PURITANISM AND THE EMERGENCE OF LAUDIANISM IN CITY POLITICS IN NORWICH, c. 1570-1643

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ABSTRACT

A prosopographical study, this thesis traces the emergence of religious factions among the governors of the city of Norwich in the decades preceding the English Civil War. Although a celebrated puritan citadel, as established in Elizabeth I's reign, Norwich contained groups dissatisfied with the dominant forms of godly piety. Coinciding with Bishop Samuel Harsnett's efforts to subvert the city's native puritan tradition in the 1620s, prominent lay citizens became attached to a variety of '*avant garde* conformity', which matured into a fully-fledged 'Laudianism' during the episcopate of Bishop Matthew Wren. The impact of Laudian reform provoked a godly backlash, which rebounded on Wren's lay and clerical supporters during the Long Parliament. However, by examining lay worshippers aligned with the religious ideals of the Caroline church, the following investigation seeks to address current historiographical issues relating to England's unresolved 'Long Reformation' and the complex nature of religious conformity under the first two Stuarts. Finally, a case will be made for Laudianism as a potent force in borough politics during Charles I's Personal Rule. By converting specific laymen to their vision of the church, Caroline divines contributed towards the formation of a Royalist contingency in Norwich, of relevance to the taking of sides in England's localised 'wars of religion' in the 1640s.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Norwich Assembly Book
ANW	Archdeaconry of Norwich
APC	*Acts of the Privy Council*
BIHR	*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*
BL	British Library
BLTT	British Library Thomason Tracts
Blomefield	Francis Blomefield, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of Norfolk* (11 vols., London, 1805)
Bod L	Bodleian Library
CA	Norwich chamberlains' accounts
CH	*Church History*
Chapter Minutes	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*, NRS, 24 (1953)
CJ	*Journal of the House of Commons*
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
EANQ	*East Anglian Notes and Queries*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
ERO	Essex Record Office
Greaves and Zaller	R. L. Greaves and R. Zaller (eds.), *Biographical Register of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century* (3 vols., Brighton, 1982-4)
Hawes, *Officers*	T. Hawes (comp.), *An Index to Norwich City Officers, 1453-1635*, NRS, 52 (1986)
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HMC	*Historical Manuscripts Commission*
HP 1509-58	S. T. Bindoff (ed.), *History of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1509-58* (3 vols., London, 1982)
HP 1558-1603	P. W. Hasler (ed.), *History of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1558-1603* (3 vols., London, 1981)
HR	*Historical Research*
JBS	*Journal of British Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JHI	*Journal of the History of Ideas*
Laud, *Works*	*The Works of William Laud*, ed. W, Scott and J, Bliss (7 vols., Oxford, 1847-60)
Le Neve, *Fasti vii*	J. Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857, VII, Norwich, Westminster and Worcester Dioceses*, comp. J. M. Horn (London, 1992)

LJ	*Journal of the House of Lords*
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
Mayors of Norwich	B. Cozens-Hardy and E. A. Kent, *The Mayors of Norwich 1403-1835* (Norwich, 1938)
MCB	Norwich Mayor's Court Book
Millican, *Freemen*	P. Millican (ed.), *The Register of the Freemen of Norwich, 1548-1713* (Norwich, 1934)
NA	*Norfolk Archaeology*
NAM	*Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany*
NCC	Norwich Consistory Court
NRO	Norfolk Record Office
NRS	Norfolk Record Society
Parentalia	Christopher Wren, *Parentalia or Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens* (London, 1751)
Parkhurst, *Letter Book*	R. A. Houlbrooke (ed.), *The Letter Book of John Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich*, NRS, 43 (1974-5)
P & P	*Past and Present*
PRO	Public Record Office
Quiet Reformation	M. C. McClendon, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich* (Stanford, 1999)
Reg Vagum	T. F. Barton (ed.), *The Registrum Vagum of Anthony Harrison*, 2 vols, NRS, 32-3 (1963-4)
Rye, *Rate Book*	W. Rye (ed.), *The Norwich Rate Book from Easter 1633 to Easter 1634* (Norwich, 1903)
Seconde Parte	A. Peel (ed.), *The Seconde Parte of a Register* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1915)
Shipps, 'Lay Patronage'	K. W. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage of East Anglian Puritan Clerics in Pre-Revolutionary England', Yale University Ph.D., 1971
SROB	Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds branch
SROI	Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich branch
STC	*Short Title Catalogue of Books...1475-1640*, eds. W. Pollard, G. R. Redgrave and K. F. Pantzer (3 vols., 1976-91)
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
UHYB	*Urban History Yearbook*
Venn	J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses Part 1* (4 vols., Cambridge, 1922-7)
Wing	*Short title Catalogue of Books...1641-1700*, ed. D. Wing (3 vols., 1945-51)

*Dates are given in old-style throughout, although the year is taken to begin on 1st January.

INTRODUCTION

1. THE ENGLISH REFORMATION, THE PEOPLE AND URBAN POLITICS, 1559-1642.

This thesis, drawing upon evidence for the city of Norwich, began life as an attempt to explore the secondary processes of the English Reformation alongside the religious origins of the English Civil War within an urban setting. Much debate surrounds the nature of 'popular' responses to the Reformation in England. It is commonplace among social and church historians to view the impact of reform as a hotly contested affair, with avid proponents of forward Protestantism, the self-righteous godly elect, ranged against the rest, a cultural rift which facilitated the taking of sides in the Civil War, famously labelled by John Morrill as Europe's last war of religion.[1] In tracing the causes of the latter, religious developments in the 1630s, the decade of Charles I's Personal Rule, are regarded as being pivotal.[2] The rise of an innovating Arminian party, the concomitant attack on a hitherto dominant evangelical Calvinist tradition and

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[1] J. Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil War', *TRHS*, 5th Series, 34 (1984), p. 178, although for a critique of Morrill's argument see I. Green, '"England's Wars of Religion"? Religious Conflict and the English Civil War', in J. Van Den Berg and P. G. Hoftijzer (eds.), *Church, Change and Revolution: Transactions of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch Church History Colloquium* (Leyden, 1991), pp. 104-5. A vast body of literature covers the theme of the English Revolution as representing a cultural clash between the godly and the unreformed in society, neatly summarised in B. Reay, *Popular Cultures in England 1550-1750* (Harlow, 1998), ch. 5. See also C. Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London, 1964); *idem*, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London, 1972), chs. 3 and 15; K. Wrightson, 'The Puritan Reformation of Manners with Special Reference to the Counties of Lancashire and Essex 1640-1660', University of Cambridge, Ph.D., 1973; *idem*, *English Society 1580-1680* (London, 1982), ch. 7; K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling 1525-1700*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1995); D. Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Culture and Politics in England 1603-1660* (Oxford, 1985), chs. 4-5; M. Stoyle, *Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon During the English Civil War* (Exeter, 1994), chs. 10-11; P. Collinson, 'The Cohabitation of the Faithful with the Unfaithful', in O. P. Grell, J. I. Israel and N. Tyacke (eds.), *From Persecution to Toleration: the Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford, 1991); E. Duffy, 'The Godly and the Multitude in Stuart England', *The Seventeenth Century*, 1 (1986), pp. 31-55; R. Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: the Ritual Year 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1994), chs. 4-6; C. Durston, 'Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645-1660', in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 210-33.

[2] Especially in the work of Conrad Russell, for example his *The Crisis of English Parliaments: English History 1509-1660* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 313-7; *idem*, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 102-11.

the emergence of an enhanced ritualism with connotations of 'popery', served to alienate a range of Protestant opinion from the ecclesiastical establishment precipitating political crisis in 1640.[3]

However, it is precisely this Arminian or Laudian assault on the reformed character of the English church which has prompted comment on the 1630s as representing, at a 'popular' level, the culmination of religious tensions in existence for some time. Christopher Haigh, extending his pessimistic interpretation of the earlier generation of English reformers' failure to convert 'the people' into the seventeenth century, has argued that the new ceremonial orthodoxy associated with Archbishop William Laud found favour with a large reserve of 'parish Anglicans', residual Catholics dislocated by the irrevocable split from Rome after 1559.[4] Similarly, Alexandra Walsham has indicated a potential constituency for Laudianism from 'church papists', reluctant conformists like 'parish Anglicans', who sought to subvert the

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[3] N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in C. Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (Basingstoke, 1977), pp. 119-43; *idem*, 'Arminianism and English Culture', in A. C. Duke and C. A. Tamse (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands Vol. VII, Church and State Since the Reformation* (The Hague, 1981), pp. 94-117; *idem*, *Anti-Calvinists: the Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1990); D. MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *JBS*, 30 (1991), pp. 1-19; A. Foster, 'Church Policies in the 1630s', in R. Cust and A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642* (Harlow, 1989), pp. 193-223. For criticisms of the Tyacke thesis see P. White, 'The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P & P*, 101 (1983), pp. 34-54; *idem*, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus within the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992); N. Tyacke and P. White, 'Debate: the Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered', *P & P*, 115 (1987), pp. 201-29; G. Bernard, 'The Church of England c. 1529-c. 1642', *History*, 72 (1990), pp. 183-206; K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), chs. 6 and 12. For the latest round see N. Tyacke, 'Anglican Attitudes: Some Recent Writings on English Religious History from the Reformation to the Civil War', *JBS*, 35 (1996), pp. 1-23.

[4] C. Haigh, 'The Church of England, the Catholics and the People', in C. Haigh (ed.), *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke, 1984), pp. 214-19, developed in his *English Reformations; Religion, Politics and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993), chs. 15-16 as well as two recent articles, 'The Taming of Reformation: Preachers, Pastors and Parishioners in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *History*, 85 (2000), pp. 572-88; 'Success and Failure in the English Reformation', *P & P*, 173 (2001), pp. 28-49. For critiques of Haigh's 'revisionist' line see N. Tyacke, 'Re-thinking the English Reformation', in N. Tyacke (ed.), *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800* (London, 1998), pp. 1-32 and the introduction to P. Marshall and A. Ryrie (eds.), *The Beginnings of English Protestantism* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 1-13.

Reformation from within.[5] Alternatively, by offering a more optimistic appraisal of the Elizabethan settlement at the parish level, Judith Maltby has rejected the Haigh-Walsham model of conformity as but crypto-popery, for an encompassing 'Prayer Book Protestantism' based upon a genuine attachment to Thomas Cranmer's liturgy. Heirs to a reformed tradition, Prayer Book conformists regarded Laudian novelty as an unwelcome incursion upon the rhythms of parochial worship.[6]

The Haigh-Walsham-Maltby debate has had the salutary effect of raising important questions about what it meant to be a member of the Church of England given the unresolved nature of the Reformation following Elizabeth's ascent to the throne. What were the mainstream beliefs of, to crib the title of A. Tindal Hart's classic study, 'the man in the pew'?[7] However, given current interest in religious conflict as a prelude to civil war, combined with recent speculation as to a possible parochial basis for Laudianism, it is striking that little has been done to reconcile these two themes by assessing the impact of the Caroline religious policy in its specific localised contexts.[8] In part the present study of confessional allegiances in early Stuart Norwich hopes to fill this historical void. For although historians have written penetrating accounts of the administrative and pastoral work of the Elizabethan and early Stuart church, we

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[5] A. Walsham, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited: Catholics, Anti-Calvinists and "Parish Anglicans" in Early Stuart England', *JEH*, 49 (1998), pp. 620-51; *idem*, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemics in Early Modern England* (London, 1993).

[6] J. Maltby, '"By this Book": Parishioners, the Prayer Book and the Established Church', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 115-137 especially p. 117; *idem*, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 16, 23-4, 84-6, 99-113, which both develop the theme of J. Morrill, 'The Church in England, 1642-9', in J. Morrill (ed.), *Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-1649* (Basingstoke, 1982), pp. 89-114.

[7] A. Tindal Hart, *The Man in the Pew 1558-1660* (London, 1966).

[8] Some notable exceptions include A. Fletcher, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660* (London, 1975), ch. 4; J. Fielding, 'Arminianism in the Localities: Peterborough Diocese, 1603-1642', in Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church*, pp. 93-113.

lack a broader appreciation of how the church's ministry, particularly its remodelled 'anti-Calvinist' form after 1633, came to be received by lay worshippers outside of the ranks of the godly.[9]

Indeed this is in stark contrast to one of the major preoccupations of historical writing on the English Reformation in its formative stages. Taking its cue from A. G. Dickens's mission statement to unearth the faith of 'ordinary men and women, who have somehow tended to fall or disappear between the gaps between the kings, the prelates, the monasteries and the prayer books', a minor research industry in the sixteenth century Reformation from its various diocesan or county perspectives was born.[10] Historians attempting local accounts of religious change into Elizabeth's reign encounter the problem of defining 'ordinary' devotion after 1559. Trawling the depths of a vast sea of unspectacular orthodoxy for more tangible confessional sympathies is anything but an exact science, tending to give rise to conjecture as to the meaning of popular conformity, already noted in relation to Haigh, Walsham and Maltby. One approach to the

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[9] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982), chs. 2-3; M. Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987); R. O'Day, *The English Clergy: the Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession* (Leicester, 1979); K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990); *idem*, 'Episcopal Government, 1603-1640', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church*; A. Foster, *The Church of England 1570-1640* (Harlow, 1994).

[10] A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964), p. v, which summarises the findings of Dickens's own regionally based study, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1555* (London, 1959). For other localised accounts of the English Reformation see S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989); M. Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: the Diocese of Lincoln Under John Longland 1521-1547* (Cambridge, 1981); P. Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Hassocks, 1977); J. F. Davis, *Heresy and the Reformation in the South East of England* (London, 1982); J. Goring, 'Reformation and Reaction in Sussex 1534-1559', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 134 (1996), pp. 141-54; C. Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975); C. Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity: Gloucestershire 1540-1580* (Cambridge, 1997); D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors* (Oxford, 1986); R. A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (London, 1960); J. E. Oxley, *The Reformation in Essex to the Death of Mary* (Manchester, 1965); R. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North West England* (Manchester, 1972); W. J. Sheils, *The Puritans in the Diocese of Peterborough, 1558-1610*, Northamptonshire Record Society, 30 (1979); R. Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1989).

difficulty of categorisation has been through the medium of biography. Naturally, such works as touch upon personal spiritual beliefs tend to focus upon figures within the upper strata of society close to the hub of government in Tudor and Stuart England.[11] Prominent individuals who really counted in early modern politics, have generally left more behind by way of archive material.[12] Certainly, the obvious bias in the available sources has characterised the approach to uncovering anti-Calvinist laymen, who at present appear limited to a few members of the aristocratic intelligentsia, such as Robert Cecil or John Viscount Scudamore, as revealed by Pauline Croft and Ian Atherton, respectively.[13] Yet these character studies enhance the view of Laudianism as a modish piety. At least in Scudamore's case, his attachment to Caroline baroque religion can be measured in terms of artifice and self-fashioning to enhance his reputation at the Stuart court in seeking to advance his political career.[14] While chiming in with virtuosi tastes, the Laudian vision held little appeal beyond the *cognoscente*.

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[11] For example see C. Cross, *the Puritan Earl: the Life of Henry Hastings Third Earl of Huntingdon 1536-1595* (London, 1966), B. Donagan, 'The Clerical Patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1616-46', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 220 (1976), pp. 388-419; R. Cust and P. Lake, 'Sir Richard Grosvenor and the Rhetoric of Magistracy', *BIHR*, 54 (1981), pp. 40-54; P. Collinson, 'Magistracy and Ministry: a Suffolk Miniature', in his *Godly People* (London, 1983), pp. 445-66; J. Morrill, 'Sir William Brereton and England's Wars of Religion', *JBS*, 24 (1985), pp. 311-32; J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: the Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990); C. M. Newman, '"An Honourable and Elect Lady": the Faith of Isabel, Lady Bowes', in D. Wood (ed.), *Life and Thought in the Northern Church c. 1100-1700* (Woodbridge, 1999); J. T. Cliffe, *The Puritan Gentry: the Great Puritan Families of Early Stuart England* (London, 1984); D. L. Smith, 'Catholic, Anglican or Puritan: Edward Sackville, Fourth Earl of Dorset and the Ambiguities of Religion in Early Stuart England', *TRHS*, 6th Series, 2 (1992), pp. 105-24.

[12] However see J. Fielding, 'Opposition to the Personal Rule of Charles I: the Diary of Robert Woodford, 1637-1641', *HJ*, 38 (1988), pp. 778-88; P. Seaver, *Wallington's World: a Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth Century London* (London, 1985).

[13] P. Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', *HJ*, 34 (1990), pp. 773-96; I. J. Atherton, 'Viscount Scudamore's Laudianism: the Religious Practices of the First Viscount Scudamore', *HJ*, 34 (1990), pp. 567-96; I. J. Atherton, *Ambition and Failure in Stuart England: the Career of John, First Viscount Scudamore* (Manchester, 1999), ch. 3. See also Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 140-2, 192-4 for the Arminians William, Lord Maynard and Sir Richard Dyott.

[14] See the comments in Atherton, *Ambition and Failure in Stuart England*, pp. 79-82.

Moving downward from the royal court towards A. G. Dickens's 'ordinary' folk, considerable advances have been made in investigating religious allegiance below the gentry through the study of the Reformation in English towns. The consolidation of Protestantism in its provincial urban settings has received fresh impetus from Patrick Collinson and John Craig.[15] Indeed, where they survive, borough archives offer potentially rich gleanings for early modern church scholars, not simply from the understandable viewpoint of wishing to conduct research upon new and hitherto neglected sources.[16] Taking Sir Maurice Powicke's cliché about the Reformation being 'a political transaction', religious changes sponsored by the Tudors held implications for town life. Notorious for being rife with factions, invariably the outcome of competition for economic resources and trading rights, or the struggle for lucrative office-holding, contests in sixteenth century boroughs also assumed a religious dimension as the Henrician and Edwardian Reformations hit home.[17] Political division among urban elites tended to follow confessional fault lines, drawing in the rest of the town's inhabitants. Moreover, in the

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[15] Of particular importance is Collinson's landmark essay, 'The Protestant Town', in his *The Birthpangs of Protestant England* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp. 28-59. Many of the remarks made there have been reiterated in the introduction to P. Collinson and J. Craig (eds.), *The Reformation in English Towns 1500-1640* (Basingstoke, 1998). See also Craig's collection of comparative studies, *Reformation Politics and Polemics: the Growth of Protestantism in East Anglian Market Towns, 1500-1610* (Aldershot, 2001). Another useful survey of the role of towns in the English Reformation is provided by W. J. Sheils, 'Religion in Provincial Towns: Innovation and Tradition', in F. Heal and R. O'Day (eds.), *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII-James I* (Basingstoke, 1977), pp. 157-76.

[16] Some yields from this rich harvest can be found in earlier urban histories such as W. T. MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540-1640* (London, 1973); D. M. Palliser, *Tudor York* (Oxford, 1979), ch. 9; A. Dyer, *the City of Worcester in the Sixteenth Century* (Leicester, 1973); P. Clark, 'Reformation and Radicalism in Kentish Towns, c. 1500-1553', in W. J. Mommsen (ed.), *The Urban Classes, the Nobility and the Reformation* (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 115-22. More recent considerations of England's urban Reformation include C. Cross, *Urban Magistrates and Ministers: Religion in Hull and Leeds from the Reformation to the Civil War*, Borthwick Papers, 67 (1985); G. Mayhew, *Tudor Rye* (Falmer, 1987), ch. 2; M. Skeeters, *Community and Clergy: Bristol and the Reformation, c. 1530-c. 1570* (Oxford, 1993); B. Coulton, 'The Establishment of Protestantism in a Provincial Town: a Study of Shrewsbury in the Sixteenth Century', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 27 (1996), pp. 307-35. A detailed summary of the secondary literature on religion in early modern Norwich is provided in the next chapter below.

[17] M. Powicke, *The Reformation in England* (Oxford, 1941), p. 1; P. Clark and P. Slack, *English Towns in Transition, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 1976), ch. 9 for the emergence of factions among borough elites.

layered and overlapping political nation of early modern England, it was inevitably the same burgesses, in fulfilling their dual roles as parish officers or members of select vestries, who were also charged with executing religious policies locally.[18] It was at the point where the demands of central government fused with parochial interests in the arena of the borough, that we see the process of reform among 'the people'.

As Craig's comparative studies of the East Anglian market towns of Bury St Edmunds, Thetford and Hadleigh reveal, religious faction fighting could be both symptom and cause of long standing material rivalries, although in the event, participants' sympathies either for or against the course of forward Protestantism rose to the surface. Rarely have these exchanges been explored far into the Stuart period.[19] Instead, renewed interest in England's urban Reformation remains bound by the rule that the narrative of religious upheaval under the Tudors, ends with the Protestant settlement's permanent establishment by the middle of Elizabeth's reign. Little is heard of factionalism in early Stuart towns until the beating of drums for civil war

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[18] S. J. Wright, 'Easter Books and Parish Rate Books: a New Source for the Urban Historian', *UHYB*, 13 (1985), pp. 30-45; J. Merritt, 'The Social Context of the Parish Church in Early Modern Westminster', *UHYB*, 18 (1991), pp. 20-31; N. Alldridge, 'Loyalty and Identity in Chester Parishes, 1540-1640', in S. J. Wright (ed.), *Parish Church and People: Local Studies of Lay Religion 1350-1750* (London, 1988), pp. 88-97.

[19] Again there are exceptions such as V. Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution* (London, 1961), pp. 160-76; R. Howell, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 77-119; P. Clark, 'Thomas Scott and the Growth of Urban Opposition to the Early Stuart Regime', *HJ*, 21 (1978), pp. 1-26; *idem*, '"The Ramoth-Gilead of the Good": Urban Change and Political Radicalism in Gloucester, 1540-1640', in P. Clark, A. G. R. Smith and N. Tyacke (eds.), *The English Commonwealth, 1547-1640* (Leicester, 1979), pp. 167-87; D. Underdown, *Fire From Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1992); R. Cust, 'Anti-Puritanism and Urban Politics: Charles I and Great Yarmouth', *HJ*, 35 (1992), pp. 1-26; A. Hughes, 'Religion and Society in Stratford Upon Avon, 1619-1638', *Midland History*, 19 (1994), pp. 58-83; D. Harris Sacks, 'Bristol's "Wars of Religion"', in R. C. Richardson (ed.), *Town and Countryside in the English Revolution* (Manchester, 1992), pp. 100-29; M. Stoyle, *From Deliverance to Destruction: Rebellion and Civil War in an English City* (Exeter, 1996), ch. 2; D. Marcombe, *English Small Town Life: Retford, 1520-1642* (Nottingham, 1993), ch. 9; P. Lake, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and a Shropshire Axe-Murder', *Midland History*, 15 (1990), pp. 37-64.

divided civic leadership again.[20] In the meantime, developments in the Jacobean and Caroline churches and their significance for the confessional environment of many towns has been left out of the frame This is a pity. For while it is recognised that boroughs served as important centres of evangelism for the first generation of English reformers, it is also the case that key provincial capitals, cathedral cities in particular, were regarded as equally vital platforms by the church's emerging ceremonial wing.[21] Laudian concerns for cathedrals as conduits for the ideals of 'the beauty of holiness' are well founded. What remains to be seen, is the extent to which evolving patterns of worship in cathedrals, were repeated in the various parishes of their surrounding cities and with what consequences for the course of local borough politics.[22] To date, studies of town-gown relations under Charles I have depicted the reception of Laudian reform in a negative vein. Recently, Andrew Foster and Catherine Patterson have highlighted Charles's often partisan backing of cathedral chapters in their jurisdictional disputes with their burgher neighbours, which

[20] R. Howell, 'Neutralism, Conservatism and Political Alignment in the English Revolution: the Case of the Towns, 1642-9', in J. Morrill (ed.), *Reactions to the English Civil War*, pp. 67-87; K. Lindley, 'London's Citizenry in the English Revolution', in R. C. Richardson (ed.), *Town and Countryside in the English Revolution*, pp. 19-45; M. Stoyle, *Exeter in the Civil War* (Exeter, 1995); S. Porter, *Destruction in the English Civil Wars* (London, 1994); W. Coster, 'Fear and Friction in Urban Communities During the English Civil War', in W. G. Naphy and P. Roberts, *Fear in Early Modern Society* (Manchester, 1997), pp. 100-17; D. Scott, 'Politics and Religion in York, 1640-1662', in R. C. Richardson (ed.), *Town and Countryside in the English Revolution*, pp. 46-68.

[21] For a case study of the importance of cathedrals as showcases in the early stages of the Reformation see D. MacCulloch, 'Worcester: a Cathedral City in the Reformation', in Collinson and Craig (eds.), *The Reformation in English Towns*, pp. 94-112.

[22] Recent work on church building programmes in Stuart London are slowly beginning to address this issue. See for example, J. Newman, 'Laudian Literature and the Interpretation of Caroline Churches in London', in D. Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 168-88; *idem*, 'Inigo Jones and the Politics of Architecture', in K. Sharpe and P. Lake (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 249-51; J. Merritt, 'Puritans, Laudians and the Phenomenon of Church Building in Jacobean London', *HJ*, 41 (1998), pp. 935-60; *idem*, 'The Cradle of Laudianism? Westminster Abbey, 1558-1630', *JEH*, 52 (2001), pp. 623-46; P. Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: 'Orthodoxy', 'Heterodoxy' and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Manchester, 2001), ch. 11.

often made Laudianism a bitter pill to swallow for some civic worthies, who were themselves patrons of godly forms of piety, namely corporation funded lectureships.[23]

However, while cathedral cities harboured champions of forward Reformation, they also provided havens for a ritualism deemed 'popish' by the godly. This at least is the contention of the ensuing investigation into the course of confessional politics in the cathedral city of Norwich in a broad sweep from 1570 to the opening stages of the Civil War in 1643. Emphasis will be on the ways in which competing visions of true worship vied for dominance among the elite. The role of conflicting religious agendas upon the working relations of different magistrates will be examined in conjunction with the impact of varied episcopal policy shifts over time. How did bishops and their clerical protégés seek to gain lay adherents in Norwich? In what ways did individual burgesses act upon diocesan initiatives and with what results for the interlocking worlds of parochial and borough politics, at the heart of Norwich's early modern corporate life?

To answer these related questions, it has been necessary to work with a varied cast of characters. Only by engaging in an extensive prosopography has it been possible to reconstruct the often complex web of diffuse religious affiliations criss-crossing municipal affairs. One drawback is that the reader has to contend with a disarming roll-call of names. Because of this, an apology for the basic historical approach and methodology employed needs to be made at the outset. Moreover, while this is a study of a town, it is not an exercise in urban history. Indeed, there is much about the socio-economic background to city life which has been glossed over in

[23] Foster, 'Church Policies in the 1630s', p. 208, which highlights the 'mini *quo warranto* campaign' conducted against borough governments during the Personal Rule; C. F. Patterson, 'Corporations, Cathedrals and the Crown: Local Dispute and Royal Interest in Early Stuart England'', *History*, 85 (2000), pp. 546-71. For a case study of Charles's assertiveness towards a predominantly godly corporation see P. Slack, 'Religious Protest and Urban Authority: the Case of Henry Sherfield, Iconoclast, 1633', in D. Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 295-302.

the following, which may give the urban historian some cause for regret. This is not a complete 'urban biography'. Rather Norwich has been placed under the microscope to engage with certain speculative ideas surrounding current historical thinking on conformity to the early Stuart church. At the same time, this research has been carried out with a keen awareness of Norwich's distinctive geography. Although the city's experience of religious change has to be understood from a broader national perspective, it is recognised that Norwich's unique political and religious institutions were equally vital in shaping the events outlined below.[24]

What follows is structured around four parts. The first section traces the process by which Norwich became a precocious Protestant citadel from 1570 until the middle years of James I's reign, a development which cast a long shadow over religious tensions in the 1630s. Section two will then assess the pressures placed upon the godly tradition by Bishop Samuel Harsnett in the 1620s. The third part will continue the thread of the narrative, examining puritan alienation from the established church as a result of the ceremonial reforms implemented by Bishop Matthew Wren. Finally, the fortunes of Norwich's puritan movement on the eve of collapse into civil war will be assessed. Although sections two and three are characterised as a two-way tussle between evangelical civic leaders and a succession of disciplinarian prelates, it will be argued that this clash of interests gave rise to a pro-episcopalian party in office-holding which allied itself to Harsnett and Wren. While the focus on this core group of conformists will be orientated towards the 1630s, their pre-history will also be mapped out. In siding with Wren in 1636, members of this party conformed to the new ecclesiastical order under Charles I, an act

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[24] This work ties in with current trends in urban history towards reassessing the place of political events in shaping the composition and outlook of borough elites, see L. Hollen Lees, 'The Challenge of Political Change: Urban History in the 1990s', *Urban History*, 21 (1994), pp. 7-19.

which by default disqualifies them from the ranks of Judith Maltby's brand of Prayer Book Protestantism.[25] In Norwich at least it is possible to detect lay proponents of Laudianism. While my findings endorse Haigh and Walsham's suggestion that the Caroline church reform found a measure of parochial support, this thesis contests the claim that any such constituency belonged to an unbroken Catholic continuum stretching back to an earlier phase of the English Reformation.[26] Instead, it will be argued that lay support for ritual change was won over by anti-Calvinist divines established in the city. From this meeting of clerical and lay anti-reformed sympathies, it will be concluded that Laudianism existed as a potent force in Norwich politics in the 1630s, serving as a powerful reaction to the religion of Protestants as yet unexplored in the secondary literature on the city's early modern history.

[25] Maltby, '"By this Book": Parishioners, the Prayer Book and the Established Church', p. 117; *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England*, pp. 16, 23-4, 84-6, 99-113.
[26] Haigh, 'The Church of England, the Catholics and the People', pp. 214-19; Walsham, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited', pp. 620-51.

2. NORWICH: A QUIET REFORMATION?

Familiar to early modern students as England's second city, in terms of population expansion alone, Norwich ranked as one of the country's more conspicuous urban success stories. From an estimated 8,500 inhabitants in 1525, the populace settled to around 12,000 by 1600. Within the space of twenty years this figure almost doubled to between 20,000 and 22,000 persons, a meteoric growth that was sustained in spite of frequent visitations by the plague.[1] One acute epidemic in 1579 carried away some 5,000 citizens. On Paul Slack's estimation, this amounted to around a third of the overall population, while other crisis mortality years such as 1604 and 1625-6 struck down 3,000 on both occasions. Yet rising immigration compensated for such catastrophes. Occupying a position at the heart of East Anglia, one of the most densely populated and heavily taxed regions in the land, Norwich stood on the axis of trade routes with the Netherlands as well as the rapidly burgeoning capital London.[2] Considerable wealth was accrued in the city, reflected in the rich corporation archive Norwich has bequeathed to posterity. Indeed scholars are fortunate to be able to draw upon an unbroken run of Assembly minutes, alongside an almost complete set of city chamberlains' accounts for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Day to day matters of civic government can be followed in the twice weekly proceedings of the Mayor's Court. In addition, the borough records contain extensive collections of apprenticeship indentures and lists of those entering the

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[1] W. G. Hoskins, *Local History in England*, 2nd edn. (London, 1972), p. 239; J. F. Pound, *Tudor and Stuart Norwich* (Chichester, 1988), p. 28.

[2] P. Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1985), pp. 126-43; N. J. Williams, *The Maritime Trade of the East Anglian Ports 1550-1590* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 61-8; A. R. Michell, 'The Port and Town of Great Yarmouth and its Economic and Social Relationships with its Neighbours on Both Sides of the Seas, 1550-1714', University of Cambridge Ph.D., 1978, pp. 38, 42-3, 104.

freedom of the city, which when correlated reveal much about Norwich's changing occupational and trade structure over time.

To date, these sources have formed the basis for some excellent studies of the city's economic and social life. John Pound's extensive research on the impact of demographic and social change upon the priorities of municipal government, has been given added colour by Victor Morgan's consideration of an emerging civic *mentalité*, the shared political culture of a ruling elite.[3] Yet, while the focus of such work has been on the practical concerns of the city's elders, the story of the Reformation has been left out of the picture.[4] This is despite Patrick Collinson's comments about Norwich's post-Reformation government as exemplifying that close relationship between magistracy and ministry, vital to the promotion of godly learning with its emphasis on order and obedience, two cherished values underpinning corporate authority in Elizabethan and Stuart England.[5] Moreover, we have heard little of Norwich aldermen as religious patrons, a key aspect of their role as civic leaders.

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[3] J. F. Pound, 'The Elizabethan Corporation of Norwich, 1558-1603', University of Birmingham M.A., 1962; *idem*, 'Government and Society in Tudor and Stuart Norwich, 1525-1675', University of Leicester Ph.D., 1974; *idem*, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England* (London, 1986), pp. 60-8; *idem*, *Tudor and Stuart Norwich*, chs. 6, 8-9; V. Morgan, 'The Norwich Guildhall Portraits: Images in Context', in A. Moore (ed.), *Family and Friends: a Regional Study of British Portraiture* (London, 1992), pp. 21-9; *idem*, 'The Elizabethan Shirehouse in Norwich', in C. Rawcliffe, R. Virgoe and R. Wilson (eds.), *Counties and Communities: Essays in East Anglian History* (Norwich, 1996), pp. 149-60; *idem*, 'The Construction of Civic Memory in Early Modern Norwich', in M. Kwint, C. Breward and J. Aynsley (eds.), *Material Memories: Design and Evocation* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 183-97. For a work continuing these broad themes into the later seventeenth century see P. Corfield, 'The Social and Economic History of Norwich, 1650-1850: a Study in Urban Growth', University of London Ph.D., 1975.

[4] Noted exceptions include R. A. Houlbrooke, 'Persecution of Heresy and Protestantism in the Diocese of Norwich Under Henry VIII', *NA*, 35 (1972), pp. 308-26; E. M. Sheppard, 'The Reformation and the Citizens of Norwich', *NA*, 38 (1981), pp. 44-56 and the work of John Evans, Kenneth Shipps and Muriel McClendon discussed below.

[5] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society, 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 141-5. For example, one recent study of the 'reformation of manners' in Norwich, strangely averse to discussing the impact of Protestant reform upon the outlook of the city's governors, is P. Griffiths, 'Masterless Young People in Norwich, 1560-1645', in P. Griffiths, A. Fox and S. Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early modern England* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 146-86.

As a corollary to this point, neglect in assessing individual magistrates' parts in shaping the Reformation locally lies with a failure to understand how, at a basic structural level, the established church functioned in early modern Norwich. This is in spite of a wealth of relatively untapped diocesan administrative material covering the city.[6] For the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, historians can call upon a range of extant returns from successive episcopal and archidiaconal visitations for the city, while the remaining Consistory Court archives are of similar bulk. Other neglected sources include a series of bishops' registers and consignation books, illuminating the flow of clerical personnel in Norwich's parishes. Approaching the late 1630s, the surviving diocesan records can be read in conjunction with the remarkably detailed correspondence on Norwich affairs among Bishop Matthew Wren's papers, now bound up in the Tanner manuscripts in the Bodleian Library.[7] Indeed it was this valuable source which inspired the ensuing project.

Overall, the historiography of early modern Norwich has shown a reluctance to examine the church within urban society, an omission which stands in contrast to work on the medieval borough, following Norman Tanner's reconstruction of the vibrant 'kind of High Church, almost Baroque Christianity', which flourished in city life on the eve of the Reformation.[8] Partly, the preoccupation with the secular in writings on Tudor and Stuart Norwich, owes much to an assumption that the institutional church became moribund in the city during this period.

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[6] For works outlining ecclesiastical administration in early modern Norwich see R. A. Marchant, *The Church Under the Law* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 15-29; R. A. Houlbrooke, 'Church Courts and People in the Diocese of Norwich, 1519-1570', University of Oxford D. Phil., 1970; *idem*, *Church Courts and People During the English Reformation, 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 4-6, 278-81.

[7] Bod L Tanner MS. 68 and the working papers for Wren's defence before the Long Parliament in 1641, mainly in volumes 220 and 314, which can be supplemented with Wren's letter book, Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368.

[8] N. P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), p. 167.

Instead, the emphasis has been on the rise of dissent, an important theme of Penelope Corfield's inaugural lecture, delivered in 1980, which spoke confidently of Norwich's enduring historical legacy of a symbiosis between trade, religion and radical politics. For Corfield, the inculcation of evangelical Protestantism was an inevitable consequence of urban life. Dissent reflected the sturdy 'independence and self-reliance' found in all open and non-deferential manufacturing communities, in turn forging Norwich's 'strong tradition of puritanism' , which 'sprang from and dwelt in its artisan culture, as well as the city's intellectual circles'. Often 'disputatious and argumentative' puritanism mirrored native preferences for 'non institutionalised' forms of piety. Clearly this was the direct obverse of the 'organisationally weak' parish church structure within the borough's confines which, as a result, failed to cater for the spiritual needs of the city's inhabitants. Elsewhere, Corfield has written of 'the poverty and dejection of the Church of England' in Stuart Norwich. Unable to appeal to vast segments of the local populace, the future lay with the dissenting congregations and the rigorous 'commercial morality' which they injected into the world of business.[9]

Of course, it is one thing to indicate a connection between Protestant nonconformity and burgeoning enterprise. It is quite another thing to explain why such a relationship occurred and here, Corfield's pessimistic appraisal of the established church appears misplaced, especially in

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[9] P. J. Corfield, *Towns, Trade, Religion and Radicalism: the Norwich Perspective on English History, 1st Helen Sutermeister Memorial Lecture, 1980* (Norwich, 1980), pp. 27-9; *idem*, 'A Provincial Capital in the Late Seventeenth Century: the Case of Norwich', in P. Clark and P. Slack (eds.), *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700* (London, 1972), pp. 294-5.

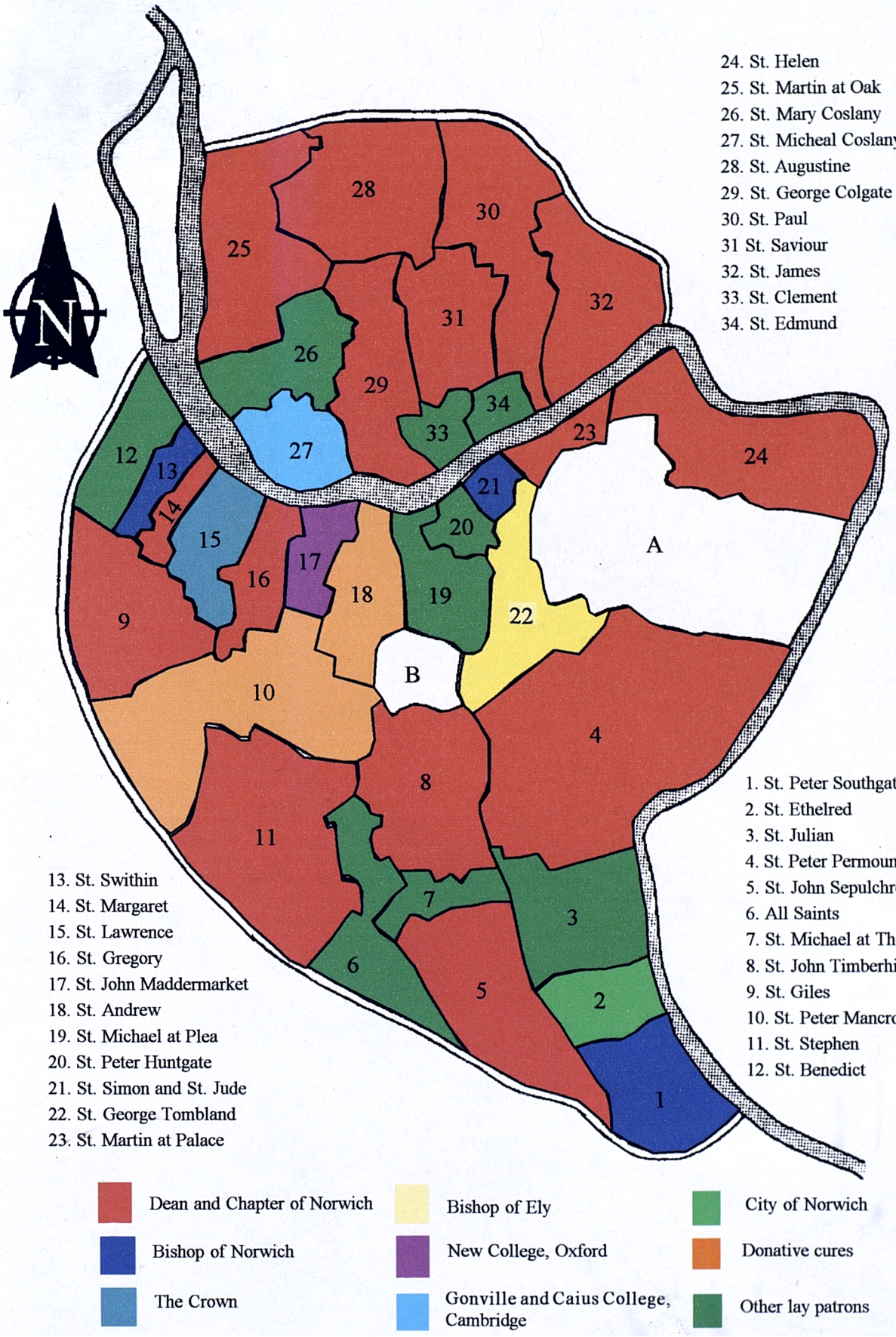
light of current interest in the early modern parish as a social institution.[10] After all, Norwich was and indeed still is famed as a city of churches. A legacy of its medieval past, Norman Tanner has put the number of parishes and affiliated chapels of ease in fifteenth century Norwich at forty six, a proportionally high total of places of worship for a European city of lesser rank, which compared favourably with the distribution of churches in major urban centres such as Venice with seventy parishes and Bruges with twelve.[11] While the Henrician dissolution pruned away the city's religious houses, Norwich's parochial system remained intact. A detailed diocesan survey carried out in 1629, reproduced on the map overleaf, counted thirty four benefices in Norwich's boundaries, with the single largest patron remaining the dean and chapter of Christ Church, who presented to fifteen of the city's cures.[12] This situation was another hangover from pre-Reformation times. These fifteen benefices were originally founded as livings appropriated to the medieval priory, who as the corporate rector, would be assured of income to provide for minor canons employed in singing the round of daily offices. In later visitation returns, incumbents in the fifteen are described variously as curates or chaplains. That so many city livings were occupied by priests burdened with extramural duties in Christ Church, became a cause for puritan complaint in the 1640s. However, such grievances also owed much

[10] See for example, D. M. Palliser, 'Introduction: the Parish in Perspective', in S. J. Wright (ed.), *Parish, Church and People: Local Studies in Lay Religion 1350-1750* (London, 1988), pp. 5-27 and in the same collection N. Alldridge, 'Loyalty and Identity in Chester Parishes 1540-1640', pp. 85-118; J. Barry, 'The Parish in Civic Life: Bristol and its Churches, 1640-1750', pp. 152-79; B. Kumin, *The Shaping of a Community: the Rise and Reformation of the English Parish 1400-1560* (Aldershot, 1996); A. Foster, 'Churchwardens' Accounts of Early Modern England and Wales: Some Problems to Note, But Much to be Gained', in K. L. French, G. Gibbs and B. Kumin (eds.), *The Parish in English Life, 1400-1600* (Manchester, 1997), pp. 74-93; E. Carlson, 'The Origins, Function and Status of the Office of Churchwarden, with Particular Reference to the Diocese of Ely', in M. Spufford (ed.), *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 164-207.

[11] Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, pp. 2-3.

[12] These details are based on NRO DN VAL/2. Other lists of patrons to Norwich benefices compiled at the Restoration, such as NRO MS 4914 and BL Harl MS 4626, fo. 324r, are not as complete as the 1629 survey. The same fifteen livings remained with the chapter into the eighteenth century, NRO DCN 115/9.

2. 1. Distribution of clerical patronage in Norwich city parishes



Dean and Chapter of Norwich
Bishop of Ely
City of Norwich
Bishop of Norwich
New College, Oxford
Donative cures
The Crown
Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge
Other lay patrons

A. Norwich Cathedral Precincts. Holy Trinity Cathedral, Christ Church.
B. Norwich Castle and Precincts.

Source: NRO DN VAL/2, 1629.

the presence of thorough-going Laudians in each cure. Petty canons who were evangelical pastors were acceptable to the godly and indeed, as described below, a team of formidable preachers had been encouraged to settle in Elizabethan Norwich as lesser office-holders within the cathedral.[13] The bishop of Norwich collated ministers to another three livings. So in terms of its share of clerical patronage alone, the established church hierarchy maintained an impressive institutional presence in city life.

Far from 'organisationally weak', the traditional parish structure was anything but irrelevant to the worship conducted in Stuart Norwich. While, the focus of Corfield's work on the long eighteenth century has placed store on the lively nonconformist tradition, Norwich's parishes remained objects of considerable local pride beyond 1660, as reflected in the antiquarian Benjamin Mackerell's lavish descriptions of the city's 'handsome' churches completed in 1722. The point is that, until now, little interest has been taken in how Tudor and Stuart Norwich's citizens related to the parish structure around them. This neglect is striking given the survival of detailed sets of churchwardens' accounts covering seven city churches for the seventeenth century, enabling us to view the ways in which the key players in civic politics performed their respective duties as parochial officers, a major concern of the following work.[14]

Of course, in this catalogue of relative neglect there is a slight exaggeration. The pace of Reformation change and its influence upon borough politics prior to the Civil War has

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[13] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 131-5; see below, pp. 29-30, 59-62.

[14] BL Add MS 12525, *passim*. At the time of writing, surviving churchwardens' accounts for the city were classified as follows: NRO COL 3/4 (St Mary Coslany, 1586-1692), NRO PD 26/71 (S) (St Peter Mancroft, 1580-1652), PD 58/38 (S) (St Lawrence, 1590-1763), PD 59/54 (St Gregory, 1574-1771), PD 191/33 (St Benedict, 1608-1763), PD 461/48 (St John Maddermarket, 1556-1762). Extracts from the accounts for St Stephen's from 1570 are transcribed in *EANQ*, 2nd Series, 8 (1899-1900). Sadly, the originals have been lost. Parish documents for St Saviour, 1623-1681 (NRO MC 1939/1), St John Sepulchre, 1625-1712 (PD 90/69) and St Margaret, 1552-1600 (PD 153/42) are comprised of summary accounts. This supplements the list of Norfolk churchwardens' accounts given in R. Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 280-1.

provided the basis for two monographs, both of which require further comment for being products of the same historical stable. The first, John Evans's *Seventeenth Century Norwich* published in 1979, offers a narrative account of the city's fortunes under successive Stuart monarchs. The book of a 1971 Stanford thesis, which purported to furnish a prosopographical analysis of Norwich's governing elite, Evans touched on several issues such as the rise of puritanism and the corporation's wrangling with episcopal governors, namely Samuel Harsnett and Matthew Wren, of relevance to this study.[15] However, town-gown relations were peripheral to Evans's main concern with the development of constitutional forms. Thus on his reading, Norwich's unusually 'open' political system, with its careful checks and balances and elaborate codes of conduct, drawn up during the turbulent fifteenth century, proved remarkably durable in weathering the storm of political upheaval from the Civil War to the Glorious Revolution.[16]

Throughout, the emphasis is on how urban government functioned amid tensions disrupting peace in the wider nation state. However, as a consequence, little is said about the ways on which broader ideological issues were interpreted by individual Norwich aldermen within the sphere of civic life. As such, Evans's offers an insular view of city politics. We learn little of magistrates' competing business interests, their ties with local gentry patrons or their participation in an encompassing national political culture centred on Parliament and the royal court. Similarly, no mention is made of aldermen's intellectual horizons, cultivated by

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[15] J. T. Evans, 'The Political Elite of Norwich, 1620-1690: Patterns of Recruitment and the Impact of National Affairs', Stanford University Ph.D., 1971; *idem*, *Seventeenth Century Norwich: Politics, Religion and Government, 1620-1690* (Oxford, 1979), especially pp. 84-104.

