are provided

> her house being seldom without one or more of them,[learned clergy] having in her husbands time been made a library of scholars (amongst whom he was, in respect of his great insight and the depth of learning and the Tongues, the strongest opponent). And as he was a great friend to the Church, so good a patron to the pillars thereof, and in their company delighted to spend such time, as the Publick affairs of his place and calling would permit; making ordinary and familiar discourse to become profitable lectures to the hearers...With these I say (the most pious learned and most orthodox divines) it was her custom also usually to converse, to learn what was her duty...[142]

Could Lucie have acquired her knowledge of theology and the abilty to read and interpret classical languages via Richard and these visiting scholars? It was not unheard of for women to read Greek, Latin and, sometimes, as in the case of another West Country wife, Catherine Killigrew, Hebrew.[143] A woman who could read Paul's letters, in their original Greek, would have captured the attention of visiting clergy and this would explain why Lucie was welcome to debate *with* them rather than simply listen *to* them. Is this what Edward was implying or was

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[141] *ibid.* p. 24.
[142] Reynell, *A Consolatorie Epilogue For Dejected Souls* (appended to Reynell Life), pp. 96-97.
[143] Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* p. 63.

he writing figuratively, using yet another metaphor, to show that Lucie 'spoke and studied' the language of Thessalonian behaviour? Does he mean that Lucie was well versed in the teachings of Paul as outlined in the epistle and that she tried to follow the apostle's advice? This would imply, not that she was familiar with Greek, but instead, she was skilled in exegesis. According to Edward, Lucie spent many hours reading the Bible and meditating, so this is possible. However if this is what Edward intended then a better example from the pauline epistles would have been the language of the Philippians, since the latter are commended and thanked by Paul for their charity, whereas the Thessalonians have their hope of Christ's, imminent, return crushed and the apostle is critical of their idleness. If Edward's intention was to show Lucie as a charitable woman then surely, as a qualified cleric, he would have selected a more suitable passage to make his point. The suggestion that Lucie studied, understood and could use Greek must, at least be plausible. In either case, Lucie was no passive recipient of clerical instructions. She was, in her own way, a theologian and philosopher and she certainly had her own particular viewpoint and was not afraid to express her opinions

> she hated neutrality in matters of God's worship and would not make new friends by changing her old religion...[144]

[144] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 26.

but

> did not approve of those who (of late) give themselves to too much studying of notions and disputing nicities in religion.[145]

Lucie's connections with the clergy gave her further opportunities for good works. Here the biography and the Forde accounts are in agreement and there is collaborative evidence in the built environment since almshouses, bearing her name and funded by her charity are still occupied. Lucie's knowledge of clergy life brought her into contact with the wives of the clergy. Her alms houses were specifically for the widows of clergy. As a widow herself, who ' took Christ as her husband' believing it was important to remain faithful to one's original spouse, Lucie wanted to give clergy widows the same opportunities to remain faithful. Her instructions were very specific. The houses were for women only and no men were to be allowed to enter the buildings.[146] The dwellings were built in 1640 and referred to in Lucie's accounts as 'my new house', presumably Lucie saw the project as a single charitable work.[147] Each house had four rooms and a small garden so Lucie's widows the'relicts of preaching ministers, left poor, without a house of their own' could be self-sufficient.[148] The original buildings were demolished in 1790 and new houses, based on Lucie's original design, were built

[145] *ibid.* p. 20.
[146] P. Carter, *Newton Abbott* (Exeter, 2004), pp. 16, 19-22.
[147] DRO 4652M/F4/4 fo. 34.
[148] R. Jones, *A Book of Newton Abbot* (Callington , 1979), pp. 121-2; *Devon Notes and Queries* VI, p. 41.

nearer to Newton Abbot's centre. The following inscription on the original houses bore witness to Lucie's understanding of the Bible.

> Is't strange a prophets widow poore sould be? Y'f strange, then is the scripture strange to thee.[149]

***Preparing To Die***

Lucie spent a considerable amount of time preparing for a good death. From Edward's account, this death was a long time coming and she appears to have been in failing health for a considerable time. Long passages describe various afflictions and miraculous recoveries. Lucie welcomed each sickness as a lesson in humility. She also viewed her suffering as a way to identify with Christ, though this may be Edward's interpretation of her suffering. He writes of her theological understanding of mortality and her patience throughout the dying process. Edward describes Lucie's attempts to make, what his contemporaries understood as, a 'good death'. This places the biography in the genre of thanatographical literature, which described the spiritual experiences of the pious dying Christian. Such works stem from the Protestant conception of the *ars moriendi*, or the art of dying well.[150] Edward's descriptions of the elderly woman's physical afflictions, her mental anguish, the prayers she utters and the instructions she gives, show that she was well prepared to meet her

[149] Teignbridge.gov.uk/ webguide-Lucie –Reynell- charity accessed May, 2013.
[150] Leendert Groenendijk, Fred van Lieburg, John Exalto 'Away with all my pleasant things in the world...' *Paedagogica Historica*, 46.3 p. 278.

