

The Career and Works of Samuel Harsnett, Archbishop of York,

1561-1631

Thesis submitted for the Degree of D.Phil in Modern History at the University of Oxford

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Library Abstract

This thesis provides a study of the career and works of Samuel Harsnett, one of the most senior members of the early Stuart Church. Harsnett enjoyed a distinguished career as bishop of Chichester and Norwich, and finally as archbishop of York, but earned notoriety much earlier, by virtue of preaching a controversial sermon against the then orthodox Calvinist position on predestined grace. It was this early expression of anti-Calvinism (or Arminianism as it later became termed), together with a predisposition towards tradition on the liturgy and ceremony of the Church, which has earned Harsnett, as Conrad Russell put it, a place among “the cream of the English Arminians”.

As the first future bishop to express openly anti-Calvinist views Harsnett’s career is contemporaneous with the first forty years of what Nicholas Tyacke described as the ‘Rise of Arminianism’. For that reason he is deserving of a biographical study, both to determine the nature of Arminianism in practice and his particular contribution to its ‘Rise’. In seeking to determine Harsnett’s contribution to the Arminian phenomenon this thesis suggests that Harsnett was, in a number of respects, hardly the archetypal Arminian that Professor Russell and most other modern historians have assumed. This raises important questions as to the actual significance of the theology of predestination to developments in the early Stuart Church.

The significant areas of Harsnett’s career considered in the thesis are: his formative years as a scholar and then fellow at Pembroke College, Cambridge; his early career as

chaplain to Richard Bancroft when Harsnett probably developed his lifelong dislike of Puritan non-conformity; his episcopal career at Chichester and then Norwich; his parliamentary career, which was marked by major ideological differences with fellow Arminians; his final appointment as archbishop of York, senior religious adviser to the king and Privy Councillor.

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The following provides a brief synopsis of the thesis by chapter:

Chapter 1. Samuel Harsnett and the Historiography of the Early Stuart Church

This chapter provides an overview of the historiography of the early Stuart Church as a context for the study of Harsnett's career. It considers the different ways historians have understood the different dimensions of the Arminianism: theological, political and liturgical. The integration of these three aspects is shown to be a gradual development in English Arminianism over the period of Harsnett's career. Finally, it is suggested that the thesis will not only demonstrate that Harsnett was not the archetypal Arminian of historiography, but that his career can be used to explore a number of aspects of Arminianism. Not least of which will be that it questions the extent of homogeneity that can be, and usually is, ascribed to it.

Chapter 2. The Early Years, 1561-1596

Traces Harsnett's early life from his childhood as the son of devout protestant parents and especially his formative years as scholar and fellow at Pembroke College, Cambridge. The likely influence of Lancelot Andrewes, a senior fellow of the college, and William Fulke, master of Pembroke, are considered: the former on Harsnett's Sabbatarian views and later on the development of his anti-Calvinist views on predestination; the latter, on a brief but surprising flirtation with anti-vestarianism.

In 1586 Harsnett was appointed as schoolmaster at Colchester grammar school but within 18 months had tendered his resignation. Nothing is known of his brief spell as master, but his attempts to intrude his own favoured candidate are well served by contemporary evidence. The affair brought him into conflict with the interests of some of

the leading Calvinist thinkers at Cambridge who appear to have been part of a *classis* network supporting an alternative candidate. It is suggested that at this date Harsnett had probably not yet developed his anti-Calvinist position, but this acrimonious brush with those of a Puritan disposition may have presaged his later virulent anti-Puritanism.

Harsnett returned to Cambridge to study divinity in 1588 and, with Andrewes succeeding the orthodox Calvinist, Fulke, in 1589 the college changed direction. It was in this period that Harsnett developed his anti-Calvinist theology, revealing it in a controversial sermon at Paul's Cross in October 1594. This sermon has traditionally been dated to 1584, and the considerable body of circumstantial evidence is analysed, proving the later date beyond reasonable doubt. The implications of this re-dating are considered in the context of the Cambridge disputes that followed soon after.

Chapter 3. Chaplain, Polemicist and Master of Pembroke

The Paul's Cross sermon proved no obstacle to Harsnett's career advancement; within three years Richard Bancroft had appointed him as chaplain and provided him with his first ecclesiastical living. In 1600 his career was briefly threatened when, as a licenser for the press, he became caught up in the political implications of passing for publication John Hayward's *Life of Henry IV*, which included a dedication to the suspected usurper, the earl of Essex.

As part of Bancroft's anti-Puritan campaign he employed Harsnett to investigate the activities of the Puritan exorcist, John Darrell, which were drawing large crowds to prayer meetings. In 1599 Harsnett exposed what he claimed to be Darrell's deception in *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of John Darrell*; he followed this with the highly polemical work, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603). It is argued that

this work was not merely a further attack on Puritan exorcists under the guise of investigating Catholic exorcisms, but was a timely anti-Catholic polemic aimed at encouraging the division between secular Catholics and the Jesuits.

In 1605 Harsnett, by this time archdeacon of Essex, was appointed Andrewes' successor as master of Pembroke College. With his appointment as bishop of Chichester he delegated his college responsibilities to deputies; this and his alleged high-handedness, led to a protracted dispute, at the end of which, he was forced to resign. This affair, and the role of Andrewes in supporting Harsnett's opponents, is suggested to mark a pivotal point in Harsnett's alienation from the Arminian faction.

Chapter 4. Harsnett as Bishop: Chichester and Norwich, 1609-1628

In this chapter Harsnett's episcopal career is considered both chronologically and thematically. While at Chichester, Harsnett took a keen interest in the administration of ecclesiastical justice; stamped his sabbatarian views on the diocese; made reform of the cathedral a priority; and acquired the patronage of Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel. At Norwich, in addition to taking a keen interest in the well-being of the cathedral, he adopted the strict visitation articles of Overall; launched a vigorous campaign against unlicensed preachers; fell foul of a group of Norwich citizens who accused him of popery, idolatry and the suppression of preaching; and acted as a very efficient agent of the Privy Council in matters concerned with both the security and economy of his diocese.

In the context of Harsnett's historiographical reputation as an Arminian, and his place as a custodian of order in Kenneth Fincham's study of the Jacobean episcopate, *Prelate as Pastor*, various themes are examined in order to test these assertions. These

themes comprise Harsnett's views and practice on episcopal residency and preaching, his relative attitude towards, and treatment of, Catholics and Puritans, and his consistent concerns for imposing order in his diocesan cathedrals. It is suggested that while in some areas his practice conformed the ideals both of Arminian and of custodian of order, in others he was significantly at odds with the norm.

Chapter 5. Harsnett in Parliament, 1610-1629

This chapter opens the Commons' assault on Arminianism during the 1629 parliamentary session, and the curious fact that while all other leading anti-Calvinists were accused of Arminian tendencies, Harsnett escaped any such censure. It is argued in what follows that, although this is a complex matter, a major factor was his role in parliament itself.

While this is a key theme of the chapter, in which Harsnett's parliamentary career is detailed chronologically, Harsnett's substantial contribution to both the routine business of the House of Lords and the major debates informs us on the wider matter of the role of the spiritual lords in parliament. A number of issues are considered including Harsnett's attendance record, his participation on parliamentary committees and, particularly in the Caroline parliaments, his contribution to debates on constitutional issues. It was on this last issue that Harsnett found himself opposing the duke of Buckingham and his supporters who included a number of leading anti-Calvinists. These stands, it is argued, account for Harsnett's exemption from accusations of Arminianism in the 1629. It is further argued that this was not a mere manifestation of factional interest – Harsnett supporting his patron, Arundel, against Buckingham – but very much a principled stand against abuses of, *inter alia*, the royal prerogative.

Chapter 6. Harsnett the Archbishop and the Privy Councillor, 1628–31

This chapter first considers the somewhat surprising appointment of Harsnett as archbishop of York, in November 1628, suggesting that political circumstances and Harsnett's reputation as one removed from the Arminian party were substantial factors. Appointment to the Privy Council followed a year later, by which time Harsnett had played a major role as an ecclesiastical adviser to the king. This had taken the form of his part in the formulation of the Royal Instructions to the episcopate. Here is considered the extent to which these constituted an Arminian agenda and concludes that although they were authoritarian, they were neither radical nor innovative. Rather, it is argued, they represented solutions to problems that had preoccupied Harsnett throughout this ecclesiastical career and bore the stamp not of Arminian influence, but of Harsnett's mentor, Richard Bancroft.

Meanwhile, his archiepiscopal career evidenced signs of the authoritarianism that had been a marked characteristic throughout his career, most notably delivering a public rebuke on John Davenant for preaching on predestination. Although he had remained aloof of the Arminian faction in previous years, he now effectively provided support for Richard Neile's ceremonial innovations as bishop of Durham, by his rough treatment of Peter Smart, a Durham prebendary who had publicly criticised Neile's policies. But, as ever in Harsnett's career, he still retained his independence from the leading anti-Calvinists as a case in which he insisted on his right to carry out a visitation of Durham diocese, much to the chagrin of its Arminian bishop, John Howson.

Chapter 7. Last Things

This deals with three distinct sources that provide rare glimpses of his personal views and private life: his foundation of a school at Chigwell, which parish had provided his first living; his library, which he bequeathed to the corporation of Colchester for the benefit of the local clergy; and his last will and testament.

Harsnett personally drew up the ordinances of the school and they give a unique insight into his views on education, whether on the curriculum, the discipline of pupils, the conduct of the schoolmaster and the religious instruction of the scholars. The humane views provide an instructive contrast, not only with his usual authoritarianism, but also with the views of other contemporary founders. The ordinances concerning religious instruction were in close accord with the strictures of the Prayer Book and the Canons of 1604. Nevertheless, once again Harsnett's place as an archetypal Arminian is called in to question, here by the importance he places on preaching and the catechism in his scholars' education.

Harsnett's library, which remains substantially complete, provides unique insights into his intellectual interests and preferences. Nevertheless, it was, it is argued, very much a working theologian's library rather than that of a collector.

In considering Harsnett's will the opportunity is taken to compare his provisions with those of a number of contemporary members of the episcopate. Among the matters considered are the embedded statements of faith, and instructions as to memorials, place of burial and other funeral arrangements. The statement of faith provides one of the few clues suggesting, that despite a long silence over the matter, he still subscribed to the anti-Calvinist position he had preached at Paul's Cross. Harsnett's instructions for an

elaborate memorial have been interpreted as proof of his predominant concern for tradition and authority vested in episcopal office; reasons for qualifying, though not denying this view, are suggested. Harsnett's personal bequests provide evidence of not only a meticulous attention to detail, but also signals of personal affection and a generosity of spirit that the details of his career hardly provide.

Chapter 8. Conclusions

The issue of Harsnett's Arminianism is addressed by considering the evidence presented in the thesis.

His qualifications as an archetypal Arminian are first considered. The Paul's Cross sermon in which he denounced the Calvinist view on predestination as Puritanism, was a cornerstone of Arminianism thirty years later. His virulent anti-Puritanism, his enforcement of conformity and decorum in worship, his campaigns against unlicensed preaching, and in his concern for his diocesan cathedrals he attempted to impose control over standards of music, the qualities of personnel and the state of the buildings; all these speak of a model Arminian.

But there was also much to suggest that he was not part of any unified Arminian faction – indeed that he had no wish to be. The theology he preached at Paul's Cross was never heard again, nor does it appear to have informed any subsequent action. His opinions on preaching and the residence of clergy showed priorities more usually seen in the opponents of Arminianism. His distance from those involved in the Durham House group culminated in a quite startling political opposition to Arminian 'colleagues'.

The thesis concludes with a short consideration of other ways by which this complex individual might be remembered.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APC: Acts of the Privy Council

BL: British Library

CJ: Commons' Journals

CSPD: Calendar of State Papers Domestic

CSP Venetian: Calendar of State Papers Venetian

DNB: Dictionary of National Biography

EHR: English Historical Review

HJ: Historical Journal

HMC: Historical Manuscript Commission

JBS: Journal of British Studies

JEH: Journal of Ecclesiastical History

LJ: Lords' Journals

LPL: Lambeth Palace Library

NNRO: Norfolk and Norwich Record Office

P&P: Past and Present

PROB: National Archives, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills

SP: National Archives, State Papers

WSRO: West Sussex Record Office

1. Samuel Harsnett and the Historiography of the Early Stuart Church

Samuel Harsnett was, by the common consent of those modern historians who accept the term, an Arminian.¹ Indeed, for some of these historians, Harsnett can be described as nothing less than the quintessential Arminian. Nicholas Tyacke positioned Harsnett in the vanguard of English Arminianism, or anti-Calvinism as he interchangeably terms Arminianism.² For Conrad Russell, Harsnett ranked alongside William Laud, Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Neile, as among “the cream of the English Arminians”.³ Julian Davies went even further, asserting that Laud, in drawing up the Royal Instructions of 1629, toned down the Arminian tenor of Harsnett’s ‘Conditions for the better Settling of Church Government’, which effectively provided the first draft of the Instructions, and concluded, therefore, that Harsnett was “far more anti-Calvinist” than even Laud himself.⁴ Given the confidence with which Harsnett’s Arminianism is asserted it is a rather curious fact that, although by the last years of his career the term was commonly being applied to

¹ Most notably Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists. The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990); Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990). One who might accept the term (albeit in a very narrow sense), but does not use it to describe Harsnett, is Peter White - see references to Harsnett in his *Predestination, Policy and Polemic. Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1993), pp.10, 99-100, 212, 245, 300. F W Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham* (Delaware, 1993), as a literary historian, has taken no interest in this particular terminology, never employing the label ‘Arminian’ with regard to either Harsnett or any other anti-Calvinist. His work is rich in biographical detail although its primary concern is the influence of Harsnett on Shakespeare’s work.

² Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp.164-5

³ Russell, *Causes*, p.3

⁴ Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church* (Oxford, 1992), p.30

a number of individuals, including fellow-bishops, there is no surviving evidence to suggest that it was ever used to describe him within his lifetime.⁵

Clearly then there is a question of terminology at issue. Just what do modern historians mean when they employ the term Arminianism, and how does this compare with contemporaries' views? Following on from the ideas first proposed by Nicholas Tyacke in his doctoral thesis on the so-called "Rise of Arminianism", the historiography of the early Stuart Church has, either directly or indirectly, continued to engage with the significance of the Arminian phenomenon.⁶ It has stimulated debates over the nature of consensus in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Church, and whether Arminianism was a revolutionary doctrine that shattered that consensus, or merely a conservative tradition stretching back to Hooker, Jewel and beyond, into the very origins of the English Reformation. But it also raises questions about the emergence of policies of the 1630s that insisted on uniformity in the liturgy and ceremony of the church, which apparently shattered the consensus, and probably contributed to the Civil War. Were these policies a logical extension of an Arminian theology of grace which implied that man had rather more choice in his own salvation than he did in the rigid Calvinist view of predestination? Was the foundation of such policies being developed under cover of James I's laudable aim to oversee a broad church? Before considering the nature of Harsnett's involvement in these

⁵ For example, when Laud and Neile were both charged in parliament with being Arminian, Harsnett was not: Peter White, 'The *Via Media* in the Early Stuart Church', in Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church 1603-42* (1993), p.227; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.164; Hillel Schwartz, 'Arminianism and the English Parliament, 1624-9', *JBS* 112 (1973), p.45, n.19

⁶ For a summary of the argument see Nicholas Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in Conrad Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (1981); and fully developed in *Anti-Calvinists*.

issues it is first necessary to reflect on the different ways historians have understood, and employed, the term Arminianism.

If there is a presentational weakness in Tyacke's portrayal of the rise of Arminianism it is that he has tended to conflate political and liturgical/ceremonial elements of English Arminianism with its theological position. In a sense this is understandable - although contemporaries were not doing so in the 1620s, by the opening of the Long Parliament in 1640, following the Personal Rule and the vigorous pursuit of order and uniformity, they were equally indiscriminate.⁷ While it would be facile to argue that these three elements were in any sense mutually exclusive, it is equally misleading to imply that any one was necessarily dependent on the others. It is a weakness that has been recognised in much of the recent research on the nature of Arminianism. Nevertheless, it will be as well to keep these distinctions in mind whilst considering the use of the term in Arminian historiography and it will be essential to do so in the consideration of Harsnett's career and works.

In modern historiography the terms Arminian and anti-Calvinist have long been held to be synonymous.⁸ This is perhaps rather misleading insofar as the first Arminian - Jacobus Arminius, the Dutch theologian whose name came to be associated with those who shared his opinion on the matter of God's grace - did, in fact, accept much of Calvin's theology.⁹ Where Arminius disagreed with high-Calvinist theology was over its supralapsarian position on absolute and double predestination: that God had ordained,

⁷ For the broad ranging criticism of Arminianism at the beginning of the Long Parliament see, for example, Anthony Fletcher, *The Outbreak of the English Civil War* (1981), pp.91-8

⁸ H C Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge*, (Cambridge, 1958); M H Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge and Transition 1558-1642* (Oxford, 1959)

⁹ White, *Predestination*, p.37

before the fall of Adam and without regard to sin, the irresistible predestination of the elect to salvation, and the reprobate to damnation. For Arminius, present sin was not foreordained by God, but was effectively man's moral choice. Thus even the elect could fall from grace. By contrast, the supralapsarian position stressed the perseverance of grace in the elect and so denied any role for man's moral responsibility. The effect of this, in Arminius' view, was to make God the author of sin.¹⁰ It was against this that Samuel Harsnett, quite independently of Arminius who had not yet achieved notoriety, expressed a similar concern in 1594. It was then that he delivered from the pulpit at Paul's Cross his own notorious denunciation of the supralapsarian position.¹¹ Based on this shared view of grace, Tyacke appropriated Harsnett to his Arminians *avant la lettre*. However, beyond this common ground, English Arminianism became a very different beast from Arminius' Arminianism. Most markedly, perhaps, in the political sphere: whilst Dutch Arminianism came to be associated with republicanism, in England it became associated with royal supremacy.

For Tyacke, Arminianism was primarily a theological position on predestination, and thus all those who professed that theology within the period of his rise of Arminianism were, *ipso facto*, Arminians. Ideas about the unity of church and state, and therefore royal supremacy, together with those on the conduct of worship and personal piety which were commonplace amongst Tyacke's later Arminians were, in effect, a logical working through of the implications of the Arminian position on grace. In different ways this narrow definition has troubled both those who are in broad agreement with Tyacke's proposition,

¹⁰ For Arminius' theology and how it differed to what subsequently became known as Arminianism see Carl Bangs, 'Arminius and the Reformation', *Church History* 30 (1961)

and those opposed to it. For the former, while shared views on grace may have brought those men together, what was more significant to disrupting the equilibrium in church and state were the political ideologies and innovative policies concerned with liturgy and ceremony. For opponents of the Tyacke thesis the very need to apply a new name, and thereby imply something innovative, is anachronistic. For them, Tyacke's 'Arminians' were nothing other than adherents of a doctrine that had its own independent tradition within the Church of England that long predated Arminius.

These alternative interpretations will be examined in due course. For the moment the timeframe of Tyacke's 'Rise of Arminianism' will provide the framework for examining the way in which the Arminianism developed from its early beginnings. As first a theological movement it remained largely that until the death of James I in 1625. Between the accession of Charles I and 1629 Arminianism acquired a political dimension as most senior anti-Calvinists backed the king against the Commons in various disputes over royal prerogative. During the period of Charles' Personal Rule saw Arminianism become associated with its final, and most antagonising feature: policies that elevated liturgy, ceremony and sacraments over word-based piety.

The first period was characterised by the Cambridge debates and the earliest challenge to the alleged orthodoxy of Calvinist views on grace. These were prompted in 1595 by the case of William Barrett who attacked the then dominant supralapsarian position as argued by its then most notable exponent, William Whitaker, the Regius Professor of Divinity at the university. This was swiftly followed by Barrett's reprimand and the drafting, though not official adoption, of the Lambeth Articles. In turn, these led

¹¹ Samuel Harsnett, in *Three Sermons preached by ... Dr Richard Stuart ... to which is added a fourth*

to the furore over Peter Baro's criticism of them; a criticism that Harsnett, John Overall and Lancelot Andrewes declined to condemn. It will be argued that Harsnett had, in fact, a more significant part in these disputes than has previously been recognised. Hitherto, it has generally been accepted that he preached the Paul's Cross sermon in 1584, but the likelier case is that it was delivered in October 1594, when it appears to be an early salvo against Whitaker's position.¹²

For Tyacke there is no need to look earlier than the 1590s for the origins of such views. The apparent diminution of the external threat from Spain, combined with the diminished threat of an internal Catholic revolt, created a climate in which unanimity in protestant thought was no longer essential. With these fears apparently abating it became possible to question aspects of the Calvinist consensus' thinking. Thus it was that the first challenges to the supralapsarian interpretation of Calvin's teaching, resulted in Arminianism *avant la lettre*.¹³ Peter Lake largely endorses Tyacke's view, countering the arguments of those that have traced early 'Arminian' theology back to Hooker and beyond, by suggesting that Hooker's position was more concerned with opposing experimental predestinarianism, rather than in any real sense advocating the theology of Arminius.¹⁴ Nevertheless, whatever the truth of Tyacke's suggestion that such views were novel, they were at this date clearly confined to matters of doctrine.

sermon ... preached by Samuel Harsnett (1656)

¹² For the usual dating see Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.164. White, *Predestination*, p.99; Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church, 1570-1635', *P&P* 114 (1987), p.35

¹³ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.4

¹⁴ Experimental predestinarians being those for whom the doctrine was at the forefront of their divinity and chose to proselytise it: 'credal predestinarians' felt the matter better reserved for private conscience than preached from the pulpit: Lake, 'Calvinism', pp.39-40

After James I's accession in 1603 the debates over predestination subsided somewhat. This was no doubt partly in response to the new king's predilection for an all-inclusive church. But it may also have been that one of the key criticisms of the supralapsarian position – that it implied God to have been the author of sin – was making many rethink their position.¹⁵ A number of high-Calvinist divines proceeded to retreat from Theodore Beza's interpretation of Calvin towards a more moderate sublapsarian position, which allowed for some relationship between reprobation and sin. In any event, after this date a number of men who inclined to the anti-Calvinist position on grace received their first bishoprics, including Harsnett, who was appointed bishop of Chichester in 1609. However, as Peter Lake has suggested, the price for such preferments may well have been silence over the matter of predestination, and so these early English 'Arminians' focused on less controversial issues by, for example, quietly pursuing their emphasis on the efficacy of prayer and the sacraments over preaching.¹⁶

Richard Neile's appointment to Durham in 1617 marked the emergence of the first identifiable grouping of anti-Calvinists such as Lancelot Andrewes and William Laud: the so-called Durham House group. Significantly for any interpretation of Harsnett's career, he was never to be party to this group – not least, it will be argued, because Andrewes sponsored Harsnett's opponents to oust the latter from his position as Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge. The formation of this group was near contemporaneous with a renewal of debates over Arminius' theology at the Synod of Dort. Here the British delegation opposed the pro-Arminian Remonstrants, but by adopting the more moderate sublapsarian position that had by now largely supplanted the dominant view that Whitaker

¹⁵ Harsnett made exactly this point at Paul's Cross. *Sermon*, pp.134

and others had subscribed to in the 1590s. Even if anti-Calvinist theology had found acceptance, the association of the Remonstrants with republican ideas effectively proscribed, for the time being, active support of a doctrine with such apparently subversive affinities. Indeed, it is a curious feature of English Arminianism that when its advocates did adopt a political stance it was in the defence of royal supremacy - effectively the antithesis of its continental counterpart. It was this that must account in part for how English Arminians managed to ingratiate themselves with James I by the end of his reign. Most notably they supported the king over the matter of the proposed Spanish Match, which, with its implications for toleration of Roman Catholicism, was anathema to the likes of the Calvinist archbishop of Canterbury, George Abbot. Despite this development the success of English Arminianism was by no means assured: the picture which emerges from modern historiography is of a 'party' which, by the end of this first phase, was neither fully pressing its doctrinal position nor, more significantly, the especially English characteristics of its underlying political ideology.

The beginning of a second phase in the 'Rise of Arminianism' can be marked by the publication of Richard Montagu's *A New Gagge for an Old Goose*, in 1624, although the significance of this was not fully realised until after the accession of Charles I. Montagu's work was a defence of the Church of England as a catholic church. In so arguing Montagu asserted that the Calvinist theology was a Puritan position on grace, and not the orthodoxy of the Church of England. This gave rise to a complaint in the 1624 parliament, a result of which was that Abbot asked Montagu to review his position. It was in this phase that Tyacke located the "triumph" of Arminianism: championed by

¹⁶ Lake, 'Calvinism', pp.34-5

Buckingham at the York House conference in 1626, it was tacitly adopted by Charles I, after which the elevation of leading Arminian prelates soon followed.¹⁷ With its power base thus established its leading exponents set about redefining the Calvinist predestinarian position as Puritan doctrine, thereby shattering the hitherto dominant Calvinist consensus. Looking through the medium of parliamentary opposition to emergent Arminianism, Hillel Schwartz has usefully traced how parliament's definition of the threat developed in response to the Montagu controversy and to the increasing support of Arminianism by extra-parliamentary authority.¹⁸ Before it was apparent to the Commons that Montagu had royal support, they were happy that the matter be referred to the ecclesiastical authorities as one of theological heterodoxy, with no constitutional implication. However, this changed when 'Arminian' prelates like Laud, Howson and Buckeridge declared Montagu's doctrine sound and no concern of the Commons, and Montagu acquired the king's support. Then it was that the Commons came to see Arminianism as resistant to parliamentary judgment on what constituted orthodox doctrine, and increasingly reliant upon royal authority. Furthermore, as parliament increasingly asserted itself in matters of doctrine, there were also some early indications that Arminianism was being associated with ceremonial novelty. By 1627, when Robert Sibthorpe and Roger Manwaring, both royal chaplains, were preaching in support of the Forced Loan, Arminianism was, in the Commons' view, becoming dangerously subversive of parliament itself. The Arminianism that had apparently triumphed by the end of the 1620s was now not just a theological position on grace that was substantially at odds with what had previously passed for

¹⁷ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.247

¹⁸ Schwartz, 'Arminianism', on which the following is based.

orthodoxy. It had now emerged as a coherent movement that was fast acquiring a reputation for indifference to parliamentary authority.

It will be argued that one of the major reasons that Harsnett escaped being named Arminian by contemporaries can be found in this second phase of Arminianism. This was partly a function of Harsnett's place outside of the Arminian circle, and thus his distance from the detested figure of Buckingham. But Harsnett's independence from Buckingham's circle was not merely a matter of factional loyalty to his patron, the earl of Arundel. It was also a display of ideological principle that convinced those who condemned Arminianism in the parliament of 1629 to exempt Harsnett from their widespread criticism of his episcopal contemporaries.

A third phase in Tyacke's 'Rise' largely coincided with the Personal Rule of Charles I. It was during this phase that Arminianism became strongly associated with a highly provocative and innovative dimension: the pursuit of a range of policies designed to enforce uniformity in liturgy and ceremony, and the elevation of the priestly function in administering the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. In historiographical terms too, this period has proved to be the most controversial within debates about Arminianism and the terms by which the phenomenon might be defined and understood. Although Harsnett was appointed archbishop of York in 1628, swiftly assumed a role as a leading counsellor over ecclesiastical matters, and was appointed Privy Councillor in 1629, his death in 1631 precluded any significant part in the policies developed during this period. However, as much of the debate over the significance of these policies rests on their continuity with earlier developments and practice it is necessary to give the period some consideration.

For Tyacke the single defining characteristic of Arminianism throughout its 'rise' was its theological dimension; to describe what took place during the 1630s as 'Laudianism' is to risk losing sight of that fact.¹⁹ Although the leading protagonists of the 'Laudian' policies were mostly Arminian in theology, the fact that ceremonialism was peculiar to the English variant of Arminianism must largely be the result of the peculiarities of the English church compared with continental reformed churches. By implication Laud - in partnership with Charles I the driving force behind the new policies - was an Arminian before he was, if ever, a Laudian. Whether or not Tyacke intended his argument to provide revisionists with a convenient explanation of the Civil War there is little doubt that to some it has proved particularly attractive.²⁰ For these revisionists the causes of the Civil War were short-term contingent factors related to functional shortcomings in government. Not surprisingly, they have necessarily placed greater significance on the Arminianism of the 1630s than on its earlier developments. Emphasis is, then, less on its theology, more on its ecclesiology. For most revisionists the real innovation of English Arminianism were the policies of emphasising ceremony, the sacraments with the concomitant elevation of the status of the clergy, and liturgy over preaching; these were policies only pursued in earnest after William Laud succeeded George Abbot as archbishop of Canterbury.²¹

¹⁹ Tyacke. *Anti-Calvinists*, pp.xi-xii

²⁰ In his review of *Anti-Calvinists* Christopher Haigh suggested that Tyacke's proposition offered exactly this: Arminianism had replaced the Calvinist consensus on the accession of Charles I and thus shattered political and ecclesiastical stability, *EHR* 103 (1988), pp.427; for Tyacke's response see the 1990 (paperback) edition of *Anti-Calvinists*, p.xii-iv

²¹ The argument that Arminianism and Laudianism were not one and the same long pre-dated Tyacke's work: T M Parker, 'Arminianism and Laudianism in Seventeenth-Century England', in C Dugmore and C Duggan (eds.) *Studies in Church History* 1 (1964), pp.20-34

Predictably, there are differences of emphasis between those revisionists primarily concerned with the origins of the Civil War and others mainly preoccupied with developments in religion and the church. Thus, whilst the former have looked little further than Laud's archiepiscopate for the origins of the later troubles, the latter have sought explanations for how these policies were able to come about. Although none of the latter would argue that the policies of the 1630s truly provide total continuity with the past, their interests have necessitated examining earlier developments and modes of thinking for clues as to the origins of the policies. Andrew Foster has, for example, suggested that the anticlericalism of the early 1640s had its origins with James I's high regard for the role of the clergy, but was kept in check by James' broad-church policies.²² The potential for discord was realized when these were abandoned by his son as criticism of an over-mighty clergy began to focus on the favoured Laudian/Arminian faction.²³ In a wide-ranging study of polemical works of the early Stuart period Anthony Milton has demonstrated that, far from being preoccupied with the matter of predestination, theologians and divines were debating a number of issues, especially attitudes to the Church of Rome. Once again Jacobean policy opened the way for accommodation of a broad range of views and the ideas which later became associated with the Laudians - Rome as a true Church (albeit in error), and rejection of the idea of the pope as Antichrist - emerged under the protection of James' all-inclusive Church.²⁴ Others have focused on the personnel of James' Church:

²² Andrew Foster. 'The Clerical Estate Revitalised' in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp.139-60; following Christopher Hill, in his *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1964), and *Economic Problems of the Church* (Oxford, 1956).

²³ Foster, 'Clerical Estate'.

²⁴ Anthony Milton, 'The Church of England, Rome, and the True Church: the Demise of a Jacobean Consensus', in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp.187-210; also his *Catholic and Reformed. The*

the elevation of Harsnett and other anti-Calvinists to a number of bishoprics seems to have been another aspect of James' irenic church policy and, later in the reign, reward for their support of his foreign policy.²⁵ At the local level, Fielding has argued that the Laudian ceremonial and altar policies enforced in the Peterborough diocese during the 1630s derived from continuity with an Arminian domination of the clerical hierarchy dating back to 1603.²⁶

Tyacke, doubtless wishing to reinforce the argument for continuity between early English Arminianism and developments in the 1630s, has pointed to early evidence of Laud's practical divinity. As early as 1617 Laud, then dean of Gloucester, had ordered the communion table to be removed from the choir and placed altar-wise at the east end of the cathedral, an act which would become a cornerstone of his policy in the 1630s.²⁷ The effect of these studies is to widen the debate over Arminianism beyond the issue of predestination. Furthermore, although these developments might, with hindsight, be seen as preparing the groundwork for later Laudian policies, the consensus among revisionists is that these policies were so innovative and so much the work of Laud that the term Arminianism is inadequate to describe them.²⁸ Peter Lake, in an attempt to shift the attention away from the "bizarre obsession with predestination", has preferred to consider

Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-40 (Cambridge, 1995), especially chapters 2 and 3.

²⁵ K Fincham and P Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policy of King James I', *JBS* 24 (1983), pp.169-207; Fincham and Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policies of James I and Charles I', in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp.23-50 (especially pp.30-3); Peter Lake, 'Calvinism', p.51, where he suggested that such elevations were granted in exchange for silence over the controversial issue of grace; Sheila Lambert, 'Richard Montagu, Arminianism and Censorship', *P&P* 124 (1989), pp.38-42

²⁶ John Fielding, 'Arminianism in the Localities: Peterborough Diocese, 1603-42', in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp.93-114

²⁷ Nicholas Tyacke, 'Archbishop Laud', in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp.51-70

²⁸ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, *passim* but especially pp.5-45, argues that the policies were primarily those of Charles I - Laud was not even the most enthusiastic prelate at implementing them.

the whole gamut of official policies under the term Laudianism, whether or not doctrinal Arminians promulgated them. Although he acknowledges that the roots of Laudianism might be traced back to Hooker, and continued by “*avant garde* conformists” such as Andrewes and Buckeridge, he argues that the package of measures introduced in the 1630s were neither conventional nor strictly defensible by scripture. Whether it was the increased emphasis on the physical church in both its fittings and the liturgy conducted therein, on prayer and the sacraments over preaching, or the rejection of sabbatarianism in favour of the revival of holy days and festivals, the policies added up to a radical innovation.²⁹

The focus thus far has primarily been with how historians have understood the nature of Arminianism and, thus, with those who both accept it and broadly agree on its significance as a disruptive force in the early Stuart Church and State. On whatever else they might differ, the revisionists share one very significant assumption on which the “Rise of Arminianism” is predicated: that until the mid-1620s there was a dominant Calvinist consensus within the Church of England. It is that very assumption, however, which is questioned by critics of the proposition. The most fully articulated critique of Calvinist consensus argument is seen in the works of Peter White, who questions not the existence of consensus, but rather the nature of that consensus. For White the consensus was not based on the Calvinist theology of grace at all, but rather on the Thirty-nine articles, the Book of Common Prayer and the Homilies, and thus a consensus that could claim a

²⁹ Peter Lake, ‘The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s’, in Fincham (ed.), *Early Stuart Church*, pp161-86; also his ‘Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and Avant-Garde Conformity at the Court of James I’, in Linda L Peck (ed.), *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.113-33

greater longevity than any Calvinist one.³⁰ This consensus was temporarily disrupted by James I's adoption of a "confessional" foreign policy in response to the start of the Thirty Years War. It was this that polarized theological debate, but once the external threat had subsided Charles I and Laud set about re-establishing the consensus. Thereafter Laud eschewed debate on predestination and implemented policies wholly in accord with the Prayer Book: "Laudianism" was therefore no innovation and Laud's only mistake was the unusual vigour with which he pursued the policies.³¹ Although White might shy away from terming his consensus 'Anglican', it is certainly, by implication, a consensus in the Anglican tradition. White, concerned primarily with repudiating Tyacke's thesis, focused on the doctrinal aspects of the Arminianism, but he is not alone in questioning the Calvinist consensus, the revolutionary aspects of Arminianism or the culpability of Laud. Thus it has been argued that the prevalent sabbatarian views of the so-called Calvinist consensus were distinctly un-Calvinist; that the drive for order in the Church during the 1630s was part of a long tradition of a monarchical church, with Laud and an insensitive monarch just going too far; and that Arminianism is more of a concern to modern historians than it was to contemporaries.³² These alternative views on the nature of the consensus within the early Stuart Church have a bearing on the study of senior Arminians. Where, for example, might Harsnett, Neile, Montagu and Laud be located: as revolutionary radicals, or moderate Anglicans *avant la lettre*? As Lake has pointed out,

³⁰ White, *Via Media*, p.213; see also his 'The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P&P* 101 (1983), pp.34-54, and *Predestination*; for further instalments in the Tyacke-White debate see Tyacke, 'Debate: the Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P&P* 115 (1987), pp.201-16, and White's 'Rejoinder' in the same issue of *P&P*, pp.217-29

³¹ White, *Via Media*, p.229

these alternative views can both be substantiated using much the same evidence.³³ Harsnett's Paul's Cross sermon perfectly illustrates this point: we have Tyacke casting him as "a living link across the years with the Arminians before Arminius", and White suggesting that the sermon rested on nothing more than "a combination of familiar scriptural texts and moral indignation."³⁴

It should be apparent from this brief review of the historiography of the early Stuart Church that, even amongst the majority of modern historians who broadly agree with Tyacke's thesis, there are differences of opinion over both the nature and significance of Arminianism. Nevertheless, there is a general acceptance that there was a body of men who were sufficiently at odds with mainstream Calvinist ideas such that they might be termed an Arminian 'party'. Moreover, the implication is that the views held by the opposing camps were so divergent that there was little by way of common ground or shared values: "there were two sides, the members of which knew each other and disliked each other heartily."³⁵ It is true that many who held the anti-Calvinist position on grace also shared similar views on such matters as church government, liturgy, and ceremony and that this, therefore, gives the impression of a coherent and broad-fronted opposition to the Calvinist consensus. However, a problem with this view is that it tends to underplay the diversities both within the Arminian 'party' and, indeed, that of their apparent opponents. The way in which the term Arminian has been employed has thus tended to imply a greater homogeneity among its 'members' than actually seems to have been the

³² Kenneth Parker. *The English Sabbath: A Study of Doctrine and Discipline from the Reformation to the English Civil War* (Cambridge. 1988), p.178; George Barnard. 'The Church of England c1529-1642', *History* (1990), pp.183-206; Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.88.

³³ Lake, 'Laudian Style', p.161;

³⁴ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.165; White, *Predestination*, p.100

case. The notion of the existence of some middle ground – or at least a spectrum of opinion - between opposing viewpoints has to some degree been overlooked in order not to understate the disruptive impact of the Arminian phenomenon.

It is not my intention in this thesis to suggest that Harsnett should be exempted from the description Arminian – indeed many of his credentials well merit the label. Nor will it be argued that he was in any sense representative of a *via media* in the Church of England. That said, Harsnett does provide a good study for demonstrating the point that the homogeneity of the Arminian ‘party’ can be, and has been, overstated. Both his apparent independence from other mainstream anti-Calvinists, and his practical differences with certain characteristics typically associated with Arminianism, provide an important corrective to the tendency to cast all Arminians in the same mould. It will be seen that after his contribution to the debates of the 1590s, Harsnett seemingly made no further contribution to polemical debates in defence of anti-Calvinism. He took no part in the Durham House group amongst whose members were those who shared with Harsnett Conrad Russell’s description, “the cream of Arminians”. It was not until the very end of his career that he spent any time at Court, unlike other senior anti-Calvinists, who had spent much of there awaiting opportunities to further the Arminian cause. His views on such matters as preaching, sabbatarianism and even the priority accorded to the beautification of churches will also be shown to be at least ambivalent. Nor, it will be shown, would it be true to say of him that he “heartily disliked” those who were apparently members of an opposite tendency.

³⁵ Lake, ‘Calvinism’, p.49

This case study in the career and works of a leading Arminian will also address other issues germane to the phenomenon. Where, when and under what influences did men like Harsnett develop their Arminianism, and what place did patronage play in his career progression as a senior Arminian? Most significant among Harsnett's patrons was Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, a former Catholic who conformed to the Church of England around the time that he appears to have first taken Harsnett as a client. This relationship prompts the further line of enquiry as to Arminian relationships with Catholics: can Harsnett be taken as a test case for the suggestion that former Catholic recusants may have been attracted to potential clients of an Arminian disposition?³⁶ An examination of Harsnett's episcopal career provides the opportunity to consider his place in the model provided by Kenneth Fincham in his important and wide-ranging study of the Jacobean episcopate. This broadly distinguishes the differences between the then predominant Calvinist members of the bench as primarily concerned with pastoral care with a strong emphasis on preaching, and their Arminian counterparts, including Harsnett, as concerned more with enforcing order and conformity.³⁷ Is Harsnett correctly placed within the latter grouping or does the evidence once again suggest that polarisation can be overemphasised? In a shrewd observation which long preceded the brouhaha over the rise of Arminianism one historian commented that, "Arminianism is an inaccurate and inadequate but indispensable name".³⁸ In the historiography of the early Stuart Church historians have, with regard to Samuel Harsnett, readily embraced the last quality, at the

³⁶ Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp.53-4

³⁷ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*

³⁸ Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge*, p.166

expense of the others. This close examination of the career and works of a man who was contemporaneous with the 'Rise of Arminianism' is an attempt to redress that balance.

2. The Early Years, 1561-1596

1. Beginnings

On 20 June 1561 Samuel, the youngest son of William Halsnoth, a baker, and his wife Agnes, was baptised in the parish church of St Botolph, Colchester.¹ Samuel Harsnett (he later adopted the new spelling of his family name) was born to parents who were, it seems, greatly committed to the protestant cause.² In 1556, as local corporations were coerced into the Marian campaign against obdurate protestants, William and Agnes Halsnoth were summoned to appear before a session of the peace, indicted for unlawful assembly.³ It appears that they, and all but one of their co-defendants, had already fled the town and so avoided being executed for their faith – a fate suffered by a number of less fortunate Colchester laypeople.⁴ One of those indicted along with Harsnett's parents was Joan Dybney, a widow, whose godliness drove her into exile to escape persecution.⁵ Later she was to show her regard for the Halsnoth family: on her deathbed in 1571, she left a bequest of 40 shillings to buy books for the young Samuel.⁶

Clearly at ten years old he was already showing academic promise and was probably by this time, or shortly thereafter, a pupil at Colchester grammar school.⁷ A further indication that the Halsnoth family were committed enthusiasts to the reformed

¹ W G Benham. 'Pedigree of Archbishop Samuel Harsnett', *Essex Review* 40 (1932), pp.105-113

² He probably adapted the new spelling because it reflected the true pronunciation. *ibid.* pp.105-6

³ ERO. Chelmsford CCR 122/4

⁴ *Ibid.*; see Laquita M Higgs, *Godliness and Governance in Tudor Colchester* (Michigan, 1998), pp.165-81 for the Marian campaign in Colchester

⁵ C H Garrett. *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge, 1938), p.355

⁶ ERO. Chelmsford D/ACR6/219

cause is provided by the will of William who died in March 1574. Unlike his youngest son, who would later challenge Calvinist claims to the possibility of foreknowledge of perseverance, William had no doubts: he confidently asserted his expectation of a place among the elect.⁸ Soon after his father's death Harsnett apparently acquired the patronage of Richard Bridgewater, a lawyer, who may have had some influence in gaining the young man a place at King's College where he matriculated as a sizar on 8 September 1576.⁹

Of Harsnett's early years at Cambridge only the basic facts can be established with any confidence. Sometime before 1580-1, when he proceeded BA, he had transferred from King's to Pembroke Hall where he held a scholarship.¹⁰ He remained at Pembroke being elected fellow on 27 November 1583 and the following year proceeded MA.¹¹ Harsnett's family background suggest that the early influences in his life were strongly Calvinist - the Dybney link may even suggest a Puritan connection - yet by the mid-1590s he was a leading exponent of the anti-Calvinist faction at Cambridge. In order to bring about such a change from what must have been his instinctive position someone, or something, clearly had a profound effect on Harsnett during his Pembroke sojourn. Although the Pembroke Hall fellowship of the early 1580s hardly classified as one of

⁷ Nicholas Carlisle. *A Concise description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales*, 2 vols. (1818), i. p.427 claims Harsnett to have been a former scholar of Colchester GS

⁸ ERO, Chelmsford D/ACR6/437

⁹ On Bridgewater's patronage of Harsnett and the matriculation date see Gordon Goodwin, *A Catalogue of the Harsnett Library* (London, 1888), p.v; for matriculation date also from *Biographica Britannica*, 6 vols. (London, 1746-66), iv, p.2543; in John Venn and J A Venn (eds.), *Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part I: From the Earliest Times to 1751*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1922-7), ii, p.319 and their *The Book of Matriculations and Degrees: Cambridge 1544-1659* (Cambridge, 1913), p.326 it is recorded as Easter term 1579 but, as Brownlow points out, this cannot be correct for Harsnett proceeded BA in 1580-1; Brownlow believes that Harsnett matriculated at the same time as Bridgewater's son and was probably a servitor to him; this seems unlikely for this Bridgewater also matriculated as a sizar, i.e. of limited means; F W Brownlow, *Shakespeare Harsnett and the Devils of Denham* (Newark, N J, 1993), p.38; John and J A Venn, *Alumni Cantab.*, i, p.216

¹⁰ John Venn (ed.), *Grace Book Δ* (Cambridge, 1910), p.336; Pembroke College, MS Cθ, fol.3

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Venn, *Grace Book*, p.376

Cambridge's most radical societies of the period it was distinguished enough.¹² It seems probable that the most influential figure insofar as Harsnett was concerned was Lancelot Andrewes. Andrewes had been appointed a fellow of Pembroke in 1575 and by the early 1580s was the college catechist. It was in this capacity that he delivered a series of sermons on the Decalogue that drew audiences from well beyond the university and Cambridge.¹³ Andrewes' expositions on the fourth commandment concerning Sabbath day observance, together with his regular meetings to discuss scripture with a group of divines from the newly founded puritan foundation of Emmanuel College, led one historian to argue that during the 1580s Andrewes flirted with Puritanism.¹⁴ The highly developed sabbatarianism argued by Andrewes may indeed have been the inspiration for later works by puritan polemicists;¹⁵ and sabbatarianism was also a peculiar feature of English Calvinism, albeit perhaps English first and Calvinist second.¹⁶ Without doubt Harsnett would have attended Andrewes' catechetical lectures and was apparently convinced, for he appears to have been a lifelong advocate of Sabbath day observance as advocated by Andrewes.¹⁷ Andrewes and Harsnett thus subscribed to a view that would

¹² In addition to Harsnett three other fellows of this period later went on to become bishops: Lancelot Andrewes (Chichester, Ely, and Winchester), Roger Dodd (Meath, in Ireland) and Nicholas Felton (Bristol and Ely); Henry Golde, DD had some claim to be a controversialist being called before the vice-chancellor in June 1586 for preaching against the cross, C H Cooper and Thompson Cooper (eds.), *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1858-61), i, p.35

¹³ Paul Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes, 1555-1626*, (London, 1958), p.22; the lectures were subsequently published in *The Morall Law Expounded* (1642) and also in *The Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine* (1650).

¹⁴ M M Knappen, 'The Early Puritanism of Lancelot Andrewes', *Church History* II (1933), pp.95-104

¹⁵ Particularly Richard Greenham's, *A Treatise on the Sabbath Day* (1599). Greenham, as a sometime fellow of Pembroke, was acquainted with Andrewes, *ibid.*, p.97

¹⁶ R Bauckham, 'Sabbath and Sunday in the Protestant tradition', in D A Carson (ed.), *From Sabbath to Lord's Day* (Grand Rapids, 1982), p.321-9

¹⁷ For the obligation on Cambridge college members to attend catechistical lectures see A A Leigh, *King's College* (London, 1899)

have put them at odds with other anti-Calvinists should the pair have survived to see the Laudian regime and its promulgation of the Book of Sports.

What was to earn Harsnett notoriety was not, however, his views on Sabbath day observance but rather his distinctly anti-Calvinist interpretation of predestined grace. Again, the most likely influence on Harsnett's thinking within Pembroke was Andrewes.¹⁸ Probably because the matter of predestination was an altogether more controversial issue, and Andrewes was by nature averse to controversy, evidence of his thinking on the matter is much harder to come by. Nevertheless, it has been argued that Andrewes was moving towards an anti-Calvinist position during the 1580s.¹⁹ It seems unlikely that Harsnett was actively espousing the anti-Calvinist viewpoint during this period and may not have been won over until Andrewes underwent an apparent shift in his own religious position after the death of his puritan-inclined patron, Francis Walsingham in 1590.²⁰ Another death, which shortly preceded that of Walsingham, may further explain why Andrewes became less inhibited in expressing his own divergence from orthodox Calvinism. In 1589 William Fulke the master of Pembroke for the previous eleven years, "a strong and restless puritan teacher" described by contemporaries as "*acerrimus papamastix*", died and Andrewes was elected in his stead.²¹ It must be seriously doubted that Fulke would have tolerated any significant deviation from the Calvinist position during his term as master, but with Fulke's death Andrewes began to steer Pembroke in a different direction. Although Andrewes by

¹⁸ But see below for the probable influence of Peter Baro on both Harsnett and Andrewes.

¹⁹ Nicholas Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism', in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp.5-33

²⁰ For the impact of the death of Walsingham see *ibid.*, p.9; if Harsnett had been openly opining anti-Calvinist views it seems unlikely that he would have been appointed schoolmaster by the bailiffs and corporation of Colchester in 1586

nature shied away from controversy he was sufficiently confident to display his anti-Calvinism in a court sermon of March 1594 on perseverance.²² Later that year Harsnett followed Andrewes' lead, albeit in a considerably more provocative manner, when at Paul's Cross he preached a bitter attack on the Calvinist denial of universal grace.²³

Whilst Andrewes seems to have been the most enduring influence on Harsnett's future career and thinking, one curious incident from Harsnett's early years at Pembroke may be evidence that Fulke may too have made an impression – albeit passing – on the young man's thinking. The following account purports to be by “Mr Harsnet of Pembroke Hall”, and recites an experience at the hands of an unnamed bishop:

The B asked me if I would weare the Surplice I said I was not resolved. B. Why soe. Ans: Because it would bring my Ministry into contempt, and I should do no good among the people, seeing I have not joynd with it a long time. How is that said the B. Why thus, I should be accused of great lightnes and inconstancy now to admit it, having so long refused it. Then the B said that to obey the Queenes Law was to bring my Ministry into Contempt. No said I, but to weare the surplice because of the people. Then I reason thus said the B to weare the surplice is to bring your Ministry into Contempt, but to weare the surplice is to obey the Queenes Law. Ergo, to obey the Law is to bring your Ministry into Contempt. Answer said the B. I said I came not to reason: Repeate the syllogisme said he, I would not, he repeated it, not weighing that his reason was captious. Mark what he saith said he to [blank], the Law of the Prince is to bring his Ministry into Contempt. Take me not so, said I, I spoke of the surplice and not the Law, yes said he and so committed me. Finis.²⁴

²¹ On Fulke see Aubrey Attwater, *Pembroke College Cambridge: A Short History* (Cambridge, 1936), pp.50 & 54

²² Tyacke, ‘Lancelot Andrewes’, p.18

²³ See below, this chapter, 3. ‘The Paul's Cross Sermon, 1594’

²⁴ Dr Williams Library, Morrice MSS volume 2, p.104, item 22; transcribed in A Peel (ed.) *The Seconde Parte of a Register* (2 vols., London, 1915); modernised transcription in Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.40. Brownlow suggests that this was a hearing of the High Commission and Whitgift was presiding [*Shakespeare*, p.40 n.1] but I can find no basis to support this assertion. The college visitor, the bishop of Ely, might have heard such a matter, but this position was vacant between 1581-99. Another possibility is that Harsnett held some form of benefice or curacy in his native Essex and fell foul of Bishop Aylmer's visitation of July 1586 (the dating of Harsnett's appearance would need adjusting) which was notoriously tough on non-conforming ministers, especially over the matter of the surplice – for some of the many examples see P Collinson, J Craig, B Usher (eds) *Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church* (Woodbridge, 2003), e.g. pp.186, 205-6, 211, 216

This statement is remarkably at odds with everything we know about Harsnett's future churchmanship: he was to be a bitter opponent of all forms of non-conformity and at the end of his life he willed that his tomb be embellished with the image of a bishop complete with mitre and episcopal staff. Can the account be genuine? That the 'Mr Harsnet' is any other than Samuel is effectively ruled out by the likely date of the account. Although undated, its position in the collection of which it is a part suggests that the compiler believed it dateable to April 1586; and in any event it could not have been written any later than 1593.²⁵ The only other plausible author, Harsnett's nephew, Adam Harsnett, was a moderate puritan and sometime fellow of Pembroke, but he could not have taken such a stand until at least 1603.²⁶ That the account was completely bogus also seems unlikely: the author of such would surely have chosen a more robust defence of the refusal to wear the surplice than that it would merely raise complaints of inconstancy from the minister's congregation. In fact, that Samuel Harsnett should have submitted the account is arguably unsurprising: both his early upbringing and the probable later influence of Fulke, formerly a vocal critic of the official orthodoxy concerning vestments, make such a stand perfectly comprehensible.²⁷ It was also very much in character: the pugnacity and independence of mind on display here were, as will be seen, to be evident in other incidents throughout Harsnett's life.

²⁵ Ibid.: the last dateable documents in the collection are from 1593; James Morrice, the likely collector, was town clerk of Colchester from 1576 until his death in 1597, Higgs, *Tudor Colchester*, p.388; thus, he may have been acquainted with the Halsnoth (Harsnett) family..

²⁶ Born in 1581, and matriculated at Pembroke in 1597 he could not have been ordained deacon until the canonical age of 22. Benham, 'Samuel Harsnett', p.112; John and J A Venn, *Alumni Cantab.* ii, p.319

²⁷ For Fulke's stand on vestments see H C Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), p.121ff

2. A first brush with Puritans – the Colchester Grammar School Affair

This brush with the authorities over his refusal to wear the surplice may have precipitated Harsnett's departure from Cambridge, for soon after he was being considered for the post of schoolmaster at the grammar school in his hometown, Colchester.²⁸ On 3 May 1586 the fellows of Pembroke Hall replied to a request from the bailiffs and aldermen of the town for a view on Harsnett's fitness for the post.²⁹ In response to "those points you requested of us" they felt able to "promise in his Behalfe, that he is verie meet, able & sufficient to performe these Duties", including the required ability to teach both Latin and Greek in either prose or verse.³⁰ This commendation helped secure Harsnett the post at the relatively young age of 25 and he took up his position on 25 March of the following year.³¹

After just eighteen months in the post Harsnett had experienced a change of heart. Pleading the understanding of the bailiffs he proffered only the explanation that it had pleased God "to chaunge the thoughts of my harte ... unto the studye of divinitye".³² Nothing can be ascertained of Harsnett's conduct in the post, but equally there is neither evidence to suggest that his performance was in question, nor anything to contradict the notion that the choice was his alone. Whatever the truth behind Harsnett's resignation it did not prevent him attempting to intrude his own views in the matter of who should

²⁸ Since Harsnett's own probable attendance there the school had foundered and was re-founded in August 1584, see Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, i, pp.482-3; also Philip Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the Most Ancient Town and Borough of Colchester*, 2 vols. (Chelmsford, 1815), i, p.171

²⁹ ERO (Colchester branch) Morant MS D/Y2/10, p.21; other copies in ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p.158 and BL MS Add. 5860, p.302; a transcription is in Morant, *Colchester*, i, p.176

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ A minimum age of 27 was often specified in the statutes of contemporary foundations and Harsnett himself so specified for the schoolmaster of his own later foundation at Chigwell, see below, chapter 7, 1. 'The Schools at Chigwell'; for Harsnett's serving dates, Lady Day 1587 to 12 November 1588, see ERO Morant MS D/Y2/10, p.176

succeed him. In so doing, he revealed a rather disagreeable side to his personality. When moderate persuasion failed he resorted to maligning the opposing candidate; when it became clear that his own preferred candidate had not prevailed he descended into petulance. But the matter of Harsnett's successor might be significant for more than merely the insights it offers into his character: it may have been an early skirmish in the theological divisions that ravaged Cambridge in the mid-1590s.