[16] Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, ch. 2, especially pp. 60-2 Evans's case for the durability of Norwich's political system rests on the notion that its constitution allowed for a fluid turnover of senior office holders. See his 'The Decline of Oligarchy in Seventeenth Century Norwich', *JBS*, 14 (1974), pp. 46-76. However, Evans's argument that Norwich's elite became less exclusive over time has been strongly criticised in R. O'Day, 'The Triumph of Civic Oligarchy in the Seventeenth Century', in R. O'Day (ed.), *The Traditional Community Under Stress* (Milton Keynes, 1978), pp. 103-36.

associations with the two universities and the clergy.[17] All of these external elements would have fed into municipal affairs creating conflict, even though magistrates' personal interests and agendas would not necessarily be stated explicitly within the corporation archive, Evans's sole primary source. For its over-dependence on municipal material, John Morrill slated the work as 'under researched'.[18] Moreover, as Ian Archer has warned, it is easy for scholars to become seduced by the formulaic contents of borough records into readily accepting 'the myth of civic harmony they were designed to perpetuate'.[19] Yet Evans has bitten off a slice of the same 'myth' in his rendering of Norwich's corporate life.

Twenty years on and the same uncritical appraisal of the city archive has informed Muriel McClendon's, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich.* Like Evans's book, the product of a Stanford thesis, McClendon belongs to the same 'school' of historical writing on Norwich.[20] Again we are treated to an insular take on city politics, although this time the focus is on the sixteenth century and the earlier phase of the English Reformation to the end of Elizabeth's reign. After her predecessor, McClendon has sought to pinpoint the ways in which the civic elite strove to contain division and faction. As the argument runs, this was achieved through the pursuit of a deliberate policy of *de facto* religious toleration, intended to galvanise corporate unity against the threat of encroachment

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[17] V. Morgan, 'Cambridge University and "The Country", 1560-1640', in L. Stone (ed.), *The University in Society* (2 vols., Princeton, 1975), I, p. 241.
[18] J. Morrill, 'The Diversity of Local History', *HJ*, 24 (1981), pp. 718-24, especially p. 721.
[19] I. M. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 40.
[20] M. C. McClendon, 'The Quiet Reformation: Norwich Magistrates and the Coming of Protestantism, 1520-1575', Stanford University Ph.D., 1990; *idem*, *The Quiet Reformation: Magistrates and the Emergence of Protestantism in Tudor Norwich* (Stanford, 1999). A summary of the overall thesis can be found in her 'Religious Toleration and the Reformation: Norwich Magistrates in the Sixteenth Century', in N. Tyacke (ed.), *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800* (London, 1998), pp. 87-115. Another product of the 'Stanford school' of historical studies on Norwich is G. J. A. Goth, 'Croakers, Tackers and Other Citizens: Norwich Voters in the Early Eighteenth Century', Stanford University Ph.D., 1985.

upon civic authority by a centralising Tudor state. While toleration was never theorised or codified in law, it nevertheless operated as a pragmatic response to deep confessional attrition.[21]

Although MacClendon has presented an intriguing idea her case, which awkwardly relies upon an argument from silence, begins to fall apart once the evidence cited is subjected to closer scrutiny. To begin with, she draws exclusively upon proceedings before the Mayor's Court. However, owing to a lack of written follow-up in cases involving religious discord, she concluded that the presiding magistrates were prepared to let matters lie, simply by refusing to exact punishments for matters of private conscience and belief. On her reckoning, because penalties were not recorded, sentences were not carried out. Yet to posit, on the basis of incomplete documentation, that a seeming failure to prosecute signified a spirit of religious forbearance is a *non sequitur* line of reasoning, based on a dismissive reading of the available material. There are other examples of rather tortuous logic as well. For example, to infer that Norwich residents were not overwhelmingly tolerant folk, then to judge this trait as 'irrelevant to the analysis of toleration as a social and political practice' is odd.[22] Equally, her definition of toleration as 'practical secularisation' in the context of Tudor borough government, strikes as being anachronistic. Belief in magistrates' abilities to 'compartmentalise' religious prejudices aside from their political outlook, is difficult to reconcile with what Patrick Collinson has described as the 'piebald mentality' of sixteenth century Englishmen, who were given to understanding the world in terms of binary opposites.[23] Did Norwich's leaders really break the mould by embracing a 'modern' pluralistic conception of their own urban society? From my

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[21] *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 33-4, 254-6.
[22] *Ibid*, pp. 14-15, 33.
[23] *Ibid*, pp. 17, 28; P. Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp. 147-8.

own investigation of Reformation politics in the city during Elizabeth's reign, confessional beliefs are hard to disentangle from a magisterial mindset, which was driven by the divinely inspired task of creating a godly commonwealth on earth.

Perhaps the quest for toleration has some application in identifying those magistrates less motivated by religious bigotry than their colleagues. However, in reviewing McClendon's book, Tom Freeman has noted, with particular reference to the Marian reaction in Norwich, that 'in no other city or major town in England during Mary's reign did the civic authorities display such zeal in persecuting heresy', unless pressurised to do so by royal commissioners.[24] In this crucial phase of the English Reformation, moderate men appear thin on the ground. What passed for a wholly intolerant Catholic regime under Mary, gave way to an ardent Protestant rule under Elizabeth, as a coercive variety of magistracy assumed the mantle of reforming the moral ills of urban society. Yet to suggest, apropos McClendon, that Elizabethan Norwich's transformation into a godly commonwealth saw a broadening of religious latitude is not very convincing.[25] Similarly, to suppose that the magistracy failed to intervene in the city's religious life through the 'exercise of great concern in the appointment of clergy', is not easy to substantiate given the city's tussle over clerical patronage with successive bishops, discussed below.[26]

Being under researched, McClendon's thesis easily comes unstuck. Another major gripe is that she failed to consult any ecclesiastical records in order to shed light on the dynamic of religious change within the city's parishes. However, the same omission does not recur in the

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[24] Review in *JEH*, 51 (2000), pp. 419-21.
[25] *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 246-7.
[26] *Ibid*, p. 73 and see below ch. 4.

third key study of Reformation politics in Norwich. While it remains unpublished, Kenneth Shipps's 1973 Yale thesis exploring puritan patronage networks across the near legendary godly heartland of East Anglia, devotes an entire chapter to Norwich.[27] Shipps furnished a detailed prosopography of the city's godly community prior to the Civil War. He also included some pioneering research on the diocesan archive to illustrate the pastoral work of Norwich's preaching fraternity. However, his work is necessarily slanted towards puritans. Consequently, the thesis is marred by an overbearing Whig teleology, as the 'good seed planted by Norfolk laymen' inevitably gained popularity and strength to overcome 'their arch-rivals, Bishop Wren and those of his ilk', who as the villains of the piece receive considerably less coverage.[28]

Even though Shipps told only half the story, his research has provided an invaluable point of departure for my own. What follows is an attempt to revisit the same historical terrain, already traversed by Evans, McClendon and Shipps, while taking in a number of new sights and meeting a host of hitherto unfamiliar native inhabitants along the way. Extending the range of evidence to encompass corporation records, printed works of divinity and diocesan material, I hope to present a clearer image of the confessional 'lie of the land'. Through giving equal weight to both the godly and their conformist opponents, I also intend to stress the contested nature of the English Reformation in Norwich, which left a deeper imprint upon civic politics than Evans or McClendon have deduced. Post–Reformation Norwich became a puritan citadel. At the same time, the city contained lay and clerical elements which emerged to challenge godly forms of piety in the 1620s, signalling discontinuity from a reformed past. However before

[27] K. W. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage of East Anglian Puritan Clerics in Pre-Revolutionary England', Yale University Ph.D., 1971, pp. 267-99. A condensed version of this unpublished work can be found in Shipps's 'The "Political Puritans"', *CH*, 45 (1976), pp. 697-706.
[28] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 299.

examining religious friction under the Stuarts, it is first necessary to observe how Norwich became Protestant. The processes by which the Elizabethan city acquired a reputation for its formidable alliance of magistracy and ministry will now be traced in depth, by way of dispelling the notion that Norwich experienced a quiet Reformation during the later sixteenth century.

PART I: THE MAKING OF A PROTESTANT CITY c. 1570-1619

3. IMMIGRATION, CATHOLIC CONSPIRACY AND THE RISE OF A GODLY MORAL ORDER

Early modern Norwich's citizens were aware of the two props sustaining the fabric of urban society, good governance and religion. The close association between the two was evidently in the mind of Mr Noble, a later seventeenth century clerk and schoolmaster at St Gregory's parish, but also something of an enthusiastic amateur chronicler of his adoptive city. Noble was quick to praise the industriousness, inventiveness and orderliness of his fellow city dwellers, traits which he attributed to Norwich's famed government. Not shrinking from its purpose, the borough was a more upright and civil place for the magistrates 'not suffering any debauched or idle person to be found in the streetes, chastising the unruly, quickening the sluggish and encouraging the willing, holding no want either for wages for such as can or will work'. Yet underlying the magistracy's sense of civic duty lay the foundations of Protestant teaching. In Norwich the Reformation ran deep, the city having been 'stored with learned preachers for many years by reason whereof the inhabitants are reasonably well instructed in the principles of religion', securing the town's reputation as a model commonwealth.[1]

Three hundred years on and Noble's summary of the virtues of early modern England's second city has proved remarkably enduring. Patrick Collinson, for instance, has depicted a regional capital 'saturated with Calvinist preaching', a 'self-contained East Anglian Geneva', which stood to exemplify that close union between magistracy and ministry characteristic of urban government elsewhere in Elizabethan and early Stuart England.[2] However, it remains the

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[1] The undated chronicle 'compiled by one Mr Noble, who was for many years clerk of St Gregory', is deposited among a loose bundle of antiquarian notes relating to Norwich in the eighteenth century, NRO MS 453.
[2] P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), p. 202; *idem*, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford, 1982), p. 144.

case that Norwich's evolution into a Protestant borough, is a story left largely untold. Certainly, to understand this change in any satisfactory detail, it is first necessary to examine events surrounding a botched attempt by several disaffected Catholic gentry to raise the city in the spring of 1570. The significance of this failed uprising rested with its efforts to exacerbate social and political divisions among Norwich's inhabitants. In this respect, 1570 saw the playing out of wider tensions within city politics which had built up during the previous decade in response to the uncertainties surrounding Elizabeth's early reign. Unrest was also generated by the settlement of immigrant Dutch and Walloon craftsmen from 1565 onwards. Native hostility towards the 'strangers' came to provide a local *cause célèbre* for Catholic plotters seeking to rally support against the Elizabethan regime. Their aspirations were short lived. However, the threat to civic order convinced Norwich's governors to embark on a thorough-going reformation of the endemic moral ills afflicting urban society. A new coercive discipline inspired by godly learning came to embody the ethos of the city's magistracy. While this left an indelible imprint upon city life down to the early Stuart period, the ascendancy of godly rule can be traced directly to anxieties over the scares of 1570.

The unease simmering below the surface of city politics in the 1560s has escaped Muriel McClendon's notice. Instead, she has viewed the immediate aftermath of Elizabeth's succession as passing Norwich by without incident, a factor which she has attributed to one critical natural disaster, namely the influenza epidemic of 1558-59. Disease did city politics a favour by removing potential Catholic troublemakers, on her estimation seven of the ten aldermen struck down. The sudden death of so many burgesses committed to the old faith and their replacement with men sympathetic to the new learning, in turn paved the way for 'the rapid confessional

unification of the magistracy'. Staunch Catholics remained a minority. Citing evidence of religious affiliation in will preambles, she calculated that with the close of 1559, the composition of the twenty four aldermen underwent dramatic change, becoming 'heavily Protestant, with but two identifiable Catholics and at least twenty probable Protestants'. Since the ranks were not filled by religious conservatives, 'Norwich was quiet during the first years of Elizabeth's reign'.[3]

Of course, the extent of the newcomers' 'probable Protestantism' is the key factor here, for while influenza removed several prominent Catholics from the aldermanic bench, it does not necessarily follow that Reformation change was easily accommodated by the city's governors after 1559. Here McClendon has treated the reader to some circular logic. Indeed, to conclude that Norwich was quiescent and devoid of religious friction in the 1560s, is strange given the survival of conservative elements among the city's clergy, especially the higher clergy attached to the cathedral, hostile to the progress of reform. The later 1560s witnessed a protracted religious contest among the clerical staff at Christ Church, played out before wider audiences across Norwich city and diocese. On the one hand stood the dean, John Salisbury, an ex-monk of Bury and an astute political survivor since the Henrician dissolution, whose immediate circle included a clutch of conservatives headed by the prebend Miles Spencer, the former diocesan chancellor in Mary's reign and an associate of the charismatic Suffolk Catholic gentleman, Sir Thomas Cornwallis.[4] On the other hand stood the forces of forward Protestantism under the leadership of Elizabeth's first, if initially reluctant Bishop of Norwich, John Parkhurst.

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[3] *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 194-9.
[4] R. A. Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation, 1538-1628', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese, 1096-1996* (London, 1996), pp. 511-13; D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County, 1500-1600* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 185-7; *DNB* 'John Salisbury'; PRO PROB 11/57, fo. 49v, will of Miles Spencer.

Parkhurst is generally regarded as an incompetent, repeatedly hamstrung administrator, ill suited to the challenges posed by the unwieldy and fractious Norwich diocese, or alternatively on Muriel McClendon's account, an exemplar of religious toleration and forbearance.[5] But to stress the bishop's ineffectiveness misses the point about his commitment to reform after Zwingli's Zurich, his place of exile under Mary. As such Parkhurst acted as a significant patron of zealous Protestant ministers in and around the city of Norwich, many of whom were to emerge as notorious nonconformists during the last years of the 1570s.[6] One early and extremely ambitious protégé was George Gardiner. Already officiating as chaplain at St Andrew's since 1562, Gardiner's stormy career, which eventually witnessed his elevation to both archdeacon and dean of Norwich upon John Salisbury's death in 1573, began with his rise to a prebendal stall, secured through Parkhurst's influence in 1565.[7] This appointment was intended to unsettle the Marian old guard within the close.[8] Over the next five years, the canon maintained a long running and bitter controversy against his conservative colleagues, a dispute which culminated in a public display of iconoclasm at Holy Trinity, carried out by Gardiner and three fellow prebends, John Walker, Edmund Chapman and Thomas Fowle in 1570. Emboldened by the addition of three reformers to the chapter, Gardiner oversaw the removal of offending objects including the organ

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[5] For Parkhurst's reluctance see, *The Zurich Letters* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1842-4), I, p. 61. The fullest biography is given in Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, pp. 17-57. See also *Quiet Reformation*, p. 208.

[6] Confiding in Heinrich Bullinger in 1560, Parkhurst's ambitions for further reform were revealed when he expressed his contempt for the 'few lukewarm' in the English church, 'whom the Lord will spew out of his mouth', *The Zurich Letters*, I, p. 108. For the bishop's use of clerical patronage see below, pp. 51, 56-7, 59-62.

[7] *DNB* 'George Gardiner'. R. A. Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People During the English Reformation, 1520-1570* (Oxford, 1979), p. 166 refers to Gardiner's appointment to St Andrew's, which he resigned by 1566, NRO ANW1/5. For Parkhurst's procurement of a prebendal stall for his protégé see BL Lansd MS 443, fo. 144. Gardiner's pursuit of the vacant archdeaconry was against the wishes of his diocesan who preferred another candidate, Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, pp. 37-40, 193, 217-8, 247, 250; BL Lansd MS 18, fo. 30.

[8] Chiming in with Archbishop Parker's 1567 metropolitical visitation, Gardiner kept a running commentary on the superstitious practices maintained at Christ Church, J. Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker* (3 vols., Oxford, 1821), iii, pp. 156-61; NRO DCN 29/1, 35r-8v.

from the choir. Much to Dean Salisbury's obvious distress, the four canons then employed 'one Slaughter' to preach in the cathedral green yard, commending the perpetrators as 'the very saints of God', a sermon which held a wider resonance for the city of Norwich as a whole.[9]

On this occasion, the Queen was not amused. Gardiner was forced to soften his earlier radicalism in the interests of securing further promotion, although his connections with no less a patron than Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who was among other things high steward of Norwich Cathedral from 1573, helped him to procure a royal chaplaincy and later the position of dean.[10] Three years prior to the incident over the organ, Gardiner had been instrumental in moving for a royal commission to investigate Popish abuses remaining in the cathedral.[11] This body, which made its returns in January 1569, was headed by Bishop Parkhurst with the inclusion of four civic worthies, the city recorder, Francis Wyndham, the mayor Thomas Parker, brother of Archbishop Matthew Parker who remembered Gardiner in his will of 1570, as well as two of Gardiner's former patrons at St Andrew's, Aldermen Augustine Steward and his son-in-law Thomas Sotherton, of whom more in a moment.[12] Contrary to Muriel McClendon's account, city magistrates were drawn into the religious faction fighting accompanying John Parkhurst's episcopate in the 1560s. Those burgesses chosen to inquire into practices in the cathedral were united by their commitment to the new faith, leading them to recommend a comprehensive set of

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[9] Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, pp. 51, 54, 57, 59; Blomefield, iii, pp. 666, 669. Like Gardiner, John Walker also officiated as a minister within the city, as chaplain at St Peter Mancroft, NRO ANW 1/5. Chapman, a noted radical, was later suspended from the town lectureship at Bedford. From 1577 he became a leading light in the puritan conference movement about the Stour Valley, *The Correspondence of Matthew Parker* (Cambridge, 1853), p. 450; R. G. Usher (ed.) *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, Camden Society 3rd Series, 8 (1905), p. xxxvii. The fate of the cathedral organ can be followed in PRO SP 12/73/68 and *HMC* Pepys MSS, pp. 174-6.

[10] H. Le Strange (comp.), *Norfolk Official Lists* (Norwich, 1890), p. 84. For Gardiner's elevation to a royal chaplaincy see Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 247.

[11] NRO DCN 29/1, fos. 35r-8v; PRO SP 12/49/43 and NRO DCN 115/9 supplies the commissioners' names.

[12] Hawes, *Officers*, p. xxxvii for Wyndham; PRO PROB 11/52, fo. 88v, will of Thomas Parker. For Augustine Steward and Thomas Sotherton see, *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 58.

statutes for Christ Church, which placed considerable emphasis upon the chapter's preaching duties, for 'Gods word is a Lantern unto our Feete and a Lighte unto our paths'.[13] Had the proposals been adopted, Parkhurst and Gardiner's vision of transforming the cathedral into a centre of evangelism would have been realised. Yet it was a vision with considerable appeal to members of Norwich's civic elite, who were equally concerned to foster godly learning within their own jurisdiction, the implication of which will now be considered in more detail.

Paralleling the factional sniping within the chapter, the impact of Reformation under Elizabeth awaited its resolution among the aldermanry. Here, it makes sense to identify which of McClendon's twenty 'probable Protestant' magistrates were at the vanguard of further reform in the years leading up to 1570. One conspicuous candidate was Alderman John Aldrich. Son of Thomas, mayor in 1507, who on the basis of his assessment for the 1523 lay subsidy counted as the second wealthiest man in Henrician Norwich, the younger Aldrich likewise enjoyed a prestigious and influential career in civic office, serving as alderman from 1545 until his death in 1582 and finally mayor on two separate occasions in 1558 and 1570. He was also elected as member for Norwich for the Parliaments of 1555 and 1572.[14] Something of a dour figure, as seen by his request to be buried without undue pomp and vain 'Janglyn of Bells', Aldrich provides a convenient touchstone for a wider godly network among Norwich's elite stretching beyond the city's confines. His origins were in the parish of St Clement's, where he acquired the flint building abutting the west of the church, part of which now houses Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Significantly, for someone with precocious Protestant beliefs, John Aldrich extended this

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[13] A copy of the proposed statutes exists in BL Stowe MS 128, especially fos. 17v, 19r-20v; Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation', p. 531.

[14] PRO PROB 11/23, fo. 9r, will of Thomas Aldrich, proved in 1529; J. Pound, *Tudor and Stuart Norwich* (Chichester, 1988), p. 32; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 56; *HP 1509-58*, i, p. 304; *HP 1558-1603*, i, p. 333.

property itself the former Norwich residence of the priors of Ixworth, Suffolk, with materials salvaged from Walsingham priory, including what became the main front door.[15] He was not the only member of his extended family to benefit from the dissolution of the religious orders. Alderman Augustine Steward, Aldrich's brother-in-law through marriage to the Sotherton family, as shown on the family tree overleaf, did the city a great service by snapping up the Blackfriars' church for the corporation's use in 1540. As seen above, Steward also pushed for an enhanced preaching role for the cathedral. In the meantime, he married his daughter, baptised with the purposefully reformed name of 'Faith' to her cousin John, Alderman Aldrich's eldest son, signifying an evangelical continuum rooted in an earlier phase of the Reformation, that has since been overlooked by Muriel McClendon.[16]

The immediate background of St Clement's is worth examining. There the Aldrich household would have come into contact with near neighbours of similar advanced reformed views, most notably Matthew Parker, Elizabeth's first Archbishop of Canterbury, who was also a native of the parish. The archetypal local boy made good, Parker remembered his birthplace, leaving provisions for the maintenance of his parents' monument in the local church. The archbishop also retained familial ties with the Aldriches, most obviously through the person of his brother Thomas, whom we have already met, who in turn nominated 'my olde acquainted and worshipfull friend Mr John Aldrich' as supervisor to his will in 1570.[17] Furthermore, Aldrich's two sons Thomas and Henry became fellows at Parker's college, Corpus Christi, Cambridge.

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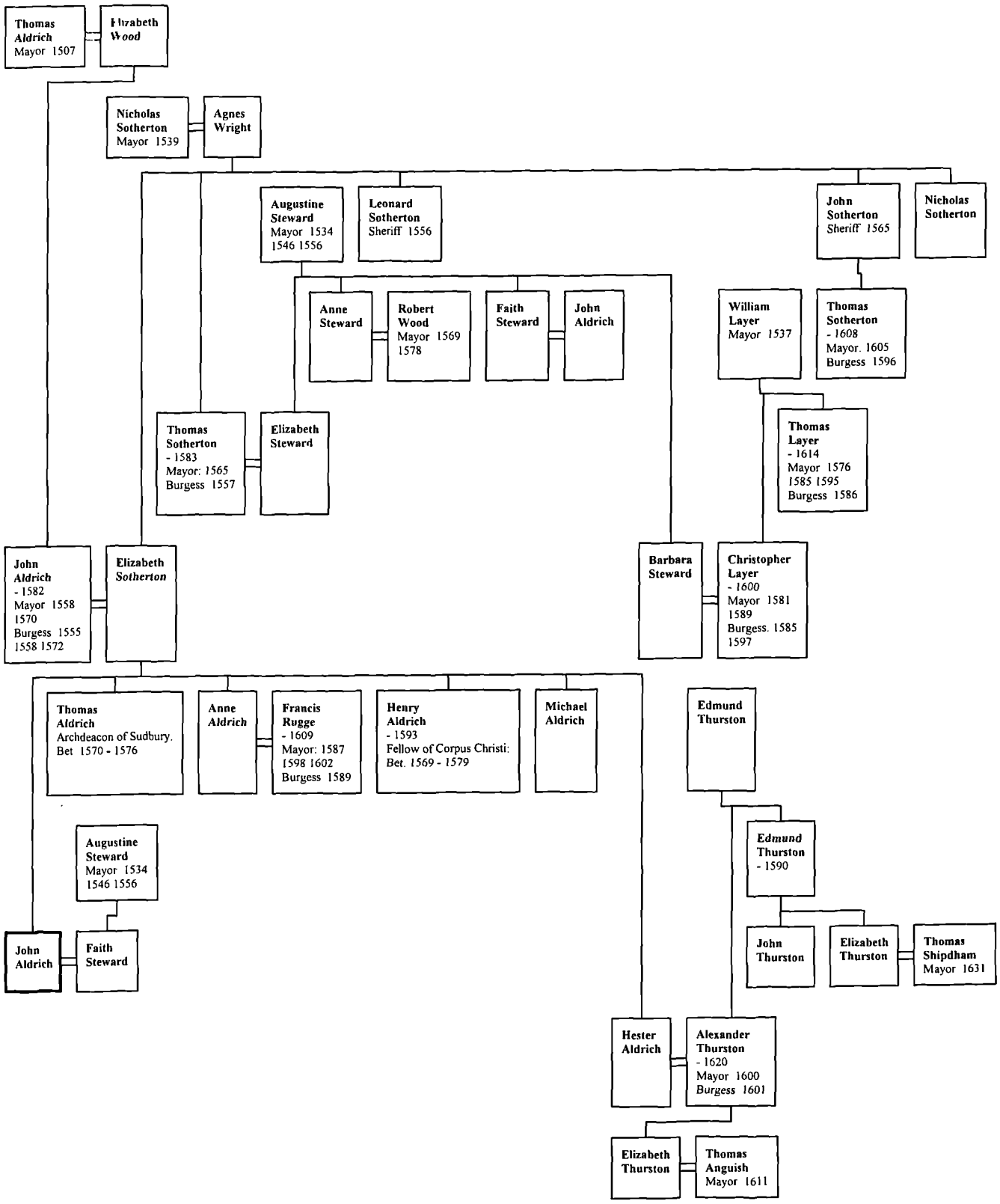
[15] PRO PROB 11/64, fo. 207v, will of John Aldrich, proved 1582; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 56.
[16] *Quiet Reformation*, p. 72; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 56.
[17] BL Add Ch 26723; PRO PROB 11/52, fo. 88v, will of Thomas Parker. In honour of its most distinguished son, Norwich corporation gave Archbishop Parker the ultimate accolade by purchasing a copy of his portrait, V. Morgan, 'The Norwich Guildhall Portraits: Images in Context', in A. Moore (ed.), *Family and Friends: a Regional Study of British Portraiture* (London, 1992, p. 23.

3. 1. Aldrich, Sotherton and Steward



From there in 1570, Thomas gained promotion to the Archdeaconry of Sudbury through the intervention of his father, who had purchased the rights of next presentation, formerly held in trust from the last Henrician bishop of Norwich, William Rugge.[18]

However, this was by no means the extent of the Aldrich-Corpus Christi connection. The link was of seminal importance when, following Parker's 1567 metropolitical visitation, the archbishop made arrangements for a series of lectures for his home county of Norfolk out of an annuity granted to his old college. Under the terms, the master of Corpus was to appoint preachers for sermons at Thetford, Wymondham and Norwich, principally from among his own fellows. Norwich was to benefit from two annual sermons, one being delivered in the green yard adjacent to St Andrew's, with the other to be preached, not surprisingly, at the archbishop's home parish of St Clement's. Both venues came to acquire significance over time as the settings for corporation lectureships developed from Parker's original foundation.[19] It was through the educational ties with Corpus Christi that another fellow of the college, Thomas Robartes or Robardes, originally from Wales and of whom more in the next chapter, came to minister in Norwich. A commanding presence within godly circles, Robartes occupied the living at St Clement's in 1574 upon the recommendation of Alderman Aldrich and his sons.[20]

Thus John Aldrich, who enjoyed close connections with the emerging Elizabethan church establishment, was also a key clerical patronage broker in his own right as well as a man of

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[18] Venn i, p. 14. Henry Aldrich returned to Norwich in the 1580s to teach in the city grammar school. However, links with his old college remained strong, Aldrich leaving £40 for 'two fyers of Charcoles' to warm Corpus Christi during the winter months in his will proved in 1592, NRO NCC 54 Clearke. For Thomas Aldrich's appoi tment as Archdeacon of Sudbury see Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 49.

[19] BL Add Ch 26723. Under this arrangement, the mayor and sheriffs of Norwich were to receive small sums at the time of each sermon, as an added financial incentive. By James I's reign, the green yard by St Andrew's had become the setting for the corporation's annual Rogationtide sermon. St Clement's came to host a civic lectureship every Wednesday, NRO CA, 1603-25, fos. 29v, 241v.

[20] Venn iii, p. 466; NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 209v. Robartes's later career is traced below, pp. 50, 59-62

considerable weight in Norwich's political affairs. Initially, he was admitted into the freedom of the city as a member of the grocer's company. However, Aldrich's main business interests lay with the export trade in cloth through his participation in the Norwich Merchant Adventurers, an organisation whose activities have unfortunately left scant trace on the historical record.[21] Nevertheless in this enterprise, he was associated with his brother-in-law, Thomas Sotherton. We have already encountered Sotherton as one of George Gardiner's allies in seeking to reform religious practices at the cathedral, but he was also a substantial property owner within the city and the head of one of Norwich's most prolific mercantile dynasties.[22] He pursued a flourishing political career, being elected burgess to Parliament in 1558 before rising to the mayoralty in 1565. Indeed, such was his local reputation that he was still being referred to as 'greate Sutterton' in Norwich some twenty years after his death in 1583, while his lasting fame has extended into the annals of English Reformation history following a brief appearance in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.[23] The martyrologist, who spent a brief period in Norwich at Bishop Parkhurst's behest in 1562, probably met the alderman in person.[24] At least a certain familiarity would account for Foxe's careful rendering of Sotherton's reluctant involvement in the burning of Elizabeth Cooper as a heretic in July 1557. Sotherton was then serving his term as sheriff with his brother Leonard. While fulfilling this role, he was pressed into incarcerating Cooper by

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[21] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 71; PRO E 122 196 7, lists fifteen members of the company in 1580. The origins of the Norwich Adventurers are summarised in E. W. Carus Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers* 2nd edn. (London, 1967), p. 176 and recently in A. F. Sutton, 'The Merchant Venturers of England: their Origins and the Mercers' Company of London', *HR*, 75 (2002), pp. 25-46, especially, p. 33.

[22] See above, pp. 29-30; *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 52, 56, 58. Thomas Sotherton was the heir of Nicholas Sotherton, who died during the term of his mayoralty in 1540. The Merchant Venturers' arms still adorn the Sotherton family home, since named 'Strangers' Hall', R. M. R. Young, *Guide to Strangers' Hall: Museum of Life* (Norwich, 1967).

[23] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 58; *HP 1558-1603*, iii, p. 419, which states that 'under Elizabeth, Sotherton played no outstanding part in civic affairs'. My assessment of his career differs from this opinion. The posthumous acknowledgement of Sotherton's greatness is found in PRO E 133/80/20, deposition of Stephen Franklin.

[24] Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 43.

Alderman Thomas Marsham, mayor in 1554, along with 'one Bacon', much against his own conscience since Sotherton and Cooper had served together in the same household. Out of 'the friendship he bore unto her and the more for the gospels sake, he was very loth to do it', repenting his part in the martyrdom ever since.[25]

If accurate, this testimony offers a unique insight into Sotherton's tortured mind, which in turn enabled the alderman to empathise with the plight of fellow sufferers for the reformed faith during his mayoralty in 1565. For that year saw the introduction of émigré Dutch and Walloon craftsmen in Norwich against fierce opposition from many native inhabitants. The settlement of the city's 'stranger' communities is a story which has often been told, albeit mainly from the perspective of the economic benefits accrued through the introduction of foreign cloth manufacturing techniques, the rise of the 'new draperies', for which Elizabethan and early Stuart Norwich came to be renowned. Primarily, the 'strangers' were invited to settle to rejuvenate the city's flagging textile industry. Traditionally associated with the production of worsted cloth, Norwich's staple commodity was becoming increasingly difficult to sell overseas, a problem directly linked to competition from burgeoning cloth production on the continent by the 1550s and 1560s.[26] This predicament was of some concern to Merchant Venturers like Aldrich and Sotherton, whose main avenue of trade lay with the Low Countries. Both men were aware of the need to recapture the foreign market with novel items which, according to the original Letters

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[25] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 58; John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, ed. G. Townsend (8 vols., New York, 1965), viii, p. 381, 775. Marsham's name appears in the 1563 edition of Foxe's work. However, it was removed from subsequent editions, possibly due to the influence of Marsham's family or friends.

[26] K. J. Allison, 'The Norfolk Worsted Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Pt.1', *Yorkshire Bulletin of Social and Economic Research*, 12 (1960), pp. 73, 78-80; J. Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: the Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1978), p. 45; N. J. Williams, *The Maritime Trade of the East Anglian Ports, 1550-1590* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 64-5.

Patent admitting alien weavers, were to include a range of 'bayes, arras, saies, tapestry, mockadoes, stamens, carsey and other outlandish commodities as hath not used to be made in this our realm of England'.[27]

Debate exists over the degree of innovation which the strangers eventually brought to Norwich's textile industry.[28] Immigrant craftsmen introduced two basic types of fabric, Dutch bays, varieties of heavy woollens which required fulling and Walloon 'caungeantry', cloths akin to traditional worsteds being made of yarn which had been combed and dyed before weaving. The latter material lent itself to being mixed with other fibres, linen, cotton or silk to produce a lighter textile which could be woven into different patterns to suit changes in fashion.[29] As such 'caungeantry' formed the basis for the famous 'Norwich stuffs', which came to predominate with ever increasing variety and inventiveness into the seventeenth century, gradually replacing the city's ancient worsted industry which adjusted to changed circumstances by absorbing imported methods.[30] But being less durable than older English cloths, new draperies generated a higher replacement demand, thus enhancing sales. In 1565, the intention of Thomas Sotherton and his associates among the Merchant Venturers was to encourage an influx of outside expertise in the manufacture of fabrics more responsive to changing foreign and, more significantly over time, domestic markets.

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[27] BL Lansd MS 7, fo. 81.

[28] E. Kerridge, *Textile Manufactures in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 1985), pp. vii-ix, stresses the continuity between native and imported alien cloth making techniques. K. J. Allison, 'The Norfolk Worsted Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Pt. II', *Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research*, 13 (1961), pp. 63-4 and L. Martin, 'The Rise of the New Draperies in Norwich, 1550-1622', in N. B. Harte (ed.), *The New Draperies in the Low Countries and England, 1300-1800* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 247-50, highlight the significant innovations introduced by the stranger communities.

[29] Fuller discussions of these distinct varieties of cloth are given in B. A. Holderness, 'The Reception and Distribution of the New Draperies in England', in Harte (ed.), *The Rise of the New Draperies*, pp. 222-5.

[30] U. Priestly, 'Norwich Stuffs, 1600-1700', in Harte (ed.), *The Rise of the New Draperies*, pp. 277-8.

While this project was ultimately successful, the prospect of competition from alien craftsmen generated much resentment among Norwich's indigenous populace. The storm of protest which greeted Mayor Sotherton's efforts to secure royal Letters Patent is an episode in the city's early modern political history which has been largely glossed over.[31] But again this is to ignore the conflict of interests the settlement of 'strangers' represented. As was the case with much political faction fighting in Elizabethan towns, there was a religious angle to the opposition which formed against Thomas Sotherton, an enthusiast for Protestant reform. Tensions flared up as soon as the Letters Patent were forwarded for ratification by the city Assembly in 1565. Refusing to admit foreign settlers under the common seal Sotherton and his allies, including John Aldrich, who having recently acquired a licence over the city's wool supplies, stood to gain from the productivity of alien weavers, resorted to the constitutionally dubious measure of bypassing the Common Council altogether, affixing the seal of the mayoralty to the document.[32] It was decided that thirty families, twenty four Dutch and six Walloons, would be permitted to ply the trade of weaving in the city. However, within the space of two years, the alien population had greatly exceeded the original controlled figure, a factor linked to the forced exodus of large numbers of Protestant refugees from the Low Countries, following in the wake of the Duke of Alva's expedition there in 1567.[33]

Consequently, the unchecked influx of strangers into Norwich was a matter of concern for Thomas Whalle, mayor in 1567. Not affiliated to the Merchant Venturers and no friend of the aliens, Whalle who, in the words of the eighteenth century historian Francis Blomefield,

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[31] As in C. M. Vane, 'The Walloon Community in Norwich, the First Hundred Years', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, 24 (1984), pp. 130-1; J. Pound, *Tudor and Stuart Norwich*, pp. 57-8.
[32] Blomefield iv, p. 282. Aldrich's share of the wool licence is recorded in PRO SP 12/114/41.
[33] W. Rye, 'The Dutch Refugees in Norwich', *NAM*, Old Series, 3 (1885), pp. 188-9.

would have 'turned them out', came to provide a focus for entrenched discontent against Thomas Sotherton's settlement scheme. Blomefield, drawing on corporation records now lost, argued that Whalle hoped to eject the Dutch and Walloons entirely. Although his proposals failed to move the majority of his fellow aldermen, Whalle nevertheless introduced a series of ordinances through the Mayor's Court restricting the foreigners' movements. Aliens were forbidden to lodge with their countrymen unless certified by the mayor and were to adhere to an 8 p.m. curfew. In the meantime, Whalle communicated differences between English and immigrant craftsmen to the Privy Council, setting in motion a chain of correspondence which eventually led to the compiling of *A Book of Orders for the Strangers*, regulating Dutch and Walloon trading, confirmed by the Council in April 1571.[34]

What has escaped attention until now is the relevant fact of Thomas Whalle's Catholicism. At least in terms of his confessional sympathies he was distant from the advanced Protestantism of men like John Aldrich and Thomas Sotherton, who were also seeking to remould the local economy to further their own overseas trading interests. A deposition taken in 1578 against a schoolmaster Walter Hall, refers to Whalle, Hall's patron, as a 'notorious papist'. Furthermore, in his will written in 1573 and proved three years later, the alderman counted several future recusants as close relatives, most conspicuously his son William, the head of a Catholic household at Aldeby until James I's reign.[35] Thomas Whalle's daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Lynne. Together, the Lynnes featured prominently among Norwich citizens

[34] Followed in Blomefield iv, p. 284; BL Lansd MS 7, fo. 203r; D. L. Rickwood, 'The Origin and Decline of the Stranger Community of Norwich (with Special reference to the Dutch congregation), 1565-1700', University of East Anglia M.A., 1967; *idem*, 'The Norwich Strangers, 1565-1643: a Problem of Control', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, 24 (1984), pp. 126-7, for the compiling of *The Book of Orders*.

[35] PRO SP 15/25/119, fo. 282r; PROB 11/57, fo. 451v; T. B. Trappes Lomax, 'Roman Catholicism in Norfolk, 1559-1780', *NA*, 32 (1958), p. 32.

certified as Papist recusants by the Consistory Court, Thomas Lynne forming part of a network which harboured a seminary priest, Gregory Gower, in the cathedral precincts in 1595. He was still an absentee from his parish church in 1615, when being hauled before the Mayor's Court with his wife, he refused the oath of allegiance and was imprisoned.[36] Another of Thomas Whalle's sons-in-law, Richard Lussher, was similarly incarcerated by the civic authorities for refusing to attend divine service, only securing his release with an appeal to the Privy Council, offering 'some hope of his conformity' in May 1591.[37] Yet Lynne and Lussher, the two brothers-in-law, were not isolated figures in city life. Indeed both men had enjoyed sufficient local support to gain elections to the Common Council in 1578, both resigning their positions for undisclosed reasons in 1583.[38]

Given such family ties, Thomas Whalle emerges at the centre of a conservative religious contingent at the heart of city politics. Out of step with the reformed ideals of his colleagues within the Merchant Venturers, Whalle's Catholicism helped to inform his marked hostility to foreign Protestant immigration. As a property owner at Kirby Beton, to the south of Norwich, the alderman sustained contacts with the Norfolk gentry. Here it is significant that he confided his belief that the aliens 'had done more hurte than ever they would do good', for 'they did but sucke the lyvenges away from the Inglishe', to Sir Clement Paston of Oxnead, who was also

[36] PRO PROB 11/57, fo. 451v; NRO DN DIS/9/1a, unfoliated entries for 1595, 1605, 1607, 1611, 1612; DN ACT/46c; MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 29r, 21 Aug 1615, fo. 29v, 26 Aug 1615.
[37] PRO PROB 11/57, fo. 451v; A. Hassell Smith and G. M. Baker (eds.), *The Papers of Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, III, NRS, 53 (1997-8), p. 11; *APC* 1591, p. 144, 23 May 1591, where Lussher has been incorrectly transcribed as Lasher. Muriel McClendon in *Quiet Reformation*, p. 246, states that Lussher, a scrivener by trade, was 'of little stature with few connections'. However, he was sufficiently connected to make a successful plea to the Privy Council. Equally, the cases of Thomas Lynne and Richard Lussher, fail to support McClendon's argument that Norwich's magistrates tolerated Catholic recusancy.
[38] Hawes, *Officers*, pp. 99-100.

noted for his inclination towards Rome.[39] Whalle's comments were aired around the county. For shortly afterwards in May 1570, Norfolk rebounded to the rallying cry to 'raise up the commons and levy a power and beat the strangers out of the City of Norwich'.[40]

Thanks to Neville Williams, the events surrounding Appleyard's conspiracy, named after its principal ringleader Sir John Appleyard, have been outlined in detail. Within East Anglia, the timing of an uprising in the wake of the revolt of the Northern Earls in late 1569, was also facilitated by the declaration of a Papal Bull excommunicating Elizabeth, a copy of which was nailed to the door of the Bishop of London's palace by another Norfolk gentleman, John Felton. This act proved to be a signal for a wider rebellion aimed at toppling the Queen in favour of the Duke of Norfolk, between May and June 1570.[41] Central to the traitors' strategy was the capture of the city of Norwich, where they hoped to stir up localised discontent against immigrant refugees, already expressed by Alderman Thomas Whalle. Neither Whalle nor members of his family were implicated in the conspiracy. However, several county gentlemen with known city connections were arrested and subsequently tried for their hand in causing disturbances in Norwich. These figures warrant further explanation.

Our knowledge of the participants in the 1570 uprising is derived from a list of thirty two insurgents examined at the summer Assizes in August, of whom three were finally executed for treason.[42] As stated, the nominal commander was Sir John Appleyard. Half-brother to the Earl

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[39] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 59. Whalle's correspondence to Paston is transcribed in J. F. Pound, 'The Elizabethan Corporation of Norwich, 1558-1603', University of Birmingham M.A., 1962, p. 303.; PRO SP 12/99/55, lists Paston as a Catholic recusant.
[40] The rallying cry is given among the indictments against four of Appleyard's co-conspirators, PRO KB 9/627/109.
[41] N. Williams, 'The Risings in Norfolk, 1569 and 1570', *NA*, 32 (1961), pp. 73-81; *idem*, *Thomas Howard Fourth Duke of Norfolk* (London, 1964), pp. 179-88, provide the fullest accounts of Appleyard's plot. A summary can be found in *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 224-5.
[42] PRO SP 12/71/61. For the three executions for treason see PRO KB 9/627/109; BL Harl MS 368, fo. 183r.

of Leicester's late wife, whose penchant for intrigue combined with his prominent family connections helped save his neck, Appleyard played a minor role in organising the insurgence.[43] Of more relevance for Norwich affairs were two gentlemen, John Throgmorton and George Redman, both of whom went to the gallows. Throgmorton, a known Catholic resident in the city is an obscure figure, although in the case of Redman, recorded as hailing from Cringleford, two miles to the south west of Norwich, biographical details are more forthcoming.[44] A Norfolk squire, he was also a freeman grocer of Norwich. In addition, Redman had served as a common councillor from the last year of Mary's reign in 1557 until resigning, presumably to devote time to his country holding in 1562. It is likely that he retained contacts in the city, enabling him to capitalise upon native anxiety over foreign competition. Indeed, as the laconic note accompanying his indictment at the August Assizes reveals, he was especially forward in 'spoiling or making havoc of the strangers' during the May disturbances.[45] Moreover, Redman's religious leanings can be inferred from his association with Edmund Harcocke. An ex-friar collated to St Michael Coslany by Bishop John Hopton, a fellow former Dominican in 1555, Harcocke accepted the Elizabethan settlement and retained his cure until his death in 1561, when he named George Redman as a close friend in his will.[46] In his previous life, Harcocke had been the last prior of the Norwich Blackfriars. Fulfilling this role he gained notoriety for preaching

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[43] *HMC* Salisbury MSS, I, p. 350.
[44] BL Harl MS 368, fo. 183r. John Throgmorton's brother-in-law, Christopher Plater, a Norwich merchant, was another staunch Catholic. Visiting Rome prior to the uprising, it was reported that he had contacted one Woller, a Suffolk man and a mercenary in the Duke of Alva's army, PRO SP 12/73/27.
[45] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 71; Hawes, *Officers*, p. 128; PRO SP 12/71/61.
[46] For Harcocke's career see NRO DN REG/12/18, unfoliated entry, 28 Mar 1555; DN REG/13/19, fo. 63r. His will survives as PRO PROB 11/46, fo. 98r. Significantly, his patron John Hopton served as Queen Mary's chaplain, placing both former Dominicans at the heart of the Marian establishment, see R. Rex, 'The Friars in the English Reformation', in P. Marshall and A. Ryrie (eds.), *The Beginnings of English Protestantism* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 53.

against the royal supremacy, publicly exclaiming before the corporation in 1535, that 'an earthly man, namely a temporal man, may not be head of the church'.[47] The ex-mendicant seemingly modified this view in 1559. Nevertheless, Harcocke's survival into Elizabeth's reign provides a significant bridge between the pre-Reformation church and the rebel leadership in 1570.

George Redman's conservative religious connections did not end there. During the proceedings in August another Norwich citizen, one 'Marsham', was also examined for spreading the seditious rumour that 'the Earl of Leicester had two children by the Queen'. This was probably Robert Marsham, nephew of the late Alderman Thomas Marsham, who, if recalled from John Foxe, played a key part in the martyrdom of Elizabeth Cooper.[48] Condemned to lose both his ears or pay a fine of £100, Robert Marsham, who was linked to both Redman and by default Edmund Harcocke as Redman's apprentice, survived to end his days as a landholder in Little Melton, dying there in 1615.[49] But his ties to the 1570 plot destroyed any ambitions he may have held for entering city politics. Instead, the name of Marsham appears to have been permanently sullied when one year after Appleyard's uprising, Robert's father Ralph was barred from the higher positions of sheriff and alderman, 'forever and not at any time hereafter', by act of Assembly. This once influential family was removed from civic office.[50]

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[47] PRO E 36/153, fos. 23-5. Harcocke's troubles were noted in G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: the Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 16-18. Elton was unaware of the former prior's return to Norwich under Mary.

[48] Marsham's slanderous words are recorded in a letter describing the Norwich rising, sent to the Countess of Shrewsbury in August 1570. Although the original has been lost a transcription is given in E. Lodge (ed.), *Illustrations of British History* (3 vols., London, 1838), I, pp. 512-4. For Robert Marsham's relationship to his uncle see NRO NCC 150 Hustings, will of Alderman Thomas Marsham, proved 1557.

[49] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 73; NRO NCC 85 Angell, will of Robert Marsham, proved 1615. However, Marsham did not severe his links with Norwich, leaving property in St John Maddermarket at his death. He also named 'my good friend Richard Rosse', mayor in 1618 and member for the city in the 1621 Parliament, as his executor.

[50] NRO NCC 150 Hustings; NRO AB/3, 1553-83, fo. 194v, 21 Apr 1571; Hawes, *Officers*, p. 103. Ralph Marsham died in 1579, PRO PROB 11/61, fo. 364r.

Given the persistence of religiously conservative troublemakers in their midst, it was likely that the forward Protestants among the municipal elite would intervene to prevent social and religious discontent from developing into open violence. Here, Muriel McClendon's assertion that the magistrates were indifferent to the uprising makes little sense. To begin with, the possibility of imminent insurrection was perceived as highly threatening by the city's authorities, some of whom were able to recall the destruction and rioting accompanying Kett's infamous rebellion over two decades previously.[51] Moreover, the raising of the rebels' standard on 16th May 1570 followed the election of John Aldrich to a second mayoral term. Not a figure to waiver in the face of a Catholic conspiracy, over the next six months, Mayor Aldrich imposed a series of restrictive measures to counter further insurgency which led to the establishment of a vigorous moral godly order, characterising borough government into the seventeenth century. His first priority was to procure outside assistance in defending the town. Help was readily forthcoming in the form of Edmund Clere and Drew Drury, the two deputy lieutenants of Norfolk, who were dispatched by the Privy Council to assemble the trained bands about Norwich for the 'maintenance and comfort of the citizens' against any possible trouble from the 'mean and base sort'.

By early June, Drury felt able to inform the council of his success in reducing the city to 'better order and government'.[52] If so, his confidence was tested when between 6th and 19th June, the rebels gathered supporters within the city as a prelude to a larger muster at Trowse on 16th

[51] *Quiet Reformation*, p. 225. The earlier rebellion held lasting memories for the Aldrich family, John's elder brother Thomas having led the city's delegation which negotiated with Kett, *HP 1509-58*, I, p. 304.
[52] PRO SP 12/71/62. Neville Williams dated this order later to July. However, in light of Drury's subsequent return to the Privy Council, it is more likely that the letter was dispatched to the deputy lieutenants in May, see *APC* 1558-70, p. 362, 5 June 1570.