Saviour. They also demonstrate Lucie's determination to make provision for others and put her affairs in order. The almshouses were linked with these provisions and the Lady Lucie Reynell charity follows some of her instructions today although it also offers support to widowers of clergywomen.

Lucie appears to have suffered from a stroke, as she loses the power of speech. Despite this, Edward explains that she does not complain or sigh and she finally makes a good end. Making this good end and accepting her fate set an example to others. Lucie was not the only Reynell wife to be such a role model. In 1605, Thomas Reynell wrote in his diary about Frances, his wife, who had given him eight children.

> 4 July beinge thursdaye about ten of the clok at might God called away francys my wife whoo sikned the Sunday before she dyed moste (z)eluslye and made a blessed and godly ende who exhorted to her children then at home...[151]

And Thomas' son, Richard, wrote about the death of his young wife Mary in 1626, soon after the birth of twins

> Itt pleased god to my great sorrow to take fromm me my loving wife wednesdaye the fifth daye of July 1626 aboute twelve of the clok att noone, she was delivered of two sonnes the Wednesday before the firste aboute six of the clok att night... She died before she was 27 yeares old. She had wisdom knowledge, and religion above any woman that ever I knew whereof she gave ample testimony all her life...[152]

Mary, like Lucie, is praised for her wisdom and knowledge. The final comment in Richard's entry is evidence of the

[151] DRO 4625MO/F/1 p. 175.
[152] *ibid.* p. 28.

educational duty required of a Reynell wife and mother. Mary Reynell is shown to have been responsible for her children's religious education, their catechising, a task she left unfinished by her untimely death and which now must pass to her husband.

> greate was her loss to mee, her three sonnes and 3 daughters, which she lefte to this wide worlde. Wch she blessete, commending them to an heavenly, and an earthly ffather, and to have them chatakised as she had begun wth them...[153]

Lucie had similar responsibilities in the upbringing of her own daughter, Jane. She must have proved a good teacher and role model for her daughter because Jane grew to be an educated and respected woman. Jane had strong views, which she surely learned from her mother, on the importance of education for women, believing it to be necessary as well as useful. Jane was

> a lady of great abilities (sanctified with heavenly wisdom) wholly composing her soul by Gods word and carrying about her a consluence of all rarities and perfections. (Learning itself, being not only thought useful but necessary by her)[154]

When Jane died her husband, Sir William Waller, erected an elaborate tomb for his wife in Bath Abbey. The inscription showed her, like her mother, to be a 'right verteous and worthy lady.' Lucie is not mentioned by name, but in Jane's epitaph her mother is acknowledged, since the words reflect the godly life of both her parents. Jane is described as

[153] *ibid.* p. 28.
[154] Reynell, *A Consolatorie Epilogue* p. 96.

inheriting much from the two with emphasis placed on learning as well as wit.

> Sole issue of a matchless paire
> Both of their state and vertues heire
> In graces great, in stature small
> As full of spirit as voyd of gall
> Cheerful grave bounteously close
> Holy without vainglorious shows
> Happy and yet from envy free:
> Learned with pride, witty yet wise
> Reader this riddle read with mee
> Here the good Lady Waller lyes.[155]

***A more worldly Lucie?***

Edward portrays Lucie as a woman with unique qualities. She performs good works and earns, though does not expect a place in heaven. Lucie stands as a true moral example not only for her granddaughter, Margaret, but for all women. However he chose his biographical material with care to suit his own purpose. When writing about Lucie's day-to-day religious practice, Edward describes her as

> a strict observer she was of the hours, day and times of public (as well as her own private) fasts and days of humiliation... her example also being of great encouragement to her household in their family duties...[156]

[155] Waller tomb, Bath Abbey.
[156] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 21.

He qualifies these statements, by saying that Lucie carried out the observance of these duties 'so far as her health would permit.'[157] Nevertheless, he does not note that on 01 December 1632 Lucie had arranged to pay 13s and 4d 'yearly to the poor chest of the parish she inhabits' for a dispensation from the Archbishop of Canterbury to enable her

> and her husband and five others whom she may invite to her table household to eat meat on fast days during her life, provided it is done soberly and frugally, avoiding public scandal[158]

Lucie's own accounts indicate that she was still paying her annual fine after her husband's death.[159] This dispensation shows Lucie in a different light. She entertains guests, she enjoys good food. This Lucie, seems more like the princess described in the only animated section of Edward's work. What other activities did the biographer edit from Lucie's life?