Harsnett's preferred candidate was Mark Sadlington, a fellow of Peterhouse.³³ The first dateable evidence of Sadlington's candidature came not from Harsnett but from Sir Francis Walsingham who wrote to the Colchester bailiffs from Court on 2 October 1588 commending Sadlington for the post.³⁴ This marked the opening salvo in a flurry of commendations, largely in favour of the other candidate, William Bentley, a former fellow of Clare Hall and, for the previous nine years, schoolmaster at Dedham, Essex.³⁵ For Sadlington, one other testimonial was provided: several of the fellows of Peterhouse signed a commendation in favour of Bentley on 10 October.³⁶ First to write in favour of Bentley's candidacy was William Hawes writing on 4 October as Bentley's former schoolmaster at Shrewsbury.³⁷ This was followed on 6 October by a letter from Thomas Byng, master of Clare Hall, who recalled that when Bentley had been of the university he

³² ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p.163; a transcription is in Goodwin, *Harsnett Library*, p.vii

³³ Thomas Alfred Walker (ed.), *A Biographical Register of Peterhouse Men*, 2 vols. (Cambridge 1927-30), ii, p.134 (for his appointment in 1583 see *ibid.*, p.45)

³⁴ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/9, p.269; at this time Walsingham was acting as recorder (1578-90) to Colchester corporation. Higgs, *Tudor Colchester*, p.388

³⁵ For Bentley's tenure at Dedham (1579-88) see John and J A Venn, *Alumni Cantab.* i, p.137; he was fellow at Clare Hall from 1574-81 (not recorded in *ibid.*), see W J Harrison, *Notes on the Fellows Scholars and Exhibitioners of Clare College Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1953), p.26

³⁶ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, pp.187; the signatories were John Mountford, Peter Baron (sic), Thomas Moigne, Fynes Morison, Robert Cannon, Andrew Perne and Richard Trym. For the full fellowship (of 14) see Walker, *Peterhouse*, ii, p.134

³⁷ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, pp.150-1

had excelled “as well for the tongues as for other good arte...”.³⁸ Byng’s commendation was followed on 11 October by one from Thomas Darcy, Viscount Colchester who, like Byng, suggested that he was reiterating an earlier such statement.³⁹ On 13 October Bentley’s cause received further support in a letter from John Knewstub, puritan rector of Cockfield, Suffolk.⁴⁰ A former Clare Hall colleague of Bentley, George Northey, also wrote in his favour at this time, claiming that he and Byng had previously recommended Bentley for the Dedham post.⁴¹ It was at this stage that Harsnett appears to have entered the debate. In an undated account that seems to be a response to his knowledge of the support for Bentley’s candidature Harsnett opened with a glowing account of Sadlington and his suitability for the post:

[A] man of my knowledge, credit & assuraunce endued wth suche extraordinarie giftes of a schoolmaster as promptnesse in speeche, mildnesse in affection, order in teachinge, eloquence in the Greek & Latin, godliness in life and conversation, as I acount him a man, peculiarly chosen of God for this town, & this profession. That is all, and all this, I do pawne you my poore name, and credit uppon, yt he shall performe.⁴²

In a clearly determined effort to persuade the bailiffs to his viewpoint Harsnett then turned to Bentley and his referees:

Touching Mr Bentley I love the man and do reverence the judgment of those reverent men, that have written of him (thoughe they knowe him not): wold God you had not to late experience of such forced commendations by letters. One word my conscience compelleth me to protest unto you all, and with grieffe I protest it: that he cannot be chosen by your statutes, being not able to make either Greek or Latin verse; that his

³⁸ Ibid. p.101

³⁹ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4. p.125; there is no extant evidence of the earlier commendations to which Byng and Darcy alluded – it could suggest that Bentley had initially been the only candidate and matters were only formalised when Sadlington was entered into the contest.

⁴⁰ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4. p.173 (letter dated 13 October 1588)

⁴¹ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4. p.193; for Northey’s fellowship (1567-82), see Harrison. *Clare College*, p.25; in timing, Northey’s testimonial can probably be grouped with the foregoing testimonials for, like these, it did not make any reference to Bentley’s competence in Greek and Latin (questioned by Harsnett in the succeeding cited correspondence).

⁴² ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4. p.159; transcribed in Goodwin. *Harsnett Library*, pp.vi-vii

order is suche yr scholars muste now begin againe; that men's opinion is such of him as if he be chosen they will take away their sons presentlie from the schoole. Thus praying God to direct your hartes according to Judgment and not affection, I committ you to his good direction in this weighty buisness.⁴³

This was an extraordinarily personal attack on Bentley's credentials and on the integrity of his referees. Whether or not it was true it could hardly remain unanswered; nor did it. There followed a series of testimonials from almost unimpeachable sources, most of them specifically addressing the question of Bentley's proficiency in the classical languages. Testimonials arrived with the bailiffs from the fellows of Bentley's former college, Clare Hall, who witnessed to Bentley's proficiency in Hebrew, Greek and Latin;⁴⁴ from the fellows of Emmanuel College who asserted Bentley's "sure knowledge both in the hebrue greek and latin tongues";⁴⁵ and from three Dedham men (perhaps governors of the school at Dedham) who also extolled Bentley's facility in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and significantly - in refutation of Harsnett's charge - that this was "in verse or prose or any other faculty".⁴⁶

Writing from Pembroke Hall on 28 October Harsnett may have been unaware of the support that was now being marshalled in Bentley's cause for he made no reference to it. He merely reminded the bailiffs of,

one consent you made unto me at my firste entrance, namelie to accept at myne hande a twelve monthes warninge, for which time, I beseeche you to admitte uppon triall, the man already commended unto you, Mr Sadlington...⁴⁷

Just three days later came what must have clinched the matter in Bentley's favour. It was a recommendation penned by three of the most senior Cambridge Calvinists - Roger

⁴³ Ibid., p.vii

⁴⁴ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p.131

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.123

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.135

Goad, the master of King's College; William Whitaker, master of St John's and the Regius Professor of Divinity; and Laurence Chaderton, master of Emmanuel College – as well as Andrew Downes, Regius Professor of Greek. They too commended Bentley for his skill in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, but also for the “pains and diligence” he took in teaching these, and for “his godlye care for their [youths] virtuous and civil life”.⁴⁸

By 7 November, it appears that the bailiffs and aldermen had determined to ignore Harsnett's claim to nominate a candidate for his twelve-month notice, for on that date he wrote to them in a fit of pique:

I am nowe constrained to become a suytor unto you for that whch before I mighte justlie have required but that I relied whollie uppon your favours for Mr Sadlington. My suyte is to remember your Ws partelie of that money whch I was commanded to paye unto Mr Pye for certain necessaries in the School parlour, which was xliiis. as I remember; and partlie for that money I laid out presentlie before my departure about dressing the orcheyard belonging to the School. My charges done in the orcheyard are in sight if it please your W: to take the paines to vewe them and I had no other profit of my charges but the laiyng out of the money, which came to thirtie shillings and somewhat more. These I beseech you may be required of the schoolmaster before he possesse them, and because I know your Worshippes upright conscience and equity in a case of Righte, I make no further suyte for them but with my humble dutie remembered alwayies to God for you I commit you to his protection.⁴⁹

If this served to relieve Harsnett's frustrations it did nothing to change the outcome. Less than a month later Bentley wrote to the bailiffs accepting the offer of the post for a trial period during which he was very willing “that my ability to teache prose, verse, latine and greeke be tried according to the orders of yo^r schoole.”⁵⁰ Bentley appears to have proved Harsnett's aspersion baseless, remaining in the post until 1598.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 163; transcribed in Goodwin, *Harsnett Library*, p. vii

⁴⁸ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p. 143

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 167

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 97

⁵¹ John and J A Venn, *Alumni Cantab.* i, p. 137

It is possible to see the skirmish over the Colchester school vacancy as an early manifestation of the divisions that would take place in Cambridge during the mid-1590s over the matter of universal grace.⁵² Harsnett and a number of other participants in the Colchester affair were again protagonists in that later conflict. On Bentley's side in 1588 stood William Whitaker, Roger Goad and Laurence Chaderton, three men who were to be leading exponents of the Calvinist opinion in the Cambridge controversies.⁵³ On the other side was a body of support from the fellowship of Sadlington's own college, Peterhouse. Included among the signatories were Peter Baro and Andrew Perne, names that are strongly suggestive of anti-Calvinism and conformist thought. And, of course, Sadlington's main champion was Harsnett who, after preaching his notorious Paul's Cross sermon in defence of universal grace in 1594, was to become identified with Baro's stand against the Calvinist majority.

We need to be careful in reading too much into the significance of this affair - that it was either a clash between Calvinists and Anti-Calvinists anticipating that of the 1590s, or that an Anti-Calvinist allegiance even existed in 1588. Although the names of Baro and Perne appeared on the Peterhouse testimonial they are probably not indicative of an anti-Calvinist allegiance. The Andrew Perne who signed the commendation was not the master of the college but a very recently appointed fellow.⁵⁴ Moreover the Peter Baro of the testimonial was probably not the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity who would be the chief target of the Calvinist side in the disputes of the 1590s, but rather more likely his son

⁵² Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.42

⁵³ Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p.314

⁵⁴ Perne was admitted fellow on 27 August 1588. Walker, *Peterhouse Men*, ii, p.133

who had been appointed a Peterhouse fellow in 1585.⁵⁵ Even if Baro senior had been the signatory it was not a personal commendation in his capacity as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, but as one party to the Peterhouse testimonial.⁵⁶ Under the master-ship of Andrew Perne, who had an established antipathy to puritan divinity, Peterhouse might have had a distinctly conformist hue but none of the 1588 college fellowship appears to have supported Baro in 1595-6.⁵⁷ Neither is there any clear evidence that Sadlington was an anti-Calvinist.⁵⁸ In the absence of any evidence to the contrary it seems reasonable to conclude that the Peterhouse fellows supported Sadlington not for his doctrinal leanings, but merely because he was one of their society who they knew to be well qualified to hold the post of schoolmaster. Francis Walsingham's support for Sadlington's candidacy tends to add weight to the absence of any strong doctrinal basis behind the Peterhouse commendation of their colleague. As a man strongly supportive of those of the puritan disposition, it is scarcely credible that Walsingham would have knowingly supported a candidate of an anti-Calvinist persuasion.⁵⁹ If Harsnett was attempting to foil a Calvinist

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.69-70

⁵⁶ The signatures represented only half of the serving fellowship (see note 36 above) but there is no reason to suppose anything significant in this – the full Clare Hall fellowship were not signatories to the testimonial for Bentley.

⁵⁷ For Perne's conformist position, see Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), pp.62-3; he died in 1589.

⁵⁸ Neither of the published works attributed to Sadlington suggest he held Anti-Calvinist views, see *DNB* 'Mark Sadlington'. Sadlington did eventually secure a schoolmaster's post, that of St Olave's, Southwark in June 1591, Walker, *Peterhouse*, ii, p.63

⁵⁹ For Walsingham's zealous Protestantism see Patrick Collinson, *Godly People* (London, 1983), pp.68-9 and *DNB* entry 'Francis Walsingham, 1530-90'. Walsingham was also a notable patron of puritans and Puritan causes: examples include John Rainolds (an Oxford lectureship in divinity), M H Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558-1642* (Oxford, 1959), p.204; and Emmanuel College (an advowson), Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (1988), p.10. It should be noted that Walsingham was a long-time patron of Lancelot Andrewes, Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes*, p.39-40; but we have also noted that Andrewes was always cautious in pronouncing his views on predestined grace.

cabal then it has to be said that it was a pretty feeble effort – all he had achieved in support of his own candidate was to obtain a testimonial from Sadlington’s college.

In marked contrast to the support for Sadlington’s candidacy Bentley’s is highly suggestive of an orchestrated campaign in which ideology was a key component. However, it was not a campaign orchestrated by the Calvinist luminaries of Cambridge – only later, when Harsnett’s charges threatened Bentley’s appointment, were they brought into the equation. Whether Bentley was invited to apply for the Colchester post, or did so on his own initiative is unclear, but what is clear is that his cause swiftly attracted the support of the godly community. Early backing for Bentley included that of two known puritan-inclined divines, John Knewstub and George Northey. Northey would have been well known to the Colchester bailiffs for he had been their own town lecturer since 1580.⁶⁰ In his early life Knewstub had been a supporter of the Presbyterian cause at Cambridge; by 1588, as rector of Cockfield, he had established a reputation as the “doyen of Suffolk preachers”.⁶¹ Although there is no direct evidence to suggest that these two men were personally acquainted, one thing they did share provides a clue as to what may have been the common bond among Bentley’s supporters. Both men had close links to the *classis* movement – an experiment that gave the Presbyterian ideal a practical expression through conferences at which ministers would submit themselves to the discipline and scrutiny of other local clergy and pious laity.⁶² The *classis* connection is confirmed by the later entry

⁶⁰ And was temporarily suspended for non-conformity in 1583. Higgs, *Tudor Colchester*, pp.281-2, 308-12; Collinson, Craig & Usher, *Conferences*, pp.240-1

⁶¹ Collinson, *Godly People*, pp.356 & 539 and *passim*.

⁶² Northey was a member the Cambridge *classis*, Knewstub a member of the Suffolk *classis*, according to R G Usher, *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth as Illustrated by the Minute Book of the Dedham Classis, 1582-89*. Camden Society, 3rd Series, viii (London, 1905), p.xliv & xxix; for their connection to the Dedham *classis* see the biographical entries in Collinson, Craig & Usher.

of the three Dedham men in support of Bentley: Thomas Farrar, Anthony Morse and probably (the signature is indistinct) John Dowe.⁶³ As they were apparently well acquainted with Bentley's pedagogic skills they may have been writing in some capacity connected with the Dedham school. However, what seems more significant is that all were active members of the Dedham classis.⁶⁴

The *classis* connection did not end here. As Professor Lake has shown, all three of the Cambridge heads who supported Bentley were variously supportive of, or tolerant towards Presbyterian thinking.⁶⁵ In Chaderton's case, at least, this was evidenced on practical support of the movement – he was a member of the Cambridge *classis*.⁶⁶ A connection between the Dedham classis of Farrar, Morse and Dowe can be made with Cambridge - and John Knewstub provides the link. It was he who undertook to take questions raised at a meeting of the *classis* in June 1585 to a group of "divers godly men" meeting in Cambridge.⁶⁷ Whether Chaderton was a member of this group is not apparent but two years later he and Knewstub attended a provincial synod of the movement in Cambridge.⁶⁸ None of this of course is to suggest that it was a *classis* conspiracy to support Bentley's candidature, but it does illustrate that godly connections established through it were exploited to the full. Further evidence that the godly pursued a concerted operation to ensure that their chosen candidate prevailed may be provided by the curious circumstance of the Emmanuel College testimonial. Emmanuel had been founded only

Conferences; on the *classis* movement in general see *ibid.*, pp.xvii-xxvii, Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, pp.189-99; Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1988), pp.120-1.

⁶³ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p.135

⁶⁴ See entries in the biographical register in Collinson, Craig & Usher, *Conferences*, pp.203-4 (Dowe), 205-7 (Farrar), xliii (Morse); for activities during autumn 1588 see *ibid.*, pp.71-2

⁶⁵ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp.25-44 (Chaderton), 72-3 (Goad); 194-6 (Whitaker)

⁶⁶ Usher, *Presbyterian Movement*, pp.xxix, xxxvii

four years previously and it is far from clear why the fellows of this “prime Puritan stronghold” in Cambridge felt able to recommend a man who apparently had no connection with their college.⁶⁹ Yet they even went so far as to commend Bentley’s proficiency in Latin, Greek and Hebrew.⁷⁰ But then so too did Laurence Chaderton – and they were hardly likely to disagree with their own master.

As already suggested, it seems highly unlikely that this affair in any way represented an assault on Calvinist theology. The only possible link between Harsnett’s sponsorship of Sadlington’s candidacy and anti-Calvinism is the rather tenuous one of the Baro signature on the Peterhouse testimonial. It is not only Walsingham’s support of Sadlington that casts doubt over the possibility of an anti-Calvinist agenda, so too does the context. In the late 1580s there was no particular controversy over, or outright challenge to the Calvinist interpretation of predestined grace. If it was a clash of ideology in 1588 then it was more likely to have been over church polity than theology: between conformist candidates on one side, on the other side those who sought to reduce or eliminate both the role of the crown and the episcopate from church government. It is certainly true that Harsnett later gained a reputation as a staunch conformist while the support for Bentley had strong connections to the *classis* movement and its Cambridge supporters. Nevertheless, there is nothing to suggest that Harsnett was as yet taking a firm conformist position, and only 18 months earlier he had been censured for refusal to wear the surplice and appointed as schoolmaster in Colchester by a corporation who showed a distinct bias towards the godly.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp.50-1

⁶⁸ Porter, *Reform and Reaction*, pp.191-2

⁶⁹ On the foundation of Emmanuel College, see *ibid.*, pp.238-9

Far from being involved in any ideological clash it seems that Harsnett was simply out-manoeuvred by a determined campaign initiated by the local godly community who exploited their influential connections to ensure the success of their preferred candidate. The Colchester schoolmaster affair was neither a precursor of the Cambridge doctrinal disputes of the 1590s, nor does it provide any satisfactory evidence that Harsnett had yet developed his anti-Calvinist or conformist thinking. It does, however, raise a number of intriguing questions about Harsnett's early career. If Bentley's appointment implies that the corporation had a predilection for godly candidates then why was Harsnett appointed to the post in the first place when his later career proved him to be, in effect, a professional anti-Puritan? It is, of course, possible that the bailiffs were only concerned with the pedagogy of their schoolmaster and that the nature of his divinity was immaterial. What seems more likely is that at this early stage of his career Harsnett, as suggested earlier, had not yet developed the strict conformist position with which he is normally associated. Thus there would have been no obvious obstacle to his appointment. Why Harsnett should have decided so relatively soon after his appointment to return to academia is another matter that cannot be resolved with any certainty. What had changed in the space of eighteen months? Perhaps it was, as he claimed, a genuine calling to return to the study of divinity. Or it may have been connected to a sense that William Fulke's term as master of Pembroke was coming to an end and that he might have a part to play in a new style of governance.⁷¹ Why should Harsnett have supported Sadlington's candidacy so enthusiastically, and why he should have gone so far as maligning Bentley in order that his own choice would prevail? There are at least two possibilities: it may indeed have

⁷⁰ ERO Morant MS D/Y2/4, p.123

been a matter of the style of divinity of the two men, but alternatively maybe it was nothing more than an early manifestation of Harsnett's irascibility in the face of opposing views – a quality that would much later prompt William Prynne to remember him as a “furious Hildebrand”.⁷² What, perhaps, is most significant about the whole affair is that it was Harsnett's first visible brush with puritans. Unfortunately, it can only be a matter of speculation as to whether he was either already out of sympathy with their form of piety or whether the incident itself launched him on his career as an anti-Puritan.

3. The Paul's Cross Sermon, 1594

Within a year of Harsnett's return to Cambridge, William Fulke had died and been replaced as Master of Pembroke by Lancelot Andrewes. Harsnett first reappears in the college records with his appointment as Junior Treasurer in 1590, and then as Senior Treasurer in the following year.⁷³ These doubtless demonstrated Andrewes' esteem for Harsnett: the new master had held the post of Treasurer himself prior to Fulke's death. Andrewes' regard for Harsnett was probably also behind the college's nomination of Harsnett as a university proctor for the academic year 1592-3.⁷⁴ Although Harsnett claimed that he resigned his teaching post to return to the study of divinity there is no extant evidence of his activities in this field during the six years following his return to Cambridge. Nevertheless, it does seem probable that under Andrewes' influence Harsnett's full and final conversion to the anti-Calvinist position took place sometime

⁷¹ Fulke died in the following year and was succeeded by Lancelot Andrewes.

⁷² William Prynne, *The Antipathie of the English Prelacie both to Regall Monarchy and Civill Unity* (1641), p.221

⁷³ Pembroke College, MS C0, fol.3

during this period. The circumstantial evidence of his family background, and his appointment in 1586 to the Colchester school position by a strongly puritan inclined corporation, certainly suggest that if he had anti-Calvinist inclinations he kept them well hidden, and in all probability they had not yet emerged. When he did finally reveal his hand it was in a manner more public and forthright than would ever have been ventured by his mentor Andrewes.

On 27 October 1594 Harsnett emerged as one of the leading and - at that date - most public critics of the Calvinist doctrine of double-predestination.⁷⁵ That doctrine flowed from the core principle of Calvinist thinking, God's absolute sovereignty. It was a tenet that necessarily excluded man from any influence in his own salvation. Thus, when God had decreed that some were predestined to salvation, others to eternal damnation, that was his final word on the matter: the elect would enjoy his good grace and, though they might sin, they could not thereafter fall from grace; conversely, the reprobate could not be redeemed, whatever the extent of their good works. For Harsnett and other such thinkers this was a desperate doctrine that meant, as he pointed out:

*That God should designe many thousands of soules to Hell before they were, not in eye to their faults, but to his absolute will and power, and to get him glory in their damnation. This opinion is growne huge and monstrous (like a Goliath) and men doe shake and tremble at it; yet never a man reacheth to Davids sling to caste it downe.*⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Harsnett served as proctor with Thomas Grimstone, a fellow of Caius. J R Tanner (ed.), *The Historical Register of the University of Cambridge... to the year 1910* (Cambridge, 1917), p.39

⁷⁵ It seems that the substance of the argument of Harsnett's Paul's Cross sermon was first developed and presented in the form of an academic disputation. Harsnett's, 'Nemo necessario damnatur. Certitudo uniuscuiusque salutis non est certitudo fidei.', was probably submitted for his BD; BL Harleian Ms.3142. 107 p.54-70. another copy is in the Harsnett Library, now housed in the University of Essex. The normal interval between award of an MA and completion of the requirements of a BD would be upwards of 8 years which would place the disputation in the period directly preceding the Paul's Cross sermon.

⁷⁶ Samuel Harsnett, in *Three Sermons preached by ... Dr Richard Stuart ... to which is added a fourth sermon ... preached by Samuel Harsnett* (1656), pp.133-4 (printer's italics)

And thus Harsnett, standing in the pulpit at Paul's Cross and taking as his text Ezekiel 33: 11, 'As I live (saith the Lord) I delight not in the death of the wicked', took up the sling against the 'monstrous' opinion.

The form of the text was couched in terms of a solemn oath and so, Harsnett argued, because God had sworn such an oath it had to be accepted that that was His will and intention.⁷⁷ Furthermore, in choosing the manner of the oath 'as I live', God was taking the most sacred form of oath, for nothing could be valued more than life.⁷⁸ He then proceeded to spell out the implications of the text: God delights in life and, as the author of life, abhors death;⁷⁹ man is God's son and no father delights in the death of his son;⁸⁰ God cannot delight in the death of a sinner for he sacrificed his own son to save sinners;⁸¹ if God delighted in the death of wicked sinners he would not have saved Peter the thief or Mary the harlot or any other of those who St Basil described as the "sinners that wore St Paul's colours".⁸² God might have prepared the fire for the likes of Abel and Judas but he did not ordain their way into it – they chose their own path to damnation.⁸³ The corollary of this, Harsnett argued, was the Calvinist "conceit": a reading of the text that carried a series of inexplicable and alarming inferences that he detailed with apparent relish.⁸⁴ By arguing against the truth of the text the Calvinists turned God's truth into a lie implying that He broke his oath and decreed that "millions of men should fry in *Hell*; and

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp.123-6

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp.126-7

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.127-30

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp.130-3, citing the story of Ulysses who feigned madness but whose sanity was exposed when he tried to save his son, *ibid.*, p.133

⁸¹ Ibid., pp.143-5

⁸² Ibid., p.146

⁸³ Ibid., pp.147-8

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.133ff; Harsnett does not here refer to Calvinists as authors of the "conceit" but does so later, *ibid.*, 152

that he made them for no other purpose, then to be the children of *death* and *Hell*'.⁸⁵ Furthermore, their interpretation made God the author of sin; took away from Adam the liberty not to sin; and falsely suggested that God had an "open" will that forbade Adam to sin, but a "hidden" will that ensured that he would sin. It suggested that God had raised man up above all other creatures only so that their fall might be that much greater.⁸⁶ That God should ordain a decree that both raised man up and also condemned him to death was – according to Harsnett - both beyond man's "weake capacity" to understand and it belied the wisdom of St Ambrose: "God put not on the person of a *Revenger* before man put on the person of an *Offender*".⁸⁷

In the final part of his sermon Harsnett laid out, in the form of six "consequences", the message of hope that he believed the text incontrovertibly demonstrated:

1. Sin is the cause of a man's reprobation, not God's absolute will. God hates sin but he sees man, his creation, as fundamentally good.⁸⁸
2. No man is necessarily condemned to hell; by God's grace he might avoid it – only if he chooses sin need he be damned.⁸⁹
3. Timothy 2: 4, says that "God would have every man to be saved" and that is exactly what it means. Citing St Augustine as his authority Harsnett then explained that it was God's conditional will, as opposed to his absolute will (eg "let there be light"), that allowed man to choose whether or not to keep the stricture "believe and thou shalt live".⁹⁰
4. God sent his son to save every soul and bring it to heaven – a point so clear in the bible "that the Sun at mid-day shines not more bright".⁹¹

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.134

⁸⁶ Ibid., p134-8

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp.139-42 (Ambrose quotation at p.142; printer's italics)

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp.148-51

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp.151-2

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp.152-5

⁹¹ Ibid., pp.155-8

5. Christ by his death offered Grace not only sufficient for the redemption of all mankind but effectually to save all men.⁹²
6. The reason not all men came to heaven was because of their neglect and contempt of Grace, and “not any privative Decree, Counsel or determination of God”.⁹³

In elaborating these consequences Harsnett could not resist some further sniping against the Calvinists. By the “*Genevan* conceipt” it was as though the text of Tim 2: 4 meant that God intended only “one or two out of every *Order* and *Occupation* to come unto *heaven*, as if our God were fallen out of liking with *Christian Souls*, and suddenly fallen in love with *Orders* and *Occupations*.”⁹⁴ The spirit of Peter taught “God would not have any one to perish, but to come to the knowledge of the Truth” (2 Pet. 3: 9) and by that he was “a greate deale wiser than that of Geneva”.⁹⁵ The Genevans, seeking to limit the truth that Christ died for the sins of all men, in effect argued that when God said that he wanted all to be saved, he meant some to be saved; when none were to perish, he meant most were to perish; that when he loved all the world, in truth he loved only a small number in the world; and that Christ was the saviour of the world, meaning he was saviour of a handful.⁹⁶ This “odd delusion”, which the Calvinists explained by the fact that Christ’s sacrifice was sufficient for all but effectually for the few, begged the question, “Is God as a man, that he should so dissemble?”⁹⁷ Harsnett concluded his sermon by warning his audience against the three false positions with regard to universal grace:

Let us take heed and beware, that we neither, (with the *Papists*) rely upon our *free will*: nor (with the *Pelagian*) upon our *Nature*: nor (with the *Puritan*) curse God, and die, laying the *burthen* of our sins on his shoulders, and the guilt of them at his

⁹² Ibid., pp.158-63

⁹³ Ibid., pp.163-5

⁹⁴ Ibid., 153

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p.156

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.158

everlasting doores: but let us fall downe upon our faces, give glory to God, and say, Unto thee, O Lord belongeth mercy and forgiveness; unto us shame and confusion; for we have gone astray, we have offended, and dealt wickedly as all our fathers have done.⁹⁸

Harsnett's sermon was a bold attack on the majority viewpoint among the reformed establishment, and it was probably also unprecedented in such a public forum.⁹⁹ Whatever its merits or otherwise as an exercise in theological argument, the sermon offered a fine display of sustained rhetoric that struck at the most vulnerable aspect of the Calvinist argument: that the majority of men were doomed to hell and that they could do nothing to alter the fact. The unsettling reality of this was that, for all but the supremely self-confident, assurance of one's own place among the elect was highly problematical. In short, in the limited understanding of most, the Calvinist doctrine on predestination had all the ingredients for a recipe of hopelessness. Critics of those who placed total emphasis on absolute double predestination could also point to the risk that subscription to such a doctrine rendered moral law irrelevant: no consequences to the elect for disobedience, no reward to the reprobate for obedience.

But if the Calvinist position was vulnerable, then so too was that of the anti-Calvinists. It was a fact that Harsnett, in the concluding remarks of his sermon, acknowledged implicitly and attempted to address. By claiming that man himself had some agency in the matter of grace – that his choice to sin or otherwise was the cause of reprobation or election, rather than God's absolute will and pleasure – the anti-Calvinists challenged the core Calvinist belief of divine sovereignty. Such devices as the anti-Calvinists might use to account for God allowing man some say in his own salvation – for

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.165

example, the distinction between his absolute and conditional will – were, in the Calvinist view, nothing more than attempts to conceal their true position: Pelagianism or Popery. The Pelagian allowed man to achieve salvation by his own agency; grace was the reward of God rather than the predetermined gift of God. The logical consequence of such a view was that man's nature had the potential to transcend God's grace and thus to beg the question of what role, if any, was there for God? Hence we see Harsnett's attempt to distance himself from any affinity with the Pelagian reliance on nature. Although the official Catholic church rejected the Pelagian position as heresy and granted God's grace a more central role in the salvation of human beings, it still retained the notion that man exercised some choice - free will - in determining whether or not to accept that grace. Harsnett was naturally keen also to distance himself from the charge of popery and so warned his audience against reliance on free will. Nevertheless, the distinction between free will on one hand and the choice that man exercised in neglecting or embracing God's grace on the other hand, was so fine that it inevitably left anti-Calvinists like Harsnett exposed to the charge of popery.

On more than one occasion in the future Harsnett would suggest that his was a middle way between the extremes of popery and Puritanism. However, his appeal to the audience in the conclusion of the Paul's Cross sermon that they reject supposed extremes was little more than a rhetorical device. His exegesis of the text may have represented a plea for a moderate interpretation of grace between that espoused by the two extremes, but it was hardly a balanced critique of their arguments: the language was confrontational and the clear target was Calvinism. This (at least in his view) was the threat of the age,

⁹⁹ For the existence of a consensus on the Calvinist teaching on predestination see Tyacke, *Anti-*

not Pelagianism or popery. Furthermore, in his conclusion he took the bold step of implying that those who subscribed to the Calvinist theology he had criticised in the body of his sermon were puritans. That tactic would not emerge again until the late 1620s when anti-Calvinism had become an altogether more potent force.

Why Harsnett should have chosen to launch this stinging attack on Calvinism when and where he did, is a matter that has been of little concern to modern historians. This is no doubt because until quite recently there was a general acceptance that Harsnett preached his sermon on 27 October 1584 - exactly ten years earlier than in fact seems to have been the case. If Harsnett had indeed preached on the earlier date then it would have appeared to be the work of a lone maverick. There was simply no context for making such a public attack on an issue that was hardly, as yet, even the subject of much academic debate. And so the tendency has been to note Harsnett's contribution as something of a curiosity: either an unusually early manifestation of Arminianism *avant la lettre*, or an understandable, albeit audacious, outburst of moral indignation.¹⁰⁰ If, however, the date of 1594 is accepted Harsnett's sermon becomes one of the opening shots in a concerted attack on the Calvinist position. Some consideration of the dating question is therefore necessary before we reflect on the full historiographical implications of accepting the later date.

The one reason for the traditional dating of the sermon to 1584 is that when it was first published in 1656 it was noted to have taken place in the regnal year 26 Elizabeth.¹⁰¹ The only direct reference to the sermon in any contemporary source came from Harsnett

Calvinists, p.248ff. For the novelty of Harsnett's position, at least at Paul's Cross, see Tyacke, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Respectively, the positions taken by Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp.164-5, and Peter White, *Predestination*, p.100

himself, and this was many years later when he referred to it during his defence against accusations of popery by a puritan element among the citizens of Norwich in 1624.

...his Lordship wondered why he should be thought a Papist. He thought it might be owing to his Disputations and his Sermon at Paul's Crosse, of Predestination Negative, unadvisedly preached by him, for which he was checked by the Lord Archbishop Whitgufte...¹⁰²

This reference does nothing to help date the sermon for Whitgift was archbishop in both 1584 and 1594. It was Brownlow who first questioned the usual dating, basing his suggestion that 1594 was more likely on a combination of quite simple observations: if the sermon took place in 1584 it was preached on a weekday (Tuesday, not Wednesday as Brownlow states) whereas in 1594 the date fell on a Sunday; in 1584 Harsnett was only twenty three, at most a deacon and therefore unlikely to have been invited to preach; and, finally, with the earlier date there was no obvious context for Harsnett to deliver such an outright attack on Calvinist orthodoxy.¹⁰³ While this does make for a compelling circumstantial case it is not indisputable. Although it is true that the majority of Paul's Cross sermons were preached on a Sunday this was not exclusively the case.¹⁰⁴ Harsnett was young, but then so too were others invited to preach at Paul's Cross.¹⁰⁵ The argument that there was little context in 1584 is persuasive, but then Harsnett proved by his later career to be more than capable of pursuing an independent line and was certainly not shy of controversy.

¹⁰¹ Harsnett, in *Sermon*, title page

¹⁰² *LJ*, iii, p.389

¹⁰³ Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.42-3

¹⁰⁴ An analysis of dateable Paul's Cross sermons preached over a twenty year period (1580-1599), shows that 28 sermons were preached on Sunday, four on Tuesdays – except for special accession day sermons no other weekday was represented. The analysis is based on the calendar in Millar Maclure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642* (Toronto, 1958), pp.212-221.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.11

Nevertheless, there are further circumstances which, taken in conjunction with Brownlow's points, do seem to put the case for 1594 beyond any reasonable doubt. The first concerns the likely circumstances surrounding the invitation to preach at Paul's Cross. The responsibility for commissioning the Paul's Cross preachers rested with the bishop of London.¹⁰⁶ In October of 1584 this was John Aylmer. There is no obvious connection between Aylmer and the young Harsnett, but it remains perfectly plausible that some third party recommended the latter to the bishop. However, circumstances in 1594 again seem to argue strongly for this being the more likely date for Harsnett preaching his controversial sermon. In October 1594 the bishopric was vacant: Aylmer had died in June and his successor Richard Fletcher had not yet been formally installed.¹⁰⁷ The usual notice for the preacher was about one month so it appears that Harsnett's invitation cannot have been Aylmer's work.¹⁰⁸ It is not clear who, in the absence of the bishop of London, had responsibility for commissioning the preacher for the Paul's Cross sermons, but given that it took place in the churchyard of St Paul's it seems quite likely that it might have fallen to cathedral personnel, probably the dean. At this date the dean was the long-serving octogenarian Alexander Nowell. More significantly for Harsnett, however, was that Lancelot Andrewes, master of Pembroke, had held a prebend residentiary at the cathedral since 1589.¹⁰⁹ In 1591 Andrewes had been Nowell's chaplain, an undoubted clue as to Nowell's regard for him.¹¹⁰ By the early 1590s Andrewes was already beginning to

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *DNB* 'John Aylmer' and 'Richard Fletcher'

¹⁰⁸ Maclure, *Paul's Cross*, p.11

¹⁰⁹ Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes*, p.40

¹¹⁰ *DNB* 'Alexander Nowell'

display signs of distinct anti-Calvinist inclinations. Did Andrewes use his influence at St Paul's to gain an invitation for his Pembroke protégé to preach at Paul's Cross?

A second circumstance favouring the case for 1594 concerns another Paul's Cross preacher, John Dove, the rector of St Mary Aldermary, London. Dove made his first appearance at Paul's Cross on 3 November 1594 – exactly one week after Harsnett's own probable debut. On this occasion Dove, a moderate puritan, preached on the second coming of Christ.¹¹¹ As would become apparent, Harsnett's approach to the matter of predestination would have been utter anathema to Dove. Although Dove could have had little or no time to prepare a direct response to Harsnett he did include a curious condemnation of "atheists".¹¹² Whether or not this was an *ad lib* remark aimed at Harsnett and other anti-Calvinists for, in effect, questioning divine sovereignty, we can only conjecture. Nevertheless, he clearly had that group firmly in his sight on what appears to have been his next St Paul's appearance.

On 6 February 1597 Dove delivered what seems to have been a direct rebuttal of Harsnett's sermon. Preaching to exactly the same text that Harsnett had chosen (Ezekiel 33: 11), Dove argued for a totally different, and strongly Calvinist interpretation: God did *not* wish all men to be saved; God's absolute will, *not* sin, is the sole cause that some are predestined to salvation, others to reprobation; and Christ died *not* effectually for all men.¹¹³ In one telling critique of Harsnett's position, Dove argued that it was an "absurditie" held by papists "that if God hardeneth men to doo evill, then God is the

¹¹¹ John Dove. *A Sermon preached at Paul's Cross... intreating the second coming of Christ* (1594)

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ John Dove. *A Sermon preached at Paules Crosse, the sixt[h] of February 1596* (1597)

author of sinne".¹¹⁴ There can be little doubt that Dove was here directly answering the challenge thrown down by Harsnett. The only question is whether he was responding to a challenge of two years previously, or of twelve years previously.¹¹⁵ If Dove were sufficiently exercised by the content of a sermon preached in 1584 then it is a little surprising that he did not choose to respond to it in November 1594 when he apparently had his first opportunity to do so at Paul's Cross. Furthermore, it would also be curious for Dove to have preached in 1597 a response to a sermon delivered fully twelve years earlier rather than have engaged with the more recent contributions to the debate on universal grace that had taken place in Cambridge during 1595. If, however, Dove was responding to a sermon of just two years previously then the whole matter makes much more sense. In the first instance there is the practical point that, as rector of a London parish who was to preach at Paul's Cross himself the following week, it is likely that he heard the sermon at first-hand. It was also likely that a number of Dove's audience would have heard a sermon preached only two years earlier, and thus appreciated the point that was being made by engaging with precisely the same text as Harsnett had chosen. Furthermore, if Harsnett's sermon were preached in 1594, far from being isolated from, or overtaken by the Cambridge debates it had very real claim to have been a spark that ignited them. And finally, in this scenario Dove *was* taking the first real opportunity to answer Harsnett's sermon in the same place as it had been originally preached, for he would have been hard-pressed to have prepared such a fully developed response within a week of Harsnett's delivery.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.43

¹¹⁵ Nicholas Tyacke recognised that Dove's sermon appeared to be a direct refutation of Harsnett's but did not question the usual dating of 1584; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.252

The final point in favour of the 1594 date is one of context. Whilst in 1584 there was no obvious reason, other than a personal inclination, for Harsnett to have started a public debate on predestination there was one powerful reason that argues against him having done so. As previously remarked, any challenge to the Calvinist orthodoxy on predestination risked the accusation of popery. With the very real threat posed by Catholic Spain in 1584 a sermon such as Harsnett's would have been, at the very least, extremely foolhardy.

Although there has recently been some acknowledgement that Harsnett probably did preach his sermon on universal grace in 1594 the historiographical implications of the re-dating have yet to be considered.¹¹⁶ The only suggestion that Harsnett was involved in the Cambridge controversies of 1595/6 comes from Strype who noted that Harsnett was one of Baro's leading sympathisers: "...to him in the midst of his Troubles there were not wanting many in the University, that favoured him and his Cause, as Mr Overal, Dr Clayton, Mr Harsnet, and Dr Andrews...".¹¹⁷ If the sermon is dated to 1594 then Harsnett assumes a significant role in the prelude to the later controversies. The theological disputes that preoccupied Cambridge divines during this period were the culmination of a long running series of quarrels between Calvinists and anti-Calvinists within the university.¹¹⁸ Recent accounts of the controversies have taken as the starting point for the escalation of these skirmishes a sermon preached on 27 February 1595 by

¹¹⁶ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (2nd edition, Basingstoke, 2001) p.149 n.19; Professor Lake now believes that Harsnett preached the Paul's Cross sermon in 1594 (private conversation).

¹¹⁷ John Strype, *The Life..of..John Whitgift* (1743), p.473

¹¹⁸ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp.169-70

William Whitaker, Regius Professor of Divinity.¹¹⁹ It was this sermon that marked the beginning of a Calvinist offensive against the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Peter Baro and his supporters. One of these, William Barrett, a fellow of Caius College, responded on 29 April with a sermon against the certainty of faith in salvation and it was this, couched in an apparently deliberate provocative style, that embroiled the leading supporters of both sides in a bitter controversy. Somewhat reluctantly Whitgift was drawn into the dispute and the matter culminated in the drafting of the Lambeth Articles, at which point Baro felt compelled to enter the debates.¹²⁰ After this attempt to enshrine unequivocal Calvinism as Church of England orthodoxy failed to receive royal sanction, the controversy fizzled out.

Why did Harsnett choose to preach on such a controversial topic in October 1594 and what, if any, connection did it have to the Cambridge controversies that started so soon after? A re-dating of the sermon to 1594 casts doubt on the usual interpretation, that this was the act of a precocious individual unadvisedly but boldly speaking his own mind. What now seems more likely is that Harsnett, in choosing the topic, the time, and the place for the sermon, was almost certainly doing so within the context of a small but organised campaign to challenge the dominant Calvinist hegemony in Cambridge. It would certainly be too much to claim that Harsnett's Paul's Cross sermon triggered the Cambridge controversies of 1595-6, but it does serve as an important example of how anti-Calvinism was finding its voice before William Barrett felt compelled to respond to Whitaker's attack on nascent anti-Calvinism of February 1595. Baro had held his views on universal grace since at least the early 1580's when he had arrived in Cambridge and

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 202-3; White, *Predestination*, p.101

we have also seen that by the early 1590's Lancelot Andrewes was quietly developing his own low-key brand of anti-Calvinism.¹²¹ Both men may have been influential in the development of Harsnett's own position and perhaps in his decision to preach as he did at Paul's Cross. Andrewes had made his first overt anti-Calvinist statement when he preached at court in March 1594 and, with his links to St Paul's, may have been well placed to influence the invitation for Harsnett to preach at Paul's Cross. If Baro played a part in Harsnett's performance then no hard evidence survives to prove it. However, it is barely conceivable that Harsnett's opinions on universal grace were entirely due to Andrewes' influence when Baro, clearly the leading thinker on such views within the university, had been expounding on the matter for some years. There also exists a small hint that Harsnett and Andrewes' support of Baro in the following year was based on prior acquaintance, not just on intellectual sympathy for his viewpoint.¹²² If Harsnett appeared at Paul's Cross with Baro's support and encouragement and courtesy of Andrewes' influence then not only do we have the explanation of how he later became identified as one of Baro's chief supporters, but also that that support was actively stirring up the debate prior to the controversies of 1595.

Professor Lake now believes that Whitaker's sermon of February 1595 may have in itself been a response to an attack on the Calvinist position and that the attack in

¹²⁰ Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp.227ff

¹²¹ Baro had been appointed Lady Margaret Professor in 1574 and his doctrinal orthodoxy had been challenged during the early 1580s. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p.305 n.53

¹²² On 20 January 1596, less than two months after joining the dispute with a response to the Lambeth Articles, Baro wrote to Andrewes making it clear that he had earlier been in communication with Harsnett and that he regarded the two men as more than detached supporters: "Altho[ugh], Reverend Brother, you have neither writ to me, nor have made any mention of me, when you writ to our Friend, Mr Harsnet..." . Strype, *Whitgift*, p.473. This may also be instructive as to the personalities of the Pembroke men: Andrewes typically hesitant about engaging in controversy, Harsnett glibly unconcerned by the prospect.

question might well have been Harsnett's October 1594 sermon.¹²³ Whitaker took as the text for his sermon Timothy ii, 4, the literal sense of which Harsnett had argued was clear proof that God offered his grace to all men, not just the elect of Calvinist theology.¹²⁴ This text was so central to the debate over God's intentions concerning grace that its use by Whitaker is probably of no significance in establishing a causal link to Harsnett's sermon. Nor perhaps is the fact that, like Harsnett, Whitaker rounded off his sermon with six conclusions any proof that he was responding to the particular argument put forward by Harsnett.¹²⁵ There was a degree of overlap in the respective conclusions but that, in itself, is hardly surprising: if nothing else a Calvinist would necessarily conclude that there was no other cause for a man's salvation (or damnation) than God's simple will and good pleasure; an anti-Calvinist that by God's grace a man might gain salvation if he chose not to sin. Nevertheless, even if Harsnett's sermon did not elicit a point-by-point refutation from Whitaker the latter must have known of it and his choice of subject may suggest that he could not let it go unanswered.¹²⁶ If that were the case then Harsnett's sermon takes on the appearance of a successful provocation in an anti-Calvinist campaign to initiate an open debate on the subject: Whitaker took the bait and in turn enabled Barrett to respond and drag the rest of Cambridge into the controversy.

There is no evidence on which to assess the extent to which Harsnett was active in supporting Baro's cause when the latter was fighting to justify his position following

¹²³ Private conversation

¹²⁴ William Whitaker, *Praelectio habita Februarii 27 anno domini 1594* (i.e. 1594/5) in *Praelectiones... de conciliis* (Cambridge, 1600)

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-15; translated from the Latin in Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 203-4

¹²⁶ It is interesting to note that Whitaker, a well-known anti-papal polemicist, chose to attack those who asserted universal grace as Pelagians rather than papists, *Praelectiones*, pp.4-6; in later polemical debates anti-Calvinist views were more often labelled papist and Harsnett claimed that he had been so accused.

Whitgift's agreement to the Lambeth Articles.¹²⁷ Given Harsnett's relatively modest position within the university it is difficult to see what he might have done other than providing moral and intellectual support. Nevertheless, if for no other reason than his Paul's Cross sermon, there can be no doubt that contemporaries would have known exactly where Harsnett stood. It is a curious feature of Harsnett's association with an apparently minority viewpoint that it seems to have no deleterious effect whatsoever on his career and network of influential contacts.¹²⁸ In fact there is a very good case to be made that the end of the Cambridge controversies marked a significant turning point: soon after this, his horizons expanded beyond Cambridge when he acquired a powerful new patron in the form of Richard Bancroft, and his ecclesiastical career began to flourish. We are thus left to consider whether this was so either in spite of the position he had taken in his Paul's Cross sermon, or perhaps because of it.

¹²⁷ Professor Lake has concluded that "Baro's only real supporter during the disputes had been John Overall". Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 236; in practical terms that may have been true but it did not prevent Baro referring to Harsnett as a "friend", q.v. note 126 above.

¹²⁸ At the height of the Cambridge controversies Harsnett wrote a witty letter to Francis Bacon, "my singular good patron", thanking Bacon on behalf of another Pembroke fellow for an attempted (unspecified) favour: Lambeth Palace Library, MS 660; for a transcription see Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp. 45-6. At this time Bacon was acting as occasional legal adviser to the Queen, and was a favourite of the Earl of Essex: Lisa Jardine & Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune: the Troubled life of Francis Bacon* (London, 1998), pp.146-77; Harsnett was probably acquainted with Bacon through the agency of Andrewes who had known him since at least early 1593: Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes*, pp.225-6

3. Chaplain, Polemicist and Master of Pembroke

1. Bancroft's Chaplain

If one near contemporary source is to be believed, then Harsnett's ecclesiastical career began with a preferment from a surprising source. According to Peter Heylyn, Archbishop Whitgift not only appointed Harsnett "as his chaplain at large, but used his Services in his House, as a servant in ordinary, employed him in many of his Affairs, and finally commended him to the care of King".¹ If that had really been so then it would have been something of a mixed message from the man who had sanctioned the Lambeth Articles and reprimanded Harsnett for the Paul's Cross sermon. Unless Harsnett was serving two masters Heylyn was probably confusing Whitgift with Bancroft, for there is no doubt that Harsnett served the latter as chaplain.² Bancroft may have made this appointment almost immediately following his own elevation to the bishopric of London in April 1597, for on 14 June Harsnett's received his first known benefice, Chigwell in Essex, a parish within the London diocese. However, Harsnett probably owed this living to Lancelot Andrewes who, as holder of the St Paul's prebend of St Pancras, was rector of Chigwell in whose gift was the vicarage of the parish. There are various possibilities by

¹ Peter Heylyn. *Aerius Redivivus or The History of the Presbyterians* (Oxford, 1670), p.345; Heylyn was apparently confident of the claim that Harsnett was Whitgift's chaplain for he repeated it later, in the context of Harsnett's role in the Darrell affair, *ibid.*, p.349

² I have found nothing other than Heylyn's assertion to suggest that Harsnett was ever chaplain to Whitgift.

which Harsnett may have already been known to Bancroft, but Andrewes, who knew both men well, may well have provided the crucial commendation.³

By the following year it was evident that Bancroft held Harsnett in high regard: it was in his capacity as Bancroft's chaplain that Harsnett assisted in the bishop's primary visitation. On 23 July 1598 Bancroft, assisted by bishops Young of Rochester and Watson of Chichester, presided over the consecration of Henry Robinson to the bishopric of Carlisle, and heard his chaplain preach a sermon that included at least a section defending the right of the clergy to marry.⁴ It seems an odd choice of topic for the occasion and a highly charged one given the queen's conservative views on the matter,⁵ it certainly upset a number of those in the audience.⁶ Although Harsnett rarely, if ever, avoided direct involvement in controversy, it is difficult to conceive what advantage he had to gain by risking the embarrassment of his patron on such a seemingly insignificant, albeit contentious, matter. It seems likely, therefore, that when Harsnett delivered the sermon he must have done so with Bancroft's foreknowledge and tacit approval. If that begs the obvious question why, then there is no obvious answer unless, as an issue that clearly separated the Reformed from the Roman church, Bancroft and Harsnett had devised a strategy to initiate debate or respond to one that was already current, if now unknown.

³ Bancroft witnessed Andrewes' mother's will in 1595, Peter McCullough, 'Growing up Together: Lancelot Andrewes and the Elizabethan Church', unpublished paper presented at 'The Myth of Elizabeth' conference, Strawberry Hill, April 2002

⁴ A short Latin account of the occasion is recorded in an early 17th Century precedent book in the Cumbria County Record Office (CCRO), DRC/3/61, facing p.1: in support of his argument Harsnett cited the example of St Paul: "Et ipse Paulo post uxore habuit ex proprio"

⁵ Although Elizabeth's outright opposition to married bishops is contested by Brett Usher, he can offer no evidence that she positively endorsed it, nor that she remained anything other than opposed to it in principle, Brett Usher, 'Queen Elizabeth and Mrs Bishop', in Susan Doran and Thomas Freeman (eds.), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp.200-20.

If proof were needed that Harsnett suffered nothing by preaching as he had at Robinson's consecration, then it was to come within a few days. On 5 August 1598 he received the first of a number of preferments that were in the direct gift of Bancroft as bishop of London, in this case the St Paul's prebendary of Mapesbury. This coincided with, and was perhaps in anticipation of, Bancroft adding Harsnett to the list of those nominated to act on his behalf in licensing books for the press.⁷ The then current arrangements for licensing books prior to printing were established by a Star Chamber decree of 1586 that required the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London to ensure that the material they licensed was free from scandalous or treasonable content. In practice these officials delegated the task to ministers – including their own chaplains - and it was these examiners who effectively assumed responsibility for authorising a work. Harsnett licensed his first work on 21 August 1598 and, although by no means one of the most active examiners, authorised some sixty books until his appointment as master of Pembroke brought his licensing career to an end in November 1605.⁸

Although Harsnett's licensing activities were a relatively insignificant part of his responsibilities as Bancroft's chaplain, one particular episode briefly threatened his wider career. On 9 January 1599 Harsnett put his licensing signature to a work by an exact contemporary from his student years at Pembroke: John Hayward's *The First Part of the*

⁶ CCRO, DRC/3/61, facing p.1: "non sine magno audientui scandalo iusta indignatione".

⁷ A prebend at St Paul's was a position commonly held by those acting as licensers: Richard Dutton, *Licensing, Censorship and Authorship in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2000), p.163

⁸ Edward Arber (ed.), *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640*, 5 vols (London, 1876-94), iii, pp.124/160. Of the dozen or so examiners Harsnett was one of the least active: D W Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett and the Devils of Denham* (Newark, N J, 1993), p.179; Dutton, *Licensing*, p.183

*Life and Reign of Henry IV.*⁹ Sometime between Harsnett licensing the work and its printing in February, Hayward and the publisher John Wolfe agreed that it should be dedicated to the earl of Essex, and so a Latin dedication to the earl was added together with a preface to the reader.¹⁰ Writing on 1 March John Chamberlain reported that there was some speculation as to why the work had appeared when it had, and also that Essex had taken exception to the dedication, and appealed to Whitgift for it to be excised.¹¹ The speculation was undoubtedly that Essex's ambitions paralleled those of Henry Bolingbroke in usurping the power of an increasingly ineffective monarch. This was hardly a parallel with which Essex wished to be associated. Nevertheless, at this stage nobody associated with the work appears to have had cause for much concern. Whitgift was content for remaining copies of the first printing to remain in circulation provided only that the offending dedication was cut out. Chamberlain also found the speculation unfounded, finding nothing untoward in the work: "I have got you a transcript of yt that you may picke out the offence yf you can; for my parte I can finde no such buggeswords, but that everything is as yt is taken."¹² With the success of the first printing Wolfe printed a second edition of 1,500 copies, but at this stage came the first suggestion of an uneasiness about the text itself, rather than the dedication: Bancroft in effect overruled Harsnett's approbation of the work and had the new edition burnt. On 1 June this was followed up

⁹ Arber, *Registers*, iii p.134; Hayward proceeded BA in 1581 and MA in 1584 (as did Harsnett). John Venn and J A Venn (eds.), *Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 1: From the Earliest Times to 1751*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1922-7), ii, p.342

¹⁰ Wolfe's testimony to Coke, SP 12/275/28

¹¹ N E McClure (ed.), *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1939), i, p.70

¹² *Ibid.*

with an injunction against the printing of any further English histories without the consent of the Privy Council.¹³

Hayward, Wolfe and Harsnett might yet have escaped any further consequences if Essex had not failed the Queen's commission to him, as newly appointed Lord Deputy in Ireland, to put down Tyrone's rebellion. Essex returned to London in September 1599 amid rising suspicion about his loyalty to the crown. He was finally brought to official account before a panel of peers in June 1600, censured, but given limited liberty while he awaited the Queen's formal judgement. In July proceedings commenced against Hayward in the Star Chamber where he was charged with producing a history intended to apply to the present time and so incite a similar plot; Wolfe was also called to account for his part in the publication of the work. This action may have been part of a larger strategy designed by Essex's many opponents at court to keep the earl under pressure while he awaited the outcome of his own case – if so Harsnett fell victim to it. As part of his defence Hayward argued that the work had been officially approved and therefore there could have been nothing seditious about it.¹⁴ The obvious weakness in that defence was the possibility that the one who provided the official approval was himself a party to the conspiracy, and so Sir Edward Coke, the chief inquisitor, sent a letter to Harsnett asking for his side of the matter.

Coke's letter does not survive, but Harsnett's reply of 22 July makes it clear that Coke had charged him with two tasks: providing an account of the circumstances of his licensing the work, and comparing the text of certain books that Bancroft would send him. That Coke had apparently been reassuring in his letter, and that Harsnett was not required

¹³ Arber, *Registers*, iii, p.677

to attend the Star Chamber to give his account in person, suggest that Harsnett was not seriously suspected of wrong doing in his licensing of Hayward's work. Harsnett, however, does appear to have been genuinely worried. Concerned that he was unable to meet the second task because he had not yet received the books from Bancroft, he wrote: "for grieffe of hart and confusion of face I am skarce able to write, that I shold be behinde hand to your most gracious divine kindnesse towards me".¹⁵ He continued in this obsequious manner, playing on his wife's confinement:

My poore estate, my credit, my selfe and more than my selfe doe hang uponn your graciouse countenance for I must crave pardon to tell an unmannerlie secrett, I have a poore weake gentlewoman my wife in child bed who since your messanger his being at myne house did neither eat, nor drink nor sleape for feare, and yet I have twentie tymes reade over your most graciouse Lettars unto her.¹⁶

Hayward had claimed that he was justified in publishing the work on grounds that it had received official approval. Harsnett put forward four reasons why this was an unreasonable claim. First, Hayward had particularly requested that Harsnett be given the book to examine but, contrary to normal practice, had avoided meeting the examiner to justify the work in person.¹⁷ Second, that the assent of a delegated official was not sufficient authority to go to print for it was "but a leading inducement" to the bishop of London to give his personal authority, and this Hayward had not obtained.¹⁸ Third, in contrast to what Hayward claimed, when Harsnett had licensed the work it contained no

¹⁴ *CSPD 1598-1601*, pp.538-40

¹⁵ SP 12/274/61: the letter is accurately transcribed in full in Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.175-7

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.176: by "child bed" Harsnett must mean that his wife was in close attendance to their daughter Thomazine who had been christened some two weeks earlier (6 July). ERO Chelmsford, T/R100/1 (St Mary, Chigwell parish register)

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.176-7

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.177: Brownlow suggests that this was probably correct in law but that in practice everyone recognised that the examiner's signature provided authority in practice: he also suggests that Bancroft probably suggested this defence to Harsnett – certainly it would have been unwise for Harsnett not to have agreed it beforehand. *ibid.*, pp.177-8

dedicatory epistle or preface - if a dedication to Essex had been included he would not have allowed it.¹⁹ Lastly, Harsnett claimed that he was nothing more than “a poor divine unacquainted with bookes and arguments of state, and with the consequences of that nature”, had had no dealings with Hayward for ten or twelve years but, moved by a sudden impulse for an old friend, licensed the work without reading more than a page of “the hedlesse pamphlet”.²⁰

In these responses, Harsnett unwittingly confirmed his agitated state of mind with some uncharacteristically woolly argument. Two anomalies have rightly been highlighted in Harsnett’s justification.²¹ The fact that Hayward had avoided a personal encounter, even though the two men had known each other well, should surely have alerted Harsnett’s suspicions about the work. Yet he licensed it with only the most cursory examination. Nor does Harsnett’s claim to be ignorant of political matters square well with his own claim that if there had been a dedication to Essex when he licensed the work he would not have allowed it.

That Coke did not pick up on Harsnett’s inconsistencies probably suggests a recognition on his part that Harsnett was probably guilty of no worse than a degree of carelessness in his handling of the original license. Bancroft was perhaps the first to see the possibility of a seditious construct on Hayward’s retelling of Bolingbroke usurpation, but it was fully 15 months after this that Harsnett’s role, together with that of Hayward and Wolf came under scrutiny. Only then, after Essex’s conduct in Ireland gave his opponents an opportunity to call him to account, did Hayward’s work become a

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.177

²⁰ Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.177

²¹ Dutton, *Censorship*, pp.180-1

convenient means to implicate the earl in a conspiracy aimed at stirring up popular support. Harsnett's former acquaintance with Hayward doubtless raised the suspicion of collusion but, following his reply to Coke, he appears to have emerged unscathed from the affair. Hayward was less fortunate than Harsnett for, although no clear link between him and Essex was ever established, he languished in the Tower for a further two years.