June, accompanied by an appeal to the commons to join their cause.[53] But these events prompted Aldrich and his brethren to make their own response. It was no mere coincidence that after an emergency Assembly meeting held on the same day, 16th June, it was agreed to pass a by-law to stop congregations of the 'mean and base sort', on the one day of the week when they would have time on their hands to make trouble, Sunday. From Saturday evening until Monday, the city gates were to be kept shut and barred, while traffic, especially in 'berrecartes', was to cease. In addition, any 'shoppes either for buying, selling or retayling', were forbidden to open during this period in lieu of a 3s fine for each offence, with the same forfeiture being applied to illicit brewing. In their contents these injunctions were symptomatic of John Aldrich's fervent Protestantism. For what functioned as a draconian act to lock down Norwich against Catholic conspirators, also doubled up as an effective piece of Sabbatarian legislation, to the end that 'Gods express Commandment may be better kept in observing the Sabbath days accordinglye within this worshipfull citie', for the better edification of its citizens.[54] It is striking that the same formulae was repeated in future acts prohibiting Sunday trading passed intermittently down to the 1640s. Thus Norwich's reputation as a godly town inspired by a rigid observance of the fourth commandment, had its point of origin in the hasty reaction to the insurgence mounted during the summer of 1570.[55]

However, the Aldrich administration's reforming zeal did not rest there. With the rout of the rebels at the end of June, a capitulation in which Aldrich, as one of the officials selected for

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[53] PRO KB 9/627/109; *HMC* Salisbury MSS, I, p. 557.
[54] NRO AB/3, 1553-83, fo. 174v, 16 June 1570.
[55] Further by-laws prohibiting Sunday trading and reinforcing Sabbath observance were introduced in 1583, 1586, 1615, 1616, 1623, 1629, 1632 and 1640. For these see NRO AB/4, 1583-7, fo. 24v, 4 Sept 1585, fo. 26v, 30 Mar 1586; AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 41r, 13 Dec 1615, fo. 45r, 26 Feb 1616, fo. 185r, 19 Dec 1623, fo. 253r, 12 May 1629, fos. 276v-8r, 20 Jan 1632, fo. 364r, 29 Sept 1640.

the commission to try the traitors in August played an active part, the mayor embarked upon an ambitious programme to quell the perceived menace from the 'great multitude of mean and base sort', deemed susceptible to the wiles of Catholic conspirators.[56] To begin with, he initiated a thorough enquiry into the extent of poverty across the city itself. The result was the famous Norwich census of the poor, which thanks to the work of John Pound, has been accorded the status of the most comprehensive survey of its kind taken in the sixteenth century.[57] Overall, the census identified 2,300 men, women and children, who were found either 'counterfeattinge a kinde of work', or begging for their sustenance. But as the report went on to confirm, such fecklessness was merely the outcome of indiscriminate generosity on the part of Norwich's wealthier citizens, who perpetuated the problem by adhering to the ideals of an old world hospitality, vagrants being 'soffred and nourished at everie mans dore withoute inqueringe from wheare they came'. Set against the recent upheaval, casual alms-giving was viewed in a sinister light. Much the same suspicions fell upon the city's prolific victualling houses, 'stuffed with players and drunkerdes', who 'in their pottes' with 'swearing prating and lyenge', caused great offence to God, hastening 'the destruction of themselves and the commonwealthe'.[58]

Mayor Aldrich proposed to clean up the town with a revised and enlightened scheme for poor relief introduced at the end of 1570. Undiscerning acts of charity, representative of former

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[56] PRO SP 12/71/60, provides a list of the commissioners including ironically Alderman Thomas Whalle's Catholic patron Sir Clement Paston.

[57] J. F. Pound (ed.), *The Norwich Census of the Poor 1570*, NRS, 40 (1971), summarised in *idem*, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England* (London, 1986), pp. 60-3. Charged with compiling the census were two city officers close to Mayor Aldrich and Thomas Sotherton, their names being given in NRO NCR Case 20c, Mayors' Book of the Poor 1571-9, unfoliated. The first, John Sotherton was Alderman Thomas's brother, see *HP 1509-58*, iii, p. 348 and PRO E 122/196/7 for his participation in the Norwich Merchant Ventures. The second, Simon Bowde, mayor in 1579 and 1588 as well as burgess in 1585, held part share of a licence to furnish the city's wool supplies, *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 62 and PRO SP 12/114/14.

[58] The report accompanying the Norwich survey is printed in R. H. Tawney and E. Power (eds.), *Tudor Economic Documents* (3 vols., London, 1924), II, pp. 316-7.

social values were proscribed and replaced with a compulsory rate levied on all wage earners, to be collected at parish level and distributed evenly across the city. Inventories of paupers were to be maintained. Regulating the system was a permanent salaried staff of deacons and 'select women', who were responsible for finding employment for the able bodied poor, instructing pauper children in reading and writing, while meeting out punishment to vagabonds, drunkards and other unruly persons.[59] At the heart of this organisation lay the city Bridewell or House of Correction, of which the mayor himself was to be master. A quasi-penal institution where disorderly vagabonds could be incarcerated for a period of up three weeks and subjected to a regimen of work interspersed with respites for eating and prayer, Bridewell was intended to be a deterrent against begging.[60] At the same time, the onus was upon furnishing a sense of moral uplift among the inmates, reflecting John Aldrich's belief in the beneficence of godly learning. It is more than coincidental that two years later, during the 1572 Parliament, the former mayor's proposals provided a blueprint for national policy when, at the behest of his family friend Archbishop Parker, Aldrich was included among the Commons' committee to determine the twin acts *For the Punishment of Vagabonds and for the Relief of the Poor and Impotent* and *For Setting of the Poor on Work and for Avoiding of Idleness*. Imposing a fixed compulsory poor rate and ordering the setting up of Houses of Correction in other towns, both statutes incorporated key aspects of the Norwich scheme.[61]

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[59] Pound, *Poverty and Vagrancy*, pp. 63-8.
[60] *Ibid*, pp. 64-5. For a pessimistic assessment of the workings of Norwich's House of Correction, in comparison with similar institutions elsewhere, see A. L. Beier, *Masterless Men: the Vagrancy Problem in England* (London, 1985), pp. 164-9.
[61] *HP 1559-1603*, i, p. 333; *Statutes of the Realm*, 14 Eliz I ch. 5 and 18 Eliz I, ch. 3; P. Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988), pp. 124-5.

Margo Todd has questioned the role of Protestantism as a motivation for social welfare reform in sixteenth century England, preferring instead to link Tudor governments' new found interests in social engineering, to a rationalising tendency rooted in Christian Humanism.[62] Yet there can be no doubting the religious zeal driving Aldrich's campaign. He intended to redeem the poor 'from idleness to drunkeness to whoredom to shamefull incest and abominable life', through a body of deacons deliberately modelled after Geneva.[63] But his scheme was not without its critics. One significant disapproving comment was made by Alderman Thomas Whalle who, when drawing up his will in 1573, emphasised the beneficence of indiscriminate charitable giving, echoing the social values of a rapidly disappearing Catholic world. Leaving £20 to the poor of St Simon and Jude, the money was to be lent freely upon a pledge of repayment in three months. The stock was to be stored in the church in a chest 'according to the order of Cambridge chest' in St Andrew's, so named after its benefactor John Cambridge, a fifteenth century mayor of Norwich who died in 1442. Cambridge had devised similar loans to the poor, with each recipient promising to pray for the donor's family.[64]

Whalle's emulation of Cambridge's donation, with its consciously medieval system of reciprocal checks and balances between benefactor and dependent, strikes as being self-consciously old-fashioned and out of step with the compulsory rating system devised by Mayor Aldrich. Whalle hoped that anyone benefiting from his loan scheme would feel compelled to remember their benefactor in the afterlife. Just as his predecessor John Cambridge had attempted to ease his passage through purgatory by invoking prayers for his soul Whalle, as a

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[62] M. Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 118-47, discussed in P. Slack, *The English Poor Law, 1531-1782* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 6-9.
[63] NRO NCR Case 20a, Mayors' Book of the Poor, unfoliated proclamation to the poor board, 4 June 1571.
[64] PRO PROB 11/57, fo. 451r; Blomefield iv, p. 317; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 22 for John Cambridge.

religious conservative, likewise sought to find redemption through one final charitable act, a good work at variance with the emerging Protestant ideals of some of his colleagues. In Norwich, the legislation of 1570 marked the culmination of John Aldrich's aspirations to reorder urban society as a godly commonwealth. Ameliorated by a forceful culture of discipline, welfare reform can be seen as a timely Protestant response to an abortive Catholic conspiracy, itself part of a local reaction to the economic policies pursued by Aldrich's brother-in-law Thomas Sotherton and his supporters in the Merchant Adventurers' Company. However, in seeking the moral regeneration of their borough, the godly among the magistracy were also influenced by their spiritual guides. It is to that other arm of the emergent godly commonwealth, the preaching ministry, which we now turn in order to gain a broader understanding of Elizabethan Norwich's burgeoning notoriety for the clamorous nature of its entrenched puritanism.

4. URBAN MAGISTRACY AND MINISTRY, 1570-1619

Underpinning the newly fashioned godly order lay a body of pastors, who did much to articulate the social and moral values enforced in 1570. The overwhelming esteem with which Norwich's governors beheld their ministers was celebrated famously by William Burton, a preacher deprived of his city living after delivering a sermon, for which he was 'accounted an enemy to Caesar', in 1589.[1] Dedicating a translation of Erasmus's *Seven Dialogues* to his former patrons, he remembered his time in Norwich with more than a tinge of nostalgia. For Burton the city represented a godly paradigm, which like Bethel and Jericho 'maintained the Schooles of Prophets among them', magistrates and ministers 'imbracing and seconding one as another and the common people affording due reverence and obedience to them both'. No motion put to the city Assembly was done without consulting 'your grave and godly preachers'. It was a great joy to witness 'the continuall resorte that was every day through the year and that for many years together unto the holy exercise of religion' of 'so many grave and Religious Magistrates' with so 'great a meeting of learned and faithfull Pastors', afterwards resorting to one another's houses 'whither some went, all went, none were excluded' to 'receive incouragement alike in the word of the lord'.[2]

Of course, relations between pastors and people may not have been as cordial as Burton cared to recall. Nevertheless, his idealised vision of Elizabethan Norwich's religious life provides an insight into the aspirations of members of the urban elite to act as forward sponsors of godly learning. The city had developed a precocious preaching tradition by 1564. During that year

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[1] William Burton, *A sermon preached in the cathedral church in Norwich, the xxi day of December 1589* (1589), *STC* 4178, 'To the Reader'. See below, pp. 66-8 for a fuller discussion of Burton's sufferings.
[2] Desiderius Erasmus, *Seven dialogues both pithie and profitable, trans. William Burton* (1606), *STC* 10457, sigs. A2r-v.

Norwich came to serve as a centre for 'prophesyings', those voluntary meetings of the clergy for the exposition of scripture, which eventually proved so irksome to Queen Elizabeth.[3] Upon John Parkhurst's death in 1575, the 'brethren' took the episcopal vacancy as an opportunity. Having recourse to their own initiative, the Norwich clergy compiled an elaborate set of orders with which to govern weekly public preaching exercises to be held in the cathedral precincts. These assemblies, surrounding a sermon followed by a discussion on the text, were self-regulatory. If any speaker was found wanting in 'soundness of doctrine', he was to accept admonition by the rest of the company or else be excluded from his place on the regular preaching rota.[4]

Thus the proceedings drawn up in 1575 envisaged a form of discipline based upon a parity of ministers, which reinforced a sense of shared vocational mission. Yet among the divines comprising Norwich's godly preaching circle, two pastors, Thomas Robartes and John More, later hailed by William Burton as the two 'presidents or leaders of an army', assumed pre-eminence.[5] Robartes, the less well documented of the pair, has already been encountered with regards to the Aldrich-Corpus Christi connections.[6] It is likely that the same Cambridge ties came into play when encouraging John More, a fellow of Christ's College to settle in the city, where along with Robartes he enjoyed John Aldrich's patronage among the 'faithfull workmen of the Lords business'. A Yorkshireman by birth, More has become familiar as 'the Apostle of Norwich'. Such was his commanding presence in England's second borough for twenty years until his death

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[3] PRO SP 15/12/27, Edward Gascoigne to Leicester, 25 Oct 1564, describing the Norwich exercises. For the background to the 'prophesyings' see P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), pp. 168-78.
[4] 'The orders for the prophesie at Norwich in anno 1575, begun *sede vacante*', transcribed in J. Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk* (London, 1877), pp. 18-20.
[5] Erasmus, *Seven dialogues both pithie and profitable, trans William Burton*, sig. A2v.
[6] For Robartes see above, p. 33. Patrick Collinson has confused this minister with another Thomas Roberts, John Parkhurst's steward, who was outmanoeuvred by George Gardiner for the post of Archdeacon of Norwich. In the event, neither of the two Robartes or Roberts served as Archdeacon, see Collinson's *Godly People* (London, 1983), p. 183, Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 234 n. 566.

in 1592 that he was eulogised in Henry Holland's 'who's who' of illustrious English reformers, *Herœologia Anglicia*, which printed his effigy, reproduced overleaf.[7] More's pastoral work symbolised the *esprit de corps* between magistracy and ministry. In turn, his career helped shape Norwich's religious life, leaving a powerful evangelical legacy with implications for local confessional wrangling under the Stuarts.

The precise circumstances behind More's arrival in Norwich are uncertain. Initially, he came to Norfolk as a protégé of Bishop Parkhurst, who collated him to the living of Alburgh in June 1572, where he was probably talent scouted by Alderman Thomas Sotherton, then serving as a feoffee to the city parish of St Andrew.[8] As such More assumed the chaplaincy of a church rapidly being transformed into a shining beacon of forward Protestantism. Uncharitably described by Bishop Wren's chancellor, Clement Corbett, in the 1630s as 'the sanctified parish of St Andrew's', former churchwardens had marked their adherence to the march of Reformation by affixing verse commemorating Edward VI's ascendancy to the throne over the south aisle:

> This church was builded of timber stone and bricks
> In the year of our Lord God XV hundred and six
> And lately translated from extreme idolatry
> A thousand five hundred and seven and fortie
> And in the first year of our noble King Edward
> The Gospel in Parliament was mightily set forward
> Thanks be to God, Anno Dom. 1547 December[9]

Commitment to the Gospel continued at John More's St Andrew's, which became a celebrated focal point for Norfolk's teaching fraternity. In 1608, this development eventually led to the

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[7] PRO PROB 11/64, fo. 208r; *DNB* 'John More'; Henry Holland, *Herœologia Anglica* (Arnhem, 1620), *STC* 13582, pp. 209-11.
[8] NRO DN REG/13/19, fo. 178v; Blomefield iv, p. 301; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 57.
[9] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 9r; Blomefield iv, p. 312. If this verse does indeed date from 1547, it is likely to have been framed amid the iconoclastic fervour accompanying the royal visitation in September that year, D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999), pp. 70-1.

4.1. John More from Henry Holland, *Herωologia Anglica* (Arnhem, 1620), where it was stated that the preacher grew the longest beard of his day in imitation of Old Testament prophets.

founding of a parish library for the better edification of the clergy, placed to the immediate north of the church above the porch to 'New Hall', the site of the Norwich Blackfriars, purchased by Alderman Augustine Steward, John Aldrich's brother-in-law and son-in-law, on the corporation's behalf at its dissolution in 1539. Over time, the repository attracted much civic pride as the 'Old City Library'. But the room was also intended to provide lodgings for visiting preachers on Sabbath days or weekday lectureships, enhancing St Andrew's reputation as a centre of civic sponsored godly learning across East Anglia.[10] From 1583, the parish boasted that other conspicuous symbol of a godly commonwealth, the city Bridewell. Significantly relocated to Thomas Sotherton's old house, which abutted the south side of the church, by prior arrangement at the alderman's death, this institution for the moral regeneration of the unruly and profane was established within earshot of Norwich's most famous pulpit.[11]

Such was the setting for John More's charismatic ministry, which lent justification to the new coercive order being forged by his civic patrons. Patrick Collinson has asserted that 'the stigma of "factious person" sits uneasily on Mr More', although to press this too far is to downplay the preacher's uncompromising beliefs, underwritten by a rigid Calvinism, not to everyone's taste. With his dying breath, he renounced 'all heresy and doctrine of poperie,

[10] *Quiet Reformation*, p. 72 and above, p. 32 for Steward's familial ties with John Aldrich; D. J. Coby, 'St Andrew's Norwich (1550-1730): Parochial Prestige in an Urban Context', University of East Anglia M.A., 1992; A. S. Geo, *Three Centuries of a City Library* (Norwich, 1917), p. 4; H. Sutermeister, *The Norwich Blackfriars* (Norwich, 1977), pp. 15-16. A list of donations to the 'Old City Library' compiled in the 1650s survives as NRO MS 4228. Down to the eighteenth century, the keys to the lodging chamber were kept by the parish clerk, sealing the link between St Andrew's Church and the New Hall opposite, NRO MS 79, fo. 217. It is worth noting that St Andrew's was not the only city parish to boast a library. Another was founded about the same time at St Peter Mancroft, W. Rye, 'St Peter Mancroft, Norwich: its Parish History in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *NAM*, Old Series, 2 (1883), pp. 359-63.

[11] W. Hudson and J. C. Tingey (eds.), *The Records of the City of Norwich* (2 vols., Norwich, 1906-10), II, p. 389; J. Campbell, 'Norwich', in M. D. Lobel and W. H. Johns (eds.), *Historic Towns*, 2 (Oxford, 1975), p. 25.

especially that of meritte' in his will.[12] This soteriological position also informed the apostle of Norwich's only venture into print during his lifetime, *A briefe and necessarie catechisme*, co-authored with Edward Dering in 1572 and condensed into its abridged version, *A Shorte Catechisme for Householders* in 1580. This hugely successful work of practical divinity, running to eighteen editions by 1631, was later attributed to Dering alone.[13] Throughout Norfolk, where the piece was recognised as 'Mr More's catechism', it furnished a sobering exposition of the three building blocks of faith, the Decalogue, Creed and the Lord's Prayer. The emphasis is on 'how we can be saved at the day of judgement before Gods judgement seat', given man's corrupt nature.[14] As it was put starkly in the text, 'is there nothing which a man can doe in this worlde to serve as a sufficient recompense to God for our sinne? No...but God is merciful, will he therefore punish sin so sharplie thinkest thou? Our God indeed is mercifull, but he is also just and true, and therefore must needes of iustice and truth punish mans sinne with that punishment which he hath appointed...None is able to suffer and overcome this great punishment of sin being onely man'. There was hope of salvation through taking 'a holde upon Christe and his merits with a true faith' and 'full persuasion and assurance of heart'. In doing so, the Christian was to frame his heart anew, which 'causeth us to detest, hate, loathe and abhore sinne in all men, but

[12] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), p. 142; NRO NCC 371 Andrewes, will of John More proved 1592. As Collinson has pointed out, More's mental world can be captured from the entry for 1564 in his *A table from the beginning of the world to this day* (1593), *STC* 18074, p. 223, 'CALVIN dyed Maii, THAMES frozen, OWSE bridge down'. The road between Cambridge and Norwich crossed the Little Ouse. Another important date in More's chronology since creation was the building of Emmanuel College in 1587.

[13] For this work's publishing history see Collinson, *Godly People*, pp. 296-8.

[14] In 1592, the parson of Overington was admonished for teaching not with 'the Catechisme articulate but with Mr Mores', R. G. Usher, *The Reconstruction of the Church of England* (New York, 1910), I, p. 265. In the preface to *A brief and necessarie catechisme or instruction, very needful to be knowne of all householders* (1572), *STC* 6679, initialled by Dering, the break from an immediate literary past was abundantly clear. The catechism was intended to supplant those 'Legendawry...Saintes lyves', 'tales of Robin Goodfellow' and 'of many other Spirites, which Satan had made [and] Hell had printed' during the time of Popery. It is likely that this introduction was written by More, whose name appears on the 1573 edition only, *STC* 6679.3.

especially in ourselves', at once emphasising the need for rigorous self-discipline to fulfil the godly life sustained through hearing the word of God as a means of enriching faith.[15]

While this message was comforting to some, the onus upon constant introspective soul searching could be disheartening to others. The emotional impact of such teaching, the state of melancholy which could be induced by an obsession with the roots of malign thoughts and actions, was embroidered by one Norwich native, the pamphleteer and dramatist Robert Greene. Known for his work on 'cony catching', he alluded to More's preaching in his autobiography.[16] Greene parodied the puritan conversion narrative, recalling how 'the said learned man' did 'beate down sinne in such pithie and persuasive manner, that I began to call unto mind the danger of my soul' sighing 'Lord have mercy upon me and send me grace to amend and become a new man'. Whatever the extent of such 'good motions', they did not last long. Falling into 'a solemn humour' and being ridiculed by his friends, 'calling me Puritan and Precision, and whether I might have a Pulpit, with such other scoffing terms', he forgot 'the good and wholesome lesson', lapsing once again 'into wicked life'.[17]

Greene's conversion, if it had occurred at all, was short lived. However, More's evangelising left a deeper impression upon others, as his pessimistic assessment of man's fallen state chimed in with the emerging moral aspirations of Norwich's governors. For part of the process of identifying sinfulness in the self lay in expurgating profanity from the outside world.

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[15] Edward Dering, *A Shorte Catechisme for Householders* (1580), *STC* 6710.5, sigs. Vir-v, Biiir-v.
[16] Greene's contributions to the literature on vagrancy are reproduced in A. V. Judges (ed.), *The Elizabethan Underworld* (London, 1930).
[17] Robert Greene, *The Repentance of Robert Greene, Maister of Artes* (1592), *STC* 12306, p. 7. Even though no name is given in the original text, that the minister alluded to was John More is inferred in the *DNB* entries for both More and Greene. However, the sermon which moved Greene to repent was the kind of sermon John More would have preached.

According to the preacher's checklist of 'unchaste behaviour', which included such imperfections as 'filthy lewd talke and songs, unwanted apparel, lewd and idle pastimes' to 'gluttony and drunkeness' carried out in 'houses of open whoredome', there was much which needed to be reformed.[18] Moreover, the urgency of time necessitated an immediate response. As More pointed out in a posthumously published collection of three 'among the many hundred sermons or rather certaine thousands', dedicated to the justices of Norfolk by his literary executor, the Sabbatarian writer Nicholas Bownd, who settled in Norwich marrying More's widow, the imminent day of judgement would find much wanting.[19] Railing against the wickedness performed in God's presence, the 'filthy adulteries, fornication and all uncleanesse' found 'especially here in Norfolke', magistrates were assured of their role. They were to uproot such evils, remembering 'that ye must once be called to account before God for your calling...let the uprightness then of your consciences be in those your meetings that ye may be void of vain glory before man, and be simple before God to do good, and then the Lorde will blesse your labours in this life, and in the life to come you shall receive full ioy both of soule and body forever'.[20]

What greater inducement could there be to embark upon the moral regeneration of society as an outward sign of righteousness in the sight of the Lord? Expanding on the same theme thirty years after John More's death in a sermon preached at St Andrew's, his 'favourite', Timothy Plummer reminded the magistrates of that 'wicked swarme', the 'great multitude', the greater part

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[18] Edward Dering, *A Shorte Catechisme for Householders*, sig, Aiir.
[19] John More, *Three godly and fruitfull sermons* (Cambridge, 1594), *STC* 18074.5, 'Epistle Dedicatory'; *DNB* 'Nicholas Bownd' and Bownd's *The Doctrine of the Sabbath* (1595), *STC* 3436. How Bownd came to Norwich is unclear, although the grant of a £10 *per annum* pension from the corporation was a strong financial inducement, NRO NCR Case 16c/5, Assembly Minute Book, 1585-1613, fo. 432v, 7 Apr 1613. This pension was subsequently bestowed upon More's widow after Bownd's death, NRO CA, 1603-25, fos. 241v, 261r, 281v.
[20] John More, *Three godly and fruitfull sermons*, pp. 5-6, 20.

of the world 'openly prophane and grossly wicked' that was ripe for further reformation. For 'common beggars' unconcerned with the path to salvation, it was a case of the Devil finding work for idle hands. To overcome the ungodly state of the 'walking disorderly', those found in 'the base estate of beggary', were to be edified through religion that 'doth so schoole the righteous that he worketh in some lawfull vocation and so is not usually brought to so greate extremetie'. Bringing 'those unprofitable burdens, the caterpillars and devouring drones of our Commonwealth' to the Gospel, would teach them to fear the Lord and to value honest labour.[21] The point was that magistrates had a divinely inspired duty to inculcate a sense of moral uplift among the unruly, through a mingling of discipline inspired by religious instruction, to help the disorderly poor help themselves in overcoming the inherent sin of their own 'base estate'. This essentially punitive approach to dealing with the causes of poverty was taken to heart by the city's fathers from the 1570s.

Yet while John More stood to champion the culture of discipline permeating Norwich's magistracy, he proved a troublemaker over contested matters of religious practice, especially the lively issues of clerical dress and full conformity to the Book of Common Prayer. Already in 1574 he had been singled out by the diocesan chancellor for refusing to wear the surplice. This warranted a reprimand from John Parkhurst that, although the vestment 'should be offensive to some, it were better to offend a fewe private persons than to offend God and disobey the Prince'.[22] Yet while Parkhurst insisted More use the surplice, given the bishop's previous opinions that the

[21] Timothy Plummer, *The Favourite, or a plaine Demonstration from Holy Scripture of Gods especiall love to the righteous, in a sermon preached at St Andrews in Norwich, the 18 November 1621* (1622), *STC* 20050, sig. A3r, pp. 7, 9, 26.
[22] Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, pp. 216, 219.

English church was but half-reformed, he would have shared his protégé's scruples.[23] However, within a year Parkhurst was dead to be replaced by an episcopal governor of a different hue, Edmund Freke, elevated from Rochester with a brief to enforce strict compliance to the rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Prayer Book. Freke was to prove a determined foe to the city's godly ministry centred on John More and Thomas Robartes. His stormy episcopacy resulted in a hardening of attitudes among those divines and laymen with qualms about the unresolved state of the English Reformation after the Elizabethan settlement.

Patrick Collinson has described Freke as 'a sometime moderate puritan who had turned his coat', which may be an apt appraisal, if it could be proved the bishop was a puritan.[24] Indeed, from what is known of his shadowy earlier career, Freke, a former Augustinian canon at Leigh Priory, where he indulged in alchemy experiments before transferring to Waltham Abbey prior to its dissolution, strikes as an unlikely candidate for godly status. Instead he should be seen as a cautious political survivor. A protégé of Bishop Bonner in the 1540s, Freke had departed sufficiently from the Catholicism of his youth by Elizabeth's ascent to the throne, at least to the extent of preaching down purgatory and 'good works which goeth before forgiveness', at St Paul's Cross in 1565.[25] Within the Elizabethan establishment he was connected to enjoy positions at court, both as a royal chaplain and later as the Queen's almoner. But there are indications that the bishop became lukewarm to the cause of evangelical reform, emerging as a critic of the Calvinist theology of grace, instead maintaining that men could attain salvation through their own actions.

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[23] *The Zurich Letters* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1842-3), I, p. 108.
[24] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p. 202.
[25] *DNB* 'Edmund Freke'. An assessment stressing the bishop's incipient Catholicism is given in D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 193-4. Freke's sermon is transcribed in Bod L Tanner MS 50, fo. 13v.

Freke's soteriological views can be inferred from an account given by the Presbyterian minister Richard Gawton. Falling foul of Freke's administration in Norwich, Gawton, who later became involved in John Feld's conference in London in the 1580s, recalled a stormy meeting at the Bishop's Palace in Norwich, where he was grilled for refusing to wear the surplice. Gawton had also engaged in a doctrinal dispute with one of Freke's chaplains. Gawton took exception to the undisclosed chaplain's belief, preached presumably during the bishop's visitation, in man's innate 'natural motions' to be drawn to God 'albeit none come to Christ but those whom his father draws, yet all come not whom God doth draw'. Rather it was 'in man whether he be drawne or no'. Since man's calling in faith was imparted through his capacity to hear the Gospel, a 'natural gift', it followed that 'we have faith by nature and consequently are saved by nature'.[26] While these words were imparted by Freke's chaplain, the bishop was undoubtedly the inspiration. If Gawton's recollection, printed as part of a catalogue of puritan sufferings in 1593 is to be believed, such hostility towards predestinarian teaching adds an important doctrinal dimension to Freke's tough stand against Norwich's preaching fraternity. In light of his soteriology, it is interesting that the bishop allowed himself to be feted by leading Catholics like Sir Thomas Cornwallis. Two of Freke's servants were even reported to have attended Mass, one of the men allegedly proclaiming loudly that 'he had as lieffe hear a dogge barke as Mr More preach', a

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[26] *A parte of register, contayninge sundrie memorable matters written by divers godly and learned in our time, which stand for and desire the reformation of our Church in Discipline and Ceremonies, according to the pure word of God and Lawe of our Land* (Middleburg, 1593), pp. 393-400, especially p. 394. For Gawton's later career see Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 204, 440. According to the minister's account, Freke was anxious to avoid further debate, reminding Gawton that it was 'not the matter' he had been sent for.

comment which may have been provoked by dislike of the 'Apostle of Norwich's' doctrinaire Calvinism.[27]

The first round came in the wake of Freke's primary visitation during the summer of 1576.[28] Failing to adhere to the set formularies of the liturgy, nine preachers with Norwich connections, including John More, Thomas Robartes along with two petty canons beneficed in the city, Richard Crick, a former chaplain to John Parkhurst and Richard Dowe, were suspended.[29] Another ex-city incumbent was George Leedes, curate at St Stephen's in the early 1560s, but at the time serving as rector of Holt.[30] In addition, Richard Gawton, Vincent Goodwyn and John Mapes are known to have held country livings at Stratton St Mary, Maltby with Wissingset and Bramstone with Cawston respectively, while a more obscure figure William Harte or Harvie, has proved impossible to trace to any cure within the diocese.[31] These four probably participated in the city's preaching circuit. Contesting their deprivations, seven ministers - More, Robatres, Crick, Dowe, Leedes, Gawston and Harte - petitioned the Privy Council lamenting the putting down of some nineteen or twenty exercises across Norwich and calling for their reinstatement. However, as regards the Prayer Book, the petitioners remained adamant in their views on the

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[27] The story of Freke's liaisons with Catholic gentry is told in A. Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 213-6; PRO SP 15/25/119, fo. 282v.

[28] The fullest account of these suspensions remains Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 203-4.

[29] The minister's names are derived from two extant copies of their original petition. The first, among the Yelverton manuscripts, bears the names John More, Richard Crick, Thomas Robartes, George Leedes, Richard Gawton and William Harte, BL Add MS 48101, fo. 134r. The second, attached to a puritan survey of the ministry, repeats these signatories including Richard Dowe but omitting Richard Gawton, *Seconde Parte* I, p. 146. To these seven can be added Vincent Goodwyn and John Mapes, who signed a later submission to the bishop in 1578, BL Add MS 48073, fo. 373r, *Seconde Parte* I, p. 146. For Crick's ties with Parkhurst and Dowe's career, see R. G. Usher (ed.), *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, Camden Society 3rd Series, 8 (1905), p. xxxviii.

[30] Leedes preached before the corporation in 1561, NRO CA, 1551-67, fo. 228r; 'Account Books of St Stephen's Church and Parish, Norwich', *EANQ*, 2nd Series, 8 (1899-1900), pp. 34-8; C. Linnel, *Some East Anglian Clergy* (London, 1961), p. 45.

[31] NRO DN REG/13/19, fos. 182v, 166v; BL Lansd MS 443, fo. 172v. The first three ministers had already proved contumacious over the surplice, Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, pp. 219-221.

ceremonies. Although stating their willingness to yield unto the authority of the sovereign prince, they went on to exclaim that to offer up full conformity 'must needes be to prefer the ordinance of man before the worde of God', calling upon the Queen to reform all offending rites 'considering the synne in the severe urging of them'.[32]

Such unwillingness to compromise was unlikely to curry favour with the Queen. Nevertheless, the lobbying continued, as Patrick Collinson has pointed out, through the agency of Norfolk's two most prominent Protestant gentry, Sir William Heydon of Holt and his near neighbour, Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey, the Lord Keeper's son by his first marriage.[33] But it took two years for any action to be taken on the ministers' behalf. After some intervention by Cecil, timed to coincide with the royal progress through East Anglia in August 1578, a carefully drafted humble submission signed by More, Crick, Robartes, Goodwyn, Dowe, Leedes and Mapes, acknowledging the ceremonies in that 'they are so farre tolerable', was finally presented to Freke.[34] Cecil's influence is evident from his amendments to the original working paper which survives among his files at Hatfield House. Patrick Collinson has since interpreted the document as being something of a fudge, offering the preachers a limited subscription to the Prayer Book, at which the bishop allegedly 'stormeth'. If so, it is difficult to see why Freke was left smarting. After all, under Cecil's guiding hand, the ministers' original objections were toned down with various marginalia, for example, against the contention that some ceremonies 'have been brought

[32] BL Add MS 48101, fo. 133v.

[33] Collinson, *the Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p. 203, although how this conclusion was reached is not evident from Collinson's references. Indeed, at the time, Heydon was out of royal favour, having come under suspicion for being an Anabaptist, a charge which Nathaniel Bacon was at pains to refute, see A. Hassell Smith, G. M. Baker and R. W. Kenny (eds.), *The Papers of Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, I, NRS, 46 (1978), p. 176. For Bacon's importance as a patron of godly learning see A. Hassell Smith, '"Puritanism" and "Neighbourhood": a Case Study in Late 16th and Early 17th Century Norfolk', in E. Royle (ed.), *Regional Studies in the History of Religion in Britain Since the Later Middle Ages* (Hull, 1984), pp. 81-93.

[34] Three copies of the submission survive, BL Add MS 48073, fo. 373r; PRO SP 12/126/45; *Seconde Parte* I, p. 146.

into the Church since the time of the Apostles and might by public authority be altered', was added, 'yet none ought'. Reference in the draft to the 'corruptions and imperfections' in the liturgy, were similarly crossed through. From such corrections, it appears that Cecil, hoping to bury the matter, engineered the final submission so as to enjoin full subscription as required by Freke two years previously.[35]

The ministers were granted preaching licences, although they were admonished not to question ceremonies in their sermons. Even so, contrary to this injunction, More and his colleagues raised five points of controversy touching the Prayer Book, despite 'being urged to subscribe thereunto' by their diocesan. They sought guidance from Archbishop Grindal, who ruled obedience to the 'meanings delivered' against the preachers' 'owne imaginations and fancies'. Finally, Freke threatened to suspend the refractory clerics a second time, the dispute being taken to the Privy Council in the spring of 1580, which then held Freke to his earlier promise not to restrain the Norwich pastors further.[36] By appealing to central government, John More and the others sought to undermine local episcopal censure. More was able to avoid scruples over the use of the liturgy by gaining reinstatement as lecturer at St Andrew's, the responsibility for performing divine worship according to the Book of Common Prayer remaining with the parish chaplain.[37] The use of the surplice continued to be flouted at St Andrew's.

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[35] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p. 204; *Seconde Parte* I, p. 146. Cecil's marginal notes on the draft are given in *HMC* Salisbury MSS, II, p. 229.

[36] *Seconde Parte* I, pp. 146-7; PRO SP 12/126/45; *APC*, 1578-81, p. 437, 4 Apr 1580.

[37] More's immediate replacement in 1576, one Mr Holland, was not well received at St Andrew's where he was accused of being a 'turncoat' for preaching false doctrine that 'betrayed the word', Hassell Smith *et al* (eds.), *The Papers of Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey*, I, pp. 236-7. Was Holland Freke's chaplain who also clashed with Richard Gawton? For More's reinstatement as lecturer but not parish chaplain see Blomefield iv, p. 301 and NRO ANW 1/8. Several months before his death, the corporation voted to augment More's stipend with profits from a lease at Heatheld, for 'his tyme in taking paynes and travell by study to preache and teache gods word diligently and paynefully in this city', NRO NCR Case 16c/5, Assembly Minute Book, 1585-1613, fo. 94r, 22 Nov 1591. The preacher died the following February, NRO NCC 371 Andrewes.

Inquiries made during the Archdeacon's visitation in 1587 revealed that the church did not even posses the vestment.[38] Thomas Robartes adopted a similar position to More. Unable to regain the living at St Clement's, he continued to reside in the parish as 'a preacher' until his death in 1584, probably under the sponsorship of Alderman John Aldrich, who remembered Robartes in his will and whose son Henry, witnessed Robartes's testament along with the rector John Morgan.[39] Vincent Goodwyn likewise found employment as a stipendiary lecturer in neighbouring Great Yarmouth. During the early 1580s, he too had tremendous difficulty in procuring a benefice under Freke, who refused to institute the minister to Cley-by-the-Sea, in the gift of the ardent Protestant Sir William Heydon, in 1583. Goodwyn had to wait for another two years and a change in episcopal administration before gaining promotion to his north Norfolk living.[40] Other Norwich pastors at variance with Freke, namely Richard Gawton and Richard Dowe, went further afield by crossing into London diocese. Gawton went to the capital. Dowe moved to Stratford St Mary, on the Essex side of the Stour Valley, where he remained in close contact with Richard Cricke. Cricke had been installed lecturer at East Bergholt across the Stour in 1580. Two years later, both men became participants in the now famous clerical conference centred on Dedham, conducted under the auspices of another émigré from Norwich, Edmund Chapman.[41]

However, the depletion of the ranks of Norwich's godly preaching fraternity did not remove its potency when contesting aspects of episcopal government. Within the city, a third

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[38] NRO ANW 3/1, *comperta*, 1587, unfoliated.

[39] After his deprivation, Robartes was succeeded at St Clement's by John Sate in March 1577. He was followed by John Morgan, who resigned in 1588, NRO DN REG/14/20, fos. 12v, 144r. For Robartes's later role as preacher see PRO PROB 11/64, fo. 208r, will of John Aldrich proved 1582 and NRO NCC 326 Bate, will of Thomas Robartes proved 1584.

[40] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 204, 484 n. 28; NRO DN REG/14/20, fos. 92v, 123r. Goodwyn died in 1606 as 'minister of the worde of God in Cley', NRO NCC 193 Bowrne.

[41] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 222-39 especially p. 223. As a canon of Norwich, Chapman had been involved in the destruction of the cathedral organ in 1570.

round ensued in the wake of Archbishop Whitgift's circulation of the three articles in October 1583, which enjoined full subscription to the Royal Supremacy, Prayer Book, ordinal and Articles of Religion. This met with protest, especially over the wording of the second article requiring assent to episcopal government and the liturgy as containing nothing contrary to the word of God.[42] Equally unsettling to both Presbyterians and moderate nonconformists, in John More's Norwich, the preacher commanded a body of sixty three like-minded clergy, including Thomas Robartes, George Leedes and Vincent Goodwyn, who were resolved not to subscribe.[43] Ultimately, Whitgift was cajoled by the Privy Council into accepting a modified form of subscription.[44] However, within East Anglia, a calming influence came in the form of Edmund Scambler, elevated to Norwich upon Freke's translation to Worcester in 1585, made vacant through Whitgift's meteoric rise to Canterbury.[45]

Scambler's reputation stood in sharp contrast to that of his predecessor. Nicholas Bownd, in dedicating John More's posthumous *A table from the beginning of the world* to the bishop, coined an atrocious pun when showering his diocesan with praise for swelling the ministry with 'many more such Mores', to advance the Gospel.[46] Scambler found an outlet for the 'Apostle of Norwich's' talents, appointing him with another troublemaker George Leedes, to a commission into clerical standards in April 1589. Inquiries were to be conducted according to ten articles, which were designed to test for overall literacy and knowledge of the Scriptures, by insisting that

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[42] The impact of these articles are discussed in K. Fincham, 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', in P. Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 130-1.
[43] *Seconde Parte* I, p. 244.
[44] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 243-72.
[45] *DNB* 'Edmund Freake'; Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, pp. 37, 106.
[46] John More, *A table from the beginning of the world to this day* (1593), 'Epistle Dedicatory'.

incumbents make notes on selected passages for inspection by the commissioners. Clerics found wanting in Latin were to be supplied with copies of Calvin's *Institutes* and Peter Martyr's *Common Places* in English. Any negligence in study was to be redressed by ecclesiastical censure, while the commissioners, ironically for More, were to ensure that incumbents observed the set forms stipulated by the Book of Common Prayer.[47] This was a shrewd move on Scambler's part. By using hitherto professed nonconformists to police nonconformity, the bishop hoped to channel the energies of forward Protestants behind his episcopate, in turn satisfying godly demands for a potent preaching ministry. During the summer of 1598, John More rose to fulfil his new responsibility. One fellow Norwich minister, Thomas Yowle or Yould, chaplain at Martin at Oak and a petty canon at the cathedral, did not appreciate his integrity being called into question by the bishop's puritan investigation team. Railing that 'the preachers be dolts' while 'Mr More and others are not worthy to carry their books after them', Yould felt victimised. However, for such 'unseemly and revyling words', the minister was thrown in gaol by the mayor, Christopher Layer, one of the godly, being a brother-in-law of John Aldrich and Thomas Sotherton.[48]

If Scambler's intention was to stifle puritan criticism, his plan backfired after two commissioners were deprived for balking over the surplice and the sign of the cross in baptism.

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[47] NRO DN SUN/3, fo. 186. The articles, without the names of Scambler's commissioners, have been printed in W. P. M. Kennedy (ed.), *Elizabethan Episcopal Administration* (3 vols., London, 1924), III, pp. 255-6. Further inquiries into the pastoral abilities of Norfolk and Suffolk clergy bore fruit in DN VIS/3/3, 'the qualities and degrees in schools of every present incumbent in every parish church within the diocese of Norwich', taken in 1603. For similar vocational schemes elsewhere, see Fincham, 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', pp. 134-5.

[48] Yould was a newcomer to the city, having been installed as a petty canon in 1589, *Chapter Minutes*, p. 21; NRO MCB/12, 1587-95, p. 308, 6 Aug 1589. For Christopher Layer see below, pp. 68-70. Perversely, Muriel McClendon in *Quiet Reformation*, p. 245, treats this episode as an example of magisterial forbearance.

John Burgess, rector of St Peter Hungate and John Harrison, along with a third parson, Roland Nutt, rector of St Michael at Plea, fell foul of the round up of nonconformists by High Commission during the hunt for Martin Marprelate, conducted in the autumn and winter of 1589.[49] Instead the three looked to their diocesan 'to sette us to our work again in the Lords harvest'.[50] However, failing to appear before the Ecclesiastical Commission and being declared contumacious, there was little Scambler could do to secure the three ministers' reinstatement, John Burgess being forced to leave Norwich, eventually securing the living of Waddesdon in Lincoln diocese upon accepting a modified form of subscription from Bishop William Chaderton. Burgess carved a reputation as an agitator at the time of the Hampton Court Conference before seeking refuge in Leyden.[51] John Harrison conformed but suffered a second suspension after Hampton Court, having gained the Norfolk living of Braiseworth, while Roland Nutt failed to regain St Michael at Plea, although he remained in Norwich as a preacher at St Andrew's, dying in the parish in 1596.[52]

Nutt had enjoyed the patronage of two eminent citizens, Richard Ferrour and Thomas Peck, both residents of St Michael's. Peck had served as mayor in 1573 and his presentment of

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[49] NRO DN SUN/3, fo. 186. This round of suspensions is referred to in a petition from the three ministers to Scambler in 1590, BL Add MS 48064, fos. 70r-71r. For Burgess's appointment to Hungate see NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 193v. John Harrison's living has proved impossible to trace from the extant diocesan records. Roland Nutt had held St Michael at Plea since 1586, DN REG/14/20, fo. 134v.

[50] BL Add MS 48064, fo. 70r.

[51] *DNB* 'John Burgess'; William Covell, *A brief answer unto certaine reasons by way of an apologie delivered to...the L Bishop of Lincolne, by Mr John Burgess* (1606), *STC* 5880, p. 40. For a recent study of Burgess's career after 1604 see P. Lake, 'Moving the Goal Posts? Modified Subscription and the Construction of Conformity in the Early Stuart Church', in P. Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church*, pp. 179-205.

[52] K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990), p. 325. In the meantime, a Mr Harrison, doubtless the same minister, was hired to give the annual corporation Rogationtide sermon in 1596, NRO CA, 1589-1602, fo. 211v. For Nutt's later career see NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 194r and Blomefield iv, p. 301. Preaching in 1631, John Stalham referred to Nutt's former ministry at St Andrew's, NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 568.

Nutt in March 1586, to coincide with his imminent rise to a second mayoral term, was not without purpose, given the alderman's known commitment to the cause of godly moral reformation.[53] Indeed upon succeeding to office, Alderman Peck embarked on a personal crusade against the city's inns. For him, hostelries were hotbeds of misrule, stuffed full with 'all kynde of evill disposed persons', some congregating 'into streete corners', eating, drinking, playing at 'unlawful games and pastimes' to the 'highe displeasure of Almighty God and the evill example of others'. One remedy was to tighten up on granting licences to run tippling houses. Another was to introduce a ban on 'double beer and strong ale' by assigning 'one honest and meeke person' as an official beer taster to each petty ward, an impractical scheme given the relative strengths of strong beer, which was promptly repealed by the next mayor.[54] However, Peck's vigilance was soon rewarded. In February 1587, following the Babington Plot, a thorough search of Norwich's taverns uncovered three nefarious 'aliens', papists and traitors, whose confessions were swiftly dispatched to Francis Walsingham.[55]

Doubtless Robert Peck's rigorous clampdown on debilitating drink received the vocal commendation of the Reverend Nutt. A source of comfort to the mayor, the minister's suspension in 1589 along with Burgess and Harrison, would not have been appreciated by the godly among the municipal elite.[56] It is likely that William Burton, another Norwich pastor displaced at the time, played to a disgruntled civic audience by expressing solidarity with his deprived

[53] NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 134; *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 61, 66.
[54] NRO AB/4, 1583-7, fo. 38v, 4 Nov 1586, fo. 40r, 8 Jan 1587, fo. 45r, 21 Aug 1587.
[55] PRO SP 12/198/4.
[56] When drawing up his will in 1592, Alderman Peck remembered his daughter Ursula Burgess, who may have been related to the Reverend John Burgess, PRO PROB 11/79, fo. 144v.

colleagues.[57] Preaching a sensational sermon in Christ Church at the end of 1589, which Burton published, 'faithfully translated from the pulpit to the pen', he spoke out against 'citations, admonitions, suspensions, excommunications and other censures whatsoever [that] doe not proceed from a hatred of sinne and a care to ammend ...brethren', but instead proceeded from the Pharisees' 'stomack to revenge their own quarrels'. He went on to question whether neglect to wear the surplice, read every Collect or 'make a leg at the name of Jesus', was sufficient cause 'to deny the minister of his maintenance'. This was a sensitive issue to raise publicly in Norwich in the latter half of 1589, although Burton's fate was sealed, when upon citing Jeremiah 22: 2, 'Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah', he added that every minister of God 'hath authoritie of the word to reprove the Prince'.[58]

The church authorities took a dim view of such opinions. Whether, as Burton maintained, his offending sermon was the sole cause of his suspension is unclear, although it is interesting to note that the minister found refuge in the household of Lord Wentworth, a dangerous figure in the eyes of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Norwich.[59] Armed with a crown patent to sniff out concealed lands in Norfolk and Suffolk, once held for superstitious uses, the peer hit upon the idea that Henry VIII's refounding of the cathedral was void. Since the action had been completed without the consent of the bishop of Norwich, the dean and chapter of Christ Church had no legal title to its property, the obvious implication being that it had no solid legal basis to exist at all.

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[57] Burton's living has proved difficult to trace. As a graduate of New College, Oxford, it is likely that he served at St John Maddermarket, an advowson owned by the college. A William Burton was collated by Bishop Freke to Aylsham in 1581, see *DNB* 'William Burton'; NRO DN VAL/2; DN REG/14/20, fo. 71r. His name also appears as a signatory against Whitgift's articles in 1584, although whether this was the same minister is unclear, *Seconde Parte* I, p. 244.

[58] William Burton, *A sermon preached in the cathedral church in Norwich, the xxi day of December 1589*, 'To the Reader', sigs. Av, Dr, B2v.

[59] See the dedication to Wentworth in William Burton, *Davids evidence, or the assurance of Gods love declared in seven sermons* (1592), *STC* 4170.