The Forde accounts show she bought a new carriage after Richard's death. This did not stand unused in the widow's life because 'Matthew coachman' continued to receive his wages.[160] Did Lucie use it solely to travel between Forde and Exeter or did she employ it to take her further afield, for driving out? It is reasonable to suggest that she visited other elite households in the area. She certainly welcomed her own house guests; this Edward confirms but takes great pains to explain

[157] *ibid.*
[158] D1508M/Monger/14.
[159] DRO 4652M/F4/4 fo. 34.
[160] *ibid.* fo. 34.

that although Lucie entertained many persons of quality, she engaged in hours of prayer and meditation, secretly in her closet, after everyone had gone to bed.[161] As Lucie continued to pay her fine, she must have provided some of her guests meat on fast days, if they were amongst the 'five others invited to her table' and she must have provided entertainment because the Forde accounts record payments to musicians and fiddlers.[162] This suggests that there would have been dancing. Contrary to common belief, dancing continued to be enjoyed in the privacy of country houses. The first edition of Playford's *The English Dancing Master* was published in 1651, a year before Lucie's death, but the dances it contained were from earlier in the century.[163] One occasion when there must have been dancing, is a striking omission from the biography. Lucie and her husband twice hosted King Charles I and a large retinue of lords and ladies, plus the latters' servants.[164] Edward, writing five years after the execution of the King and knowing that Lucie's son-in-law was Sir William Waller, a parliamentarian officer, may have thought drawing attention to these visits unwise. However, his brother, Richard Reynell of East Ogwell, gives a detailed account of the royal visits in his diary and a bill for the Kings servants survives.[165] Lucie, along with the other Reynell wives, was even kissed by the

[161] Reynell *Life and Death* p. 22.
[162] DRO4652M/F4/4 fo. 20, fo .23.
[163] Cruickshank, *Dance Through History*, p. 4.
[164] teignbridge.gov.uk/ofh/HistoryofOldFordeHouse accessed August 8 2016.
[165] DRO4625MO/F/5/1 sig.25; Mary O'Hagan, *A History of Forde House* (Newton Abbot, 1990), p. 25.

King.[166] Charles attended church with the family on 25 September, when Lucie's husband asked him to use the King's touch to cure a child with scrofula.

> King Charles, the Duke of Buckingham, with divers other Lords came from Mr Pawleth of Heynton Wednesdaye the 5 of Sber 1625 to my unkell Sr Richard Reynells house of fforde, and the Thursday after dinner in the dininge chamber, which was then the chamber of presence, knighted myself and my brother Sir Thomas Reynell, who was his Mties servant, and server in ordinary to his person in the presence of our wifes and diverse Lordes and ladyes saying to us god give you joye, wh words hee alsoe used to our wifes and kiste them at his departure towards Plimmouth, wheare having settled businesses concerning his fleete which expedition was for Cales returned agayne to my uncles house the 24th being satterdaye and the Sundaye was at Woulborough church and at my brothers suite cured a childe wh was troubled with the kings evill...[167]

The Reynell diaries show Lucie taking an active part in family life. She became a godmother on several occasions, once for her namesake

> Luce reynell the IIIIth daughter of Tho reynell was borne on the IIIIth daye of novmber being frydaye in the morning aboute one of the clok or behynde the clok XII and I of the clok in the night between Capri and angu christened Luce by mrs jane allnigeld and my brother rychards wife (Luce) and mr Richard Earma de of londone.. then her missioner for her naiesty for the prises brought in by my lo of essex christened at westogwell anno eliz R XLO the XXIIIth daye of novmber beinge wensdaye[168]

And in 1618 Thomas' son Richard, Edward's half- brother, records her taking up the same duties for his daughter Mary

> My wife was brought to bed at Westogwell, the seventh of August 1618 being Fridaye about one of the clok in the

[166] DRO4625MO/F/5/1 p. 25.
[167] DRO4625MO/F/5/1 p. 26.
[168] DRO4625MO/F/5/1 p. 183.

> afternoon of a daughter; My brother Thomas was the Godfather, my mother in lawe and aunte Reynell of Ford, the godmothers who name itt Mary, after their mother and my grandmother name.[169]

In contrast to the pious woman of the biography, in the diaries Lucie appears as an ordinary member of the family attending special occasions. She appears in many roles, Aunt, Sister-in-law, godmother and is seen to share the experiences of key rites of passage with her husband's relatives. Lucie had her own personal sadness and presumably, just as she supported her husband's family through bereavement, so they must have supported her. In 1633, not long after the death of her husband, her only surviving child Jane, the mother of the biography's patroness, Margaret Courtenay, died, closely followed by her young son, Lucie's grandchild, who died at the age of three.