On 17 January 1603 Harsnett was collated to the Archdeaconry of Essex with a substantial jurisdiction bordered by Barking in the east, Southend to the west and Chelmsford to the north. As well as a reward for Harsnett's services, this appointment indicated something of Bancroft's trust in his chaplain: because of the large size of the London diocese its archdeacons enjoyed rather more authority than did their counterparts in most other dioceses.²² Harsnett presided over the annual archidiaconal visitations at Romford in 1604–5, and may have done so at others until he resigned the position on his appointment as bishop of Chichester in November 1609.²³ It is unlikely that Harsnett personally attended the archidiaconal court for this was normally run by the archdeacon's official, a lawyer specifically appointed for the task.²⁴ Nevertheless, as this official was an appointee of the archdeacon, it is reasonable to assume that Harsnett exercised at least some influence in the general policy towards ecclesiastical justice within his jurisdiction.²⁵

²² Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990), pp.150, 153-4; proof of Bancroft's problems with some of his archdeacons came when, in July 1603, he was one of only three bishops to take up the High Commission's general order to investigate abuses by diocesan officials. *ibid.*, p.153

²³ ERO D/AZ/1/1 (incorporating the Visitation Book 1604-14, pp.151-179), pp.151, 157

²⁴ Ralph Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation, 1520-70* (Oxford, 1979), pp.31-4

²⁵ For example, he may have dictated the frequency at which the court was convened. Bancroft had tried to ensure that the courts within his diocese met no more than once a month [Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*,

Cases heard before the court took on a greater significance in the period between 1604-1609 with the campaign against clerical non-conformity. We might expect Harsnett to have personally insisted on a tough policy where there was evidence of a minister's non-conformity and, indeed, a number of both persistent and occasional offenders appeared before the court during his tenure.²⁶ The fact that no ministers from Harsnett's archdeaconry were actually deprived until 1609 almost certainly had nothing to do with his personal attitudes. It had everything to do with Richard Vaughan, Bancroft's successor as bishop of London (1604-7), a man noted for his unusual tolerance towards non-conforming ministers.²⁷

2. Demons and Witches

Nothing better indicates Bancroft's regard for Harsnett than the extent to which he employed his chaplain's talents as a polemicist in a campaign ostensibly aimed at the practice of exorcism. In 1599, and again in 1603, Harsnett provided the establishment response to major cases of exorcism, one from each side of the confessional divide.²⁸ The

p.153]; during Harsnett's tenure the court averaged four to five sittings a year: ERO D/AZ/1/1 pp.125-50, and ERO D/AZ/1/1 (incorporating the Visitation Book 1604-14), pp.42-65, 112-45.

²⁶ The most persistent offender was Thomas Ashbell, vicar of Wakering, who appeared before the court three times during 1606 for a variety of offences including refusing to wear the surplice, say prayers for the king, and baptise a child. ERO D/AZ/1/1, pp.130, 130^v, 138, ERO D/AZ/1/9, p.62; John Eaton, rector of South Hannisfield appeared in 1603 for neither wearing the surplice nor using the sign of the cross, and in 1607 was still refusing to wear the surplice. Neither man was apparently deprived of his living – for deprivations in London diocese see Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.324-5.

²⁷ The two men who were deprived had earlier appeared before the archidiaconal court during Vaughan's tenure: Ezekiel Culverwell (1606) for not wearing the surplice and William Buckley (1607) for the same and also administering the sacrament to those not kneeling and not using the sign of the cross. ERO D/AZ/1/9, p.59^v, and ERO D/AZ/1/1, p.143^v. On Vaughan's reluctance to deprive non-conforming ministers, see Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.216-7.

²⁸ Samuel Harsnett, *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of One John Darrell, Bachelor of Arts* (1599); Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures to with-draw the harts of her Majesties Subjects ... under the pretence of casting out devils* (1603); for the most comprehensive modern account of both cases see Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.21-34, 49-90; see also Thomas Freeman,

first of these cases was that of John Darrell, a Puritan preacher, who earlier in May 1599 had been found guilty by the Ecclesiastical High Commission of fraudulently inciting claims of demonic possession, and then claiming to have successfully treated the possessed by means of prayer and fasting. The second case curiously concerned a series of exorcisms that had apparently taken place in 1586 at Denham in Buckinghamshire, and had been conducted by a Jesuit, William Weston, and other Catholic priests. In order to understand why investigations into these two cases were initiated, the intentions behind Harsnett's published responses, and what these might reveal about the author, some brief descriptive account of each is necessary.

John Darrell had graduated BA from Queen's College, Cambridge in 1579, briefly studied law in London and then returned to farming in his native Nottinghamshire.²⁹ Although it is uncertain that he was ever ordained he took to occasional preaching and by the 1590s was living in Ashby-de-la-Zouch where he attended Puritan meetings and became acquainted with Arthur Hildersham, the town's Puritan minister. His first involvement with exorcism came in 1586 when he treated Katherine Wright for possession, narrowly escaping prison for allegedly inciting Wright to accuse another woman, Margaret Roper, of bewitching her. His next recorded foray into exorcism came ten years later with the cases of Thomas Darling of Burton, Derbyshire, followed soon after by that of the seven children of the Starkey family of Lancashire. In these cases Darrell claimed to have successfully dispossessed the victims through fasting and prayer meetings. The case that brought him to the attention of the authorities began at

'Demons, Deviance and Defiance: John Darrell and the Politics of Exorcism in late Elizabethan England', in Lake and Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy*, pp.35-63

²⁹ *DNB* 'John Darrell'

Nottingham in November 1597 when he attended on William Somers, a young man supposedly possessed by devils. The case became a cause célèbre as Darrell's battles with Somers' demons raged for some six months, drawing large audiences, including a number of notable godly ministers, to the prayer meetings and fasts. The success of Darrell's efforts brought him an appointment to a parish lectureship, in which capacity he regaled his listeners with stories of witches and devils.³⁰ Darrell survived a hearing of the Ecclesiastical Commission of the Northern Province on 20 March 1598 but, during the trial of Alice Freeman in the following month, Somers confessed that his possession and bewitching were fraudulently contrived between himself and Darrell. This led to Darrell's referral to Whitgift who called Darrell to appear before the Ecclesiastical High Commission in London, by which he was finally examined on 26 May 1599, found guilty and imprisoned for a year.

Unlike Harsnett's critique of Darrell, his *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* was not in response to current events. It was concerned with a series of exorcisms performed by a Jesuit, William Weston, and other Catholic priests in and around London during 1585-6. Although the authorities were to some extent aware of the gatherings that took place at Denham and other locations, the chief concern at the time had not been the practice of exorcism, but rather the relationship between the participants and Catholic conspiracies, and specifically that exposed as the Babington Plot. Full details of the exorcisms probably did not come into the hands of the authorities until 1598, this in the form of what Harsnett was to describe as "a penned booke of Miracles" that purported to be an account of the events. The matter was only fully investigated between April and

³⁰ Harsnett, *Discovery*, p.8; in each of Darrell's cases either a witch, or 'cunning man', was accused of

June 1602, when the High Commission conducted examinations of four of the supposed demoniacs and received the confession of one of the exorcists, an apostate priest, Anthony Tyrrell. It was they that provided Harsnett with the material for the *Declaration*. Briefly, it seems that the exorcisms began in late 1585 with Weston's cure of Nicholas Marwood, a servant of Anthony Babington. Soon the household of Edmund Peckham of Denham was affected with the possession of two of his servants, Sara Williams and William Trayford, and then Sara's visiting sister, Friswood; Weston joined a team of priests to conduct the exorcisms. As word spread among the Catholic community other demoniacs were identified, including Anne Smith and Richard Mainy who would later testify with the Williams sisters, to the Ecclesiastical High Commission. The exorcisms came to an end with the arrest of Weston and the other priests during Sir Francis Walsingham's widespread seizure of Catholics following exposure of the Babington Plot in August 1586.

Despite Harsnett's undoubted scepticism there is little reason to disagree with the proposition that his diatribe against Darrell, *The Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of One John Darrell*, was less concerned with exorcism than it was with the wider campaign against Puritan dissent in all its forms.³¹ In one sense Darrell's activities exposed a lacuna in the Church of England's armoury: rejecting the 'miracle' of the Catholic rite of exorcism the official church was left with no alternative with which to counter the demons that apparently survived the Reformation. Darrell, however, filled the gap. Instead of working through the miraculous intervention of relics, rosaries, holy water, the mere touch of the priest and the rest of the Catholic panoply of aids, Darrell advocated the power of

bewitching the possessed.

collective prayer and fasting to evict the demons from the possessed. Bancroft and Harsnett would certainly have recognised, as modern historians have done, that these fasting and prayer meetings served as a socialising feature of Puritan communities.³² But Darrell's performances had an appeal beyond the normal constituency for such meetings, generating a hitherto unprecedented enthusiasm among the inhabitants of Nottingham.³³ One unremarked feature of Darrell's claimed exorcisms by this method is that they all featured a demoniac who had been possessed through the agency of a witch or 'cunning man'.³⁴ This tapped into a still prevalent fear of witchcraft that must have contributed to the popular appeal of Darrell's gatherings, a popularity that alarmed Bancroft and gave urgency to Harsnett's rebuttal.³⁵

Together with Bancroft, Harsnett conducted the questioning of the witnesses at Darrell's High Commission trial, having by then probably already undertaken considerable research into the case.³⁶ Harsnett then drafted the *Discovery* in the six months following the trial, for it was recorded in the Stationers' Register on 15 November 1599.³⁷ The basis of Harsnett's case was, as the title implies, that the possessions were fraudulent, the result of conspiracies between Darrell and the demoniacs. To the modern eye Harsnett's 'proof' is far from convincing based as it is on the testimony of witnesses who were

³¹ For the fullest argument to this effect see Freeman, 'Demons, Deviance and Defiance', pp.35-63; see also: Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.61-2; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), pp.576-80

³² Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.60-74;

³³ Thomas, *Religion*, p.577

³⁴ Darrell claimed that Katherine Wright had been bewitched by Margaret Roper, *DNB* 'John Darrell'; Thomas Darling by Alice Goodridge, Harsnett, *Discovery*, sig.G1; the Starkey children by Edward Hartley, *ibid.*, sig.G4v; Alice Freeman, *ibid.*

³⁵ On the prevailing utility of a belief in witchcraft see Thomas, *Religion*, pp.638-52

³⁶ According to a contemporary account of the trial Harsnett went to Derbyshire to interview Katherine Wright, subject of Darrell's first dispossessing: Anonymous *The Triall of Maist. Dorrell* (1599), sig.B3

³⁷ Arber, *Registers*, iii, p.150

almost certainly more concerned to satisfy their examiners' prejudices than they were to speak the truth.³⁸ Nevertheless, the necessity of discrediting Darrell made the charge of fraud the only realistic strategy - in any event, it was the one Harsnett and Bancroft probably believed and it seems to have convinced at least two sophisticated readers.³⁹ Two pieces of circumstantial evidence might lend some credence to the case for fraud and therefore justify Harsnett's conviction, if not that of modern sceptics. When investigating the earlier case of Darrell's first alleged demoniac, he discovered that the investigating magistrate had also found a case of fraud was to be answered and had threatened Darrell with prison by the investigating magistrate.⁴⁰ In April 1598, during a hearing at Nottingham assizes, William Somers confessed that he had conspired with Darrell to accuse Alice Freeman of bewitching him. It is true that Somers had already proved an unreliable witness, having withdrawn an earlier confession of conspiracy when questioned by the northern high commission.⁴¹ However, his admission in Nottingham was a curious one for it was made to Sir Edmund Anderson who, as a strong believer in witchcraft, might be expected to have had a credulous ear to Somers' original claim.⁴²

On first consideration both the timing and the subject of Harsnett's *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Imposture* seem odd. Why should a series of exorcisms that had apparently caused little stir in 1586 have been resurrected as the subject of an investigation by the Ecclesiastical High Commission in 1602, and followed soon thereafter by

³⁸ Freeman argues that although the work was "well researched and written", its effectiveness was weakened by the need to make a case of fraud against Darrell: 'Demons, Deviance and Defiance', p.48: Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.58-9

³⁹ Shakespeare and Ben Jonson both made references to fraudulent possessions that suggest full agreement with Harsnett's position. Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.60

⁴⁰ Harsnett, *Discovery*, sig.F.2

⁴¹ Harsnett, *Discovery*, sigs.B.4ff, M.1^vff

Harsnett's substantial critique? Harsnett was conscious that, if nothing else, the delay needed some explanation:

All which had been long ere this offered to your equall consideration, but that the Miracle-booke came but lately to hand, and the getting of foure chiefe Daemoniacks together, besides more assistants beeing persons of that quality and condition, was a matter of some paines and travell to effect.⁴³

He had nothing to say, however, as to why the matter was now as justified as his efforts suggested. Any explanation by Harsnett is, for Dr Thomas Freeman, quite unnecessary: the *Declaration*, although apparently an attack on the Catholic exorcisms at Denham and elsewhere, was in reality targeted at the Puritan exorcists of Mary Glover.⁴⁴ There is almost certainly some truth in this conclusion. Although the High Commission had curbed Darrell's activities, it had not prevented him from engaging in a robust rebuttal of Harsnett's *Discovery*, or of subsequently engaging in a pamphlet debate with other of Bancroft's agents.⁴⁵ The most alarming feature of this failure to quieten Darrell was that it appears to have encouraged imitators, the ministers involved in the Mary Glover case being only the most notable of those who, like Darrell, proclaimed the power of fasting and prayer to dispossess demons.⁴⁶ Harsnett's one direct reference to the Glover case in the *Declaration* came in the summing up of his argument where he named, among others, four of the ministers. It was a blatant attempt to associate in his readers' minds the activities of the Puritan exorcists with those of Weston and his fellow Catholic exorcists.

⁴² Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.57; *DNB* 'Edmund Anderson'.

⁴³ Harsnett, *Declaration*, p.A^v

⁴⁴ Freeman, 'Demons, Deviance and Defiance', pp.58-60

⁴⁵ John Darrell, *A Detection of that Sinful, Lying, and Ridiculous Discourse of Samuel Harshnet* (1600); Bancroft may have employed two ministers, John Deacon and John Walker, who challenged Darrell that, as the age of miracles was over, demonic possession could not occur, see Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.71-4

⁴⁶ Thomas, *Religion*, p.578

According to Harsnett both parties were guilty of elaborate charades, with the Puritans every bit as adept at counterfeiting exorcism as their Catholic counterparts:

And if they want devils in Italy to exorcise and aske Oracles of, let them come but over into London in England, and wee have ready for them *Darrell's wife, Moores Minion, Sharpe, Skelton, Evans, Swan, and Lewis*, the devil-finders and devil-puffers, or devil-prayers...⁴⁷

Aside from this, there is little reference to characters involved in Darrell's exorcisms, but there is one other significant indication that Harsnett was at least partly aiming his work at Puritan exorcisms. As earlier remarked, a feature of Darrell's dispossessions was that all the demoniacs had been allegedly bewitched. By contrast, witchcraft played no part in the possession of any of the Denham demoniacs.⁴⁸ This notwithstanding, Harsnett chose to introduce a digression on the agency of witches, described their nature and methods, and used as an example a case that clearly referred back to Darrell.⁴⁹

If Dr Freeman is right that the *Declaration* was nothing more than a response to the continuing Puritan exorcisms then it has to be said that it was both a hugely elaborate, and strangely abstruse way of going about the task. Whatever else Harsnett might have intended it to be, and he surely did have one eye on the continuing popularity of the Puritan exorcists, it was certainly no accident that the *Declaration* served as both a highly impressive invective against the practice of exorcism in any form and by any agent, and also as a powerful piece of anti-Catholic polemic. Harsnett's initial appeal to the

⁴⁷ Harsnett, *Declaration*, p.166, also quoted in Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.74; "Moores Minion" refers to wife of George More who worked with Darrell on the Starkey case in Lancashire, *ibid.*, p.331 note 1; Skelton, Evans, Swan and Lewis were ministers in the Glover case, which took place in London, *ibid.* The quoted passage drew an angry response in the epistle dedicatory to John Swan, *A True and Briefe Report, of Mary Glovers Vexation, and of Her Deliverance by the Meanes of Fasting and Prayer* (1603), sig.A2^v

⁴⁸ For this there is surely a simple explanation: allegations of witchcraft would inevitably have increased the risk of exposing the Catholic community by, for example, the accused threatening to appeal to the authorities.

⁴⁹ Harsnett, *Declaration*, p.137

“Seduced Catholiques of England”, as set out in the epistle dedicatory, was nothing more than a rhetorical device to introduce exactly the argument he had used to preface the *Discovery*: that exorcisms were either performed by tricksters who aimed, by their “lying wonders”, to raise themselves in the minds of “the simple people”; or by those who “by the feigned zeale of the counterfeite Apostles”, sought to seduce the same from the path of true religion.⁵⁰ Much of the *Declaration* is a sustained attack not just on exorcism, but on the specific methods and tools employed by Catholic exorcists; it was also written in a manner hardly calculated to win over the seduced Catholics to whom it was allegedly addressed. No corner of the exorcist’s toolbox escaped Harsnett’s chosen tactics of remorseless ridicule and biting satire, together presented with the constant suggestion of priestly deception. It is thus that the reader is invited to consider the effects on Sara Williams of having been compelled by the exorcist to swallow copious draught of “sacke and Sallet-oyle” and then to breathe the fumes of brimstone poured over smoking coals:

With a pinte of this *holy potion* in her stomacke, working up into her head and out at her mouth, and her eyes, nose, mouth, and head stuffed full with the smoake of holy perfume, her face being held down over the fume till it was all over as blacke as a stocke; and thinke if you see not in your minde the lively *Idaea* of a poore devill-distressed woman in deede.⁵¹

Or then again, on the claim that the priest’s breath could rouse a demoniac from a devil induced trance:

Was not this a jolly ranke smel that was able to awake a poore wench out of a traunce? Verily these doe out-smel the devil by farre. For though the devil hath (as is commonly reputed) a fel ranke smel, yet I never heard of any that could discern a devil by his smel.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid., sig.A2: compare this with Harsnett, *Discovery*, sig.A2, where he describes the false aims of “miracle mongers” as either the “gracing of false religion by this graceles feate”, or “the raising of their own greatnes”.

⁵¹ Harsnett, *Declaration*, p.40

⁵² Ibid., p.71

The whole panoply of the exorcist's trade received much the same dismissive treatment: the bodily touch of the priest;⁵³ his clothes,⁵⁴ his amice and maniple;⁵⁵ holy water ("the grand champion to encounter all commers"), candles, frankincense, and the book of exorcisms;⁵⁶ and holy relics.⁵⁷ Shock was reserved for exorcists' use of the cross and especially the Eucharist: "that [he] should dare so impiously and blasphemously to prophane the most sacred reverend Supper of our blessed Saviour".⁵⁸ All this constituted the most substantial part of the argument against the Denham exorcisms yet almost nothing of it was, or indeed could be, imputed against the Puritan exorcists.⁵⁹

Harsnett also denounced general aspects of Catholic faith and practice. Deeply offended by the trickery of the Catholic exorcists to counterfeit devils that 'tempt' the demoniacs with those 'heresies' that coincided with Protestant viewpoints, Harsnett countered with a dialogue in which the devil subscribed to Catholic beliefs. In so doing Harsnett presumably chose issues not just for their shock value to the Protestant reader, but also because they were those that he found most unpalatable about the Catholic faith. Thus, we have the devil affirming that the Virgin Mary was born without original sin;⁶⁰ that the blessed sacrament is truly the very body of Christ – "cut it, and thou shall see it bleede";⁶¹ that the Pope is indeed the head of the Church and not Antichrist, and has the

⁵³ Ibid., pp.64-70

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp.79-87

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp.87-93

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp.98-109

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.17-22

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.127-8

⁵⁹ The exception was a reference to the bodily touch of the priest causing a possessing devil to cry out, this in Darrell's Lancashire exorcisms. *ibid.*, p.68.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.162

⁶¹ Ibid., p.163

power to displace kings;⁶² and that the Jesuits could “lye, aequivocate, adulterate, murther, stab, poyson Christian Princes, for advauncing the Popes Monarchie and the King of Spaine”.⁶³

On this basis it is difficult to agree with Dr Freeman that the *Declaration* was exclusively aimed at Puritan exorcists.⁶⁴ But why then was it necessary to address the issue of Catholic exorcism – what threat did it pose? Harsnett provides one answer: it was to prevent,

*the gaining of soules for his Holines and for Hell, the bewitching of the poore people with an admiration of the power of theyr Romish Church and priesthood by these cogd miracles and wonders, and thereby robbing them of theyr fayth towards God and theyr loyaltie to theyr Prince, and reconciling them to the Pope, the Monster of Christianitie.*⁶⁵

According to Harsnett, the aim of the performances – throughout the work he argued that the exorcisms were pure theatre – was, by having the counterfeit devils speak well of the Church of England whilst vilifying the Catholic Church, to persuade those attending that the former must truly be home to all the “children and heires of Satan and of hell”.⁶⁶ It was exactly as his title warned: [*Popish Impostures*] *to with-draw the harts of her Majesties Subjects from their allegiance, and from the truth of Christian Religion professed in England, under the pretence of casting out devils.* But did Harsnett really believe that? If he did, he was realistic enough to know that the hopes of the exorcists were hardly for wholesale conversions of Protestants to the Church of Rome – opening

⁶² Ibid.p.165

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ In 1624, in what admittedly might have been a somewhat disingenuous comment because it came in response to Puritan criticisms, Harsnett remembered the *Declaration* as a denunciation of a religion that was all, “Juggling and Feigned Miracles, of which his Lordship had written a Book against them”, *LJ*, iii, p.389

⁶⁵ Harsnett, *Declaration*, pp.150-1

such meetings to any outside of the known Catholic community would have been far too risky.⁶⁷ Notwithstanding his claim, conversion was not the chief concern, but there was genuine reason to fear the withdrawal of subjects' allegiance from the monarch. Where there was reason to be worried was that Weston had attempted to undermine the loyalty of the Catholic community itself. It was this involvement of a Jesuit that provided the single most disturbing feature of the whole affair of the Denham exorcisms. The majority of the English Catholic community were content to practice their faith in private but remain loyal to the monarch. The arrival of the Jesuit mission in the 1580s threatened that position, for its avowed aim was the overthrow of the Protestant state. And that is how Harsnett presented the threat. Weston had devised the appeal of devils,

either for that the number they laboured for did not so encrease as they desired, or that the Jesuits had an ambitious desire to carie away the garland from the rest of their brethren and companions in this service.⁶⁸

Although Weston's exorcisms were long past, the battle for the hearts and minds of the English catholic community was far from over in 1603. As Brownlow points, out Rome's appointment of George Blackwell as "archpriest" in 1598, had created a tension between the secular community and the Jesuits. Bancroft, with the support of the Privy Council, sought to exploit the disunity, allowing seculars to air their grievances through a series of pamphlets.⁶⁹ The publication of the *Declaration* fitted perfectly with Bancroft's strategy of alienating the Jesuits: Weston could be portrayed as a trickster whose pretended

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.151

⁶⁷ Harsnett did suggest that "in a very short space foure of five thousand" were reconciled to the Pope: this was surely included for rhetorical effect. *ibid.*, p.171. also pp.154/5

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.170-1

⁶⁹ Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, pp.69-70

exorcisms were nothing more than a means of persuading Catholic loyalists to turn against the state.

None of this is to suggest that Dr Freeman does not have a point in suggesting that the *Declaration* was part of Bancroft's anti-Puritan campaign. Nevertheless, in arguing that this was its sole purpose he fails to recognise that Bancroft had other priorities. Bancroft may yet have recognised another benefit of the *Declaration*. He had already been courting James VI of Scotland as the likely successor to the ailing Elizabeth, and the king had previously shown an interest himself in demonic possession in his *Daemonologie* (1597). The *Declaration* was almost certainly being written before James came to the English throne and would have been an important and necessary statement of Bancroft's anti-Catholic credentials. With regard to Bancroft's future relations with James there must have been some risk in ridiculing demonic possession for James' own work showed him to be somewhat credulous as to the possibility of possession. The tactic of exposing both Puritan and Catholic exorcists as frauds was almost certainly a necessary tactic in persuading James not only to modify his own views on the matter, but to demonstrate that Bancroft was determined to deal sharply with threats from both ends of the confessional spectrum. That Bancroft's strategy paid off by securing James' trust was due in no small part to the rhetorical and polemical skill displayed by Harsnett in both the *Discovery* and the *Declaration*. Although neither work is evidence that Harsnett was behind the strategy, both are testimony to the trust that Bancroft placed in him and explanation of the rewards that followed.

Harsnett's experiences with the Darrell and Weston exorcisms explain his involvement in another alleged possession case, that of Anne Gunter in 1605-6.⁷⁰ Two women had been acquitted of bewitching Anne, but her father Brian rather unwisely brought the case to the attention of the king in August 1605. By then James was a relative sceptic on the matter of witchcraft, but certain features of the case intrigued him and he took a personal interest in Anne, interviewing her on four occasions.⁷¹ From a letter by the king to Robert Cecil of 10 October we learn that Anne had been in the custody of Bancroft, and had confessed that she had not been bewitched and that she had simulated the external signs of bewitching.⁷² According to an account published some years later by a royal courtier Bancroft, failing to make impression on the girl, had placed her in Harsnett's custody.⁷³ Some corroboration of this is suggested by a letter of 30 October from Richard Neile to Robert Cecil from which it is apparent that the king had requested a further meeting with Anne, but that Harsnett and he (Neile) "were in the midst of our examinations and in no way fit for his Majesty." He further reported that Anne had now confessed on oath what "she had formerly confessed voluntarily".⁷⁴ Harsnett and Neile, it seems, then became involved in preparing the case for the Star Chamber. Harsnett had been elected to serve as vice-chancellor of Cambridge for the forthcoming year and Neile wrote a further letter to

⁷⁰ James Sharpe, *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter: A Horrible and True Story of Football, Witchcraft, Murder, and the King of England* (1999), gives a full account of the case from its origins through to the trial of Brian Gunter before the Star Chamber.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.175-89

⁷² HMC, 9 *Salisbury MSS*, Part XVII, pp.450-1

⁷³ For a translation of Robert Johnston's Latin account of the affair, published in 1655, see Sharpe, *Bewitching*, p.182

⁷⁴ HMC, 9 *Salisbury MSS*, Part XVII, p.471; Neile concludes this letter with the phrase, "My fellow chaplain commends himself very kindly to you". This has been taken as proof that Harsnett was, like Neile, a chaplain to Cecil. Pauline Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', *HJ* 34 (1991), p.791; I have found no other evidence to support this conclusion.

Cecil to ask that Harsnett be admitted by proxy for, if Harsnett should have to attend in person, it

would greatly hinder the prosecuting of Anne Gunter's business, in which we cannot have either his Majesty's learned counsel or any of the clerks of the Star Chamber, to do anything longer than myself or Mr Harsnett do ourselves attend them.⁷⁵

The Gunter affair appears to have marked the end of Harsnett's active involvement in cases of demonic possession, but not his interest.⁷⁶ In March 1615, during a second term as vice-chancellor of Cambridge, Harsnett hosted a visit by the king to the university, and it was remarked that Harsnett had been particularly thorough in overseeing all the arrangements.⁷⁷ It can hardly, then, have been a coincidence that the university chose to put on as one of its entertainments, a satire on fraudulent possession and exorcism.⁷⁸

3. Troubles at Pembroke

On 9 November 1605, following Lancelot Andrewes' appointment to the bishopric of Chichester, Harsnett was elected master of Pembroke Hall. Andrewes' rule at Pembroke had lasted sixteen years but he continued to exert some influence over college affairs well beyond Harsnett's tenure, indeed probably until his death. Although there is no evidence concerning the politics of Harsnett's election, it therefore seems likely that Andrewes at least supported Harsnett's candidacy, and maybe even encouraged him to stand. Certainly it appears that Harsnett had some reservations about taking on the post for he insisted

⁷⁵ HMC. 9 *Salisbury MSS*, Part XVIII, p.423

⁷⁶ Harsnett, as archdeacon of Essex, may have heard the case of Grace Browne, "for the crime of witchcraft", which was brought before the archidiaconal court of Essex in 1605, ERO Chelmsford D/AZ/1/9, fol.53^v

⁷⁷ SP 14/130/51; *Letters of John Chamberlain*, i, p.589

⁷⁸ Thomas, *Religion*, p.579

from the outset that he be granted leave of absence to serve the needs of his living at Shenfield and attend on the archbishop of Canterbury, his mentor Bancroft.

In November 1606 Harsnett was elected by the regents of the university to the post of vice-chancellor, having been nominated as one of two candidates for the post by the other heads of house.⁷⁹ His election only a year after taking up the mastership of Pembroke suggests that he was well regarded within the university. Although little is recorded of this year in office, there are suggestions that he exercised his life-long concern for order, drafting new statutes for the university and reportedly governing “with a high hand”.⁸⁰ The role of vice-chancellor would have required his presence in Cambridge, but thereafter, if the later accusations of a number of Pembroke fellows were true, he placed the demands of his ecclesiastical livings above those of master of the college.⁸¹ In his first few years of office Harsnett seems to have primarily resided in Cambridge, but continued his close relationship with Bancroft and Richard Neile, for in 1608 it was reported that he was acting as “an Agent, Spy or Informer resident in the University to give B Bancroft and B Neile etc an account of occurrences there.”⁸² At this time he was clearly on good terms with the future founding member of the Durham House group because in the previous year it was claimed that he had written to Neile attempting to block the appointment of George Downham as master of Caius, commenting that “while Dr Barwell is at Christ Colledge,

⁷⁹ On the process for the appointment of vice-chancellors in this period see J R Tanner (ed.) *The Historical Register of the University of Cambridge ... to the Year 1910* (Cambridge, 1917), p.4, for Harsnett’s appointment, *ibid.*, p.24

⁸⁰ BL Harleian MS 7038, fol.56b

⁸¹ At this time Harsnett was archdeacon of Essex, rector of Shenfield, vicar of the adjacent parish of Hutton, as well as holding the St Paul’s prebend of Mapesbury.

⁸² An anonymous source in Dr Williams Library, Morrice MSS volume 3, RM/J. 1630(2), cited in Andrew Foster, ‘A Biography of Archbishop Richard Neile, (1562-1640)’, unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1978), p.21

Dr Chadderton at Emanuel, and Dr Montague at Sydney Sussex, Puritanisme flourishes enough in Cambridge.”⁸³

In November 1609 Harsnett was elected bishop of Chichester and after this date there is no question as to where his priorities lay. Harsnett’s long and frequent absences from the college became the touchstone of a bitter dispute, but whether they need necessarily have been so has much to do with the manner in which he managed his conflicting responsibilities.

The first evidence to suggest that all was not well between Harsnett and the majority of fellows at Pembroke Hall came not from the parties in the dispute, but from Lancelot Andrewes. Writing to Sir Thomas Lake, acting Secretary of State, on 27 July 1612, Andrewes suggested that Harsnett had grown weary of the mastership of Pembroke and was attempting to engineer the appointment of his successor by only allowing the admission of new fellows who undertook to support his favoured candidate. This man, Harsnett’s deputy Thomas Muriell, was quite unworthy of the appointment claimed Andrewes, who then thoughtfully added that such a mischief could be averted by the appointment of Nicholas Felton, “a most fitting person”.⁸⁴

There is no reason to doubt the truth of Andrewes’ suggestion to Lake that Harsnett was preparing to stand down, but nothing came of it: Harsnett retained the mastership for a further four years. Had Harsnett had knowledge that Andrewes was aspersing his reputation then the suggestion that his stepping down would have risked confirming the calumny is a point well made, and it may well explain Harsnett’s decision

⁸³ Dr Williams Library, Morrice MSS volume 3, RM/I. 663(4), cited in Foster, ‘Richard Neile’, p.39

⁸⁴ SP 14/70/15

to continue in office.⁸⁵ It might also account for later complaints, made by those who supported Andrewes' position, that Harsnett effectively persecuted those who opposed him.

Shortly after Andrewes had penned his accusations Harsnett replaced Muriell, his then deputy, with the appointment of John Pocklington as college president. Harsnett's alleged indulgence of Pocklington, even more than that of Muriell, was to become one of the chief complaints when the rebel fellows finally decided to challenge their master. There is much contemporary material that sets out the complaints of the fellows against Harsnett and his deputies. However, there is none that sets out his defence against the charges that were put before the king. Whilst it is thus difficult to establish the full veracity of the charges they do, even as they stand, provide clues as to Harsnett's personal weaknesses and lack of judgement; make self-evident the potential damage to his reputation and career; and expose the extent of the enmity towards him.

The charges were developed through several draft versions culminating in June 1616, in a petition and articles addressed to the king. Over the course of the redrafting a number of more lurid and trivial charges were either toned down or dropped, but essentially the main heads remained: the master's absence and the detrimental effects thereof; financial mismanagement of Harsnett and his deputies; and specific allegations concerning the unsoundness of Pocklington's divinity.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.140

⁸⁶ There were four drafts of the charges, Pembroke College, MS College Box B M6-9; internal evidence indicates that the fourth draft was prepared some time after 29 May (MS M9, article 5, p.1). This may have been the list of charges that was presented to the examining committee appointed by the king, the petition to the king was an abbreviated version of these charges (MS M12a).

Accusations of financial mismanagement were presented as the first group of charges incorporated in the petition to the king. The first concerned Harsnett's appropriation of a sum of £700 that Andrewes "had by his care gathered together", and which, with a further borrowing of £200, he had invested in a purchase of lands in Norfolk.⁸⁷ What the fellows objected to was not the purchase in principle (they had committed the sum in trust to Harsnett and others for that purpose), but that in the nine years since, Harsnett had withheld all details and paperwork concerning the transaction. Rather more serious was the charge that Harsnett was personally profiting from the deal at the expense of the college: "the Tenant hath confessed that he payes £58 per annum for it, the master reckons yearely to the college but bare £40 gayning (almost) a third part to himselfe...".⁸⁸ There were other charges suggestive of fraudulent behaviour by the master and his deputies: a tenant had confessed that Harsnett had promised that the college would not pursue a bond of £100 and the bond itself "cannot now be found"; ignoring a strict covenant Harsnett and his deputies had, for ten years, failed as auditors to produce any accounts for an ancient endowment and it was now in "great parte lost, and the whole endangered".⁸⁹ Another damaging charge was that Harsnett had attempted to compel a senior fellow, Theodore Bathurst, to seal a lease "which fraudulently should have binne thrust upon the College against their consent". What outraged the fellows was Harsnett's reaction to Bathurst's refusal: he immediately imposed an admonition - "the infamous badges of dishonesty" reserved for the worst offences - on Bathurst for being

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.2

⁸⁸ Ibid.; to which the fellows added that Harsnett had, through his then deputy Muriell, assured them that the £200 loan would soon be recovered, but that nine years on "there hath not binne one penny returned for it."

⁸⁹ Ibid.

contentious, and a further admonition when Bathurst again refused.⁹⁰ Whether or not this was an accurate account is uncertain, but it has to be acknowledged that it was far from the only example of Harsnett's intolerance and high handedness in the face of criticism or opposition.

In each of the several drafts outlining the fellows' complaints it was Harsnett's long and frequent absences from the college that formed the first matter addressed. It is apparent from the charges that the question of whether or not Harsnett's absences were legitimate according to the college statutes was as of much concern as were the various consequences of those absences. In the final petition the fellows claimed that Harsnett had been absent during at least 17 terms of 27, and yet the society had not granted him any leave in the previous nine years.⁹¹ Harsnett claimed that he understood that the leave of absence that he had requested, and that was granted when first he was appointed, was a general dispensation for all time; the fellows argued that a dispensation of the kind he claimed could not be so interpreted.⁹² The conflict may have been a simple misunderstanding over the terms of the initial grant, or Harsnett may have been obfuscating, but a weakness in the fellows' case was that the composition of the society that had apparently acceded to the original leave of absence was now long gone. By the final petition to the king the fellows were not claiming that such leave had been denied, but rather "that the society then *unlawfully* granting leave is long since quite changed but

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Pembroke College, MS M12; in a first draft of the petition to the king the fellows had claimed an absence of 20 terms, Pembroke College, MS M11

⁹² The critical phrase in dispute was the term "aliquoties dispensare". Pembroke College MS M11, p.1 and MS M12, p.4

2 members”.⁹³ Perhaps by the time that this final petition was formulated the fellows felt rather less sure about these charges for the matter of absence was there relegated to the final item.

There undoubtedly were inconveniences associated with the master’s absence, although what was at the root of the concerns was not so much this, as the behaviour of the men that Harsnett appointed to act in his absence. In early drafts of the charges specific criticism had been levelled at Harsnett’s first deputy, Thomas Muriell. It was Muriell who, Andrewes had claimed, was a most unsuitable candidate for college master and it is clear that he was at one with the fellows on this. The most serious accusation against Muriell was that he sold admissions to potential scholars: he advised a Mr Fuller that in order to obtain the admission that Harsnett had previously promised for his stepson, he should now be prepared to pay £30-£40; and “tis also a common fame, that ... Mr Muriell (being then the master’s deputy) did transact and bargayne with one Mr Smith of Cambridge ... for a fellowship”.⁹⁴ Muriell was also implicated in the master’s alleged financial misdeeds being accused by the fellows of withholding some £300 in rents and other allowances and was preparing to leave the college without making any account of it.⁹⁵ As well as these alleged offences Muriell had offended against established Pembroke customs: he largely failed in his duty as president to lead the society by example in ensuring that the statutory weekly commonplace sermon took place; he also refused to

⁹³ Pembroke College, MS M12. p.4 (my italics)

⁹⁴ Pembroke College, MS M7. p.5

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.8

initiate the weekly theological disputation that by custom he was required to do, and even failed to continue the practice when others attempted to reinstate it.⁹⁶

Whether because the charges against Muriell were unfounded, difficult to prove, or merely too far removed in time, they were eventually dropped from later drafts of the articles of complaint. Their existence in the early drafts is, however, proof of just how much Muriell's presence had antagonised the fellows. If Harsnett had been aware at the time that Muriell was an irritant to the fellowship he seems to have been slow in acting upon it. But that omission was nothing compared to the apparent lack of judgement he showed in choosing Muriell's replacement. Far from appointing a deputy who might repair the damage, he appointed one whose behaviour and opinions positively scandalised the fellowship. Harsnett brought John Pocklington to Pembroke from Sidney Sussex College and immediately gave him seniority over ten other fellows. With Pocklington still Harsnett's deputy and president of the college as the rebel fellows drew up their charges he became the focus of much of their antagonism towards Harsnett. In early drafts of the fellows' charges Pocklington was charged with a range of misdemeanours: there was a suggestion of financial impropriety in that he had taken bribes for admissions and withheld fines on leases which had formerly been distributed among the fellows; had deprived fellows of their commons for trivial offences; had hired and fired college cooks without the customary involvement of the whole society and had often requisitioned them for his own use, leaving the fellows and scholars with "a poore sluttish skullboy to dresse their commons"; and had abused privilege by inviting personal friends to college feasts.⁹⁷ None of these allegations, however, were carried through to the final petition, but a number of

⁹⁶ Ibid., p.9

others were, and these were perhaps the most damning of Pocklington. The purpose of the petition was to oust Harsnett from the mastership and one of the most effective ways of achieving that would be to prove that he condoned, perhaps even encouraged, unsound opinions. It was the charge that Pocklington held just such unsound opinions that was thus, potentially, the most damaging of all the indictments against Harsnett.

Harsnett's appointment of Pocklington as President in preference to any senior Pembroke fellow had rankled the fellows from the outset and they alluded to this in the preface to their charges against him:

In the Master's absence continually, his Deputy (being therein proposed by the Master to 10 of his Seniors) ceases not dayly to violate all our rights, to rayse dangerous contentions, and to publish very scandalous opinions.⁹⁸

It was on the "scandalous opinions" that they focused their attention in the petition, first alleging that Pocklington had, at a communion, asserted that "after the words of consecration the Body of Christ is ... essentially and inseparably present in the sacrament."⁹⁹ When challenged on this by one of the fellows Pocklington had "peremptorily" defended his position by saying that he could find no fault with Bellarmine's doctrine of the sacrament save his use of the word transubstantiation.¹⁰⁰ The fellows' next concern was that Pocklington "was much offended" that the view that separation from the Church of Rome was necessary should be propounded in the schools.¹⁰¹ They also claimed that Pocklington had further defended the Roman Church, asserting that it was a self-evident truth that it was an acceptable church to God because

⁹⁷ Pembroke College, MS M7 pp.2, 3, 6, 7 & 8

⁹⁸ Pembroke College, MS M12 p.3; in earlier drafts they made this point more explicitly, e.g. Harsnett's action had been "to the eternall disquiet and discontent of the society". Pembroke College, MS M7 p.5

⁹⁹ Pembroke College, MS M12 p.3

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

there were not in its time “as many murders, adulteries robberies, etc as since have binne in the time of Protestancy”.¹⁰² It was further alleged that the president had recommended to young scholars beginning the study of divinity, the Catholic irenicist George Cassander’s *Consultations*, “as the safest author for resolution about the true Church”.¹⁰³ The fellows’ final allegation was a further suggestion that Pocklington had strongly Roman sympathies. He had apparently taken great offence at an oration by one preacher speaking on the Gunpowder Plot anniversary suggesting that Fawkes was a traitor; this, Pocklington supposedly argued, was “a great offence of our Church to speake evill of any that are dead”.¹⁰⁴ It was necessary, of course, for the fellows to imply that these positions had Harsnett’s support, and so they did: “many things more like to these he hath uttered, of some whereof solemne notice being once given to the Master he slightly put it off[f] as an idle matter.”¹⁰⁵

To the allegations of absence contrary to the college statutes, financial mismanagement, and Harsnett’s disregard of Pocklington’s popish sympathies, the fellows added one further brief charge. He was accused, together with Muriell and Pocklington in his absence, of never complying with the college statute that required him to make, at the beginning of each academic term, a formal exhortation of both fellows and scholars to attend to their studies.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. This charge was a remnant from earlier draft charges largely concerning Muriell’s failure to give encouragement and set an example to the rest of the society, see above and Pembroke College, MS M7 p.9

While the fellows were working on the charges Andrewes was apparently pressing their case at court. In a letter to the rebels dated 14 February 1616 he informed them that although Harsnett was confident that he would retain his mastership, “if I be not deceived he will be deceived in that when and from whence he thynketh least.”¹⁰⁷ Their case would be successful, he suggested, if they chose a candidate of their own society and could be unanimous in that choice. And it would be in their interests if they elect Nicholas Felton, whose case he had pressed four years earlier: for it “will much further or assist my mind from some good I entend if he be such a one as I shall have cause to lyke of.”¹⁰⁸ Doubtless encouraged by Andrewes’ suggestion that their petition would achieve the desired result with the aid of the mysterious, unidentified personage at court, the fellows finally presented it to the king in June 1616. He in turn appointed a committee of enquiry to deal with the matter that comprised George Abbot, Andrewes, Richard Neile, and the earl of Suffolk. The findings of the committee have not survived but whether or not Harsnett was found guilty of all, or any of the charges, the fellows and Andrewes gained the desired outcome: by 28 June Harsnett had resigned for on that day Nicholas Felton was elected in his place.¹⁰⁹

Without any report of the committee’s deliberations or Harsnett’s response to the individual charges we cannot know if he resigned because the charges against him were proven, that Andrewes’ prediction had come true, or that he merely wished to end an increasingly unseemly dispute. The last seems the more likely because if the charges had been fully proved then Harsnett’s reputation and career would surely have suffered rather

¹⁰⁷ Pembroke College, MS A.γ, p.1; the section relating to Harsnett is transcribed in Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.140

¹⁰⁸ Pembroke College, MS A.γ, p.1

more than actually proved the case. Furthermore, fully a year later in a letter to his lay patron the earl of Arundel, Harsnett seems to have genuinely felt that he had been unfairly slighted at the hands of his opponents.¹¹⁰ So, was Harsnett an absentee master, corrupt in his financial management, contemptuous of college custom and, if the support he gave Pocklington was anything to go by, little short of a popish sympathiser? Alternatively, was he rather the victim of a bruising factional dispute and the target of personal animosity?

There is no doubt that the charges connected with Harsnett's absenteeism were substantially justified. Indeed the fellows' complaints about his long and frequent absences seem entirely consistent with the significance that he attached to residence, especially episcopal residence. On his appointment to Chichester he became an active and resident diocesan at the expense of personally attending to his college responsibilities; the only prolonged period he spent in Cambridge after this was during the academic year 1614-15, during which he served a second term as university vice-chancellor. The matter of his absence was not so much a question of his negligence in regard to the college, more a question as to whether he was within his rights according to its statutes. However, the significant sub-text of the charge was a resentment of the nature and behaviour of the men he had imposed on the college to act in his absence. The charges concerned with his financial management of the college, with their hints of fraudulent behaviour are rather more difficult to explain. There may have been good grounds for the case, or it may be that the fellows were making mischievous use of genuine oversights that were perhaps an inevitable consequence of the master's absence. Certainly all but one of the more

¹⁰⁹ Nicholas Felton wrote to the college on this day, Pembroke College. MS College Box M4

damaging charges they made against him in this area had been dropped by the time of the petition, as had the suggestion that he winked at bribery in the admission of scholars. Brownlow has argued that in the chief complaint, the appropriation of Andrewes' carefully garnered fund for the Norfolk land investment, Harsnett was vindicated by the fact that the property eventually proved to be an extremely shrewd investment. But this misses the several points the fellows were making: that there had been no consultation and that there should have been; that no subsequent account had been made of the purchase; and that Harsnett was siphoning off a personal income from the property. Harsnett may not have been guilty of fraud but he would certainly have had some explaining to do to the committee of enquiry.

Harsnett's patronage of Pocklington, brought in from outside the college and appointed president above the claims of the college's own seniors, can hardly be seen as anything other than ill-judged. Andrewes' letter of 1612 suggests that there was already discord in the college before Pocklington's appointment and this made it a near inevitability that Harsnett's critics in the society would never be well disposed towards his new deputy. From the earlier drafts of the charges it was clear that Pocklington, aside from his divinity, had given the fellows less grounds for complaints than his predecessor Muriell. As we have seen, whereas Muriell had been charged with outright fraud and contempt for college customs, the charges against Pocklington were either concerned with trivial matters or unsubstantiated insinuations. Instead, the fellows chose to portray Pocklington as a papist let loose on a Cambridge college with the blessing of its master. They could hardly have devised a more effective strategy to ensure their case was taken

¹¹⁰ Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1585-1617, No.226; see below, Chapter 4.

seriously, or a potentially more damaging one to their master's reputation and career. It was, of course, a familiar polemical device of the time to portray opponents as representative of one extreme or the other of the confessional divide: as puritan or papist. Pocklington's divinity clearly offered his opponents the potential to place a papist construct on his views. It was probably within such a framework that the Pembroke fellows developed their case against Pocklington: if in the process they embellished his views it was not so much an intention to misrepresent those views as to cut through his sophistry and *truly* represent them. Pocklington was later to become a Laudian pamphleteer and it is interesting to note that all the areas for which he was criticised by the fellows became areas openly debated by Laudian divines. In engaging with Bellarmine's view on transubstantiation, Laud himself, although rejecting the bodily presence in the consecrated host, concluded that with some change in phraseology Bellarmine's position could be reconciled with reformed thinking.¹¹¹ Later Laudian thinkers like Richard Montagu and Francis White, as well as Laud himself, would also later argue that Rome was a true Church, albeit one in error.¹¹² In 1616 the necessity of separation from Rome might have been orthodoxy, but in being highly offended by such an argument Pocklington anticipated the debates of the 1630s.¹¹³ Even Pocklington's regard for the works of Cassander anticipated the enthusiasm of Richard Montagu for the Catholic irenicist.¹¹⁴ The fellows presented Pocklington's views as taking a more extreme form than that of the later Laudians, but it seems likely that they did so by giving in to the polemical impulse. In

¹¹¹ Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed, The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), p.200

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp.148-50

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.364-72

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.248-9

fact, he was apparently cleared of charges of popery and even, in so doing, commended himself to the king.¹¹⁵ If the truth of Pocklington's views was in reality that of the later Laudians and that Harsnett did, as the fellows suggested, condone those views, then that is the closest we are likely to be to Harsnett's own opinions on the matters.

The fellows of Pembroke were not unanimous in regard to the charges against Harsnett. Although the majority of the fellowship signed the supplication to the king to which the final articles were attached, a significant minority chose not to do so.¹¹⁶ Despite the charges concerning Pocklington's divinity it seems unlikely that the rebel faction was united by doctrinal consensus: Matthew Wren, the apparent leader of the faction, was a future Laudian bishop and Walter Balcanquall later authored a work entirely consistent with the Laudian ideals; Ralph Brownrigg, however, was a future Calvinist bishop.¹¹⁷ On doctrinal grounds Wren (and Balcanquall) might be expected to have had relatively few problems with Harsnett, but he and other rebels had personal grounds for resenting the master. In March 1615 Wren, Brownrigg and Alexander Read had been invited, by general agreement within the university, to be disputants in the Philosophy Act to be held before the king during his visit. Harsnett, who as vice chancellor at this time was effectively responsible for hosting the king's visit, apparently did everything he could to

¹¹⁵ Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1585-1617, No.226 (22 September 1617); copy: BL Add. Ms 39948 f184

¹¹⁶ The twelve *Querela Pembrochiana* who signed the supplication were Matthew Wren, Alexander Read, Theodore Bathurst, Thomas Bold, John Scarlett, Walter Balcanquall, Ralph Brownrigg, John Gale, John Jeffery, John Johnson, Robert Felton and Edward Tilman, Pembroke College, MS 12a p.1 and MS A.γ, p.3; those who apparently declined to do so were Parker, Bold, Nutt, Calverly, Boswell, Hechstetter and, of course, Pocklington, Pembroke College, MS A.γ, p.3.

¹¹⁷ Wren was the first signature on the supplication to the king (*ibid.*) and he had written to Francis Nethersole on behalf of the rebels describing Harsnett as "so potent, crafty and violent an Adversary". *ibid.*, p.13; soon after this Balcanquall was one of the British delegates at the Synod of Dort which may suggest he was essentially an orthodox Calvinist, but by the 1630s was supportive of Laudian concerns over the state of church fabric, Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, p.315

get others appointed in their stead, “and by omitting them to disgrace them”.¹¹⁸ Wren had a further grievance against Harsnett for the latter had apparently pressed his own chaplain, Owen Stockton, to object to Wren’s fellowship and then used this to place a decree in the college book “for a suspension of him from his fellowship, to be executed when he pleased”.¹¹⁹ Read had also fallen foul of Harsnett: on one occasion Harsnett had, “upon private pleasure conceived against Mr Read for differing from him according to his conscience in one or two particulars”, excluded Read from his commons and threatened him with suspension of his fellowship.¹²⁰ On another occasion Harsnett apparently warned Read to look for nothing from the college, and “in scornfull and violent termes ... to betake himselfe to teaching in a schoole”.¹²¹ The concluding remarks in the second draft of the charges suggest that most of the complainants may also have had grounds for personal grievance against Harsnett:

Many of the society also have found that how fayrely soever itt hath pleased him sometimes to use them, with words of much good liking, and promises of great favour, yet hath he (behind their backs) despised and disgraced them, and that to those on whom their fortunes or creditts might like have some good dependance.¹²²

Whether Harsnett’s behaviour was a response to a faction that already existed or the faction came about because Harsnett behaved the way he did, is a matter probably impossible to resolve. What can be established, however, is that if the faction was not actually the work of Lancelot Andrewes, it certainly took strength from his consistent support. He had expressed this support indirectly in July 1612 in his letter to Lake suggesting that Harsnett was preparing to stand down, more directly in 1616 when he

¹¹⁸ Pembroke College. MS 12c. p.9

¹¹⁹ Pembroke College. MS 9a. p.3

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Pembroke College. MS M7c p.9

wrote to the rebels encouraging them to press on with the petition because Harsnett was not as well supported at court as he supposed. But there is further compelling evidence to suggest that Andrewes took an active role in the dispute. The rebels sent the third draft of their articles of complaint to Jerome Beale, former fellow and future master of the college, and he returned these noted with numerous comments, pointing out deficiencies in the argument, making suggestions for improvements, and sometimes merely remarking on a point well made.¹²³ This was helpful advice - particularly so as Beale happened to be Lancelot Andrewes' secretary and, as he wrote from Ely House, it doubtless came with the bishop's blessing. Another indication of Andrewes' support for the leading signatories to the charges against Harsnett came in March 1615. Clearly aware that Harsnett had attempted, unsuccessfully, to exclude Wren, Brownrigg and Read from participating in the Philosophy Act, Andrewes made a very public display of his support for them, as John Chamberlain was able to report:

the Philosophie act ... was very excellent insomuch that the same day the bishop of Ely sent the moderator, the aunswerer, the varier or praevaricator, and one of the repliers that were all of his house twenty angells apiece...¹²⁴

Perhaps it was knowledge of just such support from Andrewes for the rebels that goaded Harsnett in to his harsh treatment of their number, and John Pocklington to an ill advised criticism of the former master.¹²⁵

It is a curious circumstance that Andrewes should have been so hostile towards a former protégé who apparently shared his doctrinal inclinations, and whose appointment

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.10

¹²³ Pembroke College, MS M8

¹²⁴ SP 14/130/51; *Letters of John Chamberlain*, i, p.587

as master he had probably sponsored. The breakdown in the relationship between Harsnett and Andrewes is almost certainly the key to understanding why Harsnett became curiously alienated from the leading anti-Calvinists of his generation, and was to remain so until virtually the end of his life. So what was the reason for Andrewes' hostility towards Harsnett? The obvious answer is that it actually was Harsnett's conduct as master and, if there were any truth in the complaints of the Pembroke fellows against him, then Andrewes may have had a point. But that may only have been part of the story for there is another possibility that might explain Andrewes' animosity.

When Richard Bancroft died in 1610 there was a widespread belief that Andrewes would succeed him as archbishop of Canterbury. That George Abbot, rather than Andrewes, should actually have done so was, according to James I, explained by the king's own desire to satisfy the dying wish of the earl of Dunbar.¹²⁶ In fact, as important as Dunbar's wish may have been it was shared by Bancroft who, in his will, made it clear that Abbot was also his preferred successor:

touching my Lord of London if it shoulde not please God and his majestie that he may succede me in the Archbishopricke then I give and bequeath unto him ... [a] ... remembrance of me his faithfull friend.¹²⁷

Harsnett had long been within Bancroft's orbit, but hitherto without any detriment to Andrewes. Of course, it is hardly likely that Harsnett's influence with Bancroft extended to the latter's preferred successor, but it might be reasonably expected to have given some fillip to the anti-Calvinist cause – instead the prize went to an arch-Calvinist. Furthermore

¹²⁵ Pocklington was reported to have said that Andrewes' responses to Bellarmine. *Tortura Torti* and *Responsio ad Apologia Bellarmini*, were "workes of small substance and solidity": the fellows used this as evidence of Pocklington's popish views: Pembroke College, MS M7 p.10

¹²⁶ SP 14/61/107

it was to an arch-Calvinist who was esteemed by Bancroft in almost the same breath as Harsnett.¹²⁸ If Andrewes placed any value on the archbishopric then the fruit of his former protégé's relationship with Bancroft must have been bitter.¹²⁹

Even allowing for some exaggeration in the claims of the Pembroke rebels, and the rather distasteful part played by Andrewes, Harsnett hardly emerges from the affair with much credit. He could, of course, have avoided the whole matter if, as Andrewes had done, he had resigned the mastership on appointment to the episcopate. His patronage of Muriell, and more particularly Pocklington, clearly antagonised the fellows; and his refusal to correct the situation suggests that he was positively impervious to criticism. The accusations of financial impropriety may well have proved groundless, but in either refusing, or failing, to keep the society informed it was hardly surprising that they conceived suspicions. However, the fact that Harsnett genuinely felt wounded by what he saw as a personal attack, and that he suffered no ill consequences to his career following his resignation, tends to suggest that he was probably guilty of no more than bad judgement and high-handedness. The real significance of the affair was that it alienated Harsnett from Andrewes, and that alienation meant that he would pursue his career largely on his own terms rather than in concert with those who would soon be gathering round the anti-Calvinist consensus of the Durham House Group.