The threat was met by Dean Gardiner who lobbied to have the cathedral's foundation confirmed by statute, finally enacted in Parliament in 1593.[60] But in light of his challenge to the cathedral's future, Wentworth's timely assistance to a minister who had exclaimed that 'wee have too many drones that sucke all the honey out of the churches hive', was not entirely coincidental. Burton was recruited into the Wentworth campaign. However, under the peer's protection, the preacher reached some accommodation with the church, first gaining a licence from Richard Fletcher to hold a lectureship at Bristol, before assuming the cure of St Giles, Reading in 1591.[61]

The clampdown on nonconformity at the end of 1590, followed by the death of John More two years later, marked a turning point in the fortunes of Norwich's godly clergy. In the ensuing decade, the city remained a haven for divines with scruples over the liturgy, although a change in tone was discernible during the 1590s, as Norwich's ministers sought to avoid provocation with episcopal authority in the interests of tending to their pastoral charges. Embodying the less confrontational atmosphere was Robert Hill, More's successor at St Andrew's from 1598 until 1603.[62] A graduate of Christ's College Cambridge and from 1588 a fellow of St John's College at the same university, Hill brought a learned respectability to the city's most prestigious pulpit as the editor of that great *doyen* of English Calvinism, William Perkins, whose famous treatise *A*

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[60] Hassell Smith, *Country and Court*, pp. 266-7; R. A. Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation, 1538-1628', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese 1096-1996* (London, 1996), pp. 528-9.

[61] William Burton, *A sermon preached in the cathedral church in Norwich*, sig. Cr; *idem*, *Davids evidence*, sig. Aiiiir, dedication to the 'Beloved Christian auditors in the Citie of Bristol'; *DNB* 'William Burton'.

[62] Blomefield iv, p. 301 states that Hill took on the cure at St Andrew's in 1591, one year before More's death, a date also implied in Henry Holland's *Heroologia Anglica*, p. 210. However, this does not tally with the recorded payments for Hill's services as a corporation lecturer which began in 1598 and ended in 1602, NRO CA, 1589-1602, fos. 265v, 274r, 291v. Previously in 1597, Richard Lathe was listed as parish chaplain, J. F. Williams (ed.), *Bishop Redman's Visitation 1597*, NRS, 18 (1946), p. 29. Hill had left Norwich by the end of 1603, BL Harl MS 595, fo. 161r.

Golden Chaine, or the description of theologie Hill translated and revised in two further editions.[63] The appointment of Perkins's editor represented a coup for the St Andrew's feoffees.

Here two aldermen in particular, Thomas Layer and Francis Rugge, were instrumental in forming the contact with Hill, who in turn dedicated a collection of sermons by his immediate successor Thomas Newhouse to the two city fathers. Both Layer and Rugge belonged to the family network around John Aldrich and Thomas Sotherton, shown between pages 32 and 33. Thomas Layer, mayor on three occasions in 1576, 1585 and 1595, as well as burgess for the city in 1586 and the elder brother of Christopher, a Merchant Venturer, was another brother-in-law to both Sotherton and Aldrich.[64] He cast a long shadow over city politics, dying in 1614 at the grand age of eighty six. Throughout his extensive career, he displayed a commitment to the cause of forward Reformation in the mould of his near kindred, finally charging his wife to execute his will, 'for soe I am persuaded she will doe, for that I know she have the feare of God before her eyes, for thanks be to God the giver thereof'. Among his bequests, Layer left legacies of 40s apiece to the Dutch and Walloon congregations.[65] It is striking that Robert Hill, like his patron Thomas Layer, also cultivated associations with illustrious settlers from the Low Countries, including Francis Bertie, a founder member of the Stranger Church in London, together with the political theorist Adrian de Saravia, whose widow Hill married.[66] Alderman Francis Rugge also

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[63] *DNB* 'Robert Hill'. When editing William Perkins's *Satans sophistrie answered by our saviour Christ* (1596), *STC* 19747.5, Hill recalled his twenty year acquaintance with Perkins, noting 'I at his request made the first fruits of his labours to speak English'. For these fruits see William Perkins, *A Golden Chaine, or a description of theologie containing the order of the causes of salvation and damnation, trans. Robert Hill* (1590), *STC* 19657 and the revised edition of 1612, *STC* 19664.

[64] Thomas Newhouse, *A learned and fruitfull sermon preached at Christ Church in Norwich* (1611), *STC* 18494, 'Epistle Dedicatorie' by Robert Hill; *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 61-3; *HP 1558-1603*, ii, pp. 443-4; PRO E 122/196/7 for Christopher Layer's participation in the Merchant Venturers' Company.

[65] PRO PROB 11/124, fos. 194v, 192v.

[66] PRO PROB 11/118, fo. 60r, will of Francis Bertie; A. Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth Century London* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 31, 122; *DNB* 'Robert Hill'.

4. 2. Alderman Thomas Layer, mayor 1576, 1585 and 1595, burgess 1586.

moved in godly circles. Thrice mayor in 1587, 1598 and 1602 and member for Norwich at the 1589 Parliament, Rugge was close to the city's Protestant founding fathers, having married John Aldrich's daughter Anne.[67]

Robert Hill should not be remembered solely as William Perkins's understudy. He was also a celebrated pedagogue and writer of practical divinity in his own right, his catechism, *Christs prayer expounded* of 1606, running to seven reprints in his lifetime before being revised after his death as *The path-way to pietie* in 1629.[68] Yet like his mentor Perkins, Hill was a proponent of what has been labelled covenant or 'federal' theology. Concerned with the overarching theme of God's covenant with his people, the idea was to elaborate upon the message of an earlier generation of evangelicals, such as John More and Edward Dering, by focusing on the role of human agency in fulfilling God's promise of salvation.[69] The touchstone remained an acknowledgement of God's eternal predestination to election and reprobation. However, a renewed emphasis was placed upon belief in the revelation of the Gospel as a conditional prerequisite to salvation, a central theme of Hill's only published work from his Norwich period, *Life everlasting, or the true knowledge of one Jehovah, three Elohim and Jesus Immanuel*, an abridgement of *De natura Dei* by the Heidelburg theologian, Hieronymus Zanchius, printed in 1601.[70] Hill reaffirmed the idea that it was against the Gospel proclamation 'that God would have this or that man, me or thee saved, and so that I or thou believe'. Rather salvation was contingent

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[67] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 64; *HP 1558-1603*, iii, p. 307. In addition, Rugge was rated with Thomas Layer as the highest tax payer on moveable goods in St Andrew's for the 1598 lay subsidy, PRO E 179/152/497.
[68] Robert Hill, *Christs prayer expounded, a christian directed and a communicant prepared, to which is added a preface of prayer* (1606), *STC* 13472; *idem, The pathway to pietie, the eighth edition* (1629), *STC* 13477.
[69] J. S. Coolidge, *The Pauline Renaissance in England* (Oxford, 1970), ch. 5; D. MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England 1547-1603* (Basingstoke, 1990), pp. 90-3.
[70] Robert Hill, *Life everlasting, or the true knowledge of one Jehovah, three Elohim and Jesus Immanuel* (Cambridge, 1601), *STC* 13479. The debt to Zanchias is acknowledged on p. 655.

upon an active faith in Christ, for 'whosoever will be saved must believe in Christ', as though 'beleefe in Christ were a worke by which we are saved' for 'we are saved freely through Christ'.[71] There were obvious pastoral advantages in a theology which advanced a conditional covenant of works as a sign of God's unfailing covenant of grace. Reaffirming the promise of salvation to his elect, God's predestination to everlasting life could be shaped by prayers and other good works, as in the case of Hannah, mother of Samuel, who praying for a son, vowed 'to consecrate him to the Lord, whom God made predestinate to life'. God's decree could not be swayed by man's intercessions. Nevertheless, the prayers of the godly were efficacious to the extent that 'we are bidden to pray one for another, then because God promiseth that he will heare such prayers for the godly brethren'.[72] Works of sanctification were vital to the godly life, even though God's eternal predestination remained immutable and unmoved by human action.

Robert Hill's publishing ventures ensured that he did not remain in Norwich for long, the minister soon gaining promotion to the prestigious pulpit of St Martin in the Fields, within the political hub of the *vill* of Westminster by 1603.[73] Yet, his ministry at St Andrew's marked the beginning of the high tide of Calvinist teaching in Norwich. Under the leadership of Hill's successor and fellow Christ's College, Cambridge man, Thomas Newhouse, St Andrew's resounded to such refrains as 'the manner of Gods decree concerning Election and Reprobation' and 'how the childe of God is neither subject to the dominion of sinne, nor total defection from grace', edited by Newhouse's protégé Robert Gallard in 1614, who in turn noted 'how lawfull and

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[71] *Ibid*, pp. 527-8.
[72] *Ibid*, pp. 593-5. The example of Hannah is taken from 1 Samuel 1: 10.
[73] For Hill's later career see J. F. Merritt, 'Religion, Government and Society in Early Modern Westminster', University of London Ph.D., 1992, pp. 335-40, 359-60.

meet a thing it is to preach and publish the doctrine of predestination'.[74] By comparison with the protracted controversies between Norwich's godly clergy and the church hierarchy characteristic of Elizabeth's reign, the Jacobean period was one of relative quiescence. That this was the case owed much to the lengthy tenure of John Jegon, bishop from 1602 until his death in 1618 and a figure committed to a broad evangelical agenda, his 'godly proceedings' in reforming the ministry, winning Nicholas Bownd's fulsome praise for 'stopping up the passage unto all idle shepherds and hirelings, who seek the fleece and not the flock'.[75]

Under Jegon's episcopate, the alliance between urban magistrates and ministers, reached its apotheosis with the promotion of John Yates to St Andrew's in 1616. As argued below Yates, as the bishop's choice of candidate to reinforce the established church's authority within the city, also stood to affirm and justify the moral rectitude of civic government.[76] Dedicating his catechism to George Birch, mayor in 1621 and one of his St Andrew's flock, Yates exalted the 'peace powdered with pietie' within his adoptive city. Admonishing the alderman to 'cleanse therefore the Augean stables of our drunken Taverns and Tipling Houses, with all the vaults of professed filthiness', executing 'laws with strictness and resolution', so that 'God shall bless the same with happy success, if otherwise God will suffer wickednesse to punish itself', it is significant to observe that this is precisely what Birch had attempted during his mayoral office.[77]

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[74] Thomas Newhouse, *Certaine sermons preached by T. Newhouse set forth by R. Gallard* (1614), *STC* 18493, pp. 1, 46, sig. A3v. Newhouse tutored the future master of Sydney Sussex College, Samuel Ward, who in turn considered Newhouse to be overly precise, see M. Knappen, *Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries* (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1966), pp. 103, 107, 113. For Robert Gallard see below, pp. 90-2, 117, 178.

[75] Nicholas Bownd, *The holy exercise of fasting* (Cambridge, 1604), *STC* 3438, sigs. ¶3r-4iir. Patrick Collinson has echoed Bownd's appraisal of Jegon as being 'as representative a Jacobean bishop as one could hope to meet', *The Religion of Protestants*, p. 78.

[76] John Yates's career is examined in further detail below pp. 92-8, 108-12, 123-41, 171-2.

[77] John Yates, *A modell of divinitie catechistically composed* (1622), *STC* 26085, 'Epistle Dedicatory'. For Birch see *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 75. In the 1624 lay subsidy, he was the highest tax payer on goods in St Andrew's, PRO E 179/153/583.

The year 1621 saw another drive to turn Norwich, if not into a dry town, at least a city purged of unlicensed hostelries, with harsh penalties being served for defying the ban. Indeed, one John Cooper fell victim to Birch's crusade against drink, urging the magistrates that 'if he might not be permitted to tipple', he would be forced to convey his wife and children 'to Mr Mayor to be kept', for which words Cooper was incarcerated in Bridewell.[78]

John Yates found common purpose with the reforming zeal of Mayor Birch at the centre of Jacobean Norwich's godly moral order. Yet, even though the first two decades of James I's reign were years of calm in relations between city and diocesan, it would be misleading to depict this period as being completely devoid of underlying religious friction. As we shall see, in the next chapter, Jegon had to contend with a core of dissent, stemming from the Brownist movement of the 1580s, which proved resilient in Norwich, its original birthplace. The implications of a rise of radical separatism within the city will now be examined at length to highlight a significant local dimension to the marked anti-Calvinist reaction conducted under Bishop Samuel Harsnett, John Jegon's successor but one, during the early 1620s. In turn, episcopal initiatives in the 1620s shifted the religious focus of Norwich's magistracy, of vital importance to the emergence of confessional tensions under Charles I.

[78] NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fos. 351r-v, 25 June 1621; fo. 378r, 15 Dec 1621. Significantly, George Birch also served as the principal patron of that foe of unruly beggars, Timothy Plummer. See Plummer's, *The Favourite, or a plaine Demonstration from Holy Scripture of Gods especiall love to the righteous* (1622), sig. A3r.

5. AN UNDERCURRENT OF DISSENT

If the ongoing resistance to the church's rites and ceremonies mounted by John More and his colleagues during the 1570s and 80s vexed local diocesan governors, successive bishops of Norwich were soon alerted to more radical challenges to ecclesiastical authority. At their most extreme, these amounted to instances of heresy. Indeed in the ten years between 1579 and 1589, Norwich formed a setting for proceedings against four heretics, with each case ending in a burning. The first involved Matthew Hamont, a ploughwright of possible Dutch descent from Hethersett. Cited before Bishop Freke for denying the divinity of Christ and rejecting the New Testament as a fable, he also courted attention for speaking slanderous words against the Queen. Refusing to recant, he was committed in April 1579 to the mayor, Sir Robert Wood. Having been honoured with a knighthood during the royal progress of the previous year, Wood was compelled by Hamont's outburst against the monarch to sentence him to lose both his ears before dispatching him to be burned in the castle ditch in May. Both actions are difficult to reconcile with Muriel McClendon's consideration of magisterial forbearance under Elizabeth.[1]

An account of the burning was later provided by William Burton, who, anxious to demonstrate his own loyalty to church and state by denouncing heretics in print, condemned Hamont as an Arian.[2] Similar fates befell John Lewes and Peter Cole, also executed at Norwich for holding comparable Arian beliefs in 1583 and 1587 respectively.[3] Another Norfolk inhabitant

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[1] *DNB* 'Matthew Hamont'; BL Lansd MS 981, fo. 161r; NRO MCB/10, 1576-81, p. 392, 23 May 1579; *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 59-60; *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 248-9, criticised in J. Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558-1689* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 100-2.

[2] Willaim Burton, *Davids evidence* (1592), p. 137. Hamont's trial was also recorded in John More, *A table from the beginning of the world to this day* (1593), p. 225.

[3] Burton, *Davids evidence*, p. 137; *DNB* 'Matthew Hamont', gives Cole as a tanner of Ipswich. According to John More's appraisal, Lewes was a 'blasphemer', while Cole was an 'Arian Anabaptist', *A table from the beginning of the world*, p. 225.

to go to the stake, this time in January 1589, was Francis Kett, sometime fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge and according to the entry in the old *Dictionary of National Biography*, a grandson of the famous rebel leader Robert Kett of Wymondham. Burton categorised Kett's heterodoxy with the Arianism of Hamont, Lewes and Cole. However, because of Kett's university background, Burton regarded the heretic's opinions as 'more dangerous than his predecessors', for maintaining that Christ was 'not God but a good man' who had 'suffered once for his owne sinnes' to 'suffer again for the sinnes of the world' at his second resurrection. Kett's views were imbued with an apocalyptic millenarianism. Those seeking salvation 'must before he die go to Jerusalem', where 'Christ with his Apostles are now personally in Judea gathering of his church, that the faithfull should miraculously be preserved at Jerusalem with a wall of fire and be fed with Angels food from heaven'.[4] To Bishop Scambler, writing to Burghley, such beliefs were antichristian since they implied God's 'new covenant promised is not yet established'.[5] Richard Bancroft agreed, capitalising upon Kett's execution to denounce all false prophets, who would welcome the spiritual kingdom of Christ only with the 'material restoration of the earthly Jerusalem', in a sermon delivered at St Paul's Cross.[6] Here Bancroft also had his Presbyterian opponents in mind.

As disturbing as Kett's views were to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, millenarian beliefs that true religion be sought outside of the established church, represented the extreme tip of a larger iceberg of radical separatism within East Anglia. Continuing his diatribe against the Devil's martyrs, Burton went on to castigate 'our English Donatists, our schismaticall Brownists,

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[4] *DNB* 'Francis Kett'; NRO MCB/12, 1587-95, p. 229, 15 Jan 1589; Burton, *Davids evidence*, pp. 138-9.
[5] PRO SP 12/217/11, Scambler to Burghley, 7 Oct 1588 charging Kett according to fifteen articles, transcribed in part in BL Lansd MS 982, fo. 102r. Kett's rejection of Christ's covenant explains why John More referred to him as a 'Jewish Arian', *A table from the beginning of the world*, p. 225.
[6] BL Lansd MS 982, fo. 102v.

followers of Barrow and his crue'. It is likely that Burton spoke from first hand experience of dissenting groups, who 'once accounted highly of Gods ministers, now they call them murtherers and false prophets', when reflecting upon his time in Norwich in 1589.[7] Any history of the Elizabethan church in Norwich which fails to acknowledge the impact of Brownism misses a significant element in the city's religious life. Yet the lingering presence of separatists about Norwich has unfortunately been passed over by Muriel McClendon, who assumed that Norwich's civic authorities were somehow unaware of the radical religious movement within their midst.[8] As will be argued here, this was far from the case. Rather, the breakaway congregation first formed under Robert Browne and Robert Harrison, held deeper implication's for the established church in Norwich well into the middle years of James I's reign.

Robert Browne himself requires little introduction. To date, his evolving position on the nature of church government has been the source of extensive study, although the activities of Browns's immediate followers have received less attention since the pioneering explorations of Champlin Burrage and Albert Peel.[9] Exceptions include Joy Rowe's work on Suffolk separatists and John Craig's account of Brownism amid the Bury 'stirs' of the 1580s.[10] However, little has been done to asses the rise, tribulations and long term survival of the Brownist movement in its birthplace, Norwich, where it proved remarkably durable throughout the last decades of Elizabeth's reign. A Corpus Christi Cambridge graduate, Robert Browne rose to notoriety with

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[7] Burton, *Davids evidence*, p. 139; *idem*, *A sermon preached in the cathedral church in Norwich* (1590), sig. Gr.
[8] *Quiet Reformation*, p. 249.
[9] The definitive study of Browne's emerging thought remains B. R. White, *The English Separatist Tradition from the Marian Martyrs to the Pilgrim Fathers* (Oxford, 1971), ch. 3; C. Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters* (Cambridge, 1912) and A. Peel, *The Brownists in Norwich and Norfolk Around 1580* (Cambridge, 1920).
[10] J. Rowe, 'Some Suffolk Separatists and the Norwich Conventicle, 1588-1610', in C. Rawcliffe , R. Virgoe and R. Wilson (eds.), *Counties and Communities: Essays in East Anglian History* (Norwich, 1996), pp. 179-87; J. Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 103-10.

his *A Treatise of Reformation without Tarying for any*. Printed at Middleburg in 1582, Browne's tract established the guiding principles for a gathered congregation, independent of episcopal government and civil authority, based upon his experience of the church organisation which he co-founded with Robert Harrison, a fellow denizen of Corpus Christi, in 1579.[11] On his own testimony, Browne developed strong feelings against episcopacy while moving in the circle of Richard Greenham at Dry Drayton. Already his preference for a Congregationalist structure of ecclesiastical government was assured when he posited that no one under Christ had single authority over the church, rather the meeting 'of everie whole church, and of the elders therein, is above the Apostle, above the Prophet, the Evangelist, the Pastor, the Teacher and every particular Elder'.[12] But it was upon arriving in Norwich at the height of Bishop Freke's drive for full conformity to the Prayer Book that Browne's ecclesiology was worked out in practice.

There Browne joined his acquaintance Robert Harrison, master of one of the city's hospitals as well as a tutor at Aylsham grammar school upon the presentation of the mayor of Norwich, Thomas Peck and Alderman John Aldrich in 1573.[13] Harrison enjoyed the confidence of godly figures among the municipal elite. Yet, his nonconformity became a matter of concern for his patrons and John Parkhurst alike, after he was brought to the bishop's attention for having altered the responses when baptising his godson, a child of John Allen at Aylsham. Conducting the baptism according to the first person plural, he signified the boy's passage into a saving remnant. This simple change of pronoun had tremendous prescience for Harrison's future dissent, even more so given that Robert Browne afterwards married Alice Allen who was undoubtedly a

[11] A. Peel and L. H. Carlson (eds.), *The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne*, Elizabethan Nonconformist Tracts II (London, 1953), pp. 150-70
[12] *Ibid*, p. 399.
[13] Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, pp. 209-11; *HP 1558-1603*, i, p. 33.

relative of John Allen, the father at the service.[14] Harrison and Browne found common ground against episcopacy following Edmund Freke's disciplining of the Norwich puritans. Freke's subsequent suspension of nonconformist preaching pastors, an act which Harrison likened to 'manslaughter' in a suitably fiery letter to his diocesan in 1576, finally propelled both Harrison and Browne to take the decisive step of breaking from the established church.[15]

The true extent of their following in Norwich has eluded the historical record. However, a potential constituency of support for the two men is indicated by one intriguing document, a supplication for further reform signed by 175 citizens to be presented to the Queen at some stage in the early 1580s. The only extant copy exists among papers collected for a puritan survey of the ministry intended for publication in the 1590s. There is no evidence that this address was ever delivered to Elizabeth, while the date of 1583 on the transcription is too late given the inclusion of Robert Browne and Robert Harrison among the signatories, both men having departed for Middleburg prior to the end of 1582.[16] It is likely that the supplication was drawn up in anticipation of Browne's gathering of a congregation on the basis of a covenant by the spring of 1581. For while the signatories advocated the removal of 'the government of Antichrist also with all his archprelates and all his court keepers' in favour of a Presbyterian system 'that holie Eldership, the verie sinew of Christs Church' maintained by 'a synod of lawful ministers', they also emphasised the discretion of individual flocks to choose their own pastors, 'whose soules pertain to the ministers charge' according to each congregation's judgement.[17]

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[14] Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 218; *The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne*, p. 6.
[15] This letter was printed in 1593. While the author is given as an anonymous R. H., it can only be Harrison, *A parte of a register* (Middleburg, 1593), *STC* 10400, pp. 365-70.
[16] *Seconde Parte* I, pp. 157-60. An earlier date is suggested in Peel, *The Brownists in Norwich and Norfolk*, pp. 6-8; White, *The English Separatist Tradition*, p. 48.
[17] *Seconde Parte*, I p. 158.

The Norwich address represents a transitional phase among radical Protestants between hopes for a Presbyterian form of discipline and an impulse towards Congregationalism. As yet the distinctions between the two variants of ecclesiastical government were blurred in the minds of the 175 Norwich men, who valued the rights of individual church 'elderships' to shape their own pastoral care above all else.[18] Prominent among the names were various members of the Weld family, headed by Roger Weld. Not even a common councillor when signing the petition, Weld eventually rose to the position of sheriff in 1585 and mayor in 1599, aided no doubt by his privileged kinship connections with the civic elite. The Welds were cousins of the Aldrich family. Both Roger and his brother John were joint participants in the Merchant Adventures' Company, placing them in contact with the two Layer brothers Christopher and Thomas, Thomas Layer witnessing Roger Weld's will in 1606.[19] There is nothing to suggest that Weld ever followed the path to full separation. However, the association between this future alderman and Robert Browne's supporters in the 1580s discounts Muriel McClendon's assessment that Norwich's magistrates were oblivious to the presence of sectaries within their jurisdiction.[20]

Harrison and Browne's flight to Middleberg in 1582 did not spell the end of separatism within the city.[21] Turning to evidence of persecution by the church authorities, returns of 'Brownist recusants' from Norwich appear intermittently among the records of the Consistory Court over the next two decades. In the case of the Norwich separatists, we can also draw upon a

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[18] Indeed, two names on the list, Robert Barker and John Chambers, appear in Robert Browne's writings as members of the Middleburg congregation, *Seconde Parte* I, p. 159; *The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne*, pp. 422, 425.

[19] *Seconde Parte* I, p. 159; Hawes, *Officers*, p. 163; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 66; PRO PROB 11/64, fo. 207v, will of John Aldrich; PRO E 122/196/7; PRO PROB 11/107, fo. 213v, will of Roger Weld, proved 1606; see above pp. 68-70 for the Layer brothers.

[20] *Quiet Reformation*, p. 249.

[21] White, *The English Separatist Tradition*, p. 49. Bishop Freke's efforts to break the movement can be seen in BL Lansd MS 33, fo. 40r.

written account of their trials furnished by George Johnson.[22] Printed at Amsterdam in 1603, Johnson's discourse amounted to a virulent attack upon his brother Francis, pastor of the English congregation in the Dutch city, along with 'that envious and subtile man' Daniel Studley, one of the church's elders.[23] Francis Johnson and Studley had been attached to Henry Barrow's church in London in the late 1580s. Both men adhered to Barrow's model of church discipline as exercised by elected elders alone, a system which they transported to Amsterdam upon being exiled there in 1597. George Johnson felt his brother had departed from Robert Browne's founding principles by subverting the congregation's powers of election over its deacons.[24] However, of particular relevance is the ensuing account in Johnson's *Discourse* of an appeal made to the original dissenting church in Norwich, 'their elder sister in the Lord', to act as a third party in the dispute. Communicating with the Norwich pastor, Mr Hunt, Johnson was supplied with information to blacken Studley's reputation. According to Hunt, Studley had caused earlier frictions among the Norwich congregation by installing 'one Bradshaw', so 'openly and manifestly known of evil behaviour' to administer while Hunt languished in prison beneath the Guildhall in 1594. In addition, Studley had enticed members of the Norwich flock away to Amsterdam. Wishing 'all to come to them, to fill up their number, to increase their contributions etc', Studley had employed underhand means, sullying the East Anglian group's good name 'inveighing against them and disgracing them as a simple people' both ignorant and weak.[25]

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[22] The following is based on NRO DN DIS/9/1a, unfoliated; George Johnson, *A discourse of the troubles of the banished church at Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1603), *STC* 14664, pp. 205-6.
[23] *DNB* 'Francis Johnson'; BL Add MS 28571, fo. 169r, gives details of his time at Middleburg; Johnson, *A discourse*, p. 206.
[24] Johnson, *A discourse*, dedication to Francis Johnson; White, *The English Separatist Tradition* , pp. 96-103.
[25] Johnson, *A discourse*, pp. 44, 88, 205-6.

Mr Hunt is readily identifiable as William Hunt. An extraordinary figure, ordained by Bishop Scambler without having taken a degree, Hunt first assumed position in East Anglia as vicar of Chattisham near Ipswich, where he was presented by Eton College in November 1587. He was not incumbent for long. Two years later, he had been replaced following his deprivation for being a Brownist, his successor dutifully recording the fact in the parish register, lamenting that no baptisms, marriages or burials had been entered throughout his predecessor's ministry.[26] On the basis of Johnson's testimony, Hunt does not resurface in Norwich until 1594. However, it is possible that he migrated to the city shortly after vacating his living in 1589, since one tantalising hearing before the Mayor's Court hints at a resurgence of separatism at around the same time. The case involved Miles Willan, cordwainer, for words spoken against John More and another corporation preacher Mr Flood in April 1590. Conversing with Richard Stutter, a blacksmith, Willan asked him why he resorted to hear the city's preachers, exclaiming that 'they do not teach the truth but teach mens traditions and fancies'. Stutter disagreed saying that he liked the ministers 'very well', which caused Willan to turn his back on him.[27]

While Willan was ordered to attend divine service at his parish church, this episode points towards an undercurrent of dissent in Norwich, the cordwainer's words echoing Robert Browne's earlier statement on episcopacy as corrupting the church with 'the dongue that commeth of man, even with their traditions, tolerations and falsifiinges'.[28] It is likely that such sentiments were

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[26] NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 157r; SROI FB 63, Chattisham parish register, unfoliated entry for 5 Nov 1589. Hunt's career has been traced in J. Rowe, 'Some Suffolk Separatists and the Norwich Conventicle, 1588-1610', pp. 179-81. My account corrects Rowe's dating. For example, the Norwich conventicle did not take place in 1588, but was presented to the Archdeacon in 1603.

[27] NRO MCB/12, 1587-95, p. 540, 24 Apr 1590; Muriel McClendon, *Quiet Reformation*, p. 245, not only confuses the dating of this case to 1591, but also implies that Willan was a Catholic recusant. For Mr Flood's employment see NRO CA, 1589-1602, fos. 16r, 60r, 101v, 131r, 159r, 186r, 211v.

[28] *The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne*, p. 402.

rekindled by Hunt's appearance in the city. Certainly by 1595, from a list compiled for the Consistory Court of sectaries committed to gaol, it seems that the gathered church had acquired a tight organisational structure. Overall, sixteen separatists associated with Hunt are named. When collated with further indictments for being 'a recusant sectary' given in later years, this total can be extended to thirty three individuals, among whom several family names predominate. The most outstanding were the Lachelowes of St Peter Mancroft parish. Elizabeth, wife of John Lachelowe, a scrivener, imprisoned in 1595 along with her daughter Anne, is given on the lists down to 1603, when she was joined by two fellow Mancroft parishioners, Henry Ives and his wife, along with Thomas Mayes and his wife Bridget of St Peter Permountergate.[29] Another prisoner was Alice Willise widow of St Stephen's, where two 'recusant schismatics' George Gooch and Thomas Wootton resided, Wootton's name recurring until 1617.[30] Besides these families, the 1595 list also refers to five householders, including three weavers George Pollard, Thomas Fowler an apprentice living at Pockthorpe and Adam Brayser, as well as a yeoman, John Turner and a butcher Thomas Wylles or Wyllet. Conceivably, these five served as elders or deacons within the congregation. Thomas Wyllet, with his wife Alice and their two children Sarah and John, of St Michael at Thorn, where they 'keep victualling', maintained strong views against the established church being regularly presented as sectaries until 1615.[31] Perhaps they were also related to Miles Willan, convicted by the Mayor's Court in 1590.

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[29] NRO DN DIS/9/1a, unfloiated. John Lachlowe had gained the freedom of the city, Millican, *Freemen*, p. 117.
[30] NRO DN DIS/9/1a, unfoliated; DN ACT/46c, compiled in October 1615 refers to Wootton as does NRO ANW 3/20, *comperta*, 1614-17, where he is listed with four 'schismaticks' from St Stephens in 1617.
[31] NRO DN DIS/9/1a. Of the five possible elders, Thomas Fowler, son of Thomas originally from Leicester, is the only one known to have purchased his citizenship, Millican, *Freemen*, pp. 160, 223. For the Wyllets' presentments under the catch-all terms 'recusants', see NRO ANW 3/2 and DN ACT/46c. However, they were clearly the members of Hunt's church indicted in 1595.

Another significant figure incarcerated in 1595 was Thomas Woolsey 'a minister', who on George Johnson's account, was responsible for the Norwich church's pastoral care with William Hunt and Thomas Ensner, significantly a Chattisham native who had followed Hunt to Norfolk by 1596.[32] From an analysis of its membership, the Norwich congregation emerges as a self-contained gathered church. More than a peripheral concern to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, William Hunt was imprisoned again in 1598 with 'Elizabeth his wooman', a terse comment implying that no legal marriage had been consummated,. But the removal of their pastor hardened the congregation's resolve. In June 1602, members of his flock were caught expounding Scripture in a conventicle near to the city, where discussion focused upon the nature of the true church. It was agreed that 'there is no Lawfull ministry of the Word of God within the Church of England'. Instead, the established church was 'a synagogue of prophane persons and a Cage of Fowle and uncleane birdes', in which 'the sacraments be not rightly administered', the only 'trewe Church of Christ' being that maintained by the separatists themselves.[33] This was not the only conventicle inspired by Hunt's preaching. A year later, a second clandestine meeting held by 'divers' was discovered during the archdeacon's visitation at Mr Serlesbye's house in the parish of Trowse, neighbouring Norwich. Serlesbye can only be Thomas Serlesbye, vicar of Trowse and a serial nonconformist from the 1570s. Equally significant were the names of some

[32] NRO DN DIS/9/1a; Johnson, *A discourse*, p. 206; SROI FB 63, which records the burial of Thomas Ensner's wife in 1589. Another of Hunt's disciples at Chattisham, John Hayward, also became a peripatetic preacher, troubling the parishioners of St Margaret's Ipswich as 'a prisoner who goeth at liberty without warrant and doth much hurt by seducing the people' in 1605, DN DIS/9/1a.

[33] NRO DN DIS/9/1a. The allusion to 'a Cage of Fowle and uncleane birdes', an amalgamation of the two texts Jeremiah 5: 27 and Revelations 16: 2, was a familiar motif in Brownist invective against the established church, see Rowe, 'Some Suffolk Separatists and the Norwich Conventicle 1588-1610', p. 181.

of those present, which included Elizabeth Lachelowe and her daughter as well as 'Mother Willesey' - Alice Willise - three members of the original congregation detected in 1595.[34]

From the returns of identifiable Brownists, dissent in Norwich proved remarkably tenacious despite repeated persecution by the church courts. The principal participants remained deeply dissatisfied with the established church beyond William Hunt's death in 1603, forging a radical continuum which took an interesting turn with the appearance of John Robinson in the city.[35] Famous as the future pastor to the Pilgrim Fathers, Robinson's status in American history has been the subject of much spilt ink.[36] Regretably, his formative career prior to separating from the Church of England remains far murkier, a point which owes much to the paucity of biographical information before his migration to Amsterdam and then Leyden. For many details we are reliant upon his detractors, notably Joseph Hall, later bishop of Exeter.[37] However, on the basis of his own testimony written after his departure for the Netherlands, Robinson claimed to have ministered in some unspecified way at St Andrew's, where he subsequently left a radical legacy to trouble Bishop Jegon after 1605.[38]

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[34] NRO ANW 2/44, visitation presentments, 1603-11, unfoliated. Thomas Serlesbye began his career as chaplain at St Nicholas, King's Lynn in the 1560s, where he refused to wear the surplice, Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 220.

[35] Hunt's death can be deduced from the fact that in 1603 his widow Elizabeth returned to Suffolk and married Thomas Scase, a noted separatist from Thrandeston near Chattisham, see Rowe, 'Some Suffolk Separatists and the Norwich Conventicle', p. 183.

[36] There is a substantial body of secondary literature on Robinson. For comprehensive studies of his writings see S. Brachlow, *The Communion of Saints: Radical Puritan and Separatist Ecclesiology 1570-1625* (Oxford, 1988) and T. George, *John Robinson and the English Separatist Tradition* (Macon, Georgia, 1982).

[37] Joseph Hall, *A common apologie of the Church of England against the unjust challenge of the Over Just sect called the Brownists* (1610), *STC* 12649, pp. 114-5, 125, 145. For a discussion of Hall as a defender of the Jacobean church see K. Fincham and P. Lake, 'Popularity, Prelacy and Puritanism in the 1630s: Joseph Hall Explains Himself', *EHR*, 111 (1996), pp. 856-77.

[38] This recollection, taken from an anonymous manuscript treatise attributed to Robinson now deposited as Bod L Jones MS 30, fos. 4r-5v, is transcribed in C. Burrage, *New Facts Concerning John Robinson Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Oxford, 1910), pp. 16-17.

Thanks to the exhaustive genealogical research carried out by Walter Burgess, Robinson's origins in Sturton-le-Steeple, Nottinghamshire, are well assured. With this fact established, the future pastor to the Pilgrim Fathers can be identified as John Robinson, fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1598 and master of the Great Hospital in Norwich in 1601.[39] Here the separatist Robinson should not be confused with a contemporaneous John Robinson, a Norfolk man and a graduate of Emmanuel college.[40] To complicate matters further, the latter Robinson was also active in Norwich at the same time, when he sparked controversy by condemning ecclesiastical justice, asserting that 'Papists and the lyke were not converted in High Commission', in a sensational sermon delivered at St Andrew's in 1603.[41] This Robinson who became a lecturer at Great Yarmouth in 1609, must not be equated with his famous namesake, whose career took a different course.[42]

Sniping at English separatists in 1610, Joseph Hall disparagingly attributed Robinson's decision to break from the church to his failure to regain admission to the mastership of Norwich hospital. If so, his loss of employment was occasioned by the subscription campaign conducted

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[39] W. H. Burgess, *John Robinson Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers: a Study of his Life and Times* (London, 1920), pp. 10-16, remains the most authoritative biography. T. George, *John Robinson and the English Separatist Tradition*, p. 78, notes payments to Robinson in the Great Hospital account rolls.

[40] Venn iii, p. 470. The Pilgrim Father Robinson's possible Norfolk origins were implied in B. Brooke, T*he Lives of the Puritans* (3 vols., London, 1813), II, p. 334 and elaborated upon by J. Browne, *The Pilgrim Fathers of New England* (London, 1895). Browne suggested that Robinson hailed from Saxlingham Nethergate. However, according to the parish register this Robinson married Anne Whitfield, while the separatist Robinson is known to have wedded Bridget White of Worksop near Sturton-le-Steeple, see H. M. Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims* (London, 1906), p. 633; *DNB* 'John Robinson'.

[41] *Reg Vagum* I, pp. 34-6. The deposition states that the preacher was 'of Emmanuell College', linking him to the Norfolk John Robinson. Nevertheless, the offending sermon has been attributed to the Pilgrim Father Robinson in S. Brachlow, 'John Robinson and the Lure of Separatism in Pre-Revolutionary England', *CH*, 50 (1981), pp. 288-301 and *idem*, entry for Robinson in Greaves and Zaller III, p. 103.

[42] Venn iii, p. 470; *DNB* 'John Robinson'.

after the Hampton Court Conference.[43] Refusing to subscribe, Robinson was either suspended from his Norwich position or else hoped to evade censure by returning to Sturton-le-Steeple, where seventeen individuals were presented to the Archdeacon of Nottingham for 'gadding' to hear Robinson preach in May 1605.[44] Perhaps he strove to find patronage within his native county. Yet, seeking 'satisfaction for a troubled heart' he spent the next two years in transit between Sturton and Cambridge, participating in a famous puritan conference of 1608 at the Coventry home of Sir William and Lady Elizabeth Bowes attended by Richard Bernard, John Dod, Arthur Hildersham and John Smyth, the future separatist and Anabaptist.[45] Smyth drew Robinson to the gathered congregation around Gainsborough and Scrooby in Lincolnshire. After being 'hunted and persecuted on every side', the Scrooby church was forced to emigrate to Amsterdam where Robinson joined the English congregation administered by Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth in 1608 before moving to Leyden.[46] In the meantime, Robinson attracted a separatist following in Norwich. If Henry Ainsworth's passing comments are to be believed, 'certayn citizens' were excommunicated for resorting to prayers conducted by the pastor, presumably after his suspension or voluntary resignation in 1605. Regrettably, the extant

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[43] Joseph Hall, *A common apologie*, p. 145. For the enforcement of subscription after Hampton Court see B. W. Quintrell, 'The Royal Hunt and the Puritans, 1604-1605', *JEH*, 31 (1980), pp. 41-58; K. Fincham, 'Clerical conformity from Whitgift to Laud', in P. Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 138-9. In Norwich diocese nine beneficed ministers were deprived between May 1605 and March 1606, K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), p. 325. However, this figure does not account for an unknown number of curates and lecturers not listed in the institution books. The clampdown in Norwich was completed in July 1606 when Jegon issued an ultimatum to all clergy 'not already censured by deprivation' to 'present resolution to conform hereafter', SROB MS 909/8, fo. 27v.

[44] R. A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (London, 1960), p. 152.

[45] Recounted in John Robinson, *A manumission to a manuduction* (Amsterdam, 1615), *STC* 21111, p. 20; *idem*, *A justification of separation from the Church of England* (Amsterdam, 1610), *STC* 21109, p. 10. See also C. M. Newman, '"An Honourable and Elect Lady": the Faith of Isabel, Lady Bowes', in D. Wood (ed.), *Life and Thought in the Northern church c. 1100-c. 1700* (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 414; B. R. White, 'The English Separatists and John Smyth Revisited', *Baptist Quarterly*, 30 (1984), pp. 344-7.

[46] William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620-1647*, ed. S. E. Morison (New York, 1963), p. 10.

Norwich diocesan archives yield no records to confirm this story.[47] But it is conceivable that Robinson found common cause with a radical contingent centred on St Andrew's, where during the Archdeacon's visitation of 1606, several parishioners were discovered holding 'pryvate meetings and assemblies' in the house of Thomas Parker or Barker, who was also a conspicuous absentee from divine service in 1609. In 1614, Barker was returned as a 'Brownist' in contempt of the laws of England.[48] While there is no hard evidence to link Barker with Robinson, the detection of the conventicle in St Andrew's in 1606, immediately following the pastor's departure from Norwich is more than coincidental.

The Archdeaconry act books furnish no further clues as to Parker or Barker's identity.[49] It would be tempting to equate him with Thomas Barker from William Hunt's old cure of Chattisham, the son of Elizabeth Barker, who was also returned as a 'brownest' present at conventicles around Chattisham in 1606. Ten years later, her daughter Elizabeth joined Robinson's Leyden congregation marrying Edward Winslow, later governor of Plymouth colony.[50] Again, such kinship ties hint at a seam of dissent running between the earlier separatist movement in East Anglia in the 1590s and the Leyden community on the eve of its migration to New England. Henry Dexter identified eleven householders originating from Norwich among

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[47] Henry Ainsworth, *Counterpoyson: Considerations touching the poynts in difference between the godly ministers...and the seduced brethren of the Separation* (1608), *STC* 234, pp. 246-7. It is possible Robinson made several return visits to Norwich since he was named in the will of Alderman Thomas Lane, written in 1606 and proved a year later, PRO PROB 11/109, fo. 174r.

[48] NRO ANW 3/12, *comperta*, 1606; ANW 2/44, visitation presentments, 1603-11; ANW 3/20, *comperta*, 1614-7.

[49] Millican, *Freemen*, pp. 91, 160, lists two Thomas Parkers, an apprentice joiner and a worsted weaver respectively. The name does not occur among those rated for the lay subsidy of 1598 in St Andrew's, PRO E 179/152/497. However a Thomas Parker along with various members of the Barker family signed the supplication of Norwich men to Queen Elizabeth in 1581, *Seconde Parte* I, p. 159. Whether he was the same person as the 'Brownist' in 1606 is unclear.

[50] SROI FB 63; NRO DN VIS/4/2/2; Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims*, p. 640; William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 441.

Robinson's flock.[51] Of these the most tangible link between the Pilgrim Fathers and former Brownists is provided by Thomas Wyllet and his family, who domiciled in Leyden before participating in the *Mayflower* expedition. Wyllet has already been encountered as a deacon in William Hunt's church.[52] That he chose to flee persecution from the ecclesiastical authorities by joining Robinson's congregation, suggests that a prior connection existed between the two men, probably dating from the ministers time in Norfolk.

The presence of Robinson's church across the North Sea, offered encouragement to the dislocated survivors of an earlier dissenting movement. Casting a lasting shadow, the challenge to established ecclesiastical authority posed by radical separatism remained a lingering problem for Bishop Jegon beyond the subscription campaign of 1605 and 1606. Six years later, the prelate was confronted with a case of heresy. A major scare followed the arrest of one William Sayer near Bury St Edmunds for propagating a mixture of Anabaptist and Arian beliefs in July 1612. Sayer's fate is unknown, although he does not appear to have been burned as a heretic.[53] Nevertheless, the threat to the church's integrity linked to the spread of heterodox beliefs, ensured that Jegon was alert to the existence of principled dissent especially in the city of Norwich, which fell within the administrative control of his brother Thomas, installed as Archdeacon of Norwich in 1604.[54] In particular, archdiaconal and episcopal anxieties were fixed on St Andrew's, where the persistence of 'Brownists' like Thomas Barker has already been noted. The presence of semi-

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[51] Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims*, Appendix I.
[52] *Ibid*, p. 639; NRO DN ACT/46c and see above, p. 80.
[53] CUL MS Mm. 6. 58 7, fos. 1r-14r; Mm. 1. 43, p. 181; Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in England 1558-1689*, pp. 114-5.
[54] Thomas Jegon also held a prebendal stall at Norwich cathedral, Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, pp. 45, 53.

separatists amplified tensions between the church authorities and the St Andrew's parish officers, which continued throughout much of James I's reign.

Frictions emerged in a drama played out between the diocesan chancellor, Robert Redmayne and the questmen in the spring of 1607.[55] A year previously, St Andrew's in common with other city parishes had come under scrutiny from two separate visitations conducted by the bishop and archdeacon. At St Andrew's the ministry was found wanting. In particular, the chaplain Thomas Mellis or Miles, like John Robinson a Corpus Christi Cambridge man, who had assumed the cure while Thomas Newhouse took on the parish lectureship, was discovered preaching without a licence.[56] A notorious nonconformist, he had been censured for failing to observe the Prayer Book while officiating at St George Tombland in 1603. At St Andrew's three years later, he was presented for refusing to wear the surplice, the parish apparently having neglected to purchase a new vestment, while in 1613, Miles was in trouble again for performing baptisms without using the sign of the cross.[57] Yet in 1607, the churchwardens countenanced their incumbent's nonconformity after apparently failing to provide the prescribed clerical attire. Chancellor Redmayne then started proceedings against the officers in the Consistory Court, at the same time as ordering the removal of what the wardens described as 'divers convenient seats' whereby 'the ministers of the city were placed in one roumthe and in another next them, the aldermen' from St Andrew's. The seating had encroached too far into the chancel for Redmayne's liking.[58]

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[55] *Reg Vagum* II, pp. 279-80.
[56] Miles was a Norwich native, Venn iii, p. 188; NRO DN VIS/4/2/1; ANW 3/12, *comperta*, 1606.
[57] NRO ANW 3/10, *comperta*, 1602-3; ANW 3/17a, *comperta*, 1613.
[58] *Reg Vagum* II, pp. 279-80. The ordering of seating in chancels was a particularly vexing matter for Redmayne. In 1615, he ordered the churchwardens at St Mary Tower, Ipswich, another godly parish, to build 'convenient seats' about the communion table, to ensure parishioners received the sacrament kneeling, PRO SP 14/82/43.

However, the churchwardens refused to comply with this second order until they had first received express instruction from Bishop Jegon, at which point Redmayne who had assumed the case from Thomas Jegon's archdiaconal court, excommunicated the four questmen, labelling the entire congregation 'schismaticks, schismaticall and factious persons [and] contemners of authoritie'. Given the extent of nonconformist practices and open dissent within St Andrew's, it is not difficult to understand the chancellor's frustration. Seeking to overturn Redmayne's ruling, the churchwardens backed by other parochial worthies, most notably the two former mayors Thomas Layer and Francis Rugge, petitioned Bishop Jegon expressing their duty to the government and rites of the established church. They also attested to their pastor's conformity in 'wearing and using the ornaments and dewe observation of all other ceremonies appointed'.[59] However, in light of Thomas Miles's continual flouting of the Book of Common Prayer, this statement lacked sincerity, a point which was reinforced by the known nonconformity of two signatories, or rather the wives of the two signatories, Edward Ainsworth and Richard Playford. Earlier in 1603, Mrs Ainsworth had refused outright to be churched. In the same year, Mrs Playford had been presented for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper seated along with Edward Peckover, who later acted as a witness to Alderman Thomas Layer's will in 1613.[60]

Unfortunately, the outcome of this appeal is unknown. Of more significance for future events was the irrepressible air of nonconformity about St Andrew's which forced the Jegon brothers to monitor the parish closely. Their concerns were realised during the archdiaconal visitation of 1614. Thomas Miles's successor as chaplain, Robert Gallard, was presented for

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[59] *Reg Vagum* II, pp. 179-80, which incorrectly gives Francis Rugge's surname as Brigge. For Layer and Rugge see above, pp. 68-70.
[60] NRO ANW 3/10, *comperta*, 1602-3; ANW 2/44, presentments, 1603-11; PRO PROB 11/124, fo. 194v.

praying 'not for archbishops and bishops according to the prescript form of the canon' but only 'for the ministrie and clergie'.[61] Did Gallard intend to cause a stir by hinting at clerical parity in his prayers? If so, he eventually managed to reconcile himself with John Jegon, who in turn supported the minister's ambitions to become parish lecturer with the grant of a preaching licence. Gallard represented the lesser of two evils for the bishop. Gaining promotion to the lectureship upon election by a minority of the church's twenty two feoffees, the minister was not the preferred choice of the rest, who instead hoped to install 'one Rogers' to the prestigious city pulpit. But, since Rogers was unwilling to subscribe to the Articles of Religion and form of church government, he was unacceptable to Jegon. The contested appointment ended up before the Privy Council in June 1615, which backed Gallard's election, endorsing the bishop's designs to prevent another potential radical from assuming the pastoral charge of St Andrew's.[62]

Jegon had been successful in managing this obstreperous parish. The bishop's political manoeuvrings continued when in 1615, he sidelined Robert Gallard by collating him to Sprowston, placing pressure on the minister to resign his city cure, if not his weekday lectureship in Norwich. Since Gallard's original appointment had not been endorsed by the majority, some trustees were reluctant to maintain his stipend. Instead the feoffees raised the issue with the city Assembly, which agreed to meet the cost of Gallard's Thursday lecture, resolving to end bickering among the trustees by paying for two additional exercises at St Andrew's on Mondays and Fridays.[63] Such a move worked to John Jegon's advantage. From the end of 1615, the

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[61] NRO ANW 3/20, *comperta*, 1614-7.
[62] *APC* 1615-6, pp. 147-8, 195-6, 10 May and 9 June 1615. There are no clues as to the identity of the contumacious Rogers, although it is likely he belonged to the famous clerical dynasty that spawned John Rogers of Dedham.
[63] For Gallard's role as a publicist see above, p. 71-2. His collation to Sprowston is given in NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book, 1627; NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 40r, 1 Dec 1615.

responsibility for hiring and firing the St Andrew's preachers was transferred to the corporation, effectively taking the matter out of the feoffees' hands. This ensured a heightened prestige for the three weekday lectureships. At the same time, the feoffees were placed under even greater constraints to promote conformable men as potential lecturers, clerics who would gain episcopal sanction in the form of a licence to preach, making them suitable candidates for the city's employ.