Edward's account of a virtuous and pious Aunt may have overlooked Lucie's role in the normal family cycle of birth, marriage and death but the biography is, by his own admission, an edited version of events. Lucie is offered to readers as a 'looking glass' wherein they might, see an image of perfection which they can choose to imitate.[170] Some sixty years earlier Philip Stubbs used the same metaphorical conventions when he published the short biography of his wife, Katherine, under the title *A Christal Glasse for Christian Women* (1591) Stubbs

[169] *ibid.* p. 20.
[170] Reynell, *Life and Death* p. 6.

saw Katherine as a role model in life and death.[171] Others must have agreed with him for *A Christal Glasse* had been published in twenty four editions by the late 1630s.[172]

Lucie's biography was therefore not unique. Katherine was just 19 when she died, Lucie was in her seventies, so Edward could draw inspiration from a far longer godly life than Philip Stubbes. The survival of Lucie's biography suggests that the story of her spiritual journey found a readership. Exeter University owns England's one surviving copy.[173] This is bound together with handwritten sermons dating from the 1650s. These sermons, created by a preacher who resided in Crediton, are on the godly life. Pious Lucie becomes a moral example, for Christian women. Within a few years of publication, Edward's work became a reference book for a preacher, exhorting women to a godly lifestyle. Therefore, within her biographer's lifetime, Lucie did indeed become a role model just as Edward hoped.

***Conclusion***

This chapter has shown that Lucie's biography offers much more than a mirror of virtue. By setting Edward's record of Lucie's life alongside other sources including her own household accounts; the diaries of other family members and popular contemporary literature such as gardening manuals and conduct

[171] Philip Stubbes, *A Christal Glasse For Christian Women* (London, 1591).
[133] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, Subordination* p. 348.
[173] Exeter University/Special Collections/Crediton Library/1641/HAL.

books this thesis has clearly demonstrated the importance of examining early modern women's lives in a wider context since Lucie's various experiences and her achievements show that her field of activity and influence went far beyond the confines of her household. Reading the spiritual biography alongside other primary sources helps evidence of her interests and activities to emerge more clearly. This provides information not only of her specialist knowledge but also how she applied her learning throughout her long life. From Edward's narrative, the accounts, the diary entries and the survival of her charity for bereaved clergy spouses, parallels to the lives of other women more familiar to historians, such as Margaret Hoby and Grace Mildmay can be seen. Lucie Reynell's religious confidence, her horticultural and herbal knowledge, her skills at accounting and needlework are evidence of an educational and training experience not dissimilar to that of other women of similar rank.

Sources are silent on any teachers or mentors, other than her husband, who encouraged Lucie in household or estate management, nor do they name any role models, thus making it difficult to discover exactly how she gained her knowledge and skills. Nevertheless evidence of her interests and knowledge, in a large number of fields, can be gleaned from the pages of her Forde accounts. From the financial statements and the marginal notes, which accompany them, she emerges as an

accountant, a judicious lender, a reader, skilled with her needle and a clever opponent in negotiations with suppliers of provisions. In her husband's lifetime she takes responsibility for paying bills and has the authority to send for such services as the household required. Even in old age, an educated, skilful and self-contained woman emerges from the archive.

## Chapter Seven.

***Daughter, sister, wife, role models all; towards a curriculum for girls.***

The experiences of three West Country women lie at the core of this thesis: Dorothy Arundell, loyal daughter of the Catholic Church; Anne Edgcumbe, the erudite sister who sought a brother's approval of her work; Lucie Reynell, a wife faithful to her husband even in widowhood. All three became role models for other women: Lucie immortalised, in a biography, for her piety and virtue; Anne setting a godly example to her husband's parishioners, in her own lifetime; Dorothy, celebrated by later historians, as the spiritual disciple of a martyred priest. Dorothy, Anne and Lucie, together with some of their female relatives, friends, acquaintances and co-religionists are contained within the pages of this thesis. Their experiences have been examined; their aspirations and achievements noted and evidence about their education has been brought to light.

In unpacking experiences and achievements of these women, the concept of containment emerged as a sub-theme, closely related to both the theory and practice of educational provision for early modern women. The title *Containing Eve's Daughters* was deliberately chosen to highlight this containment, a concept which had a huge impact on the education, socialisation and

fashioning of girls and a subject on which much advice was offered in the early modern period.

As noted in chapters two and three, men were advised to contain women in order to protect virtue and reputation, the qualities regarded as essential and godly in both household and commonweal. The former was presented as a miniature version of the latter with a well-ordered household, a man at its head, making a vital contribution to the well-being of the commonweal. As chapter two illustrated, in religious terms, women were portrayed as the daughters of Eve. They were thought to be inheritors of primeval woman's disobedience, thus they had the potential to be dangerous temptresses who, unless contained and controlled, were capable of leading men into sin. In Exeter religious and secular authorities took a dim view of any woman perceived to be uncontained.