¹²⁷ PROB 11/116/96; as well as Bancroft's sponsorship, Abbot had prepared his own case, Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.28

¹²⁸ On no less than three occasions in his will Bancroft put the names of Abbot and Harsnett together: that either Harsnett or Abbot might preach his funeral sermon; that each should receive an engraved ring; and finally that each might receive specified artefacts from among his possessions: PROB 11/116/96

Despite the simmering discontent within his own college, in November 1614 Harsnett was elected vice-chancellor for a second term of office, a fact that suggests that he continued to be well regarded by others in the university. Perhaps the most challenging task of the year was to ensure that the king's visit to Cambridge in March 1615 passed off smoothly. Harsnett apparently acquitted himself with great credit, the observations of John Chamberlain providing a distinct contrast to the portrait later presented by the rebel fellows of Pembroke. Chamberlain, who despite being a close acquaintance of Lancelot Andrewes was seemingly unaware of Andrewes' antipathy towards Harsnett, reported how the latter "did his part every way as well in moderating the divinitie act, as in taking great paines in all other things, and keeping exceding great cheere."¹³⁰ But more than Harsnett's efficient management of the event what really impressed Chamberlain was the manner in which he defended the integrity of the university against royal caprice. While willing to concede the degree of Master of Arts to the courtiers accompanying the king, Harsnett was not prepared to grant doctorates and refused "many importunities of great men" for different candidates, including that of the king on behalf of John Donne.¹³¹ Chamberlain foresaw that the university would be forced by royal mandate to capitulate over the matter, but he nevertheless admired Harsnett's stand: he "hath ben very stiffe, and caried himself very peremptory that way, wherein he is not much to be blamed, being a

¹²⁹ There is some reason to believe that he would have valued it for he was apparently disappointed not to have received the diocese of Winchester in 1616 (he did receive it in 1619 after James Mountagu's death). *Letters of John Chamberlain*, ii, p.28.

¹³⁰ SP 14/130/51; for indications of the close relationship between Andrewes and Chamberlain see the frequent exchanges between them in *Letters of John Chamberlain*, [e.g.] i, pp.323, 467, 507-8, 583

¹³¹ SP 14/130/51; *Letters of John Chamberlain*, i, p.589

matter of more consequence than at first was ymaged.”¹³² When, inevitably, the mandate came, Harsnett once again risked royal disapproval when he and some of the other lords described the men foisted on them as “*filios noctis et tenebriones* that sought thus to come in at the windowe, when there was a fayre gate open”.¹³³ This uncompromising stand in defence of the rule of law could have cost Harsnett dear; that it did not suggests that it may have earned him enough admiration to ensure that he survived the Pembroke affair with little more than injured pride.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ SP 14/130/74; *Letters of John Chamberlain*, i, p.591

4. Harsnett as Bishop: Chichester and Norwich, 1609-1628

Writing to Robert Cecil on 3 November 1609, Richard Bancroft reported that the king had agreed to the appointment of Samuel Harsnett to the bishopric of Chichester.¹ On 10 November the king's letters patent were read to the Dean and Chapter of Chichester Cathedral and three days later Harsnett was declared unanimously elected by the seven canons present, the 21 absent canons being declared contumacious.² Harsnett was consecrated in London by Bancroft, and formally installed to the bishopric by proxy on 30 January 1610.³ In this position, as with that of Master of Pembroke Hall, Harsnett was once again the direct successor of Lancelot Andrewes, recently translated to the see of Ely. Thus began Harsnett's episcopal career, one that would, after ten years at Chichester and a further nine years at Norwich, culminate in his appointment to the archbishopric of York in 1628.

The nature and style of Harsnett's episcopal government, both during his tenure at Chichester and for much of his time at Norwich, has already received considerable attention by Kenneth Fincham in his study of these aspects of the Jacobean episcopate.⁴ As Dr Fincham pointed out the episcopal records for both Harsnett's sees, and especially that of Chichester, are among the richest collections to have survived and his careful and thorough study of these enabled him to draw the following conclusion about Harsnett's Jacobean episcopal career:

¹ *CSPD 1603-1610*, p.556

² W D Peckham (ed.), *Acts of the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Chichester, 1545-1642*, Sussex Record Society 58 (1959), pp.179-80

³ *Ibid.*, pp.181-2

⁴ Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990)

For his pastoral activity; though not his churchmanship, Samuel Harsnett represents the typical Jacobean bishop. He conducted visitations of Chichester and Norwich in person, and did his best to instil some discipline into the cathedral community at Chichester. He was probably a reasonably diligent preacher, and became a familiar face in Chichester consistory. Among the initiatives he took was a drive against urban lectureships in Norwich diocese. Though he had other commitments, such as his controversial spell as Master of Pembroke, Cambridge, and later as agent for the Privy Council in East Anglia, Harsnett made his mark in two decades of unglamorous diocesan work.⁵

Thus Harsnett, among others, provided the evidence to support one of the key contentions in Dr Fincham's work: that most Jacobean bishops, despite the burgeoning demands of their secular and administrative workloads, took their spiritual and pastoral responsibilities seriously, and that James's support for the episcopate served to enhance the reputation of the order by drawing to it conscientious and able men.⁶ However, within this general picture there were differences in style, especially in what Dr Fincham terms churchmanship – “the distinctive style and content of a bishop's government, in which his theological beliefs and personality are mediated by practical experience of diocesan rule.”⁷ On the basis of his work Dr Fincham identified and posited an explanatory model comprising three main styles of churchmanship: the prelate as preaching pastor; as custodian of order; and as administrator. The dominant style was, he argued, that of the Pauline model of the bishop as preacher: the evangelicals whose priority was propagating the gospel through their own personal record of preaching and teaching. For Dr Fincham the dominance of this style was no coincidence – it was an approach that sat well with the evangelical fervour of men who made up the Calvinist consensus that typified the Jacobean episcopate for most of the reign. It was a style exemplified by such notable preachers as George

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.297

⁶ In opposition to the views of H R Trevor-Roper, ‘James I and his Bishops’, in his *Historical Essays* (1957), pp.130-45

Abbot, Toby Matthew, Arthur Lake and John King. In contrast to the pastoral style, Dr Fincham's custodians of order placed emphasis not on preaching and teaching, but on imposing discipline and order within their dioceses. These men typically enforced conformity in the liturgy and ceremony of the Church, and paid considerable attention to the care of the fabric of churches as places of worship. Unlike the preacher prelates of the pastoral model with their distinctly Calvinist piety, the exemplars of the prelate as custodian of order - Harsnett, William Barlow, Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Neile – seemed to have shared, alongside their distinctive style of episcopal government, a distaste for the Calvinist view of predestined grace.⁸

Dr Fincham's work is a broad-ranging study of the nature of episcopal governance across twenty-six dioceses by eighty different incumbents over a period of more than twenty years. In such a study patterns naturally suggest themselves and there is much to commend the construction of an explanatory framework within which to consider the results. But, as Dr Fincham himself acknowledges, there are limitations to such a model. In the case of many of the incumbents insufficient evidence survives to be certain about which model they fit best; others showed no great passion for their responsibilities so hardly merit inclusion in any category. For different reasons some do not fit the model: Richard Bancroft was neither an evangelical Calvinist, and therefore preaching pastor, nor, despite his rabid anti-Puritanism, especially sympathetic to those of the Arminian, anti-Calvinist persuasion, who provided the custodians of order. Nevertheless, there is no particular reason to take issue with Dr Fincham's placing of Harsnett as one of his custodians of order: his career does display a considerable concern for discipline and order

⁷ Ibid., p.249

within his dioceses. However, it might be argued that, unlike those other custodians of order, he also exhibited the exemplary credentials of a preaching pastor: there is some evidence to suggest that he was an unusually active diocesan preacher and strongly inclined towards residence in his diocese, tending to the needs of his flock. Why not then consider Harsnett as another Richard Bancroft – a man who showed contradictory inclinations and thus inappropriately classified as positively one thing or the other?

In fact there are probably good reasons. Harsnett was a diligent diocesan and left the strongest traces of his activities in the vigour with which he enforced conformity on the clergy and revered order and uniformity in the externals of religious practice. But undoubtedly the strongest point in favour of Dr Fincham's categorisation of Harsnett as a custodian of order is the bishop's apparent theological leanings; whatever Bancroft's doctrinal inclinations might have been they were rather more opaque than those of Harsnett. As a preaching custodian of order Harsnett may be an exception to either model, but as an anti-Calvinist in theology he sits rather uncomfortably in the company of the other preaching pastors among whom Calvinism was the dominant ideology. As an Arminian custodian of order, however, Harsnett adds weight to Dr Fincham's argument that this style was the dominant factor of the minority anti-Calvinist cadre and so, alien to that of the Calvinist consensus on the episcopal bench.

It is a key theme in this thesis to question the accuracy of the traditional depiction of Harsnett as a 'model' Arminian. Harsnett probably was an anti-Calvinist in theology throughout his life, but his episcopal career reveals some important areas in which he remained quite independent of those with whom he shared this position. By considering

⁸ Ibid., pp.248-93 for a discussion on the differing styles of churchmanship.

the course of his career, and then various themes within it, we should develop a more nuanced understanding of his 'Arminianism' in practice. Without diminishing Dr Fincham's insights it is also important to note those areas in which his categorisation of Harsnett as custodian of order, does less than justice to a complex personality. From the following consideration of his episcopal career - as in other areas of his life and career – it will be apparent that Harsnett's brand of Arminianism and his churchmanship were peculiarly individual.

1. Chichester: 1609-19

On his appointment to the see of Chichester Harsnett was virtually the epitome of the Jacobean candidate consecrated to first episcopal office. At the age of 48 he was close to the average of 51 and, although by now a widower, shared with the majority (75%) an experience of married life. Formal academic qualification to the level of doctor of divinity was virtually *de rigueur* for the Jacobean bishop and Harsnett was no exception to this rule. Not only did he come to office well equipped in terms of life experience and scholarly achievement, but also, like many of his colleagues, professionally prepared for leadership and institutional government. The experience of having served as archdeacon or cathedral dean was relatively common and headship of an Oxbridge college only a little less so. Harsnett came to office having experience as both an archdeacon and as master of a college, and was thus among the most experienced of a generally well qualified episcopate.⁹

⁹ For the characteristics of the Jacobean episcopal appointees see Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.18-22

Possession of the right personal and career profile was, of course, no guarantee of a man's elevation to the episcopate. Who or what then persuaded James to agree to Harsnett's appointment to Chichester? As in the case of most other initial appointments little is known for certain about the circumstances of Harsnett's selection. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the typical candidate in the selection process required both the support of a patron and the personal approbation of the king who took a keen interest in matters concerning his church and theology. Unlike a number of successful candidates Harsnett did not have the advantage of having served as a royal chaplain and so it seems likely that he primarily relied on outside influence to put forward his case. Harsnett may have served briefly as chaplain to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, the most influential secular patron of the early Jacobean period and a man behind a number of episcopal preferments, but there is nothing to suggest that by 1609 Harsnett was still a client.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the connection may have been enough for Cecil to at least support Harsnett's claims. Lancelot Andrewes might also have provided support for the nomination of Harsnett as his successor, the two men being well acquainted through their Pembroke years. Despite these connections it seems most likely that it was Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, who initially put Harsnett's name forward for the Chichester vacancy. As has already been seen, Harsnett had long been within the Bancroft orbit and that the connection remained close is clear from the fact that Bancroft entrusted Harsnett with the metropolitanical visitation of Ely in 1608.¹¹ With Bancroft's sponsorship, the possible support of Cecil and Andrewes, James' personal knowledge of Harsnett through the Ann

¹⁰ Pauline Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', *HJ* 34 (1991), p.791; A Kautz, 'The Selection of Jacobean Bishops', in *Early Stuart Studies*, ed. H S Reinmuth (Minneapolis, 1970), pp.153

¹¹ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.21

Gunter case, together with the ideal experience and qualities for episcopal office, his appointment can hardly have been any surprise.

It was probably in anticipation of Harsnett's first episcopal appointment that Bancroft presented him with the living of Stisted, Essex, on 28 September 1609.¹² His new diocese was a poor one and, although he resigned all his other benefices, he was allowed to retain Stisted *in commendam*, resigning only when he was translated to the richer diocese of Norwich.¹³ A further problem for Harsnett would have been the difficulty of administering the diocese from his episcopal residence in its western corner; a problem only exacerbated by poor east-west communications.¹⁴ Puritanism was strongest and most deeply rooted in the arable communities of the east Sussex Weald in which, by virtue of their isolation, it was difficult for the established church to exercise much influence.¹⁵ For Harsnett, whose career-long concern with Puritanism was primarily concerned with non-conforming ministers, this may have been mitigated by the fact that the East Sussex Puritan community was largely lay-led. Catholic recusants were generally quiescent and confined to the west of the diocese, especially around the Cowdray Park estate of Viscount Montagu.¹⁶ Harsnett avoided one potential problem for the incumbent bishop - the existence of three peculiars of the Archbishop of Canterbury - because George Abbot appointed the bishop as dean of the peculiars in 1611.¹⁷

¹² John Le Neve, *Lives and Characteristics of ... Archbishops* (1720), pp.129-30

¹³ For the poverty of Chichester diocese see Andrew Foster, 'Chichester Diocese in the Early 17th Century', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 123 (1985), pp.188-90; his resignations were from the prebend of Mapesbury, the vicarage of Hutton and the Archdeaconry of Essex: Le Neve, *Characteristics*, p.129

¹⁴ Foster, 'Chichester Diocese', p.187

¹⁵ Anthony Fletcher, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660*, (London, 1975), pp.73-4

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.99

¹⁷ Foster, 'Chichester Diocese', p.188

Throughout his episcopal career Harsnett was particularly assiduous about keeping residence in his diocese. We have seen that on his appointment to Chichester he retained the position of Master of Pembroke, but that this rarely if ever took precedence over diocesan business. One of the few events that effectively obliged his absence from the diocese was attendance in the House of Lords during parliamentary sittings. Harsnett's first year in office coincided with the final two sessions of the 1606-10 Parliament and this prevented him from taking up residence at least until Easter of 1610. The recess between the two sessions (23 July to 16 October) provided the opportunity to conduct his primary visitation during which he personally, and unusually, conducted a survey of church fabric.¹⁸ After the prorogation of this Parliament in December 1610 Harsnett was free to attend to his new diocesan responsibilities and seems to have set about the task with some gusto. The lax practice of Chichester Cathedral personnel was one of his first priorities. His capitular visitation of 1610 resulted in the first of what was to be a series of vigorous attempts to bring some degree of order in the cathedral: enforcing residency in the cathedral close; improving attendance at divine service, Sabbath days and feast days; raising the dismal standard of the choir; and stamping out all forms of unruly and unseemly behaviour by any of the cathedral's officers.

Another priority for Harsnett seems to have been a desire to impose his personal authority on the administration of ecclesiastical justice in the diocese. During his early years in the diocese Harsnett was frequently in attendance in the Chichester consistory court. His personal involvement was, no doubt, in part due to his distrust of the incumbent chancellor, John Drury. In an action so typical of his public career Harsnett

¹⁸ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.138-9

demonstrated his contempt for Drury in December 1611 when he reproved the chancellor for failing to wear canonical robes and demanded to see proof of Drury's ordination.¹⁹ Following Drury's death in 1614 Harsnett installed his own nominee, Clement Corbett, as chancellor.²⁰ Thereafter Harsnett seems to have been more relaxed towards personal attendance at consistory court, although he continued to exercise control through deputies of his own nomination. Corbett's appointment may well have been a purely tactical one, for he was usually absent from the diocese, preferring instead to be resident in Cambridge where he was Master of Trinity Hall. Corbett was husband to Harsnett's stepdaughter and his absence was probably mutually agreeable. In the patent granting Corbett the post, Harsnett ensured that he maintained some measure of personal control by retaining the right to act in disciplinary matters.²¹ Drury's death was, in fact, timely for it allowed Harsnett to take up a second term of office as vice-chancellor of Cambridge for the academic year 1614-5, safe in the knowledge that his own men were acting in accordance with his views.

Among other priorities that marked Harsnett's first episcopal appointment were a determination to provide the diocese with an educated clergy and to enforce his own personal views regarding Sabbath day observance. Even in era when there were concerted efforts to improve the educational qualifications of the clergy Harsnett's record at Chichester was remarkable: every newly ordained priest appointed to a benefice under the

¹⁹ WSRO, Ep.I/17/13, fol.202v; Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.158

²⁰ Peckham (ed.), *Acts of the Dean and Chapter, 1545-1642*, p.200

²¹ WSRO, Cap.I/27/2, fol.128 (patent); WSRO, Ep.I/17/15-18 (for deputed nominees); Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.158-9; for Corbett's relationship to Harsnett see W G Benham, 'Pedigree of Archbishop Samuel Harsnett', *Essex Review* 40 (1932), pp.105-113

patronage of the bishop possessed at least the degree of BA.²² Harsnett's own views on Sabbath Day observance were almost certainly acquired during his Pembroke years under the influence of Andrewes' catechistical lectures on the Decalogue. Now he was in a position to impose conformity to his own standards and the evidence suggests that he did so on a regular basis during his Chichester incumbency.²³ Although there is no direct evidence to suggest that Harsnett's views on this matter ever put him in direct conflict with other leading anti-Calvinists his position was, to say the least, unusual.²⁴ Of course, a reputation for being sympathetic to sabbatarian inclinations is not enough to explain how Harsnett escaped the accusation of Arminianism by contemporaries, but it is one of a number of factors that, taken as a whole, made him a slightly odd Arminian.

It was during Harsnett's spell at Chichester that he acquired the patronage of Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel. This was to become a relationship of great significance to Harsnett's career, not least in that it would contribute to his isolation from others who shared his doctrinal inclinations. By September 1617 the two men already appeared to have established a close relationship. In a letter dated 12th of that month Harsnett welcomed the return of Arundel, writing to "his singuler good lorde, at Court", in fulsome terms:

²² 44 appointments were under Harsnett's patronage; in total 190 priests received benefices of which 183 (96%) were graduates: Peter Jenkins, 'The Rise of a Graduate Clergy in Sussex, 1570-1640', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 120 (1982), p.162

²³ WSRO, Ep.I/17/15, fos. 55^v-62^v (1613) – for harvesting barley on the Sabbath five men were sentenced by Harsnett to penance at Chichester market-cross and admit the offence in their own parish church; WSRO, Ep.17.I/17/17, fol. 85^r; Ep.I/17/18, fos. 33^v, 96^r - for the imposition of similar penance; WSRO, Ep.I/17/15, fos. 65^v, 146^v – similar penance meted out for sexual offences proves the seriousness with which Harsnett viewed it.

²⁴ Andrewes probably continued to hold the views that may have influenced Harsnett but he was, by nature, more circumspect about engaging in controversy than Harsnett.

Next unto those starres of your lps hond familye, I knowe none in England that have suffered more eclypse by your lps absence then myselfe, nor none that have so much cause to joye in your lps happie returne.²⁵

This was no empty rhetoric for the relationship endured until the end of Harsnett's life and the respect was clearly mutual: by 1620 Arundel had entrusted the education of his youngest son William to Harsnett, by then installed as bishop of Norwich.²⁶

Apparently at his own initiative, Harsnett assumed a watching brief on local matters.²⁷ In this first extant evidence of their relationship Harsnett reported on a dispute that was brewing in the corporation of Chichester and would, without the earl's intervention in his capacity as High Steward, "breake out into a tumulterie combustion". The issue at stake was the corporation's exempt jurisdiction, which was being challenged by two county lawyers; the result, a new charter brokered by Arundel protecting the liberty, earned Harsnett's approbation later that year.²⁸ Given that such exemptions often bred enmity between corporations and the local clergy, Harsnett's position towards the former seems even-handed.²⁹ Harsnett's relationship with the city elders has been described as "amicable", but there is no doubt that he found their antics somewhat distasteful; later that same year he warned Arundel that, "If your Lp had but the least taste

²⁵ Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1585-1617, No.220 (12 September 1617)

²⁶ Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1617-32, No.245 (17 August 1620) in which Inigo Jones reports to the earl that, "Mr William was verry merry at his departure, and the busshope and he ar the greatest friends that may be."

²⁷ That the role was self-appointed seems to be confirmed in a letter 20 December 1617 in which Harsnett apologised to the earl for advising him on a corporation matter when "I nether [stet] knewe nor heard that your L[ordshi]ps least finger in it, and therefore I was bold to write to your L[ordshi]p as if it had been *res integre*". Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1585-1617, No.225; copy: BL Add. Ms 39948, fos.184^v-185^f

²⁸ Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1617-1632, No.226 (29 December 1617)

²⁹ Fletcher, *County Community*, pp.234-5

of the unsavorye government of Chich[ester], you would doe like Almighty God, spue both it and them out of your mouth.”³⁰

Just nine days after writing this Harsnett once again wrote to Arundel, seemingly in response to a suggestion by the earl that he might secure advancement for the bishop. Brownlow has suggested that what was on offer was the bishopric of Norwich. If it was, it must have been conditional, for the then current incumbent John Jegon, although for some time in ill-health, still had three months to live.³¹ Whatever the substance of the offer it elicited a remarkable response from Harsnett that opened thus:

I muste, yf I bee an honest man, speake unto your lp in my civil lyfe, as unto my confessor, that is (after the Hebrue phrase, or eloqui) speake the very secrett of my hearte, whereout I shall speake incredible thinges, rather seeminge dreames to your lp then the dictats of a true spirit.³²

What Harsnett then had to say may be more revealing of his current state of mind than any genuine lack of ambition, but the clear message was that he had no desire to take any advancement. Indeed, he claimed that he had, “never affected the place I am in, nor eny bishoprick in the kingdom”, and then that he, “doth as much loathe the nowe stepp of climbinge ambition, as hee doth the steps to hell.”³³ Nor since had he ever sought anything higher. What Harsnett appears to have been experiencing was a deep sense of disillusionment and world weariness, the cause of which was his treatment at the hands of the fellows of Pembroke:

I am not for these tymes, nor these tymes for mee. A true touch hereof your lordship had plainely in view, my late requital for my poor true service to his ma[jes]tie and my

³⁰ Ibid. p.235; Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1585-1617. No.225

³¹ Brownlow mistakenly attributes Jegon’s death to 1617, F W Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett and the Devils of Denham* (Newark, NJ, 1993), p.144; for Jegon’s ill-health and death see *DNB* ‘John Jegon’

³² Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1585-1617. No.226

³³ Ibid.

moother. I praye God I may never remember it, nor eny true subject feel the like: it may happilye shake him at the roote.³⁴

Was this rhetoric disguising the hope that something better than Norwich might appear in the future? It is difficult to conceive of what else might have been on offer. The only vacancy at the close of 1617 was the diocese of Llandaff, a diocese poorer even than Chichester and hardly likely to be offered to a man already on the episcopal ladder. However, if the offer had indeed been for Norwich, conditional on Jegon's death, then that suggests that what Harsnett was experiencing was a passing - but nevertheless genuine - troubled state of mind.

Barely eighteen months after Arundel's apparent offer the bishopric of Norwich was again vacant, following the death of Jegon's actual successor, John Overall. This time Harsnett accepted the position, but left no evidence to explain the change of heart.³⁵ We can only speculate as to whether he was reluctantly burying his principles, had recovered his composure or, rather less likely, was cutting his losses for a modest improvement in status.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Brownlow claims that, "Arundel renewed his offer of support and Harsnett accepted", *Shakespeare*, p.144.

2. Norwich: 1619-1629

On 10 June 1619 royal assent was granted for Harsnett's nomination to be forwarded for election as bishop of Norwich; on 27 June the Dean and Chapter duly elected him.³⁶ Harsnett's new diocese was relatively wealthy by comparison with Chichester, supported by a strong East Anglian wool economy. The diocese had no notable Catholic recusant community, perhaps explained by the absence of any dominant aristocratic families that might provide either protection or succour. It was also unusual for its bishop having restricted rights to conduct episcopal visitations – seven years rather than the normal triennial entitlement. A major advantage to Harsnett was that the bishop enjoyed the right of patronage to an unusually high number of benefices, and his own patron, the earl of Arundel, was also a significant patron of benefices in the diocese.³⁷

Matters connected with the cathedral had early engaged Harsnett's attention at Chichester, and they did so again upon his arrival at Norwich. On this occasion what troubled Harsnett was a matter that had been overlooked by his predecessors. It was that, in spite of the Edward VI's express wish when granting the patent for the foundation of the cathedral, the Dean and Chapter of Norwich should conduct "themselves in accordance and conformity with the statutes, ordinances, and rules thereafter to be made", no such statutes had been established. Just over a year after Harsnett's arrival the matter had been rectified because, as the King's preface to the new statutes put it, "a complaint has been made to Us by the Reverend Father in Christ, Samuel, the present Bishop of

³⁶ *CSPD 1619-1623*, p.59; J F Williams and B Cozens-Hardy, eds., *Extracts from the Two Earliest Minute Books of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral, 1566-1649*, (Norfolk Record Society, Norwich, 1953), p.55.

Norwich ... that the said statutes, contrary to the intention of the said king, have not yet been ordained and established”.³⁸ These statutes, and the apparently cordial relations between Harsnett and the Dean, Edmund Suckling, proved enough to ensure order in the cathedral for the remainder of Harsnett’s term at Norwich, but the episode provides a telling comment on both his priorities and his general concern for matters of order.³⁹

Shortly after his arrival in the diocese Harsnett, following on from an action by his short-lived predecessor Overall, took up claim for dilapidations against the estate of John Jegon. The claims in the suit were in respect of various episcopal properties, most notably the episcopal palace at Norwich and Ludham Hall, the usual residence of the bishops of Norwich. Jegon’s widow, Dorothy, had subsequently married Sir Charles Cornwallis with whom Harsnett pursued the matter. Although such actions provided potential for discord Harsnett appears to have been determined to conduct the matter graciously. In so doing he earned the respect of both Cornwallis and Jegon’s secretary, Anthony Harison. On 25 January 1620 Cornwallis wrote to Harsnett setting out details of the properties and reasons why allowances might be made against the suit. He concluded his letter with an offer to put the matter to arbitration, either before George Abbot, Francis Bacon (as Lord Chancellor) or the Earl of Arundel, “whom I knowe muche to favour & respect your Lordship”.⁴⁰ That Cornwallis offered Harsnett’s patron, Arundel as a possible arbiter of the dispute suggests that a measure of trust had already been established between himself

³⁷ NNRO DN/VAL/2; this document dated 1629, lists the incumbents of all benefices within the gift of the bishop (45 in his sole gift, one jointly with Arundel, and eight jointly with others), and Arundel (20 in his sole gift).

³⁸ NNRO DCN 23/1 *Statutes of the Cathedral Church of Norwich* (Norwich, Privately printed and undated), p.xv

³⁹ For a fuller discussion of the significance of Harsnett’s attitudes towards his cathedrals and their personnel, see this chapter, 3.4 ‘Cathedrals and Statutes’

and Harsnett. Replying the next day Harsnett welcomed the offer and, rather than choose his patron, determined that for the “final umpire of all matters now in question ... I doe settle my choice upon my Lord Chancellor of England”.⁴¹ Nor does the magnanimity on either side seem to have been merely gesture politics. Shortly afterwards Cornwallis, writing to Harison in the wake of his recent dealings with the bishop, expressed a highly favourable view of the bishop:

I [am] with you in judgement that this bishop will approove himself a very worthie man. His understanding is greate: his experience much (and if [I] be not much deceived) his nature and disposition nobly and well disposed.⁴²

As a leading member of the Norfolk gentry Cornwallis was a useful ally; the good relations established between the two men must have served Harsnett well when they were required to work together on Privy Council commissions.⁴³

For his primary visitation of the diocese in 1620 Harsnett drew inspiration from the visitation articles of his predecessor, John Overall; in his next visitation of the diocese in 1627 he adopted Overall's articles virtually unaltered.⁴⁴ Overall had been loosely affiliated with the Arminian circle of Richard Neile's Durham House Group, and it will be recalled that he was one of those who, with Harsnett and Andrewes, had been sympathetic to Peter Baro's anti-Calvinist position in the 1590s.⁴⁵ Overall's articles became a model for those bishops with strong conformist agendas who, in turn, have usually been taken to be associated with the Arminian tendency. The significance Harsnett attached to the precise

⁴⁰ Cambridge University, Ms. MM.III.12, p165

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p165

⁴² *Ibid.*, p162

⁴³ Harsnett worked with Cornwallis on at least three such matters. *APC 1621-3*, p.455-6; *APC 1623-5*, p.389; *APC 1627-8*, p.367

⁴⁴ K Fincham, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (2 volumes, Woodbridge, 1994/8), i, pp.169-70

wording of visitation articles is, however, rather called into question by his later adoption (again with few amendments) of the Calvinist Toby Matthew's visitation articles for the archdiocese of York. Nevertheless, the use of Overall's form of enquiry did set the pattern for Harsnett's style of episcopate: a concern for the strict observance of correct forms of worship and behaviour by both clergy and laity.

In addition to the formal opportunities offered by diocesan visitations, Harsnett most notably pursued his own authoritarian agenda through attacks on non-conformist preaching. Professor Collinson has depicted Harsnett as responsible for a virtual vendetta against stipendiary preachers in Norwich diocese.⁴⁶ Harsnett was not, however, an opponent of preaching *per se*. It is highly unlikely that he shared the view held by most of the Arminian persuasion that preaching was somehow less necessary to what they believed was a settled church in which the protestant faith was now well established.⁴⁷ What concerned Harsnett throughout his career was not too much preaching, but preaching of a certain type and by a certain sort of preacher. It was Harsnett's attempts to curb the activities of what he saw to be disruptive preachers that provided two of the more notable set pieces of his Norwich years. In 1624 his campaign against a group of Norwich Puritans gave rise to their complaints to Parliament that he had, among a string of other offences, suppressed sermons and lectures. Later he became embroiled in a dispute between the dean and chapter and the corporation of Great Yarmouth over rights of

⁴⁵ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.47

⁴⁶ Patrick Collinson, 'Lectures by Combination: Structures and Characteristics of Church Life in 17th-Century England', in *Godly People* (London, 1983), pp.488-9

⁴⁷ For this view on the 'Arminian' position with regard to preaching see Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.280

appointment of the town minister, the corporation having supported the nomination of John Brinsley, a Puritan suspected of separatist tendencies.⁴⁸

Aside from the periodic absences occasioned by sittings of Parliament, Harsnett continued the practice he established at Chichester of residing in his diocese. For the most part this was at Ludham Hall which, having been destroyed by a fire during Jegon's tenure, Harsnett rebuilt at his own expense.⁴⁹ Harsnett's inclination to reside in his diocese put him in a good position to take an active role in its secular affairs. During the second session of the 1621 Parliament, and consistently thereafter, Harsnett involved himself in various select committees that had a bearing on the commercial, civil, and defence interests of East Anglia. But his involvement in such matters was not restricted to discussions in parliamentary committees. The Privy Council made extensive use of Harsnett in a number of issues affecting the region.

One role saw him appointed to act as an independent arbiter in the case of local disputes that had been referred to the Council. The range of matters was diverse. Some were clearly of an appropriate nature to be dealt with by the diocesan. One was a dispute over the payment of tithes by three members of the long-established French community in Norwich. These men had been paying tithes to their local minister but refused to make contributions to the French congregation. The basis of their argument was that they had been born in England; one, Denis Lermite, also claimed exemption because he was both a freeman of the city, and liveryman. Harsnett was ordered to make a judgement in the case and ruled that the Frenchmen were liable to both tithes - Lermite was in fact an elder of

⁴⁸ For more detail on these two cases and others, together with a general discussion on Harsnett's attitudes to preaching, see below, this chapter, 3.2 'On the Importance of Preaching'

the French congregation. The Privy Council fully endorsed Harsnett's ruling, observing – no doubt on the basis of Harsnett's advice – that should these men be followed by other wealthy members of the French congregation then it would fall into disorder and responsibility for its maintenance fall on the city. The city corporation had good cause to be grateful to their bishop for protecting their interests.⁵⁰ In another case Harsnett was charged, with Clement Corbett his former chancellor at Chichester, to report on the dispute between the master and fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge on one hand, the City of Norwich on the other. The case concerned an allegation by the City that the college had disposed of fellowships sponsored by the former in a way contrary to the original provision. It is unclear what part Harsnett had to play in the final outcome, but the City may well have again benefited from his involvement – to the City's advantage the Council overruled certain of the findings that the university visitor had determined in the college's favour.⁵¹

A rather more significant role saw Harsnett act as the Council's agent in matters concerned with the defence and the economic security of the region. In 1620 he was charged with others to examine and report on the condition of the pier defences for the port of Great Yarmouth and to propose how the maintenance of these should be financed. In 1622 the Council, noting the culmination of this enquiry and its subsequent recommendations, approvingly remarked on how Harsnett had proved that the Great Yarmouth defences had benefits to other areas of Norfolk and he was commissioned to "invite" the various beneficiaries to make liberal contributions to fund the repair

⁴⁹ Harsnett spent approximately £2,000 on the repair of Ludham: Francis White's suit for delapidations against Harsnett, SP 16/270/67

⁵⁰ *APC 1619-21*, pp.387-8; *APC 1621-3*, pp.7-8, 57-8; *APC 1623-5*, p.5

programme.⁵² In 1626 the Council again commended Harsnett on his endeavours in a similar matter, this time concerning the repair of sea breaches between Yarmouth and Happisburgh on the Norfolk coast. This case confirmed Harsnett's efficiency in such matters but, just as much, his value to the Council as an impartial arbiter in those East Anglian affairs that had wider national significance. A number of his fellow commissioners were admonished for tardiness in discharging their responsibilities, doubtless because they owned land on the stretch and would have been expected to contribute to the repairs.⁵³

Confidence in Harsnett's ability to effect resolutions to knotty problems may have led to Council commissions bearing on commercial matters in the Norwich diocese. On 27 July 1622 he was instructed by the Council to intervene in the subject of imports into Norfolk of spun and combed wool. This practice was in breach of statute and was the cause, the Council advised Harsnett, of great distress and hardship among the combers and weavers of the county. He was to gather together both English and 'Stranger' wool traders in a bid to put a stop to the trade. However, the matter was not straightforward. In response to Harsnett's directions the Company of Hosiers submitted a petition in October claiming that, far from the practice being injurious to the combers, it was "a great benifite and advantage to them in generall"; forbidding it would jeopardise the employment of six thousand people. Harsnett was instructed to take the appropriate advice and make recommendations to the Council. By the following May he had resolved matters sufficiently to bring the competing parties before the Council. He earned the

⁵¹ *APC 1621-3*, pp.42, 145; *APC 1623-5*, pp.38-40

⁵² *APC 1619-21*, pp.194-5, 230-1, 272, 411-2; *APC 1621-3*, pp.172-3, 193-4, 419-20; *CSPD 1619-23*, pp.260, 310-1

⁵³ *APC 1625-6*, p.361

approbation of the corporation of the city for his efforts in protecting Norwich from this threat to its economy.⁵⁴

Harsnett's involvement in another case concerning the commercial interests of the diocese shows that he not only responded to Privy Council instructions, he was prepared to act on his own initiative. From a Council directive to the port officers of Great Yarmouth of July 1624, it is apparent that Harsnett had drawn their attention to the illegal export of high-grade fuller's earth, a compound used in the cleaning of woollen cloth, which had recently been discovered in Norfolk. By November the case had led to the seizure of two illegal traders, who were instructed by the Council to make submission "to the said Lord Bishopp for their said peremptorie and grosse misdemeanour and carriage towards his Lordshipp".⁵⁵ Clearly, Harsnett had taken a personal interest in their case and, in so doing, merited the appreciation of both the Council and of concerned parties in his diocese. In what way Harsnett had become aware of the matter is not clear, but it seems unlikely that he could have been personally responsible for the detection of the offence. What seems likeliest is that it he was trusted by local interests to make the most effective representations to Council, a mark perhaps of the high esteem in which he was held.

All this activity by Harsnett on Privy Council business was unusual. It was comparatively rare for a Jacobean bishop to be so frequently called upon and Dr Fincham has suggested that the lack of any dominant aristocratic presence in Norfolk during this

⁵⁴ *APC 1621-3*, pp.295-6, 329, 455-6; NNRO, NCB/16, fol.481^v

⁵⁵ *APC 1623-5*, pp.285, 366-7, 389; in another case seemingly initiated locally, the Council commended Harsnett and the local justices for apprehending three men who, in exporting corn from Norfolk, had transgressed a "late proclamacion" of the King made to ease the dearth of the cereal in the county, *APC 1621-3*, p.424

period may explain the matter.⁵⁶ This may well have been a factor, but it does little to explain why Harsnett's immediate predecessors and successors at Norwich do not seem to have been employed in the same way. There is at least a circumstantial case for suggesting that Harsnett's patron, the earl of Arundel, had some part in his client's involvement on conciliar business. Few, if any, would have been as well acquainted with Harsnett's administrative abilities as Thomas Howard, and for most of Harsnett's Norwich years the earl was a member of the Privy Council. It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that of all Harsnett's conciliar activities, none were commissioned during the two-year period of Arundel's enforced confinement in his Sussex estate following his sequestration from the Council in March 1626. Almost immediately following Arundel's resumption of his place Harsnett was once again asked to take an examining role in a dispute involving a complaint against a sheriff and magistrates of Norwich.⁵⁷ It seems reasonable to conclude that Harsnett was as much an agent of his patron as he was of the Privy Council and, furthermore, that the arrangement was a mutually beneficial one. Arundel enjoyed the advantages of a trusted lieutenant in the county in which he was a major landholder; and Harsnett, while serving his patron, was provided with the opportunity to put himself in favour with the local community and establish a reputation as an efficient administrator.

For much of the summer of 1627 Harsnett was engaged on another piece of secular business: this time conducting a survey of Arundel's Norfolk estates. From Harsnett's report on his progress it is apparent that the project had been brought about by the earl's need to raise capital. This was clearly a matter of necessitated by circumstance

⁵⁶ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.105, *pace* A Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), pp.47-8, 336.

⁵⁷ *APC 1627-8*, p.367

rather than a planned rationalisation of his estates. Harsnett reported that he was in the process of renegotiating terms with “your L[ordshi]ps tenants in those mannors w[hi]ch wee hope to preserve from sale.” Nevertheless, some manors would have to be forfeited and here was a problem. Clearly referring to the effects of the Forced Loan, Harsnett complained of the problem finding buyers when there was a “generall consumption that all doe feel, by the late vaste exhaustion of moneyes out of the cuntry”. Fear of war seems to have added to the problem of finding purchasers: “the troublesomenesse and uncertainties of these times, [which] striketh a feare into many, to parte with their money”. In what is surely an indication of a deep level of trust and respect shared by the two men, Harsnett then felt able to give some forthright advice. Although potential purchasers were few, there was some interest in the finest manors of Arundel’s estates – understanding that these were “the perles of your affection ... Yeat, pardon my zeale, my goode lord – before your Lp’s estate should synke, these, or some of the favourites must bee sacrificed, to save the whole.”⁵⁸

This temporary diversion from local episcopal responsibilities did not prevent Harsnett from keeping a close interest in an affair of considerable significance to the episcopal bench. Earlier in the year George Abbot had refused to licence a sermon preached by Robert Sibthorpe arguing the absolute obligation of subjects to meet the King’s demands for a Forced Loan. Behind the Loan, and therefore eager to publish such a legitimising defence, was the Duke of Buckingham. Buckingham, by this time champion of the Arminian faction, enlisted William Laud to pressure the archbishop into submission. Abbot refused to capitulate and was forced to retire to Canterbury; it was left to George

⁵⁸ Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1617-32, No.291 (20 July 1627)

Montaigne, the Arminian bishop of London, to license the sermon. Harsnett, who had clashed with Buckingham in the parliament of the previous year, wrote to Arundel reporting on his attempt to persuade Abbot to make some concession to expedience. The effort had been to no avail and Harsnett fully realised that in making it he had placed himself in an even worse position with Buckingham and his Arminian clients:

Touching the newes of Canterbury, I was much troubled at it: but it was no more than I foresawe, and forewarned my L[ord] and his followers of. His Gr[ace] grewe so passionate and discontent, it was not possible for him to submit ... I knowe I am deepe in their black book.⁵⁹

Whether Harsnett's position over the Forced Loan, with its implications for his views on the royal prerogative, was based on principle, or somehow tied to the interests of his patron, is a matter that is considered elsewhere in this thesis. At this point it is sufficient to note two things. First, his position was entirely consistent with the stand he would make over the Petition of Right in the following year and also with his alliance with Abbot, again in 1628, in pressing for the severe punishment of Roger Mainwaring, who had preached the same message as Sibthorpe.⁶⁰ Second, whatever his doctrinal inclinations or churchmanship, he was clearly at odds with the Arminian faction, just at the time that it was beginning to achieve a dominant position in the king's counsel.

Harsnett's final year as incumbent of Norwich, 1628, was most notable for his contribution to the parliamentary proceedings concerning the Petition of Right. The parliamentary session kept him in London between March and June during which period the archdiocese of York fell vacant upon the death, on 29 March, of the octogenarian, Toby Matthew. Charles proposed the appointment of the Arminian, Montaigne on 4 June.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ See below, Chapter 5, 4. 'The Petition of Right, 1628'

With Harsnett deeply implicated in opposition to the crown's interests on the Petition it seems unlikely that he was even considered for the archbishopric. Instead, he seems to have returned to Norfolk and resumed his diocesan duties.⁶¹ Yet within a few months Harsnett's position had radically altered. With the Duke of Buckingham dead, the Earl of Arundel fully restored to crown favour, and Montaigne surviving only to the day of his enthronement Harsnett was elected to York on 26 November 1628. He performed his last ordination as bishop of Norwich on 4 January 1629 and nine days later was consecrated as archbishop.⁶²

3. Arminianism in Practice? Themes in Harsnett's Episcopal Career

There is one rather curious, but noteworthy, feature of Samuel Harsnett's episcopal career. It is that Harsnett - for most historians the model Arminian - was an Arminian bishop who had little to do with any other Arminian bishop. As has been shown, Harsnett had been acquainted in his early career with two future bishops who shared an antipathy to Calvinist views on predestined grace: Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Neile. After his appointment, however, he seems to have eschewed all dealings with these men who, by their involvement in the Durham House group, were to become the centre of an anti-Calvinist alliance at court. Given Harsnett's apparently self-imposed isolation from this group, two factors explain historians' general agreement that he was, nevertheless, an Arminian archetype. The first is Harsnett's St Paul's Cross sermon of 1594. This, in its critique of the Calvinist position on grace, provides one of the clearest statements of anti-

⁶¹ On 21 September he presided over the ordination of new priests, probably at Ludham, REG/15/21, unfoliated

⁶² Ibid., entry 4 January 1629

Calvinist theology by any leading churchman of the early Stuart Church. The second point is that, on the evidence of Harsnett's episcopal career, his churchmanship was, in practice, indistinguishable from that of those anti-Calvinists who had allied themselves to the Durham House interests. The unequivocal evidence of Harsnett's early anti-Calvinism through the former has tended to focus attention on that evidence from the latter that bears out the common ground he shared with other Arminians. In so doing it has deflected attention from any material that tends to point in any other direction. Thus, while there is much in Harsnett's episcopal practice to suggest that he shared similar views with other leading Arminians, there were also significant differences. The following explores themes from his episcopal career that are both typical and atypical of the supposed Arminian archetype; they consider Harsnett's attitudes to episcopal and clerical residence; preaching, both his own and that of others; the motivations behind his contrasting treatment Puritans and Catholics, and the significance of his especial interest in his diocesan cathedrals.

3.1 Episcopal and Clerical Residence

One aspect of Harsnett's episcopal career that set him apart from most other anti-Calvinist bishops was his impressive record of residing in his diocese. Andrewes, Neile and William Laud formed, together with Harsnett, what is generally viewed to be the first rank of Arminian prelates. Unlike Harsnett, these three men spent most of their episcopal careers in close proximity to court, managing their diocesan affairs through delegated officials and

occasional personal visits, normally during the summer months.⁶³ In the early years of James I's reign, during which Harsnett was first appointed to the episcopate, the 'court' bishop was a rare phenomenon, normally restricted to the individuals who held some post at court that required his attendance. By the second half of the reign the number of bishops regularly in attendance at court – even though they lacked formal office – increased markedly.⁶⁴ Although it has not been possible to construct a full itinerary for Harsnett, it is quite clear that this development made no difference to his own habit of spending as much time as possible in his diocese. Whether by inclination or by circumstance, Harsnett held no position at court during these years; nor does he appear to have spent much time in London except for obligatory attendances at parliamentary sessions.⁶⁵ In the case of Harsnett's Chichester years his own record for residence in the diocese contrasts with that of Andrewes, his predecessor in the post. Andrewes was, by virtue of his eloquent preaching at court, a favourite of James I; it was doubtless for this reason that he was only ever briefly resident in his various dioceses.⁶⁶ By contrast, the evidence of Harsnett's Chichester career suggests that he was in the diocese most of the time, and irrespective of the season. His rare documented absences all relate to either the periods of parliamentary sittings, or the year of his second term as vice-chancellor at Cambridge. The pattern of residency during Harsnett's Norwich years followed much the

⁶³ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.42-3. 309-14

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.41

⁶⁵ Refer to his parliamentary attendance record – this was no more than average in the early years.

⁶⁶ Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.147-54; Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.309

same course as that established while at Chichester: occasional absences to attend parliament seem to have been the only reason to have drawn him away from the diocese.⁶⁷

That Harsnett spent much of his episcopal career in residence in his dioceses set him apart in practice from other leading Arminian prelates, but was it a matter of conviction or circumstance? There is a good case to suggest that Harsnett did consciously choose the role of resident bishop. He implied as much when, in May 1624, he defended himself in the House of Lords against the complaints of the Norwich Puritans: “As touching Preaching and Non-residence, he hath been reckoned more than half a Puritan”.⁶⁸ It seems that at the very beginning of his episcopal career he had been faced with a choice between taking up residence in his diocese and remaining in London in the service of his mentor, Bancroft. Harsnett, “remembered his Manner of leaving his Service with the late Lord Archbishop of Cant[erbury] that he might go to his Cure.”⁶⁹ This was not the only alternative to diocesan residence that Harsnett rejected. On his appointment to Chichester he had retained the position of Master of Pembroke Hall and did so until his enforced resignation in 1616. However, apart from 1615 when his term as vice-chancellor of the university required him to be so, he spent little time in Cambridge. It would have been perfectly possible for Harsnett to carry out his diocesan responsibilities during the summer months – something that court bishops like Andrewes did with no major disadvantage to their dioceses - and still have provided leadership of his college by being in residence for the majority of the academic year. Instead Harsnett, as we have seen,

⁶⁷ Positive evidence of his residency includes much to prove that he was in residence *throughout* the year: both correspondence and ordinations evidence Harsnett being in the diocese during winter as well as summer months.

⁶⁸ *LJ*, iii, p.389

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

chose to be an absentee master, delegating his responsibilities to a much-disliked deputy, a decision that cost him his position at Pembroke.

During the latter part of Harsnett's Chichester term Richard Neile's Durham House group emerged to become the focal point for most of the known anti-Calvinists among the episcopate. As previously suggested, Lancelot Andrewes' role in the Pembroke affair may explain Harsnett's detachment from the Durham House group from the outset – and well before Buckingham's support of the Arminian 'party' effectively placed any client of the earl of Arundel in an opposing camp. This could suggest that Harsnett's decision to reside in his diocese had little to do with any positive conviction on his part. Instead perhaps he was excluded from court circles by the personal antipathies of those who would otherwise have been his natural allies. But, if that were so, it did not prevent him from applying himself to diocesan affairs as enthusiastically as he had before the emergence of the new court bishop culture. This is most evident during his Norwich term in the records of his activities relating to the numerous Privy Council commissions, but other isolated references give some indication of his particular diligence. He showed an interest in the work of the consistory court, as he had done at Chichester, here too making the occasional personal appearance;⁷⁰ on at least one occasion he also attended the county assizes at Norwich.⁷¹ The clergy also benefited from the presence of their bishop. Harsnett regularly conducted ordination and institutions ceremonies on each of the four occasions during the year permitted by the ecclesiastical canons. This contrasted favourably with those bishops who spent only a short period during each year in their

⁷⁰ NNRO, VIS/5/1 (unfoliated, 1 June 1620); Bodleian Tanner MS 138, fol.137; NNRO, REG/15/21 ii, fos.1^v-2^r; NNRO, ACT/58b (unfoliated, 21 June 1628)

diocese, and thus conducted ordinations and institutions when it coincided with their limited residence – when it best suited their own needs rather than the readiness of the candidates or the needs of the benefice.⁷²

Harsnett's attitude to absenteeism among the clergy might also provide some indication as to his views on the residence of bishops in their diocese. One of his earliest concerns on arrival in Chichester was slack practice among the cathedral staff. His concern over the absenteeism of the four resident prebendaries is reflected in the statutes he promulgated in 1611, following his first visitation of the cathedral. By Harsnett's order, if these men failed to make residence in accordance with original statutes they were to be deprived of office; the bishop would be free to nominate others in their place.⁷³ The statutes also required that the vicars and clerks on the cathedral staff should seek the permission of the Dean and Chapter before any absence; repeated unauthorised absence would be punished by deprivation.⁷⁴ In his next cathedral visitation (1616) Harsnett was again concerned for the residency of the prebendaries, enquiring as to how well they, and now also the Dean, observed the ecclesiastical canons regarding residence.⁷⁵ Harsnett's concern over non-resident clergy was not limited to stricture alone. At least two persistent offenders in Norwich diocese received the ultimate punishment of deprivation at his hands.⁷⁶ It does not follow, of course, that because Harsnett took a tough line on absentee clergy that he was absolutely committed to episcopal residence. He was, for

⁷¹ Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1617-32, No.291, Samuel Harsnett to Thomas Howard (20 July 1627); copy BL. Add. MS 39948 fos. 186-7

⁷² Canon 31 (1604): for example he conducted ordination ceremonies in August, September, and December 1626, and in February, May, September and December 1627, NNRO REG/16/22

⁷³ From the 1611 Statute Book printed in F G Bennett, R H Codrington, and C Deedes (eds.), *Statutes and Constitutions of the Cathedral Church* (Chichester, 1904), p.28

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.30

example, not alone in depriving clergy for persistent non-residence: Andrewes had been particularly hawkish in this respect.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, it was Harsnett, not Andrewes, who addressed the problem of non-residence by the Chichester cathedral prebendaries; and Harsnett it was whose attitude towards residence by the clergy was entirely consistent with personal practice.

Harsnett's exemplary attendance record in both dioceses, his enthusiasm for diocesan work, and his active pursuit of non-residents among his clergy offer strong circumstantial evidence that he was a resident diocesan by conviction. It is a matter from his later career, however, that seems to confirm it. Some time during 1629 Harsnett, by then archbishop of York, composed his 'Considerations for the Better Settling of Church Government'. The twelve articles suggested in the Considerations effectively set out Harsnett's own ideas for good episcopal practice in defending the church against the threats posed by non-conformity. Among the issues addressed by the Considerations were those that had preoccupied Harsnett throughout his episcopal career: unregulated preaching, subversive, or 'Puritan', clergy, and liturgical conformity. But it is the very first of the considerations that alerts us to the priority Harsnett attached to the matter of episcopal residence: "To command the Lords the Bishops to their severall sees; excepting those which are in attendance at Court."⁷⁸ It was a view that rather appealed to Charles I for he incorporated it in his Royal Instructions to bishops issued in December 1629.⁷⁹ Laud, by this time Charles' chief counsellor on church matters, presumably had no

⁷⁵ Fincham, *Visitation Articles*, i, p.139

⁷⁶ NNRO, VIS/5 (unfoliated, 28 September 1629), ACT/58b (unfoliated, 21 October 1628)

⁷⁷ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.210

⁷⁸ William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (1646), p.368; see also Appendix

objection to Harsnett's residency clause for he was as much responsible as the king for the Instructions. Nevertheless, it hardly accorded with his own personal practice – from the outset of his episcopal career, and long before he was “in necessary attendance at court”, Laud had chosen to reside in proximity to court rather than in his diocese. That there was nothing ‘Arminian’ about this particular instruction is presumably why George Abbot had no difficulty agreeing to it.⁸⁰ Whether the instruction meant to imply that a non-resident bishop was somehow a deficient bishop is a moot point; its author would have known that it was perfectly possible to make arrangements that ensured diocesan business was properly conducted in a bishop's absence. What it does perhaps suggest is that Harsnett, unlike other leading anti-Calvinist prelates, was more concerned with his immediate pastoral responsibilities than with pursuing personal career ambitions or pressing the ‘Arminian’ agenda at court.

3.2 On the importance of preaching

It is a commonplace of historiography that a characteristic feature of Arminian churchmanship was to downplay the role of the sermon in public worship. Instead emphasis was placed on the sacraments, the Prayer Book liturgy and aspects of ceremony and order as set out in the ecclesiastical canons. Harsnett does indeed seem to have shared with other anti-Calvinists a special reverence for the Book of Common Prayer, the authority of the canons and much of the ceremonial implied by this. What he did not share

⁷⁹ J Bliss and W Scott (eds.), *The Works of William Laud*, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1847-60), v, pp.307; see also Appendix

⁸⁰ When Laud was held responsible for the Considerations his prosecutors objected to a number of the injunctions but not to that concerning residence of bishops; Bliss & Scott, *Works of William Laud*, iv, pp.273-4

with them was the view that the role of preaching was in any way subordinate to reverential public worship.⁸¹ Harsnett was an active preacher himself and, although a fierce opponent of unregulated preaching, emphasised the importance of preaching in the ministry, sometimes as a priority over and above the usual components of the Arminian agenda.

Although no record of Harsnett's preaching survives, nor indeed the text of any sermons preached during his episcopal career, there is little doubt that he was a diligent diocesan preacher.⁸² We have already noted that in 1624 Harsnett had claimed before the House of Lords that his record on preaching and residence was such as to cast him as "more than half a Puritan". He was making this claim against the charge that he had suppressed all Sunday morning sermons in the city of Norwich, allowing only that preached in the cathedral. By this, his accusers claimed, the bishop denied a large number of Norwich citizens the opportunity to hear a sermon, for the cathedral could only accommodate 2-3,000 of the 30-40,000 parishioners of the city.⁸³ Harsnett answered the substance of the charge by agreeing that he had indeed put a stop to Sabbath morning preaching in the city, but this was merely a response to the complaints made to him by six or seven of the "abler sort of Ministers in Norwich". These men had asked to be released from preaching on the Sabbath morning before the cathedral sermon because the requirement had led to either foreshortening of prayers or commencing their services so early that many had been unable to attend. Harsnett had agreed to the ministers' requests

⁸¹ A point made by Christopher Haigh in his review of Tyacke's *Anti-Calvinists* in *EHR* 103 (1988), pp.425-7; also Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Court* (Oxford, 1992), p.68

⁸² Dr Fincham has identified two specific occasions on which Harsnett preached as bishop of Norwich: Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.89; Bodleian, Rawlinson MS D 1088, fol. 117v; LPL, MS 943, p.125.

⁸³ *LJ*, iii, p.388

on the grounds that they were, in any case, preaching on Sabbath afternoons and weekdays. Furthermore he had met the difficulties of those that could not attend the cathedral sermon by establishing three sermons in remoter parts of the city as well as having “erected many Lectures in several Places in the Country.” Thus Harsnett made a reasoned defence of his action in Norwich. However, what is more revealing of his attitude to preaching is the indignation that he displayed in response to the accusation “that he inhibited or disheartened Preachers”. He was, he claimed, in

no way guilty of ... this Accusation; if he were then he was unworthy to bear the Name of a clergyman; and showed the Unworthiness of such as should dishearten Preachers from preaching the Word of God.

Harsnett then went on to recall his own preaching record. As vicar and parson he had

preached every Sabbath in the Morning, and catechised in the Afternoon; and that he continued the like in Preaching in *Chichester* when he was Bishop there. That in *Norwich* he never missed the public Place, and ever preached there against Popery.⁸⁴

The fact that Harsnett chose to use in his defence his own practice of preaching is in itself revealing. By doing so he was clearly making the point that his own practice accorded with what he believed to be a model for clergy at all levels within the church. Also, by stating his case to an audience that included James and Charles, as well as fellow bishops and secular peers, it is scarcely credible that he was laying claim to anything that was not completely verifiable.

Notwithstanding these points, had Harsnett’s apparent concern for the priority of preaching been restricted to this occasion, it might be explained as a mere rhetoric of defence. But then this was not the only occasion. The Puritan-inclined Lord Montagu reported one such instance in his journal of proceedings in the House of Lords for the

1629 session. A discussion had taken place in committee in which the bishops, led by Laud, deplored the laxity of lay proprietors and churchwardens in repairing the fabric of churches within their keeping. Montagu noted that it was Harsnett who warned that all this concern for the beauty of holiness might overlook the pastoral responsibilities of the Church:

[The] Archbishop of York said there was many more abuses in the churches greater than these necessary to be looked unto, that though it was necessary these material churches were looked to, yet there was an inward and spiritual church more to be cared for with the Preaching of the Word to the salvation of souls.