In the event Gallard continued to provide Thursday morning sermons at St Andrew's. However, Bishop Jegon's careful meddling in parochial affairs bore fruit in 1616, when the trustees attracted the services of an aspiring fellow of Emmanuel College, John Yates, to fill the vacant chaplaincy. Ordained by Thomas Dove of Peterborough in 1614, Yates was an ideal nominee from Jegon's perspective. A figure with important connections to godly circles, the young Cambridge graduate had also emerged as a staunch defender of episcopal government as the bastion of Calvinist orthodoxy within the Jacobean church.[64] Like Jegon, Yates shared a commitment to the cause of evangelical reform as regulated by the authority of bishops. In addition, his early career had also put him in touch with puritan groups in the capital, when upon completing his degree at Cambridge, Yates sought the tutelage of Alexander Richardson, convenor of a private seminary at Barking, Essex. Richardson did not enter the ministry, probably because of scruples of conscience over the Prayer Book. He was also a noted proponent of the French logician and grammarian Peter Ramus, whose principles informed Yates's later work as a catechetical writer.[65] Yates shared an intellectual inheritance with Richardson's other

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[64] Venn iv, p. 488; NRO DN VSC/2/3a, consignation book, 1633, p. 99.

[65] For Richardson see J. Morgan, *Godly Learning* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 286; K. L. Sprunger, 'John Yates of Norfolk: the Radical Puritan Preacher as Ramist Philosopher', *JHI*, 37 (1976), pp. 697-706; Alexander Richardson, *The Logicians Schoolmaster, or a Comment upon Ramus Logicke* (1629), *STC* 21012, 'To the Christian Reader'; John Yates, *A modell of divinitie catechistically composed* (1622), *STC* 26085, 'An advertisement to the reader'.

outstanding pupils. These included some great names in the history of English puritanism such as the religious casuist William Ames and the future dissenters Thomas Hooker and Charles Chauncey, later president of Harvard College.[66] The precise dates of Yates's time at Barking are uncertain. However, his period in London diocese is known to have included a brief two month trial as master of Dedham Grammar School in 1611, which if fulfilled would have placed him within the sphere of another *doyen* of the East Anglian preaching network, John Rogers.[67]

From these early ties, John Yates's puritan credentials seem well assured, or so his most recent biographers Keith Sprunger and Tom Webster have argued.[68] Nevertheless, with his first foray into publishing, *Gods arraignment of hypocrites*, printed at Cambridge in 1615, Yates acknowledged his unfailing duty towards his episcopal governors, 'the true defenders of the Orthodoxicall truth and resolute enemies of all that oppose it', at whose command he was ready 'to stay or goe forward' and 'yield presently' as required by authority.[69] *Gods arraignment* was a thorough exposition of William Perkins's writings on the theology of grace. Containing a stinging rebuke to 'all the crew of Arminius defenders that...do greatly derrogate from the Maiestie of God and abuse their own wits to overturn Gods wisdom', Nicholas Tyacke has identified this treatise as a timely response to the Dutch theologian Jacob Arminius's posthumous *Examen* of Perkins in circulation at Cambridge after 1612.[70] But it is also conceivable that Yates

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[66] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 352-3; L. W. Gibbs, 'William Ames's Technometry', *JHI*, 33 (1972), pp. 615-24; BLTT E 135 (17), George Walker, *A True Relation of the Chiefe Passages between Mr Anthony Wootton and Mr George Walker in the year...1611, and in the Yeares next following to 1615* (1642), p. 6; C. Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1704), III, pp. 42, 60.
[67] C. A. Jones, *History of Dedham* (Colchester, 1907), p. 124; T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: the Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 13, 315.
[68] Sprunger, 'John Yates of Norfolk', pp. 700, 705-6; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, pp. 30, 315.
[69] John Yates, *Gods arraignment of hypocrites...a defence of Mr Calvine against Bellarmine, and of Mr Perkins against Arminius* (Cambridge, 1615), *STC* 26081-2.5, p. 158.
[70] *Ibid*, pp. 91, 157; N. Tyacke, *Anti Calvinists*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1990), p. 39.

had in mind a doctrinal controversy much closer to home. In light of his links with Richardson, Yates initially hoped to refute a similar position on the doctrine of justification to that maintained by Arminius, which emerged amid a bitter dispute from 1611 and 1615 between two London ministers, George Walker and Anthony Wotton, lecturer at Barking. Walker took exception to Wotton's views on the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which he likened to the Socinianism revived by Vorstius, Arminius and 'those of that faction' in Holland. However, by involving Richardson in his personal campaign against Wotton, to the extent of Richardson's denouncing of Wotton's opinions on his death bed in 1613, it is possible that Yates was encouraged to enter into the fray with his own statement of orthodoxy, while the contention was aired before an informal conference of twelve divines.[71] If so, familiarity with these events accounts for Yates's dedication to Sir William Ayloffe. Justice of Havering on the Bower and a former patron, Ayloffe retained an interest in the Walker-Wotton controversy through his association with Thomas Gataker, one of the arbitrators chosen to reconcile the two preachers. Certainly this link would have been known to Yates who moved in the same circles.[72]

Whatever the exact circumstances behind Go*ds arraignment*, as an avowed defender of episcopacy and Calvinist orthodoxy with sufficient cachet among the godly, from Jegon's standpoint, Yates was the perfect choice for the irksome St Andrew's parish. Jegon approved this

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[71] The background to the Walker-Wotton dispute is discussed in P. Lake and D. Como, '"Orthodoxy" and its Discontents: Dispute, Settlement and the Production of "Consensus" in the London (Puritan) "Underground"', *JBS*, 39 (2000), pp. 38-48; P. Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: 'Orthodoxy', 'Heterodoxy' and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 221-32. For Richardson's involvement see Walker, *A True Relation*, pp. 5-6, 26.

[72] Yates, *Gods arraignment*, 'To Sir William Ayloffe'; Thomas Gataker, *An Answer to Mr George Walkers Vindication* (1641), Wing G310; Simeon Ashe, *Gray Hayres Crowned with Grace: a sermon preached...at the funeral of...Thomas Gataker* (1655) Wing A3958, p. 44. Anthony Wotton also had links with Richardson's Ramist group his son Samuel penning a translation of Ramus's *The art of logick gathered out of Aristotle*, *STC* 15248, commissioned and published by Wotton in 1626 perhaps to heal any rifts with Richardson's supporters.

reputable and conformable divine, licensing him to preach throughout the whole of Norwich diocese upon his arrival by July 1616.[73] If Yates was deemed an ideal candidate to attract errant nonconformists or semi-separatists back into the church's fold, he acquitted himself to the task admirably, his popularity becoming assured with his employment as Friday morning corporation lecturer at St Andrew's in 1617.[74] Yates used the city pulpit as a platform to criticise John Robinson and the residue of his sympathisers in Norwich. At least, Robinson thought so when in 1618 he received details sent by the anonymous W. E., apparently with Yates's consent given 'before the magistrate', concerning his successor's efforts to refute him.[75] Sniping from Leyden, Robinson responded to his 'Christian friends in Norwich' with *The people's plea for the exercise of prophesie against Master John Yates his monopolie*. As indicated from the title this treatise expanded upon the issue of lay prophesying, the public exposition of scripture by individuals not in holy orders, a practice which Yates attacked on the grounds that the ability to prophesy also entailed the power to 'remit and retain sins'. This opposition incurred Robinson's reproach. For although he could be counted 'a man of good gifts and note among you', Yates stood to plead 'the cause of the Church of Rome as Christs wife and of Antichrists clergie as of Christs ministry' by his denial.[76]

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[73] NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 99. It is possible that Yates also came to Norwich upon the recommendation of Thomas Jegon, who may have encountered Yates in his capacity as parson of Sible Hedingham, Essex, where Jegon requested to be buried, PRO PROB 11/131, fo. 283v.

[74] NRO CA, 1603-25, fo. 281v.

[75] John Robinson, *The people's plea for the exercise of prophesie against Master John Yates his monopolie* (Leyden, 1618), *STC* 21115a, 'To my Christian friends in Norwich'. The tract was reprinted with pagination in 1641 and it is this copy in BLTT E 1093 which is followed here. Walter Burgess, *John Robinson*, pp. 204-5, argued convincingly that W. E. was William Euring. Although an obscure figure, brought up not 'among the Muses, but Mariners', Euring became an active casuist and publicist in Leyden, disputing with Thomas Drakes, the minister at Harwich. See his, *An answer to the ten counter demands propounded by T. Drakes* (Leyden, 1619), *STC* 10567, 'To the Reader'.

[76] Robinson, *The people's plea*, 'To my Christian friends in Norwich'.

Robinson's argument centred on Yates's premise that those 'out of office' without a calling to the priesthood, had no capacity 'to meddle with the power of the keys'. While there were Biblical precedents to confirm prophesying by men and women outside of an ordained ministry, Yates drew a clear distinction between what he considered to be prophecy according to an ordinary rule as opposed to an extraordinary example. The Holy Spirit had worked through lay individuals. But these cases being by God's 'extraordinary permission' established no lasting principles, the only firm pattern being Christ's perpetual 'binding and loosing to all such as are sent and ordained, either by himself immediately, or by such as he shall appoint thereunto', rendering it an absurdity to claim that 'ordinarie prophesie ought to be out of office'. Yet for Robinson, pastor to a gathered congregation, this dichotomy was irrelevant. Instead he believed it to be 'a violation of naturall honesty' to exclude any with 'a warrant sufficient from his zeale in Gods glory and mans salvation' from using their gifts in due 'time, place and order'. Such had been the calling of the Prophets. However, this ran contrary to Yates's understanding of the nature of calling, whereupon even the Prophets were bound by an ordinary rule since their vocation came from God, who had predetermined their elevation to the spiritual life.[77]

Here were two divergent interpretations of the basis of ministerial authority. Yates defended public prophesying as the sole reserve of an ordained, sacerdotal priesthood called into the world against Robinson's claim that such a limited notion of calling was not a mark of the true church. After all, how was the church to know 'such as have bent their thoughts towards the ministry', unless they first demonstrate their gifts publicly beforehand? Of course, Robinson was alluding to the congregational election of ministers, since it was an 'intolerable bondage' for any

[77] *Ibid*, pp. 1-2, 4, 31-2.

church 'to have pastors ordained for them of whose ability in teaching they had not taken former experience', a radical notion rooted in the premise that all churches 'attaining perfection' should admit as prophets 'not only the Ministers but also the Teachers, and of the Elders and Deacons, and even of the Common people...if there were any which would confer their gifts' to proclaim God's word.[78]

This was anathema to Yates, who returned to the theme of ministerial authority in his catechism, *A modell of divinitie*, published in 1622. Lamenting the fall of many children from 'our Deare Mother the Church of England' into 'those humours that are fitter for controlment than imitation', he struck out against schism among English Protestants by restating the universal nature of the church as 'one individual and singular body...not to be divided into many bodies', it being an 'error of the Separation to say a Congregation is a Church properly taken'.[79] Surely this was intended as a swipe at Robinson and his followers. Yates went on to question the separatist assertion that a gathered congregation comprised the exclusive membership of the elect, for it may have been the case that 'all in it are but shadows of a Church', the only hope of salvation being derived from belonging to the universal church, for 'a man may be saved that lives in no visible Congregation, yet if he lives out of this body he must needs perish'. By the 'visible Congregation', Yates meant the church 'referred of God to the Pastor and the Prince'. This institution could only be administered by those 'whom God with an ordinary calling

[78] *Ibid*, p. 71. Robinson did not seek to dismiss the important sacerdotal functions of the priestly office. He continued to maintain ordination as vital to the ministry and was uncomfortable with the suggestion that lay elders could administer the sacrament, see Brachlow, *The Communion of Saints*, pp. 193-202.
[79] Yates, *A modell of divinitie*, *STC* 26086, 'To our Deare Mother the Church of England'.

extraordinarily gifted', a reference to learned, episcopally ordained clerics like himself, the New Testament mentioning 'nothing of examination or elections' in the appointment of priests.[80]

Hostility towards Congregationalist theories of ministerial election came to inform Yates's writings prior to the Civil War, which are explored at greater length in chapter seven below. Here it is interesting to note the timely reappearance of Robinson's *The people's plea* in 1641 to coincide with broader attacks on episcopal government mounted during the Long Parliament. The reprint was not lost on Yates, under suspicion for defending episcopacy during Charles I's Personal Rule.[81] Returning to Jacobean Norwich in the late 1610s, Yates's ministry symbolised the careful balance in town-gown relations forged by Bishop Jegon, whose sanctioning of Yates, a celebrated evangelical Calvinist preacher and an unflinching conformist, as the successor to John More, Thomas Newhouse and Nicholas Bownd, ushered in a period of calm in the city's confessional politics. However, this equilibrium, the product of episcopal efforts to buttress the church from a perceived separatist threat, would be tested by events on the national stage. John Jegon's death in 1618 and his eventual replacement a year later by Samuel Harsnett, an Arminian with a different agenda to his Calvinist predecessor, signalled another change in Norwich's religious climate, the implications of which will now be examined closely.

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[80] *Ibid*, pp. 256-7, 263-7.
[81] BLTT E 1093. For Yates's later career see below, pp. 108-12, 123-41, 171-2.

PART II: RELIGIOUS CHANGE AND GODLY REACTION IN THE 1620s

6. SAMUEL HARSNETT: NEW DIRECTIONS IN EPISCOPAL GOVERNMENT

During the 1620s, the integrity of John Yates's preaching came to be tested from the same episcopal authority he had striven so assiduously to defend. Samuel Harsnett's elevation to the see of Norwich in 1619, a promotion which reflected the diocese's puritan reputation in the eyes of the crown, eventually held deeper implications for the fortunes of the city's godly community. To begin with, the new bishop was an anti-Calvinist anxious to exert greater control of the city's pulpits, particularly those staffed by corporation lecturers. Moreover, his reaction against the Jegon administration's evangelical programme, in favour of a more rigid definition of religious conformity, came to be regarded by some as undermining the alliance of magistrates and ministers, vital to ordering the moral fabric of urban life. A campaign against public preaching exercises was conducted in tandem with moves to integrate the cathedral into the heart of civic religious spectacle. Under Harsnett, Norwich also became the focus for a new ceremonial orthodoxy based upon a decorous style of worship, introduced into certain city churches, a development which rebounded in a litany of complaint against the prelate in Parliament in 1624, as described in the next chapter.[1]

Episcopal efforts to refashion Norwich's religious environment, were facilitated by policy shifts in central government. The bishop's local manoeuvres must be interpreted against the background of James I's endeavours to secure a Spanish marriage for his son, together with the widespread controversy this provoked. An atmosphere of royal hostility towards public criticism of foreign policy enabled Harsnett to seize the initiative. Manipulating James's

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[1] I. Atherton and V. Morgan, 'Revolution and Retrenchment: the Cathedral, 1630-1720', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese, 1096-1996* (London, 1996) p. 547. Atherton and Morgan are silent on Harsnett's impact upon religious practices in the city's parish churches, discussed more fully below, pp. 148-61.

mounting fears of a puritan conspiracy against his hispanophile diplomacy, the bishop was able to depart from the evangelical irenicism characteristic of former Jacobean churchmanship in East Anglia, intensifying confessional rifts within the city and diocese of Norwich.[2]

Indeed with his new appointment, the bishop was well placed to amplify royal paranoia. The conventional image of Harsnett in the current historiography is of an angular and aggressive figure, whose reputation had been built around his enmity towards puritans. Andrew Foster considered him to be 'something of a bully'. As one of the more outspoken Elizabethan critics of predestinarian doctrine and chaplain to Richard Bancroft in the late 1590s, he made a name for himself by exposing the deceitful practices of the self-styled exorcist John Darrell.[3] Harsnett's elevation to York in 1629 occasioned a solemn fast by the province's preaching ministers. Fearing the prelate's 'Designs of Mischief against the Reforming Pastors and Christians' of the north, a prayer meeting held in March 1630 to 'implore the Help of Heaven' against the archbishop had the desired effect. A year later Harsnett was dead.[4] Such a hard-line anti-Calvinist was deemed a suitable administrator for the puritan infested Norwich diocese when in August 1619, in keeping with the carefully balanced spirit of divide and rule underlying Jacobean ecclesiastical policy, Harsnett was translated from Chichester to succeed his short lived

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[2] T. Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 26-33; K. Fincham and P. Lake, 'The Ecclesiastical Policy of James I', *JBS*, 24 (1985), pp. 198-202; K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 243-6.

[3] A. Foster, 'The Dean and Chapter, 1570-1660', in M. Hobbs (ed.), *Chichester Cathedral: an Historical Survey* (Chichester, 1994), p. 91. For further biographical details see N. Tyacke, *Anti Calvinists*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1990), pp. 164-5 and more recently T. Freeman, 'Demons, Deviance and Defiance: John Darrell and the Politics of Exorcism in Late Elizabethan England', in P Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 34-63.

[4] T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 88.

predecessor John Overall, a divine of similar theological outlook, whose precise and exacting visitation articles set the tone for episcopal government in East Anglia for the ensuing decade.[5]

In addition, Harsnett owed his promotion to the intervention of his friend and patron, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. Once established in Norfolk, the prelate's fortunes became entwined with those of the Howard interest, both at court and in the immediate vicinity of the family's traditional county seat. To begin with the bishop was entrusted with the upbringing of the earl's son William.[6] Following Arundel's temporary fall, as a consequence of his opposition to Buckingham's war policy in 1626, it was Harsnett who was entrusted with squeezing rents from his patron's Keningshall estate to meet the composition fine, rekindling that 'sparke of the vigor of their ancestors spirits' among Howard's tenants.[7] Yet by participating in such wider faction fighting, the earl's servant also suffered a loss of face in the wake of the Buckingham party's rise to prominence. During his second visitation of Norwich in 1627, he became the victim of a local smear by old adversaries from Pembroke College Cambridge, who accused the bishop of encouraging puritans to 'a far greater confidence and insolency than before', by commending the lectureship at King's Lynn in a sermon which also reproved churchwardens for presenting ministers negligent in wearing the surplice. The report dispatched to William Laud,

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[5] Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 38; *DNB* 'John Overall'. My comments on Overall's contribution to Norwich diocesan administration follow K. Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church I*, Church of England Record Society (1994), p. 57.

[6] M. F. S. Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921), p. 119.

[7] K. Sharpe, 'The Earl of Arundel, his Circle and Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-1628', in K. Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 231-2; BL Add MS 39948, fo. 187v.

then a prominent Buckingham client, strikes as being entirely spurious.[8] However, this charge is indicative of the close interplay between power struggles on the local and national stage, which forms an important theme in the discussion of town-gown relations in Norwich in the 1620s.

Harsnett's defence of Arundel's regional patrimony gave him plenty of scope to meddle in civic affairs. For example, in 1621 the bishop was commissioned by the earl, as Steward of the Duchy of Norfolk, to head an investigation into the alleged poor standards of worsted finishing within the city. Such outside interference in Norwich's staple industry was not entirely welcomed by the corporation.[9] Nor was the bishop's careful cultivation, during the course of a suit over dilapidation, of a friendship with Sir Charles Cornwallis of Beeston, a deputy lieutenant of Norfolk and a continual thorn in the magistrates' side over apportioning the city's contributions to county musters.[10] On top of this could be added the new bishop's known confrontational approach to incorporated boroughs. In the course of an earlier jurisdictional feud with the burghers of Chichester over the city's rights in the cathedral close, a dispute which Harsnett won in 1617, he confided his contempt to Arundel, writing that 'if your lordship had but the least taste of the unsavoury government of Chichester, you would do like Almighty God, spew both it and them out of your mouth'.[11] But there was nothing to suppose that the new

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[8] LPL MS 943, pp.125-7. Laud's correspondent, Mr Mapletoft, was probably Edmund Mapletoft a fellow of Pembroke and later chaplain to Bishop Mathew Wren. As rector of Holbrook, Suffolk, he served as one of Wren's agents in the clampdown on nonconformity in 1636, see Venn iii, p. 138; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r; Tanner MS 314, fos. 180r-v; A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 84. For Harsnett's unpopularity at Pembroke see *DNB* 'Samuel Harsnett' and J. Twigg, *The University of Cambridge and the English Revolution, 1625-1688* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 18.

[9] *Reg Vagum* II, p. 245; NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 380v, 10 Jan 1623, fo. 382r, 17 Jan 1623.

[10] The dilapidation suit can be followed in Bod L Tanner MS 228, fos. 89r-91v; PRO DEL 4/9, fos. 22r, 35v, 127v, SP 16/270/167-8. For the city's wrangling with Cornwallis see G. L. Owens, 'Norfolk 1620-1641: Local Government and Central Authority in an East Anglian County', University of Wisconsin Ph.D., 1970, pp. 203-7.

[11] BL Add MS 39948, fo. 185r; A. Foster, 'Chichester Diocese in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 123 (1985), pp. 191-2.

bishop would deal with Norwich's magistrates in a similar ill-tempered way. Indeed, at first relations between the two parties were cordial, the prelate fulfilling his customary duty of furnishing hospitality for the corporation upon his arrival, even though in this instance it is possible to detect an ulterior motive behind such initial overtures.

Like his predecessor Jegon, Harsnett was uncomfortable with the Walloon congregation's tenure of his domestic chapel. Having been granted use of the building by Bishop Parkhurst, Harsnett hoped to relocate the émigré French elsewhere, ideally to that prime piece of civic property, the New Hall, home to the Dutch church since the mid-1560s. Having viewed the Dutch chapel he suggested as much to the Mayor's Court. Remarking on the benefits which could be accrued from renting part of the building to the Walloons, the bishop's proposal was a point which 'this howse did well like of'. The French did not. Daunted by the prospect of competing for space with the Dutch at St Andrew's, they petitioned against the move and Harsnett was forced to back down, even confirming the Walloons' licence to his chapel in 1622 albeit not without first removing the congregation's seating with the least possible grace.[12] Nevertheless, in pursuing this business, the bishop established contacts among the civic elite. The most pronounced of these was with Alderman William Browne, mayor in 1630, who following his diocesan's mediation between the city and the French church, purchased a piece of plate for the bishop in return for entertaining his brethren.[13] Harsnett remembered Browne in his will. It is interesting that Browne, who resided at St George Tombland, where he was presented

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[12] NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 267v, 17 Nov 1619; W. J. C. Moens, *The Walloons and their Church at Norwich 1565-1832* (London, 1888), p. 22.

[13] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 78; NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 269v, 4 Dec 1619. Possibly Browne was deliberately attempting to curry favour with the bishop to assist in a suit for loss of cargo at the hands of Robert Vyrans of Great Yarmouth, PRO REQ 2/414/19.

at the archdeacon's visitation in 1613 for his continual seven years' absence from communion, despite having been 'charitablie and christianlie intreated and admonished thereunto' to 'the great offence of well disposed inhabitants and citizens', fell under suspicion as a crypto-Catholic. At least he was not one of the godly, making him a friend of the bishop. Throughout the mounting religious controversies of the 1620s and 30s, he proved to be a steadfast proponent of the episcopal cause. We shall encounter Alderman Browne again.[14]

Despite the initial conviviality, relations between the prelate and the forwardly Protestant among Norwich corporation cooled in the wake of Harsnett's 1620 visitation. Various articles of enquiry were bound to cause a stir among godly circles. Most testing of all related to a section concerning the conduct of lecturers which, as Kenneth Fincham has remarked, comprised the first of any Jacobean set of injunctions to single out this wing of the ministry for special attention. Churchwardens were to enquire whether any lecturer attached to their parish held a licence. In addition, it was to be noted whether the minister read public prayers before preaching in his surplice according to the rites of the Book of Common Prayer, 'without omission of any part thereof' and without maintaining 'any doctrine directly contrary or repugnant to the articles of Christian faith and religion'. Was the minister 'schismatically and phantastically affected to novelties and innovations'?[15] Such questions probed far beyond the moderate level of subscription required by previous diocesan governors and at St Andrew's, Robert Gallard was censured for seldom reading prayers before his Thursday morning lectures.[16]

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[14] PRO PROB 11/160, fo. 174r; NRO ANW 3/17a, *comperta*, 1613; see below, pp. 145-6, 208-9, 219-20.
[15] Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church I*, p. 216.
[16] NRO DN VIS/5/1, unfoliated.

Equally contentious was the insistence that all women should be churched wearing 'a decent veil upon their heads'. Again at St Andrew's, the churchwardens failed to return names of parishioners not complying with the order, while on the other side of the Wensum at St Saviour, the matter of the veil prompted legal proceedings against Harsnett by the sheriff Thomas Shipdham.[17] Events were set in motion in January 1621 after Shipdham's wife Elizabeth refused to give thanks for the birth of her son suitably veiled. Shipdham *née* Thurston was undoubtedly a woman of strong religious views, being the daughter of Alderman Edmund Thurston, a son-in-law of the late Alderman John Aldrich, who was also a signatory with Robert Browne and Robert Harrison of the Norwich supplication in 1581 and a patron of the nonconformist minister John Burgess in the 1590s.[18] Sheriff Shipdham who originally hailed from Halesworth in Suffolk proved another foe of episcopal policy.[19] When Chancellor Redmayne excommunicated Mrs Shipdham for her obstinacy, she contested the sentence in King's Bench during Trinity term 1622, arguing that the requirement to wear a veil was both an ecclesiastical innovation and an alien novelty, a praemunire not sanctioned by any custom or law in the realm of England. For Harsnett the case threatened to set an awkward precedent. In the event, it was deferred to Archbishop Abbot, who convening a panel of six prelates then resident in London, which happened to include Harsnett himself, resolved the issue in Redmayne's favour.[20] The Shipdhams lost their plea, although the sheriff continued to disdain ecclesiastical

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[17] For the role of churching, see D. Cressy, 'Purification, Thanksgiving and the Churching of Women in Post-Reformation England', *P & P*, 141 (1993), pp. 106-46; NRO DN VIS/5/1.

[18] *Seconde Parte* I, p. 159 and above, p. 32-3, 78-9; PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 32r, will of Edmund Thurston proved 1590 and see above p. 64-5 for John Burgess; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 67.

[19] NRO DN DEP/31/34, fo. 11r. Shipdham had been apprenticed to his wife's uncle, Alexander Thurston, mayor in 1600, Millican, *Freemen*, p. 104; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 67; PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 32r, will of Edmund Thurston.

[20] The case can be followed in Geoffrey Palmer, *Les Reportes de Sir Geoffrey Palmer* (1688), Wing P225 (7), p. 296. Harsnett's presence in the capital is confirmed by PRO DEL 4/9, fo. 35r.

censure thereafter. Later emerging as a campaigner against Bishop Matthew Wren in the summer of 1636, he was alleged to have regarded excommunication as 'but a Scare-Crow' in the face of the church courts.[21]

Prolonged legal wrangling with a prominent city officer did not bode well for future town-gown relations. Having made an impact with his drive for greater ceremonial conformity than hitherto enjoined, Harsnett was presented with an opportunity to instigate an overhaul of Norwich's religious life, especially in regard to the preaching conducted in the city. The prelate cultivated James I's mounting concern over outbursts against his pro-Spanish policy emanating from both press and pulpit. Here it is significant that royal anxiety became fixed on the city of Norwich and the parish of St Saviour's in particular for having played host to one vociferous critic of Jacobean diplomacy, Thomas Scott. Exposed as the author of *Vox Populi*, a pamphlet of 1620 reporting the machinations of the Spanish Council of State and its agent Count Gondomar, Scott fled to Holland.[22] However, since this publishing venture had no direct bearing upon episcopal authority, Harsnett was reluctant to involve himself in proceedings against Scott, despite having been approached to intercede with Archbishop Abbot by the minister's brother. The bishop made a cool reply, promising not to initiate charges unless commanded by the king.[23]

However, in the wake of *Vox Populi* in February 1621, a separate challenge to James's marriage negotiations emerged from Norwich diocese in the form of *The Double Deliverance: Spayne and Rome Defeated*, a timely satire penned by Samuel Ward, town lecturer at Ipswich.

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[21] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 162r.
[22] S. L. Adams, 'Captain Thomas Gainsford, the *Vox Spiritus* and the *Vox Populi*', *BIHR*, 49 (1976), pp. 141-4; P. Lake, 'Constitutional Consensus and Puritan Opposition in the 1620s: Thomas Scott and the Spanish Match', *HJ*, 25 (1982), pp. 805-25. The minister's links with Norwich are given in *DNB* 'Thomas Scott' and BL Egerton MS 2877, fo. 103r, a copy of Scott's 1620 assize sermon 'The Proiector'.
[23] PRO SP 14/134/20, 134/75.

Although published in Amsterdam, there was no mistaking the provenance of this caricature. Clearly embossed with Ward's name, the illustration depicted the Pope, cardinals and the King of Spain seated in league with the Devil, flanked by the flight of the Armada on one side and by Guy Fawkes approaching Parliament with a lantern on the other.[24] The print proved embarrassing to James. While in his defence Ward claimed that the image had been produced five years earlier, the minister was deprived of his preaching licence and placed under house arrest. Upon his release, Ward disregarded the injunction barring him from the pulpit. Because of this, Harsnett sought to discipline the minister in the Norwich Consistory Court, which in turn led Ward to make a direct appeal to the crown through Lord Keeper Williams's intervention.[25] James denied Ward's reinstatement to his lecture, instead ordering the post be turned into a combination exercise on 26th July 1622.[26]

However, since Ward's open and continued defiance of his suspension represented an affront to diocesan authority, Harsnett's direct participation in the minister's case was soon well assured. Given the bishop's presence in London in July 1622, it is conceivable that he was instrumental in framing the royal proclamation on Ipswich's preaching rota.[27] Yet whatever his hand in orchestrating ecclesiastical policy at the centre, it is certainly the case that Harsnett took these royal instructions as a mandate to convert borough lectureships into combination exercises elsewhere in his diocese. The city of Norwich did not escape the prelate's attention. Two ministers on the city's payroll met with episcopal disapproval, when at some point in the summer

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[24] Reproduced in M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature* I (London, 1959), pp. 15-16.
[25] T. Birch (ed.), *The Court and Times of James I* (2 vols., London 1848), ii, pp. 226, 228, 232; R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War* (London, 1969), p. 53; *DNB* 'Samuel Ward'; PRO SP 15/42/76; John Hacket, *Scrinia Reserata*, vol. 1 (1693), Wing H171, p. 95.
[26] PRO SP 14/130/127, 132/59; Bod L Tanner MS 265, fo. 28r.
[27] PRO DEL 4/9, fo. 35r; Bod L Tanner MS 265, fo. 28r.

of 1622, Harsnett reduced the number of corporation lectures at St Andrew's from three a week to just one.[28] The first pastor was John Yates, who preached on Fridays.[29] The second was John Ward, a more radical figure than Yates, but like the latter an Emmanuel College graduate, who had gained preferment to the Monday morning lecture in 1618.[30] A relative newcomer to the city, Ward had been presented to St Michael at Plea by Lord Dacre the previous year. However, upon arrival, he failed to win Bishop Jegon's trust, who in turn refused the pastor a preaching licence, leaving Ward to wait until Archbishop Abbot's *sede vacante* visitation, conducted after Jegon's death, before being granted this privilege.[31]

John Ward of Norwich should not be confused with John, brother of the notorious Ipswich lecturer Samuel Ward.[32] Moreover, to complicate matters further, the John Ward who officiated at St Michael must not be mistaken for a contemporaneous minister of the same name who had been collated by Jegon to St Simon and St Jude in 1604 and St Swithin in 1608 before serving at St Benedict's in 1628.[33] The second Norwich Ward was of a completely different character to the Emmanuel preacher. No graduate, he remained in the city until the early 1640s,

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[28] Confusion exists over the precise dating of Harsnett's meddling with the civic lecture series. Bishop Wren, in preparing his defence in 1641 was under the impression that proceedings took place immediately upon Harsnett's translation to Norwich in 1619, Bod L Tanner Ms 314, fo. 155v, followed in Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 271. For a more cautious appraisal see Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor*, p. 246. My reading follows the relevant city chamberlains' accounts, which record cessation of wages to both Monday and Friday lecturers after 1622.
[29] See below, pp. 72-3, 92-8; NRO CA, 1603-25, fo. 281v.
[30] Venn iv, pp. 331-3; NRO CA, 1603-25, fo. 301r.
[31] NRO DN VSC/2/3b, fo. 3v.
[32] The mistake occurs in Venn iv, pp. 331-2. John Ward of Norwich was born in Stradbrooke, Suffolk in 1582, NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 505r. He could not have been John the brother of Samuel and Nathaniel Ward, later of New England, since this John Ward was recorded as being rector of Dinnington, Suffolk in 1638 when he was charged with simony by the High Commission, PRO SP 16/392/33, 392/72, 393/16; Bod L Tanner MS 219, fo. 1. The Norwich minister fled to Rotterdam to escape episcopal censure in 1636.
[33] This John Ward was collated to St Simon and St Jude while still a deacon in 1604, NRO DN REG/15/21, fo. 11. He was ordained priest by Jegon and collated to St Swithin four years later, resigning St Simon and St Jude in 1616, DN VSC/2/3b, DN REG/16/22, fo. 55v. His brief spell at St Benedict is recorded in NRO PD 191/23, St Benedict's churchwardens' accounts, 1608-1763.

when the corporation reported his inept preaching, gross misconduct and scandalous life in 'frequenting taverns and alehouses' to the Long Parliament. This Ward held his city benefice in plurality with Little Ellingham which he neglected shamelessly. At least this was the opinion voiced by the exasperated churchwardens who complained bitterly to the Archdeacon of Norwich in 1629 about their rector's continual absence, leaving the cure in the hands of one Henry Baldwin, who 'doeth not live in the town...[and] cannot read to the misunderstanding of his parishioners', it being 'unknown whether he be in holie orders or not'.[34]

John Ward of St Michael's was a highly respected figure among godly circles. A patron of religious learning in his own right, the minister retained strong personal links with his old college and its master William Sancroft, acting as a local talent scout for that 'Nursery of Preachers' that 'famous seminary', whose 'renowne whereof make every man that looketh heaven-ward desirous to crowd his children into'.[35] Ward enjoyed considerable cachet with the city's preaching fraternity, even if such popularity did not extend to all of Norwich's inhabitants. For example, one Frances Whitacres, a parishioner at St Michael's, expressed the wish that 'if she should meete with him, she would spitt in his face and discharge her ordinance at him' adding that 'she had as willingly receive the sacrament of a dogge as of Mr Ward', for which words and other lewd behaviour, that acknowledged crusader against profane living, Mayor George Birch, had her whipped and committed to Bridewell.[36] Bishop Harsnett was equally

[34] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 134; NRO DN REG/16/22, fo. 21r; NRO MC 16/15, fos. 1-2. During the 1634 visitation, Ward was similarly presented at St Swithan's for neglecting to read prayers on holy days, NRO DN VIS/6/4.

[35] BL Harl MS 3783, fo. 38r, a letter dated 1634 from Ward imploring Sancroft to safeguard his son's education, so that the boy 'shall in due time come forth to beare the name of the Lord Jesus, and lift him up amongst his people'. Ward also hoped to advance the learning of the son of Gilbert Cushion, a schoolmaster, deacon and 'a godly poor man of our city'.

[36] NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 358r, 28 July 1621. For George Birch see above, pp. 70-1.

unimpressed with Ward's standing among the civic elite. Armed with what he understood to be a royal brief to discipline lecturers, the prelate seized the moment to silence Ward's Monday sermons on the grounds that, as Ward later testified to the House of Commons in 1624, his preaching was not only superfluous but 'needlesse'.[37]

Harsnett ordered the conversion of the Monday and Friday St Andrew's lectures into combination exercises of ministers from 'out of the country'. At a stroke the number of civic sponsored public sermons was halved from four a week to two, with the St Andrew's Thursday lecture being held in conjunction with a Wednesday exercise at St Clement's, leaving the corporation to fill the roster on the other two weekdays.[38] John Ward's name disappears from the payments for preachers in the city chamberlains' accounts after 1623. While John Yates assumed the remaining Thursday lecture at St Andrew's until the summer of 1623, the altered circumstances perhaps influenced his decision to leave the city for the north Norfolk living of Stiffkey, highlighted on the map between pages 121 and 122, upon the presentation of an ageing Sir Nathaniel Bacon in September 1622.[39] Admittedly, there the new minister found the pulpit 'too low' for his preaching stature.[40] But upon relinquishing his former stipend, Yates's turn as both chaplain and lecturer at St Andrew's passed to another Emmanuel College fellow, Laurence Howlett in November 1624.[41]

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[37] BL Add MS 18597, fo. 168v.
[38] Bod L Tanner MS 314, fo. 155v; NRO CA, 1603-25, fos. 377r, 399v. For the problems of settling payments for the combination exercises see MCB/16, fo. 18r, 23 Oct 1624; AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 217v, 14 Oct 1625.
[39] NRO CA, fo. 396v; DN VSC/2/3a, p. 99. Nathaniel Bacon died in February 1623, five months after appointing Yates, PRO PROB 11/141, fo. 117v. For Bacon's role as a patron of godly learning see A. Hassell Smith, '"Puritanism" and "Neighbourhood": a Case Study in Late 16th and Early 17th Century Norfolk', in E. Royle (ed.), *Regional Studies in the History of Religion in Britain*, pp. 81-93.
[40] NRO DN VIS/6/1, visitation presentments, 1629. For the decayed state of Stiffkey pulpit see, NRO ANW 3/27, *comperta*, 1625; ANW 3/28, *comperta*, 1626; ANW 3/29, *compaerta*, 1629.
[41] NRO AB /5, 1613-42, fo. 183r, 24 Nov 1624; CA, 1603-25, fo. 396v; Venn ii, p. 420.

Whether Yates's move was motivated solely by mounting episcopal pressure cannot be answered satisfactorily. However, the timing of his departure was conspicuous, coinciding as it did with Harsnett's ongoing clampdown on pulpits elsewhere in Norwich, occasioned by James's Directions to Preachers issued in August 1622.[42] Again, there is a possibility that Harsnett exerted an influence over the contents of these articles.[43] It is certainly the case that the spirit of this declaration mirrored the earlier orders determining the corporation lectureships instigated in Norwich diocese in July. The August directions went a step further than the previous injunctions. Intended to curb the excesses of 'diverse yonge students' who 'by reading of late writers and ungrounded divines' have broached 'unprofitable, unsound, seditious and dangerous doctrines' leading to disquiet in both church and state, preachers were admonished to conduct sermons 'in a regular form'. By this, sermons were to follow set patterns laid down in the Articles of Religion and the Homilies. Moreover, expositions upon the starker points of predestination, election and reprobation, now deemed controversial, were to be avoided. Discussions on the prerogative powers of sovereign princes were also prohibited. Instead, preachers were to reinforce obedience to the state and uniformity in the church without falling into 'bitter invectives and undecent rayling speeches against the persons of either papists or puritans', especially 'when the auditory is suspected to be tainted with the one or the other infection'.[44]

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[42] This was the conclusion reached in Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 276. However, there may have been other reasons tempting Yates away from Norwich. For example, by her will written in 1621and proved two years later, Bacon's eldest daughter and immediate heir, Lady Anne Townshend, made provisions for educating the poor children of Stiffkey, possibly with Yates in mind as a potential schoolmaster, PRO PROB 11/141, fo. 118r.
[43] Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* I, p. 216.
[44] LPL Register Abbot ii, fos. 199r-200r.

In this respect, the declaration reflected King James's longstanding concerns to sustain balance and harmony in the church. However, one crucial provision, intended to promote greater unity, rested on the encouragement of all clergymen to catechise upon the basic tenets of Christianity rather than offer sermons on Sunday afternoons. It was the last point, article two of the royal injunctions, which Harsnett employed in a draconian way to regulate preaching still further. For at a later stage in September 1622, the bishop forbade the continuation of all Sunday morning services in Norwich beyond 9.30 a.m. to enable the city's inhabitants, all 20,000, the opportunity to attend the sermon at the cathedral, to be followed in every parish church by afternoon catechism classes instead of preaching.[45] Combined, both measures proved controversial in Norwich, a city imbued with a strong Sabbatarianism since the 1570s.[46] At once the godly were denied their staple diet of painful and precise preaching on the Lord's Day, while along practical lines, Norwich's sermon going citizens were forced to cram themselves into the cathedral nave or, if weather permitted, outside in the adjoining 'green yard' where there was not enough room for the 20,000 or 30,000 expected to be present.[47]

Recalling the order's impact nearly twenty years later in 1641, one Norwich minister, William Alanson, noted how the elderly and infirm living in the remoter corners of the city were loath to make the journey. Moreover, in the case of those compelled to attend, the lack of space and available seating ensured that many, especially youths bound as servants or apprentices, individuals traditionally deemed as being most in need of pious instruction, were also deterred from following their masters beyond the cathedral gates. Instead they fell into bad company

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[45] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 316r, 336r; *LJ* III, p. 388; BL Harl MS 159, fo. 118v; NRO ANW 21/1, fo. 8v.
[46] For the origins of Sabbatarianism in Elizabethan Norwich, see above, pp. 43-4.
[47] Bod L Tanner MS 114, fos. 205-6.

absconding to inns and taverns for all manner of riotous activities. Feasting, gaming or 'worse matters for the maintenance whereof', away from the glare of watchful supervision, servants and 'cash-keepers' were prone 'sundry times' to 'fall short of their accounts', squandering their employers' earnings on vain pastimes.[48] Accordingly, Harsnett undermined the moral fabric of city society. However, the fact that this pessimistic account was penned in 1641 by William Alanson, Bishop Wren's chaplain and correspondent on Norwich affairs, should make us pause. In 1636 Wren had decided to overturn Harsnett's ruling. Naturally, Alanson was anxious to remind his master of this seemingly benevolent act, to use in his defence against impeachment proceedings brought by the Long Parliament.[49]

Thus Alanson had strong motives to condemn Harsnett's earlier reforms. Nevertheless, his report accurately summarised the anxieties felt by Norwich's godly magistrates that the loss of Sabbath day preaching stood to turn city life upside down. At least this was the cause behind the petitioning campaign mounted towards the end of 1623. Presented to the Mayor's Court in December and endorsed by three hundred signatures calling for the restoration of Sunday morning sermons, the original document has not survived.[50] But it is likely to have conveyed the points echoed by Alanson. Here, the petition's timely appearance during the mayoralty of Robert Craske, a known disciple of godly clergy, who as an apprentice grocer in 1584 had presented Mr Olyet, a minister, to the magistrates for speaking 'unseemely and contemptuous words tendynge to the discredit and defaymynge of the preachers of gods word', was more than

[48] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336r..
[49] *Ibid*, fo. 316r. For Alanson see below, pp. 152-3, 202-3. Wren's change of tack as regards Sunday sermons is recorded in Tanner MS 137, fo. 7r-8v.
[50] See the comparable charge levelled against Harsnett in 1624 that 'many being old and not able for their age to come so far' were prevented from attending the cathedral sermon, Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 206; NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 508v, 21 Dec 1621.

coincidental.[51] If anyone were to champion the godly cause, it would be Alderman Craske, whom we shall meet again. However, with the summoning of a Parliament in the following spring, the Mayor and his supporters were presented with an opportunity to air their grievances against local episcopal government at Westminster. The outcome and significance of their lobbying will now be discussed.

[51] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 74. Robert Craske became sheriff in 1607, *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 75; NRO MCB/11, 1582-7, p. 362, 18 Nov 1584.

7. THE 1624 PARLIAMENT AND JOHN YATES'S DEFENCE OF CALVINIST ORTHODOXY

Samuel Harsnett's pursuit through Parliament by Norwich's troubled citizens is well documented. Besides the formal outline of events in the Journals of the two houses, the unprecedented nature of proceedings against a Lord Bishop in the Commons warranted copious notes in Sir Walter Erle's Parliamentary diary, now deposited in the British Library.[1] Another insider account is furnished by John Yates's recollection penned in the early 1640s.[2] In addition, we are fortunate to posses Harsnett's replies to the original articles made against him, which have survived among the Tanner Manuscripts.[3] Combined, this material enables us to build up a detailed picture of the background to the issues raised in May 1624. Above all, the extant documentation affords a glimpse at a closely knit pressure group at work in challenging their diocesan, a significant factor which nurtured King James's suspicions over an alleged puritan conspiracy to subvert the royal prerogative. In turn pressure politics proved unsettling for Norwich's civic elite with overtones for the future.

To begin with, it is important to note that the Norwich petition sent to Westminster under the sponsorship of Mayor Robert Craske, was dispatched without the prior consent of the entire city. The document had been certified by the Mayor's Court. However, it did not bear the common seal, a significant point in light of the later petitioning campaign against Matthew Wren, which had to be ratified by the city Assembly to carry any weight with Charles I.[4] In 1624, Craske's claim to speak for the citizens of Norwich lacked a firm constitutional basis.

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[1] *CJ* I, pp. 699-701, 705, 714-5; *LJ* III, p. 386; BL Add MS 18597, fos. 167r-75v. The fullest treatment remains Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 272-9.
[2] BL Add MS 25278, especially fos. 124v, 137r-9v.
[3] Bod L Tanner MS 114, fos. 205-20.
[4] See below, pp. 201-7.

This may explain why the two city burgesses, Sir William Denny and Sir Thomas Hyrne were reluctant to risk their reputations by forwarding the puritan appeal in the House of Commons.[5] Instead the mayor acted through the agency of the knight of the shire, Sir John Corbet. Without seeking some prior consultation with their burgesses, Harsnett was able to dismiss the Norwich men's charges as the work of 'a companie of factious puritans'. At least, this was the view taken by Francis Nethersole when describing the proceedings to Sir Dudley Carleton.[6]

From Robert Craske's perspective, John Corbet, by possessing the added prestige of a county seat, was a potentially more influential patron than either William Denny or Thomas Hyrne. Moreover, as one of the godly, Corbet was also sympathetic to the mayor's cause. Along with his brother Miles, the recorder of Great Yarmouth and a future regicide, Corbet can be identified at the heart of a purposeful puritan network criss-crossing Norfolk, which played a significant part in the religious contests of the 1630s.[7] Another link between the Corbets and Norwich is furnished by Robert Gallard, the former Thursday lecturer at St Andrew's. Gallard officiated at the Corbet family seat of Sprowston, dedicating a volume of sermons to that 'trulie religious gentleman' Sir Thomas Corbet and his wife Anne, parents of Miles and John.[8] Gallard had much to say about his ordinary's shake up of Norwich's lectureship series. Ironically, the

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[5] PRO SP 14/165/2. For a list of members present at the 1624 Parliament see BL Harl MS 159, fo. 6. Judging from his future defence of Bishop Wren while serving as city recorder in 1636, William Denny was unlikely to have supported the mayor. Thomas Hyrne's position is unknown, although given his earlier role as a patron of cathedral worship, donating £10 towards the cost of a new organ in 1607, he was probably unsympathetic to the puritan cause, NRO DCN 107/1.