This view was not confined to the churches and courts, it appeared in Cornish dramas, which were still being presented when Carew wrote his *Survey of Cornwall* in 1602. The idea of a woman, guided by Satan, leading men away from God to commit terrible deeds, was taken up by Carew's cousin, Anne Edgcumbe Dowriche, in her *French Historie* and it is likely that she was familiar with the Cornish plays. In scientific and medical theories, based on the four humours, women were described as full of moisture, weak and unstable. Therefore, as noted in chapter three, many advice books, frequently written for and

by men, portrayed women as both physically and morally weak and dangerous; they needed to be under the control of men to keep all members of godly society safe. Meanwhile advice books, for a female readership, stressed the importance of acknowledging weakness, preserving virtue and remaining silent. In this context, Containing Eve's daughters refers to these early modern notions of women's weakness by their nature and through divine will, and their acknowledged state as subordinate to men. Consequently, throughout their education, women were taught to accept containment, which involved the necessity of obedience to fathers and husbands and the acknowledgement that female duties should be confined to the household, whilst their fathers, brothers and husbands had careers and wider responsibilities outside it. As chapters two and three demonstrated, such theories had a direct impact upon the educational provision deemed necessary for the perceived weaker sex. As noted in chapter three, educationalists, writing against a background of this containment argued persuasively for girls to access education but had to write about this proposed education with reference to the advantages it would bring to men. They claimed that educating girls could only enhance the future of godly society. Some suggested that women could be placed in charge of girls' schools. The founder of Bristol Red Maids' and his trustees appear to have followed his advice, placing women in authority and giving them agency to speak on behalf of the school's first students.

As more details of the lives of three West Country women emerged from local and family archives, from their own writings and from what third parties recorded about their activities, another aspect of containment was recognised; the confidence of self-containment. Dorothy, Anne and Lucie were by no means weak or subservient creatures. They emanate from primary sources as autonomous, self-contained and confident women. All three were prepared to listen to the advice of men, their spiritual advisor, brother or husband respectively, but equally each was capable of and prepared to make their own decisions, disregarding male counsel if necessary. Thus, despite her promise, to embrace the Bridgettine life, made to John Cornelius, Dorothy co-founded a new convent for a different order. The widowed Lucie took tight control of her own affairs, refusing all offers of second marriage. Moreover she entered into debates with clergymen, offering them her own interpretations of scripture and made it clear that she had no patience with those who held extreme religious views. Anne sought her brother's patronage for her book but, at the same time, told him it was well worth reading. She published her *French Historie*, in London and Exeter, confidently proclaiming her providential view of history, providing political commentary on recent events and concluding it with strong advice on religious policy for Queen Elizabeth herself. Each woman was confident enough to express views, on religious belief and practice, openly, since each believed that her own

world-view was correct and all of them expected to be vindicated in Paradise.

All three women were aware of their womanly state, since Lucie meditated on it each day and both Dorothy and Anne refer to it in their books, the former noting her unworthiness to write about a martyr, the latter excusing her woman's work should her book not please its intended audience. Yet though each woman acknowledged commonly held views on the female condition, there is a sense, drawn from their writing and activities, of Lucie, Dorothy and Anne merely conforming to society's norms by paying lip-service to an expected and publically practised humility, rather than holding personal beliefs about their own individual frailty. Dorothy, Anne and Lucie had agency, they took charge of their personal destinies, making their own decisions, arguing with men, from a position of self-assumed authority. Furthermore the women's achievements were recognised by men of sound reputation. Anne's clergyman husband included her work, alongside that of Oxford scholars, in his own publications. Lucie's biographer, another clergyman, praised her knowledge of religion and her business sense. Dorothy was acknowledged as a scholar and historian by Bartoli, an historian and man of scholarly reputation.

Dorothy defied local and national authorities. Official state records show that whilst in London, she was known to have

attended secret Masses, heard illegal sermons and visited recusants in prison. In Chideock she taught members of the recusant community, hid seminary priests and defended her actions before county officials, yet, other than imposing fines for non-attendance at church the authorities took little action against her. Lucie debated with religious experts based in Exeter's Cathedral Close, in her later life called the Great Church of St. Peter. She scrutinised bills, argued with trades-people and refused to pay for work unless it was to her satisfaction. Furthermore she set up her own charity, to provide alms houses for clergy widows and ensured that it was well-regulated. The Machiavellian characters in Anne's published work were, according to literary scholars, used as the model for new ones by playwrights, Marlowe and Shakespeare. These self-contained and confident women achieved much.

It is the women's achievements which provide the most clues to the education they received as they grew up, within the confines of their elite West Country households. Examining these achievements and recognising the depth and breadth of knowledge required to accomplish each of them casts light on their educational curriculum. The fact that women received no formal education through official institutions, the universities and Inns of Court, is not disputed but, when all they achieved and their wide knowledge base is considered,

suggestions that the education of girls was neglected in elite households can be refuted.