This earned the approbation of Lord Say and Sele, who enthusiastically took up Harsnett's point with a "good speech for the necessity of preaching ministers". It was not, as we will see, the first time that this Arminian bishop and Calvinist (if not moderate Puritan) peer had seen eye-to-eye. There were other occasions too when Harsnett's concern for the preaching ministry seemed somewhat at odds with what we are led to believe characterised the typical Arminian prelate. In 1627 he is reported to have observed that the most important of all clerical functions was "preaching in season and out of season".⁸⁵

In December 1624 Harsnett intervened in a dispute between the bailiffs of Great Yarmouth and the Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral over the right to appoint to the vacant benefice of St Nicholas' church in the town.⁸⁶ With Christmas fast approaching Harsnett was, he advised the Bailiffs, anxious that the church be provided with "an able and sufficient preacher to the cure". His choice of the appellation 'preacher', rather than

⁸⁴ *LJ*, iii, p.389

⁸⁵ Cited in Julian Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.68; LPL MS 943 fol.127 and Bodleian Tanner MS 114 fol.204

⁸⁶ For an outline of the case and transcriptions of contemporary correspondence, see Henry Swinden, *The History and Antiquities of the Ancient Burgh of Great Yarmouth* (Norwich, 1772), pp.834-42; for the case

‘minister’, seems to have been deliberate for he commended his chosen candidate to the Bailiffs for above other things, his preaching:

you shall receive much comfort from his godly and holy instruction ... so you will entertain him with that chearfulness as holy men have used to entertain those, who bring the good tidings of salvation unto them.⁸⁷

This comment has, quite understandably, been ignored in a case that seems to confirm the usual portrayal of Harsnett in historiography: the authoritarian bishop prepared to impose his will on any who threatened order and authority within the church. Despite the evidence of Harsnett’s personal commitment to preaching, historians have consistently placed greater emphasis on the severity with which he dealt with certain instances of unregulated preaching, especially that of stipendiary preachers.⁸⁸ Great Yarmouth is the best documented of such instances. The vacancy into which Harsnett pressed his own candidate was one of two that the town claimed the right to appoint. The bishop had reasonable grounds to be suspicious of the town bailiffs: earlier in the year they had proved negligent in responding to his request that they speedily apprehend a suspected group of separatists.⁸⁹ Thus, no doubt fearing what type of minister the bailiffs planned to appoint to the vacancy, Harsnett persuaded them to accept the temporary appointment of Richard Gammon. As soon as Gammon was in place Harsnett took out an inhibition on the corporation replacing his appointee. It was an act of duplicity that shocked the bailiffs. They were stung into seeking legal advice and lost no time in advising the bishop that their

in the context of Caroline anti-Puritanism, see Richard Cust, ‘Anti-Puritanism and Urban Politics: Charles I and Great Yarmouth’, *HJ* 35, 1 (1992) pp.1-26 (esp.pp3-5)

⁸⁷ From a letter by Harsnett to the Bailiffs of Great Yarmouth, dated 22 December 1624 in Swinden, *Great Yarmouth*, p.834

⁸⁸ Collinson, ‘Lectures by Combination’, pp.488-9; Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.243-4, 279

counsel confirmed their claim to appoint to the vacancy.⁹⁰ Furthermore, they went ahead and appointed their own candidate, the Puritan-inclined John Brinsley, to the town lectureship.⁹¹ With neither side prepared to concede ground the case went to High Commission. When judgement was finally given George Abbot upheld Harsnett's action, finding in favour of the Dean and Chapter's right to appoint and insisting that Brinsley should be removed.⁹² While the Great Yarmouth case does provide evidence of Harsnett's authoritarian style, it has to be remembered that this was not a case about suppressing preaching. It is easy to overlook the fact that Harsnett was as keen as the town corporation that a preacher be appointed to the vacancy. The problem was over the nature of the man to be appointed. The bailiffs' apparent dilatoriness towards the separatist conventicle gave Harsnett good reason to suspect that the corporation would appoint a subversive. Harsnett's concern in this case was not with some minor transgression against conformist ideals, but rather with one that was potentially schismatic. As such, it should be no surprise that it was a concern with which George Abbot was inclined to agree.⁹³

The priority Harsnett accorded preaching in his diocese marked him out from many other Arminians, or indeed any other of Dr Fincham's custodians of order. Of these only Lancelot Andrewes enjoyed a reputation as a prolific preacher. But Andrewes' preaching output comprised mostly of elegantly argued theology in the form of sermons

⁸⁹ Harsnett had written to the bailiffs on 15 July 1624 requesting the apprehension of several named persons the next day but nothing had happened by the beginning of December; Swinden, *Great Yarmouth*, pp. 831-2

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.835

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.836

⁹² *Ibid.*, p.839-41

delivered to, and savoured by, the cognoscenti at court, including James I himself. Those in his spiritual care within his various dioceses seldom benefited from them. As Dr Fincham has pointed out, for other Arminians too much preaching overshadowed the task of ensuring conformity to an ideal of reverent public worship.⁹⁴ Perhaps Samuel Harsnett wanted the best of both worlds for he appeared as keen on preaching as he was in ensuring conformity.

3.3 Catholics and Puritans

The relative attention that Harsnett as bishop gave to the twin threats to the established Church – Catholics and Puritans – leaves little doubt as to which he saw as posing the greater practical danger. That his churchmanship provoked the complaint to parliament of 1624 is proof enough that he was viewed by the godly community as an enemy of their particular form of divinity. His campaign against stipendiary preachers and his perfunctory treatment of the bailiffs' claims at Great Yarmouth merely support the impression that he was a true heir to Richard Bancroft. It is such evidence that also forms a large part of the case for Harsnett as exemplar of Arminianism in practice.

In contrast to this, there is evidence to suggest that Harsnett's attitude towards the Catholic community was somewhat more relaxed. In January 1615 he received a letter from the Privy Council concerning the treatment of recusants in the Chichester diocese:

Wee are very sorry to heare that in your lordship's diocesse the number of recusants do so multiply and increase; and although wee are well persuaded of your lordship's zeale and care in the gouernment of your Churche, yet can wee not heerein acquitt

⁹³ Abbot's toleration of moderate non-conformity contrasts with his tough line towards separatists, see Susan Holland, 'Archbishop Abbot and the Problem of Puritanism', *HJ* 37 (1994), pp.23-43

⁹⁴ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.279-81

your subordinate minister's and officers of connivency, or at least want of care, who ought to have been more vigilant in their charge.⁹⁵

The particular concern was the recent establishment of two recusant communities, either side of the town of Hastings in the far east of the diocese. In a separate letter addressed to the Lieutenants of Sussex the Council explained its particular concern: maritime counties were at greatest risk from invasion by hostile Catholic states and therefore needed to be the soundest in their religion.⁹⁶ Harsnett might legitimately have claimed that the peculiar problems of geography and communications prevented him effectively identifying and dealing with the problem in this part of his diocese.⁹⁷ However, despite the councillors' claim to the contrary, it seems likely that he was here being delivered some degree of rebuke. But, if that were so, then it is also possible that the Council recognised that the nature of the recusancy problem in this diocese was beyond just the efforts of the bishop and his ministers, and that was why they had recruited the secular assistance of the county lieutenants to investigate the matter.

During Harsnett's incumbency at Chichester one notable Catholic chose to conform to the Church of England. On Christmas day 1616, Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, took communion from Lancelot Andrewes. By this action and his enthusiastic denunciation of the materialism of the pope and the Italian priesthood that he had encountered on a recent travels in Italy, he appears to have convinced contemporary

⁹⁵ *APC 1615-6*, p.34

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.33-4

⁹⁷ The Council would also have been aware that Harsnett was at this time away from his diocese, serving his second term of office as vice-chancellor at Cambridge.

observers that this was a genuine conversion, not one motivated by political expediency.⁹⁸

Although the earliest correspondence between Harsnett and Arundel dates to September 1617, Harsnett's style of address and tone suggests that the two men were already well acquainted. If such were the case it is possible that Harsnett influenced Arundel's decision to embrace the Church of England, although more likely is the suggestion that Howard merely saw in Harsnett a congenial mind.⁹⁹

A number of less distinguished Catholic recusants, chiefly from the established West Sussex recusant communities, did appear before Harsnett in order to conform to the Church of England. These provide the only real examples of Harsnett's personal contacts with recusants, although little can be inferred of his attitude towards Catholics from these cases. The act of conforming – purging one's convictions for recusancy – necessarily took place before the diocesan bishop for it was only he that could issue the requisite certificate for presentation to the exchequer.¹⁰⁰ The number of conforming recusants was as likely to indicate an episcopal regime that was harsh with regard to recusancy convictions, and thereby forced capitulation, as it was to indicate one that offered an amenable alternative to the potential convert.

An action from the end of his career, as archbishop of York, is as revealing as any that Harsnett's tolerance of Catholics had strict limits. For his primary archiepiscopal

⁹⁸ Mary Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921), pp.112-9: Arundel had already been appointed to the Privy Council and established his place at Court before his conversion. *ibid.*, pp.114-5

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.119

¹⁰⁰ The following conformed before Harsnett: in 1610, John Holcroft and John Colpes, PRO E 368/539 membranes 135 and 140; 1611, William Booth, Thomas Blackwell, Francis Jewer and John Stone, PRO E 368/541 m. 108 and 110, E 368/543 m. 137, E 368/545 m. 101; 1612, William Arden, PRO E 368/544 m. 139; 1614, William Thatcher, PRO E 368/550 m.118; 1615, George Joblin, Robert Ballard, William Coldham and Robert Brooks, PRO E 368/545 m.101, E 368/550 m.160, E 368/556 m.112, E 368/559

visitation Harsnett adopted as the basis for the articles to be enquired upon, those devised by his Calvinist predecessor, Toby Matthew, for the visitation of 1622-3. Among a number of minor amendments and additions to Matthew's model, Harsnett made two that indicate a concern that Matthew had not gone far enough in unearthing subversive Catholics. The subject of Matthew's article 35 – enquiring after those who preached without licence and sought “to withdraw the people from their due obedience” - would undoubtedly have met with Harsnett's approval, but his addition was aimed at exposing another type of threat:

What Jesuites, or seminary priests doe you know or understand, that have lately come from beyond the seas? Who are the receivers or abettors of them? What children doe you know or understand, to have beene borne within your severall parishes or chappelries, which are not baptized by an English minister, according to the rites and customes of our Church?¹⁰¹

In his article 48 Matthew had explicitly addressed the matter of recusants, seeking to be advised of both the recusants themselves and those who harboured them, and how long these recusants had been within the parish. But Harsnett wanted the net cast wider, adding the following:

What number of servants meniall or retayners doeth every recusant within your parish or chappelry keepe, what be their several names, and what imployments have they? Enquire diligently how long they stay in service, and what becommeth of them when they are departed?¹⁰²

Of course Harsnett had other amendments and additions to Matthew's visitation articles and some of those were aimed at the other extreme of the confessional spectrum. Puritan non-conformists were the clear target for additional articles: enquiries should be made as

m.211. I am indebted to Michael Questier for drawing my attention to these cases and explaining the process of conforming.

¹⁰¹ Fincham, *Visitation Articles*, i, p.67

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.68

to who sat in church during divine service without removing their hats; who went to churches outside their own parish during the time of divine service – this clearly targeting the Puritan phenomenon of ‘sermon gadding’; and also those who refused to kneel while taking communion.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Harsnett thought it necessary not only to improve on Matthew’s leniency towards Puritans, but also to tighten up on the Catholic non-conformity. This gives some indication that Harsnett, far from being obsessed only with the Puritan threat, was concerned with any threat to orthodoxy from whatever direction it came.

If the normal focus of attention on Harsnett might lead to the conclusion that he was tough on Puritans, but soft on Catholics, he clearly saw himself as an opponent of both. In defending himself in 1624 he was keen to draw attention to his record of preaching against popery and the anti-Catholic polemic of the *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, which he called upon as proof of his anti-Catholic credentials. Perhaps as a means of defence against accusations that he himself was a papist this was understandable, but on at least two further occasions he would make claim to a place in a *via media* between the two extremes.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, on the evidence of Harsnett’s episcopal career it might reasonably be concluded that he saw the main threat to the church coming from Puritans, not from Catholic recusants. In the spectrum of episcopal views this placed Harsnett in the company of Laud, Neile and the other anti-Calvinists. By contrast, the Calvinist, George Abbot, while neither prepared to tolerate separatists nor out-and-out repudiation of ceremonial conformity, did turn a blind eye towards moderate non-conformity in order not

¹⁰³ Ibid.

to alienate otherwise sound preaching ministers.¹⁰⁵ Nor is it likely that he was alone in such a position. But was anti-Puritanism the exclusive preserve of anti-Calvinists? Perhaps among Harsnett's contemporaries in the episcopate it was, but it had not always been so. Abbot's own predecessor, Bancroft, had earned a reputation as a scourge of Puritan non-conformity and he was by no means an anti-Calvinist. In Bancroft's case it can be argued that he developed a rabid anti-Puritan strategy in order to deal with an organised Presbyterian tendency, a more extreme manifestation of Puritanism than Harsnett or his contemporaries ever faced. Nonetheless, Bancroft, and his predecessor Whitgift, had established a tradition of authoritarian response to the Puritan threat that had nothing to do with theology and all to do with a perceived threat to order in the Church. Harsnett's own early manifested intolerance of non-conforming Puritan ministers seems as likely to have been the product of his fifteen year apprenticeship under Richard Bancroft as it was anything to do with his anti-Calvinist theology.

3.4 Cathedrals and statutes

The English cathedral in the early Stuart Church was an anachronism. With its daily rhythms still dominated by the round of liturgy, its professional musicians, and its large complement of clergy occupied by often-minimal demands, "here the old devotional world cast its longest shadow for the future of the ethos which became Anglicanism".¹⁰⁶ None of this troubled Samuel Harsnett, however, for cathedrals appear to have been among his highest priorities on both his appointment to Chichester and to Norwich. If any aspect of

¹⁰⁴ In the ordinances to his school and in his will, see below, Chapter 7

¹⁰⁵ Holland, 'Archbishop Abbot'

Harsnett's episcopal career confirms his predilection for order and seemliness then his close interest in the functioning of his diocesan cathedrals surely does so. Here too, appears to be an anticipation of certain matters that would comprise the later Laudian emphasis on the 'beauty of holiness', with its concerns for the physical environment in which worship took place.

Harsnett's own particular priorities are most strongly evidenced in Chichester where he appears to have been personally involved in revising the cathedral statutes after capitular visitations in 1610 and 1616.¹⁰⁷ Yet even in Norwich there are suggestions that he may have taken a personal interest in the statutes that he was, it will be recalled, responsible for bringing about. The Chichester statutes of 1611 are no doubt a reflection of what Harsnett found to be the most offensive failings during his visitation of the previous year. The failure of some cathedral personnel to abide by their residency obligations has already been noted, but a number of other serious concerns were addressed by the set of dozen decrees that comprised the new statutes. Disorderly behaviour including drunkenness and gambling was proscribed for "any Vicar, Clerk, Virger, Sexton, or other inferior Church officer". There were strictures that indicated a general disregard for the sanctity of divine service, whether by unauthorised absence or "unreverend gesture or unseemly talking" during the service. Musical standards were also of concern: the bishop devised statutes demanding that the Master Chorister be deprived of office if he

¹⁰⁶ Diarmaid MacCulloch. *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (2nd edition, Basingstoke, 2001) p.79

¹⁰⁷ For the resulting statutes of 1611, see, Bennett, Codrington and Deedes, *Statutes*, pp.28-30; those of 1616, *ibid.*, pp.30-33

failed to teach the choristers for three hours a day, and to preclude appointment of any “Clerk, Vicar or Chorister ... until he first make public trial of his voice and skill”.¹⁰⁸

From the revised statutes of 1616 it is clear that, much to Harsnett’s chagrin, little had been resolved.¹⁰⁹ No less than 28 decrees “for the better ordering” of the cathedral were passed by the Dean and Chapter. The musical standard of the cathedral was once again a major cause for anxiety: ten of the new decrees were concerned with regulating every aspect of the choristers’ conduct and the Master Chorister’s responsibilities. The bishop was also appalled by the disorderly state of the cathedral, introducing new demands for sweeping and cleaning various areas and further decrees against disorderly behaviour: “Hogs and Dogs and lewd persons” were at “play or do worse” in the churchyard; whereas “brawls and enormities” took place in the cloisters.¹¹⁰

Having expended considerable energy on the affairs of Chichester cathedral and shown enough interest to have discovered the problem of the lack of statutes for the cathedral at Norwich, it is likely that Harsnett had an input to the statutes prepared by Dean Suckling.¹¹¹ At Chichester, Harsnett had been concerned to put an end to lax practices among the cathedral personnel. There appear to have been no such immediate problems at Norwich, where the priority was to put in place preventive measures. The Norwich statutes provided for most of the concerns that Harsnett had experienced at Chichester. Once again there were decrees concerning the conduct and abilities of

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.29-30

¹⁰⁹ For Harsnett’s visitation articles see, Fincham, *Visitation Articles*, i, pp.139-41

¹¹⁰ The decrees are in Bennett, et al. *Statutes*, pp.30-33

¹¹¹ For the statutes of 9 August 1620, see NNRO DCN 23/1; for Suckling’s authorship, NNRO DCN 29/2 p.135; there is every reason to suppose that Harsnett and Suckling enjoyed good relations - Suckling sought the bishop’s advice on subsequent appeals against the statutes, NNRO DCN 28/1 pp.51-2

choristers, and additionally the organist.¹¹² As well as academic title, any candidate for the post of Dean was required to be a “priest and preacher of sound orthodox faith”, those for prebendaries to possess a minimum qualification of Master of Arts.¹¹³ Strict residency requirements were set out for these same cathedral personnel and the bishop given the authority to punish “a Dean who is ... sordid and niggardly”.¹¹⁴ As at Chichester, considerable emphasis was given to the form of divine service, and conduct thereat; it was to be celebrated with “singing, playing of the organ and melodies”.¹¹⁵ Perhaps in recognition of one of Harsnett’s priorities was a schedule of preaching obligations that included a requirement on the bishop to preach in the Cathedral at Christmas, the Pentecost and Easter.¹¹⁶

Harsnett’s concern to impose order and discipline on the administration of his diocesan cathedrals certainly add weight to the Fincham judgement of Harsnett as custodian of order. They may even suggest a bishop who was, in certain respects, anticipating Laudianism. But Harsnett’s pursuit of order may be seen in another, more personal way: he seems to have been rather inclined towards regulations in other contexts. On his first appointment as vice-chancellor of Cambridge he had set about drawing up new statutes; and then, some time after his involvement in the cathedral statutes, he personally drew up the statutes for his foundation of Chigwell school. On that occasion he had this to say:

¹¹² NNRO DCN 23/1, pp.11/13

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.1-2, 6-7

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.3-5, 8

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.13-4

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.15

The being and life and continewation of all foundations on earth are the Lawes and Statutes of that foundacõn and the life of the Statutes and Ordinances is the due and strict observacõn of them ...¹¹⁷

Perhaps his concern for order and discipline originated not as an ideological position, but rather as a defining characteristic – a personal predilection for well ordered institutions.

¹¹⁷ G Stott, *A History of Chigwell School* (Ipswich, 1960), p.150

5. Harsnett in Parliament, 1610-1629

When Francis Rous rose to address the House of Commons on 26 January 1629 it marked the beginning of the assault on Arminianism that was to dominate much of the remaining proceedings of the last parliamentary session prior to Charles I's Personal Rule. For Rous, and the speakers who followed him, here was a conspiracy to subvert the course of true religion as exemplified by the Church of England. Their concerns were manifold. Orthodox doctrine, in this case the Calvinist view on predestined grace, was threatened by, as Rous put it, "an error that maketh the grace of God lackey it after the will of man, that maketh the sheep to keep the shepherd, that maketh mortal seed of an immortal God."¹ Arminians had wheedled themselves into the counsels of the king complained Christopher Sherland; they insinuated that all those that opposed them were, likewise, opposed to him and they assigned to any not of their inclination the "odious name" of puritan.² The success of these Arminian advisers encouraged, said Edward Kirton, "some of the clergy that are near his majesty...[to]...change their opinions for advancement, and...turn white into black, black into white".³ Rous had warned that Arminianism was the Trojan horse by which Romish tyranny and Spanish monarchy would enter the kingdom; Sir Robert Phelips warmed to the theme: there were two sects aiming to undermine the king and the kingdom, "ancient Popery" and "new Arminianism".⁴

¹ Wallace Notestein and Frances Helen Relf (eds.), *Commons Debates for 1629* (Minneapolis, 1921), pp.12-3

² *Ibid.*, pp.15-6 and p.16, n.48

³ *Ibid.*, p.15

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.16

Addressing the committee for religion on the following day, John Pym pulled together the strands of the argument and added his own spin. He too saw “old popery” and “new Arminianism” as the twin threats to true religion, reeling off a list of complaints that proved his point: the cessation of recusancy prosecutions; the growth in superstitious rites and ceremonies; the recent preferment of those who taught against the truth; the suppression of books against Arminian doctrine and the allowance of those in its favour.⁵

In the early debates the main targets of opprobrium were William Laud and Richard Neile. In spite of being named in the Remonstrance of 14 June 1628 as men “justly suspected to be unsound in their opinions”, Laud had subsequently been appointed bishop of London and both men had been promoted to the Privy Council in April 1627.⁶ Equally shocking to the anti-Arminian speakers had been the appointment of Richard Montagu to the bishopric of Chichester. According to Sir Walter Erle, Montagu, through his controversial works of the mid-1620s, was the “principal disturber of the church”.⁷ It was not until the committee of religion produced its Heads and Articles on Religion on 23 February that the real naming and shaming of Arminians was completed. In this the names of a further four serving members of the Caroline episcopate were added to those of Laud, Neile and Montagu. Godfrey Goodman of Gloucester was named as a “false and counterfeit” papist who had obtained a position of trust and authority.⁸ John Howson, “a long suspected Papist” who had recently been elevated from Oxford to Durham, was

⁵ Ibid., p.20

⁶ M F Keeler, M J Cole and W B Bidwell, *Proceedings in Parliament 1628*, 6 vols. (New Haven, 1977-83), iv *Commons Debates 1628*, p.313

⁷ Notestein and Relf, *Debates 1629*, p.35

⁸ Ibid., pp.98-9

similarly accused of obtaining his preferment by concealing his true religion.⁹ In John Buckeridge “a known Arminian” had recently received the see of Ely.¹⁰ Francis White, who Sir Walter Erle had earlier reported “hath sold [his] orthodox books and bought Jesuitical books” had, “since his last Arminian sermon preached at court”, been appointed to Norwich.¹¹ It was an impressive list comprising more than a quarter of the episcopate and all the notable names in the modern historians’ cast of the usual Arminian suspects. Except one: that is, the recently appointed archbishop of York, Samuel Harsnett.

Why did Harsnett escape the censure of parliament in 1629? After all, here was a man who had preached a notorious sermon espousing an anti-Calvinist position on grace, had supported Baro in the Cambridge disputes of the 1590s, and, as recently as 1624, had been subject to accusations very similar to some of those levelled against Arminians in 1629. The matter is complex but it will be argued in this chapter that a major factor was his role in parliament itself. It will be shown that Harsnett, one of the most active bishops in the early parliaments of Charles I, consistently took positions on a series of major issues that were at least independent of, in some cases diametrically opposed to, those that had come to be associated with Arminianism. Why he took the positions he did is rather more difficult to determine than the fact that he did take them. Nevertheless, the attempt to answer the question will lead us to consider what part such issues as loyalty to his patron, career ambition and personal conviction (even the very nature of his supposed Arminianism) might have played in Harsnett’s thinking.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.99, 100

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.100

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp.60, 100

It naturally follows from such a consideration of Harsnett's parliamentary career that we should also reflect on the extent to which his substantial contribution to both the routine business of the House of Lords and the major debates informs us on the wider matter of the role of the spiritual lords in parliament. Were Harsnett's activities typical of a bishop in the early Stuart parliaments? Were these men contributing significantly in both practical and intellectual terms to parliamentary proceedings? Does it reinforce or challenge the revisionist assertion that there was no great ideological division in the 1620's parliaments and that what divisions did exist were more about competing factions driven by motives of self-interest?¹²

Before attempting to draw any conclusions on either the significance of Harsnett's own role in the House of Lords, or the larger question of the contribution of the early Stuart episcopate in general, it is necessary to consider in some detail the context and the detailed business of the parliamentary sessions spanned by his episcopal, and therefore parliamentary, career. Although the focus in what follows must necessarily concentrate primarily on the person of Harsnett, and especially his most active period in the sessions of the later 1620s, due regard will therefore be given to his peers.

1. The Jacobean Parliaments, 1610-1624

On 9 February 1610, Harsnett took his seat in the House of Lords for the opening of the fourth session of the 1606-10 Parliament. Although the most recently appointed prelate he was not the only member of the Jacobean episcopate taking up a place among the lords spiritual in parliament for the first time. Since the prorogation of the previous

¹² Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979)

parliamentary session in July 1607 others had also received their first sees. Henry Parry had been appointed to Gloucester in December 1607; Richard Neile and James Montagu had taken up the respective vacancies at Rochester and Bath and Wells in 1608; and George Abbot, having initially received Coventry and Lichfield in 1609, now sat as bishop of London having been nominated to that position shortly before the opening of the 1610 session.¹³ Parry (d.1616) and Montagu (d.1618) had relatively short episcopal careers, but peer group comparison of such fundamentals as attendance and committee appointments in the first parliamentary sessions following their appointments are still possible. Abbot and Neile, who both outlived Harsnett, will provide the opportunity to compare his whole parliamentary career – especially the positions he took on the major constitutional issues that emerged in the early Caroline parliaments – with those of two contemporaries from opposite ends of the doctrinal spectrum.

Harsnett's parliamentary debut of 1610 seems to have been somewhat low key. It is not clear as to whether appointment to House of Lords select committees in this period was either based on peers nominating a member for his perceived strengths, or individuals volunteering to sit because of their own particular interests or enthusiasm for the matter under consideration.¹⁴ With seven committee appointments over the two sessions, Harsnett was the least active of the group of neophyte spiritual lords: Parry (11), Montagu (15) and Neile (16) each comfortably exceeded Harsnett's total.¹⁵ Abbot's remarkable

¹³ For Parry, Montagu, Neile and Abbot see entries in *DNB*: Abbot was in fact consecrated bishop of London on 12 February 1610.

¹⁴ It is not possible to determine from Henry Elsyng's account of the procedure for appointment to select committees if members did, or indeed could, nominate themselves; see Elizabeth Read Foster, *The House of Lords 1603-49, Structure, Procedure and the Nature of its Business* (Chapel Hill NC, 1983), p.88

¹⁵ There were 63 select committees (as distinct from committees of the whole house) during the course of the two sessions of 1610; *LJ*, ii, pp.548-65

tally of 37 committee appointments, augured a long and active career in the Lords and, perhaps, gives an indication of the high regard that had already seen his rapid elevation to the bishopric of London and would, within another year, see him installed as Bancroft's successor at Canterbury. Harsnett's relatively modest record of appointments might then suggest that either he was not especially anxious to take an active role himself or was not (for whatever reason) seen as an obvious choice by others. But, if no firm conclusions can be drawn from the small number of Harsnett's committee appointments, it is worth noting that the majority were concerned with commerce and property issues, and none with the ecclesiastical reform bills that were a marked feature of both the 1606-10 and 1614 parliaments.¹⁶

Harsnett's attendance record during the two 1610 sessions – he sat at 79 of the 116 sittings (68%) - compared favourably with an average attendance of all eligible bishops of 53%.¹⁷ Within his peer group Harsnett's attendance was rather better than Montagu's (57%), exactly comparable with that of Parry, but less than that of both Neile (78%) and Abbot who was present at 110 sittings (95%). There is evidence that Harsnett's attendance might well have been rather better had it not been for a preoccupation that may also have affected his select committee appointments: the declining health of his major ecclesiastical patron, Bancroft. A hint of Bancroft's health problems and Harsnett's personal involvement came on 24 May when the latter was excused from the session to attend the archbishop's sickbed;¹⁸ intermittent absences

¹⁶ For the predominance of ecclesiastical reform bills see Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), p.59

¹⁷ This calculation reflects the vacancy at Coventry and Lichfield throughout 1610, and also that of Canterbury after Bancroft's death.

¹⁸ *LJ*, ii, p.599

thereafter may have been similarly occasioned. Harsnett, who had been appointed by Bancroft to act as an administrator of his will, made no further appearances in the 13 sittings following the archbishop's death. By contrast Parry, Montagu and Neile all attended the sitting on 5 November (the first after Bancroft's death), and most sittings thereafter; Abbot, also an administrator of Bancroft's will, was absent from the first session, but was subsequently a regular attendant.

The issue that dominated this first session of Harsnett's parliamentary career was the Great Contract: Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury's ultimately unsuccessful attempt to put the king's revenues on a sound footing. Whether or not Harsnett contributed to ensuing debates on the king's finances from his seat in the Lords is uncertain.¹⁹ Nevertheless, there is clear evidence that the principles at stake interested him considerably and, furthermore, that his manner of expressing this interest caused such consternation among parliamentarians that the king himself felt it necessary to intercede on Harsnett's behalf. What sparked the furore was a Lent sermon that Harsnett had preached at Whitehall on 4 March to a "great audience", including the king, taking as his text "Give unto Caesar the things that be Caesar's".²⁰ There was surely no coincidence in Harsnett's choice of theme. The sermon came just as the Commons were about to begin proceedings against John Cowell, a Cambridge law professor, for his assertion in *The Interpreter* (a law dictionary published in 1607) that the absolute power of kings placed them above the law. Cowell had been a close acquaintance of Richard Bancroft for some

¹⁹ There are no references to him doing so in the *LJ*, ii, pp.548-675

²⁰ For the sermon date see the calendar of court sermons included on the diskette appended to Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court, Politics and religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean preaching* (Cambridge, 1998), citing the Westminster Abbey Muniment Book 15 fol.40; for the text see Abbot's account in John Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, (7 vols., 1659-1710), i, p442

years and the latter, in fact, stoutly defended Cowell when, on 27 February, the Commons called for a conference to discuss the matter.²¹

It was perhaps Bancroft who prompted his protégé to preach what was effectively a defence of Cowell's position. According to George Abbot, writing some years later, it was in fact Harsnett's sermon that was the major factor in the king's decision to call the members of both houses to a meeting in the Banqueting House at Whitehall on 21 March.²² No transcript of the sermon survives, but the various accounts of the James' speech make it clear that what had caused offence was Harsnett's unqualified assertion of the king's right to take whatever he needed from his subjects.²³ Speaking some months later one speaker in the Commons neatly summed up the complaints when berating preachers who had allegedly encouraged the king to exceed his prerogative: "Did not a prelate preach upon this text (Give unto Caesar etc.) that it was not to give but to render, and made subsidies not gifts but duties?"²⁴ James made reference to Harsnett's sermon early in the long speech that set out his own position on the divine right of kings. The speech was a clear attempt to calm any fears that he intended to ride roughshod over the liberties of his subjects. In essence his defence of Harsnett was that the bishop had been misunderstood for he had been speaking in the abstract and that, only in theological terms: "of a King's power in Abstracto, [which] is most trew in Divinitie: For to Emperors, or Kings that are Monarchs, their Subjects bodies & goods are due for their defence and

²¹ *DNB* 'John Cowell'

²² Rushworth, *Collections*, i, p.442

²³ According to Abbot the sermon was afterwards burned, *ibid.*: the other accounts are: Henry Hasting's for the Lords in Elizabeth Read Foster (ed.), *Proceedings in Parliament, 1610*, 2 volumes (New Haven, 1966), i, p.46; William Petyt's for the Commons in *ibid.* ii, pp.59-60; and an anonymous account in SP 14/53/31.

maintenance.”²⁵ In James’ view what Harsnett had omitted to say – and, but for want of time occasioned by the presence of both the king himself and a great audience, would certainly have gone on to say – was that all this was according to and in recognition of the established laws of the country. “I would then have concluded”, said James,

as an Englishman, shewing his people, That as in general all subjects were bound to relieve their king; So to exhort them, that as wee lived in a settled state of a kingdome which was governed by his owne fundamental Lawes and Orders, that according thereunto they were now (being assembled for this purpose in Parliament) to consider how to helpe such as they now had; And that according to the ancient forme, and order established in this Kingdome : putting so, a difference betweene the generall power of a king in Divinity, and the settled and established state of this Crowne, and Kingdome.²⁶

The crucial point here is that what James imputes to Harsnett is the argument that, although kings generally do have divine rights, a particular king can negate this if he transgresses the established laws of his kingdom.²⁷ Doubtless, by this speech James was as much concerned with presenting himself as the model monarch as he was in getting Harsnett off the hook. Nevertheless, as will be shown when considering Harsnett’s robust position over the Petition of Right, the king may well have justly presented his bishop’s position.

It seems that Harsnett expected from the outset to play little part in the forthcoming proceedings of the ‘Addled’ Parliament (April-June 1614). Although present on the first day he had already nominated a proxy (whose name is not recorded in the *Lords’*

²⁴ The speaker was a Mr Martin (either Henry or Richard) on 14 November: Foster, *Proceedings, 1610*, ii, p.328

²⁵ J P Somerville (ed.) *King James I and VI: Political writings* (Cambridge, 1994), pp.181-2

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.182

²⁷ See SP 14/53/31 which has the king saying “for all he [Harsnett] said was true divinity in a king generally but not in every particular king.”

Journal),²⁸ and he appeared only three times in the next 28 sittings and sat on none of the seven select committees of the session.²⁹ By contrast, of those bishops who had begun their parliamentary careers with him, Abbot (now of Canterbury), Neile (Lincoln) and Montagu were each in attendance at every sitting of the short 1614 session, while Parry (Worcester) was present at 14 sittings. Neile and Montagu continued as active committeemen with, respectively, six and five appointments. Abbot, perhaps because of his increased responsibilities, sat on only three committees, Parry one. If in 1610 Harsnett had taken a relatively modest (albeit controversial) position over the royal prerogative, Richard Neile, a fellow anti-Calvinist, took a rather more robust one in 1614. According to an anonymous diarist Neile, in opposing the request by the Commons to meet with the Lords over impositions, asserted that “I, or whosoever else that has taken the oath of supremacy and allegiance, cannot with a safe conscience argue or dispute the king’s prerogative to lay impositions.” He went on to impugn the commons where “I fear there will pass from them undutiful and seditious speeches not fit for us to hear”.³⁰ The enmity that this earned Neile was undoubtedly in the memory of those who drew up the Remonstrance of 1628 and again attacked Neile during the parliamentary session of 1629. Despite Neile and Harsnett’s apparently shared Arminianism it will be seen that, as their parliamentary careers progressed, their views over the royal prerogative were to take somewhat different directions.

²⁸ The other six bishops who nominated one or more proxies all named Abbot as one of them, *LJ*,ii, p.686

²⁹ I have not been able to ascertain the reasons for his absence.

³⁰ Maija Jansson (ed.) *Proceedings in Parliament 1614, House of Commons* (Philadelphia, 1988), p.361; for similar accounts see anonymous diarist in *ibid.*, p.363; also in *The Court and Times of James the First . . . transcribed by Thomas Birch* ed. R F Williams (2 vols., 1849) in vol. i, p.122.

The first session of James' 1621 parliament, during which Harsnett rarely appeared, was a relatively harmonious affair. Recalled by James in order to gain financial support for his son-in-law, Frederick Elector of Palatine, the Commons quickly displayed their support for the aim by voting two subsidies. This gesture was perhaps enough to persuade James to overlook a Commons-inspired action to overthrow his chief minister, the Lord Chancellor Francis Bacon, on charges of accepting bribes as a referee of the much maligned grants of patent. James also granted the Commons permission to draft legislation on the prerogative matter of monopolies.

Harsnett may have foreseen his prolonged absence from the Lords, although there is no indication that he appointed a proxy to act on his behalf. In fact he was present at only four of the 86 sittings during the first session that sat between 30 January and 2 June.³¹ Although direct evidence is therefore lacking for Harsnett's position on the major issues of the session there is no reason to suppose that he would have differed from his present patron Arundel by defending his former patron Bacon. He would also have been unlikely to demur from Arundel's apparent connivance with Abbot in rejecting the Monopolies bill.³²

By the opening of the second session on 14 November Harsnett had clearly acquitted himself of whatever distractions had prevented his attendance during the first session, for he was present at all but two of the 25 sittings. It was this session that marked for Harsnett the beginning of an active career as participant on Lords' committees. His ten committee-appointments during this session exceeded those of both Abbot (eight)

³¹ Harsnett attended the sittings on 3, 5, 22 and 27 February; *LJ*, iii, pp.8-9, 25, 30

³² Russell, *Parliaments*, p.113 for Arundel's anti-Bacon stance; Zaller, *1621 Parliament*, p.129-30, for the Monopolies allegiance of Abbot and Arundel.

and Neile (seven) and comprised committees concerned with a variety of matters including those considering the intractable issue of monopolies, and the exportation of wool. This latter appointment, doubtless arising from his incumbency of the major wool-producing diocese of Norwich, presaged his later involvement in matters concerning trade generally, and the wool and cloth industries particularly.

While Harsnett was quietly establishing a presence in the Lords, for Neile, 1621 marked a “breakthrough into parliamentary respectability”.³³ His strong attendance record and numerous committee appointments, that included the prestigious standing committee on privileges, showed this. Abbot too continued his high profile role in the Lords. It was during this session that Abbot’s reservations about Buckingham, a former protégé, emerged over the latter’s treatment of political opponents. By 1626 such reservations were to harden into outright opposition to the favourite, a position that Abbot would share with, alone of the ‘Arminian’ prelates, Harsnett.

In 1624 the House of Lords led the discussions over the issue that dominated the final Jacobean parliament: whether or not England should declare war on Spain. Opening parliament on 19 February, James invited members to advise him on the breaking of the treaties with Spain concerning the restitution of the Palatinate and his once-cherished scheme to tie English and Spanish interests through a marriage alliance. In 1621 the Lords, tacitly supporting the king’s diplomatic strategy, had remained silent over the proposed Spanish Match. Now the ill-fated attempt by Buckingham and Prince Charles to expedite the marriage put these two at the head of the powerful pro-war lobby. Harsnett,

anticipating regular absence from the session, had appointed Valentine Carey, bishop of Exeter, to act as his proxy but seems to have made a particular effort to attend Buckingham's relation of the Spanish expedition, and the discussions that followed. At these sittings on 27-28 February it was the bishops who "specially distinguished themselves by their warlike zeal".³⁴ This opposition was no signifier of doctrinal inclination: Abbot in his opening speech warned of the likelihood of Spanish perfidy and was joined by another high Calvinist, Morton (Coventry and Lichfield) in opposing any alliance with Catholic Spain; but Anti-Calvinist speakers, including Neile, also spoke in favour of war.³⁵

Harsnett, although present, appears to have remained silent during this debate. The position of Harsnett's friend and patron, the Earl of Arundel may, however, give some clue to the bishop's attitudes. The most compelling evidence that Arundel was opposed to war was in his apparent support for Lionel Cranfield. As Lord Treasurer, Cranfield had strongly favoured the Spanish Match for the benefits that the dowry would bring to the hard-pressed crown finances. It was a position that put him wholly at odds with Buckingham who, fearing that Cranfield might persuade the king towards an anti-war policy, engineered his impeachment. Arundel, it seems, supported Cranfield: in a letter of 2 April the Venetian ambassador reported that Cranfield was "assisted secretly by the Earl of Arundel" in a counter-bid to oust Buckingham.³⁶ In the early Caroline parliaments

³³ A W Foster, 'A Biography of Richard Neile, 1562-40', unpublished D.Phil thesis (University of Oxford, 1978), p.132

³⁴ S R Gardiner, *The History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-42*, 10 volumes (1894-96), v. p.189; Russell, *Parliaments*, pp.163-4

³⁵ S R Gardiner (ed.), *Debates in the House of Lords 1624 and 1626*, (Camden New Series, volume xxiv, 1879), pp.5-13; other Anti-Calvinist speakers included Montaigne (London) and Wright (Bristol).

³⁶ *CSP Venetian*, xviii, p.268

when Harsnett spoke to most of the major issues he was to take positions that were largely in concord with those of Arundel. Harsnett's silence is entirely consistent with Arundel's reluctance for an outright confrontation with the duke and the powerful pro-war lobby.

Soon after this, another matter emerged that potentially cast Buckingham in an unfavourable light. Before Buckingham and Charles' trip to Spain the Earl of Bristol had been despatched by James to smooth the negotiations with the Spanish. Buckingham, clearly concerned that Bristol's account of proceedings after the arrival of the duke and prince might place his own role in the matter in an unfavourable light, sought to silence the earl. In another of his reports the Venetian Ambassador once again suggested that Arundel - this time supporting Bristol - was working behind the scenes in opposition to Buckingham.³⁷ Harsnett's position with regard to Bristol in 1624 is not transparent but, two years later, when Buckingham renewed his attack on Bristol, Harsnett vigorously defended the earl. This he did despite the enforced absence of his patron from the House of Lords - a fact that is strongly suggestive that Harsnett was, on his account, supportive of Bristol's efforts to oppose Buckingham's warmongering. There seems, therefore, at least a strong circumstantial case that Harsnett was at odds with his fellow prelates over war with Spain.

While such great matters preoccupied most parliamentarians, Harsnett faced the prospect of defending himself against the complaints by the citizens of Norwich for his conduct as their diocesan.³⁸ He was finally able to present his defence against the accusation on 19 May having requested on 14 May that the agreed conference between

representatives of both houses be expedited.³⁹ This matter may have had some bearing on the request for leave of absence made by Harsnett on 5 March; in any event he did not reappear until 1 May, having missed 45 consecutive sittings.⁴⁰ Thereafter he was present for all but one afternoon sitting until the prorogation of parliament on 29 May. Following the prolonged absence Harsnett resumed committee duties; his appointments again including those that touched commercial matters affecting the Norwich diocese; another concerned the repair and maintenance of the river and port in his home town of Colchester. A further appointment might, if he volunteered his services, suggest the same concern for the welfare of children that he was later to show in the foundation ordinances of his schools in Chigwell.⁴¹

In Harsnett's first parliament James I had spoken in defence of his bishop; in his last address to his own final parliament on 29 May 1624 the king did so again. On the earlier occasion James had sought as much to quell concerns over his own absolutist tendencies as to champion the cause of a relatively junior bishop. Now his defence of Harsnett was suggestive of an altogether more personal regard for the bishop as well as providing support for the assertion that in the closing months of his life the king was increasingly alienated from hard-line Calvinist views. Impressed by Harsnett's spirited defence against the Norwich complaints, James commended Harsnett to the assembled members as a prelate who took the middle ground between papists and puritans both of whom were, as far as the king was concerned, equally undesirable: "it is but little difference to me whether

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.343-4

³⁸ See above, Chapter 4. 2. 'Norwich: 1619-1629'

³⁹ The complaint had first been heard by the Commons on 7 May, *CJ*, i, p.699

⁴⁰ *L J*, iii, pp.246ff

my crowne be gone under ye popes foot or hande of the puritans.”⁴² He then went on to give his full backing to Harsnett for both the decoration of churches and putting down popular lectures:

My Lords for decoration of the church according to ye lawes and customes of England and in such manner as my chapell is adorned I am so farr from discom[m]ending it, that I com[m]end it, And recom[m]end all y[ou]r Lords to cause y[ou]r churches soe to be adorned. I must com[m]end ye Lord of Norwich for putting downe ye popular lectures where fellows stand up and talke and prate what comes in their owne braines, ...⁴³

James’ defence of Harsnett’s conduct in the Norwich affair and this ringing endorsement of his churchmanship seems to have provided a fillip to Harsnett’s parliamentary career for after this date it does exhibit a marked contrast to that shown in the Jacobean sessions. During the following parliaments he was more frequently in attendance and was substantially more involved in committee work; indeed, in this respect becoming by far the most active of the spiritual lords. More significantly, he started to take very visible and independent positions on major constitutional issues that were to dominate the early parliaments of Charles I. However, before moving on to this next stage in Harsnett’s parliamentary career we should briefly pause to reflect on his experiences during the Jacobean parliaments.

Whether in terms of attendance, the routine business of parliament or involvement in the debates on major topics, Harsnett’s contribution to the parliamentary history of the period 1610-1624 is relatively insignificant. Of 346 separate sittings for which attendance

⁴¹ On 11 May 1624 Harsnett was appointed to a committee to consider the Act to Prevent the Destroying and Murdering of Bastard Children. *ibid.*, p.372.

⁴² Cambridge University MS DD.III.87, p114

⁴³ *Ibid.*

is recorded over the four parliaments, Harsnett attended only 148, some 43% compared with an average 57% attendance for all bishops over the same period. Clearly the low attendance also limited the contribution that he made as a member of select committees. With the notable exception of his defence in the Norwich case he made only one recorded 'speech' over the four parliaments and that on a relatively insignificant matter.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, there are features of Harsnett's parliamentary career during this period that are noteworthy in light of what was to come. The position he apparently took over the royal prerogative in 1610 provides a useful benchmark for that which he was to take over the Petition of Right debates in 1628. Although his committee appointments had been relatively few, signs of particular specialisms that emerge in the later Jacobean parliaments augured a Caroline parliamentary career that was to see him become the most active of the spiritual lords in this area. Inferences may also be drawn that his allegiances to the Earl of Arundel, which became highly visible after 1624, were manifest in the Jacobean parliaments and that the delicacy of the political climate explains Harsnett's silence for he was later to show little reticence in expressing views on great matters of state.

⁴⁴ Harsnett spoke briefly to a bill concerning the exchange of York House for certain manors and other properties in Yorkshire between the king and the archbishop of York, Gardiner, *Lords Debates 1624 and 1626*, p.95

2. A New King and his first Parliament, 1625

Charles I opened his first parliament on 18 June 1625, some three months after the death of his father and just two days after the arrival in London of his new French bride, Henrietta Maria. Given the apparent enthusiasm for war displayed by his father's final parliament in the previous year, he did so in the not wholly unreasonable expectation that his own first parliament would provide him with the necessary funding to pursue the cause. In such hopes he was, however, to be disappointed. By the end of the short first session (curtailed by an outbreak of the plague in London) parliament had granted the king just two subsidies, a revenue wholly inadequate for the purpose of waging a war. A second session convened in Oxford with the express purpose of seeking an increase to this initial grant yielded nothing further. It was brought to a close within two weeks after the Commons proved to be more concerned with pursuing grievances against the Duke of Buckingham than addressing the king's need for war finance. In 1625 the Buckingham issue chiefly exercised the members of the Commons, but in the next parliament it became a matter of concern to their counterparts in the Lords, Harsnett not least among them. In addition to the concerns over Buckingham's conduct as chief royal adviser and confidant, a further issue added to the tension between king and parliament in 1625: the perceived threat posed to the church by emergent Arminianism. In this matter, which was to increasingly occupy parliamentary scrutiny for the remainder of the decade, Harsnett was to remain curiously uninvolved. Although Arminianism too was a matter discussed exclusively by the Commons in 1625, the context in which it was first raised deserves some brief comment. The position taken on this - the complaints against Richard Montagu - serve as the first useful litmus test of where men were seen to stand in times to

come. It was therefore a matter of no small importance in understanding why Samuel Harsnett escaped the criticism heaped on Arminians in the Parliament of 1629.

During the negotiations over the French marriage James had chosen to renege on his own undertaking to recall parliament in the autumn of 1624. This served to create fears that concessions were being made to the French over the treatment of English recusants, a fear that Charles exacerbated by the apparent delay in calling parliament until the marriage could be presented as a *fait accompli*. It was against this background that some members in the Commons articulated their concerns about Arminianism; a phenomenon that would, if permitted to flourish, usher in popery by the back door. The catalyst for the concerns was the tolerant attitude shown by the king and his close spiritual advisors towards Richard Montagu. Montagu's controversial work, *A New Gagge for an Old Goose*, published in 1624, was in effect a defence of the Church of England as a catholic church. In so arguing Montagu had asserted that the Calvinist position on grace was in fact a puritan position, not the orthodoxy of the Church of England. This gave rise to a complaint in the 1624 parliament, a result of which was that Abbot asked Montagu to review his position. He did so, but hardly in the way that Abbot had intended. In the *Appello Caesarem*, published in 1625 Montagu sought to justify the position taken in the *Gagge*. For a number in the Commons, led by John Pym, publication of the *Appello* was, in view of their position in the previous year, contempt of parliament for which Montagu was placed in custody awaiting a hearing. It was Charles' response to this - claiming privilege of parliament for Montagu as one of his servants - that effectively ensured that Arminianism became, and would remain, a constant source of friction between him and parliament.

Although the Montagu affair was not discussed in the Lords, at least one of their number, Richard Neile, took a pro-Montagu position that could hardly have escaped the attentions of those who railed against it in the Commons. Francis White, later to succeed Harsnett as bishop of Norwich and himself named Arminian in the 1629 parliament, provides the link to the then bishop of Durham, Neile. Neile, himself entrusted by James in 1624 of overseeing the Montagu affair, had charged White with reading the manuscript of the *Appello* and the latter's endorsement appeared in the published edition.⁴⁵ Few of the other Lords spiritual appeared at this stage to have Neile's confidence in supporting Montagu, but as the inclinations of the new king and his favourite became apparent, so men like Laud emerged from the shadows to form the visible ranks of senior Arminians. By keeping his counsel Harsnett also kept his distance from these men and was to remain distant as others began to swell their ranks⁴⁶

Matters played out in the Commons may have dominated the parliament of 1625, but there was what was to become a highly significant development for Harsnett's place in the House of Lords. On 23 June he was appointed to the standing committee for privileges joining six other lords spiritual including Abbot and Neile, and his own secular patron, the Earl of Arundel.⁴⁷ In 1625 members of the committee, which had first been established in 1621, were for the first time nominated by members of their own bench.⁴⁸ Thus, although the Earl of Arundel sat on the committee, it seems that it was not by virtue of his influence that Harsnett was appointed. This is a significant point insofar as issues of

⁴⁵ Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c.1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987), p.151

⁴⁶ It is difficult to conceive that Harsnett did not read Montagu's works, but neither work was included in his library bequest, Gordon Goodwin, *A Catalogue of the Harsnett Library*, (1888)

⁴⁷ M Jansson and W B Bidwell (eds.), *Proceedings in Parliament 1625* (New Haven, 1987), pp.45, 48-9

⁴⁸ Foster, *House of Lords*, p.97

privilege affecting the earl arose in the following parliament. The basis on which candidates were put forward is no longer transparent, but it was not merely a matter of seniority on the episcopal bench. One appointee, Richard Senhouse of Carlisle, had received his first diocesan appointment only the previous year.

For Harsnett, as for the House of Lords in general, the 1625 parliament was a relatively quiet affair: the Commons petition concerning Montagu never reached the Lords and when the Commons seemed more determined to use the second session to pursue Buckingham rather than deal with issue of further subsidy Charles immediately dissolved the parliament. Of the 34 sittings Harsnett was in attendance at just over half, more or less equally distributed between the Westminster and Oxford sessions. At the opening of the Oxford session he clearly anticipated a brief absence: he asked to be excused by the House on a request submitted through Bishop Morton.⁴⁹ In addition to his appointment to the Privileges committee and its sub-committee to “peruse and perfect the Journal book”, Harsnett sat on six select committees.

3. In Opposition to the Duke: the Parliament of 1626

Charles’ coronation took place on 2 February, just four days prior to the opening of his second parliament, and Harsnett read the traditional text used on such occasions: “Give unto Caesar the things that be Caesar’s”.⁵⁰ Arrangements for the coronation had been entrusted to William Laud and it was presumably he that recommended Harsnett for his part in proceedings. In view of the Harsnett’s 1610 sermon on the same theme, he must

⁴⁹ Jansonn and Bidwell (ed.), *Proceedings 1625*, p.125

have seemed an appropriate choice; in the light of what was to come it was not without irony. Whether Harsnett's place in the coronation proceedings was determined by his seniority on the episcopal bench or for the fact that his supposed doctrinal inclinations were in accord with Laud (and perhaps the king's) cannot now be established. Whatever the case, events of this parliament soon served to distance Harsnett from the very men whose views on the church he most likely shared. At the root of this was not, it seems, any particular ideological differences, but rather Harsnett's loyalty to his patron, the Earl of Arundel. The first hint of a campaign to undermine Arundel's standing at court came on the day of the coronation, when Buckingham seems to have been behind Charles' public rebuff of Arundel's planned reception for the royal party.⁵¹ Shortly after this, Buckingham's position as champion of the Arminian faction became clear. On 11 February he presided over the first meeting of the so-called York House conference attended by the leading anti-Calvinists on the episcopal bench: Laud, Neile, Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and George Montaigne. The snub to his patron would hardly have endeared the duke to Harsnett, but it seems unlikely to have been the primary reason for his absence. As we have seen Harsnett had already fallen foul of Andrewes over the affair of the Pembroke mastership. The alienation from Andrewes almost certainly explains why Harsnett was never a member of Neile's Durham House Group. Thus, long before Buckingham granted his patronage to the Arminian circle, Harsnett had been excluded from the covert networking of those who were seemingly natural allies.

⁵⁰ As prescribed by the *Liber Regalis*, L G W Legg (ed.) *English Coronation Records* (1901), pp.103/125; for Harsnett as the reader see *ibid* p.269 and marginal note on BL Harleian MS.5222, p.53: "It was read by D^r Harsnet B^p. of Norw^{ch}".

⁵¹ Kevin Sharpe, 'The Earl of Arundel, His Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-28', in *Faction and Parliament: Essays in Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978), p.230:

The growing enmity between Buckingham and Arundel was played out in the House of Lords against the background of a number of different issues that had significant constitutional implications. Harsnett, often from his newly acquired place on the Privileges Committee, played no small part in these disputes – the question of Lord's proxies, the restraint of Arundel for a supposed personal misdemeanour against the king, the case of the Earl of Bristol and the Common's attempt to impeach Buckingham. Each will thus be considered in turn to determine the reasons for his growing alienation from the Arminian faction and the commensurate respect such positions earned him with those outside that narrow circle.

Just who provided the initiative for reviewing the number of proxies that could be held by any one Lord is not readily apparent from the parliamentary sources. But a number of things are clear: that Arundel was a leading enthusiast for the measure; that the aim was to restrict Buckingham's influence in crucial votes; and that Harsnett supported his patron against Buckingham and that peer's supporters. On 15 February the appointments to the Privileges Committee were agreed and shortly thereafter the Lord Keeper charged the committee to consider action against those absentee Lords who had named no proxy.⁵² According to Lord Montagu, the Earl of Westmorland moved the motion, although at this stage there was no suggestion that limitations would be placed on the number of proxies held.⁵³ The first clue that the committee was keen to go further came from Arundel himself. At the committee's initial report he urged a further sitting:

⁵² W B Bidwell and Maija Jansson. *Proceedings in Parliament, 1626*. (4 volumes. New Haven, 1991-96), i, pp.49-50

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.51

“The same committee to meet and consider of a new order.”⁵⁴ The outcome of the committee’s deliberations became clear on 25 February when four orders concerning proxies were proposed. John Chamberlain, writing to Dudley Carleton, was in no doubt that the manoeuvre was aimed at Buckingham:

[T]he Duke had one feather pluckt from his wing in the upper house in the matter of proxies of those that be absent, wherof he having eleven yt was thought inconvenient that one or two men by that meanes might sway the house.⁵⁵

The reference was to the third order: “no Lord of this House shall be capable of receiving above two proxies, nor more to be numbered in any cause voted.”⁵⁶ Buckingham dismissed the order as a slight on members and proposed no alteration be made without the king’s agreement. Among his supporters Laud argued rather more pragmatically that the order be trialled rather than instituted permanently, and Neile that the proposal was an unwanted restraint.⁵⁷ Joining Viscount Saye and Sele and others in opposing a suggestion that precedents be searched before instituting the order, Harsnett demonstrated a good grasp of procedure while managing to sound a note of contempt for the opponents of the order. It was, he remarked, “a novelty to look into precedents for making an order.”⁵⁸ It was a position shared by the majority and the order was carried.⁵⁹

This direct challenge to the interests of the king’s favourite was probably a major factor in Charles’ order of the 5 March that Arundel be sequestered from the Privy Council and imprisoned in the Tower. The alleged offence was that Arundel had allowed

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.62

⁵⁵ John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 7 March, in N E McClure (ed.), *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, (2 volumes, Philadelphia, 1939) ii, p.630

⁵⁶ Bidwell and Jansson, *Proceedings 1626*, i, p.70 (also pp.71/73)

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.72

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.73

his son to marry Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of Lord Lennox, without seeking the king's permission. The marriage had in fact taken place prior to the start of the parliamentary session, but it may well be the case that the king delayed action until Arundel's opposition to Buckingham became clear.⁶⁰ Pressing business seems to have prevented the issue being raised by the Lords until 14 March. On this day the Lord Keeper delivered a message from the king informing the Lords that Arundel had been restrained for a personal misdemeanour that had no bearing on parliament, whereupon the Committee for Privileges was charged with searching for precedents for such commitments of other peers during the time of a parliament.⁶¹ The next day saw a vigorous debate on the matter. Harsnett, among others, was clearly much agitated. He was one of the Lords to speak at least twice to the matter, a fact that, as Lord Montagu rightly observed, was "contrary to the ancient order".⁶² Rattled though he was, Harsnett was concerned that proper courtesy should be observed:

To avoid the rocks that may breed distastes, etc., to his Majesty. Motion, to attend his Majesty and humbly entreat his Majesty to receive from the House the reason of their tenderness of their privileges, etc., by our petition, etc.⁶³

In speaking thus Harsnett was supported by the Calvinist bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, Thomas Morton while Lord Saye and Sele was for proceeding with a search for precedents. Morton and Say and Sele were in fact the only lords other than Harsnett to speak more than once to the motion. Arguing against any further search for precedents, and in so doing once again siding with Buckingham, was William Laud. On this occasion Laud seems rather to have missed the point and in so doing effectively (but apparently

⁶⁰ V F Snow, 'The Arundel Case, 1626', *The Historian* 26 (1964), pp.323-49

⁶¹ Bidwell and Jansson, *Proceedings 1626*, i, pp.149-50

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.159 and n.19 for the standing order against speaking twice to a motion.

unwittingly) arguing against himself. Whatever misdemeanour Arundel had committed it was none of the things that Laud claimed in arguing, “for treason, felony, and breach of the peace, the King’s prerogative lies”.⁶⁴ In the event the majority vote went towards suspending any response to the king’s message until the committee had further time to examine the precedents.⁶⁵ The affair rumbled on: by 18 April both the Privileges Committee and another select committee appointed to consider the king’s counsel’s precedents for the imprisonment reported respectively that no precedents could be found and that none had been offered. Only after a Remonstrance had been presented to the king, and subsequently the Lords ceased to conduct any business until Arundel had been released to attend the House, did he eventually take his place on 8 June. The tension created by the restraint of Arundel thus continued throughout the remainder of the session and doubtless exacerbated concerns in the Lords over the treatment of another of their number, the Earl of Bristol.