[6] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 130; PRO SP 14/165/21.

[7] *DNB* 'Miles Corbet'; NRO MC 46/4, contains Corbet's defence of his signing Charles I's death warrant.

[8] See above, pp. 71-2, 90-2; NRO CA, 1603-25, fo. 377r; NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book, 1627; *DNB* 'Miles Corbet'; Thomas Newhouse, *Certaine sermons preached by T. Newhouse set forth by R. Gallard* (1614), *STC* 18493, p. 89.

Corbets were also distant relatives of Samuel Harsnett, making the course of Parliamentary proceedings in 1624 something of a family affair, a point not lost on the bishop himself.[9]

The plot thickens when we learn that, besides the Corbets, Mayor Craske was also associated with Sir Edward Coke. Soon to emerge as the champion of the city's complaints against Harsnett, Coke, a former recorder of Norwich, was no friend of the bishop having previously gone out of his way, while Attorney General in 1599, to present Harsnett on treason charges for licensing John Hayward's *The First Part of the Life and Reign of King Henry IV*, a work containing a eulogy to the Earl of Essex then in disgrace.[10] The lawyer pursued the same quarry with equal tenacity in May 1624. Moreover, as a prominent Norfolk landowner in his own right, Coke could count among his tenants as Lords of the Manor of Welborne, Robert Craske and his fellow Norwich alderman Thomas Atkin, who also happened to be a near kinsman of the Corbet brothers, through marriage to the Brewsters of Wrentham, Suffolk.[11] With the assistance of influential backers at Westminster assured, statements against the bishop were taken on 3rd May.[12] Initially, Harsnett was investigated according to four main clauses referred to a joint committee of both Lords and Commons on 15th May, which included Sir John Corbet among its membership. The charges were then enlarged to six points read on 18th May and presented to the peers the next day. Throughout we encounter the same godly connections at work, the witnesses being headed by two victims of the episcopal reforms in 1622, John Ward

[9] W. G. Bentham, 'Pedigree of Archbishop Samuel Harsnett', *Essex Review*, 40 (1931), pp. 108-9.
[10] Hawes, *Officers*, p. xxxvii; *DNB* 'Samuel Harsnett'; PRO SP 12/274/61-2, 275/31.
[11] PRO E 134/8Chas1/Mich3. Thomas Atkin's second daughter Anne married Humphrey Brewster, son of Francis and a patron of the puritan émigré John Philips, later of New England. Miles Corbet in turn married Humphrey Brewster's sister, see D. Brunton and D. H. Pennington, *Members of the Long Parliament* (London, 1954), p. 110.
[12] BL Add MS 18597, fo. 167r.

and John Yates, who protested against the loss of their lectureships.[13] Let us examine some of the other accusations in detail.

Besides objections to his suppressing of Sunday morning sermons, Harsnett came under fire after excommunicating parishioners for not praying towards the east, while encouraging the setting up of images in churches across the city. The last move was perceived as a direct obverse to the promotion of preaching initiatives.[14] However, evidence supporting these allegations was derived ostensibly from one parish, St Peter Mancroft, where two representatives, the curate Samuel Gardiner, sometime chaplain to Archbishop Abbot and John Thacker, one of the vestrymen, were forward in supplying details to the Commons' committee. A common councillor, who would eventually rise to the mayoralty in 1643, John Thacker was a staunch ally of Robert Craske.[15] During Easter 1624, prior to his summons to Westminster, Thacker had been at loggerheads with his fellow parishioners over a contested nomination to the office of churchwarden, a post which the majority within the vestry had allotted to the more affluent and prestigious Alderman Alexander Anguish for a second term. Thacker challenged the election, in the Consistory Court, where Anguish attacked his opponent as 'factiouslie given'.[16] By travelling to the capital to give evidence against his bishop, John Thacker was proving a point about his ability to represent his parish's interests, particularly when established patterns of

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[13] *CJ* I, p. 705; BL Add MS 18597, fo. 168v; Add MS 25278, fo. 138v.
[14] PRO SP 14/165/2; Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 205.
[15] BL Add MS 18597, fo. 168r; *DNB* 'Samuel Gardiner'. John Thacker had been a councillor since 1618. He rose to sheriff in 1629 and became an alderman in 1638, Hawes, *Officers*, p. 150 and *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 82. For his mayoralty see below, pp. 199-200, 266-70.
[16] NRO DN CON/12, unfoliated; PD 26/71 (S), pp. 45. 47. Alexander Anguish was the largest taxpayer on moveable goods in Mancroft as well as the high collector for the 1624 subsidy, PRO E 179/153583.

worship were being challenged by episcopal censure. The councillor's squabbles over office-holding also suggest that Harsnett's actions had exacerbated factions in the St Peter's vestry.

With such parochial bickering in mind, we turn to Thacker's testimony against the bishop's commendation of a beautification programme in his church. Allegedly, this was lavish. Involving the defacing of a monument to accommodate a high altar adorned with images and crucifixes, it also included the setting up of a decorous font complete with a silver dove descending and 'stirring the water with its wings'. On Thacker's account, the bishop played an indirect part in the scheme. According to information imparted to the councillor by his friend Mayor Craske, Harsnett had merely expressed approval of the project, adding 'the blessing of God be upon those that did it'. Instead, the real culprits were several vestrymen. They had redirected some £200 designated for the repair of the church roof towards the plan even though, as noted by the curate Samuel Gardiner, most of the parish had contested it. Thacker hoped to tarnish his opponents with the same idolatrous brush applied to the bishop, who 'caused it to go on'.[17] It is not difficult to discern Thacker's motivation in wanting to testify before the Commons' committee, although it would be rash to discount the councillor's evidence of church beautification as being deliberately embroidered. Indeed the richness of Mancroft's furnishings caused concern nearly twenty years later. The church reappeared among a catalogue of complaints from the city to the Long Parliament in 1642, a petition which John Thacker, then an alderman anticipating elevation to the mayoralty would have endorsed. Consequently, the puritans had much to say about St Peter's. As they observed:

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[17] BL Add MS 18597, fos. 168v, 175v. Thacker's evidence concurs with Harsnett's version of events in Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 219. A brief treatment of this episode is provided by M. Aston, 'Puritans and Iconoclasm, 1560-1660', in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (Basingstoke, 1996), p. 106.

> there are 26 Images painted and their severall names sett downe, then 7 Images without names, alsoe the picture of the devill tempting Christ carved and paynted with many Crucifixes continued in the windowes. All these abound at the Altar. At the font there are alsoe divirse Images upon the topp, an angell gloriously apparrelled standing upon a gilt globe and holding a scepter in his hand, then upon 4 pillars stand the 4 Evangelists. There is also hanging over the water a gilded dove susteyned by a wire with about forty Images besides.[18]

This description reiterates the complaints made in 1624. That Harsnett's episcopate had witnessed the transformation of his parish church into an 'idolatrous temple' certainly left John Thacker seething for two decades. In 1633, he perhaps hoped to avoid gazing on superstitious images, by sitting out the whole service under his hat. Other parishioners opted for more preventative action, as when one John Hoyle was presented before the Mayor's Court in July 1624, for committing sacrilege in removing the silver dove from St Peter's.[19] This was doubtless the same wooden dove alluded to in articles drawn up against Harsnett. As argued below, the local wrangling at Mancroft was ignited by a more concerted episcopal initiative to remodel parish church interiors across the city and diocese of Norwich in the early 1620s.[20]

Unfortunately for Thacker, his efforts to discredit Harsnett as the cause of parochial faction fighting backfired. The Norwich councillor's protest enabled the bishop to out manoeuvre his accusers by playing the part of a victim to a conspiracy orchestrated by a small clique of subversive puritans. Along the same lines, Harsnett pointed to a further personal grievance against him in relation to a fourth article. Here, the bishop was attacked for censuring one minister, Robert Peck rector of the market town of Hingham, shown on Map 7. 1 overleaf, for catechising and singing psalms with his family at home on Sunday afternoons.[21] Incumbent since 1606, Peck was the principal lecturer at a combination exercise established at Hingham in

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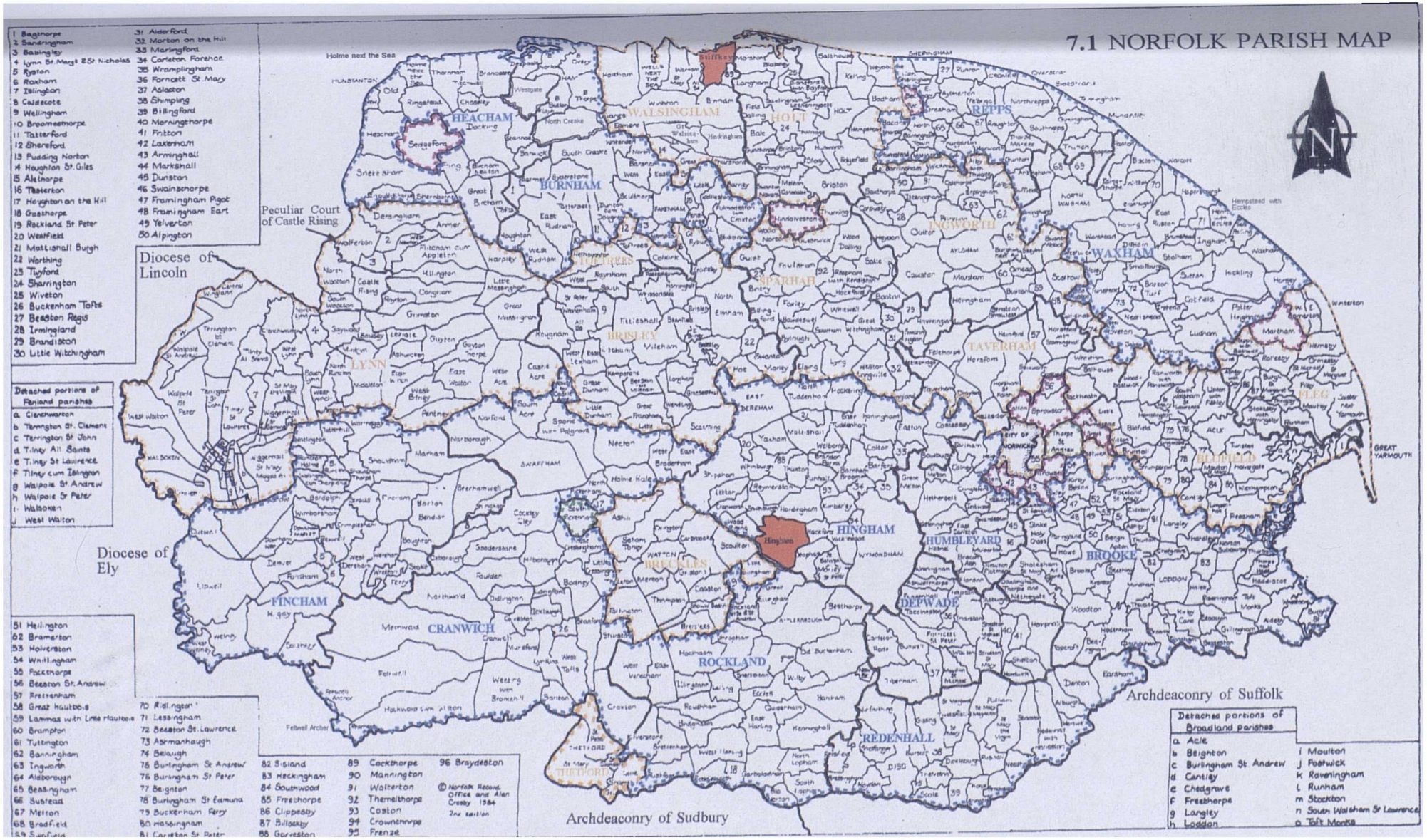
[18] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 131.
[19] NRO DN VIS/6/4; MCB/16, 1624-34, fo. 6v, 17 July 1624.
[20] See below, pp. 148-161.
[21] *CJ* I, p. 705; Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 205.

7.1 NORFOLK PARISH MAP



1610. He was also a near kinsman of the famous John Rogers of Dedham, his son Thomas having married one of Rogers's daughters, sealing Peck's lasting fame and prominence within the East Anglian preaching fraternity.[22] But at the same time, he was a habitual troublemaker. This at least is what Harsnett maintained when compiling his defence, the prelate noting that he had been forced to proceed against Peck upon reports from several local Justices, alarmed by unlawful late night assemblies at the minister's house. The bishop, who also occupied a seat on the county bench, then prosecuted Peck in the Consistory Court. It was alleged that Peck had 'infected the parish with strange opinions as not to kneel when they come to church, that the name of Jesus is no more than a common name and that it is superstitious to bow at the name of Jesus'. Bound over at Quarter Sessions a second time in 1622 for holding conventicles, Harsnett cited other cases of Peck's 'inconformity' from documents since lost.[23]

However, Peck was not the only East Anglian minister to bear a grudge against episcopal government, for another incumbent Thomas Stokes, rector of Carleton Rode, attacked his diocesan on two counts of exacting extortionate fees for institutions. Again, Harsnett ensured that such allegations did not wash. According to the bishop's prompt counter-petition, Stokes, a civil lawyer, had sponsored corruption charges out of a fit of pique upon being turned down for the vacant position of Archdeacon of Norfolk. Smarting, Stokes allegedly threatened to 'smoake the Bishopp with more Complaintes' should his suit not be granted.[24] In Stokes's case, as in those of Thacker and Peck, there was plenty of vitriol for the bishop to exploit to his advantage

[22] NRO DN REG/15/21, fo. 24r; *Reg Vagum* I, p. 102; Bod L Tanner MS 180, fo. 24v.
[23] Bod L Tanner MS 114, fos. 220-1. Harsnett produced evidence of two office cases relating to Peck's previous nonconformity in 1615 and 1617.
[24] Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 222; PRO SP 14/165/2. Stokes, an obscure figure, emerged as an active participant in Bishop Wren's administration in the 1630s being sequestered from his living in 1644, see Venn iv, p. 167; A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 273; Bod L J. Walker MS c 6, fo. 46r.

as the wronged party. Fortunately for Harsnett the king saw things the same way. James proved willing to protect the prelate from further investigation by the Lords, requesting the Upper House through the Lord Keeper, to refer the entire matter to High Commission. Since the articles touched on church affairs, they were to be decided by an ecclesiastical tribunal. Like Harsnett, James was anxious to move the charges out of Upper House's hands, hoping to avoid a dangerous precedent whereby any diocesan might become subject to a Parliamentary inquest. So when Lord Saye motioned that Harsnett be examined by the Lords alone, James intervened in person. Sending a stern rebuke to the peers, the king reminded the House that any such action would serve as a grave affront to the royal prerogative, which forced Saye to shelve further proceedings against the bishop.[25] The king saved Harsnett at the final hour. After Parliament's dismissal on 29th May, the Privy Council embarked on a mopping up exercise against Harsnett's accusers, such as Thomas Stokes, who was bound over to make submission to his ordinary.[26]

Besides Stokes, another spokesman from Norfolk to encounter royal displeasure was John Yates of Stiffkey. Initially Yates had been summoned to Westminster, on his own account to testify against Harsnett for 'putting down preaching and taking too much for orders and institutions'. Seeking to bury the issue, the king ordered Yates to 'make all clear' with his diocesan.[27] However, Yates's audience with the king was also occasioned by the minister's involvement in a second petitioning campaign against Richard Montagu, a royal chaplain and canon of Windsor, who served the cure at Stanford-Rivers in Essex, where he had acted to

[25] S. R. Gardiner, *Notes on the Debates in the House of Lords, 1624 and 1626*, Camden Society, 2nd Series, 24 (1879), p. 96. My reading corrects the version given in Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 274, which implies that the original motion to refer Harsnett to High Commission came from the Lords, when clearly the prime mover was King James.
[26] *APC* 1623-5, pp. 235-7, 12-13 June 1624.
[27] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 138v, 139r.

counter a Catholic proselytiser attempting to make converts among his parishioners.[28] This Montagu did with *A Gagg for an Old Goose*, which attempted to beat the missionary priest at his own game, by blurring the distinctions between the churches of England and Rome. At the heart of Montagu's treatise lay a sensational redefinition of Calvinism as doctrinal puritanism, which in turn enabled the work to serve as a Trojan Horse for the Arminian circle around Richard Neile, whose two chaplains Augustine Lindsell and John Cosin, Montagu's friend and correspondent, were instrumental in guiding *A New Gagg* through the censor.[29] Ensuring the tract's release during the 1624 Parliament, the Arminians hoped to win over James, then seeking distance from mainstream Calvinism with its anti-Papal edge. However, making a successful appeal to his ecumenical sensibilities in line with current foreign diplomacy, the king consequently found Montagu's argument congenial, publicly commending the author with a disarming 'if thou be a papist, I am a papist'.[30]

John Yates viewed the tract rather differently. As he recalled, his involvement in the Montagu affair came about after his recruitment as a spokesman for the opposition, co-ordinated by Archbishop George Abbot and his chaplains, Thomas Goad and Daniel Featley. If his account is to be believed, Yates was pressed to sign a declaration condemning *A New Gagg* during the hearings against Harsnett.[31] From evidence provided by Parliamentary sources, he proceeded to do this along with another minister Nathaniel Ward, not Samuel Ward the infamous

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[28] *Ibid*, fo. 138v; *DNB* 'Richard Montagu'.
[29] Richard Montague, *A Gagg for the New Gospel? No: A New Gagg for an Old Goose* (1624), *STC* 18029, especially pp. 110, 157-72. This was written largely in response to a tract by John Heigham of St Omer, see N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1990), pp. 125-6.
[30] M. Janson and W. B. Bidwell (eds.), *Proceedings in Parliament 1625* (New Haven, 1987), p. 325.
[31] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 138v-9r; K. Fincham, 'Prelacy and Politics: Archbishop Abbot's Defence of Protestant Orthodoxy', *HR*, 61 (1988), p. 57.

Ipswich lecturer as assumed by Peter Heylyn at the Restoration, with the final petition being submitted to the Commons on 13th May 1624 for further deliberation by Abbot.[32] While the two subscribers are identifiable, uncertainty surrounds the authorship of this document and its accompanying set of twenty-one articles outlining Montagu's errors. Immediately after Parliament, Yates was anxious to disassociate himself from the actual articles, even though Montagu in his follow up work *Appello Caesarem, a Just Appeal from Two Unjust Informers* of 1625, had no doubts as to the identity of his 'unjust informers', those 'Classicall Puritans', the 'two Grandees of the faction, so great and turbulent as most be in the diocese of Norwich'.[33] Yates was forced to defend his reputation in *Ibis ad Caesarem*, denying any foreknowledge of the articles and petition. However, since both documents were conveniently printed at the end of his text, it is possible that the minister was not being entirely candid with the truth, Yates having played a more instrumental role with Daniel Featley and Thomas Goad, than he cared to admit. After all, a prior link already existed between Yates and Goad, the editor of his catechism, *A modell of divinitie* of 1622.[34] While Yates may not have collaborated in the actual framing of the articles, there is every indication that he was carefully lined up as a spokesman on behalf of Abbot's party in 1624.

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[32] PRO SP 14/166, fo. 199, Parliamentary diary of Sir Edward Nichols, which corrects Peter Heylyn's error that the 'two informers' of 1624 were Yates and Ward 'preachers at Ipswich', see *Cyprianus Anglicus* (1668), Wing H1699, pp. 125-6, 135. Samuel Ward's mistaken presence at the 1624 Parliament is repeated in the *DNB* entries for John Yates and Richard Montagu; Greaves and Zaller III, p. 348; J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: the Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 59-60.

[33] Richard Montagu, *Appello Caesarem: a just appeal from two unjust informers* (1625), *STC* 18030, sig. A2, p. 3. See also Montagu's letter to John Cosin, dated 24 Oct 1624, in which he hoped Bishop Neile would move 'my answers to Yates and Ward' through the press, see G. Ornsby (ed.), *The Correspondence of John Cosin DD*, vol. 1, Surtees Society, 52 (1869), p. 22.

[34] John Yates, *Ibis ad Caesarem, or a submissive appearance before Caesar in answer to Mr Montagues Appeale* (1626), *STC* 26083, sig. A2, pt. iii, pp. 45-6; *idem*, *A modell of divinitie catechistically composed* (1622), *STC* 26085, 'An advertisement to the reader'.

Contemporaries familiar with Yates's work would have understood the allusion to the eponymous mythical creature Ibis. Dedicating his earlier catechism to the 'worthy senators' of Norwich corporation, he warned his patrons not to follow the pattern of Alexandria in Egypt, which having 'nourished the great bird Ibis to devour the garbage and offall of it...left of his owne filth and beastliness more noysome behind him'. The in-joke about Richard Montagu's trail of 'filth and beastliness' was easy to appreciate. However, by proving himself forward in condemning Montagu's anti-Calvinist line, Yates has gone down in Stuart history's hall of fame, in spite of his own repeated efforts to justify his conformity, as a puritan agitator and a religious radical, a misleading depiction of his later career, which I will now attempt to dispel. Partly, the assessment owes much to Montagu's and afterwards Peter Heylyn's sullying of his reputation.[35] Such notoriety also derives from Yates's own memory of the 1624 Parliament, which now lurks amid a manuscript treatise, 'Eldership the Greatest Lordship' among the St John papers in the British Library. Having signed a petition against his chaplain, James was incensed with Yates. Summoning him to his presence, the king assailed the minister with terrible and often quoted words that such 'puritans dissolved parliaments, perturbed his affairs and [he said] he would make his kingdom too hot for us'. From this outburst, Yates's fullest biographer to date, Kenneth Shipps, labelled his subject a radical puritan.[36] Yet Shipps failed to place 'Eldership the Greatest Lordship' in the context of Yates's pre-Civil War writings, especially his work in defence of the Caroline ecclesiastical policy, printed in the late 1630s.[37]

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[35] John Yates, *A modell of divinitie* 'Epistle Dedicatory'; Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 125-6, 135.
[36] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 124v, 136r; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 271-9 especially, pp. 278-9.
[37] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage' p. 279 n. 41,which simply notes that Yates penned 'a moderate treatise against factions in 1637' without exploring the work further.

Additionally, Shipps failed to address the issue of what shall for convenience be termed, the problem of the two John Yates. Confusion persists over whether John Yates, the controversialist against Richard Montagu was the same person as John Yates, author of *A treatise of the honor of Gods house*, published to justify Caroline altar policy in 1637 and since identified by Peter Lake as contributing towards the 'ideological synthesis' he termed the 'Laudian style'.[38] Following the entry on Yates in the old *Dictionary of National Biography*, Lake implied a separate authorship. Indeed it was Edward Irving Carlyle, Yates's nineteenth century biographer, who believing *A treatise of the honor of Gods house* to be out of character with his subject's previous works, first posited the existance of two contemporaneous churchmen of the same name. This interpretation has been repeated in Greaves and Zaller's gazetteer of seventeenth century British radicals and Tom Webster's recent study of Caroline puritanism.[39] Unfortunately, both works have recycled Carlyle's version, advancing that John Yates of Norfolk became a Congregationalist minister in the 1640s, the co-editor of two Independents, Jeremiah Burroughs and William Bridge as well as the signatory of *A Renunciation and declaration of the Ministers of Congregational churches...in the City of London*, printed in response to Thomas Venner's Fifth Monarchy plot of 1661.[40]

But it remains to be seen whether the Norfolk John Yates became associated with the emergent Independent party among the Westminster assembly of Divines. To begin with, the Stiffkey parish register records the minister's burial on 12th September 1657, confirming that he

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[38] P. Lake, 'The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), p. 167.
[39] *DNB* 'John Yates'; Greaves and Zaller III, p. 348; T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 315
[40] *DNB* 'John Yates' citing B. Hambury, *Historical Memorials Relating to the Independents or Congregationalists* (3 vols., London, 1839-44), III, p. 595.

was not alive to witness Venner's abortive coup.[41] Certainly, Yates knew William Bridge and Jeremiah Burroughs in the 1630s. But there is nothing to suggest that he shared their ideological outlook in the 1640s and indeed John Yates of Stiffkey's name can be found on an address of Norfolk Presbyterian clergy, printed during the second Civil War in June 1648, in direct opposition to the Independents.[42] It is more likely that the editor of Burroughs and Bridge's sermons in 1647 and 1649 was another John Yates. A Congregationalist who became vicar of West Ham in the 1640s and rector of Cheshunt Hertfordshire in 1656, from where he was ejected at the Restoration, the second John Yates is a likelier candidate for the signatory against Venner, also being well placed in the capital to serve as a disciple to Burroughs and Bridge.[43]

Instead John Yates of Stiffkey had become a Presbyterian by 1648. The same concerns for a national church structure aligned to the Scottish system also informed the manuscript treatise 'Eldership the Greatest Lordship', which by reflecting on events surrounding the authorship of *Ibis ad Caesarem*, can only have been written by John Yates.[44] Unfortunately this later piece is not dated. However, by referring to having taken the Solemn League and Covenant in favour of a Presbyterian system as 'a divine ordinance appointed by Christ' to 'gather and govern the church...in all nations', against the tyranny of 'Babylons Bishops', the author

[41] NRO PD 492/1, Stifflkey parish register, unfoliated. Yates's will, which exists as a draft copy only, was not proved by the Norwich Consistory Court until 1662, see NRO NCC O. W. 1662 204; M. A. Barrow and T. F. Barton (comps.), *Index of Wills Proved at the Consistory Court of Norwich, 1604-1686*, NRS, 28 (1958), p. 217.

[42] Yates had acted as one of William Bridge's patrons in 1630, PRO SP 16/531/134; BLTT E 447 (6), *The Attestation of the Ministers of the County of Norfolk and the City of Norwich, in vindication...of the Solemn Covenant against the spreading Errors and prodigious Blasphemies that are scattered abroad in these licentious Dayes* (1648).

[43] BLTT E 424 (1), Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* (1647), 'To the Reader'; E 471 (1), *The Works of William Bridge* (1649), 'To the Reader'. That John Yates of West Ham was the editor in each case is also suggested by A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), p. 551.

[44] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 124v, 136r.

indicates a period from the end of 1643 to the summer of 1644.[45] This time scale is confirmed by the dedication to 'an honourable friend' the Solicitor General Oliver St John. Then engaged in devising a settlement amid widening fissures in the Westminster Assembly, with the passing of the toleration order of September 1644, St John emerged as an Independent opposed to Presbyterianism on Erastian grounds of retaining greater state control over the church.

Prior to his about turn, St John was courted by the Scottish Presbyterian Robert Baillie as the Scots' ablest supporter in Parliament.[46] It appears that Yates in arguing for a clear demarcation between the roles of lay magistrates and ministers in ordering the church, also singled out the Solicitor General as a potential champion against Independency. For Yates, Parliament, the 'senate of seventy' not 'one of them of the Tribe of Levi', occupied a subordinate position in ecclesiastical affairs. The civil magistracy could nominate judges and elders of the people, laymen without discretion 'in the word and sacrament or power of the keyes in any ministeriall action', to function as arbitrators in disciplinary matters, making the ministry 'capable as a court to give an oath which power Christ left not in his church'. However, it was contrary to the word of God and wisdom of the state for individual congregations to appoint their clerical elders directly. As such it was 'the error of our age that denie the whole ministrie of the Church of England and set up one of their own, as if Christ left the power of the people to perfect themselves', since God as the sole author of the ministry made the 'people our end, but no originall of our calling'. Here Yates hoped to counter Congregationalist ideas of a ministry by

[45] *Ibid*, fos. 124v, 125v, 126r-v.
[46] *Ibid*, fos. 119v, 120r, 122v; *DNB* 'Oliver St John'; W. A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church During the Civil War and Under the Commonwealth* (2 vols., London, 1900), II, pp. 41-3.

'popular' election, echoing his earlier exchange with John Robinson over lay prophesying in 1618, discussed above.[47]

In appealing to St John, Yates sought to clear his own name from allegations of inconsistency for having sided with episcopal government in the 1630s, which culminated in a rapprochement with his old literary adversary Richard Montagu, installed as Bishop of Norwich from 1638 until his death in 1641. On this count Yates's apology for his actions has a bearing on how we interpret his defence of Calvinist orthodoxy in 1624. Certainly, since the 1624 Parliament, relations had warmed between the two divines, Yates recalling a congenial reception at the bishop's palace, 'you are welcome to me if I am welcome to you, not a word of our controversy, I am weary with chiding'. Indeed Yates was able to account Montagu 'my greatest friend'. Yet at the same time, he was at pains to demonstrate that such familiarity had not forced him to abandon his previous convictions, complaining that 'many have conceived that he [Montagu] converted me to be an Arminian, and I shall have bine one in point if I had not prevented it in a miserable mangled copy and two books [which] came out before this Parliament, that I heare are put up unto it for popery, and so Sir Edward Dering hath printed, but I could pay him for more wit and discretion, and I have noted contradictions, the sign of a light brain'.[48] Here the stern rebuke against Edward Dering, provides a revealing link back to the 1630s. With the opening of the Long Parliament, John Yates had been targeted in one of the Kent MP's early speeches with other Laudian apologists, John Pocklington, Peter Heylyn, Christopher Dowe, Robert Shelford, Peter Hausted and other authors of 'audacious and libelling

[47] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 122r-v, 126r-v, 143r; see above, pp. 92-5.
[48] *Ibid*, fos. 137r, 124v, 139v.

pamphlets against true religion', licensed during the Personal Rule.[49] Yates sought to disassociate himself from enthusiasts for Caroline ceremonialism, particularly in view of his subsequent condemnation of 'Babylons Bishops'.

The first of the 'two books' referred to must be *A treatise of the honor of Gods house*, which was entered into the Stationers' Register in June 1637, when Norwich diocese was reeling from the aftershocks of Bishop Wren's enforcement of the 'altar policy' the previous summer.[50] The connection with Norwich diocese is confirmed by the dedication to Clere Talbot, a civil lawyer and Norfolk Justice of the Peace, who served as one of Wren's officers.[51] Laced with scathing comments atacking disobedient 'unruly vaine talkers', those 'contentious spirits' and 'bad humours' that 'make work enough for them which have most to do, and set all in combustion', the author appealed to the civilian's prejudices. Charged with enforcing Wren's reforms Talbot would have applauded Yates's attack on puritan dissenters. Observing that it is 'a happy church that is without weedes', Yates went on to posit that 'separations are not to be trusted that seek safety where Satan shall not find them, America is no more the place than Rome, Satan is to be feared, hath found and will find their societies'. Instead, Yates, who was unwilling to allow scruples of conscience to deter him from his pastoral charge, hoped to reconcile others. As he conceded 'there is a necessitie to preach for order when they that

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[49] BLTT E 197 (1), *A Collection of Speeches made by Sir Edward Dering...in matters of religion* (1642), p. 13. Yates's name does not appear in an earlier edition, BLTT E 196 (18), *Foure Speeches made by Sir Edward Dering in the High Court of Parliament concerning the Archbishop and divers other grievances* (1641), p. 6. However, any omissions can be attributed to the fact that the first version was not authorised by Dering himself, see S. P. Salt, 'The Origins of Sir Edward Dering's Attack on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, c. 1625-1640', *HJ*, 30 (1987), p. 2.

[50] E. Arber (ed.), *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1640* (London, 1877), iv, p. 360 and see below, pp. 192-201.

[51] B. P. Levack, *The Civil Lawyers in England 1603-1641: A Political Study* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 274-5; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 2v; Tanner MS 68, fo. 213r.

professe to be children of our Church nevertheless oppose her holy Orders' adding bluntly that 'its my duty to stande for the Churche' to persuade 'all members to be of one minde'.[52]

It is unclear whether Yates was targeting specific individuals. Nevertheless, the main purpose of his treatise, worth examining in some detail, was to address what he believed 'breedes the greatest scandal', namely the application of the term 'altar' in relation to the permanent setting of the communion table at the east end, a key aspect of Laudian liturgical innovation. Here the significance lay in what he chose not to argue. Rather than advocate the 'altar policy' positively as enhancing the church's sacramental life, Yates defended reform from the negative standpoint of why it was wrong to assume that the word 'altar' necessarily 'induceth a sacrifice' and even if it did, whether every sacrifice should be confuted with the sin of idolatry, since 'it is no human invention to place a Table or Altar immediately before God'. Central to his thesis lay a consideration of the interchangeable use of 'altar' and 'table' to describe the same object. A subtle line, it owed much to Yates's signature Ramist approach to Biblical exegesis, defined in Ian Green's phrase as the 'focus on relationships such as subject and adjunct and on resemblance in quality' according to precise definitions of scriptural meaning.[53]

To begin with, he established what he saw as the abuse of the word 'altar' when taken to signify an idol. Thus any altar bedecked with an image 'to be worshipped and the soule of a dead man conceived to be in that image to heare our prayers, receive our offering and to mediate with Almighty God' marked a 'great abomination' after the custom of 'impious pagans' who

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[52] John Yates, *A treatise of the honor of Gods house: or the true pattern of the church, with a discovery of the true cause and cure of our present contentions* (1637), *STC* 26089, 'To Clere Talbot Dr of Law and Commissary to the Lord Bishop of Norwich'.
[53] *Ibid*, 'To Clere Talbot'; I. Green, *The Christian's ABC: Catechisms and Catechising in England c. 1530-1740* (Oxford, 1996), p. 429.

would 'tie God to them'. Such superstitious usage was not taught by the reformed church, which did not treat the communion table in an idolatrous fashion. From this premise, Yates then went on to justify the application of 'altar' based on an equivalency of phrasing in both the Old and New Testaments, most conspicuously in the passage from Ezekiel 41: 22, where the prophet presented with a vision of the Temple is shown an altar of wood designated the 'table before the Lord'. This example enabled Yates to infer that 'the Holy Ghost is not as curious as these men are curious to call an Altar a Table and a Table an Altar' since both were enjoined together. The same blurring of terms applied to Christian rites, since the Apostles meeting to celebrate the Lord's Supper in designated sanctified places, required a table, signifying the holy table of the Lord as an altar. Moreover, upon renewing their covenant with the Lord, Christians after the Jews likewise received their oblation from an altar. Placing emphasis upon 1 Corinthians 10: 18, 'Behold Israel after the flesh, are not they which eat of the sacrifice partakers of the altar?', he concluded that 'Sacrifice or Sacrament, Table or Altar is all one to the Apostle, so our communion be correspondent thereunto'.[54]

By sacrifice, Yates was anxious to exclude any notion of a material offering. Instead he placed stress upon the sacrifice of prayer through the act of receiving bread at the Lord's table, defined as the place where Christ stands according to Revelations 8: 3, 'And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne'. The twist here was to assign Christ's presence to the figure of the angel rather than to the altar before the throne as a symbol of Christ before the Father. Reading the mystical vision to

[54] Yates, *A Treatise of the honor of Gods house*, sigs. ϒ1r, *3r, ϒ2r-v, §3r, ϒ3v.

preclude any interpretation of the altar as representing Christ, Yates reiterated that it was permissible to worship at the table 'without danger because it must needes be God and no Idoll' being worshipped, the altar simply being made holy as the focus of divine presence in worship.[55] In addition, by equating Christ with the figure of the angel, interceding with the prayers of the saints, Yates invoked the Lord's Supper as a vehicle for affirming God's covenant. So rather than offer an anti-Calvinist or Arminian interpretation of participation in the eucharist, as a way of conferring God's grace on the penitent sinner, he perceived the Lord's Supper in a Calvinist vein as a sacrament whereby God's promise to his elect could be renewed.[56]

Writing in 1637, Yates appealed to the godly not to turn away from the church because the altar had been dressed in a Laudian garb. In essence, the eucharist remained the same, its purpose had not changed in spite of Bishop Wren's insistence that tables were to be aligned in permanent altar-wise positions. Yates accepted the Laudian line that Christians were bound to pray to the altar at the east as a sign of active faith. Because the altar was imbued with the divine presence and since the term denoted the place where the Lord's table stood, it followed that the immediate space surrounding the altar was holier than other aspects of God's House, reflecting the tripartite division of the Tabernacle revealed to Moses into the 'sanctuary', the place of divine majesty, the 'presbytery', the place of ministry and the 'auditory', the area allotted to the twelve tribes of Israel, the people. This pattern, repeated in Solomon's Temple, held true for Christian churches, where for Yates, the sanctuary's orientation was no matter of indifference.[57]

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[55] *Ibid*, sig. Y2v.
[56] For more on the role of the eucharist in mainstream English Protestant thought see A. Hunt, 'The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England', *P & P*, 161 (1998), pp. 39-83, especially pp. 51-60. For Arminian interpretations of the sacrament see N. Tyacke, 'Archbishop Laud', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church*, pp. 61-2.
[57] Yates, *A treatise of the honor of Gods house*, pp. 5, 8, 60, 63.

Aware of the point that the sanctuary in the Temple had been fixed towards the west, Yates in drawing comparisons with the Christian's liberty from the Mosaic law touching Sabbath observance, remarked that Christians were free from the burden of honouring God to the west, one of the 'beggardly rudiments of the time of darkness' tending to idolatry. Instead, rejecting superstition upon renouncing the devil in baptism, Christians renewed their covenant according to the 'ceremonie of prayer into the East'.

It followed from the 'planting of the house of prayer ordinarily' to position the table or altar at the east end 'making that the sanctuary' where 'we have one perfect communion with God'.[58] According to Yates's heightened sense of clerical status, the sanctuary was to be served by a strict ministerial hierarchy. Returning to Revelations 7: 11, 'And all the angels stood round the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God', rendering the text against the prophetic, anagogic sense, he equated the throne with the sanctuary, the fours beasts with the people and the angels with the ministry. Specifically, the angels in verse 14, those who 'have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb' symbolised the disciples and their successors, bishops. Occupying a dignified position close to the throne as the altar's custodians, bishops by assuming an elevated place before the divine presence, were to be honoured above all other ministers.[59] Here Yates criticised any who sought to have Timothy and Titus 'unbishopped'. This was an obvious foil to William Prynne's literary attacks on the episcopal office after 1636, which denied the 'supposed divine Monopoly of conferring orders' granted to the two Biblical figures by St Paul.[60] Rather

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[58] *Ibid*, pp. 52-60.
[59] *Ibid*, pp. 5, 19.
[60] *Ibid*, pp. 34, 39; William Prynne, *The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus and of the Angel of the Church of Ephesus* (Amsterdam, 1636), *STC* 20476, p. 24, reprinted in 1660 as BLTT E 190 (1).

for Yates bishops were 'absolutes in their dioceses'. Having 'none above them in the extraordinary calling' as a 'number of Apostles above the rest', the church held no 'power to confer their ministry which is given them of God and not of man'.[61]

Yates extended his thoughts on the divine status of episcopacy in his second literary excursion from the 1630s. *Imago mundi, et regnum Christi: the foure monarchies, and Christs twofold kingdome*, was entered into the Stationers' Register, having been forwarded by Yates, still styling himself 'minister of God's word', in November 1639. Publication was delayed by several months, anticipating the calling of Parliament amid the Scottish crisis by the Spring of 1640.[62] Prefaced with an elaborate dedication to King Charles, reminding readers that as the sovereign head of both church and state it was impossible for the church to excommunicate, or the people to draw arms against the monarch 'without the dissolution of both', *Imago mundi* stands as a timely piece of propaganda for the Caroline church aimed at English supporters of the Scots. Devoting a passage to the Lord Bishops of the Church of England, those 'Princes of Priests by divine right', Yates picked up the thread of a *Treatise of the honour of Gods house*. Prompted by 'a nameless author', a lawyer, a layman and one of the 'mocking Michaels of our dayes', a reference to Prynne, he returned to the historical treatment of Timothy.[63]

Crucially, much hinged around the interpretation of 1 Timothy 1: 3, where the Apostle was set to govern the church of Ephesus by St Paul. Prynne's demolition of *iure divino* claims

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[61] Yates, *A treatise of the honor of gods house*, pp. 43-6, 49.
[62] E. Arber (ed.), *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers*, iv, p. 465; John Yates, *Imago mundi et regnum Christi: the foure monarchies and Christs twofold kingdom, the gentiles converted* (1640), *STC* 26084, frontispiece. Initially the treatise was entered under its later subtitle *The gentiles converted* only. The subsequent re-working suggests that additions were made prior to release. As Yates hinted later, the extended introduction was possibly compiled in collusion with Richard Montagu, BL Add MS 25278, fo. 124r. Indeed Yates's views on episcopacy mirror the arguments in Montagu's *THEANTHROPIKON* (1640), *STC* 18035, pt. ii, p. 464.
[63] Yates, *Imago mundi et regnum Christi*, sigs, A3v, C2r-v.

for episcopacy rested on the premise that even if Timothy had been conferred absolute power to decide controversies in his own congregation, Ephesus was but one city and as such should not be taken as a pattern for the church. Drawing upon his favoured text, the book of Revelations, Yates posited the contrary. Of vital importance were two passages, chapter 1, verse 20, a vision of the seven angels set above the seven churches, seen as the apostle in each church in Asia and chapter 4, verse 4, an allusion to the four and twenty elders seated around the throne, taken as confirmation of the apostolic succession of bishops above other ministers. Conflating the two, Yates concluded that each city had a throne prepared for specific elders crowned as priests to officiate over every church. Thus Ephesus was not unique, every city having 'but one Bishop to rule over it as the Levites were given to Aaron, so all Priests and Deacons to the Bishop', a statement with ramifications for one contemporary city, Geneva, which having cast aside episcopal government 'by no Constitution can be a Church, or agree with the Apostolicall plantation'. The same criticism applied to the Scottish Kirk after 1637.[64]

Since each city had been entrusted into the care of a bishop, it followed that the ordinary could determine rites in contention, every church being 'under one Bishop and altar, who had power to design the Churches Communion, which is always defined by the unity of one Bishop and Altar, and no believer is said to be within the Altar that is not admitted to the Sacrament by the Bishops approbation'. This was an uncompromising defence of episcopal authority in the tense circumstances of 1640. Yet the author was acutely aware of the need for calm, adding respectfully that he had found his own diocesan 'not Lordly but loving' and willing to put aside

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[64] William Prynne, *The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus*, p. 33; Yates, *Imago mundi et regnum Christi*, sigs, A3v, C*, e.

past differences, the care of prelates being 'not to revenge themselves, but to redress our faults when they find them and why should we fume to have them corrected?' Yates cited his personal reconciliation, like 'two Philosophers', with 'my Lord of Norwich' Richard Montagu. But in doing so, he was forced to justify his actions against the 'conceit' that 'his Lordship would remember an old contention, and that I should be urged to renounce my writing, and indeed, some say I have not only done this, but am wholly changed from what I was and become an Apostate, a heavy judgement and worse than the plague...I know not the contradiction of any thing I have said or written that should shame me...Let him that can...show me the opinion that I had and have changed it'.[65]

Whatever his hopes for unity in 1640, by defending bishops' absolute powers to model liturgical practice, Yates could be read as a staunch Laudian. Apostate or not, his adherence to 'prelatical' government in the 1630s would prove difficult to explain away during the Civil War, especially in light of having sworn the Solemn League and Covenant. Thus the immediate need to justify past actions informed 'Eldership the Greatest Lordship'. Above all, Yates was at pains to stress continuity in his thinking, admitting 'it pleased the Bishops as much with an Altar and the Correlative a Bishop as ever they were disposed with mee for popery and Arminianism' adding that 'its true my notion of an Altar did but suit with theirs in words and they allowed that to goe out with it that confuted their idol'. Any misrepresentations were due to interfering bishops who 'would suffer no truth to come out without a shoeing horse to pull it on', which

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[65] Yates, *Imago mundi et regnum Christi*, sigs. C3-d, summarised, p. 37.

made for a convenient excuse in 1643.[66] However, as far as he was concerned, by refusing to endorse an anti-Calvinist interpretation of the eucharist in 1637, staying true to his understanding of communion as a means of strengthening assurance of faith, he had remained steadfast in his beliefs during the Personal Rule, merely apologising for the 'altar policy' to counter schism in East Anglia after Wren's visitation.

Throughout his career to 1640 it is fitting to label Yates as a Calvinist episcopalian. During the 1630s he strove to accommodate Laudian ceremonialism within his own 'Jacobean' conception of a national reformed church as maintained by an Apostolic succession of bishops. Despite his professed adherence to Presbyterianism in 1643, he was not compelled to retract his former views on *iure divino* episcopacy completely. He did qualify his earlier position that each church in Asia had been founded through the office of one bishop alone, St Paul having established churches 'all now left to these Elders and Bishops in common and under one Presbytery' after 1 Timothy 4: 14, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery'. But this implied parity of ministers did not obscure the linear descent of bishops.[67] Writing for Oliver St John's benefit and applying the same reasoning which led Yates to justify tables as altars and *visa versa*, church elders, nominally the apostles, prophets and evangelists of Scripture, could be subsumed under the titular heading of episcopacy, a superior order of divines responsible for planting the church in primitive times.

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[66] BL Add MS 25278, fo. 137r. There is no evidence to suggest that either of Yates's works from the 1630s were deliberately doctored during the licensing process. For further thoughts on the studied manipulation of the censor in the 1630s see A. Milton, 'Laudianism, Censorship and Religious Orthodoxy in Early Stuart England', *HJ*, 41 (1998), pp. 644-50.

[67] BL Add MS 25278, fos. 120v, 144v.

So by discussing 'a lawful presbytery' after 1643, Yates was really alluding to a modified form of episcopal government. His argument centred on the capacity of specific elders to ordain priests, an office which the apostles had deferred on particular individuals, in other words bishops, 'to be president or moderator' among divines and to 'rule in any presbytery'. Lesser elders, unable to ordain, could not plant or visit churches, a crucial function reserved for elders empowered by bishops.[68] Thus instead of advocating a church eldership served by a ministry on an equal footing, Yates envisaged a presbyterian system facilitated by an episcopate, its *iure divino* powers of ordination and adjudication left intact, although exactly how bishops were to exercise this authority in practice was not developed fully.[69] Stating 'Episcopacy without Presbytery is tyranny' and 'Presbytery without Episcopacy is faction', Yates hinted at a form of clerical synod. Any controversies arising from the 'inspection and ordering' of the church would be put up for deliberation by the ordinary assisted by a staff of resident pastoral elders like himself, 'as if kings, courts and commons should vote the same thing'. Yet this was hardly a radical solution to the question of ecclesiastical government in the 1640s. As he highlighted, those 'bishops who can defend our covenant [and] cannot be against the episcopacy of the apostles or their succession in the planting of churches', should be maintained contrary to the Solemn League's call to extirpate episcopacy root and branch.[70]

The point of assessing John Yates's later writings in depth allows for a fresh perspective on the minister's account of his part in the 1624 Parliament. Far from the radical puritan and latent Congregationalist sketched by Edward Irving Carlyle and Kenneth Shipps, Yates emerges

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[68] *Ibid*, fos. 126v, 127r, 143v, 146r.
[69] *Ibid*, fos. 146r, 165v.
[70] *Ibid*, fos. 143r, 144r-v, 165v.

as a moderate figure, a conformist cleric, whose literary exchange with Richard Montagu was derived from the conservative ends of defending Calvinist orthodoxy against innovative Arminian doctrine. For this reasons it is difficult to substantiate Shipps's claim that Yates led the attack on Harsnett, prompting the first Commons' investigation into a bishop.[71] Rather he was summoned to Westminster as a witness, before becoming entangled in the intrigue between the Arminian party around Bishop Richard Neile and the Calvinist circle about Archbishop George Abbot, to sway King James during the Spanish marriage negotiations. Praising the former king's efforts to retain a balance, Yates recalled how James had acknowledged the minister's 'right way' in presenting grievances to his sovereign.[72] Doubtless Yates sensed royal frustration, expressed in James's much quoted speech at the close of Parliament, which endorsed Bishop Harsnett's efforts to counter the 'Popular party of Puritans' by suppressing 'popular Lectureships', but warned Harsnett from troubling 'Ministers that are Conformitants'.[73] Possibly the king had John Yates in mind when making this qualification. While Yates's perception of Reformation had been dented by Harsnett and roundly challenged by Montagu in 1624, the parson of Stiffkey managed to heal his differences with his current and future diocesans to appear, despite his later protestations to the contrary, as a convinced Laudian in 1637. However, as confessional politics became more polarised in the 1630s, other godly activists from Norwich would not be as willing to accommodate episcopal initiative as John Yates.

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[71] *DNB* 'John Yates'; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 276-80, 299.
[72] BL Add MS 25278, fo. 136r.
[73] BL Harl MS 159, fos. 136r-v.