Since education was seen as vocational, elite West Country parents made concerted efforts to provide their daughters with a consciously devised curriculum of experience, factual knowledge and practical skills which would prepare them for their future roles in adult society. Religion played a central role in this preparation programme, regardless of whether the woman's household was Catholic or Protestant. All three women were taught to be devout. Anne became a clergy wife, the perfect helpmeet for her husband, setting a godly example for his parishioners and arguing, in her writing and within local religious networks from a standpoint of Puritan providentialism. According to her biographer nephew, the Protestant Lucie, took in religion with her milk and learned godly ways when she was very young. This included turning away from a life of frivolity and learning to read, meditate and pray in the privacy of her room. In the case of Catholic Dorothy and her sisters, a carefully constructed programme of religious education, using artefacts, special books and role models from previous generations, became essential tools in the education of girls. The latter were to become the guardians of all their Catholic family valued, especially when male relatives were exiled from their estates. Preparation for adult life meant encouraging the younger generation of women

to take leadership roles, holding fast to the family's religious beliefs, despite pressures from both local and national authorities to conform. The entrance requirements of the exiled Bridgettine Community of Syon formed a part of the education programme offered to the Arundell sisters and this, together with new meaning attached to special books and religious artefacts, had a direct influence on the choices they made as adults. Three of the women became nuns within exiled communities.

Anne Edgcumbe's father, Richard, made special provision for the education of his younger daughters in his will. Anne made extensive use of the skills she acquired as she followed a dual vocation as a wife and mother of six children and as published poet, religious and political commentator. Goldsmith's daughter, Lucie Reynell, also a wife and mother, was taught by her husband, who was much older than she. Lucie used her education to run a large estate, support and discuss theology with the clergy and set up her own charity to support Christian widows. She sought spiritual solace in her garden whilst also developing her knowledge of herbs and healing. She enjoyed needlework in the company of other women, making fine embroideries for her own pleasure as well as plain garments to give to the poor.

There is no evidence to indicate that the women were discouraged from engaging with scholarship. All three lived

surrounded by books and all their households had libraries which they could access. The Arundells had collections of books at Lanherne and at Chideock. The names of Anne's Step-Grandmother, Katherine and Dorothy's Great Aunts Jane and Mary are inscribed in surviving copies of John Lydgate's *Troy Book* and Machiavelli's *Il Principe,* respectively. Probate documents show that the Arundell's book collection was extensive and that readers' tastes were wide. Many of the books were of a religious nature but additional subjects covered included classical and modern languages, geography, history, poetry, music and philosophy. Lucie's husband gave his young wife full access to his library, which was reported to be large. Anne's father Richard, was described by his nephew, Richard Carew, as learned and he composed his own poems. The library at Mount Edgcumbe was destroyed by incendiary bombs in 1941 and its contents lost but it was likely to have contained books of interest to humanist scholars. Anne drew upon a humanist education to write and publish her historical narrative poem, which emphasised the legitimacy of Protestant Christianity, condemned all Catholics as enemies of the state and offered advice and instructions to the monarch. The three women were selected for this study by reason of their elite status and their differing religious persuasions. Anne and Dorothy came from the landed gentry and Lucie was a lawyer's wife with a mercantile background. Without doubt all three women were able and intelligent. Each left a legacy for future generations.

Anne and Dorothy used the written word to defend their religious faith. The Lucie Reynell foundation still provides homes for clergy widows and now also widowers. Lucie's legacy was of more practical nature but, as her nephew's book, the Forde household accounts and Reynell family diaries testify, this was still linked to deeply held, personal religious convictions.

All three women drew confidence from their education. Each refused to be contained by authority; Lucie, Dorothy and Anne were confident and self-contained. This confidence enabled the women to take responsibility for the education of others, sharing their knowledge, convictions and skills. This teaching was not confined to elite circles. Anne, as a clergy wife, helped her husband in his parish, teaching by example through her own behaviour and charity. Dorothy taught converts and those returning to the Catholic faith in the Chideock community. Lucie trained female members of her household in sewing, offered advice to visiting clergy and joined in discussions with the students who visited her husband's library.