John Digby, 1st Earl of Bristol, had been appointed by James to conduct negotiations over the Spanish Match and in that business had fallen foul of both Charles and Buckingham, who had used their influence with James to have Bristol confined to his estate in Dorset. After James’ death Charles removed the earl from the Privy Council, and, when Bristol had sought permission to attend the coronation, accused him of disloyal conduct and attempting to convert the prince to Popery. This issue culminated in Bristol petitioning that he might take his seat in the Lords, there to defend himself against the Duke’s charges and to bring his own accusations that would show Buckingham to have

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.158

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.159

abused the king, state and both houses of Parliament.⁶⁶ As a member of the Privileges Committee Harsnett may have defended Bristol merely in order to protect the rights of a fellow member of the house; or he may have done so because it served to embarrass Buckingham (against whom Bristol was making damaging allegations). Whatever the case, defend Bristol's cause Harsnett certainly did. On 29 April the Lords debated whether Bristol should be able to answer for himself from his seat or whether he should remain in custody and defend himself from the bar of the House as a delinquent. Harsnett's 1624 defence against the accusations brought by the citizens of Norwich was raised as one recent precedent of a like case but Harsnett himself drew a distinction between the two cases. In this latter case, Harsnett reminded the House, he had faced a charge raised in the Commons and yet on enquiry he had been instructed to answer the charge from his place. In Bristol's case, however, no formal charge had been made and thus, argued Harsnett, the peer should be allowed to take his seat on the bench.⁶⁷ On 1 May Bristol was brought to the bar of the House and requested that he might bring his charges against Buckingham before the king's charge of treason against him was heard.⁶⁸ When the question was put to the House Harsnett was first to speak, arguing that Bristol's petition constituted an accusation and therefore had priority in order over the king's charge, that had not yet been formally received.⁶⁹

Earlier in the session Charles had resisted the Commons' attempts to bring charges against Buckingham. However, the introduction of Bristol's case to the Lords gave that

⁶⁶ For Bristol's petition, *ibid.*, p.284

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.321

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.328/337

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.337-8; the compromise agreed on was to hear the substance of both charge and counter-charge leaving the priority to be decided later, *ibid.* p.329

house its own interest in Buckingham's affairs because the substance of Bristol's defence against treason was an accusation of the same against the duke. Thereafter the accusations became interdependent and much of the remainder of the session was taken up with procedural matters as to how the two cases might be taken forward.

If Harsnett's antipathy to Buckingham is strongly evidenced through his positions on the proxies issue, the restraint of Arundel, and Bristol's case, then the positions he took on Buckingham's own case leave no doubt. On the 8 May Harsnett was one of eight lords appointed to report formally on a conference of both houses at which the Commons' complaints against Buckingham were to be presented.⁷⁰ On 15 May Harsnett gave his long report concerning the charges of Sir John Eliot against the duke.⁷¹ Although the content of Eliot's charges was damning, Harsnett appears to have confined himself to a straightforward report with no added spin; in the discussions that ensued he showed no such impartiality. Immediately succeeding Harsnett's report the Commons' impeachment articles against Buckingham were read to the Lords. In a reported response to this Buckingham claimed that one of his chief accusers in the Commons, Sir Dudley Digges, had made such remarks during the conference that "so far did trench on the King's honor that they are interpreted treasonable". Furthermore, Buckingham asserted that the eight reporting lords would confirm this by willingly producing their notes of the conference.⁷² This assertion was just too much for many of those present: among the strongest protests were those of Saye and Sele, like Harsnett a reporter of the conference, Morton and Harsnett who declared, in direct contradiction of Buckingham, the view that, "No rational

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.380

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp.460-3

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.477

construction can be made of anything that can touch the King's honor."⁷³ Perhaps sensing themselves that the duke had gone too far, but unwilling to contradict him, Buckingham's clients Laud and Neile pleaded silence on the matter, although Neile at least admitted that he believed Digges "in his heart [he] meant well".⁷⁴

Ultimately, neither the Buckingham nor the Bristol case came to trial because Charles, more concerned to put a stop to investigations of his favourite's affairs than to see the latter punished, dissolved parliament on 14 June. It would be facile to argue that in Harsnett's stances on the major issues preoccupying the Lords during 1626 he was somehow fearlessly standing up for his convictions against the majority. It has been well demonstrated that Buckingham had many opponents in the Lords and Harsnett was not alone in taking positions against the Duke. Nevertheless, by doing so he was clearly emerging as one of both Buckingham's and, by implication, the king's most consistent opponents.

That Harsnett should have taken sides with the likes of Morton and Saye and Sele against the new champion of the Arminian faction and his clients tends to add weight to the view that factional interest took precedence over ideology in the parliaments of the 1620s, even for an 'Arminian' bishop. The evidence suggests that Harsnett did so primarily out of loyalty to his friend and patron, the Earl of Arundel. If so, it was an impressive show of devotion: for the most part acting necessarily in Arundel's absence, Harsnett did not restrict himself to quiet opposition merely, for example, voting against

⁷³ Ibid., pp.482-3; Saye and Sele: "Protested on his honor that he conceived not that Digges had any such intention. Neither were his words so. Neither did he conceive them such. If he had, he would have presently reprehended him." Morton: "Upon his faith etc., he heard nothing, neither can conceive anything, that might, etc."

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.483

the duke's positions, but intervened forcefully in the interests of his patron. Even at the very end of the session, when it became clear that Charles had run out of patience and had determined to bring the parliament to an end, Harsnett was involved in one final gesture of defiance to the royal will. On 15 June, in what was to be the final day of the session, he was appointed to a committee to draw up a petition calling on the king not to dissolve parliament. Once again Harsnett found himself in the company of Lord Saye and Sele. Only one other from the episcopal bench, George Abbot, joined Harsnett on the committee; Arminians like Laud and Neile were doubtless hoping for an end to the business so that their new champion would escape further unwanted attention.⁷⁵

Harsnett's involvement in these major issues was by no means the limit of his contributions to the business of the House. The session saw him attend 72 of the 81 sittings (89%); by far the best attendance record of his parliamentary career to this date. In addition to his reappointment to the Privileges Committee he was also appointed for the first time to the Petitions Committee, the other Lord's standing committee. Furthermore, during the session he sat on no less than 30 select committees, these appointments representing a wide range of business. Hitherto, Harsnett had rarely sat on any committee that was concerned with religion or the Church but in this, as in many other respects, 1626 marked a turning point in his parliamentary career. In this session he sat on at least six such committees including those dealing with acts concerning the discovery and suppression of recusants,⁷⁶ the better maintenance of the ministry,⁷⁷ and the reform of

⁷⁵ For composition of the committee see Bidwell and Jansson, *Proceedings 1626*, i. p.633

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.127

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.292-3

abuses on the Sabbath day.⁷⁸ In the light of his own sabbatarianism, the last is the most interesting of such appointments, especially as Laud and Neile also sat on the same committee. No record apparently survives by which we can determine the nature of the discussions that took place in this committee, but it may well have been an issue that served to widen the rift that seemingly took place between Harsnett and the other Arminians on the episcopal bench over rather more secular matters. Continuing the interests of previous sessions he once again sat on select committees that had a distinctly commercial slant and doubtless of some interest to his Norwich diocese: on this occasion acts concerning the transportation of wool, fullers earth and fullers clay;⁷⁹ the better preservation of saltpetre;⁸⁰ the better venting of dyed and dressed cloths.⁸¹

Harsnett has been portrayed as a rather severe, authoritarian figure but one small incident from this session suggests that this is not an entirely fair assessment. Through his place on the Petitions Committee, Harsnett seems to have played the leading role in the case of a Norwich citizen, George Gardyner, who had appeared before the Lords for selling protections under the forged signature of the Earl of Huntingdon. The case against Gardyner seems to have been straightforward enough, for the Lords, on hearing the evidence of the Petitions Committee, sentenced him on 4 April to stand in the pillory in both Westminster and Norwich.⁸² The following day, on the strength of a letter by Harsnett, it was agreed to respite the censure until further witnesses, whom Gardyner was

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.300/3: for other committees, see pp.295/7, 313/5, 327/36

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.231/4

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.319/20

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp.327/36

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.250

attempting to implicate in the business, could be heard.⁸³ In arguing for the respite Harsnett was doubtless merely acting as a fair-minded member of the Petitions Committee in order that Gardyner be allowed to demonstrate any mitigating circumstances. However, after these witnesses had been heard and cleared of any wrongdoing, it was Harsnett who, notwithstanding the fact that he knew two of these witnesses who Gardyner was attempting to asperse “to be men of great worth and credit”, argued for “[s]ome mercy to Gardyner in respect of his friends and alliances.” For once during this session Harsnett was arguing the opposite case to Lord Saye and Sele whose argument that Gardyner be made an example won the day with the majority over Harsnett’s plea for leniency.⁸⁴

4. The Petition of Right, 1628

Charles dissolved the 1626 Parliament in order to put a stop to proceedings against Buckingham but in so doing left himself without finances to meet the cost of war. His solution, to order a forced loan, was a short-term success. However, by early 1628 he was again forced to resort to parliament for financial support. Resentment of the extra-parliamentary means to which Charles had resorted in the interval between sessions soon surfaced, principally aggravated by the Five Knights’ case. Although these men had been arrested by special command of the king without stated reason, it was quite apparent to most that the action was a direct response to their refusal to pay the Forced Loan. It was the ensuing debates over whether imprisonment without stated cause was a legitimate

⁸³ Ibid., p.259

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.281

exercise of the royal prerogative that directly led to the constitutional crisis that culminated in the Petition of Right.

Responding to the king's insistence that early consideration be given to the matter of supply, the Commons resolved to provide him with five subsidies. Yet it soon became apparent that before they would pass an Act confirming this resolution they wanted satisfaction in the matter of the subjects' liberties. In the light of Charles' actions over the Forced Loan, most members of the Commons were inclined to press for a Bill that would enshrine their liberties in law; as a first step to achieving this they determined to consult the Lords. The initial conference between the two Houses took place on 7 April and, as in 1626, a distinct body of opposition to the crown's view of matters soon emerged among the Lords. In one respect the following examination of Harsnett's participation in the ensuing debates - finally concluding with the king's reluctant agreement to the Petition of Right - merely tends to confirm his place in what has been termed the "opposition party".⁸⁵ However, what is more significant than the mere fact of his place within an opposition party is why it should have been so and what that signified. A close analysis of proceedings allows us the opportunity to consider the possible intellectual basis of his stand, the extent to which it was dependent or independent of his patron the Earl of Arundel, and how his involvement marked him out from the majority of his spiritual peers, especially from those whose ecclesiological views he has generally been held to share.

Harsnett's early determination to be involved in the matter of the subject's liberty is perhaps discernible from his appointment as one of the four assistants to the like number of Lords formally charged to report the Commons' presentation at the meeting of the two

Houses on 7 April.⁸⁶ This appointment placed him in the company of two men who were also to become leading members of the so-called “opposition party”: Viscount Saye and Sele, with whom Harsnett had frequently shared a platform in 1626, was appointed one of the other assistants, while Bishop Williams of Lincoln was appointed reporter.⁸⁷ The first debate in the Lords took place on 12 April, following a presentation by Sir Robert Heath (the Attorney General) of the legality of the Crown’s case for imprisonment without stated cause. This debate centred on the way to proceed: the Crown’s supporters, including the Duke of Buckingham, argued that the judges in *Darnell’s Case*, the findings of which the five knights had appealed against, should be heard. The opposition, fearing that such a hearing would be followed by a vote and the case clinched in the Crown’s favour, sought to have a further conference with the Commons; “before we proceed to judgment in this great cause”, as Harsnett put it.⁸⁸ The outcome of the debate went with the Crown, but when the judges addressed the Lords on 14 April, far from settling the issue they declared that in fact they had made no judgment, having merely imprisoned the defendants while precedents were examined.⁸⁹ Having now avoided a vote in the Lords, Harsnett and other sympathisers of the Commons’ cause pressed again for a further conference with the lower house. Harsnett summed up the dilemma facing the house:

Marvels that as yet since Magna Carta we know not what is *lex terrae*. It is impossible to make a just meridian between the King’s prerogative and the people’s

⁸⁵ J S Flemion, ‘The Struggle for the Petition of Right in the House of Lords: The Study of an Opposition Party Victory’, *Journal of Modern History* 45 (1973), p.199

⁸⁶ R C Johnson, M F Keeler, M J Cole, and W B Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* (6 volumes, New Haven, 1977-83), v, pp.157, 159, 161

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Flemion, ‘Petition of Right’, p.199; Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v, p.210

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.217; *LJ*, iii, p.738

liberties, etc. To prepare this for the Commons. To set aside all further dispute, and then we and they to think of some accommodation.⁹⁰

The desired conference with the Commons took place on 16/17 April and after the Commons' speeches had been reported, discussions resumed on 21 April when it was concluded that the king or Council could imprison with a good cause.

The next day it remained to settle the outstanding issue: should the just cause be expressed in the warrant? Saye and Sele opened the debate arguing that neither the law nor precedent allowed for imprisonment without stated cause; but even if reason of state might sometimes make it necessary it should never be at the expense of the law.⁹¹ He was followed by the Earl of Arundel, who was speaking for the first time since the debates on the liberties of the subject had entered the House of Lords, and who summed up the conundrum under debate. The law prevented the king from committing an individual without expressed cause, but inherent in the prerogative was that the king might do exactly that in certain cases.⁹² It was an admirably balanced comment, leaving his sympathies in doubt.⁹³ John Williams was, by contrast, unambiguous in his view: "Till the cause be shown, the commitment is not according to the laws."⁹⁴ Proceedings were briefly interrupted by a message from the Commons offering a new conference to clarify any doubts of interpretation over their proposals, an offer that may have been deliberately conceived to prevent a vote on their proposal by the Lords.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v. p.233; also p.235

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.320

⁹² *Ibid.*,

⁹³ Gardiner thought that Arundel was one of a 'middle group', *History, 1603-42*, vi, pp.277-8; Flemion placed him as a crown supporter while he had Harsnett as a member of the "opposition". 'Petition of Right', p.204 n.38; Sharpe placed Arundel (with the Earl of Bristol) at the head of a centre group of which Harsnett and Williams were members. 'Earl of Arundel', p.236.

⁹⁴ Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v. p.321

⁹⁵ Flemion, 'Petition of Right', p.201

George Abbot then entered the debate on the side of the “opposition” arguing against the “impudency” of those who suggested that kings were not bound to do justice to those who were not their equals. When any exceptions to the law were made, “they do be well pondered”.⁹⁶ Harsnett joined the debate with a speech that made good an omission of principle of some 18 years earlier. It will be recalled that in Harsnett’s first parliament, James I had qualified the bishop’s assertion that kings had the right to demand whatever they needed from their subjects, by adding that they could do so only in accordance with the laws of the land. Now, in a slightly different context, Harsnett demonstrated that he well understood and accepted the principle, for he suggested that a way to modify the Commons’ proposal to make it acceptable was, “to add these words to the beginning, viz., *secundem legem terrae*”.⁹⁷ As discussions continued Buckingham became increasingly irritated, stressing the need for a speedy conclusion of the matter - by vote rather than yet another conference with the Commons - in order to expedite the subsidy act and thereby prosecute the war with France.⁹⁸ Harsnett was tenacious, making two further speeches in direct opposition to Buckingham’s view. In the first he argued vehemently against a vote on the proposition: “Not to destroy this work by a vote. Meant it for a question of our debate, not for a question to be voted.”⁹⁹ This echoed the view already expressed by Saye and Sele and was now immediately followed by Arundel who, in a rare glimpse of his position, supported the argument against a vote.¹⁰⁰ Harsnett and

⁹⁶ Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v. p.321

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.321/7

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.324/5

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.324; see also p.330

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.324

Williams then concluded the day's proceedings by successfully pressing for a conference with the Commons.¹⁰¹

The following day it was agreed to appoint a committee comprising of 18 peers, drawn from proponents of both sides of the argument, to consider what should be communicated to a similar committee of the lower House. Harsnett was among the number appointed and Abbot, Williams and Morton completed the cast of the lords spiritual. Of the secular peers Buckingham led the crown party, Saye and Sele and the Earl of Bristol the opposition; Arundel, perhaps by virtue of his office as Earl Marshal, was also appointed. Abbot, as spokesman for the Lords' committee, reported the outcome of the first meeting with the Commons; the agreed purpose of the forthcoming conference was to reach a mutually acceptable agreement as to how to protect both the king's prerogative and the subjects' liberties.¹⁰² The outcome of the Lords committee's deliberations was finally presented to the Commons on 25 April in the form of an alternative proposition that, according to Abbot, took full cognisance of the Commons' own proposals and was intended to provide no unalterable statement, "but a model to be added unto, altered or diminished as in your reasons and wisdoms you shall think fit".¹⁰³ The substance of the propositions was that the king confirmed the provisions of Magna Carta and the subsequent explicatory statutes regarding the liberties of the subject. Furthermore, in regard to the royal prerogative, the king accepted in principle that the

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.326; see also p.328

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.333

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, iii, p.75

reason for restraint or imprisonment should be given and thus undertook, “within a convenient time”, to declare it.¹⁰⁴

It seems that Harsnett may well have played a major part in both the production and delivery of the Lords’ propositions. Although, given the composition of the committee, the propositions must have been a compromise offering, William Laud clearly thought that Harsnett was the significant contributor to the final text. On a copy of the propositions he noted that they were “Penned by Dr. Harsnet, Bishop of Norwich.”¹⁰⁵ If Harsnett had been so involved it would also serve to explain why Abbot invited him to read the propositions to the Commons.¹⁰⁶ In fact, the Lords propositions were hardly radical and their offering did little to appease the Commons who continued to work on their own version to be incorporated into a bill.¹⁰⁷ A message from the king to the Commons on 5 May effectively put paid to the hope of gaining his assent to a Bill: although he was prepared to accept a bill confirming Magna Carta and the six explicatory statutes he would do so only if “it may be without additions, paraphrases, or explanations.”¹⁰⁸ It was as a result of this that Sir Edward Coke, the following day, persuaded the Commons to replace the Bill with a Petition of Right.¹⁰⁹ By this device Parliament was effectively appealing to the king on behalf of all his subjects to acknowledge that the royal government had committed a wrong. If it received the

¹⁰⁴ The text of the propositions is printed in *ibid.*, pp.74-5; also in *ibid.*, v, pp.344-5

¹⁰⁵ SP 16/102/14; further annotations suggest that Laud was less than impressed by the propositions, M A Judson, *The Crisis of the Constitution* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1949), p.164

¹⁰⁶ For the evidence as to who read the propositions – Abbot or Harsnett – see Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, iii, p.74 n.34; to the argument in favour can be added a copy of the propositions in The Queen’s College, Oxford MS.CLV pp.180-90, supposedly authored and read by Harsnett, p.180

¹⁰⁷ The Bill was first read on 29 April, Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, iii, p.149

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.254

necessary backing of both Houses, it would have the same effect as an Act: binding justices to find against any similar future abuses of the subjects' liberties.

Ultimately this change of tactic was successful and once again Harsnett was in the vanguard of those Lords sympathetic to the Commons' cause. On 8 May the Commons presented the Petition to the Lords and the next day a committee of ten peers, including Harsnett, Williams, Saye and Sele and Arundel, was appointed to debate the matter.¹¹⁰ Although there was a body of sympathy within the Lords towards the Commons' grievances, it is as well to appreciate that they were not wholly in accord. In thinking in terms of an "opposition group" it is perhaps best to see a body of men who were concerned to protect the fundamental liberties of the subject, but saw it as their primary duty to broker an accommodation between the contrasting positions of the Commons and Crown. Thus, when the king appeared to be offering some acknowledgement that his, or rather his counsellors', treatment of the loan resistors had been heavy-handed, there was a widespread acknowledgement in the Lords that it was a step in the right direction. The olive branch had come in the form of a letter delivered to the Lords on 10 May while the Lords committee was considering its own response to the Petition. In this the king went some way to addressing the original complaint by undertaking that no person would in future be imprisoned for refusing to lend money to the Crown. He also accepted, that in the case of those who were imprisoned for reasons of state security, the reason would be supplied, "so soon as with convenience or safety the same is fit to be disclosed and expressed."¹¹¹ Harsnett, together with other "opposition" peers, made it clear that he saw

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.272

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, v, pp.401/2

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, iii, p.372

the king's letter as representing a substantial concession and argued for persuading the Commons to accommodate it within the Petition.¹¹² On 19 May the Commons sought a meeting at which to respond to the Lords' alterations to the Petition, including the addition of a saving clause concerning the prerogative. Harsnett supported a conference but made it clear that he, for one, was ultimately prepared to concede the Lords' alterations if it jeopardised an accommodation between the two Houses: "That we give way to them in their way but that we have a conference; then give some reasons that induced us to the alteration and after, upon better reason, to give way to them."¹¹³ Ultimately the Commons and their sympathisers in the Lords got their way and the Petition was delivered to the king on 28 May. Nevertheless it was not before Harsnett had taken the opportunity to express his frustration with proceedings over the sticking point of the king's prerogative:

It is strange that our intention should be one and yet we should not be able to express that intention. That you would be pleased as they have reserved themselves out of respect so that we should endeavor to meet with them in a middle way before we vote anything peremptorily. To affix to that particular "that no free man", etc., that this does not touch upon the King's prerogative.¹¹⁴

The king's first response to the Petition, on 2 June, avoided the conventional form of assent to a petition of right that would have made its particulars, in effect, binding in law. Harsnett's reaction to this, delivered in a keynote speech to the House on 7 June, revealed perhaps more than in anything else that he had said or done before, his absolute commitment to the issue:

Now the House is full I shall crave pardon to utter unto your Lordships the charges of a troubled heart, and not to hold you long with expectation of any great

¹¹² *Ibid.*, v. p.429; Saye and Sele and Abbot were also prepared to seek an accommodation. *ibid.*, p.433

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.467; for another report of the same. see p.462

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.484; for other reports see pp.480/486/487

matter. It is that we shall not rise at the end of this parliament with that comfort and joy as I thought we should have done when I returned and see [sic] the answer....I am afraid that though it be full of grace it is not that comes home and gives full satisfaction to the petition as was expected.¹¹⁵

Harsnett then moved that a conference be held with the Lower House to petition the king for “such an answer that may flow fully to the petition.” Once again Harsnett was attempting to steer a middle course - the Commons solution had been to proceed with a potentially inflammatory remonstrance to the king. His initiative proved to be exactly the right strategy. Before the conference, warmly welcomed by the Commons, could take place the king yielded. In response to a further reading he gave his second reply to the Petition in the formula sought: *Soit droit fait comme est desire*.¹¹⁶

Harsnett’s involvement in the progress of the Petition of Right through the House of Lords raises a number of questions. Why did he adopt the position he did and just how much an opponent of the Crown was he? In pursuing his particular standpoint was he merely acting in accordance with the position of his patron, the Earl of Arundel? How did his involvement compare with other bishops and how might it have affected his standing with them? Whilst the available evidence inevitably places limits on the extent to which these issues can be resolved, they are so critical to both the context of Harsnett’s career, and its later progression, as well as to an understanding of both the nature of the man and his reputation with contemporaries, that some attempt at answering them has to be made.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.598; for another report see p.600

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p.600

It has been argued that Harsnett's stand placed him within a body of men in the Lords strongly opposed to the Crown's position – the so-called “opposition party”.¹¹⁷ This may well be a useful term in considering this group's position in their own House but, as has been previously suggested, less so when the position of the Parliament as a whole is considered. In fact the opposition group in the Lords acted as a moderating force on the contrasting positions of most in the Commons and the Crown faction, led by Buckingham, in the Lords – seeking, as Harsnett himself put it, “a middle way”. That this was so is demonstrated by the Lords' propositions offered as a response to the early Commons' proposals for a bill and by their later deliberations over the precise wording to be incorporated in the jointly proffered Petition of Right. If Harsnett did indeed draft the Lords' propositions then that would confirm his desire to broker a compromise. The Commons saw the propositions for what they were: an honest endeavour to reach accommodation of both points of view but one, in their view, allowing too much latitude for interpretation.

That Harsnett adopted the position he did may have been, as some have implied, the result of the direct influence of his patron, Arundel.¹¹⁸ It can certainly be argued that Harsnett's position over the Petition of Right was logically consistent with that which he had adopted two years earlier over Arundel's incarceration without stated cause. In that case it is not unlikely that he made his stand precisely because it concerned his patron. However, Harsnett's attitude to the matter of the Petition is somewhat different. If in this case he was following a line laid down by Arundel, it is worth noting that the earl gave virtually no indication of his own position on the subject in the period leading up to the

¹¹⁷ Fleming. ‘Petition of Right’, pp.199, 204 n.38

presentation of the Lords' propositions on 25 April. Even after that date when the strategy switched from Bill to Petition the sum of Arundel's contribution to the debates is more difficult to read than Harsnett's.

There are several noteworthy features concerning the episcopal contribution to the Lords' debates over subjects' liberties. The first is simply that so few of the episcopate made any contribution; the second, of those that did have any significant contribution all were broadly in sympathy with the Commons' position;¹¹⁹ the third, that of these Harsnett alone can be considered to be of an anti-Calvinist persuasion. By far the most active episcopal speakers were George Abbot, John Williams and Harsnett. The Calvinist Thomas Morton spoke only once (15 April) before the presentation of the Lords' propositions, when he echoed sentiments expressed just previously by Harsnett, but made several speeches during the Petition stage. Whatever the views of the pro-Buckingham Arminian bishops, they kept these largely to themselves. Only William Laud had anything of substance to say and that not until 19 May when he objected to use of the term "unlawful" in a clause of the Commons' draft Petition relating to the oath administered to those who had refused the Forced Loan.¹²⁰ This relatively minor point, which was conceded by the Commons, was the one indication that 'Arminian' bishops had any views on the matter of the subjects' liberties.

¹¹⁸ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.165; Sharpe, 'Earl of Arundel', p.236

¹¹⁹ Joseph Hall (Exeter) did write to the House of Commons on 28 April urging that they reconsider their position with regard to the matter, Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, iii, p.125 n.26; on 14 May he expressed the view that the Petition was incompatible with the King's prerogative, *ibid.*, v, p.424

¹²⁰ Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v, pp.462, 467-8

Harsnett's involvement in the Petition of Right must inevitably dominate this account of his part in the parliamentary proceedings in 1628. Nevertheless, the session was not without any other significance for the bishop: in terms of both attendance and committee appointments it was the most active session of his parliamentary career. Of 94 sittings Harsnett was present at 87 (93%) and was appointed to 41 committees, putting him ahead of any other bishop by a substantial margin.¹²¹ All this activity was impressive, but it was Harsnett's participation in the case of Roger Mainwaring, chaplain to Charles I, who with Robert Sibthorpe (another royal chaplain), had preached in support of the king's right to levy the Forced Loan, that best demonstrates his distancing from other Arminians on the episcopal bench. John Pym, leading the Commons reaction against Mainwaring, had been in no doubt that here was an Arminian conspiracy to subvert parliamentary authority. The Lords considered the case on 13 June when Harsnett joined Abbot and Williams in roundly condemning Mainwaring, Harsnett demanding that he be punished for his errors by acknowledging them in both Houses, preaching a penitential sermon at Court and at St Paul's Cross, having his books burnt and being suspended from the ministry for three years.¹²² Doubtless realising the strength of opposition to their position the Arminian faction abandoned Mainwaring to his fate. For the final occasion in his parliamentary career Harsnett had once again taken a position that must have placed him in good odour with opponents of Arminians, the very party in which modern historians have so confidently placed him.

¹²¹ John Williams (27), Robert Wright (24), Richard Neile (23) and Thomas Morton (22) were the next most active episcopal committee members. William Laud sat on only 13 committees despite a respectable attendance record of 77 sittings (82%).

¹²² Johnson, Keeler, Cole and Bidwell (eds.) *Proceedings 1628*, v, pp.636/638

5. Harsnett's Parliamentary Career – An Assessment

At the recall of Parliament in January 1629 Harsnett, somewhat surprisingly given his opposition to the king's interests in the previous year, resumed his seat in the Lords as Archbishop of York. The session itself proved to be a short one, and for Harsnett and the other lords it was a low-key affair. With the Commons steadfastly blocking any attempt to gain sanction for the legitimate collection of tonnage and poundage, and instead determined to air their concerns over innovations in religion, there was little by way of significant business to occupy the Lords. Despite the elevation in his status Harsnett still pursued an independent line. Early in the session he supported the Commons' request for a fast that was only grudgingly granted by the king; later, during a Lords' committee, he registered his disagreement with Laud over the priority that should be accorded to the repair of churches.¹²³ These incidents can only have added to the impression of distance between Harsnett and those who were presently being criticised by the lower House for Arminianism or popery. As was noted earlier, Harsnett's promotion to York drew not a single adverse comment in the Commons. Yet opprobrium was heaped on every other prominent anti-Calvinist in the episcopate, as well as on some who had not yet achieved episcopal office.¹²⁴ There is evidence to suggest that, even by the end of the 1626, Harsnett was winning admiration from unexpected sources for his opposition to Buckingham. In a diary of public events for that year, an anonymous author who was clearly no admirer of anti-Calvinists, approvingly reported the following: "Of the bishops,

¹²³ For the fast and Charles' reaction see Notestein and Relf, *Debates 1629*, p.28, and HMC, *45 Buccleuch MSS*, iii, p.338; for the disagreement with Laud see *ibid.* p.332

only Harsnet of Norwich and Morton of Coventry and Lichfield declared themselves publicly in parliament against the Duke."¹²⁵ In the same year another anonymous author writing in a newsletter praised Harsnett and others for opposing Buckingham:

The Earles of Essex, Lincolne, Warwick, the Lord Say, and the Bishop of Norwich, have purchas'd to themselves an eternall memory, by theyr well-temper'd boldness, and more-upright behaviour.¹²⁶

Harsnett's support for the Petition of Right during the following parliament can only have served to reinforce these positive views.

Harsnett's opposition to Buckingham over the previous three years was clearly a major factor in his omission from the list of those accused by the Commons of religious innovation in 1629. But was that enough to have escaped censure? Opposition to Buckingham was, of course, no indication that a man was necessarily innocent of the charge of religious innovation, even though Buckingham had been the patron of the chief suspects, Laud and Neile. It would not have been lost on the Commons that Harsnett's churchmanship was not so different from that of Laud, Neile or any of the other accused. Only five years previously Harsnett had had to defend himself in parliament against the charges of Norwich Puritans. On that occasion Harsnett had been accused of popery; and that, or Arminianism, was the charge now being levelled against a number of his episcopal colleagues. But if the charge was similar, the situation was quite different. The case against Harsnett in 1624 had been brought before parliament having originated as a local

¹²⁴ In addition to the bishops named in the Commons, John Cosins and Matthew Wren were also accused of Arminianism. Notestein and Relf, *Debates 1629*, pp.100-1

¹²⁵ Bidwell and Jansson, *Proceedings 1626*, iv, p.345. His persuasion is clear from a number of allusions but perhaps best illustrated by his praise for the Calvinist bishops Senhouse (Carlisle) and Lake (Bath and Wells) in reporting their deaths in the parliamentary session: "two of the best", *ibid.* p.344

¹²⁶ F W Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett and the Devils of Denham* (Newark, NJ, 1993), p.153, citing a newsletter in the Newdigate MSS, Arberry Hall.

grievance; he had faced formal and detailed charges; and he was charged alone, with no suggestion that he was acting in concert with others or in accordance with some wider episcopal strategy. The impetus for the 1629 charges of religious innovation came from within the Commons itself and they were of a general nature and largely anecdotal. But the major difference was the matter of collusion. Now the cause of the alarm in the Commons was the belief that all those named were part of a conspiracy to subvert the cause of true religion. Laud and Neile were the obvious ringleaders, and had been named in the Commons' Remonstrance at the end of the previous session. They had been clients and supporters of Buckingham and all the others named had directly, or through this pair indirectly, enjoyed the patronage of Buckingham. By contrast, Harsnett had consistently opposed Buckingham's interests and, by so doing, had done enough to suggest that he had no part in any such conspiracy.

If Harsnett was dissociated from the 'conspiracy' because he was outside the Buckingham circle, then that is a proof of Conrad Russell's contention that factional interests rather than ideology were the defining characteristic of parliaments of the 1620s. By this argument all Harsnett's parliamentary opposition to Buckingham's interests proved that loyalty to Arundel was more important to him than the common ideology he supposedly shared with so many of Buckingham's clients: anti-Calvinism. Harsnett's positions on the major issues of the 1626 session – the restriction on proxies, the restraint of Arundel, the case against the Earl of Bristol, and the attempt to impeach Buckingham – seem to bear this out. With the exception of the proxies, Harsnett's part in these matters was necessarily conducted in Arundel's absence. It says something for his devotion to the cause of his patron that he nevertheless made trenchant interventions in each of these

when it would have been no less loyal to have quietly opposed Buckingham by merely voting against the Duke's positions.

Did Harsnett actually compromise on ideology in order to support Arundel? For members of the Durham House Group, anti-Calvinism was the dominant ideology and one that both brought them, and bound them, together. Harsnett, however, had never been part of that forum and, although he probably continued to hold the views he had expressed at Paul's Cross, he clearly did not consider that anti-Calvinism obliged him to support others who subscribed to the same ideology. But, although Harsnett's positions in defence of Arundel put him at odds with fellow anti-Calvinists, there was nothing in these positions that intrinsically compromised the ideology. Anti-Calvinist ideology may not, then, have been at stake, but there was a discernible and consistent ideological dimension to Harsnett's concerns over the constitutional principles at stake in the matter of the royal prerogative. There was a distinct intellectual coherence between his stand over the Petition of Right in 1628 and the position he had taken over Arundel's restraint in 1626. In both cases what was essentially at stake was the king's claim that his prerogative entitled him to imprison without stated cause. That Harsnett's stand was as much based on his own convictions as loyalty to Arundel is suggested by the fact that he went considerably further than his patron in openly opposing the crown. The best proof, however, that Harsnett's concern over the potential abuse of the royal prerogative was as much a matter of principle as it was of factional loyalty, is his stance in the Mainwaring case. Mainwaring's position on the Forced Loan had been a perfect fit with the absolutist position adopted by the king, which is presumably why Buckingham and his clients supported it. To oppose it was, again, entirely consistent with Harsnett's previous

perceptions on the limits to the royal prerogative. To oppose it was, however, also entirely unnecessary. It could only serve to further antagonise the king and Buckingham and, furthermore, was a matter of no concern to Arundel and his interests. Yet Harsnett clearly thought it did matter, and once again chose to take a position quite independent of his anti-Calvinist colleagues.

The implication in Professor Russell's argument is that factions came into being for reasons of self-interest rather than shared values and beliefs. Since Buckingham's 'conversion' to the Arminian cause had a whiff of political expediency about it, that may be a reasonable conclusion of the nature of the duke's faction. The Arminians needed a champion and Buckingham had the king's ear. Buckingham rightly judged Arminian churchmanship to match the king's preferences, and support for it was a good guarantee of keeping the king's ear. But the Arundel-Harsnett relationship looks rather different. Harsnett did support his patron, in fact much more effectively and passionately than Buckingham's bishops did him, but Harsnett's convictions were as much his own as they were Arundel's. It seems more likely that these two men were drawn together, and enjoyed a long-standing relationship, because they shared a worldview, rather than for reasons of political expediency or self-interest. Harsnett's performances in the early Caroline parliaments provide evidence not only that he could, and did, speak on behalf of his patron, but also that he could, and did, speak for himself.

In historiographical terms Harsnett's involvement in the high politics of 1626-8 is clearly the most significant aspect of his parliamentary career. It explains why he escaped censure in the Commons' debates of 1629, and throws important light on the nature of his

relationship with Arundel. Perhaps most significantly, it provides insights into Harsnett's thinking on major constitutional issues.

This involvement in high politics should not, however, overshadow the value of his contributions to the routine business of the House of Lords. It has been remarked that Abbot and Neile, who like Harsnett had first taken up their seats in 1610, were among the most industrious of the Jacobean episcopal parliamentarians.¹²⁷ Harsnett could claim to have made an even greater contribution to the parliaments of the 1620s: in the six sessions of parliament between 1621 and 1628, no other peer, spiritual or temporal, had a higher participation rate in committees than he.¹²⁸ Such level of participation in this system, "the key element in the machinery of parliament", when taken together with the extensive range of commissions with which he was charged by the Privy Council, proves that Harsnett was widely trusted as a highly efficient and energetic administrator.¹²⁹ His appointment to the standing committee on privileges in 1625 was surely confirmation of this. It was this committee that initiated the challenge to the king over his restraint of Arundel in 1626 and marked the beginning of the series of constitutional challenges that culminated in the Petition of Right. Thus Harsnett's exceptional contribution to the routine business of the House provided him with opportunity to take centre stage in the constitutional debates that are the most significant aspect of his parliamentary career.

¹²⁷ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.60-1

¹²⁸ J S Flemion, 'The Nature of Opposition in the House of Lords in the Early Seventeenth Century: a Revaluation', *Albion* 8 (1976), pp. 32 & 34

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.15

6. Harsnett the Archbishop and the Privy Councillor, 1628–31

At the prorogation of parliament in June 1628 Samuel Harsnett's career prospects hardly looked promising. He was the client of an out-of-favour patron; he had proved over recent years a constant and vigorous opponent of the king's closest counsellor; he had been one of the more vocal advocates in favour of the crown conceding ground over the claims for the liberties of the subject; and, most recently, had unequivocally condemned one of the king's own chaplains, Mainwaring, for preaching in favour of the Forced Loan. At the age of 67 he had spent little if any time at court and seemed less likely than ever to find favour there. However, barely four months later Harsnett found himself elevated to the vacant archbishopric of York; within a further year he appears to have established himself as one of the king's leading advisers on church policy; and, in November 1629, he received the ultimate royal recognition with appointment to the Privy Council.

The final phase of Harsnett's career raises a number of questions. What brought about the apparently curious transformation of his fortunes in these final years? Did the man who had seemingly chosen the life of diligent – if not exactly low profile – resident diocesan finally acquire a taste for the life and politics of the court prelate?¹ Once appointed to high office, what were his achievements and what, if anything, did he contribute to the foundation of later Caroline – or indeed Laudian – church policy? Having apparently distanced himself for most of his career from others of anti-Calvinist

¹ R A Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560-1642*, (1960), p.50, suggests that Harsnett was essentially a court bishop who delegated his diocesan work to subordinate diocesan officers. Furthermore, he suggests that as such Harsnett contrasted with his successor at York, Richard Neile (*ibid.*, p.52); if this were true for York it was in startling contrast to the earlier episcopal

inclination did he finally reconcile himself with the group of prelates suspected by many contemporaries, and most modern historians, to form an Arminian party and thus earn his place among “the cream of English Arminians”?

1. Restoration to favour and the appointment to York

The archbishopric of York fell vacant in April 1628 on the death of Toby Matthew. At this stage it was already clear that Harsnett’s position over the liberty of the subject was at odds with that of the crown. This, coupled with his earlier opposition to crown interests in the 1626 parliamentary session, would have precluded any serious consideration of his promotion to York. In any event, the appointment that actually followed, that of George Montaigne of London, probably suited the king rather better. It provided the opportunity to reward William Laud, then bishop of Bath and Wells and already well established as a court favourite, with a prestigious and strategically significant diocese. By contrast, the appointment of Montaigne, allegedly an Arminian, was that of a careerist rather than an energetic diocesan and as such signified little about any strategic plan that Charles might have had for his Church. Montaigne looked distinctly like a short-term appointment: his translation to York took place in early July in a ceremony that prompted one commentator to observe that the new archbishop “carries death in his face”; he was lame, deaf and looked distinctly unlikely to survive the year.²

careers of the two men – while at Chichester and Norwich Harsnett had never resided in London, while Neile had done so almost permanently.

² The Rev. Joseph Mead writing to Sir Martin Stuteville in R F Williams (ed.), *The Court and Times of Charles I ... transcribed by Thomas Birch*, 2 volumes (1849), i, p.371; Harsnett officiated at the ceremony together with bishops Neile, Buckeridge and Field.

On 24 October 1628 Montaigne died and ten days later the king instructed the Dean and Chapter of York to elect Harsnett to the vacancy.³ There can be little doubt that Harsnett's churchmanship would have appealed to Charles given his concern for order and discipline, but that alone seems insufficient to account for the king overlooking the bishop's previous opposition to Buckingham and the crown. What had changed between the end of parliament and late October to make Harsnett the preferred candidate for the archbishopric of York? The explanation of Harsnett's restoration to favour seems in fact concerned less with Harsnett and more with the fortunes of the earl of Arundel. If Arundel had not himself been restored to royal favour, then it is hardly conceivable that Harsnett would have even been considered for York. In the previous two years Harsnett had been just too closely associated with defending Arundel's interests to escape royal disapproval himself. It was clear that he had taken his cue for opposing Buckingham in 1626 from the latter's part in Arundel's arrest and sequestration at the beginning of that year. Harsnett's position over the Petition of Right had been rather more vocal than that of his patron but it seems likely that the two men shared a similar outlook concerning the liberty of the subject.

Arundel took his place in the Lords on the reassembly of parliament on 17 March 1628, although for most of the session he remained under suspended sentence of house arrest.⁴ The first step towards normalising the relationship between Arundel and the king seems to have taken place on 26 May, the day the House of Lords gave their assent to the Petition of Right. The Lord Treasurer, the earl of Marlborough, proposed that the king should be asked to receive the various lords who had been out of favour and, as a sign of

³ SP 16/120/8

reconciliation, allow them to kiss his hand. It is not entirely clear whether Arundel, or indeed Harsnett, was included in this proposal, but it was welcomed by Buckingham who promptly agreed to take it to the king, did so, and immediately returned with the royal grant.⁵ The initiative for Arundel's reconciliation with the king is usually attributed to Sir Richard Weston, a former client of Arundel.⁶ More likely is that Weston's present patron, Buckingham, engineered the reconciliation himself; increasingly the target of both parliamentary and popular opprobrium, he needed to secure support at court.⁷ In early July the Venetian ambassador reported that Buckingham had reached "a better understanding than formerly with the Earls of Arundel and Bristol, and they are at liberty to return to the Court."⁸ Within a month it appears that Buckingham had contrived for Arundel to be reconciled with the king in person: a meeting took place at the duke's house during which the earl was permitted to kiss the king's hand. Nevertheless, there were significant and symbolic limits on the extent of Arundel's restoration to royal favour – he remained sequestered from the Privy Council and was denied his former emoluments.⁹ It was the assassination of Buckingham on 23 August that removed any final obstacle in the way of Arundel's full restoration to royal favour. On 26 October Arundel's sequestration was discharged and he was restored to his seat on the Council and, apparently, to the

⁴ Russell, *Parliaments*, p.371

⁵ Mead to Stuteville in Williams, *Court and Times... Charles I*, i, pp.358-9. Among the lords named were George Abbot and John Williams (Lincoln). Harsnett may have been among the unnamed "rest"; Arundel did not attend because, according to the writer, he was not in the House – in fact he was, see *Lords Proceedings 1628*, p. 37

⁶ Mary Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921) p.262; L J Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge, 1989), p.23; S R Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642*, 10 volumes (1864), vi, pp.361-2

⁷ Russell, *Parliaments*, p.391

⁸ *CSP Venetian 1628-9*, pp.168-9

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.213

highest regard of his sovereign.¹⁰ Two days later Montaigne died and Arundel, now one of the king's closest counsellors, was perfectly placed to recommend his client for preferment to York.

Although it seems certain that Arundel would have pressed Harsnett's case, it is unlikely that his recommendation alone would have been sufficient to persuade Charles of Harsnett's merits. There were other credible candidates whose churchmanship would have been just as agreeable to the king and whose support of royal policy was rather less patchy. In autumn 1627, Charles had sequestered the metropolitan authority of George Abbot over the archbishop's refusal to authorise publication of Sibthorpe's sermon. He then transferred jurisdiction in the Canterbury province to any two of Laud, Neile, Montaigne, Howson and Buckeridge.¹¹ Clearly these were Charles' favoured men. Subsequently Montaigne had been rewarded with York but now that the archiepiscopate was again vacant what of the claims of these other candidates? In Laud's case the appointment to the bishopric of London in July had placed him in a see that was, if not as prestigious as York, strategically more significant.¹² Not only did it provide him with jurisdiction over the London printing presses, it had the added advantage of keeping him in close proximity to court. Furthermore, two years earlier Charles had confirmed Laud's position as chief ecclesiastical adviser by promising him the succession to Canterbury on Abbot's death;¹³ to have appointed Laud to York would have been both irrelevant and inconvenient. Both Howson and Buckeridge may have been passed over in favour of

¹⁰ *APC* 1628-9, p.209-11; Mead to Stuteville in Williams, *Court and Times... Charles I*, i, p.419; *CSP Venetian* 1628-9, pp.394, 398

¹¹ Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus* (1668), p.170

¹² Charles apparently considered London as the "retreat and receptacle of the Grandees of the Puritan faction", and on its conformity rested that of the whole country. *ibid.*, p.174

Harsnett because they were junior in terms of episcopal service. Richard Neile, however, seems to have had a stronger case than Harsnett: he had first been appointed to the episcopate a year earlier than Harsnett, would probably have been Laud's preferred candidate and had already been favoured by the king with a place on the Privy Council.

Arundel's recommendation may well have played a critical part in Charles appointing Harsnett, but there was a more compelling reason for him to overlook the claims of Howson, Buckeridge and Neile: political expediency. Peter Heylyn's reflections on the events that followed the prorogation of parliament in June 1628 provide a useful context for making sense of Harsnett's appointment. In Heylyn's view, Charles was aware of the popular antipathy to the appointments of Laud to London and that of another rising favourite, Wentworth, as President of the North, and so devised "tricks of king-craft" in order to placate the opposition: "...nothing was conceived could have pleased them more, than to grant them their desires in matters which concerned Religion, as bestow Favours upon such men as were dear unto them."¹⁴ Heylyn recalled a series of actions that seem to bear out this view: the issue of a proclamation enforcing laws and statutes against recusants; the apprehension of Richard Smith, 'Bishop of Chalcedon'; the appointment of the Calvinist, Barnaby Potter, to the bishopric of Carlisle; and the recall of copies of Richard Montagu's controversial work, *Appello Caesarem*. One final significant gesture was made at the end of the year: George Abbot, "a great confident of the Popular Party in the House of Commons", was summoned to court, being received from his barge

¹³ Roger Lockyer, *The Early Stuarts* (1989), p.311

¹⁴ Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p.195

and accompanied into the presence of the king by Harsnett where he was offered the royal hand.¹⁵

Harsnett might not have been exactly “dear” to the parliamentary men whose confidence the king was apparently anxious to win, but he was in considerably better odour than Neile or, indeed, Buckeridge and Howson. By opposing Buckingham and being sympathetic to the Commons in their struggle over the Petition of Right, Harsnett had earned, as seen earlier, their respect. More important perhaps, was that he had not been tainted with the accusation of Arminianism - and it was in that that he differed to the other potential candidates for York. Harsnett’s promotion fits well with Heylyn’s schema but there was an added bonus: his churchmanship would undoubtedly have been to the king’s liking. Harsnett’s record as a strict disciplinarian looked a good fit with Charles’ ambition to establish order and uniformity of worship in his Church, and with his opposition to unregulated preaching.¹⁶ Restored to favour through his connection with Arundel, Harsnett possessed a churchmanship that commended him to the king; he had earned a reputation among the Commons for standing against absolutism and had managed to remain free from the charge of Arminianism. So high was Harsnett’s political capital at this time that shortly after his appointment to York a rumour was circulating that he had been appointed to the Privy Council.¹⁷ The same rumour suggested that two other peers of distinctly Puritan inclination, Lords Bedford and Saye and Sele were also about to be appointed to the Council. There is a plausible case for the suggestion that this rumour originated from official sources and was intended to encourage the view that the king was

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ For Charles’ attitudes to preaching see Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church* (Oxford, 1992), pp.130-2

broadening his counsel to appease popular opinion.¹⁸ If that were so then Harsnett's place in the rumour suggests that he too was a man with some degree of popular acceptability. It seems that in the political climate of late 1628 Harsnett looked more than just a good compromise candidate, he was a particularly astute choice.

After his election to York Harsnett was soon attending to administrative matters: in December he proposed a list of members for the Ecclesiastical Commission of York for approval.¹⁹ He completed his obligations at Norwich with his final round of ordinations on 4 January 1629 before being confirmed to York in Lambeth Palace chapel on 23 January.²⁰ In early 1629 he also set in motion the arrangements for his primary visitation of York province. He prefaced his visitation articles with orders that were to be posted in all the parish churches within the province.²¹ More than the visitation articles themselves these orders provide a valuable insight as to the matters that Harsnett wished to convey to parishioners as his priorities in the forthcoming exercise. It was a judiciously balanced statement: while promising to deal severely with unseemly behaviour in church he assured the laity that he would not tolerate members of the clergy exacting unreasonable fees from their parishes.²²

The recall of parliament in January 1629 prevented Harsnett from taking up residence in York but on 7 February he was nevertheless ordered by the Privy Council to

¹⁷ Pory to Mead, 28 November 1628 in Williams, *Court and Times... Charles I*, i, p.440

¹⁸ Williams, *Court and Times... Charles I*, i, p.440, 447

¹⁹ SP 16/123/46

²⁰ NNRO REG/16/22 entry 4 January 1629; the form of proceedings for the confirmation SP 16/132/13

²¹ Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Articles of the Early Stuart Church*, 2 vols. (Woodbrige, 1994 and 1998), ii pp.35-6; in STC, publication date is recorded "1628, and 1629", suggesting that Harsnett set them out in early 1629; see SP 16/154/94 for an undated copy

²² The matters that particularly exercised him were the wearing of hats during divine service, unruly behaviour within church, excessive charges for archdeacon's visitation articles, and unreasonable fees "by severall officers in severall courts, much to the scandal of our ecclesiastical jurisdiction"; *ibid.*

attempt a reconciliation in a bitter dispute between a member of the Yorkshire gentry, Sir Richard Hawkesworth, and his wife.²³ Parliament kept Harsnett in London until at least the beginning of March, and he may still have been there during early April attending to the final arrangements for the founding of a grammar school in his first parish, Chigwell.²⁴ By 23 April he must finally have arrived in York for he was enthroned in his cathedral on that day.²⁵ He remained in York over the summer during which time he investigated the case of a suspected recusant on behalf of the Privy Council.²⁶

More significantly, Harsnett assumed responsibility for dealing with Peter Smart, a Durham prebendary, who in July 1628 had preached a sermon highly critical of the liturgical and ceremonial changes introduced in the cathedral during Richard Neile's episcopate.²⁷ After an initial judgement by the northern high commission the case was transferred in January 1629 to that of the southern province. On 25 June Benjamin Laney, chaplain to Neile, by then bishop of Winchester, complained to John Cosin, also a Durham prebendary and a chief target of Smart's invective, that Smart had yet to be held to

²³ Lady Hawkesworth had complained of her husband's mistreatment of her and their child, *APC 1628-9*, pp. 263, 334; Harsnett was commissioned on 7 February and later that month he reported his failure to reconcile the couple and recommended the child be placed in the care of Lady Hawkesworth's parents, SP 16/135/15 and SP 16/136/66. The case dragged on: in October Harsnett was complaining of the inordinate amount of time the case was costing him, SP 16/150/28. It was finally settled on 21 November when the Council overruled Hawkesworth's objections to Harsnett's recommended solution, *APC 1629-30*, pp. 184-5

²⁴ Harsnett attended the last sitting of the 1629 session on 10 March, *LJ*, iv, p. 42; he signed the ordinances to his schools on 13 April, see below Chapter 7, 1. 'The Schools at Chigwell'; a petition by Captain Theophilus Wright of 18 April included a request that, parliament being dissolved, it be considered by Harsnett and "other lords", suggesting that the petitioner might have believed that Harsnett was still in London, SP16/141/6

²⁵ John Le Neve, *The Lives and Characters... of all (Arch)bishops... since... 1559* (1720), Part 2, p.131

²⁶ This was Gervase Markham; in June the Council ordered the earl of Newcastle (who held Markham in custody) to refer the case to Harsnett, *APC 1629-30*, p. 43; Harsnett reported to Newcastle in August that he had obtained satisfactory evidence to refute the charge against Markham, SP 16/149/24

²⁷ Ornsby, G., (ed.), *The Correspondence of John Cosin*, 2 volumes, (Surtees Society., 52, 55, 1868-72), pp. xxii-xxvi; among Smart's main complaints were the positioning of the altar, singing of the creed, the adornment of the cathedral with candles.

account.²⁸ The case was to be transferred back to York reported Laney and, although Harsnett had undertaken the responsibility “with much alacrity”, the writer was concerned lest the matter be allowed to rest: “What he [Smart] may brag and talk in the mean time, who can help? No man have command over his loud tongue.”²⁹ He was right to be concerned for Smart resorted to an appeal through common law, initially receiving a sympathetic hearing from the puritanically inclined judge, Sir Henry Yelverton. Then, however, Yelverton attempted to broker a reconciliation, stepping back from the case and referring it to ecclesiastical jurisdiction.³⁰ Harsnett’s mind was apparently made up well before the matter came before the York high commission: on 19 July Yelverton noted that Harsnett had caused many copies of Smart’s sermon found at York to be burned.³¹ The prebendary did not take heed of this warning: he filed with Harsnett a long list of charges against Cosin and other Durham prebendaries.³² It may have been these that prompted Harsnett and the commission to sentence Smart in 1630 to a fine, deprivation of his living, and imprisonment.³³ Unfortunately, there is no record to indicate whether Harsnett supported such harsh treatment because he objected to Smart’s gratuitous offence against church authority, or because he was in fundamental agreement with the innovations that Neile and Cosin had brought about in the cathedral.

In a letter of 6 October Harsnett conveyed his first impressions of York province to Lord Conway, President of the Privy Council. After six months he had seen enough to conclude that the Church in the north was “infested with the men of Dan and Bethel,

²⁸ Williams (ed.), *Court and Times*, vol ii, p.21

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Cosin, *Correspondence*, p. 155-8

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 161-99

whose hearts are overseas”; it was only to be wished that their bodies should be confined with their hearts.³⁴ Clearly the “northern cold climate” had not divested Harsnett of his sense of humour. By 6 November Harsnett was back in London, for on that date he wrote to Sir Henry Vane asking if he might avail himself of Vane’s lodgings at court.³⁵ Harsnett had no doubt returned to London because he had been given indication that the king was to appoint him to the Privy Council.³⁶ The appointment was confirmed just four days later when Harsnett was sworn in as a privy councillor.³⁷ Arundel’s influence may have played some part in Harsnett’s appointment, but by this time he may well have commended his own case by his involvement in the formulation of royal ecclesiastical policy.