8. REPERCUSSIONS: RELIGION IN NORWICH IN THE 1620s

By gaining royal approval for his actions, Samuel Harsnett emerged from the political manoeuvres of 1624 as the clear victor. Thwarted in their efforts to overturn the ruling on Sunday morning sermons, Norwich's godly continued to be affronted by this injunction for the next twelve years, until its repeal by Bishop Matthew Wren in 1636. Wren, who had earlier deemed Harsnett as 'so potent, crafty and violent an adversary', changed tack.[1] Wren was concerned that a truncated forenoon services did not allow time for the performance of Common Prayer, complete with the litany, 'to the offence of almighty God and the great scandal of Christian Religion'. As he understood it, the pronouncement to attend the cathedral was being used as an excuse not to fulfil morning worship. He was convinced that Harsnett's directive restricting preaching to expositions on the catechism, was also being subjected to some licence, as ministers departed from the authorised catechetical text in the Prayer Book.[2] The ban on Sabbath day preaching was lifted. However, members of the corporation were still expected to present themselves *en masse* for the whole cathedral service every Sunday. Wren secured a written order from King Charles to ensure that they did.[3]

Although Harsnett's injunctions on preaching within the city caused distress to the zealously Protestant of Norwich's elite, it was also the case that the 1622 orders reinforced developments whereby the cathedral sermon came to occupy a prestigious status in city life. It had been customary for the corporation to attend public sermons at the cathedral since the early

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[1] BL Harl MS 7048, p. 153.
[2] Bod L Tanner MS 137, fos. 7r-8v. By restoring forenoon sermons, Wren intended to reintroduce catechism classes as an extended form of evening prayer beginning at 3.00 p.m., Laud, *Works*, v, p. 538.
[3] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fos. 97v-8r, 23 Mar 1636; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 156.

sixteenth century, if not before.[4] In a post-Reformation setting, preaching at the cathedral acquired a new urgency, particularly throughout much of the Elizabethan era, when the weekly divinity lecture was performed by Henry Byrd, a prominent evangelical who had been forced to depart Norwich under Mary because of his religious views. As cathedral lecturer Byrd was patronised by that noted Protestant founding father, Alderman John Aldrich, among other 'workmen in the Lords busynes'.[5] Henry Byrd was still alive in the first decade of James's reign, when he was presented to the archdeacon for holding an unlicensed school in his house in St Edmund's parish.[6]

Nevertheless, it was during the 1610s, that the Sunday combination exercise in the cathedral green yard began to attract a growing interest from well-to-do citizens. This progression chimed in with initiatives on the part of Dr Edmund Suckling, dean from 1614 until 1628 and a younger son of one of Elizabethan Norwich's mercantile dynasties, to place the cathedral on a firmer footing by lobbying for an authoritative set of statutes, finally granted through Harsnett's intervention in 1620.[7] Son of Robert, mayor in 1572 and 1583, as a local boy, Dean Suckling had sufficient family connections to draw funds to the sermon in two ways.[8] First of all, prominent burgesses were encouraged to enhance the green yard's reputation by endowing specific sermons to attract preaching talent from across Norwich diocese. As a result the green yard's physical surrounds were lavished with greater expense, particularly in regards to seating.

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[4] R. Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation, 1538-1628', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral, Church, City and Diocese 1096-1996* (London, 1996), pp. 535-6.
[5] NRO DCN 47/1, fos. 395-6; John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1563), *STC* 11222, p. 1678, a reference I owe to Tom Freeman; PRO PROB 11/64, fo. 208r, will of John Aldrich, proved 1582.
[6] NRO ANW 3/12, *comperta* 1606.
[7] Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation', pp. 511-3; NRO DCN 24/2, fo. 30v; DCN 115/9, iii, 1620.
[8] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 60.

A key patron on the first count was Sir John Pettus, mayor in 1608 and MP for Norwich on two occasions in 1601 and 1604, who had been knighted during James's progress from Scotland in 1603. Through a prosperous marriage with the Curteises of Honington, Suffolk, Pettus had also come into landed wealth.[9] Owning estates in Suffolk and at Rackheath, Norfolk, as well as property in London, the alderman was well placed when drafting his will in 1614 to bequeath 10s, out of the 'love, zeal and religious mind' he had 'unto the preaching of the word of God', for every sermon delivered at the green yard from Trinity Sunday to the Sunday before the bishops' synod, commonly called 'Steane day'. It was at this assembly of the Norfolk clergy, held at Michaelmas, that the rota for next summer's cathedral sermons would be drawn up.[10] By providing adequate finances for this preaching series, Pettus set a precedent for other eminent men to follow, fostering interest in the green yard sermon as an occasion for grand civic spectacle. Dean Suckling applauded such benefaction. So too did the dean's brother Sir John Suckling, from 1622 the comptroller of the royal household, who supplemented Pettus's original endowment, bringing added cachet to the combination.[11] The cathedral sermon attracted increasing numbers of distinguished visitors from out of town. In 1631, Suckling's successor John Hassell was able to tout the event to his patron Viscount Dorchester as appealing to 'the best qualitie that the Countie can afford, as knights, gentlemen, councillors at law etc'. The corporation was equally keen to encourage such 'qualitie'. Part solemn religious observance, part gathering for the country society, the exercise provided an opportunity for networking and the conduct of business affairs. Taking advantage, the city hired a steward for 'keeping the door

[9] *Ibid*, p. 83; J. Pound, *Tudor Norwich* (Chichester, 1988), p. 83; *HP 1558-1603*, iii, p. 212.
[10] PRO PROB 11/123, fo. 412r; Houlbrooke, 'Refoundation and Reformation', p. 536.
[11] NRO DCN 29/2, p. 32, which lists provisions for sermons from two other citizens, Henry Fawcett and Edward Nutting. For John Suckling see *DNB*, entry for his son Sir John Suckling the poet.

at Christ Church sermons' for honoured guests. At the same time, the corporation made provisions for the collection of alms at the cathedral entrance every Sunday, sealing the exercise as a regular institution within the civic week.[12]

Given this background, Harsnett's 1622 injunction on Sunday preaching would not have been received in a universally negative vein by all of Norwich's citizens. Some undoubtedly welcomed the chance for formal display within the cathedral setting, while others were known to be openly enthusiastic One prominent layman, likely to have supported the measure, was Harsnett's ally Alderman William Browne. To begin with, Browne had already proved himself a conspicuous patron of the worship carried out in Christ Church, which was overlooked by his house situated in the adjoining parish of St George Tombland, as shown on the map overleaf.[13] In 1608, he had been forward among other citizens with his near neighbour Edmund Anguish, in contributing towards a new cathedral organ.[14] Moreover in 1615, Browne, again in collusion with Edmund Anguish and another fellow merchant Hammond Thurston, laid out significant expense upon revamping the galleries around the green yard 'for the better and more convenient setting and hearing for themselves and their friends' of the sermons preached there.[15] Investing in the surrounds of the preaching space, Browne anticipated moves to transform the cathedral exercise into the high spot of civic religious life. Against the backdrop of Harsnett's troubles in

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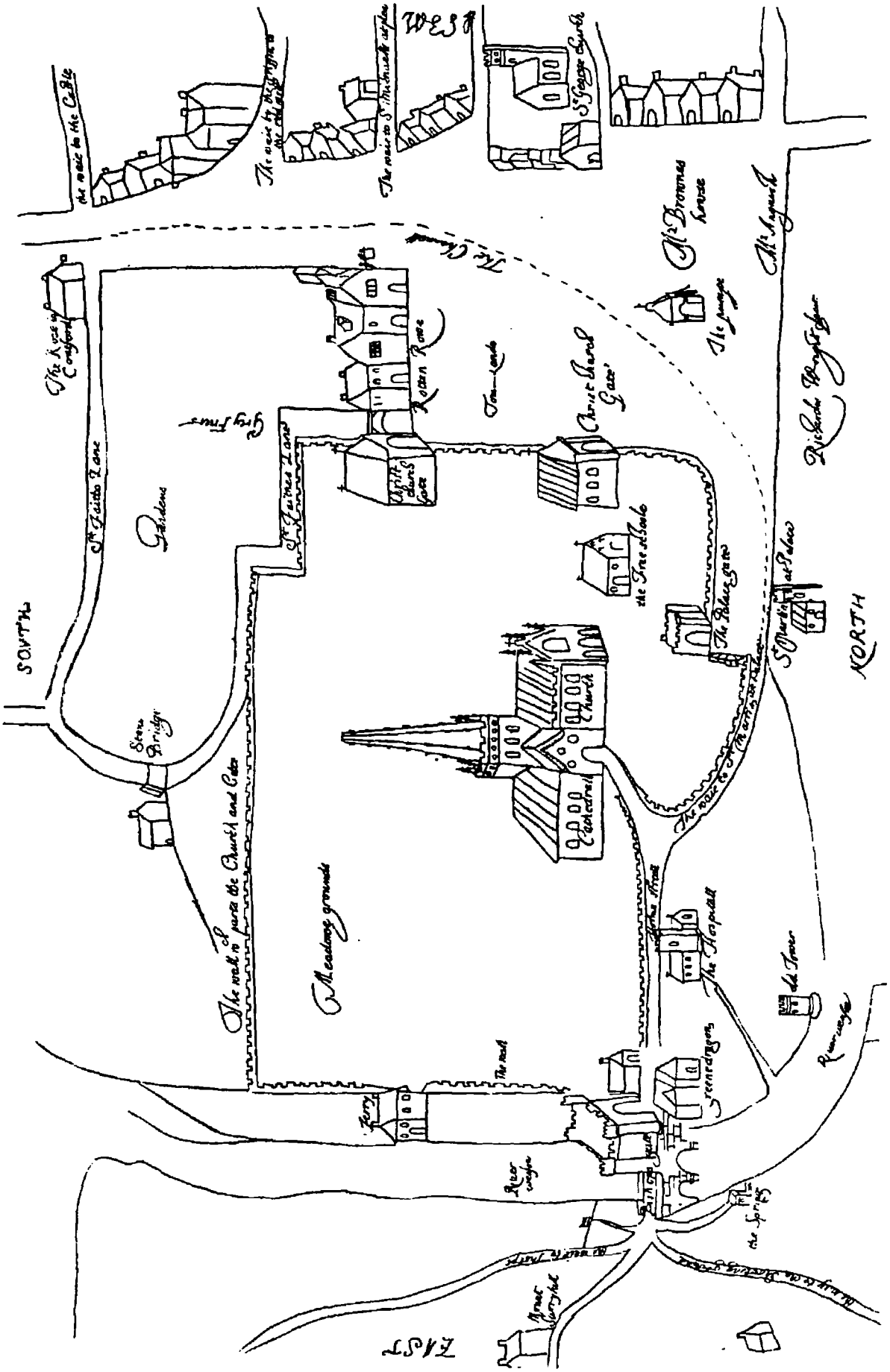
[12] PRO SP 16/188/3; NRO CA, 1625-48, fo. 12r; MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 427v, 15 Oct 1622.

[13] See above, pp. 104-5; W. Rye, 'The Precincts of Norwich Cathedral', *NAM* 2nd Series, 1 (1906), pp. 49-51; PRO E 179/152/497.

[14] NRO DCN 107/1, receipts for organ repairs, 1607-9. The new organ was intended to replace an instrument damaged in 1601 after the spire was struck by lightening, see P. Aston and T. Roast, 'Music in the Cathedral', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral*, p. 690. Lists of benefactors for cathedral music were not uncommon. For another list of donors towards a new organ at Worcester, this time with a conspicuous Catholic complement see M. Hodgetts, 'Recusant Contributors to the Worcester Cathedral Organ, 1613', *Midland Catholic History*, 1 (1991), pp. 28-33, a reference I owe to David Crankshaw.

[15] A deed cited in H. W. Saunders, *A History of the Norwich Grammar School* (Norwich, 1952), p. 122; *Chapter Minutes*, p. 50.



8. 1. Walter Rye's copy of a map dated *circa* 1630 showing properties in St George Tombland.

Parliament during May 1624, it is interesting to note that Browne was active on his diocesan's behalf in other ways. Reacting to the godly group's dubious claim to speak on behalf of the entire city, a scurrilous libel was circulated in Norwich. Bearing the suitably provocative title of 'howe nowe proud schismatique', an obvious reference to the former mayor Robert Craske, the man responsible for promoting the 1624 petition, its source was eventually traced to the household of a certain Alderman William Browne. No friend of Robert Craske, Browne's servant appeared before the magistrates for propagating the verse.[16] However, in light of his own strong associations with Bishop Harsnett, it is unlikely that the alderman had done much to discourage the libelling and may have helped with its composition.

In this case, Browne's protest against the godly appears as something of an isolated act. However, it is likely that Harsnett found other supporters and indeed there is evidence to suggest that the bishop's reforms found one other constituent in the form of Alderman Robert Debney, Robert Craske's successor to the mayoralty in May 1624. Debney emerged as a prominent figure in civic office until his death in 1638. Wealthy enough to relinquish his mayoral salary and secure election as burgess in 1628, a brief sojourn at Westminster which sadly has left no trace on the Parliamentary records, Debney retained firm links with St Gregory's parish, his birthplace, where in 1624, he was assessed on moveable goods worth £12 among the highest tax payers in the city.[17] As such, the alderman played a key role in parochial affairs, not least of all in his capacity as owner of the parsonage house.[18] The rights of presentation to St Gregory's lay with the dean and chapter, who as the corporate rector, were responsible for nominating a

[16] NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 512r, 29 May 1624.
[17] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 76; PRO E 179/153/583. I am grateful to Dr Andrew Thrush of the History of Parliament Trust for allowing me to read a copy of Debney's forthcoming biographical profile.
[18] PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 252v, will of Robert Debney, proved 1638; NRO PD 59/54, fo. 62r.

chaplain, whose stipend would then be supplemented by the parishioners.[19] Chief among them was Robert Debney.

However, before adding further details about this alderman, it is worth shining the spotlight on St Gregory's, for what the parish reveals about the pace of religious change under Harsnett. As seen in the previous chapter, one of the charges against the bishop in Parliament, concerned his part in permitting the embellishment of church interiors. His endorsement of a controversial beautification scheme at St Peter Mancroft, has been noted as providing a local *cause célèbre* for the Norwich godly, when testifying against their bishop at Westminster.[20] But it seems unlikely that Mancroft was an isolated episode. Conceivably, by commending one church refurbishment, Harsnett encouraged expenditure on images and fixtures in parishes elsewhere within the city and surrounding diocese. Was the bishop the instigator of moves to adorn Norwich's churches? Thanks to the work of George Yule and Julia Merritt on church building in early Stuart London, it is incorrect to depict the Jacobean period as one of neglect in the maintenance and repair of church fabrics, a view propagated by Laudian apologists anxious to depict themselves as restoring a church despoiled, on their account, by sacrilegious acts of vandalism committed at the Reformation.[21] The structural condition of churches was a pressing matter for the ecclesiastical authorities in Jacobean Norwich under Bishop John Jegon. In 1603, a year after his arrival and under pressure from Archbishop Whitgift to make an exacting survey of church fabrics, Jegon thought fit to remind the clergy and churchwardens of their duty 'to

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[19] NRO DN VAL/2 and annual payments in PD 59/54, St Gregory's churchwardens' accounts.
[20] See above, pp. 119-21.
[21] G. Yule, 'James VI and I: Furnishing the Churches in his Two Kingdoms', in A. Fletcher and P. Roberts (eds.), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 182-208; J. Merritt, 'Puritans, Laudians and the Phenomenon of Church Building in Jacobean London', *HJ*, 41 (1998), pp. 935-60.

repayre redelye and rebuyld all ruynes and decayes' in every church and chapel and to provide the requisite ornaments for worship. Moreover, to prevent shoddy workmanship, the bishop appointed one Richard Kimocle as the official diocesan painter or 'lymmer'. Granted a monopoly to conduct repairs across Norwich, Kimocle's presence so incensed the Suffolk puritan gentleman Sir Edward Lewkenor that he transcribed Jegon's order, possibly to use as ammunition against prelacy at the time of the Hampton Court Conference.[22] But from Jegon's perspective, Kimocle's employment ensured that parish churches were kept in right order.

In addition, as demonstrated by the extant *comperta* which survives for one of the diocese's four archdeaconries, Norwich, upon Jegon's elevation in 1602, the right ordering of churches applied to the internal fittings for Common Prayer, especially communion tables which were to be made 'comelie' with the addition of a 'joyned frame'.[23] Possibly the intention here was to provide for stout objects which were to remain in the main body of the chancel aligned east to west. This 'Jacobean' arrangement was more in keeping with the rubric of the Prayer Book than with the Elizabethan Injunctions of 1559 which stipulated that 'the holy table' was to be 'set in the place where the altar stood', allowing for its removal into the chancel during communion.[24] Reading the charges against him in 1624, Harsnett's preference was for eucharistic practice in line with the 1559 injunctions, as opposed to the Jacobean setting of the table. In part, this can be inferred from the allegation that the bishop excommunicated certain parishioners from St Peter Mancroft, for refusing to pray towards the east, in the direction of

[22] LPL Register Whitgift iii, fo. 140v; BL Add MS 38492, fos. 95r-v. For Lewkenor see P. Collinson, 'Magistracy and Ministry: A Suffolk Miniature', in his *Godly People* (London, 1983), pp. 445-66.
[23] NRO ANW 3/10, *comperta* 1602, unfoliated.
[24] E. Cardwell (ed.), *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (Oxford, 1844), i, pp. 233-4.

what some disgruntled vestrymen referred to as 'a high altar'.[25] If true, it implied that Harsnett enforced greater reverence to the communion table as an east end 'altar', one hallmark of fully fledged 'Laudianism' in the 1630s. The problem here is interpreting what 'high altar' meant in terms of the placing and alignment of the table during the administration of the eucharist, since the table could still be moved into the chancel during the service according to the Elizabethan Injunctions. However, tantalising evidence from the extant Archdeaconry of Norwich *comperta* suggests that Harsnett had a permanent fixture for the table as an altar in mind.

The entry relates to the archdeacon's visitation of the city of Norwich on 27th September 1619, five days after Harsnett had gained temporalities in his new see, which significantly was not conducted by the archdeacon, Andrew Byng, but by the bishop's commissaries attached to the archdeacon's court, headed by Dr Clere Talbot.[26] As outlined in chapter seven, Talbot was the civil lawyer dedicatee in John Yates's defence of the 'altar policy', *A treatise of the honor of Gods house*'.[27] Acting as the ordinary's official in 1619, Clere Talbot was preoccupied with the siting of communion tables, which in every city church visited were 'to be placed at the east end of the chancell', an order which Talbot, as the bishop's agent, would have received directly from Harsnett himself. This can be interpreted as a reinforcement of the Elizabethan Injunctions, permitting the table to be repositioned for communion. As such, Harsnett's commissaries can be seen dispensing with Jacobean usage enforced by Jegon whereby the table stayed in the chancel at all times, even when not being used to administer the sacrament. Yet following up the initial

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[25] See above, pp. 119-21; Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 205; BL Add MS 18597, fos. 168v.
[26] The following is derived from NRO ANW 3/21, *comperta* 1617-19; Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 38.
[27] John Yates, *A treatise of the honor of Gods house* (1637), 'To Clere Talbot' and above, pp. 131-2. B. P. Levack, *The Civil Lawyers in England* (Oxford, 1971), p. 274 implies that Talbot was not appointed commissary until 1620. However, based on a reading of the Archdeaconry of Norwich archive, he officiated some months previously.

inquiry in successive investigations, Talbot possibly went beyond the Elizabethan Injunction. The specific case related to Mileham, where in 1621 the table was 'to be *alwaies* placed at the east end' as it is 'now placed by order of the commissioners in this visitation' before a reredos displaying the Decalogue.[28] Of course, Mileham may have been a unique instance, reflecting local circumstances. However, it is possible to cite another example of Harsnett's officers sanctioning and actively encouraging the re-positioning of tables to a fixed altar-wise location at St Gregory's Norwich.

Significantly, the first stop on Clere Talbot's 1619 visitation, the parish not only adopted the instructions touching communion tables, but went further in its expenditure on beautification. Fortunately, St Gregory's possesses a detailed set of churchwardens' accounts running from 1574, through which we are afforded a unique glimpse at a programme of church refurbishment carried out between 1622 and 1624, remarkable for its resemblance to Bishop Harsnett's preferences for lavish ornamentation, as indicated at St Peter Mancroft.[29] In many respects, what shall be labelled 'the St Gregory's scheme' was a continuation of repair work already under way. Earlier in 1616, the churchwardens had made dire presentments to the archdeacon that 'a stayer case which sometime went upp to the rood loft' was in danger of imminent collapse, threatening to take a section of the north wall along with it. They asked to demolish the stair tower and reinforce the wall with buttressing. Following the accounts, work commenced to strengthen the masonry on the north side within the year, although the parishioners had to wait until 1620 for a

[28] NRO ANW 3/24 and MS 2686, stray *comperta* 1621-2, entry for Mileham, my italics. The same priority to make the communion table the focal point of the chancel as an altar, can be detected behind *Clere Talbot's 1623 ruling for* St John Maddermarket, which ordered the lowering of seats 'built towards the communion table', NRO ANW 3/25.
[29] NRO ANW 3/21; PD 59/54, especially fos. 59v-66r.

faculty to take down the decayed steps.[30] By doing so they removed an obstruction to the chancel entrance. This in turn allowed for greater access to what the account unconventionally termed 'the high altar', which in line with episcopal directions, was transformed into the focal point of the church at the east end and, as we shall see, given a decorous backdrop. In 1622, the chancel was freshly plastered and paved with 'wotten tyle', the same tiling being placed under 'the altar in the finishing of it'. The object was then set before a reredos displaying the royal arms, Decalogue, Lord's Prayer and Creed, while more money was laid out 'for 6 great posts and 42 pillars turning for the altar' to make rails. At the same time, the pulpit was moved to the north side of the nave, out of the way of the chancel entrance. Similarly, to avoid cluttering the ascent to the altar, the font was repositioned at the west end, set upon steps, railed and bedecked with a new cover depicting various gilded 'figures'.[31]

Completed in 1624, the St Gregory's scheme reflected Harsnett's designs to tie eucharistic practice closer to the Elizabethan Injunctions than the Jacobean model. Again, it is difficult to interpret from the accounts alone whether 'altar' signified a fixed east end altarwise table, or an object which could be set lower down in the church tablewise during communion. But that the sanctuary was railed in implies that a permanent altarwise table was envisaged. Here, we can discern provisions for the administration of the Lord's Supper from a communion table as an altar, an arrangement impressed by Bishop Harsnett through his commissioners and adopted in St Gregory's as a showcase church, presaging a key element of Laudian liturgical reform in the 1630s. Payments for 'matts for the chancell and for the altar' in 1623 suggest that

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[30] NRO ANW 3/20, *comperta* 1614-17; PD 59/54, fo. 57r, 59r.
[31] NRO PD 59/54, fos. 59r-v, 60r, 62v, 66r. The unusual reference to the 'high altar' could also have been employed to describe the raised crypt beneath the chancel upon which the communion table was placed.

communicants expected to receive kneeling at an east end table set altarwise. Having noted that the altar was railed in, it is tempting to infer that parishioners were also compelled to take communion at the rail at St Greogory, anticipating another aspect of Laudian ceremonialism as executed by Bishop Matthew Wren, discussed below.[32] However, this was not the case.

Certainly, in seeking to justify his policy, Wren noted the existence of rails at St Gregory, while another source among the bishop's files implied that reception at the rail was encouraged in Norwich from Harsnett's time if not before. The latter, penned in 1641 by Wren's chaplain and correspondent William Alanson, relates to practices at St Michael Coslany. Alanson, who officiated as curate in the church during the 1620s, recalled from his ministry 'above fifteen yeares since' how it was commonplace for 'every communicant came up to the Railes without the least scruple at all'.[33] Alanson was writing for the benefit of his master Bishop Wren. Busily compiling his defence to twenty five articles of impeachment presented against him by the Long Parliament in 1641, Wren faced charges of being an innovator in ordering parishioners to the rail during communion. That his chaplain was able to give a convenient precedent for episcopal directives, has to be read with a pinch of salt.[34] Although Alanson would have nothing to gain by lying, his account sought to refute a specific accusation, citing a local custom whereby the eucharist was distributed at a non-Laudian rail, or a rail before a table set tablewise, in St Michael's prior to Wren's arrival in Norwich.[35] However, if he was referring to developments in

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[32] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 62v; below, pp. 192-4.
[33] *Parentalia*, p. 77; Bod L Tanner MS 314, fo. 110 and below, pp. 202-3 for William Alanson.
[34] Wren used the example of reception at the rail in St Michael Coslany to his advantage in his defence, *Parentalia*, p. 84. NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book 1627, confirms Alanson's presence at St Michael's.
[35] For the use of rails in pre-Laudian liturgical settings see Yule, 'James VI and I: Furnishing the Churches in his Two Kingdoms', pp. 193-7; N. Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism', in P. Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 19-21.

the 1620s, when tables were treated as altars under Harsnett's influence, Coslany may have reflected later Laudian designs. If it could be proved that, as at St Gregory's, a railed 'high altar' was already present at St Michael's prior to 1636, then the church may well have served as a local blueprint for Wren's vision of eucharistic practice. But since we lack evidence to verify Alanson's remarks, St Michael's lacking its early seventeenth century churchwardens' accounts, this is pure conjecture.

Significantly, Wren's chaplain was silent on reception at the rails at St Gregory's, an omission which owed nothing to ignorance of former liturgical customs in the church since, as mentioned below, the minister served as chaplain there in the late 1630s. That Alanson did not allude to St Gregory's suggests that communion was not distributed at the rails before Wren's coming.[36] Indeed, Wren was aware of this fact himself after discovering, during the course of his visitation in 1636, that in St Gregory's the rail was set 'so far from the table that communicants go within', while the church was 'not yet rightly ordered' in its rails.[37] Thus before 1636, it was customary within the church for communicants to kneel within an enclosed sanctuary. However, while the local arrangement at St Gregory's did not comply with Wren's designs, the reordering of the church's interior by 1624 did mark a transitional phase between earlier Jacobean eucharistic practice and a 'proto-Laudian' scheme emphasising the sanctity of the Holy Table. If so, St Gregory's was a realisation of Samuel Harsnett's interests in fostering the 'beauty of holiness', as witnessed by the accusations levelled against the prelate in 1624.

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[36] Bod L Tanner MS 314, fo. 110; *Chapter Minutes*, pp. 72-3, 10 Jan 1637; NRO PD 59/54, fos. 86v, 87v, 89r, 91r; below, p. 224-5.
[37] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 213r, 216r.

As such, the restoration work became the object of much parochial pride, in that having met the costs of realigning their church's interior to the tune of £108 21s, the St Gregory's parishioners celebrated the refurbishment with a literary flourish. Half of the total expenditure was met by the parish rates. The remainder was raised by voluntary subscriptions, the names of eighty six donors contributing to the scheme being entered into the accounts for 1623 beneath a remarkable statement of intent. Employing a rhetoric which would become familiar in the 1630s, the preamble is worth quoting in full.

> Christian Successors: according to the last yeares accompt with the great church Subscribed. It is thought fitting not to suppress, but to specify unto you the particular names underwritten of all well disposed Gentlemen and Inhabitants within this parish who have Voluntarily Contributed to so Pyous a worke as the Beautifying of Gods House or habitation, the place where his Honour Dwelleth, as the Prophet Daniel Professeth in the 26 Psalm, the 8 verse, not doubting but that as our Fore Fathers have formerly shown their Zeale and good works, in building of this Temple, So you seeing our Continewed Mayntayning and Upholding of the same, may take the better Occasion to be stirred up, to go forward, in the same good course.[38]

Here, the wording is striking for its implicit emphasis upon rebuilding the Temple as a meritorious 'good work', an idea which the godly would have found unsettling. Certainly, following this entry, unique among extant contemporaneous parish documents for the city of Norwich, the St Gregory's congregation hoped to establish a pattern for church rebuilding to be emulated in other parishes.[39] Surely it is more than coincidental that in his later defence of the 'beauty of holiness' of 1639, the Norwich prebend Foulke Robartes also prefaced his work with Psalm 26: 8. Perhaps in this instance, Robartes sought to evoke memories of the earlier

[38] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 62v.

[39] The wording of this address had a prescience for the next decade when expressions such as 'Gods Holy House' and 'Temple' acquired a loaded significance under Charles I, see P. Lake, 'The Laudian Style, Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 161-85. In the 1640s, the city godly referred to St Gregory's as an 'Idolatrous Temple', Bod L Tanner Ms 220, fo. 130. Later on, use of the word 'Temple' in the context of a church or chapel was enough to arouse the suspicions of the iconoclast William Dowsing, see T. Cooper (ed.), *The Journal of William Dowsing* (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 167.

restoration scheme at St Gregory's, hoping to stir up a spirit of parochial harmony singularly lacking among his own flock at St Clement's throughout the factious later 1630s.[40]

Not surprisingly the benefactors represented a spectrum of city society from one Francis Wattson, a peddler, who gave 28s, to more eminent local worthies. Whether the likes of Watson really gave money voluntarily, contributing to the refurbishment with their wholehearted consent, is impossible to tell. However, this point does not matter so much as the fact that the scheme was funded by weighty local patrons. The most distinguished included Francis Bacon, the future judge of King's Bench and Edmund Reeve, the town steward and also under steward to the dean and chapter.[41] Another influential figure with cathedral connections was the chaplain Matthew Stoneham. The long standing incumbent at St Gregory, having served the cure since 1594, a living which from 1600 he held in plurality with St Stephen, Stoneham would have been a familiar figure in Norwich. The master of a private school in the city and an apparitor to the Consistory Court, he also operated as a licensed vintner.[42] However, as a former chaplain to Bishop John Jegon, the minister immediately strikes as being an unlikely advocate of eucharistic novelty. Dedicating his second forray into print, a treatise of the first Psalm, to Jegon in 1610, Stoneham shared his diocesan's commitment to Calvinist orthodoxy. The minister posited his understanding of the world as divided into the elect and reprobate, as predetermined by God at

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[40] Foulke Robartes, *Gods holy house and service, according to the primitive and most Christian forme thereof* (1639), *STC* 21068, frontispiece. See below, pp. 247-50.
[41] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 63v. For Bacon and Reeve see *DNB*. For Reeve's stewardships see NRO DCN 47/4, fo. 40r.
[42] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 31r; Venn iv, p. 169; NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book 1627; Saunders, *A History of the Norwich Grammar School*, p. 279; NRO DN DEP/38/43, fo. 272r; NCC 351 Spendlowe, will of Matthew Stoneham proved 1637 which refers to 'a licence for the drawing of wine'.

the beginning of Creation, for 'God knoweth the way of his righteous ones, Servants, Saintes and Children, not only as he apprehendeth it in his wisdome, but approveth it in his mercy'.[43]

Earlier in 1608 Stoneham published two Assize sermons dedicated to Sir Edward Coke, then engaged in a debate over prohibitions, writs transferring cases from church to common law courts. Amid discussion over the constitutional basis of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the Norwich minister undoubtedly had Coke in mind when he remarked that 'the church is to be sustained, the arches and pillars whereof are with all care and diligence to be shoared and supported, lest the fall thereof bring with it a co-ruine and inseperable downfall of the commonwealth'. Churchmen were to be 'sustained, both in their abilitie for their purse and in dignitie toward their persons'.[44] With his acute sense of the clerical estate's respective rights *vis-à-vis* the laity, Stoneham was attuned to Harsnett's assertive style of episcopal government, with its concomitant designs on reordering liturgical practice in Norwich. Possibly, over time the minister abandoned his earlier Calvinism. While the declaration in his will that 'I doe assure myselfe of the salvation of my soule' negates this, Stoneham emerged as a proponent of Bishop Wren's enforcement of the 'altar policy' in 1636.[45] So too did his son Nicholas, ejected from his living of Eyke, Suffolk in 1644, for observing ceremonies and 'carrying on the Lord's day'.[46] In light of his future backing of Wren's reforms, it is interesting to note Matthew Stoneham's concerns for the sanctity of the communion table in the 1620s, at St Gregory's and his other cure St Stephen's where, if the Victorian editor of the no longer extant churchwardens' accounts is to be trusted, payments for

[43] Matthew Stoneham, *A Treatise of the First Psalm* (1610), *STC* 23289, sig. A2, p. 213.
[44] For the debate on prohibitions see J. P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England 1603-1642* (Harlow, 1986), pp. 122, 211-2; J. P. Kenyon (ed.), *The Stuart Constitution* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 180-1; Matthew Stoneham, *Two sermons of directions for judges and magistrates* (1608), *STC* 23290, sig. A3, pp. 21-2.
[45] NRO NCC 351 Spendlowe; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 164r.
[46] Venn iv, p. 169; A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 345.

'posts and rails' were also made in 1622. Were these intended to surround an altarwise table as at St Gregory's? Moreover, if information supplied to Matthew Wren for his defence is correct, rails were also in place at St Margaret's Norwich prior to the bishop's visitation in 1636. Significantly, the curate at this church in the 1620s was Nicholas Stoneham. If rails were introduced into St Margaret's in tandem with the St Gregory's scheme, it suggests that the younger Stoneham shared his father's preference for administering the eucharist within an enclosed sanctuary.[47]

Besides the parish chaplain, heading the benefactors to St Gregory's in 1623 was Robert Debney. Of course, the Alderman's place at the top of the list reflects his status as the highest rate payer in the parish, although given Debney's strong family ties with the church, he may have been extremely enthusiastic for the beautification scheme. To begin with, he was the son of John Debney, under steward and chapter clerk at Norwich cathedral during Elizabeth's reign, who died in 1595.[48] A notorious religious conservative, along with Dean Salisbury, Debney senior formed part of the entrenched anti-reformed establishment at Christ Church, which had proved so vexing to Bishop John Parkhurst and his hatchet man Canon George Gardiner in the 1560s and early 1570s. John Debney also led a conservative contingent within his home parish. Visiting St Gregory's in 1573 to remove what Parkhurst described as 'the order of the rodeloft as it is being in a maner whole, with the vault or soller' so that 'as little is wanting of that it was in the tyme of poperie', the bishop's officers were met with an open show of defiance. Entering the church with several parishioners Debney mounted the loft and assailed the visitors, condemning

[47]'Account Books of St Stephen's Church and Parish, Norwich', *EANQ*, 2nd Series, 8 (1899-1900), p. 285; *Parentalia*, p. 77; NRO DN VIS/5/3/2; DN VAL/2. Unfortunately, the surviving accounts for St Margaret end in 1600, NRO PD 153/42.
[48] NRO DCN 29/1, fo. 36; NCC 238 Hinde; will of John Debney, proved 1595.

other rood lofts in Norwich as 'contrarye to that of St Gregories'. In addition, the chapter clerk found it hard to conceal his thoughts on reformed tastes in music, since he 'many waies forgetteth him selfe, as in calling the Geneva psalmes *Gehena psalmes*', as an exasperated Parkhurst wrote to inform Archbishop Parker.[49]

Of course, whether his father's antics and strong religious opinions left any deep impressions upon the young Debney is not easy to answer. Despite John Debney's efforts to prevent Bishop Parkhurst from bringing his parish out of the 'tyme of poperie', St Gregory's was eventually purified, when in 1577 a glazier was hired 'for taking out the images out of the windowes and amending the same'.[50] Whether this action received the chapter clerk's assent is unknown. Compared to his earlier stand against episcopal authority, John Debney's views in later life have eluded the historical record, although his wife Cecily, in a distinctly Protestant vein, made payments 'to the preacher for a sermon at my burial' in her will proved in 1613.[51] However, the younger Debney, a scrivener by trade, did follow his father into the dean and chapter's employ. Serving as cathedral coroner from 1596 until resigning in 1611, the future alderman may have preferred the more elaborate forms of worship associated with Christ Church and other English cathedrals after 1559.[52] Another clue to his religious sympathies by 1620 is furnished by his choice of a second wife. Robert Debney's wealth had been procured through

[49] NRO DCN 29/1, fo. 36 and above, pp. 28-32; DN VIS/1/3; Parkhurst, *Letter Book*, p. 212.
[50] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 9r. However, while St Gregory's may have lost its medieval stained glass in 1577, money was laid out on a new object of parochial pride, a spire, erected twenty years later in 1597, see PD 59/54, fos. 31r, 36r, 38r. Conspicuously, the church was the only one in Norwich to boast a spire from this date, in imitation of the cathedral as mother church of the diocese. The entire steeple was pulled down in the nineteenth century, see J. Stacy, *A Topographical and Historical Account of the City and County of Norwich* (London, 1819), p. 170. For an eighteenth century engraving showing the spire intact see BL Add MS 23039, fo. 77.
[51] John Debney's will betrays nothing of his former conservative beliefs, conveying a formulaic bequest to 'Jesus Christ my Redeemer, by whose death and passion I trust to be saved', NRO NCC 238 Hinde; NCC 178 Coomney, will of Cecily Debney.
[52] *Chapter Minutes*, pp. 38, 45.

his auspicious marriages, first to Agnes, sister of the wealthy city benefactor Sir John Pettus and secondly to Margaret, daughter of Susan Downing, a fellow parishioner at St Gregory.[53] Susan Downing had also married into the municipal elite, first to alderman Henry Pye and then to George Downing, mayor in 1607. Along with her son-in-law, she subscribed to the beautification scheme in 1623, later naming Robert Debney as executor in her will proved two years later in 1625.[54]

Given her familial ties with Debney and her part in restoring St Gregory's, it is interesting to note some of widow Downing's choice possessions. These included, among other household items carefully inventoried at her death, a 'picture of our Lady' along with another 'Picture of Christ, Mary and Martha and the curtayne to it', proudly bequeathed to her son George. The presence of a 'curtayne' implies that this object was intended for some domestic devotional use. Certainly, the display of sacred imagery in the home would been an anathema to the godly, although widow Downing's legacy of 'my Bibles' to her maid would have been more in keeping with reformed preferences.[55] Nevertheless, her penchant for religious art may have been shared by Robert Debney as it was by other members of St Gregory's congregation. Indeed in 1624, a year after supervising their church's refurbishment, the churchwardens John Freeman and John Weavers found themselves cited in the Consistory Court for having contravened the Elizabethan Injunctions for 'suppression of superstition', by erecting and exalting 'divers piles or at least one pile of images, pictures or portraytures' of Christ and the Apostles, between three

[53] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 76; W. Rye (ed.), *The Visitation of Norfolk, 1563, 1589 and 1613*, Harleian Society, 32 (1891), p. 221; PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 254r, will of Robert Debney.
[54] NRO NCC 43 Trotter, will of George Downing, proved 1617; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 69 for Susan Downing's marital ties; NRO PD 59/54, fo. 63v; NCC 66 Belward, will of Susan Downing proved 1625.
[55] NRO NCC INV 32/86; NCC 66 Belward.

and eight yards 'high from the pavement' in the body of their church.[56] Given Bishop Harsnett's tacit approval of religious imagery, the charges were probably wavered. On the basis of internal evidence from the St Gregory's churchwardens' accounts, provision for sacred art was made as part of the wider scheme implemented in 1623 when payments were made 'for timber for the chancell pillars'. From this it seems that the portraits were intended to adorn the high altar. It is likely that the work was carried out by Thomas Isbourne, a native born craftsman and painter whose name appears in the accounts for 1623 and 1624.[57]

Singling out various abuses in religion in 1642, puritans had much to say about the 'popish' goings-on at St Gregory's. They considered it the first of the city's parishes where images came to proliferate under Bishop Harsnett, making it appear 'more like an Idolatrous Temple than a reformed Church'.[58] The font was built up by 'one James a known papist having that platforme from Rome'. In the space of twenty years the church's interior had been subjected to further licence, the parishioners having set up 'a great Image of Christ' flanked by two angels and eight Apostles along with 'a most Idolatrous Crucifix, the 4 Evangelists in full stature and a blasphemous picture of the Trinity'. While in the altered circumstances of the 1640s, attempts had been made to conceal such pictures with 'a few deale boards', images still abounded. Similarly, the parochial custom whereby a figure of Moses was bedecked with streamers on festival days 'after the forme of Idolatrous churches beyond the seas', as a representation of 'the glory of Moses face from the raine from the mount', was deemed equally shocking to godly

[56] NRO DN CON/11, loose bundle of allegations and libels, 1623-4, file 212; PD 59/54, fo. 59v, 61v.
[57] Regrettably, the loss of the relevant Consistory Court act book for 1624 does not permit us to trace the case any further; NRO PD 59/54, fos. 62v, 65v; V. Tillyard, 'Painters in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Norwich', *NA*, 37 (1980), pp. 318-19 for Isbourne. Incidentally, Thomas Isbourne was also caught spreading the verse libel 'howe nowe proud schismatique' in May 1624, NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 512r, 29 May 1624.
[58] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 135, 130.

sensibilities. Whereas from the 1570s, St Andrew's acquired fame for the force of its godly learning, St Gregory's in the 1620s gained an obverse reputation as a haven for ritualism.[59] Rather than presenting itself as an auditory for God's word, St Gregory's emerged as a repository for sacred imagery and the bastion of a new ceremonial style, symbolised by one old woman's alleged making 'curtsey to the font', which anticipated later Laudian preoccupations with outward displays of reverence. Here too, there was symmetry in John Debney's stance against a reforming bishop and his son's contribution to a scheme which many saw as contradicting the very Reformation itself. Given that both 'anti-Reformed' statements were focused upon St Gregory's, it is striking that Bishop Wren, later derived active support from this church's congregation, headed by Robert Debney and the art enthusiast John Freeman, outlined in chapter ten.[60] This was in spite of the fact that Wren's insistence upon reception at the rail departed from established practice in the church However, that prominent members of St Gregory's congregation threw their weight behind Wren in 1636, as they had similarly concurred with Samuel Harsnett's nurturing of greater beautification in the 1620s, reveals that both prelates were able to tap into a constituency discontented with the direction of the English Reformation in this single city parish.

Bishop Harsnett's endorsement of baroque church embellishments appealed to some. But his suppression of Sunday morning preaching continued to grate with others, especially Robert Craske and Thomas Atkin, who in 1627 challenged Harsnett's ruling again, this time through the agency of their fellow parishioner at St John Maddermarket, Mayor Francis Cocke, who

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[59] *Ibid*, fos. 130-1.
[60] For St Andrew's see above, pp. 51-2; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 131; see below, pp. 221-5.

proposed payments for two additional Sabbath day sermons in the remoter corners of the city. The motion was opposed by the Assembly ostensibly on the grounds of cost, although a petition 'for liberty of preaching' was sent to the bishop.[61] However, Harsnett, then embroiled in reinforcing the dean and chapter's rights over the lectureship in neighbouring Great Yarmouth, was in an unlikely frame of mind to grant concessions to quarrelsome incorporated boroughs.[62] Besides, as the bishop maintained in 1624, he had permitted three sermons in the further parts of Norwich on Sunday forenoons. From Harsnett's perspective, this number, which was apparently confirmed by Matthew Wren's later visitation in 1636, was sufficient enough not to warrant additional preaching on the Sabbath.[63] Instead the bishop's gift prior to his translation to York in 1629 took the form of petitioning on the chapter's behalf over the rating of property near the Close. Complaining of the city's alleged encroachment upon the cathedral's rights through the discovery of 'Surrepticious Charters to strengthen them in their unlawful Claimes', the prelate did little to reconcile existing tensions between town and gown upon his departure.[64]

On the contrary, Harsnett's reforms fostered an unsettled atmosphere towards the established church hierarchy. Grassroots discontent was captured in one revealing defamation case brought against Robert Walman, a carpenter and freeman of Norwich, in the Consistory Court during 1632. Visiting his neighbour, John Barker a worsted weaver in St Swithin's, conversation turned towards religion. When asked what he thought of the city's ministry,

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[61] *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 76-7; PRO E 179/153/583; NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 236r, 26 Nov 1627; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336r.
[62] R. Cust, 'Anti-Puritanism and Urban Politics: Charles I and Great Yarmouth', *HJ*, 35 (1992), pp. 4-5; Bod L Tanner MS 134, fo. 189.
[63] Bod L Tanner MS 114, fo. 218; Laud, *Works* v, p. 339.
[64] Undated petition from Harsnett to Charles I in NRO NCR Case 9m, which contains the working papers for the property dispute with the dean and chapter. See also the entries in NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 253r, 12 May 1629, fos. 274v-5r, 1 Mar 1631, fos. 283v-4r, 27 July 1632, fo. 285r, 17 Aug 1632, fo. 288r 21 Jan 1633, fo. 288v, 25 Oct 1633.

Walman exclaimed that 'there were ten false prophets in the City of Norwich to one true one' since 'divers ministers or preachers in Norwich had preached lies'.[65] Pressed on his opinions of Richard Gamon, rector of St Lawrence and St Giles, Walham considered this minister to be a pharisee and an unworthy preacher. Apparently Gamon, already sensitive to criticism after a brief and unhappy spell as curate at Great Yarmouth at Harsnett's behest in 1624, learnt of these words and sued the carpenter for defamation.[66] It emerged that Walham had neglected to repair to his parish on Sunday mornings. As he argued, the service was not celebrated in due time, meaning it over-ran into the cathedral sermon, ensuring that he could not attend worship without missing Sabbath day instruction. He disliked being forced to go to the green yard exercise as well. He was adverse to the setting, for the cathedral was 'built by papists' and that 'it was not Christs Church but...a Romish church and [that] he went thither sometimes because some good men did come thither'.[67] Walham voiced opinions that were doubtless expressed elsewhere in Norwich during the 1620s. However, it is interesting that, as well as being presented at the behest of Richard Gamon, the carpenter was examined by two clergymen with cathedral connections, Simon Sumpter and the prebendary Foulke Robartes. All three emerged as agents in the crackdown on nonconformity under Bishop Wren.[68] That these clerics can be seen working together to enforce discipline four years earlier, is indicative of a more strident clericalism rooted in Harsnett's episcopate. Divisions among lay and clerical opinion held implications for the next phase of religious change during Charles I's reign.

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[65] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 92; NRO DN DEP/40/45, fos. 97r-v, deposition of William Yarham of Heigham, tanner; fo. 98r, deposition of John Barker, worsted weaver.
[66] *Ibid*, fo. 97v. For Gamon's livings and career see NRO DN VSC/2/3b, fos. 1v, 2v; PRO C 2/CHASI/Y1/58.
[67] NRO DN DEP/40/45, fos. 98r-v.
[68] *Ibid*, fos. 98r, 99r; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 220-1, 309r-v.

PART III: THE RISE OF LAUDIANISM AND CONFESSIONAL DISCORD IN THE 1630s

9. GODLY REACTION: THE NORFOLK FEOFFEES AND THE TOMBLAND LECTURESHIP

Samuel Harsnett's elevation to York in 1629 presented an opportunity to resolve the lingering issue of Sunday morning preaching and the founding of stipendiary lectureships suppressed in 1622. However, the choice of Francis White as successor was an unwelcome prospect for the godly. A figure associated with the Arminian circle around Richard Neile and the Durham House group in the 1620s, in a controversial move White had been consecrated Bishop of Carlisle by Neile in 1626.[1] As such he was a known anti-Calvinist with a similar theological outlook to Harsnett. On the other hand, White's immediate political background differed from that of Harsnett, making him a potentially less combative figure as far as Norwich corporation was concerned. To begin with, White's position as royal almoner gave him a valid reason not to reside in his see and become enmeshed in Norwich affairs. Whereas Harsnett had represented the Howard interest in Norfolk, White had no comparable cause to engage in local politics. Moreover, confiding in his colleague William Laud, being advanced in years, the new bishop envisaged his charge as a possible retirement billet. Considering Norwich diocese to be 'in as good order as most places are' his desire was, should King Charles release him from court office, to end his days at Ludham manor. In 1629, White seemed a proponent of the quiet life.[2]

Because of this, it was conceivable that the new bishop might be persuaded to reverse Harsnett's order for Norwich, a city with strong associations with Gonville and Caius College Cambridge, where White had also held a fellowship. But if the Norwich godly had something to

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[1] *DNB* 'Francis White'; T. Birch (ed.), *The Court and Times of Charles I* (2 vols., London, 1848), i, pp. 179-80.
[2] PRO SP 16/176/26. White's duties at court assumed a new significance after December 1629, when by royal decree, all bishop's except those holding office in the king's household were ordered to reside in their sees, Laud, *Works* v, p. 307.

hope for from their new ordinary, their aspirations were not realised. Allied to the rising Arminian party, White was not compelled to implement further evangelical reform, an episcopal intransigence which forced the local preaching fraternity to take the initiative themselves by forming the Norfolk feoffees for religion, detailed below. Nevertheless upon his arrival in February 1629, members of the corporation lobbied the bishop to restore Sunday sermons. A key campaigner was Alderman Thomas Cory, mayor since May 1628 and an ally of Thomas Atkin and Robert Craske, who named Cory as a supervisor to his will. Prior to relinquishing his mayoralty, Cory moved the Assembly to present a petition for further preaching to the bishop. Moreover, to demonstrate the earnestness of his request, Cory reinforced the petition with an ordinance prohibiting illicit trading and open-air gatherings 'under pretence of cudgell play' on the Sabbath, ostensibly prompted by the 'idleness, drinking and disorder' of ferrymen congregating in town on the Lord's Day.[3]

From the Mayor's perspective, White's response did not go far enough. While the bishop willingly granted the concession of one forenoon sermon besides the cathedral exercise on Sundays, the question of further weekday lectureships was left unsettled.[4] In December 1629 White was tied by the issue of Charles's instructions to his bishops. Framed under the auspices of William Laud, the inspirational driving force behind this document was Harsnett of York, who was keen to include an injunction touching public lectures, which repeated his earlier ruling for Norwich. Any new corporate sponsored sermons were to be read 'by a company of grave and

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[3] Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 38; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 77; PRO PROB 11/181, fo. 419v, will of Robert Craske, proved 1638; NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fos. 253r-v, 12 May 1629.