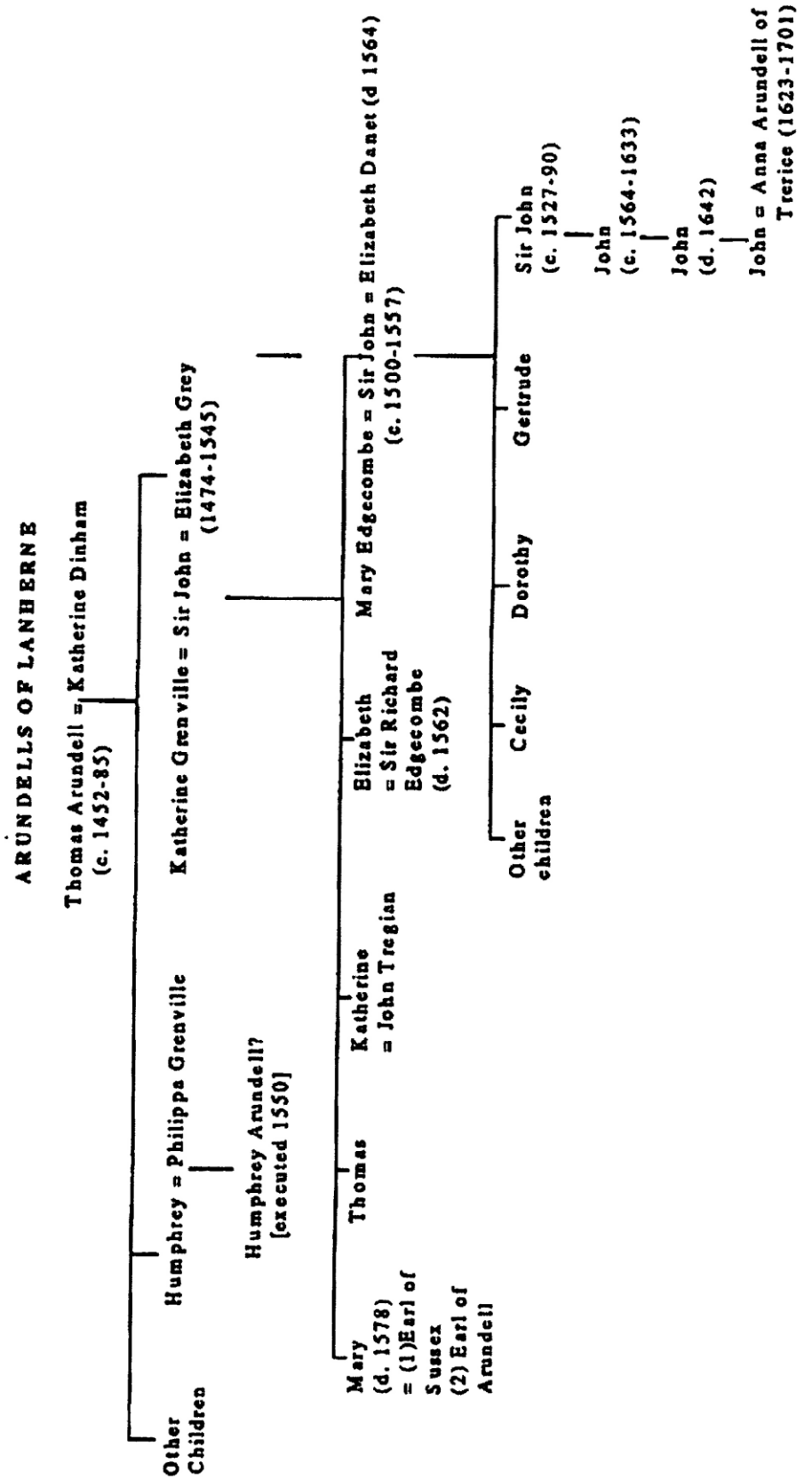
This thesis has highlighted the outstanding achievements of three remarkable women. However this thesis stresses that there is no evidence to suggest that Dorothy, Anne and Lucie were in any way regarded as remarkable by their West Country contemporaries. They were not lauded as being endowed with

special skills. They could be described therefore as ordinary women, albeit from the elite strata of society. Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that they were in essence no different from other elite women in the South West region. This makes it plausible to suggest that women in other South West elite households were no less advantaged than Dorothy, Anne and Lucie and so were also recipients of a far deeper and broader education than hitherto acknowledged. Furthermore it is not unreasonable to suggest that they are exemplars for not only elite women in the South West but also for others of similar status in different regions of early modern England.