2. The Considerations for the Better Settling of the Church Government

In December 1629 Charles I signalled through his issue of Royal Instructions that he intended to take active control of church government. The Instructions comprised an assortment of directives that were addressed to his bishops and provided them with instruction concerning their personal conduct, the regulation of preaching and the rooting out of non-conformity.³⁸ The Instructions as finally published were the work of the king and his closest religious confidant, William Laud; they provided an outline manifesto for much of what would characterise the ecclesiastical policy of the Personal Rule. Harsnett’s first involvement in the Instructions appears to have occurred when he was invited to offer

³³ *Ibid.*, p. xxv

³⁴ SP 16/150/28; in this letter Harsnett also expressed his admiration of the king’s appointee as President of the North, Thomas Wentworth

³⁵ SP 16/151/24

³⁶ *Ibid.*, in which he indicated this much by confiding that he was in London “insperato, inexpectato”

³⁷ *APC 1629-30*, p. 174

comment on the final draft. On 12 December he responded warmly to Viscount Dorchester (Dudley Carleton) advising the Secretary of State that he had carefully considered the various points in the draft and was returning them unaltered as “just, pious and necessary for the public welfare of the Church”.³⁹ Despite this - which could suggest that Harsnett had not been consulted or involved during the process of formulating the Instructions - Dr Davies has posited a strong circumstantial case that not only did Harsnett heartily endorse them, but that he was also the main architect of their form.⁴⁰

Dr Davies’ case is based on the authorship and content of ‘Considerations for the better settling of the Church Government’, a document that apparently pre-dated the Instructions and heavily influenced their form.⁴¹ This was introduced as evidence in Laud’s trial in 1644, having been discovered by William Prynne when he raided Laud’s study seeking material to support the charge of treason through the introduction of religious innovation. It was clear to Prynne and the prosecution that the Considerations provided the evidence that confirmed Laud as the author of the Instructions.⁴² Such a conclusion was reasonable. The document looked like an early draft of the Instructions: eight of the twelve Considerations had appeared, with very slight amendment, as the Instructions.⁴³ By Laud’s own account, however, Prynne’s conclusion regarding the authorship of the Considerations was wrong: “my copy of the Considerations”, he

³⁸ J Bliss and W Scott (eds.), *The Works of William Laud*, 7 volumes (1847-60), v. pp.307-9; reproduced in the Appendix below.

³⁹ SP 16/153/50

⁴⁰ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, pp.28-31

⁴¹ William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (1646), pp.368-9; reproduced in Appendix

⁴² Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, p.368

⁴³ See the Appendix for a comparison of the texts of the Considerations and the Instructions

claimed, “came from Archbishop Harsnett”.⁴⁴ Quite reasonably Dr Davies accepts Laud’s implied assertion that Harsnett was author of the Considerations. He points out that Laud disliked Consideration 9 – proposing control over the appointment of the heads of Emmanuel and Sidney Colleges, “which are the Nurseries of Puritanisme” – and was probably responsible for adding the two Instructions that addressed matters not covered in the Considerations.⁴⁵ One of the most significant arguments in Dr Davies’ work is that William Laud’s role in the formulation and application of religious policy during the Personal Rule has been overstated in recent revisionist historiography. In his view Laud’s role was very much subordinate to that of the king – in fact Laud was often found by his actions to be among the more conservative exponents of Caroline religious policy. That thesis is served well by his interpretation of the events leading up to the publication of the Royal Instructions. Here we have the implication that the king sought Harsnett’s advice without reference to Laud.⁴⁶ Harsnett was the sole author of the Considerations and Laud was uninvolved with the process until the Considerations had been delivered to the king. The king liked what he saw and so adopted the document, with only minor amendments, as the cornerstone of his policy that subordinated the pulpit to the liturgy. Thus Harsnett’s Considerations provided the king with “a radical programme to bind preaching to the liturgy and discipline of the Church”.⁴⁷ Even Laud’s role in turning the Considerations into the Instructions was distinctly subordinate to the king’s vision for re-

⁴⁴ Bliss and Scott (eds), *Works Laud*, iv, p.274

⁴⁵ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.29

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.132

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

imposing royal authority and control and amounted to the addition of two of the less contentious of the Instructions.⁴⁸

It is very probable that the copy of the Considerations found in Laud's study was, as he suggested, "Archbishop Harsnett's". However, it is quite another matter to suggest that the ideas it contained were either particularly innovative, or Harsnett's work alone.⁴⁹ Some, as will be shown, were already common currency and it is as likely that Harsnett was as much reflecting a line of thinking as he was leading one. If he was asked to tender his views it was precisely because his thinking, at least in matters of church government, was in accord with that of the king and Laud. Laud might not have been involved in drafting the Considerations, but what is clear is that he wholeheartedly endorsed the majority of its provisions, that he added what he considered lacking, and that he removed what he disliked.⁵⁰ In the process of emphasising Harsnett's involvement Dr Davies exculpates Laud from any involvement. In fact, nowhere does Peter Heylyn suggest that Harsnett's role in the Instructions was equal to that of Laud⁵¹ – what he does suggest is that Laud's contribution to the Considerations were rather greater than Dr Davies implies:

Conference had passed between him and Harsnet ... and certain Considerations were resolved upon to be propounded to the King, for the peace and well-Ordering of the Church; which being reduced into form, and by Laud presented to his Majesty...⁵²

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.29

⁴⁹ As part of his effort to lessen Laud's culpability in Caroline church policy Dr Davies hands total responsibility for the Royal Instruction concerning preaching over to Harsnett, *ibid.*, pp.132, 152

⁵⁰ Bliss and Scott (eds). *Works Laud*, iv, p.274, "Nothing in them against either law or religion ..", then going on to applaud the provisions concerning combination lectures; Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.29 making the case that Laud was responsible for the two Instructions that were not drawn from the Considerations.

⁵¹ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.28

⁵² Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p.199

Whatever the extent of their involvement in the Considerations and the Instructions we do know that Laud approved of the former as a first draft as much as Harsnett did of the latter as a final draft.

While Harsnett probably was author-in-chief of the Considerations it is too much to infer from that that he was effectively the king's chief adviser on religious policy in the late 1620s; or that Laud, although he approved of Harsnett's measures, had made no appreciable intellectual contribution to them. Nevertheless, for a number of reasons, the Considerations are of considerable significance in any study of Harsnett's career. They provide certainly the earliest, and arguably the only, evidence of Harsnett working in co-operation with Laudian interests. With the possible exception of visitation articles they also provide the only published expression of his views concerning ecclesiastical policy, particularly with regard to episcopal responsibility. As such, do they provide the evidence that justifies historians' usual placing of Harsnett at the centre of the anti-Calvinist, or Arminian, faction? An examination of the constituent parts of the Considerations will go some way towards addressing that point and also to question whether Harsnett was at the forefront of a radical programme for ecclesiastical reform, or merely setting down what he had long been doing in practice, much of which was, in any case, accepted policy and hardly contentious.

In the first Consideration Harsnett addressed a matter that had already been signalled as royal policy. The king had written to George Abbot in May 1629, instructing the archbishop that, because "divers bishops live in and about London, to the ill example of the inferior clergymen, and the hindrance of God's service and the king", bishops

should forthwith be instructed to reside in their dioceses.⁵³ Whether this instruction was in itself initiated by Harsnett's prompting, or that his views merely coincided with those of the king cannot be established; however, we have seen that it was something that he had personally practised with great assiduity during his own career. When this consideration was transposed as the first of the Royal Instructions it was apparently one with which Abbot was particularly in accord. Commenting on the Instructions as a whole Abbot remarked that "certain particulars are very wholesome and helpfull to the government of the Church". The injunction regarding residence was undoubtedly one such, for he then went on to complain bitterly about the bishop of Durham, John Howson, who "notwithstanding the king's letter has remained here all last summer, and, while he is in London, most unseemly lieth in an inn."⁵⁴ Abbot's endorsement of the residence requirement sponsored by Harsnett, but blatantly disregarded by Howson (long suspected of Arminian and popish sympathies), is enough to confirm that this particular matter cut across the doctrinal divide. By the prominent inclusion of a residence requirement Harsnett was complying with a royal dictate and preaching what he practised, but there were precedents that long predated either and might have been equally significant in formulating his position on the matter. Harsnett's relationship with Richard Bancroft was the pivotal one of his early career and it was Bancroft who had attempted to reinvigorate canonical authority with the Canons of 1604.⁵⁵ Canonical authority directing bishops to reside in their dioceses had been implied in the Canons of 1571 and Bancroft had

⁵³ SP 16/142/75

⁵⁴ SP 16/153/40: Abbot was complaining because Howson had clearly ignored an instruction by the king that Howson's suit against the Dean of Arches (Sir Henry Marten) should be pursued in the York province in order that Howson comply with the terms of the king's letter to Abbot regarding residence. SP 16/142/76.

underpinned the significance of residence for the clergy in general by ensuring that the matter was incorporated in the 1604 Canons.⁵⁶ Bancroft followed this up in 1605 by instructing his appointed deputies for the metropolitical visitations of that year to focus, *inter alia*, on observance of the canons related to residence of the clergy.⁵⁷ Bancroft's continuing influence on Harsnett's thinking can hardly be doubted. Whether in other matters addressed in the Considerations, or in other contexts entirely, Harsnett proved to be a scrupulous observer of the Bancroft's canons and consistently preoccupied by issues that had concerned his former mentor.

The substance of the second Consideration was also drawn from the king's letter to Abbot of May 1629 and required that not only should bishops reside in their dioceses, but that they should also live in their episcopal houses rather than on commendams or privately purchased land or leases. Nor should they waste woods. Whilst these were essentially practical directions that avoided accusations of episcopal ostentation, protected the interests of bishops' successors, and ensured their accessibility, they were also consistent with Laud's concern for protecting episcopal wealth.

Harsnett's third Consideration was another matter that had previously been addressed by royal declarations, but was potentially altogether more vexatious. It was concerned with disputation of the doctrine of double predestination – the subject of Harsnett's St Paul's Cross sermon of 1594, for which Whitgift had disciplined him. This Consideration was clearly intended to confirm and underpin the royal proclamation of June

⁵⁵ S B Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (London, 1962) pp.103-23

⁵⁶ Gerald Bray (ed.), *The Anglican Canons 1529-1947* (Woodridge, 1998): Canon 1.1 of 1571 required the bishop to "diligently teach the gospel" in both his cathedral and also "indifferently" in churches throughout the diocese, pp. 172-3; Canons 41-2/4 of 1604, pp. 326-31

1626, and a further declaration for the peace of the church issued shortly before the assembly of the 1629 parliament – both intended to dampen different stages of the furore over the Richard Montagu case.⁵⁸ In Dr Tyacke's view the proclamation of 1626 had effectively proscribed Calvinism and announced the king's patronage of Arminianism; anti-Calvinism had become the acceptable doctrinal position.⁵⁹ However, Dr Davies has argued for an alternative view: that the king was no Arminian and had sought to proscribe discussion of predestination because he was uninterested in theological debate, had seen the unsettling effects of allowing it, and believed the best way to maintain a peace in the church was to avoid such controversy.⁶⁰

What can we conclude about Harsnett's Arminianism from his inclusion of this issue in the *Considerations*? Was he backing the suppression of disputation concerning predestination because it supported the anti-Calvinist cause, or because he believed the subject too fraught for public debate, or merely because it was royal policy? We know of course that he had taken the anti-Calvinist view in 1594 but also that he had been assiduous in avoiding discussion of the matter since Whitgift had upbraided him. His silence on the matter might, as Peter Lake has suggested, have been the price he was prepared to pay for career advancement.⁶¹ But Harsnett's career hardly suggests that he was a man to avoid controversy and in the intervening period he had taken positions in opposition to both the crown and the emergent Arminian faction that were just as likely to

⁵⁷ K C Fincham, 'Ramifications of the Hampton Court Conference in the Dioceses, 1603-69', *JEH*, 36 (1985), p.212

⁵⁸ For the proclamation see J F Larkin (ed.), *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, ii (Oxford, 1984), pp.90-3; the declaration was issued between 24 December 1628 and 7 January 1629, see Williams (ed.), *Court and Times*, vol i, pp.449, 457, ii, pp.3-5.

⁵⁹ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp.166-8; Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635', *P&P* 114 (1987), pp.32-76

have wrecked any career ambitions. In fact so quiet had Harsnett been over the matter that no member of the 1629 Commons had included him in their list of bishops charged with Arminianism; and at the time of the Norwich petition one commentator opined that Harsnett had been of the Arminian persuasion but had dropped it long ago.⁶² It must at least be a possibility that, having been personally reprimanded for engaging in debate over the issue and observing the mounting controversy following the Montagu case, that he had learnt the lesson that it was indeed a matter that was best not discussed. In that view he would have shared his position with many so-called Calvinist credal predestinarians. Although they might have differed from Harsnett in their views on predestination to reprobation, or the possibility of the elect falling from grace, they certainly believed these were matters best kept to private conscience rather than exposed to public debate.⁶³ Given that the proscription of debate on predestination was, by proclamation, established royal policy all we can conclude with certainty is that Harsnett could hardly have done otherwise than reinforce it in the Considerations. Of course, Harsnett was almost certainly comfortable with the policy, but that was by no means the exclusive preserve of known Arminians, nor can it be taken as any reliable signal that he had come out of the shadows and allied with an Arminian cause.

Probably the most contentious of those of Harsnett's Considerations carried over into the Instructions, were those that related to the conduct of stipendiary lecturers.⁶⁴ The

⁶⁰ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, pp.12, 111-2, 115-6.

⁶¹ Lake, 'Calvinism', pp.34-5

⁶² Newsletter dated 22 May 1624, in J Ballinger (ed.), *Calendar of the Wynn Papers, 1515-1690* (Aberystwyth, 1926), p.196.

⁶² Lake, 'Calvinism', p.50

⁶³ Lake, 'Calvinism', p.39-40; see also Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, pp.123-4

⁶⁴ Appendix, Considerations 5 & 6

fifth Consideration comprised a package of measures designed to bring these men to greater accountability: requiring that afternoon sermons be replaced by question and answer catechising; that such lecturers should precede their lectures by reading divine service wearing their surplice; that lectures set up by market towns should be presented by a “Combination of grave and orthodox Divines” from neighbouring parishes; and that single lectureships established by corporations would henceforth only be available to men appointed to a cure of souls within the town. The sixth Consideration proposed procedures whereby bishops would encourage more of their “grave orthodox Divines” to monitor the conformity of such lecturers by attending such sermons and reporting back to the bishop.

The Considerations regarding preaching were adapted with little amendment to become a key constituent of a programme that has been described as a Caroline policy for the restraint of preaching.⁶⁵ It has been demonstrated elsewhere in this thesis that Harsnett was unusually (at least for a supposed Arminian) committed to the practice of preaching. Can these apparent contradictions be reconciled? If Harsnett did indeed subscribe to some Arminian or Laudian agenda by which preaching was to be subordinated to the liturgy then his personal views on preaching do appear odd. But there is another way of looking at the relevant Considerations that makes the matter perfectly explicable. The Considerations were carefully targeted at a problem that, throughout his career, Harsnett seems to have diagnosed as the chief cause of discord in the Church. That problem was not preaching, nor the Calvinist interpretation of predestinarian doctrine, but non-conformity. One of the chief opportunities for an individual of tender

conscience to avoid the strictures of the church establishment was to operate at its margins as a stipendiary lecturer. Harsnett had pursued such men with more vigour than perhaps any of his episcopal colleagues.⁶⁶ Now that he was in a position of authority with views that coincided with the king it was hardly surprising that they became his chief target.

Harsnett's inclusion of the directive that all afternoon sermons be turned into catechising by question and answer can be read as a restraint on preaching, but in his case it seems more likely to have been motivated by a belief in the necessity of catechising. Earlier in 1629 Harsnett had given an indication in the foundation ordinances of his school just how significant he saw the importance of catechising the young.⁶⁷ The basis of his views on the efficacy of catechising may be found in the influence of Richard Bancroft. It was Bancroft who ensured that provision for the regular catechising was made in the 1604 Canons and was doubtless behind the royal supplement to the canons that further underlined the case for catechising.⁶⁸ The matter of catechising rather than preaching on Sunday afternoons had surfaced in August 1622 when James issued his Directions on Preaching.⁶⁹ It was these that seemingly prompted Harsnett to insist that Norwich clergy preached on the catechism on Sunday afternoons.⁷⁰ In the preamble to the items

⁶⁵ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, pp.126-71

⁶⁶ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.244-6

⁶⁷ See below, Chapter 7, 1. 'The Schools at Chigwell'; also the official commitment to catechising long predated this.

⁶⁸ Bray, *Anglican Canons* (Woodridge, 1998), canon 59, pp.348-9; *HMC Fourteenth Report*, Part iv, pp.519, the mss. of Lord Kenyon; in his metropolitical visitation Bancroft also laid particular emphasis catechising, Fincham, 'Hampton Court', p.212

⁶⁹ E Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (2 vols., Oxford, 1839), ii, pp.146-54 (specifically pp.149-50).

⁷⁰ NNRO ANW/21/1 fol.8^r; Davies suspects Harsnett was James' chief adviser on the content of the Directions, *Caroline Captivity*, pp.130-1, Fincham thinks it more likely to have been Lancelot Andrewes, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.244-5

comprising the fifth Consideration Harsnett made it clear that he was primarily targeting stipendiary lecturers:

That a speciall Care be had over the Lecturers in every Diocese: Which by reason of their pay are the peoples creatures, and blow the Bellows their way, sedition. For the abating of whose power these wayes may be taken.⁷¹

In the corresponding Royal Instructions the king and Laud came up with a form of words that was briefer and rather more ambiguous: “That they [ie the bishops] take great care concerning the lecturers, in these special directions following.”⁷² This caused confusion as to whether the Instructions applied only to lecturers or to all preachers - it may well have been deliberate for the king apparently chose to understand it as applying to all.⁷³ Harsnett’s preamble suggests that he saw lecturers as the main offenders against the canons and directions on the matter of catechising.

The second clause of the fifth Consideration was clearly intended to flush out non-conformists among the lecturers. By insisting that the lecturer read divine service before every sermon Harsnett was effectively forcing a test of conformity to the Prayer Book. Insofar as it went well beyond the requirements of the canons this was Harsnett’s most radical demand.⁷⁴ In further insisting that the lecturer do so wearing his surplice - Laud and the king added the hood in the corresponding Instruction - Harsnett was asking no more than the canons required, but more than some men could comfortably live with. This was no measure calculated to limit the number of sermons. If it did so it was just an unavoidable consequence of tackling the real threat to the peace of the church.

⁷¹ Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, p.368

⁷² Bliss and Scott (eds), *Works Laud*, v, p.308

⁷³ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.136

The third and fourth clauses likewise did nothing to inhibit preaching per se; rather they were intended to bring certain preachers to account. In his article on combination lectures in the early Stuart Church Professor Collinson identified Harsnett as one of the earliest bishops to conduct a concerted campaign against stipendiary lecturers.⁷⁵ Harsnett's favoured solution to the problem of particularly troublesome lecturers was to replace them with "a Combination of grave and orthodox divines", exactly the expedient he was to propose in clause three of the fifth Consideration, and what Professor Collinson observed later became "a Laudian salve for a running sore".⁷⁶ Laudian it might later become but Harsnett had been pursuing his own campaign during the early 1620s for, as we have seen James commended him at the close of the 1624 parliament "for putting downe the popular lectures where fellows stand up and talke and prate what comes in their owne braines."⁷⁷ As with other issues dealt with in the Considerations, Harsnett's strictures against stipendiary preachers may also have their genesis in his apprenticeship under Bancroft. Collinson notes that the curious wording of Canon 72 almost certainly relates to the puritan exorcist, John Darrell, against whose practices Bancroft commissioned Harsnett to write the condemnatory polemic, *The Discovery*.⁷⁸ Whether by proposing the introduction of combination lectureships (comprising established and orthodox ministers), or by compelling single corporation lecturers to take on a cure of

⁷⁴ Bray, *Anglican Canons*, pp.344-5 & 362-3 (canons 56 and 72), required stipendiary preachers and lecturers to read divine service and administer the sacraments on a minimum of two occasions during the year

⁷⁵ Patrick Collinson, 'Lectures by Combination: Structures and Characteristics of Church Life in 17th-Century England', in his *Godly People, Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, 1983), pp.488-9

⁷⁶ Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, p.368; Collinson, 'Lectures', p.491

⁷⁷ Cambridge University MS DD.III.87, p114; Collinson, 'Lectures', p.489

⁷⁸ Collinson, 'Lectures', p.488; also see above, Chapter 3, 2. 'Demons and Witches'.

souls, Harsnett's aim was to make non-conforming ministers and popular preachers accountable to the church hierarchy.

Of the issues raised in the remaining Considerations, the king and Laud assimilated three into the Royal Instructions.⁷⁹ The charge on bishops against conducting unworthy or frequent ordinations was amended with the latter qualification dropped – in this Harsnett was once again referring to Bancroft's canons where there were prescribed limits on frequency and to which Harsnett had strictly adhered during his Norwich tenure.⁸⁰ The proposal that only those of a rank permitted by law could maintain a private chaplain was yet another of Harsnett's initiatives aimed at non-conforming ministers. In this case, it was directed against those who sought the protection of sympathetic private patrons so as to avoid episcopal authority. Laud and the king dropped four remaining issues addressed in the Considerations when they drew up the Instructions – not perhaps because they had any difficulty with them, but simply because none of them made any sense in a document that was to be addressed to the episcopate.⁸¹ Perhaps the most noteworthy of these was Harsnett's proposal that there should be official involvement in the appointment of heads to Emmanuel and Sidney Sussex colleges, “which are the nurseries of Puritanisme”.⁸² This Laud described as “a sour expression” which both he and the king disliked. This was, according to Davies, a clear attack on two leading Calvinist divines and therefore proof

⁷⁹ Considerations 4, 7, and 12 – the last was the general provision that bishops should be themselves held accountable by reporting bi-annually to the king – in the Instructions this requirement was reduced to an annual account. Appendix: Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, pp.368-9; Bliss and Scott, *Works Laud*, v, pp.307-9

⁸⁰ Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, p.368; Bray, *Anglican Canons*, canon 31 p.308-9

⁸¹ Considerations 8-11 – see Appendix

⁸² Appendix: Prynne, *Canterburies Doome*, p.369

enough “that Harsnett was far more anti-Calvinist than either of them”.⁸³ What seems more likely was that Harsnett was once again remembering his years with Bancroft when the two colleges had been in the forefront of producing non-conformist ministers, and perhaps were still doing so. The king may also have balked at naming a college whose head was serving as one of his private chaplains.⁸⁴

From his days as Bancroft’s chaplain Harsnett had been preoccupied with the dangers posed to the church by non-conformists and their preaching. To a large extent the *Considerations* can be seen as an articulation of what had most concerned Harsnett throughout his career. There was not a great deal that was innovative or radical about the programme contained in the *Considerations*, at least as far as his own record stood. Much of it was firmly based on Bancroft’s priorities and Bancroft’s canons and, if it seemed like a personal crusade against non-conformity, then that was something Harsnett had learned from Bancroft. Harsnett’s dislike of stipendiary preachers was long established – probably going back to his days with Bancroft, who had also seen their dangers – and the concern to establish catechising was well grounded in Bancroft’s canons, which were in themselves based on the Elizabethan Injunctions. The provisions against certain types of preachers were very much what Harsnett had been accused of in 1624, and had been robustly defended by James I (by then rather converted to the idea of the subversive potential of stipendiary preachers). If Harsnett’s part in the formulation of the Royal Instructions did place him in accord with Laud, Neile and others of the suspected Arminian party it was in areas that they would always have agreed upon. He had long remained distant from the

⁸³ Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, p.30

⁸⁴ SP 16/124/59 (1628, undated) names Richard Dampont as king’s chaplain and president of Sidney Sussex .

main body of anti-Calvinist thinkers and there is nothing to suggest in the affair of the Instructions that much had changed.

Nevertheless, the Considerations undoubtedly provide a valuable indication of Harsnett's views on episcopal priorities – views that for the most part were shared with the king and Laud. But if there was a sense in which the programme was radical it was not so much in its content as by the fact that the king, or Laud, chose to pursue it in such a systematic manner. As authoritarian and as concerned with order as they are, the Instructions fall far short of encapsulating the main priorities of the 'Laudian' policies pursued in the 1630's - policies that really started to antagonise moderate puritan opinion.

3. The Final Months

Following his appointment as Privy Councillor Harsnett regularly attended council meetings, continuing to do so until 17 February 1630; shortly after this he appears to have returned to York.⁸⁵ His major commission during this period at court was that of the case of the fellows of Pembroke College whose petition against their Master, Jerome Beale, was referred to Harsnett by the king on 25 January.⁸⁶ Harsnett, presumably appointed because of his former positions as vice-chancellor of the university and master of Pembroke, was instructed to adjudicate the matter together with the earl of Holland, chancellor of the university, and Secretary Coke. Their investigation of the fellows' complaints concluded with the finding that the charges were proved and that Beale should

⁸⁵ Harsnett attended 25 of a possible 29 council meetings between his appointment and this date. *APC 1629-30*, p. vii; John Howson in a letter to Laud dated 4 March refers to Harsnett's departure from London, apparently to deal with archdiocesan business. SP 16/162/32

⁸⁶ SP 16/159/16; a formal commission to investigate was issued on 28 January 1630, SP 16/159/29

be removed as master of Pembroke.⁸⁷ The irony of acting as judge in a case of Pembroke fellows trying to oust their master can hardly have been lost on Harsnett.

Before Harsnett's return to York he was involved in two incidents that are certainly typical of an authoritarian, if not acerbic temperament. The first involved Walter Long who appeared before the Star Chamber for disturbances that had taken place in the House of Commons at the end of the 1628 session. At the hearing, which took place on 5 February, Richard Neile had delivered Long of a censure together with a £2,000 fine. According to one correspondent it was then that Harsnett, unable to contain his temper, "made a bitter invective against him, taking Mr Attorney's place upon himself", which prompted some in attendance to remind Harsnett that he was exceeding his position in delivering such a rebuke.⁸⁸ Those parliamentarians who had seen Harsnett's position on the Petition of Right as indicating that he was sympathetic to their cause may have had second thoughts following this outburst. The second incident may have made them wonder if he too should not have been included in their list of Arminian suspects. This was his "vehement oration" of "well-nigh half hour long" delivered against John Davenant, bishop of Salisbury, at a meeting of the Privy Council.⁸⁹ Davenant had preached a Lent sermon that had touched on the matters of predestination and election and in so doing had offended against the proscription on preaching such matters. This could be taken as proof positive of Harsnett's anti-Calvinism, but Harsnett had remained completely silent over the

⁸⁷ Beale was called to a hearing before Harsnett and the others on 10 February. SP 16/160/3; the fellows' complaints are listed in SP 16/160/55-63; the commission's sentence on Beale was delivered on 15 February. SP 16/161/8; Beale later successfully appealed against the sentence. Aubrey Attwater, *Pembroke College Cambridge: A Short History* (Cambridge, 1936), p.70

⁸⁸ Pory to Mead in Williams (ed.), *Court and Times Charles I.* ii, pp.55-6

⁸⁹ Bodleian, Rawlinson Letters 89, fol. 69

issue for nearly 40 years, and what seems rather more likely to have incensed Harsnett was not so much Davenant's theology as his offence against Church authority.

Further evidence of Harsnett's authoritarian style followed soon after and on this occasion was directed against a senior colleague: John Howson, bishop of Durham. The matter concerned the claims of the archbishop of York to carry out visitations of the diocese of Durham. Officials of the diocese had long made claims that it was exempt from the archbishop's normal right, indeed, obligation, to conduct visitations in the various dioceses of his province: they had successfully obtained royal prohibitions against it during the reigns of Edward II, Edward III and Henry IV and, as recently as 1573, had contested the claim when Archbishop Sandys persuaded bishop Richard Barnes to act as his agent.⁹⁰ Although Howson was a diocesan clearly favoured by the establishment, and one supposedly of similar doctrinal inclinations to Harsnett, this did not prevent Harsnett from pressing his authority.⁹¹ On 4 March Howson wrote to Laud and he was clearly much aggrieved by what he believed were Harsnett's underhand tactics. According to Howson, Harsnett had been intending to obtain a commission from the king to visit the diocese, had been persuaded to stay his hand, but "not an hour after his departure from London, he sent to my house an inhibition while the seale was yet hot".⁹² That Harsnett so chose to offend Howson provides further evidence of how he deliberately seems to have remained aloof from, or outside of anything that might be described as an Arminian party. It appears that Harsnett got his way: in October 1630 Archbishop Abbot reported to Secretary Dorchester (Dudley Carleton) that with regard to the annual report on the Royal

⁹⁰ Barry Till, 'York against Durham: The Guardianship of the Spiritualities in the Diocese of Durham Sede Vacante', *Borthwick Papers* 84 (York, 1993)

⁹¹ For Howson's favoured position see above.

Instructions, “Durham will be accounted for by the Archbishop of York”.⁹³ In this case at least, obedience to authority proved more significant than any ties of doctrinal agreement.⁹⁴

Harsnett returned to London after two months absence, resumed his seat on the Council on 14 April and attended what would be his last meeting on 12 May 1630. This proved, in effect, his final appearance on the public stage. At what stage after this his health began to deteriorate is uncertain but when he wrote to Dudley Carleton in January 1631 commending the interests of the “honestest man in the world” (the Dean of Norwich, John Hassall), he had clearly been suffering for some time: he was, he wrote, “a man, old in yeares, worne with infirmities, [and] farr distant from the Sun”.⁹⁵ The following month he drafted his will and soon thereafter took an abortive trip to take the waters at Bath. It was from there, “in so much weakness... as I am not able to write my own name”, that he dictated his final letter on 25 April, again to Carleton, pleading favourable consideration of

⁹² SP 16/162/32

⁹³ SP 16/174/96

⁹⁴ It may also indicate something of Charles' regard for Harsnett; this would be confirmed if there was truth in the rumour circulating in March 1630 that Harsnett had been appointed by the king as a commissioner to treat with the Spanish ambassador. Mead to Stuteville in Williams (ed.), *Court and Times Charles I.* vol ii, p.67

⁹⁵ SP 16/174/96

a petitioner from Yarmouth.⁹⁶ He died exactly one month later and, in accordance with his wishes, his body was removed to Chigwell to be reunited with that of his wife in the parish church that had provided him with his first living.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ SP 16/189/26

⁹⁷ On 31 May Dean Hassall wrote to Carleton confirming Harsnett's death and, no doubt aware that Harsnett had commended his cause, used the opportunity to plead for consideration for one of the episcopal vacancies. SP 16/192/78; a Peter Mease, writing to Sir John Coke, reported the arrangement that Harsnett's body was to be brought to Chigwell for burial. *HMC, Twelfth Report*, p.432

7. Last Things

From the end of Harsnett's life come three distinct sources that provide rare glimpses of his personal views and private life. Most of what has gone before has necessarily focused on the public performances and duties, but in the foundation charter of his school, his last will and testament and the library he bequeathed for the benefit of the clergy of Colchester, Harsnett reveals dimensions of his personality that are otherwise quite invisible.

1. The Schools at Chigwell

On 13 April 1629 Samuel Harsnett confirmed by his signature and seal an endowment for both a Latin school and an English school in Chigwell and, by ordinances "made by me", the manner in which the schools would be governed and the principles upon which they would be run.¹ Perhaps in order that his reason for founding the schools should be ever apparent to successive generations of its governors, schoolmasters and scholars he set it out as the first in a succession of ordinances that should be read in their entirety by the schoolmaster after Morning Prayer each Easter Monday²:

The first Ordinance That I am to make is to lay a bond and obligation uppon my selfe humblie uppon my knees during my life to praise and magnifie the goodness of God whoe from a poore Vicar of this parish hath called mee to so high a Dignitye in his Church and to enable mee to offer this myte of my thanckfullnes unto him for all the blessinges that in mercie he hath bestowed uppon mee.³

¹ For Harsnett's statutes and ordinances see Appendix 1 of G Stott, *A History of Chigwell School* (Ipswich, 1960), pp.139-64

² *Ibid.*, p.163

³ *Ibid.*, p.151

That he should have chosen Chigwell as the beneficiary of his endowment might not only have rested on his previous incumbency – doubtless he had already determined that he should be buried with his late wife in the parish church which adjoined the site of the proposed Latin school.⁴ At what stage Harsnett first conceived the intention of founding the schools is rather less certain, but it may have been as early as 1619. In October of that year, four months after his translation from Chichester to Norwich, Harsnett acquired the plot of land on which would later be built the Latin school and on which the present school still stands. In 1627 he acquired a house with a garden and adjoining land that was to become the English school and the house of the master of that school.⁵

The foundation of the schools took place at a period that followed something of an Elizabethan ‘golden age’ in the establishment of endowed grammar schools. Of the 475 schools included in Nicholas Carlisle’s early nineteenth-century survey of the sorry state of such schools, more than ninety date their foundation (or re-foundation) to Elizabeth’s reign. Perhaps because of the coverage thus achieved, less than fifty were founded in the similar period covered by the reigns of James I and Charles I.⁶ Foundations that were contemporary to that of Harsnett’s owed their endowments to both laymen and clerics. Among lay benefactors Thomas Sutton, “the richest commoner in England”, provided the founding endowment for Charterhouse (1611);⁷ and Stephen Perse, physician and fellow

⁴ In his will of 13 February 1631 Harsnett would specify that he be buried in “the Parishe Church of Chigwell withoute pompe or solempnitye at the foot of Thomazine late my beloved wief”. PROB.11/160/78; Stott, *Chigwell School*, boundary map shown in end paper

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20

⁶ Nicholas Carlisle, *A Concise description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales*, 2 vols. (1818); foundation dates for a number of institutions are either unknown or not supplied; the comprehensiveness of Carlisle’s survey is also somewhat suspect, e.g. no entry is included for John Whitgift’s foundation at Croydon which, compared to some, was flourishing, F H G Percy, *Whitgift School, A History* (Croydon, 1991), p.105

⁷ *DNB* ‘Thomas Sutton’ (1532-1611); Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, ii, pp.2-19

of Gonville and Caius, by the terms of his will did likewise for a grammar school in Cambridge (1613).⁸ Robert Chaloner, canon of Windsor and rector of Amersham, was one of the most enthusiastic clerical benefactors being responsible for the foundations of grammar schools at Knaresborough, Yorkshire (1617) and, by his will, Amersham (1621).⁹ Although it appears that Harsnett was the only member of the early Stuart episcopate to provide an endowment for a school his gesture did have post-Reformation precedents: James Pilkington of Durham provided for the foundation of a school at Rivington (Lancashire) in 1566;¹⁰ Edmund Grindal and John Whitgift, successive archbishops of Canterbury, respectively did so for St Bees school in Whitehaven, Cumberland (1583) and Croydon (1599);¹¹ Edwin Sandys, a predecessor of Harsnett's at York, founded the grammar school at Hawkshead, Cumberland (1585).¹²

Thus, in the broader social context, Harsnett's endowment for the foundation of the Chigwell schools was hardly noteworthy. Nevertheless, while many of the ordinances that he drafted are clearly influenced by established custom and practice there are peculiarities of both provenance and originality that makes the complete package a highly personal, and thus valuable, statement. Where Harsnett's ordinances are most commonly in agreement with those of earlier foundations it is primarily in practical administrative matters: the hours set for the schools;¹³ the limitations on otiums (play days) and the length of terms;¹⁴ arrangements for replacing school governors and the appointment of

⁸ *DNB* 'Stephen Perse' (1548-1615); Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, i, pp.98-9

⁹ *Ibid.*, i, p.44, ii, pp.838-40

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, i, pp.715-7

¹¹ For Grindal's school, *ibid.*, pp.152-168; for Whitgift's school, Percy, *Whitgift School*

¹² Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, i, pp.656-64

¹³ Stott, *Chigwell School*, pp.154-5

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.156-7

new schoolmasters;¹⁵ the safekeeping, in a three-lock chest, of documents relating to the school;¹⁶ the forfeit of free tuition, or expulsion, for undue absenteeism;¹⁷ the practical measure of ensuring that “noe leprouse, fowle or infectious Child be admitted”;¹⁸ the appointment of a school Visitor, in this case the bishop of London.¹⁹ All had long established and widespread precedents.²⁰

However, it is the ordinances that relate to such matters as the qualities of schoolmasters, the place of religious practice within his institutions, the curriculum, and the expectations on standards of behaviour of both masters and scholars that potentially offer the most important insights into Harsnett’s character. Whether for his views on education or, most significantly for this thesis, on religion, in these ordinances Harsnett transcended established precedent. For his authority he drew on the Royal Injunctions of 1559, the ecclesiastical canons of 1604, or sometimes merely on his own commonsensical ideas on the very purposes and priorities of educating the young.²¹

In his ordinance concerning “the behaviour of the Schollers” Harsnett set out the guiding principles on which his schools should be run:

I publish to all men the true intentions of my hart, That I more affectionately desire That the poore Schollers of my Schooles bee nurtured and disciplined in good manners then instructed in good Arts, And therefore I charge my Schoolemasters respectively, As they will Answear ytt to God and good men, That they bring upp their Schollers in the feare of God and reverence towards all men, That they teach them obedience to their parents, observance to their betters, gentlenes and Ingenuity in all their carriages, And above all, That they chastise them severely for three vices,

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.151-2

¹⁶ Ibid., pp.162-3

¹⁷ Ibid., pp.159-60

¹⁸ Ibid., p.160

¹⁹ Ibid., p.162

²⁰ See Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, also Foster Watson, *The English Grammar Schools to 1660: their Curriculum and Practice* (Cambridge, 1908)

²¹ For the canons see *The Anglican Canons 1529-1947*, ed. Gerald Bray (Woodbridge, 1998)

Lyeing, swearing, and filthy speaking, That menn seeing the buds of vertue in their youth May bee stirred upp to blesse them and to praise God for their pious Education.²²

Reverence towards God would have been in the forefront of the minds of most founders of this period, and many may even have shared the view that manners were more important than book learning, though none seems to have explicitly stated so. Matters such as obedience to parents, and the vices for which children should be “sharply” or “severely” punished were also commonly enough expressed in foundation ordinances and some went further than Harsnett.²³ Nevertheless, no contemporary founders appear to have combined these factors together in such an articulate statement on the philosophy underpinning their foundation.

In the typically forthright and precise manner that characterises all his ordinances, Harsnett left little to chance with regard to the qualities and qualifications to be possessed by his schoolmasters:

I Constitute and ordayne That the Latine Schoolemaster be a Graduatt of one of the Universityes, not under Seaven and Twentye yeares of age, A man skillful in the Greeke and Latine Tongues, A good Poett of a sound Religion neither Papist nor Puritan, of a grave behaviour, of a sober and honest Conversation, noe Tippler, nor haunter of Alehouses, noe puffer of Tobacco, And above all that he bee apt to teach and severe in his government; and all election and elections otherwise made I declare them to be voyd *ipso facto*, And that as soone as the Schoolemaster doe enter into holy orders either Deacon or Priest his place to become voyde *ipso facto* as if he were dead.²⁴

²² Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.158

²³ The ordinances of Heath Free Grammar School (near Halifax, Yorkshire), c.1600 enjoined reverence, love and obedience towards parents as well as inveighing against swearing, cursing, taking God's name in vain, railing, wrangling, fighting and even laughing. Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, pp.134-5

²⁴ Stott, *Chigwell School*, pp.152-3; this ordinance relates to the qualities and qualifications of the Latin schoolmaster but in the next Harsnett goes on to say that it should also apply to the candidate for the post of the English schoolmaster, *ibid.*, p.153.

Harsnett's requirement that his schoolmasters were graduates was common enough and in accord with the canons,²⁵ the age stipulation was neither and may have been intended to ensure the candidate had sufficient life experience to meet Harsnett's exacting demands.²⁶ That the schoolmasters should be "neither Papist nor Puritan" was in the former injunction not without precedent, but in the latter, most probably, quite unique to Harsnett.²⁷ It is yet further proof of Harsnett's antipathy to puritans; two years later, in the preamble to his will, he would echo this sentiment, although then his distaste would be extended to any who subscribed to the "novities of Geneva".²⁸ Though perhaps there is nothing exceptional in requiring the schoolmaster to be of "sober and honest Conversation" it is the only example of an ordinance that uses the precise phrasing and juxtaposition of the corresponding canon.²⁹ It was a frequent injunction of other contemporary ordinances that schoolmasters should not be frequenters of alehouses or suchlike,³⁰ but Harsnett appears to have been alone in proscribing tobacco. In fact he had expressly forbidden its use in 1615 when, as vice-chancellor of Cambridge, he had presided over the visit of

²⁵ Canon 78. Bray, *Canons*, pp.370-1; this canon, although aimed at curates teaching in parishes in which there was no public school already founded, was clearly recognising that which had already been established as good practice.

²⁶ As was spelt out in one of the rare examples of an age stipulation: Witton, Cheshire (1558), Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, p.127

²⁷ The schoolmaster at Hexham (1598) was to be "a zealous and sound Professor of true Religion, abhorring all Papistrie". Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, ii, p.246; none of the statutes reproduced either in Carlisle's or Watson's works mention similar prohibitions on puritans, nor could Stott discover any. *Chigwell School*, p.152, n.44

²⁸ PROB.11/160/78 and see below in this chapter 'Last Will and Testament': reflecting the 'Arminians' tactic of casting Calvinist theology as one with Puritan theology.

²⁹ See Canon 77 in Bray, *Canons*, pp.370-1; the wording here is precisely that of the Royal Injunctions of 1559. XL in. David Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae* (4 vols., 1737), iv, p.186; the qualities of honesty and sobriety are frequently found jointly or separately but in no other case that I have discovered are they combined with conversation.

³⁰ This was proscribed for members of the clergy by the Royal Injunctions of 1559, Wilkins, *Concilia*, iv, p.183

James I, who had earlier condemned the use of tobacco.³¹ Another example of Harsnett closely following the canons is the importance he placed on the aptitude of the candidates for the trade of teaching: “he bee apt to teach” demands Harsnett; “found meet...for his learning and dexterity in teaching” require the canons.³² The vehemence with which Harsnett pronounces that his schoolmasters should not be in holy orders seems rather curious given the priority he placed in his ordinances on the religious aspects of education.³³ Perhaps Harsnett was concerned that the schoolmasters should be committed to teaching and not distracted by clerical career ambitions.

The ordinances that relate to the religious education and practice in the schools are concerned with teaching the catechism, the requirement for (and the form of) morning and evening prayers, and the dictate on attending church on Sundays and holy days. Although, to a greater or lesser extent, these are matters addressed in the extant ordinances of most contemporary school foundations the value of Harsnett’s ordinances is that in their exactitude they are deeply revealing of his personal views. They also incorporate certain unique features, whether on the high priority accorded to catechising, on the liturgy or on the forms of homage to be observed.

Harsnett was doubtless aware that earlier founders had exhorted their schoolteachers to teach the catechism and also that the formal pronouncements in the 1604 Canons had charged that it was the duty of all schoolmasters to “teach in English or Latin, as the children are able to bear, the larger or shorter catechism heretofore by public

³¹ John Nichols, *Progresses... of King James I* (4 vols. 1828), iii. p.44: James I. *Counterblast to Tobacco* (1604); Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.153, n.47

³² *Ibid.*; Bray, *Canons*, pp.370-1

³³ The prohibition was not unique in fact though it was in form, and is especially curious because the first Latin schoolmaster may well have been in orders. Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.153, n.48

authority set forth.”³⁴ But we might suspect by the wording of Harsnett’s ordinance that he would have needed encouragement neither from the canons, nor from other earlier foundations. For him it was of the highest priority:

I ordayne That the Latine Schoolemaster every Saterday Afternoone, doe call the Schollers of both Schooles before him, And doe Catechise them in the principalls of our Christian Religion According to the order of the booke of Comon prayer, That they may by this meanes bee seasoned and prepared to receive publick Instruction by way of Catechising from the Vicar in the Church wch I more desire than the seasoning them with learning.³⁵

In stipulating the Prayer Book catechism it might be argued that Harsnett was hardly exhibiting great enthusiasm for catechising; it was short, not especially Protestant,³⁶ and might be the least that a senior prelate would be expected to commend. Although Edmund Grindal, when he ordered that the younger children in his school be taught “to say by heart the Catechism in English set forth by public authority”, must have been referring to the Prayer Book catechism he went on to demand that the older pupils should progress to “the greater as well as the lesser Catechism”.³⁷ By the latter he was doubtless referring to Dean Alexander Nowell’s altogether more demanding *Catechism or First Institution of Christian Religion*, which had gained the official approval of synod in 1562.³⁸ James Pilkington, Calvinist bishop of Durham, had earlier gone beyond the approval of “public authority” in the orders for his school, commending not only Nowell’s

³⁴ Bray, *Canons*, pp.372-3

³⁵ Stott, *Chigwell School*, pp.155-6

³⁶ Christopher Haigh, ‘The Church of England, the Catholics and the People’ in Christopher Haigh (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (1984), p.211

³⁷ The Elizabethan ordinances of Oundle (Northants) school specified “Mr Nowell’s little Catechism” for the younger pupils and “his large Catechism” for the older pupils Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, p.80:

³⁸ *Ibid.*.

catechism, but also Calvin's, as set out in the *Institutions*.³⁹ Of course, it is hardly likely that Harsnett would ever have demanded Calvin's catechism. However, while Harsnett required his schoolmaster to instruct only in the rudimentary form of catechism, he made it clear that this was merely a precursor to the more detailed instruction that he entrusted to the vicar of Chigwell. In fact he had already gone on record with his views on catechising. During his defence in the House of Lords of the petition presented by the Norwich Puritans in 1624, he had elaborated this particular point in response to a question from Charles, then Prince of Wales. On that occasion Harsnett had been criticised for enjoining only the most basic catechising of children: he "commanded to ask bare Questions, and nothing else; *ergo*, no Instructions".⁴⁰ What concerned Harsnett was, he explained, that the preachers in question "used to choose a text of the Creed, &c and to ask the Child some One Question, and then to dilate very long upon it, and never to descend to the capacity of the Child."⁴¹ From the cited ordinance it is clear that he still took the view that the process of teaching the catechism should begin with fundamentals, but as a means towards greater understanding rather than an end in itself. Indeed, his concern for his pupils' instruction in the catechism could hardly have been put in stronger terms than his final words on the matter.

Neither the Royal Injunctions of 1559, nor the 1604 canons relating to schoolmasters, laid any obligation on schoolmasters to lead their pupils in morning or evening prayer, but this was doubtless only because its omission in practice could hardly have been conceived. Nevertheless, most ordinances made it a formal requirement and so

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.79-80; Harrow School's ordinances demanded much the same. *ibid.*, p.80

⁴⁰ *LJ*, iii, p.388

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.390

Harsnett's are primarily of interest for the precise form that prayers should take rather than for its inclusion *per se*:

I ordayne That the Schollers of both the Schooles doe everye morning uppon their knees before they beginne their lectures offer upp their sacrifice of prayer and than[k]sgiveing to God in such prayers and Psalmes as shalbe appointed by mee, That is to say That their masters both at the one tyme in the morning doe repeate orderlye The Lord's Prayer, And after that the *Te Deum Laudamus*, and that their Schollers doe Answere them accordingly. And at Afternoone before they Departe, That the masters doe repeate orderlye the hundred and thirteene psalme, and they Answere ytt in the verse following to the ende of that Psalm.⁴²

The unusual features of this ordinance are those that require the recital of the *Te Deum Laudamus* during morning prayers and the repetition of the Psalm 113 each evening.⁴³

Why Harsnett, alone of founders, should have chosen the *Te Deum Laudamus* is not readily apparent, but a clue may lie in his clear regard for the forms and authority of the Book of Common Prayer. The daily recital of the *Te Deum* was part of the order for morning prayers set out in the Prayer Book. In each of Harsnett's other ordinances concerning religious practices he draws on the Prayer Book as a basis in formulating his instruction and it seems reasonable to conclude that he wished his pupils to be constantly reminded of its significance in the daily liturgy of the Church of England. As well as for its obvious aptness as a closing dedication – “The Lord's name is praised from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same” – perhaps Harsnett also chose Psalm 113, *Laudate pueri*, because it echoed the sentiment of his first ordinance in its sixth verse: “he taketh up the simple out of the dust: and lifteth the poor out of the mire”.

⁴² Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, pp.157-8

⁴³ No other ordinances appear to enjoin the *Te Deum*; the only other instance of specified psalms appears to be that of Kirkby Stephen (Westmoreland) school (1566) which suggests that one of 15 specified psalms (Psalm 113 is not one of these) be sung morning and evening. Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, p.42

Canon 79 ordered that schoolmasters should every Sunday and holy day lead their pupils to the parish church there to hear “such Sermon [as] shall be made”, and at a convenient time thereafter examine them on “what they have borne away of such Sermon.”⁴⁴ Harsnett enjoined likewise but, in so doing, also took the opportunity to underline the importance he attached to the forms of homage his pupils should observe:

I ordayne That the Schollers of both Schooles doe upon every Sunday and holiday in the morning resort orderly unto their severall Schooles, And that they goe from thence wth their masters before them unto the Church twoo & twoo in a ranke, That they carry their service bookes wth them And Answear the Versicles in the Psalmes as the Clerke of the parish doth, That they kneele att such tymes of the Celebratinge of Divine service accordingly as ytt is in that behalfe prescribed by the booke of Comon prayer, And that they stand upp at the reading of the Creede and the Ghospell, And bowe att the sacred name of *Jhesus*, And that as many as bee of Capacitye doe take in writinge the notes of the preacher’s Sermon And give account of them on Munday Morning to their Masters.⁴⁵

Harsnett’s ordinance is unusual for its precision and emphasis on the forms of homage he expected to be observed. Again, it seems to underline the central place of the Prayer Book in his thinking. While we might assume that few founders would have objected to the Prayer Book injunction to kneel during divine service and stand at the reading of the creed and the gospel, it is surely a significant clue to Harsnett’s character that only he insisted on spelling it out. The reverence Harsnett demanded be shown at the name of Jesus was not, however, a Prayer Book injunction. In fact, only a few weeks before Harsnett set his seal to the Chigwell ordinances it had been implied that the practice had distinctly Arminian connotations. On 13 February a Dr Moore, one of the growing chorus of critics of Arminianism, had complained in the House of Commons that Richard

⁴⁴ Bray, *Canons*, pp.372-3

⁴⁵ Stott, *Chigwell, School*, pp. 158-9

Montagu had ordered him to desist preaching against bowing at the name of Jesus.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it would be wrong to see in Harsnett's insistence on the practice anything especially Arminian, or of any anticipation of the Laudian reverence for liturgy and ceremony that was soon after imposed. No one would have accused George Abbot of Arminianism, yet in his metropolitan visitation articles for Gloucester diocese (1612) he had enquired as to whether parishioners were "using all due and lowly reverence, when the blessed name of the Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned".⁴⁷ In fact, Harsnett was merely holding a line that had been laid down in the Royal Injunctions of 1559, later reiterated in the 1604 Canons, by the following order:

[T]hat whensoever the name of Jesus shall be in any lesson, sermon, or otherwise in the church pronounced, due reverence be made of all persons young and old, with loweness of courtesie...as thereunto do necessarily belong, and heretofore hath been accustomed."⁴⁸

In Harsnett's robust defence against the Norwich petition of 1624 he had complained of the "strange Opinions" that included the view "that it is Supersticious to bow down at the Name of Jesus".⁴⁹ For Harsnett then, the ordinance was merely a reiteration of orthodoxy. By insisting on it he might have gone further than many Calvinist contemporaries (and certainly more than any puritan divine), but if loyalty to the Elizabethan settlement and Bancroft's canons constituted either Arminianism or proto-Laudianism then we surely stretch the definition of either beyond its limits.

⁴⁶ Thomas Crew, *Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons, 1628* (1707), p.80

⁴⁷ Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, i. (Woodbridge, 1994), p.104; Harsnett had followed John Overall's visitation articles for Norwich diocese on this point. *ibid.*, pp.165/9

⁴⁸ Wilkins, *Concilia*, pp.187-8

⁴⁹ *IJ* iii, p.389

Of course, there was no formal obligation on a founder to reiterate explicitly in his ordinances the directions contained within the canons. It is debatable whether, by the aforementioned ordinances, Harsnett strictly complied with Canon 79: this charged schoolmasters to train their pupils in “such sentences of Holy Scripture, as shall be most expedient to induce them to all godliness”.⁵⁰ If Harsnett was therefore discriminating in his use of the canons it is all the more significant that he chose to include the order that pupils should report their understanding of the sermon on the next day. This signal confirms that Harsnett’s Arminian theology was clearly no bar to his appreciation of the potentially edifying effects of the preacher’s word.

As in most things pertaining to his schools Harsnett apparently drew on a mix of canonical authority, established practice, and personal idiosyncrasy when he drafted his ordinance concerning the curriculum. For instruction in Latin grammar the schoolmaster should employ “Lillies Gram[m]ar, and noe other”.⁵¹ This was William Lily’s *Brevissima Institutio* - precisely the work that was intended by the demand in the canons that schoolmasters use “the grammar set forth by King Henry the Eighth...and none other.”⁵² In recommending Cicero and Terence for style Harsnett was unexceptional but he completed his instruction with a rather curious stipulation concerning the poets to be read: “That he [the schoolmaster] reade the auncyent Greeke and Latine Poetts, noe Novelities nor conceipted modern writers.”⁵³ It is a moot point as to whether Harsnett meant to proscribe contemporary poets writing in Greek and Latin or those writing in English;

⁵⁰ Bray, *Canons*, pp.372-3

⁵¹ Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.154

⁵² Bray, *Canons*, pp.372-3; for Greek grammar Harsnett specified Cleonard’s Grammar, which was not specified in the canons but was commended by (among others) Grindal for his school at St Bees, Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, i, p.158

whatever the case it was it was clearly an intentional piece of sniping, and one personal to him.

The limitations that Harsnett imposed on his schoolmasters with regard to the punishment of pupils are notable by their moderation:

I constitute and ordayne That the Schoolemasters doe not exceede in their Correction above the number of three stripes wth the Rodd att any one tyme, That they strike not any Scholler uppon the head or the Cheeke with their fiste or the palmes of their hands or wth any other thinge, uppon paine of Losse of Fortye shillings for every such stripe or stroke to be defaulked by the Governours out of their yearly wages, That they doe not curse nor revile their Schollers...⁵⁴

An ordinance of Charterhouse School, dated to 1627, placed a similar obligation of restraint on the schoolmasters, but this only in general terms: “in Correction, they shall be moderate”.⁵⁵ Harsnett’s use of the rod contrasts starkly with the ordinance of Oundle Free Grammar School; that demanded that the punishment for each “oath or ribald word” be three strokes of the rod.⁵⁶ Although the contemporary (1628) ordinances of Coventry Free School, like Harsnett’s, proscribed the schoolmaster striking his pupils about the head its silence on use of the rod suggests that this was left to the schoolmaster’s discretion.⁵⁷ Yet even in the rare exhortations towards moderation no other founder seems to have made provision for enforcing this moderation through the type of punishment set by Harsnett. Despite insisting on restraint, Harsnett did support judicious use of corporal punishment. Like the authors of many other contemporary foundations he insisted that the pupils should not speak English in the Latin school;⁵⁸ in fact they should

⁵³ Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.154

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.157

⁵⁵ Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, ii, pp.2-19

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.218

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.651

⁵⁸ For example, Pilkington for Rivington school. Watson, *Grammar Schools to 1660*, p.134

“be corrected by the Ferula” for speaking thus.⁵⁹ Furthermore, swearing – in Harsnett’s view one of the three major vices, together with “Lyeing...and filthy speaking” – was, within the defined limits, to be punished by the rod.

As source material towards an understanding of Harsnett the Chigwell foundation ordinances have limitations. Precisely because of their value as the only such source attributable to a bishop of the early Stuart Church, they have finite worth insofar as there are no direct comparators. With no comparable source we can only speculate as to which, if any, of the views expressed by Harsnett through his ordinances were especially peculiar to him as a Caroline bishop. Nevertheless, although as a charitable act of an early Stuart bishop it was unique in form, it was not unique in munificence: George Abbot had provided for the foundation of a hospital at Guildford during his lifetime.⁶⁰ The form and context of the ordinances also limits the extent to which they shed light on one significant area of interest in this thesis: the nature of Harsnett’s alleged Arminianism. The first, and perhaps the defining, aspect of English Arminianism was theological, and that essentially the position taken with regard to predestined grace. Yet the ordinances were hardly an appropriate medium in which to expound on the Arminian view of grace and they certainly offer no evidence that Harsnett sought to do so, even obliquely. Foundation ordinances were also an inappropriate place to express views on the relationship between church and state. As has been demonstrated elsewhere in this thesis there is, any case, little to suggest that Harsnett can be associated with this political dimension of Arminianism that had

⁵⁹ Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.157

⁶⁰ Arthur Onslow, ‘The Character of Archbishop Abbot’, appended to *The Life of Dr George Abbot, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* (1777), 53; also ‘A Description of the Hospital at Guildford’, also appended to the *Life*

surfaced in the 1620s. The chief characteristics of the final pre-civil war phase of Arminianism were, under the direction of William Laud and Charles I, its emphasis on ceremony, sacraments and the elevation of the liturgy over preaching. Harsnett's school foundation preceded these developments, but the critical point is whether or not he can be seen to have been anticipating such policies. However, the evidence that the ordinances are capable of providing in this area is thin. The ceremonial and sacramental aspects of this later phase of Arminianism are directed primarily towards the place of worship and the administering personnel, and thus of less direct relevance to school ordinances which, by contrast, are more concerned with the laity.