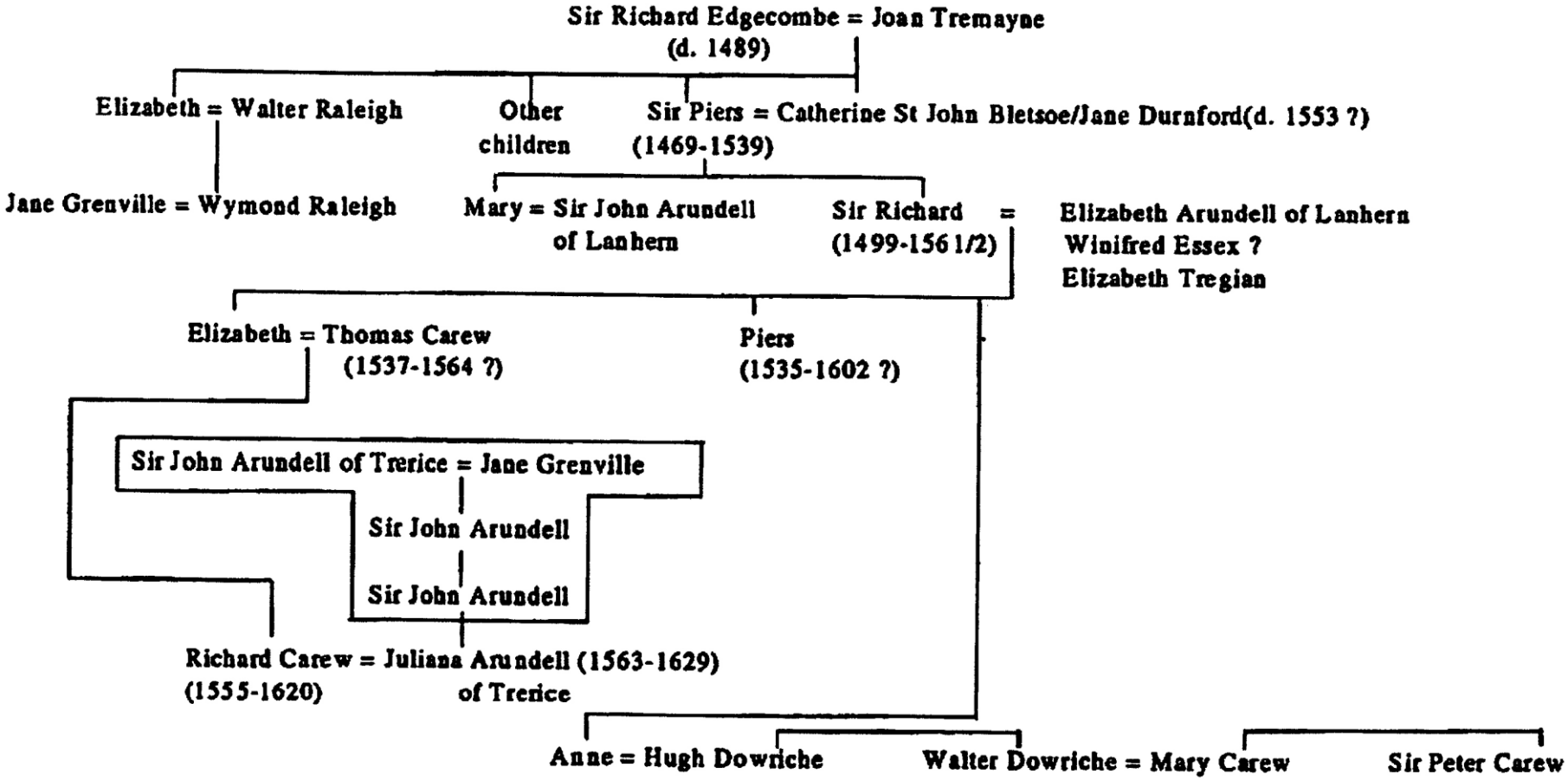
There is therefore much potential in further local case studies. This places responsibility firmly in the hands of local historians, highlighting the need for new interrogations of family and regional archives, seeking information on the lives of other elite women, in different localities, but searching for what they achieved rather than noting what they could not do. It is hoped that the research, outlined in this thesis, will encourage local researchers to look beyond the boundaries of formal education and to re-examine the achievements of women based in elite households. Working back from these achievements and establishing the knowledge and skills that was necessary to accomplish them does, without doubt, raise further questions on how and where elite women acquired such erudition. This examination of the experiences

and achievements of three West Country women, from three contrasting elite families, suggests that the answers lie hidden in local archives, family papers, account books, wills and inventories, where the purchase of a lute string or a skein of silk and the bequest of a book might eventually prove to be of greater significance than previously appreciated. Using local studies to encourage a re-consideration of the many ways elite women could engage with an educational process in early modern England and to further acknowledge the importance of female experience gained through household training, social interaction and the observation and creation of role models is recommended. If the learning experiences women encountered, within the households of elite families in the South West peninsula, was broader and deeper than is usually acknowledged then further, regionally based, case studies of other women should provide further evidence to refute claims that elite women received no education in early modern England. If the achievements of more women are seen together, a more complex and detailed picture will emerge of the curriculum offered to girls through the education and training they accessed when contained within the elite households of England's godly commonweal.

## Appendix Arundell and Edgcumbe Family Trees



## EDGECOMBE


Sir Richard Edgecombe = Joan Tremayne
(d. 1489)
Elizabeth = Walter Raleigh
Other children
Sir Piers = Catherine St John Bletsoe/Jane Durnford(d. 1553 ?)
(1469-1539)
Jane Grenville = Wymond Raleigh
Mary = Sir John Arundell of Lanhern
Sir Richard = Elizabeth Arundell of Lanhern
(1499-1561/2) Winifred Essex ?
Elizabeth Tregian
Elizabeth = Thomas Carew
(1537-1564 ?)
Piers
(1535-1602 ?)
Sir John Arundell of Trerice = Jane Grenville
Sir John Arundell
Sir John Arundell
Richard Carew = Juliana Arundell (1563-1629)
(1555-1620) of Trerice
Anne = Hugh Dowriche
Walter Dowriche = Mary Carew
Sir Peter Carew

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Box 28 MS 2 *A Book of Prayers In English*, handwritten in 1627.

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