Where the ordinances are of most value to this investigation of Harsnett's life are in the extent to which they are suggestive of certain personal qualities. They reveal his views on the relationship between education and religion, and his steadfast loyalty to the broad principles of the Elizabethan religious settlement. A comparison of Harsnett's ordinances with those of other foundations shows his ordinances having thoroughness and attention to detail that is exceptional. It is difficult to find a substantive enjoinder in any other foundation ordinances that does not have a counterpart in those of Chigwell – it is almost as though Harsnett had systematically trawled the work of others in order to ensure that he overlooked nothing of significance. But, as has already been observed, there is much about the Chigwell ordinances that is peculiar to Harsnett, and that can be taken to include relatively trivial matters of detail: Harsnett laid down the punishment that should be administered to any pupil who “doe make water w[i]thin the walles of the Courtyard”, and also prescribed the exact form of words to be delivered by the two school governors who were to present the New Year's day gift of an “Angell of Gold” to the school visitor,

the bishop of London.⁶¹ All this, perhaps, provides clues as to Harsnett's career achievements. It may account for his being so highly valued as a member of parliamentary committees, in part for his appointment to the Privy Council, and also why he was entrusted with the Lord's re-draft of the Petition of Right and possibly for drafting the 'Considerations for the better settling of Church Government'. The care that Harsnett applied in drafting his ordinances was also, it seems, sufficient enough reason for Sir Thomas Fanshawe to make them the model for the ordinances of his father's foundation at Dronfield, Derbyshire.⁶²

Harsnett also exhibited a striking note of compassion with regard to his pupils and no little understanding as to the nature of children. His concern for the less able pupils is demonstrated by the comparatively rare foundation of an elementary school in addition to the Latin school. Here the pupils who showed no great facility for the classics would be "instructed and taught to reade write Cypher and cast Accounts and to learn their Accidence".⁶³ We have seen too that this compassion extended to the comparative mildness of the injunctions concerned with the correction and punishment of pupils and the stiff, and unique, penalty imposed on the schoolmasters should they exceed their authority in this area. The significance of this is perhaps underlined by the omission of both the limit on strokes of the rod, and the fine on the schoolmaster, from the Dronfield ordinances; in almost every other respect these were an exact rendering of the Chigwell ordinances. It is

⁶¹ Stott, *Chigwell School*, pp.160/2

⁶² For the Dronfield statutes (1638) see Carlisle, *Grammar Schools*, i, pp.221-8; Fanshawe may well have been acquainted with Harsnett for he inherited estates in Barking (close to Chigwell), *DNB* entry for his father, (also) Thomas Fanshawe (1533-1601)

⁶³ Stott, *Chigwell School*, p.142

difficult to disagree with the suggestion that, if Harsnett's ordinances were properly enforced, his schools were among the most humane of their time.⁶⁴

Harsnett esteemed good manners over arts, but it is just as clear that he saw the former as only a natural product of a "pious education" which saw to it that children should be raised "in the fear of God and reverence towards all men". Such sentiments would surely have been as agreeable to Harsnett's Calvinist colleagues in the episcopate as would his emphasis on the importance of the catechism and sermon. Nor does it seem likely that his frequent recourse to the Prayer Book should put him especially at odds with his fellow bishops. Whether or not those of Calvinist inclination would have so readily and repeatedly drawn, as Harsnett did, on the authority of the Royal Injunctions of 1559 or the Canons of 1604, is rather more debatable. However, leaving aside the especial reverence Harsnett demanded be shown at the name of Jesus, it can certainly be argued that few of his ordinances taken individually, are exceptional. What is striking about them is that when the instructions are considered as a whole they represent a very marked and consistent commitment to the principles of the Elizabethan settlement. It may well be that such a marked loyalty to the spirit of this settlement was a characteristic shared with other Arminian prelates - but it was not that that defined them as Arminians. Nor is it likely that it was exclusive to them.

⁶⁴ F W Brownlow, *Shakespeare, Harsnett, and the Devils of Denham* (Newark, NJ 1993), p.158

2. Harsnett's Library at Colchester

Harsnett chose neither to remember his old college, nor add to the collection recently donated to the library of York Minster by the wife of his predecessor, Toby Matthew, when he willed that,

I give to the Ballyffes and Incorporacion of the Towne of Colchester all my Librarie of Bookes provided that they provide a decent roome to sett them up in that the clergie of the Towne of Colchester and other divines maye have free access for the readinge and studyinge of them.⁶⁵

Among those bishops who left instructions regarding the disposal of their libraries this was unusual, but it was one that probably facilitated the library's survival, apparently intact, until the present day. Although Harsnett's library of some 875 works was modest by the standards of Matthew (approximately 3,000), Whitgift (6,000), Bancroft (6,060), and Abbot (2,650) it is now the largest bishop's library to remain as a discrete collection. Few such libraries were bequeathed either whole, or substantially complete, and even those that were, were subsumed into larger collections. Such was the case with those of Lancelot Andrewes, Francis Dee, Arthur Lake and James Montague, who all bequeathed the substantial part of their libraries to their former colleges.⁶⁶ A number of other bishops remembered their colleges by either bequeathing specific volumes or, instead, leaving cash bequests for the purchase of books.⁶⁷ The libraries of these and others were thus dispersed either by the express intentions of the owner, or the omission of any specific provision. John Whitgift had one of the largest private collections, but while he made

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ David Pearson. 'The Libraries of English Bishops. 1600-40'. *The Library* 6th Series 14 (1992). pp.233-4, 239-40, 245-6, 249

⁶⁷ William Barlow, John Buckeridge, and Herbert Westfaling left specified volumes to their college libraries; Robert Bennett, Valentine Carey and Anthony Watson bequeathed cash for the purchase of books; *ibid.*, pp.236, 237, 255.

specific provisions for certain volumes, his library suffered dispersal. Bancroft appears to have acquired a substantial minority, but smaller collectors, including Harsnett, also obtained volumes.⁶⁸

The contents of Harsnett's library have led Kevin Sharpe to suggest that here was proof that Harsnett's relationship with Thomas Howard was as much based on a shared interest in classical scholarship and antiquity as it was on political values. Arundel's library was a "monument" to such scholarship, Harsnett's collection "a fine repository of humanist learning".⁶⁹ Arundel and Harsnett may well have been drawn together by shared intellectual interests, but whether any meaningful conclusion can be drawn based on similarities in their libraries is doubtful. It is certainly the case that Harsnett's library contained the works of a number of classical authors. Cicero, the chief inspiration for Renaissance humanism, was particularly well represented, and there were also works of other orators and rhetoricians including Plutarch, Demosthenes, and Seneca the Elder, and of poets including Virgil, Ovid and Homer.⁷⁰ None of these, however, made Harsnett unusual. Bibliographical analyses of other early Stuart bishops' libraries suggest that the works of these authors were - alongside bibles, biblical commentaries and other theological works - virtually *de rigueur*.⁷¹ This in itself is hardly surprising. Since the Renaissance, classical authors such as Cicero and the poets had become standard fare even for the grammar school scholar. The humanist notion that classical antiquity provided the

⁶⁸ The library was catalogued during Whitgift's lifetime thus enabling analysis of the collection, *ibid.*, p.256

⁶⁹ Sharpe, 'Earl of Arundel', p.240

⁷⁰ Gordon Goodwin, *A Catalogue of the Harsnett Library* (London, 1888): works cited hereafter are listed in the catalogue alphabetically by author, unless otherwise noted. For the pre-eminent position of Cicero in the development of Elizabethan humanism, and especially on Gabriel Harvey, Harsnett's near

role models for eloquence had, by this time, so permeated the world of learning that it would be more remarkable if such works had not had a place in an early seventeenth-century library.

If the majority of classical authors in Harsnett's library were probably acquired for their stylistic merits, his small collection of works by classical philosophers may give a better clue to his intellectual inclinations. Aristotle dominated the collection, but there also works by Diogenes, and the Stoic, Seneca the Younger. The complete absence of any works by Plato may be of some significance, contrasting as it does with the ample representation of Aristotle.⁷² Aristotelianism was the philosophical system most closely associated with scholasticism, whilst Platonism acquired popularity with the Renaissance backlash against that school of intellectual enquiry. Harsnett was, of course, no latter-day scholastic.⁷³ His apparent preference may have been nothing more than a reflection of his own personality: Aristotle's systemising was always more likely to appeal to Harsnett's own predilection for order and authority than Plato's questioning of the nature of reality and the supposition of a transcendent form beyond it. It is also worth noting that Augustine had drawn on Plato's philosophy of the infallible deity when he developed his own position on predestination – the very position that had been assimilated by Calvin and

contemporary at Pembroke. see Mike Pincombe, *Elizabethan Humanism, Literature and Learning in the later Sixteenth Century* (2001), especially pp.15-36, 84-91

⁷¹ Pearson, 'Libraries of English Bishops', p.228;

⁷² The library does contain one work by the neo-Platonist, Plotinus

⁷³ From the early period of scholasticism the library has 18 works of Thomas Aquinas, two of Duns Scotus, two of Peter Lombard; from the later period are two works by Robert Holcot, a leading thinker of the *via moderna* school which, for its liberal views on the covenant, was sometimes charged with Pelagianism; Alister McGrath, *Reformation Thought* (3rd edition, Oxford, 1999), pp.74-6. One each of the Duns and Holcot works appear to have been acquired from Whitgift's library, Goodwin, *Catalogue*, pp.64 & 86

his successors and that Harsnett famously opposed.⁷⁴ Although the absence of Plato's works may be accounted by nothing more than their removal from the library before it was catalogued, what seems more likely is that Harsnett, who would certainly have been familiar with them, saw no place for them in his own collection.

Recourse to the authority of the early church Fathers was widespread among divines of the Church of England and was largely irrespective of doctrinal inclination. Harsnett had declared his own reverence for the primitive church and his library reflected this in the substantial representation of works by both the Latin and Greek Fathers.⁷⁵ With the surprising exception of St Gregory of Nazianzus, all the so-called 'Great Fathers' of the Catholic Church were represented: St Athanasius, St Basil and St John Chrysostom of the Eastern Fathers; St Ambrose, St Augustine, St Gregory the Great and St Jerome, the Western Fathers. The collection went well beyond these with the inclusion of the works of a further fourteen Greek Fathers and ten Latin Fathers.⁷⁶ No evidence survives to suggest whether or not Harsnett shared with Andrewes and Laud their particular efforts to encourage the study of the Greek Fathers.⁷⁷

Harsnett's library may incidentally have been "a fine repository of humanist learning", but it was essentially a working library rather than that of a collector. That Harsnett saw it as such is evident from his intention that it should be left in its complete

⁷⁴ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490-1700* (2003), p.109

⁷⁵ Works by the Church Fathers were "a staple of any early-seventeenth-century library". Pearson, 'Libraries of English Bishops', p.227

⁷⁶ Greek Fathers: St Clement, St Cyril, Diodore, St Epiphanius, Eusebius, St Gregory of Nyssa, St Ignatius, St John of Damascus, St Justin Martyr, Origen, St Polycarp, St Proclus, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, and Theodoret. Latin Fathers: St Arnobius, St John Cassian, St Eucharius, St Fulgentius, St Hilary, St Isidore, St Leo, Rufinus of Aquileia, Tertullian, and St Vincent.

⁷⁷ For Andrewes and Laud's enthusiasm for the Greek Fathers see Julian Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church* (Oxford, 1992), p.52: in the library, the slight imbalance in favour of the Greek Fathers probably just reflects the fact that they outnumbered the Latin Fathers.

state for the future edification of Colchester divines. A previous analysis of the library's contents supports this contention. Nearly 200 works in the collection were published between 1581 and 1590 and a further 60 in the following decade, suggesting that Harsnett laid the foundation of his collection while studying and teaching divinity at Cambridge.⁷⁸ The most substantial category of works in the library, some 120 Bibles and biblical texts, tends to support the theory that this was a theologian's library; so too does the sizeable collection of works of continental reformers, Catholic theologians and Church of England divines. With the exception of the notable omission of any of Martin Luther's works all the other major reform thinkers - Zwingli (one work), Melanchthon (4), Bucer (2) and Calvin (3) - were represented in the library. But so too were other important figures such as Theodore Beza (4), Henry Bullinger (8), Peter Martyr (7), John Oecolampadius (3) and Hieronymous Zanchius (4).⁷⁹ Among the Catholic writers whose works were most numerous represented were Robert Bellarmine and Thomas Stapleton. The surprising lacuna among the works of Church of England writers is Richard Hooker, but those of the Elizabethan apologist John Jewel and William Whitaker, who had probably answered Harsnett's Paul's Cross sermon, were both in evidence, as were works by Abbot, Andrewes, Bancroft and Whitgift.⁸⁰ Contemporary polemical works seem to have been of

⁷⁸ G H Martin. 'Archbishop Samuel Harsnett, 1561-1631 and his Library at Colchester', in Kenneth Neale (ed.), *Essex: "full of profitable things"* (Oxford, 1996). p.48

⁷⁹ Beza was influential in the development of the Calvinist position on predestination, but his notable work on the subject, *Tabula Praedestinationis* (1555), is not amongst the present Harsnett collection.

⁸⁰ Whitaker's four works were anti-Catholic polemics against Campion, Stapleton and Bellarmine..

no interest to Harsnett, or were certainly deemed unworthy of inclusion in the library; a rare exception was a series of responses to John Selden's *History of Tithes*.⁸¹

Much of Harsnett's library consists of works, and categories of works, that would have been commonplace in the libraries of contemporaries. There are, however, some items in the collection that do give clues as to his particular preoccupations and interests. Evidence of the preparatory research for his *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* is apparent from a number of works that otherwise might not be expected in a bishop's library: the *Malleus Malleficarum* (1582), a treatise on witchcraft by Jacob Sprenger and Heinrich Institoris; copies of Girolamo Menghi's *Flagellum Daemonum* (1597) and his *Fuga Daemonum* (1596); and Johann Nider's *Myrmecia Bonorum* (1602).⁸² Evidence of his continuing interest in the subject of exorcism comes from a 1606 copy of *Practica Exorcistarum* by Valerio Polidoro. Interests outside of his professional sphere are suggested by the presence of other works: alchemy by the *Artis Auriferae*; geography by Ptolemy's *Geographia Universalis*, Mercator's *Atlas sive Cosmographicae* and Abraham Ortelius' *Thesaurus Geographicus*; mathematics by the *Aurea Carmina* of Pythagoras.

Rather disappointingly we have to rely on the composition of the library for any insights into Harsnett's mind. While a number the works are copiously annotated most of the annotations comprise brief summations of content, key words and highlighters.⁸³

⁸¹ Richard Tillesley, *Animadversions upon Mr Selden's History of Tithes* (1619), Richard Montagu, *Diatribae upon the first part of the late History of Tithes* (1621), and Stephen Nettles, *An Answer to the Jewish Part of Mr Selden's History of Tithes* (1625); Selden's work is not in the library.

⁸² He must have had access to Reginald Scot's sceptical work, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), for it was clear that he used it for his description of witches in the *Declaration*.

⁸³ Annotations on a 1561 edition of Calvin's Institutes [Goodwin, *Catalogue*, p.44, H.a.61] are typical of the short paraphrasing and highlighters (frequently "Nota"), e.g. at Book xxi, liber 3, p.586, verse 2, on the matter of predestination, next to a text entry "peruerimus in viam fidei, inquit Augustinus, eam constanter teneamus", is simply the summation of the argument: "Via fidei constanter tenenda". One rare and possible indication of Harsnett's opinion is in a copy of the *Quadriologus*, a life of Thomas Becket

Nevertheless, this style in itself underpins the suggestion that this was a working theologian's library rather than that of a collector. What makes Harsnett's library an especially valuable resource to scholars is the general rather than the particular: not the occasional glimpses of personal interests and idiosyncrasies, nor that it is unique to Harsnett, but rather that it is the best surviving intact example of what was probably representative of a typical senior churchman's working library.

3. Last Will and Testament

On 13 February 1631, Harsnett set his signature to his last will and testament.⁸⁴ The explicit and self-conscious manner in which Harsnett drafted this document make it a particularly valuable source for assessing both his fully developed ideological position and how, in this and other matters, he compared with others of the early Stuart episcopate. A number of aspects of Harsnett's will are considered here: the preamble with its embedded statement of faith; his instructions as to a memorial; his wishes with regard to his place of burial and other funeral arrangements; and, finally, his bequests. Where it is instructive and appropriate, comparison will be made with similar provisions included in the wills representative of a cross section of bishops whose careers were in some part contemporary with that of Harsnett.⁸⁵

[*ibid.*, pp.47-8, K.e.41]; an alteration, in what I believe to be Harsnett's hand, is made to a description of the work on the frontispiece: "Vita processus sancti Thome Cantuarensis martyris super libertate ecclesiastica" – has the words "sancti" and "martyris" struck out and above the latter is noted "indigni"; after "ecclesiastica" is noted "falso usurpata".

⁸⁴ PROB 11/160/78; on 18 May, just before his death, he added a codicil to this will with a number of additional bequests, rather confirming that although "weake in bodye" he remained of "perfect memorie" until the end.

⁸⁵ These are: George Abbot (d.1633), Lancelot Andrewes (d.1626), Richard Bancroft (d.1610), William Barlow (d.1613), John Buckeridge (d.1631), Valentine Carey (d.1626), Nicholas Felton (d.1626), John Jegon (d.1618), John King (d.1621), Arthur Lake (d.1626)

It was normal practice in wills of the period to incorporate within the general preamble a commendation of the soul with some expression in regard to its future well-being; more unusually the testator might make some remark as to his relationship with the church. In his will Harsnett first commended his spirit to God trusting that, “through the mediation of Christ Jesus my blessed saviour and redeemer”, he would enjoy the “fellowshippe of his blessed saints at the joyfull days of a generall resurrection”.⁸⁶ There was nothing in this that was contradictory of the doctrine of the Church of England, but there was perhaps a hint that Harsnett still held to the belief expressed half a lifetime previously from the lectern at Paul’s Cross: that God had sent his son so that every soul might be brought to heaven. It has been suggested that this mediating role of Christ’s sacrifice in man’s salvation was a distinctive feature of Arminianism.⁸⁷ It is rather interesting then, that it also appeared to be a given for Richard Bancroft, Harsnett’s old mentor:

I bequeath my soule into the hands of Almighty God through Jesus Christe ... assureinge my-selfe consequently that by his death and bitter passion my synnes are forgiven me that I shall rise againe...⁸⁸

Without invoking Christ’s intervention, Lancelot Andrewes and John Buckeridge both thought fit to plead their case for God’s grace, “humbly beseeching” it be granted them.⁸⁹

As this was surely something no self-respecting Calvinist would have done, it might give a

⁸⁶ PROB 11/160/78

⁸⁷ Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic. Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1993), p.31

⁸⁸ PROB 11/116/96: William Barlow took a similar line: “[of] grace I have the more comfortable assurance because knoweing whatsoever is in my selfe I doe only relye upon all the sufficient merritts of my Lord and Savioure Jesus Christe...”. PROB 11/122/109: Valentine Carey echoed Harsnett’s hopes: “hoping onlie by the merritt of God and merritts of Jesus Christ to obtayne ... salvation amonge the blessed Saints in heaven”. PROB 11/149/91

clue to Nicholas Felton's position who appears not to have been too sure of his place among the elect: "I doe remitt my soule into the hands of that God of whome I both begge and hope that in the houre of my dissolution he will graciously receive it."⁹⁰ While short, near-death statements of faith cannot bear too much weight as indicators of doctrinal inclination it was certainly only known Calvinists like John Jegon, Arthur Lake and John King who seemed assured of receiving grace.⁹¹

Perhaps rather surprisingly it was relatively unusual for episcopal testators to make reference to the nature of the Church that they had served. When Harsnett did so it was in unequivocal terms:

I doe herebie professe that I dye in the ancient faithe of the true Catholic and Apostolicke Church called the Primative Church that Faith as it was professed by those ancient holy fathers next after the blessed Apostles the greate Renowned Pillars of the same signed and sealed with their bloode renouncing from my harte all moderne Popishe Superstitions and alsoe all novities of *Geneva* not concordant with the *maximes* of the Primative Renowned Church relyinge and restinge my sinfull soule uppon the alone meritts of Christe Jesus my only saviour and moste blessed redeemer.⁹²

This is a remarkable statement and nothing in the wills of any other bishop in the sample remotely approaches its explicit nature. Only George Abbot and Arthur Lake had anything to say on the nature of the Church of England. Abbot declared that this Church was "the best framed pattern of all the churches in Europe", but he made a plea to God that may just indicate his concern about developments he perceived in the Church of

⁸⁹ Andrewes: "most humbly beseeching him to make me partaker [in] all the comforts of his holy spirite pertaining to his covenant with mankind". PROB 11/150/109; Buckeridge: "most humblie beseeching that ... I maie obtaine mercie and grace". PROB 11/160/70

⁹⁰ PROB 11/150/34; although acknowledging some uncertainty about Felton's doctrinal position Dr Fincham seems to incline towards Calvinism. Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), p.268

⁹¹ Jegon: "assuredlie persuadinge myselfe of a joyfull resurrection". PROB 11/131/29; Lake: "hopinge assuredlye of lief everlastinge". PROB 11/152/99; King believed that "it hath pleased him even from my mother's wombe to take me into his special favour and protection", and so confidently hoped that it would continue. PROB 11/137/35

Charles I and William Laud. He asked that God “increase the number of his faithful to abate more and more daily the strength of antichrist and popery”.⁹³ Writing a few years earlier than Abbot, Lake felt more reason to be positive than his fellow Calvinist: “I desire to ende my lief in that faith which is now established in the Churche of England” he wrote, and then added the earnest hope that this faith would be “propagated to other countreyes which sytte in darkness”.⁹⁴

We cannot be certain that there was no polemical intent in Harsnett’s will, but even if there was it seems unlikely that a final statement of faith would be anything other than an accurate reflection of his views at the end of his life. What does it then signify? An appeal to the Church of the Early Fathers was true to the original reform impulse, rolling back the years of accumulated “popish superstition”. But that, for Harsnett, was as far as it went: the “novities of *Geneva*” were too much and, of those, uppermost in his mind was surely the Calvinist doctrine of double and absolute predestination. And so it can be argued that nothing had changed: Harsnett, the Arminian *avant la lettre*, remained an Arminian until the day he died. Very likely he did – but there was an important difference. What in 1594 had been a matter he had been prepared to champion was, thereafter, a matter for his private conscience. During the intervening period not only had he kept quiet about his anti-Calvinist views, he had shown little inclination to ally himself with those who shared them and no difficulty in taking up other common causes with those who opposed them.

⁹² PROB 11/160/78

⁹³ PROB 11/152/99; the will is dated 27 December 1625

⁹⁴ PROB 11/152/99

The statement of faith was essentially a private affirmation, but other aspects of a will generally translated into publicly visible declarations of the testator's intentions. Potentially the most potent and enduring signal of such inclinations was the memorial by which they wished to be remembered. In one of the few provisions of an early Stuart bishop's will to have attracted significant comment from modern historians, Harsnett set out a very precise instruction as to the marble stone which should be laid upon his grave.⁹⁵

He willed that it should have set into it:

a Plate of brasse moulten into the Stone an inche thicke haveinge the effigies of a Bishoppe stamped upon it with his Mitre and Crozier staffe but the Brasse to be soe riveted and fastened cleare throughe the Stone as sacrilegious hands may not rend off the one withoute breakinge the other.⁹⁶

No holder of episcopal office since the reign of Mary appears to have instructed that the traditional symbols of episcopal authority should be so depicted.⁹⁷ Harsnett clearly recognised that such an image set up in the Puritan heartland of Essex would cause serious offence. Perhaps it was a deliberately provocative final gesture – as such it would certainly have been in keeping with a lifetime of forthright gestures. In introducing his analysis of the churchmanship of the Jacobean episcopate, Kenneth Fincham drew attention to the striking contrast between Harsnett's instruction and the imagery of the near contemporary memorial brass of Henry Robinson.⁹⁸ By both its pictorial representation and the form of its dedication, Robinson's brass depicted the bishop as the good shepherd, tending to the pastoral needs of his flock through his own role as evangelical preacher. The implication of the contrasting style of these two memorials is

⁹⁵ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.248-9; Margaret Aston, 'Bishops, Seals and Mitres', in Diana Wood (ed.), *Life and Thought in the Northern Church c.1100-1700* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp.216-8

⁹⁶ PROB 11/160/78

⁹⁷ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p.248

that whereas Robinson saw the role of bishop as essentially pastoral and evangelical, Harsnett was more concerned with reminding the onlooker of the tradition and authority vested in episcopal office.

As a means of illustrating the contrasting possibilities for the role of the early Stuart bishop the comparison of the respective brasses is useful, but it is not, in Harsnett's case, the whole story. A devoted protégé of Richard Bancroft, the champion of *jure divino* episcopacy, it is hardly surprising that Harsnett had an elevated regard for the office and there can be little doubt that his instruction was primarily intended to convey this. But Harsnett had specified that the bishop should be depicted with both the mitre and the crozier, and if the former were a reminder of episcopal authority, the latter was as much a reminder of the bishop's pastoral responsibility. Whatever Harsnett intended it is important not to overlook an episcopal career that quite clearly demonstrates that he did not hold the responsibilities implied by the mitre to the exclusion of those expressed by the crozier.

Harsnett's elaborate instructions for his memorial – he went on to specify the exact wording for the inscription to surround the effigy – were quite unmatched by other contemporaries.⁹⁹ George Abbot's resting place was marked by the construction of one of the most elaborate tombs of an early Stuart bishop - a distinctly ironic remembrance of the austere Abbot.¹⁰⁰ But this had nothing to do with his wishes. He left no instructions concerning a memorial and it was his brother Maurice, a wealthy London merchant, who

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.248-50

⁹⁹ The inscription was to read: "Hic iacet Samuel Harsnett quondam vicarius ecclesie primo indignus episcopus Cicesterensis dein indignior episcopus Norwicensis demum indignissimus archiepiscopus Eboracensis". PROB 11/160/78

gave instructions for the recumbent effigy of the archbishop to be enclosed by an ornate canopy supported by Doric columns and adorned with allegorical figures.¹⁰¹ Although others, including the anti-Calvinists Andrewes and Buckeridge, also left no instructions on the matter of memorials, Harsnett was not alone in expressing his wishes.¹⁰² The specifications of those who did choose to leave instructions as to the form of memorial were, however, all more austere than those of Harsnett. Of these, none was starker than that of the Calvinist, John King, who managed to convey a confidence in his place among the elect while ensuring that his tomb would not encourage any excessive reverence for his memory. He specified the most succinct of epitaphs: his grave should be marked “onlie with a tombstone with this inscription RESURGAM.”¹⁰³ Another Calvinist, Arthur Lake, showed similar indifference to his worldly existence in specifying “a plaine stone” with a short epitaph beginning “I was by nature barren, bitter, deade”, followed merely by his title, date of death and age.¹⁰⁴ John Jegon’s request was for “some simple memorial, halfe tombe or remembrance in the wall next my grave”, again showed no concern to display the authority of his office.¹⁰⁵

The most elaborate requirement after that of Harsnett was of his fellow anti-Calvinist, William Barlow. He willed that “suche a monument and no other as Doctor

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Burke. ‘Archbishop Abbot’s Tomb at Guildford: a Problem in Early Caroline Iconography’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 12 (1949), pp.179-88

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 185; Maurice Abbot was apparently of a puritan inclination in the 1620s. This would have made the elaborate memorial to his brother a rather curious instruction but for the fact that he may have moved away from this position in the 1630s when, as governor of the East India Company he became heavily dependent on crown support and came into opposition with puritan peers; he sided with the royalist cause in 1642; Valerie Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1961), p.97; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution* (Cambridge, 1993), pp.376-7

¹⁰² Valentine Carey and Nicholas Felton also left no instructions for memorials; Richard Bancroft forbade “any other monument than a plaine stone to be laid upon my grave”. PROB 11/116/96

¹⁰³ PROB 11/137/35

¹⁰⁴ PROB 11/152/99

Goodeman Deane of Westminster hath set up for himselfe in the churche of Westminster”, should be erected next to his burial place.¹⁰⁶ This instruction might have been more complex to execute than those of Lake, King and Jegon, but the memorial was essentially a modest affair, depicting a kneeling figure at prayer. Ironic, then, that it was Barlow’s memorial that suffered the fate that Harsnett had feared for his own: it was later defaced by Puritans, although they were perhaps more motivated by their resentment of Barlow’s account of the Hampton Court Conference than by distaste for the imagery of his memorial.¹⁰⁷

Willed instructions as to the arrangements for the funeral and the place of burial afforded the testator an opportunity to make a final public statement of how he wished to be remembered. Harsnett specified that his last resting place should be in “the Parishe Churche of Chigwell withoute pompe or solempnitye at the foote of *Thomazine* late my beloved wief”. Twelve poor widows, who were to be provided with black gowns for the occasion, should accompany his hearse. The funeral was to be celebrated with “Divine Service of the Churche only withoute any sermon or that which is so inaptly termed an Exercise”; and it was to be followed by “a sober civill Banquet for as many of the Parishioners as should be pleased to accompanye my bodie to the earth”.¹⁰⁸ Harsnett’s instructions were not only precise but, like the imagery of his memorial instruction, almost certain to offend Puritan sensitivities. Black mourning gowns were mocked by Puritans as

¹⁰⁵ PROB 11/131/29

¹⁰⁶ PROB 11/122/109; for a description of Good[e]man’s tomb. see *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, London: Westminster Abbey* (1924), p.44 and illustration at plate 82

¹⁰⁷ *DNB* ‘William Barlow’

¹⁰⁸ PROB 11/160/78

superstitious and hypocritical,¹⁰⁹ they also dismissed funeral banquets for denoting an unnecessary respect for the dead;¹¹⁰ and Harsnett's prohibition of a sermon, with its jibe about 'exercises', would have been further cause for criticism: how could a funeral be complete without a sermon?¹¹¹

James Pilkington, Calvinist bishop of Durham, expressed the wish in his will of 1572 to be buried with "as few popish errors as may be" and declared that to specify one burial place over another was just such a popish wickedness.¹¹² Was Harsnett, in so doing, betraying popish tendencies? Not as far as his contemporaries were concerned, for he was not alone among them in taking a different view to that of Pilkington: only Andrewes and Jegon – representing different wings of the doctrinal spectrum within the Church – left the matter entirely to the discretion of their executors. A number of others did express only a preference to be buried in their diocesan cathedral, allowing that convenience might dictate otherwise, and so arguably were relatively indifferent on the matter.¹¹³ Others, however, gave precise locations: Abbot requested to be buried in his home town, Guildford, King in his cathedral at St Paul's, and Bancroft in the chapel of Lambeth Palace.¹¹⁴ Harsnett's instructions were thus, together with those Abbot, unusual for specifying burial in a place with connections to his past, rather than to his final incumbency. But, whatever Pilkington had thought about the popish inclinations of those

¹⁰⁹ Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family in England 1480-1750* (Oxford, 1998), p.270; David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle in Tudor And Stuart England* (Oxford, 1997), p.439

¹¹⁰ Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family*, p.275; Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death*, p.443

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.408

¹¹² *DNB* 'James Pilkington'; Cressy, *Birth Marriage and Death*, p.408

¹¹³ Barlow in Lincoln. PROB 11/122/09; Buckeridge in Ely (although his first preference was Bromley. Kent). PROB 11/160/70; Carey in Exeter (and if not, St Paul's). PROB 11/149/91; Felton in Ely. PROB 11/150/34; Lake in Wells. PROB 11/152/99

¹¹⁴ PROB 11: 164/85, 137/35, 116/96

who specified their place of burial, for Harsnett the simple matter of being reunited with his wife in a place that clearly held fond memories hardly qualified as one of those “modern popish superstitions” that he had rejected.¹¹⁵

As in the case of his memorial and the place of burial, Harsnett’s instructions for the funeral arrangements were unusually precise. No other bishop specified the wearing of mourning gowns, no other instructed for a funeral banquet, and no other thought to mention a funeral sermon – least of all to proscribe one. Of the other bishops Andrewes did leave the massive sum of £600 for his funeral, but this should only be used if “it bee thought requisite I bee in any solemne manner buried”; he left it to others to decide what form the event would take. If solemnity was not required then Andrewes desired only that he receive “an honest, decent funeral”; the money so saved should be diverted to charitable works.¹¹⁶ Felton’s only specific request was that he be buried at night, a practice increasingly fashionable, but thought by Puritans to smack of popery and heathenism.¹¹⁷ Bancroft showed an unusual concern for his physical remains in that he willed that his body should not be disfigured. It was to be buried within 40 or 50 hours of his death and he commanded that any “idle and absurd” and costly ceremony, including such things as a later procession behind an empty coffin, should be avoided; all that he allowed was that, within a month of his death, there should be a sermon preached by either George Abbot or Harsnett.¹¹⁸ For the rest of the sample, if anything at all was willed,

¹¹⁵ Both Nicholas Felton and John King appear to have been widowers at the time of death but neither made any request to be buried alongside his wife.

¹¹⁶ PROB 11/150/109

¹¹⁷ PROB 11/150/34; Houlbrooke. *Religion, Death and the Family*, pp.272-3

¹¹⁸ PROB 11/116/96

Abbot's instruction, that "all circumstances of my interring and funeral" should be left to the discretion of his executors, was typical.

The other *raison d'être* of the will was the disposal of the material accumulations. Harsnett's bequests provide otherwise rare clues to the private nature of the man: the friendships he valued; his familial loyalties; old grudges; personal interests and what appears to have been an unusually generous nature with regard to communal charity. The primary benefactors of Harsnett's will were two nephews, Samuel and Abraham Harsnett.¹¹⁹ The larger portion went to Samuel who was also appointed executor. He was to receive the lease of the parsonage and manor of Oving in Sussex, a house in Chigwell (further proof of Harsnett's attachment to the place), the lease of houses in Chancery Lane, and the residue of the estate after payment of the various other bequests.¹²⁰ Abraham was provided with the lease of a farm in Sussex and a house in London. Harsnett's stepdaughter, Elizabeth, was remembered by the bequest of a piece of plate worth £10; her husband, Clement Corbett who had served as Harsnett's Chancellor at both Chichester and Norwich, may have been disappointed to receive a ring worth 14 shillings as the only personal reward for his loyal service.¹²¹ Harsnett was, however, generous with his retinue and numerous bequests were made to servants: one old servant, Anne Porker, "commonly called nurse", clearly held a special place in his affections for he left her 20 marks per annum for life in addition to "all my wearinge lynning belonginge to my body" and £10 payable within a month of his death. Another generous and thoughtful

¹¹⁹ PROB 11/160/78

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*; Harsnett obtained the lease on the house in Chancery Lane from the Dean and Chapter of Chichester on 21 January 1631, less than a month before drafting his will. W D Peckham (ed), *The Acts of the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Chichester 1545-1642*, Sussex Record Society, 58 (1959), p.241

request was for, £20 to be paid to his servant Mildred Finch on the day of her marriage.¹²² As many aspects of his diocesan career illustrate, Harsnett had a precise mind and the attention to detail he showed in his will rather confirms that aspect of his personality. His will does have something of an appearance of an inventory of his possessions – he even specified that his convocation robes should be converted into coverings for chairs and stools. If he had been, as has been asserted, a collector of Holbein portraits it is surprising that he should have overlooked his collection.¹²³

The Protestant rejection of the place of good works in personal salvation undoubtedly contributed to a decline in pious giving.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, most bishops made at least some form of charitable bequest, the most common form being small bequests to the parish poor of places associated with their life or career: Harsnett left £10 for the poor of Colchester, and similar amounts to the parishes of Shinfield and Stisted where he had held livings.¹²⁵ Naturally, those who were single, or widowed and childless, were in a position to be more generous towards charitable causes. When this was coupled with substantial wealth the generosity could be on a grand scale: Andrewes willed numerous large charitable bequests, including a substantial provision £2,000 for the purchase of impropriations to provide income for various disadvantaged groups.¹²⁶ Harsnett had

¹²¹ Ibid.: Harsnett did leave £100 to be divided among the Corbett's children.

¹²² Ibid., there were 14 bequests in favour of individuals clearly identified as servants, cooks and gardeners

¹²³ Kevin Sharpe, 'The Earl of Arundel, His Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-1628' in Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament* (Oxford, 1978), p.241

¹²⁴ Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family*, p.130

¹²⁵ Of the sample only Jegon and Lake left nothing to charity: in Jegon's case this may have been more to do with his reputed parsimony than hard-line reform thinking, Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.14, 17, 75; Lake, however, may have acted out of principle: unlike Jegon he had neither wife nor children to consider, nor a reputation for miserliness. Harsnett's provisions: PROB 11/160/78.

¹²⁶ PROB 11/150/09; he also willed capital bequests totalling approximately £750 to groups of parish poor, prisoners, the apprenticeship of young orphans, poor widows and assistance for the marriage of poor maids.

nothing like the means available to Andrewes, but without the claims of surviving wife or children he was minded and able to be the most generous benefactor of the rest. His main charitable act, the foundation of the schools in Colchester, had been completed during his lifetime, but Harsnett's will shows that he had instituted at least one other charitable project during his lifetime: he willed £100 to the building of a poorhouse at Cawood, near Selby in Yorkshire, "in case I live not to finishe the same myself", at the same time indicating that he had already provided bricks, timber and stone for the same purpose.¹²⁷ In addition to this and his bequests to parish poor, Harsnett left the sum of £20 for the benefit of the "poor prisoners" residing in the King's Bench, and similar amounts for those in Ludgate and the White Lion at Southwark.¹²⁸ In a codicil to his will, drawn up only days before his death, he added one final community project to his charitable bequests, charging that the commutation monies due upon bonds, together with £37 already received by him, should be directed towards the beginning of a new causeway ("cawsey"), again in the favoured parish of Cawood.¹²⁹

There is one omission from Harsnett's carefully considered will that is worthy of comment. Most of the bishops here surveyed included some form of bequest to their alma mater. Lancelot Andrewes made Pembroke College a major beneficiary of his will leaving it, *inter alia*, £1,000 for the purchase of land to support two fellowships, and the perpetual

¹²⁷ PROB 11/160/78

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*; this was a relatively unusual form of bequest with only Andrewes [PROB 11/150/09] and Barlow [PROB 11/122/09] making similar provisions.

¹²⁹ PROB 11/160/78: this project and the poorhouse bequest are the only examples I have found of any bishop leaving provision for community projects at the time of death: Abbot, who had founded a hospital at Guildford during his lifetime, told in his will how he had originally been minded to leave such a bequest to the mayor and corporation of Canterbury for the maintenance of a conduit but they "have used me so unrespectfully and ungratefully, that I have felt it fit to alter the purpose". PROB 11/164/85

advowson of an Essex rectory.¹³⁰ John Buckeridge left £500 to be invested in land for the benefit of the fellows and scholars of St John's College, Oxford.¹³¹ Others left various bequests of cash, books or plate to their former colleges: William Barlow to St John's and Trinity Hall, Cambridge,¹³² Valentine Carey to St John's and Christ's, Cambridge,¹³³ and Arthur Lake to New College, Oxford.¹³⁴ George Abbot left nothing in his will, but he had been a generous supporter of Balliol and University Colleges, Oxford, in his lifetime as well as a founding benefactor of Pembroke College, Oxford. By contrast, Harsnett had been connected to Pembroke College, Cambridge, for more than half his life, whether as student, fellow and finally master, yet he made no mention of the college in his will. Coming from a man who had so carefully remembered friends and places from a long career there can be no suggestion that this was anything other than a deliberate snub. Shortly after his forced resignation as master of the college he had bemoaned the shabby treatment he believed he had received from "my mooter", and at the end of his life he was still in no mood for forgiveness.¹³⁵ As we have seen, even his library - an obvious gift for the college - he willed should be left for the benefit of others.¹³⁶

Virtually nothing can be ascertained of Harsnett's life away from his official activities but there is at least a suggestion in his will of possible interests. In the codicil to his will was a bequest to a servant, Thomas Jegon, to whom Harsnett left "all my colts that have not bene backed", to go "during his keepership the newe lodge which I have

¹³⁰ PROB 11/150/09

¹³¹ PROB 11/160/70

¹³² PROB 11/122/09

¹³³ PROB 11/149/91

¹³⁴ PROB 11/152/99

¹³⁵ Arundel Castle. Autograph Letters 1585-1617. No.226.

built up in Norwood Parke with my owne monye”: was this a hunting lodge that Harsnett had had built for his own entertainment?¹³⁷ Harsnett certainly took an interest in the management of his estates for no other bishop seems to have been concerned with the minutiae of livestock: he, however, knew that he could bequeath five fatted oxen worth £40 to one servant, and three yokes of oxen together with ploughs, plough gears and harrows to another.¹³⁸

The provisions of Harsnett’s will tend to support the suggestion that he effectively sought to stage-manage his own funeral – that it represented a self-conscious statement for public consumption.¹³⁹ From the foregoing comparison with contemporaries it is quite apparent that Harsnett was unusual; perhaps even unique, in this: none of his fellow bishops seemed quite so concerned about where they were to be buried; with what ceremonies their burial was to be attended; and how they were to be remembered thereafter. Nor were many so meticulous as he in carefully itemising their possessions and the instructions for their disposal. Harsnett’s last will and testament is perhaps, a perfect summing-up of the characteristics he displayed in life: full of strong convictions; a

¹³⁶ Nicholas Felton, Harsnett’s successor as master of Pembroke, also left nothing to the college. In his case, however, with surviving sons to consider it is understandable that he left the college no financial bequest: if he had any books of note, he made no mention of them in his will, PROB 11/150/34

¹³⁷ PROB 11/160/78; there were other horses too, and he knew the value of them: “one nagge worthe tenn poundes”, left to Walter Nashe; a further suggestion of his interest in hunting comes from the bequest (in 1627) to Harsnett by Sir Gawen Harvey of his pack of beagles, Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.253 n.1

¹³⁸ PROB 11/160/78

¹³⁹ Brownlow, *Shakespeare*, p.160

penchant for the forthright or provocative gesture; a marked proclivity for attending to detail; and a tendency to the idiosyncratic.

8. Conclusions

There can be little doubt than when Samuel Harsnett stood at the pulpit at Paul's Cross on 27 October 1594, and there preached against the idea of the preordained and unalterable election of some to eternal salvation, some to eternal damnation, he knew exactly what a furore would ensue. What he could not know was that from the perspective of later historians the sermon would become the defining event of his long career; the one, more than any other, that would determine all interpretations of his place in the early Stuart Church. In modern historiography, Harsnett's Paul's Cross sermon has become something of an albatross around, if not his neck, then at least his historical reputation. For Harsnett, unlike almost any of the usual Arminian suspects, there has never been any need to question whether or not he really was, theologically, an anti-Calvinist. The other leading churchman who formed, with Harsnett, the "cream of the English Arminians" - William Laud, Richard Neile and Lancelot Andrewes - were always canny about revealing their precise theological positions, at least in public forums. But Harsnett preached a sermon that proved to be the clearest, most unequivocal denunciation of the then Calvinist orthodoxy concerning God's predestined grace, by any man destined to achieve episcopal office in the early Stuart Church.

In the forgoing examination of Harsnett's career there is much else that might justify his place as the archetypal Arminian. At the conclusion of his Paul's Cross sermon he suggested that those Calvinists who subscribed to the full supralapsarian position were Puritans. Although Harsnett never again appears to have attacked Puritans for their theology, his career thereafter was marked by regular assaults on Puritan non-conformity.

This inclination may have developed after a Puritan alliance foiled his attempt to nominate his own candidate for the vacant schoolmaster's post at Colchester. In any event, within three years of his sermon he was chaplain to Richard Bancroft, self-appointed scourge of Puritan non-conformists. Bancroft was undoubtedly architect of the policy that saw Harsnett first author his polemical work against the Puritan exorcist John Darrell, and then a similar work, supposedly aimed at Catholic exorcists, but with at least an eye on other Puritan exorcists. On his appointment to the episcopate Harsnett's anti-Puritan agenda primarily focused on unlicensed preaching, although his general episcopal style drew the complaints from the group of Norwich Puritans in 1624 that he was inhibiting preaching and promoting idolatry.

In pressing for strict conformity and decorum among the lay congregations Harsnett was pursuing an agenda that would characterise Laudian church policies of the 1630s. What he insisted on was entirely in accord with Bancroft's canons of 1604 and the Prayer Book, but in doing so he was demanding what many colleagues overlooked.¹ Such matters as bowing at the name of Jesus, kneeling at communion, removing hats during divine service, and the requirement that women should wear a veil during the ceremony of churching, were all measures calculated to expose Puritan tendencies among the laity.²

¹ Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, pp.138-9

² For wearing hats and refusal to kneel during communion see Harsnett's additions to Toby Matthew's visitation articles. K Fincham, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (2 volumes, Woodbridge, 1994/8), i. pp.68: Harsnett's insistence at his primary visitation of Norwich in 1620 that women should be veiled during churching led to an appeal by a prominent Norwich Puritan and his wife, Thomas and Elizabeth Shipden. David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle in Tudor And Stuart England* (Oxford, 1997), pp.219-20.

Harsnett's concerns with standards of music, proper repair of fabric and the behaviour of personnel in his cathedrals also foreshadowed later Laudian concerns.³

So in many respects Harsnett was, indeed, the model Arminian. But, as this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, there was another dimension to him. It has suited historiographical purposes to co-opt Harsnett into the ranks of an Arminian party that his career, at least, suggests was rather less homogenous and coherent in its aims than has sometimes been implied. Although he shared some common aims with others of an anti-Calvinist persuasion, he pursued those aims independently of any Arminian party. Furthermore, he exhibited certain characteristics that were hardly in accord with fellow anti-Calvinists, and sometimes completely at odds with them.

The principal defining feature of Tyacke's Arminians was their theology, specifically their opposition to the Calvinist interpretation of predestination. In 1594, there is no question that Harsnett subscribed wholeheartedly to that viewpoint. Nor, it is important to stress, is there any evidence to suggest that he ever changed his mind over the matter. What evidence there is, however, suggests that, if he did continue to subscribe to anti-Calvinist views, he kept them very much to himself. More importantly they provided no obstacle to occasionally allying himself with others of opposing beliefs, and no incentive to ally with those who shared his views. In short, anti-Calvinism ceased to inform Harsnett's actions before his ecclesiastical career prospered.

Two incidents lend support to the view that Harsnett had effectively buried his anti-Calvinist opinions by the time of his appointment to the episcopate. In 1624, when defending himself against the Norwich petitioners, Harsnett claimed that after being

³ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (2nd edition, Basingstoke, 2001).

reprimanded by Whitgift following the Paul's Cross sermon he had never again preached on the matter "of Predestination Negative". Was this "a prudent silence", or had Harsnett genuinely decided that it was a matter best not discussed?⁴ One contemporary, writing in a newsletter reporting the Norwich petition, went somewhat further. He suggested that Harsnett might even have modified his views: "it is reported that he was of the Arminian opinion and converted a great while ago".⁵ Further evidence that Harsnett, whatever his private views, was no longer perceived as actively holding to the anti-Calvinist position is evidenced by correspondence from the very period in which rumours were abroad concerning the Durham House group. During the latter half of 1617 George Abbot had been communicating with Dudley Carleton on the extent of Arminian penetration in England.⁶ Carleton, clearly well informed on the matter, wrote to Sir Horace Vere on 14 October 1617, reporting that he had authored a work against Arminianism and was enclosing a copy of the work for Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, by then, Harsnett's patron. It would have need of the earl's protection, wrote Carleton, "if these Arminians have so strong patrons in our court as they would persuade the world".⁷ Carleton certainly believed that Arundel would have no sympathy whatsoever for any of the Arminian persuasion. If he was aware that Arundel was by now Harsnett's patron, then it would have been a curious deed to entrust the work to one known to favour a recognised Arminian.

pp. 79-80

⁴ Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church, 1570-1635', *P&P* 114 (1987), p.35

⁵ Newsletter dated 22 May 1624, in J Ballinger (ed.), *Calendar of the Wynn Papers, 1515-1690* (Aberystwyth, 1926), p.196; my thanks to Dr Kenneth Fincham for drawing my attention to this reference.

⁶ Lake, 'Calvinism', p.50

⁷ Arundel Castle, Autograph Letters 1585-1617, no.222

Harsnett's isolation from Richard Neile's Durham House group is a matter that has gone largely unremarked, and yet it is one of critical importance in understanding his career and his relationship with Arminianism.⁸ Two possible explanations suggest themselves. It has been shown that Lancelot Andrewes acted as *éminence grise* in the Pembroke opposition to Harsnett's mastership – if Harsnett had knowledge of Andrewes' role, then it must have served to alienate him from the anti-Calvinist consensus gathering around Richard Neile at Durham House. Alternatively, Harsnett's absence from the Durham House circle may just be further evidence of a decision to keep his anti-Calvinist theology to himself.

Harsnett as bishop did initiate a range of policies concerned with uniformity in liturgy and ceremony, elevation of the priestly function, and the material well-being of cathedrals, but these were not pursued to the detriment of pastoral care. Historiographical attention has normally focused on Harsnett's attempts to suppress unlicensed preaching. The implication of this is that Harsnett, like other anti-Calvinists, placed priority on ensuring conformity to an ideal of reverent public worship over preaching, or education through such as the catechism. But this needs to be put in the perspective of his record on preaching. We have seen that on more than one occasion he remarked on the priority of preaching over material concerns; the evidence suggests that he was also a diligent preacher himself. His views on the importance of clerical residence have also been noted, and in this too his personal practice differed to others of the Arminian persuasion.

⁸ Nicholas Tyacke explains Harsnett's distance from the mainstream anti-Calvinists as a consequence of his place in Arundel's circle while other Arminians enjoyed the patronage of Buckingham: Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.165. This is a perfectly acceptable explanation for his isolation in the later 1620s, when Buckingham allied with the Arminian cause, but does not explain why he remained outside the Durham House group that had formed some ten years earlier.

The most significant difference between Harsnett and other Arminians emerged during the later 1620s when Arminianism took on political dimensions. Hillel Schwarz has suggested that the politicisation of Arminianism in this period took two forms: it marked the advent of criticism of the theology in parliament, and it saw the majority of leading Arminians backing the constitutional claims of the monarchy.⁹ It was established in the examination of Harsnett's parliamentary career that he escaped the criticism heaped on the majority of episcopal Arminians because of his opposition to Buckingham and his sympathetic stance towards the Commons' position on the Petition of Right. Nor should Harsnett's opposition to the interest of the Arminian faction be seen as a mere function of factional division. He was in the very forefront of the debate over the Petition of Right while his own patron remained a relatively passive participant. In joining George Abbot in condemning the action of Mainwaring, who had preached in favour of the Forced Loan, Harsnett opposed Arminian colleagues on a matter of principle, for by then the matter had no factional implications.

It is no intention of this thesis to argue that the term 'Arminian' should no longer apply to Samuel Harsnett. For him, as for others, Arminianism is perhaps, as Curtis remarked, "an inaccurate and inadequate but indispensable name". The significance of exposing the contradictions within Harsnett's own brand of Arminianism is rather to demonstrate the notion of an Arminian 'party' speaking with one voice and acting with one purpose can be, and usually has been, pressed too far. If Harsnett, as one of the very "cream of English Arminians", can be seen to have had little to do with any other Arminians, was prepared to oppose them on matters of principle, and had different

⁹ Hillel Schwartz, 'Arminianism and the English Parliament, 1624-9', *JBS* 112 (1973), pp.41-68

pastoral priorities than the usual archetype, is the same true of other anti-Calvinists who remained outside of the Durham House group?

So rather than remembering Harsnett as primarily as an Arminian, how should he be remembered? Certainly he was a complex individual who was more than a little shaped by his experiences at Cambridge and his apprenticeship under the arch anti-Puritan, Richard Bancroft. Harsnett's anti-Calvinism proved no obstacle to Bancroft's regard and it was Bancroft who provided him with the opportunity to display his rhetorical brilliance in the campaign against exorcism, and later launched his protégé on an episcopal career. Harsnett as a bishop was above all, perhaps, an authoritarian, but he was also an able administrator and conscientious pastor. Throughout his career he displayed outbursts of petulance and high-handed behaviour that go some way to justifying Prynne's description of him as "a furious Hildebrand". But he was also a loyal client, a generous and humane benefactor and, as his parliamentary performances demonstrate, a man of principle. All of these were rather more important to an understanding of Samuel Harsnett's career than the subject of one controversial sermon preached at Paul's Cross.

Appendix

'The Considerations for the better settling of Church Government' and the Royal Instructions of 1629

Considerations ¹	Instructions ²
1. To command the Lords the Bishops to their severall sees: excepting those which are in attendance at Court.	1. That the lords the bishops be commanded to their several sees to keep residence, excepting those which are in necessary attendance at court.
2. That none of them reside upon his Land or Lease that he hath purchased, or on his Commendam if he hold any, but in one of his Episcopall Houses. And that he wast not the woods where any are left.	2. That none of them reside upon his land or lease that he hath purchased, nor on his commendam, if he should have any, but in one of the episcopal houses, if he have any. And that he waste not the woods where any are left.
3. That they give charge in their Tryenniall Visitation: and at other times both by themselves, and the Archdeacons, that the Declaration for settling the question, in difference be strictly observed.	3. That they give charge in their triennial visitations, and all other convenient times, both by themselves, and their archdeacons; that the declaration for the settling all questions in difference, be chiefly observed by all the parties
4. That a speciall Charge be given them against frequent and unworthy Ordinations.	4. That there be a special care taken by them all, that the ordinations be solemn, and not of unworthy persons.
<p>5. That a speciall Care be had over the Lecturers in every Diocese: Which by reason of their pay are the peoples creatures, and blow the Bellows their way, sedition.</p> <p>For the abating of whose power these wayes may be taken.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the afternoon sermons in all Parishes may be turned into Catechising by Questions and Answers, according to a Order set out by King James of blessed memory. If this cannot be then: 2. That every Bishop ordain in his Diocese, that every Lecturer doe read Divine Service in his Surpliss before the Lecture. 3. That where a lecture is set up in a Market Town it be read by a Combination of grave and orthodox Divines neer adjoining. 4. That if an Incorporation do maintain a Lecturer he be not suffered to preach till he take upon him Curam Animarum within that Incorporation. 	<p>5. That they take great care concerning the lecturers, in these special directions following.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That in all parishes the afternoon sermons may be turned into catechising by questions and answers, when, and wheresoever there is no great cause apparent to break this ancient and profitable order. 2. That every bishop ordain in his diocese, that every lecturer do read divine service according to the liturgy printed by authority, in his surplice and hood, before the lecture. 3. That where a lecture is set up in a market-town, it may be read by a company of grave and orthodox divines near adjoining, and in the same diocese; and that they preach in gowns, and not in cloaks. As too many do use. 4. That if a corporation maintain a single lecturer, he be not suffered to preach, till he profess his willingness to take upon him a living with cure of souls within that corporation; and that he actually take such benefice of cure, as soon as it shall be fairly procured for him.
6. That the Bishop do countenance and encourage the grave orthodox Divines of his Clergy, and gaine them in the severall quarters of his Diocesse to be present at such Lecturers Sermons as are neere	6. That the bishops do countenance and encourage the grave and orthodox divines of their clergy, and that they use means by some of their, that they may have knowledge, how both lecturers and preachers

them: That so the Bishop may have knowledge.	behave themselves in their sermons within their diocese. That so they may take order for any abuse accordingly.
7. That the suffer none under Noble men, and men qualified by Law, to have any private Chaplain in his house.	7. That the bishops suffer none but noblemen, and men qualified by learning, to have any private chaplain in his house.
8. That his Majesty may be graciously pleased that men of courage, gravity, and experience in Government be preferred to Bishopricks.	
9. That <i>Emanuel</i> and <i>Sydny</i> Colledge in <i>Cambridge</i> , which are the Nurseries of Puritanisme; may from time to time be provided of grave and orthodox men for their governors.	
10. That His Majesties High Commission be countenanced by the presence of some of his Majesties Privy Councill, so oft at least as any Matter of Moment is to be sentenced.	
11. That some course may be taken that the Judges may not send so many Prohibitions.	
	8. That they take special care that divine service be duly frequented, as well for prayers and catechising, as for sermons: and take particular note of all such as absent themselves as recusants, or otherwise.
	9. That every bishop, that by our grace, favour, and good opinion of his service, shall be nominated by us to another bishopric, shall, from that day of nomination, not presume to make any lease for three lives, or one and twenty years, or concurrent lease, of any way make any estate, or cut any woods or timber; but merely receive the rents due, and so quit the place: for we think it an hateful thing, that any man, leaving the bishopric, should almost undo the successor. And if any man shall presume to break this order, we will refuse him our royal assent, and keep him at the place which he had so abused.
12. That His Majestie would be graciously pleased once in halfe a yeare to call for an Account of all, or so many of these as hee in wisdom shall thinke fitt.	10. We command you to give us an account every year the second day of January, of the performance of these our commands.

¹ William Prynne, *Canterburies Doome* (1644), pp.368-9

² J Bliss and W Scott (eds.), *The Works of William Laud*, 7 volumes (1847-60), v, pp.307-9

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