[4] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336r. Another example of White's willingness to compromise was his grant of a licence to the puritan minister John Brinsley to hold a contested lectureship at Great Yarmouth, see *DNB* 'John Brinsley' and R. Cust, 'Anti-Puritanism and Urban Politics: Charles I and Great Yarmouth', *HJ*, 35 (1992), p. 19-20.

orthodox divines'. Since the former Monday and Friday stipendiary lectures at St Andrew's had been run as 'combinations' from 1622, the city fathers were now bound to keep these exercises by royal decree. In addition lecturers were barred from preaching unless they 'take a living with cure of souls within that corporation'.[5] It was as a direct response to the evident challenge to furnish suitable preachers with benefices, that we can trace the formation of the 'trustees for the Religion in Norwich and Norfolk', two years later in 1631.

Modelled after the London Feoffees for Impropriations and possibly acting as an offshoot of the main body in the capital, the trustees' aims were simple. By raising funds to purchase advowsons and tithes belonging to impropriated livings, they sought to augment the number of godly preaching ministers within the county. The feoffees stipulated that their concern was to promote 'graduates conformable to the orders of the church'. But as one alarmist report, citing a remark made by the group's legal agent commented, 'it is true conformity is put in, but its onely for a pretence'.[6] Unfortunately, documentation relating to the Norfolk trustees' activities is sparse. Compared to the extensive depositions taken against the London Feoffees in the Court of Exchequer between 1632 and 1633, largely at the behest of William Laud, then bishop of London, the Norfolk group's existence is betrayed by a single undated dispatch among the State Papers, which on the basis of internal evidence can be dated to after December 1631.[7] Possibly this account was intended for use by the prosecution during the Exchequer proceedings. The

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[5] N. Tyacke, 'Archbishop Laud', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), p. 67; Laud, *Works* v, pp. 307-8.

[6] The group is referred to in PRO SP 16/531/134, dated 1630. However, given that this report mentions William Bridge's Norwich appointment, which did not take place until December 1631, I would suggest a later date, NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 7. For the London feoffees see I. M. Calder (ed.), *The Activities of the Puritan Faction of the Church of England, 1625-33* (London, 1957) and N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603-1642* (London, 1990), p. 14.

[7] Calder (ed.), *The Activities of the Puritan Faction of the Church of England, passim*; PRO SP 16/531/134.

Norfolk men are recorded as having raised £200 to be sent to 'our proto-trustees in London', which highlights a financial arrangement with the central organisation in the capital. Whether it can be assumed. after Kenneth Shipps, that the Norwich agents acted as a 'branch of the London feoffees' is less certain.[8] Indeed upon successfully breaking what he termed 'the main instrument for the Puritan faction to undo the Church', there is nothing to indicate that Laud then sought to confiscate funds from the Norfolk group as well. Kenneth Shipps asserted that the East Anglian body continued to operate into the later 1630s. However, there is no evidence to support this claim either and it is more likely that with Exchequer ruling of 1633, the Norfolk trustees also went into abeyance.[9]

Although no action was taken against them, the Norwich feoffees' membership would have given Laud cause for concern. Within the 1631 report, the names of twelve trustees, comprising four city aldermen, four lawyers and four clerics are mentioned. Others were probably associated with the main body but were not listed. Among the representatives from the corporation can be seen the usual suspects, Robert Craske and Thomas Atkin, the two principal agitators against Bishop Harsnett in 1624, along with Craske's brother-in-law John Tooley and another alderman, Augustine Scottow.[10] All four were also linked by their common profession. Each gained his livelihood as a merchant-grocer, participating in one of the city's more affluent distributive trades, dependent for its success upon supplying, among various miscellaneous household items, the local market in luxury foodstuffs, dried fruits, sugar, spices and tobacco,

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[8] PRO SP 16/531/134; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 283. The Norwich trustees should be seen in the light of similar initiatives, distinct from the London organisation, which emerged elsewhere such as at Reading and Leicester, J. M. Guilding (ed.), *Reading Records* (2 vols., London, 1895) II, p. 266; PRO SP 16/88/13.
[9] Laud, *Works* iii, pp. 216-7; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 283-4.
[10] PRO SP 16/531/134; *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 75, 80.

quantities of which were imported from the Low Countries.[11] Scottow, for instance, had known links with one *émigré* family from across the North Sea, the de Hems, fellow parishioners at St Michael at Plea. Incidentally, this parish was also served by the clerical feoffee John Ward, who with a nonconformist minister John Payne of St John Beerestreet, was remembered in the will of Jacques de Hem, the denizen founder. An entrepreneur, de Hem purchased his freedom in 1602, buying his way into Norwich high society.[12] Representing the Norwich Walloon congregation at a 'stranger' colloquy in London in 1615, he retained familial contacts in his native Flanders, sending his son Tobias to study at the arts faculty of Leyden university, Tobias eventually returning to East Anglia, where he named his 'great friend' Augustine Scottow as supervisor in his will of 1629.[13] Linked to such overseas business interests was a shared commitment towards fostering evangelical Calvinism. Much the same determined sense of purpose lay behind John Tooley's meteoric rise to the aldermanry in 1631 while still serving as sheriff, a questionable advancement in light of the recent constitutional amendments made in 1628, which stipulated that only ex-sheriffs were to be considered for the magistracy.[14] The promotion caused a stir. One William Gargrave was heard to exclaim that 'he himself might have as well been Sheriff

[11] J. F. Pound, *Tudor and Stuart Norwich* (Chichester, 1988), pp. 56-7, 72, 77; U. Priestly and A. Fenner, *Shops and Shopkeepers in Norwich, 1660-1730* (Norwich, 1985), pp. 6-7; D. Rickwood (ed.), *The Norwich Accounts for the Customs on Strangers' Goods and Merchandise, 1582-1610,* NRS, 39 (1970), *passim.*

[12] Biographical details on Jacques de Hem are given in R. Esser, 'News Across the Channel - Contact and Communication Between the Dutch and Walloon Refugees in Norwich and their Families in Flanders, 1565-1640', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 14 (1995), p. 149; PRO PROB 11/143, fo. 481r. John Payne's deprivation by Harsnett is noted in PRO SP 14/165/2.

[13] PRO PROB 11/156, fo. 125v. Such contacts across the North Sea would have proved vital during the puritan diaspora from Norfolk after 1636.

[14] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 74; J. T. Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 76-7.

and Alderman of the City as Mr Toly, if he would have paid as dearly for it as Mr Toly paid'. So saying, Tooley had Gargrave bound over at the next Quarter Sessions.[15]

In the case of the Norwich magistrates among the trustees, it is possible to detect the same radical continuum responsible for the challenge to episcopal authority mounted during the 1620s. Turning to the four lawyers and motives appear more varied. Obviously the future regicide Miles Corbet of Sprowston, another former foe of Bishop Harsnett, was a man of marked religious views.[16] Sir Thomas Huggin of Castle Acre is a more obscure figure. A defaulter on the forced Loan in 1626 and a Virginia Company speculator, his religious sympathies have not left a comparable trace on the historical record.[17] John Fountain held opinions in tune with Miles Corbet. A former steward of the royal manors of Cawston and Ronham under James I, Fountain later emerged as a staunch parliamentarian and a captain of the Norwich volunteer company in 1642.[18] Moreover, in 1637 he began legal proceedings against Bishop Wren. Acting on behalf of William Rivett, patron of Bildeston, Suffolk and Deputy Lieutenant for his county during the Civil War, Fountain brought a suit in chancery against the bishop for refusing to institute Rivett's choice of incumbent, John Ashley, a lecturer at Walpole in Suffolk, to the living. Wren had been informed of Ashley's 'inconformity and sundry other misdemeanours' by Edmund Stubbes. One of the bishop's standing commissioners, as well as parson of Huntingfield and Cookely, two parishes adjoining Walpole, Stubbes was well placed to attest to Ashley's character, in turn persuading Wren to block the promotion. Wren forwarded

[15] NRO NCR Case 20a, Quarter Sessions' minute book 1630-8, fo. 9r, 21 May 1631. However, William Gargrave was known for speaking his mind, having appeared before the Consistory Court for 'rayling and furious' words against several parishioners at St Peter Mancroft, NRO DN DEP/39/44, fos. 54v-8r.
[16] PRO SP 16/531/134 and above, pp. 117-18.
[17] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 280; PRO SP 16/70/73.
[18] *HMC* 10th Report, Appendix 4, p. 213; Blomefield iii, p. 384; BL Add MS 22619, fo. 33r.

another candidate, who was served with a writ of *ne admitus* by Rivett and Fountain. In the event, Fountain won the case, confirming his credentials as a tough opponent of episcopal authority in the 1630s.[19] However, the fourth lawyer Richard Catelyn of Kirby Crane strikes as being more moderate. His involvement with the trustees appears to have been inspired by opportunism, Catelyn using the position to ingratiate himself with wealthy godly activists among Norwich's citizenry with an eye to further employment. In this he was successful, gaining election to the Long Parliament as a burgess in 1640. But he was not a zealous member of the House, being discharged and sequestered for his absence from Westminster once civil war had begun by the end of 1643.[20]

A similar range of mixed motives is encountered among the four clergymen feoffees. Robert Peck of Hingham was a notorious nonconformist and a formidable proponent of the cause of forward Reformation, while John Ward of St Michael at Plea would eventually find sanctuary in Rotterdam following Wren's visitation, denouncing his former ordination at the hands of Bishop Jegon thereafter.[21] John Benton, rector of Wramplingham and like Ward an Emmanuel College man, sits uncomfortably with Kenneth Shipps's ascribed label of 'inveterate puritan'.[22] But the most incongruous figure was that confirmed champion of episcopal government, John Yates of Stiffkey, whose involvement was probably intended to lend an air of respectability to the project. At least, in the early 1630s, prior to becoming embroiled in discussions over the

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[19] *Parentalia*, p. 108. For Stubbes's livings see LPL Register Laud, fo. 136v and Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 99v for John Ashley's lectureship.
[20] M. F. Keeler, *The Long Parliament, 1640-1641: A Biographical Study of its Members* (Philadelphia, 1954), p. 128; PRO SP 23/72/606. For Catelyn's election see below, pp. 253-4.
[21] PRO SP 16/531/134. For Peck see above, p. 121-2 and below pp. 240-2. For Ward see above, p. 108-11, 118-19 and below p. 195-7.
[22] Venn i, p. 137; NRO DN REG/16/22, fo. 38v; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 281.

'altar policy', Yates retained much cachet among godly circles. As a protégé of Sir Roger Townshend, Nathaniel Bacon's son-in-law and heir, praised by Yates in 1631 as the paragon of the virtuous religious life in a collection of sermons, *The saints sufferings and sinners sorrows*, the minister was linked to an influential voice in county politics.[23] Besides, Yates's presence also owed something to his sour relations with Francis White, a backer of Richard Montagu's *Appello Caesarem* in 1625.[24] Yates, therefore, hoped to make a concerted stand against the machinations of anti-Calvinist courtly prelates like White, who had already done much to discredit his good name and reputation in print.

Whatever the varied concerns of the different trustees, the group's subversive potential was realised with their first and only recorded appointment. Recommended by their associates in the capital and secured through the service of 'one King', undoubtedly Henry King, son of the Norwich town clerk Thomas King, a later combatant against Wren in 1636, the Norfolk feoffees procured the service of William Bridge, a former fellow of Emmanuel, where Yates, Ward and Benton had also studied.[25] Bridge, who is illustrated overleaf, was a notorious nonconformist. Described by one hostile witness as 'an absurd turbulent fellow', he had begun his career lecturing in and around Saffron Waldon, Essex on alternate Sundays, funded by 'divers' inhabitants within the town. In 1630 he was presented during the visitation of the Archdeaconry of Colchester for preaching without a licence, while refusing to wear surplice and hood. When

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[23] Yates's career is discussed in detail above pp. 72-3, 92-8, 108-12, 123-41; John Yates, *The saints sufferings and sinners sorrows, or the evident token of salvation and perdition* (1631), *STC* 26087, sigs. A4-A5; L. Campbell, 'Sir Roger Townshend and his Family: a Study in Gentry Life in Early Seventeenth Century Norfolk', University of East Anglia, Ph.D., 1990, pp. 32-57, 62-5;

[24] BL Add MS 25278, fo. 139v.

[25] PRO SP 16/531/134; A. Campling and A. W. H. Clark (eds.), *The Visitation of Norfolk, 1664*, vol. 1, NRS, 4 (1934), p. 115, and below pp. 203-7, 243-5 for details on the King family; *DNB* 'William Bridge', which states that the minister graduated MA in 1626.

EFFIGIES
GVILIELMI BRIDG
ME Obiit 1670 W Sherwin sculpt

9. 1. An illustration of William Bridge in later life, reproduced in J. E. Clowes, *Chronicles of the Old Congregational Church of Great Yarmouth, 1642 to 1858* (Great Yarmouth, 1906).

interrogated by the commissary over his conformity, his answer was suitably evasive, stating that until he obtained authorisation from the bishop of London, William Laud, he 'will be carefull to observe the kings instructions for the time to come'.[26] A potential candidate for recruitment by the London feoffees, Laud on the other hand was not enamoured with Bridge's preaching. Refusing to licence the minister as town lecturer at Colchester in 1631, Laud reportedly flew into a rage – 'He was angry, and said, When you want one, you must go first to Dr Gouge and then to Dr Sibes, and then you come to me: I scorn to be so used: I'll never have him lecture in my diocese that will spew in the pulpit'.[27] A few months later, Bridge evaded Laud's censure by moving to Norwich.

Indeed Bridge's ministry within his new adoptive city got off to an auspicious start, when in December 1631 he was presented to St Peter Hungate, where the feoffee Robert Craske and his colleague Thomas Cory had purchased the advowson. Next came the important matter of obtaining a preaching licence. Here, Bridge and his patrons took advantage of the vacancy in Norwich upon Francis White's translation to Ely in December 1631, which ensured that until the end of January, all diocesan business was transferred to Lambeth.[28] For two months, Norwich was administered by Laud's opponent Archbishop George Abbot. Although his former political influence had long been eclipsed at court, the archbishop remained committed to an evangelical agenda, sympathetic to the aspirations of the Norfolk trustees. On 21st December 1631, Abbot

[26] PRO SP 16/531/134; ERO D/AC/A47, fo. 70v, 20 Jan 1630, fo. 161v, 5 Nov 1631.
[27] *The Winthrop Papers* III, Massachusetts Historical Society (1943), p. 58. Bridge had expounded upon Revelations 3: 15, 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou were cold or hot'. It is not difficult to see why Laud took offence to this thinly veiled attack on his integrity as a bishop. William Gouge and Richard Sibbes were two clerical members of the London Feoffees for Impropriations.
[28] NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 7; Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 38.

licensed Bridge to preach across Norwich, Lincoln and Ely dioceses.[29] Moreover, in the coming year, in April, the minister received further sanction from Lambeth, with the grant of a licence to hold Hungate in plurality with the curacy of St George Tombland, where the alderman feoffee John Tooley resided and officiated as churchwarden.[30] Under Tooley's guidance in October, the Assembly moved to include Bridge on the city payroll for a Friday exercise at Tombland. At a stroke, the godly fulfilled their longstanding ambition of restoring the number of corporate sponsored lectureships to their pre-1622 level of three a week. But it was an end which could not have been achieved without Archbishop Abbot's intervention.

Similarly, Bridge's Friday morning exercise could not have taken place without the countenance of Francis White's successor Richard Corbet who, as stated in the city Assembly book, 'allowed' Bridge 'to performe' weekday sermons.[31] Following Hugh Trevor-Roper's appraisal of his career, Corbet is regarded as a better satirist than an administrator. An anti-Calvinist given to writing witty ballads on the theme of 'the Distracted Puritane' reared in 'the howse of pure Emmanuel', Corbet's reaction to godly zeal was less confrontational in practice.[32]

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[29] LPL Register Abbot iii, fos. 153r-9v; NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 7; K. Fincham, 'Prelacy and Politics: Archbishop Abbot's Defence of Protestant Orthodoxy', *HR*, 61 (1988), pp. 36-64.

[30] NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 2; Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 58, for John Tooley's office holding. Tooley was not, as stated in Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 285 the patron of the church, St George's being a rectory appropriated to the Bishop of Ely, BL Harl MS 595, fo. 162r; NRO DN VAL/2.

[31] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 286r, 1 Oct 1632. In the same session, Daniel Claydon was appointed to host a Monday lecture at St Peter Hungate, a venue which was switched to St George Colegate in 1633. With the addition of the Thursday lecture at St Andrew's, this restored the number of stipendiary exercises to their pre-Harsnett days, see NRO CA, 1625-48, fos. 165r, 183r. This entry also corrects Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 285 and Greaves and Zaller I, p. 99, which imply that Bridge also took on the lecture at St Andrew's at this time.

[32] J. A. W. Bennet and H. R. Trevor-Roper (eds.), *The Poems of Richard Corbett* (Oxford, 1955), pp. xi-xli, 56-7. However, in light of his episcopate in Norwich, it is inaccurate to describe Corbet as indolent. For example, he told the Walloon congregation to 'depart and hire some other place for your irregular meetings', BL Harl MS 464, fo. 15. Similarly, he took a hard line on rectors who were remiss in repairing their churches, a theme reinforced by his chaplain William Strode in his posthumously printed, *A sermon preached in a visitation held at Lynn in Norfolk, June 24th 1633* (1660), Wing S2340, pp. 28-9. Corbet was also active in pressing more regimented church seating in line with emergent concerns for the 'beauty of holiness', PRO SP 16/266/58 and Bod L Tanner MS 135, fo. 163r.

After all, he was not averse to fostering preaching initiatives. While incumbent upon his former see of Oxford, he had licensed several lectureships, including a combination exercise at Woodstock, where Corbet himself took regular turns in the pulpit. His successor John Bancroft disliked the meeting and promptly closed it down.[33] Faced with an opportunity to sponsor similar lectureships in Norwich, Corbet commended Bridge's prestigious £20 *per annum* civic appointment provided that, in line with the 1629 directions to bishops, the weekly exercise was performed in rotation by 'a company of grave and orthodox divines near adjoining'.[34] What was an extension of episcopal good will backfired. For by permitting the Friday lecture, Corbet merely gave Bridge a platform to generate further religious controversy across the city.

Indeed while Bridge's spell as Tombland lecturer was not, as his anonymous detractor put it 'absurd', it certainly proved turbulent. To begin with, as it transpired from the bishop's visitation conducted during the summer of 1633, the minister woefully neglected his second cure of St George's, since neither he nor his assistant curate John Stalham took the trouble to read divine prayers on weekdays and holy days. Disregard for set prayers extended to the Friday morning lecture. At the same time, the minister proved popular with sermon gadders, several parishioners from Tombland preferring to resort to St Peter Hungate 'when Mr Bridge preacheth there'.[35] More alarmingly, Tombland was becoming a haven for conventicles. One parishioner, Nathaniel Porter, was presented for holding illicit prayer meetings, a point of some concern since Porter stood excommunicated after being caught expounding, 'to his owne invention', in the

[33] K. Fincham, 'Episcopal Government, 1603-1640', in. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church*, p. 85.
[34] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 286r, 1 Oct 1632; Laud, *Works* v, p. 308.
[35] NRO DN VIS/6/4, unfoliated entry for St George Tombland. John Stalham is described vaguely as 'clericus'.

house of one Bursham in St Andrew's by the archdeacon's court the previous year.[36] It was suspected that by failing to observe set prayers Bridge had encouraged such activities.

Another potential concern for Bishop Corbet was the minister's choice of 'company' to fill the Tombland preaching roster, some members of which were reputed vocal critics of current ecclesiastical policy. Eleven clerics are known to have shared the pulpit at St George's.[37] Among these we find William Bridge's contemporary at Emmanuel College, Jeremiah Burroughs, along with a Gonville and Caius graduate, William Greenhill, both of whom would later form the mainstay of the Independents in the Westminster Assembly of Divines as the celebrated 'Morning Star' and 'Evening Star' of Stepney respectively. As Cambridge scholars, Bridge and Burroughs had been influenced by John Wilson of Sudbury, deprived by Harsnett in 1627 for spreading sedition.[38] Under Wren, Burroughs was also suspended from his Norfolk living of Tivetshall and excommunicated for failing to use 'visible reverence' at the name of Jesus, while also refusing to read the king's declaration on Sunday Sports.[39] However, he procured the backing of Henry Rich, Earl of Holland. Protected by this distinguished lay patron, Burroughs departed Norwich diocese 'without prejudice', first to Delft and then to Essex where he was sheltered at Little Leighs, home of Holland's brother, Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick. In 1638 he was in trouble again for advocating the Scottish Covenanters' rights to resist King Charles. At least this was the impression created by John Michaelson, vicar of Chelmsford, whose information prompted proceedings against Burroughs by both High Commission and

[36] *Ibid*; NRO MC 16/15, fo. 4.
[37] The names are given in NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 580v. The fullest secondary account of the Tombland exercise remains Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 286-7.
[38] *DNB* 'Jeremiah Burroughs', 'William Greenhill', 'John Wilson'; Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England*, p. 22; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 175-83.
[39] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 6v; Tanner MS 89, fo. 175.

subsequently the Court of King's Bench.[40] Forced to flee to Holland again, this time to Rotterdam, Burroughs returned in 1641. He became a formidable apologist for Parliament's war effort as a just cause to defend the Protestant faith and the people's liberty, arguing that 'it is lawfull to take up armes to maintain that Civil right we have to our Religion and this we doe. For we have not only a right to our Religion by the Law of God, but we have a civil Right to this our Religion...and therefore there can be no scruple in this'.[41]

Burroughs was perturbed by changes heralded by the royal instructions of 1629. His colleague William Greenhill, as a fellow lecturer with Burroughs at an earlier combination exercise at Mendlesham, certainly viewed the current direction of ecclesiastical policy pessimistically.[42] Both men enjoyed the patronage of Lady Jane Bacon of Brome Hall, Suffolk. Lady Jane had presented Burroughs to Tivetshall, while Greenhill served as both tutor and chaplain to the dowager, having been installed at Oakley, within the immediate neighbourhood of Brome.[43] Providing spiritual comfort to his patroness, Greenhill confided his thoughts on the royal directions. Writing to Lady Jane in January 1630, he could smell a conspiracy:

> Since I wrote to your Ladyship, the Bishops have received instructions from the King, for they make him the author of all. And they are touching Bishops retiring to their own Sees, Catechising in the afternoon, Gentlemen restrained from keeping of Chaplaines or Schollers in their houses, Lecturers reading of prayers in their habits and Surplusses Constantly on Week days or others. They have thought to have chopt them all downe at a blow but that was too violent, they will take a milder course, weary all men out with imposition of holy burdens that they will hardly touch with one of their fingers. It makes my heart bleed to thinke of the miseries that by such men and their

[40] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 9v-10r, 121r, 248r; B. Donagan, 'The Clerical Patronage of Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick, 1619-1642', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 120 (1976), p. 408; ERO T/B211/1/39; Bod L Tanner MS 314, fo. 180r.

[41] Burrough's lecture before the London Assembly is BLTT E 338 (1), *Foure Speeches Delivered in Guildhall on Friday the sixth of October, 1643...upon the Occasion of Desiring the Assistance of our Brethren in Scotland in this Warre* (1646), p. 33.

[42] *DNB* 'William Greenhill', which conflates this Greenhill with another cleric of the same name who graduated from Magdalen College Oxford and held the vicarage of New Shoreham, Sussex in 1615, see A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), p. 233. For the Mendlesham exercise see N. Evans (ed.), *The Wills of the Archdeaconry of Sudbury 1630-1635*, Suffolk Record Society, 29 (1987), p. 264.

[43] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 286.

> projects are coming upon the Church, which I beseech the Lord of his infinite mercy to uphold and preserve in despight of all the oppressors thereof.[44]

Given his suspicion that a plot to silence the Gospel was afoot, Greenhill's clash with Wren in 1636 seems inevitable. Suspended for refusing to comply with the bishop's articles, he followed Burroughs and William Bridge to the Low Countries, in later life acting as co-editor of both their works, being named by Bridge as his literary executor.[45] Close relations between the three pastors stemmed from their shared experience of the Tombland lecture after 1632.

Other participants in the same exercise with grave doubts about the church hierarchy's intentions included the three former clerical feoffees John Benton of Wramplingham, John Ward of St Michael at Plea and Robert Peck of Hingham. Robert Gallard of Sprowston was another figure closely allied to the Norfolk trustees.[46] Thomas King, rector of Salle since 1628 and Edward Case of Erpingtom, would attract Bishop Wren's attention in 1636, King for expounding scripture at length while catechising, Case for holding a fast ahead of a royal proclamation, arguing that 'he heard it was at London and supposed it had been here likewise'. Both men eventually conformed.[47] Besides these beneficed pastors, the Tombland exercise played host to three stipendiary lecturers active within the teaching fraternity about King's Lynn. The first was Matthew Swallow, curate of St Margaret's Lynn since 1628. A commanding presence in the port town, Swallow had already suffered momentary suspension by the diocesan chancellor

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[44] ERO D/DBy/C24, fo. 19r; F. Heal and C. Holmes, '"Prudentia Ultra Sexum": Lady Jane Bacon and the Management of her Families', in M. McClendon, J. P. Ward and M. MacDonald (eds.), *Protestant Identities: Religion, Society and Self-fashioning in Post- Reformation England* (Stanford, 1999), pp. 111-2.
[45] Bod L Tanner MS 89, fo. 175; Tanner MS 314, fo. 122r; BLTT E471 (1), *The Works of William Bridge* (1649), 'To the Reader'; PRO PROB 11/335, fo. 354r, will of William Bridge, proved 1671.
[46] For Gallard see above, pp. 71-2, 90-2, 117..
[47] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 5r, 212r; *Parentalia*, p. 98. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 290, writes of Thomas Case that 'Wren sent him packing'. However, he was still incumbent upon Erpingham during the Archdeacon of Norwich's 1639 visitation, not resigning the cure until December 1640.two years after Wren's move to Ely, NRO ANW 3/34 and DN REG/18/24, fo. 19v.

Clement Corbet for nonconformity in the Summer of 1629. He too balked at conforming to Wren's injunctions, resigning his lectureship, as the bishop noted 'not without some contempt'.[48]

However, from the chancellor's perspective, a more unsettling contributor to Bridge's lecture was John Stalham, sometime preacher at St Nicholas Lynn in 1629, a position which he held seemingly without licence. Chancellor Corbet had been moved to censure this itinerant lecturer.[49] Delivering lengthy extemporary prayers after preaching, Stalham had also courted controversy with a thundering fast day sermon delivered in March 1629, which condemned the present state of the church and commonweal. In the text, he gave thanks for the prosperous estate of England under Queen Elizabeth. But as he lamented:

> now there is pollution in the Court, pollution in the Church and commonwealth and how O Lord...canst thou behold us with the eyes of mercie, seeing poperie and superstition is secretly set up in the chiefest places of the this kingdom...for the sinnes of this kingdome great miserie and calamities would fall.

This was a politically sensitive outburst. But professing to speak 'not as a prophet to judge but as a watchman to forewarn', Stalham immediately provoked the comment 'noe you stand like a foole' from one wit, Thomas Rivett, gentleman of Lynne.[50] Rivett's friends included a churchwarden Samuel Thacker, who had presented Stalham for not wearing the surplice.[51] The minister obviously had his enemies in St Nicholas King's Lynn, who in turn were content to see further proceedings brought against him in the Consistory Court.

Given his strong opinions on current affairs, it is striking to note Stalham's reappearance as an assistant preacher at Tombland in 1633. This role would have seemed insidious to

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[48] Extracts from King's Lynn Assembly Books relating to religious affairs are transcribed in BL Add MS 24346, fo. 8, 8 Dec 1628; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 5r, 7 Dec 1636.
[49] BL Add MS 24346, fo. 9, 11 Oct 1629; NRO DN DEP/38/43, fo. 389r.
[50] NRO DN DEP/38/43, fos. 389r-v.
[51] *Ibid*, fos. 390r-v.

Chancellor Corbet, especially in light of the minister's recent promotion to the living of Terling in Essex in May 1632. Stalham had been presented by Sir Robert Mildmay, whose daughter was married to a brother of the Norfolk feoffee Robert Peck of Hingham.[52] Peck himself had close familial connections with the ruling oligarchy in Lynn, which doubtless came into play during the selection of another of William Bridge's circle of preachers at St George's, Thomas Walker.[53] Bridge's near contemporary at Emmanuel, Walker went to Cambridge on a scholarshiip funded by Lynn corporation. He also took turns in the town's pulpits in 1631 before progressing to Norwich and then Assington, Suffolk, where he replaced Nathaniel Rogers upon the latter's emigration to New England in 1635. Faced with the prospect of having to conform to Wren's articles, he also crossed the Atlantic.[54] However, Walker along with Stalham epitomised the variety of staunchly evangelical preachers attracted to the Tombland exercise in the early 1630s. Backed by such like minded colleagues, the stage was set for Bridge's spat with another Norwich lecturer John Chappell of St Andrew's. The resulting religious dispute exacerbated tensions among Norwich's clergy which by default sent ripples through the city's governing elite as well. In turn the controversy led to Bridge's temporary suspension.

Our knowledge of the ensuing discord is derived from an instance suit brought against Bridge by Isaac Grandorge and John Salter, churchwardens of St Andrew's in the Consistory

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[52] NRO DN VIS/6/4; DN DEP/41/46, fo. 568r; R. Newcourt, *Repertorium...or an Ecclesiastical Parochial History of the Diocese of London* (2 vols., 1710), II, p. 578; K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling 1525-1700* 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1995), pp 160-4, which regrettably has nothing to say about John Stalham's earlier career in Norfolk. For the marital ties between the Mildmays and the Pecks see Bod L Tanner MS 180, fo. 242r.

[53] Bod L Tanner MS 180, fo. 24v.

[54] BL Add MS 24346, fo. 9, 1 July 1631, 2 Dec 1631; NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 3; PRO SP 16/293/218; Bod L Tanner MS 314, fos. 120r, 122v.

Court during February 1634.[55] Unfortunately, the original articles against Bridge have not survived. However, from the extant witness deposition statements taken prior to the hearing, it is possible to reconstruct the background behind the case of Grandorge and Salter *con* Bridge, which appears to have been carefully managed by Chancellor Corbet to discredit the Norwich minister. To date the only treatment of these proceedings has come from Kenneth Shipps, who first spotted the case but offered a partial reading of the material.[56] In short, the two churchwardens brought a defamation suit against Bridge for sullying the good reputation of their incumbent, John Chappell, chaplain and Thursday lecturer at St Andrew's since 1627.[57] Delivering a series of sermons at St George's, Bridge had attacked certain doctrines held by Chappell. In the process, Bridge had enticed a number of parishioners away from St Andrew's whenever he preached on weekdays at Tombland, forcing the St Andrew's churchwardens to fulfil their duty, according to Bishop Corbet's visitation articles, of reporting ministers who impugned 'any doctrine delivered by others his fellow preachers'.[58] As well as the questmen, the main protagonists against Bridge included two St Andrew's parishioners, a maltster called Francis Norris and Thomas Ingram. A hosier, originally from Suffolk, Ingram proved to be a particularly confrontational figure in his resident parish, quarrelling with his neighbour, John Greenwood, who became sheriff in 1642 and later an Independent of extreme views.[59] In 1636, Ingram brought a defamation suit against Greenwood for spreading the rumour that he had lived

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[55] The case in its entirety is deposited in NRO DN DEP/41/46, fos. 567r-601r. For Grandorge and Salter as churchwardens see NRO MC 992/1, fo. 12v.
[56] Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 286-8.
[57] Blomefield iv, p. 301; NRO CA, 1625-48, fo. 68r.
[58] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fos. 568r, 582v, 584v; K. Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church I*, Church of England Record Society (1994), p. 163.
[59] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fos. 567r, 568v. for Greenwood see Hawes, *Officers*, p. 72 and Joseph Hall, *Hard Measure*, in P. Hall ed., *The Works of Joseph Hall*, I (Oxford, 1837), p. Iv.

incontinently before marrying his wife.[60] Nevertheless, against the background of such grubby parochial squabbling, it is interesting to note Ingram's unflinching support for Chappell against Greenwood's devotion to Bridge, sealed by his family's membership of the minister's Congregational church at Great Yarmouth in 1643.[61] In the process, Ingram won Chancellor Corbet's commendation. Although sometimes 'of that faction of assurance and undoubted salvation', the hosier had endured numerous insults from 'schismaticks' who accounted him an 'apostate' after opposing Bridge in 1634.[62]

Upon Ingram's testimony, tensions between the two ministers began on 23rd May 1633, on the occasion of one of Chappell's Thursday lectures at St Andrew's. Preaching on the subject of the working of divine grace, Chappell maintained that 'God doth truly intend and will the salvation of all men and that Christ died for all men according to the holy scriptures conditionally that they repent, believe and obey the terms of the gospel'. This position was an anathema to Bridge who was a rigid predestinarian. As one report of the Tombland lecturer's earlier 'spiritual preaching' observed, the minister reinforced the point that 'grace is irresistible' adding, 'hear an expression for it. God is like a mother who when her child cryes puts on the cloathes thereof, whether the child will or no'.[63] Bridge disliked Chappell's sermon for the emphasis it placed on man's capacity to attain his own salvation. This premise smacked of Arminianism and accosting Chappell in the chancel of St Andrew's 'next unto the Communion Table' afterwards, he asked the lecturer to forbear propagating such doctrines 'for that they were new things' contrary to scripture. When Chappell refused, Bridge threatened to dispute with him

[60] NRO DN DEP/43/47, fos. 500r-5v, Ingram *con* Greenwood.
[61] NRO FC 31/1, fo. 1.
[62] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 271r.
[63] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 569r; PRO SP 16/531/134.

in his own lectures.[64] Indeed the first salvo was fired the next day, when preaching on Bridge's behalf, John Stalham attacked Chappell for having betrayed the legacy of the great Calvinist founding fathers at St Andrew's such as John More, Thomas Newhouse, Roland Nutt and Nicholas Bownd.[65] At other times, Bridge himself also took occasion to preach down Chappell's 'divers deceits'.[66] Culminating in a forceful Tombland sermon delivered after Christmas 1633, Bridge assured his congregation that 'he did not believe Christ died for every particular man for that all men should be saved...because he intended not for all' since 'it was not likely [that] Christ should lay downe his life on earth for him he appears not for in heaven', adding that while Christ's death was sufficient for all men, 'his righteousness [is] not imputed to every man'.[67]

Such pointed exchanges, which went on for over half a year, made for a fervent doctrinal debate. However, there was a nastier side to the controversy, after it was alleged by Thomas Ingram that Bridge had written to several prominent citizens and members of the county gentry, including his patron Miles Corbet, asking them to boycott Thursday lectures at St Andrew's.[68] This action prompted the churchwardens to bring their suit. But lining up behind the Tombland preacher stood his fellow minister and patron John Ward, Alderman Timothy Scottow of St Andrew's, brother of the feoffee Augustine Scottow, together with the town clerk Thomas King, another figure closely allied with the former Norfolk trustees. Each was at pains to stress

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[64] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 586v.
[65] *Ibid*, fos. 568r-9v. Stalham preached upon 1 Corinthians 3: 11, 'For other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ'. In later life, Stalham encountered Arminianism in the preaching of Samuel Oates, who had infected Terling with 'strange conceits' touching universal grace, BLTT E 384 (10), John Stalham, *Vindiciae Redemptionis in the Fanning and Sifting of Samuel Oates his Exposition upon Matt 13. 44* (1647), 'To my beloved brethren and neighbours in Terling'.
[66] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fos. 567r-v.
[67] *Ibid*, fo. 577r, deposition of John Ward.
[68] *Ibid*, fo. 585v, deposition of William Mayes, worsted weaver of St John Sepulchre, who received the information from Thomas Ingram.

Bridge's orthodoxy against Chappell's supposed errors.[69] John Ward was particularly forward in testifying as to Chappell's alleged Arminianism, remarking candidly that as 'common fame' would have it:

> since the publication of King James his declaration...Mr Chappell hath publicly in the pulpit commended Arminius by name, as well for his doctrine as his ministrations and that he held the authority of Perkins for it, which this witness knoweth was and is offensive unto many for he this witness hath heard divers persons express so much..[70]

But was Chappell really an Arminian? Presenting his own side to the court, the St Andrew's chaplain was keen to disassociate himself from the 'factious term' Arminianism, having already pointed out to his detractor Bridge that his position 'in the sending of Christ, God did conditionally intend the eternall good of all mankind', was a tenet which could be readily accounted as 'scripturisme'. Because 'the Lutheran churches held these things before Arminius...[there was] therefore no reason they should have their denunciation from him'. In his statement at least, Chappell was careful to avoid provocation, summarising his views of the Dutch theologian by insisting that he 'did not recommend him for his life though he never heard any ill of the man'.[71]

Yet in his public statement of religious orthodoxy Chappell was not being entirely frank about his beliefs. An interesting figure, the younger brother of William, who was sometime tutor to John Milton and later bishop of Cork, John Chappell followed in the family footsteps to become a graduate of that bastion of Elizabethan Calvinism, Christ's College, Cambridge. But in 1609 he migrated to Emmanuel. The timing of this move was propitious coinciding as it did with a clampdown on nonconformity at Christ's, which has been described in detail by Stephen

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[69] *Ibid*, fos. 578v, 600r, 589r. For Timothy Scottow see Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 50. For Thomas King see PRO SP 16/531/134 and below, pp. 203-7, 243-5.
[70] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 581r.
[71] *Ibid*, fos. 586v, 587v, 588v.

Bondos-Greene. Progressing to an Emmanuel fellowship in 1617, Chappell joined a teaching circuit in Derby before moving to Norwich.[72] However, upon assuming the cure at St Andrew's, he abandoned the evangelical Calvinism associated with his old college, possibly under the influence of Bishop Harsnett who had licensed the minister's corporation lecture. Indeed Chappell's brother William also emerged as a controversial theologian. Both as a tutor at Christ's and later as provost of Trinity College, Dublin, he attracted stinging criticism for defending justification by good works and Arminianism, most vociferously from James Usher. His soteriological views found favour with William Laud who procured a string of Irish offices for the elder Chappell.[73] Significantly, upon resigning St Andrew's in 1634, John Chappell also gained preferment in Ireland through the intervention of Strafford, who considering the minister to be 'a deserving man', pressed his recommendation upon Laud in November 1637. Becoming Chancellor of Cork, John Chappell proved an able apologist for the religious changes sponsored by Lambeth after 1633.[74]

The point is that as a former protégé of Samuel Harsnett, John Chappell had served as a spokesman for anti-Calvinist thinking in Norwich since 1627, making him an obvious target for William Bridge's circle in the following decade. Yet while Bridge drew large audiences in refuting Chappell, the St Andrew's lecturer had also gathered adherents. These included several city clergymen, who were forwarded to account for Chappell's religious orthodoxy according to 'the cause of the Church of England as it now standeth'.[75] Three ministers in particular warrant

[72] *DNB* 'William Chappell'; Venn i, p. 324; S. A. Bondos-Greene, 'The End of an Era: Cambridge Puritanism and the Christ's College Election of 1609', *HJ*, 25 (1982), pp. 197-208; NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 591v-2r, deposition of Edmund Porter who claimed to have heard Chappell lecture in Derby.
[73] *DNB* 'William Chappell'; Laud, *Works* iv, pp. 298-9 and the forthcoming work of Alan Ford.
[74] Laud, *Works* vi, p. 514; Venn i, p. 324.
[75] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 582r.

attention. The first was George Cock, rector of St George Colegate, who as one of Samuel Harsnett's ordinands would succeed Chappell at St Andrew's in 1635.[76] The second was another of Harsnett's protégés Richard Gamon, parson of St Lawrence.[77] The third was Edmund Porter, a prebend of Norwich, who would later suffer at the hands of Parliament during the Civil War.[78] In 1636, they formed part of Bishop Wren's commission into religious affairs in the city. That these three presebnted a united front on Chappell's behalf against, as Richard Gamon put it, the 'untrue doctrines or opinions' held by Bridge, was not without prescience for their participation in Wren's administration.[79]

Besides his clerical colleagues, Chappell also found a lay constituency. Thomas Ingram's support of his minister has already been noted as has that of his fellow parishioner Francis Norris, who made the rebuke that 'since the coming of Mr Chappell and by his good life...unity and love hath bin nourished, until the coming of the said Mr Bridge hath declared to a general dissension...in religion'. It is interesting that this comment was added to Norris's original deposition submitted to the court. Amended in Clement Corbett's recognisably scratchy hand, it appears that the chancellor carefully primed the witnesses testifying on Chappell's behalf.[80] Corbet was anxious to stop the verbal war of attrition fuelled by Bridge's uncompromising soteriological beliefs. Following the case, Bishop Richard Corbet, no relation to the chancellor, was forced to intervene, suspending the Tombland lecturer for contravening the royal Declaration of 1629, which forbade contentious predestinarian preaching.

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[76] *Ibid*, fos. 576r-v. For Cock's career see NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 4; NRO CA, 1625-48, fos. 202v, 221v, 240r, 261v, 295v.
[77] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fos. 581v-2v.
[78] *Ibid*, fos. 591r-v. For Porter's fate in the 1640s see Blomefield iii, pp. 666-7..
[79] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 164r, 220r; NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 582v
[80] NRO DN DEP/41/46, fo. 568r.

Nevertheless, this disciplinary measure was short lived. Receiving a deputation from the Mayor's Court, comprising Bishop Harsnett's acknowledged adversary Alderman Thomas Shipdham as well as William Bridge's patrons Thomas Cory, Augustine Scottow and John Tooley, Bishop Corbet restored the minister to his livings upon submission in September 1634.[81] Possibly, Bridge's return forced John Chappell's resignation from St Andrew's in February 1635.[82] Hoping to avoid further contention, or simply persuaded that he could do little good in Norwich, Chappell sought a position with his brother William in Dublin.

However, this did not restrain Bridge from advancing predestinarian teaching. Similarly, the minister's reinstatement did not end Chancellor Corbet's use of the church courts to censure debate on election and reprobation, as demonstrated by a subsequent office case relating to Tombland, brought in February 1636. Here the defendant was not Bridge but one of his assistant curates, Edward Wale. An obscure figure, employed at St George's upon Thomas Walker's presentation to Assington in September 1635, Wale soon drew attention to himself for his nonconformity. As the court was informed, he refused to wear the surplice or use the sign of the cross in baptism. He did not bow at the name of Jesus and also altered parts of the prescribed liturgy, preaching past 10 a.m. on Sunday forenoons in contempt of authority.[83] On top of these infractions, Wale caused distress with uncharitable death bed utterances. Summoned to offer prayers at the bedside of Thomas Sergenson, praised by several witnessed for his 'honest and religious life and conversation', Wale was heard to 'terrific and affright' the dying citizen with 'strange, difficult questions concerning his salvation'. Unable to gain satisfactory answers from

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[81] Laud, *Works* v, p. 328; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 21r, 13 Sept 1634 and above, pp. 106-7 for Thomas Shipdham.
[82] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 312r, 24 Feb 1635.
[83] NRO DN CON/16, 'articles exhibited against Edward Wale clerk', loose file.

Sergenson as to his assurance of faith, Wale stormed out. To the minister, the old man was 'in a damnable estate, for his sinnes were more heavie than anything in the world and worse than damnation', words which caused 'great terror and astonishment' to Sergenson and his family.[84]

Wale was obviously no wit. While his harsh condemnation could be attributed to a lack of pastoral experience, Wale's turning away from his parishioner for offering no certain sign of his election, was indicative of the uncompromising presdestinarian teaching propounded in William Bridge's fold. Disciplining Wale in the Consistory Court, Clement Corbet hoped to shock opinion in Norwich.[85] Equally, William Laud, upon learning of Bridge's attack on John Chappell in 1634, was also at pains to sensationalise the subversive potential of Calvinist preaching in England's second city in his report to Charles. Describing Bridge's preaching as 'factious', Laud impressed upon the king the need for tighter control in East Anglia.[86] Following Richard Corbet's death in July 1635, Charles picked as a successor Matthew Wren, a firm disciplinarian unlikely to suffer theological wrangling by evangelicals like Bridge. The new episcopal appointment had the desired effect. A few months after Wren's primary visitation, the Tombland lecturer quit Norwich for Rotterdam, a move which in one respect assuaged royal anxieties. Noting Bridge's departure, Charles added, 'Let him go, we are well rid of him'.[87]

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[84] *Ibid.* Depositions relating to the case can be found in NRO DN DEP/42/47a, fos. 534r-7v.
[85] Wale was not present at St George Tombland for Bishop Wren's primary visitation, indicating that he had been deprived prior to the spring of 1636, NRO DN VSC/2/4, fo. 3r; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 155r.
[86] Laud, *Works* v, p. 328.
[87] *Ibid*, p. 340.

10. 'SOME JOYFULLY CONFORMED, OTHERS FROWARDLY OPPOSED': MATTHEW WREN AND THE STIRS OF 1636

The controversy over the theology of grace triggered by William Bridge's verbal exchange with John Chappell, hinted at wider confessional fissures opening up among Norwich's citizenry. Matters came to a head with the elevation of Matthew Wren as Richard Corbett's successor in November 1635.[1] From King Charles and Archbishop William Laud's perspective, the new appointment was intended to counter the seemingly intractable problem of nonconformity for which the East Anglian diocese was notorious. With an agenda to enforce a new ceremonial orthodoxy, Wren's reforms proved a grave challenge to the godly. Yet at the same time, within the city of Norwich at least, the bishop gained support from sympathetic clergy and laymen not adverse to shifts in ecclesiastical government. The result was an increasingly polarised atmosphere played out in city politics in the summer of 1636. Although Matthew Wren has gone down in history as the most unpopular bishop ever to preside over Norwich, vilified as 'Little Pope Regulus' in the caustic writings of William Prynne, such hostility was by no means universally shared.[2] Wren's execution of Caroline church policy found adherents, whose individual stories are pieced together in this chapter.

To date, the current historiography surrounding Wren's reputation is as divided as contemporary seventeenth century opinion on the bishop's career. The fullest biography remains Peter King's extensive study submitted as a thesis in 1969. Drawn exclusively from the bishop's correspondence and papers among the Tanner and Rawlinson manuscripts in the Bodleian

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[1] Le Neve, *Fasti vii*, p. 38. The title quote is taken from Foulke Robartes, *Gods holy house and service* (1639), *STC* 21068, sig. *2v.

[2] [William Prynne], *Newes from Ipswich* (Edinburgh, 1636), *STC* 20469, p. 4. Later attacks on the bishop in the mould of Prynne's pamphlet include BLTT E 165 (14), *The Wrens nest defiled* (1641) and E 166 (7), *Wrens Anatomy* (1641).

NEVVES FROM IPSWICH:

Discovering certaine late detestable practices of some dominiering Lordly Prelates, to undermine the established Doctrine and Discipline of our Church, extirpate all Orthodox sincere Preachers and preaching of Gods Word, usher in Popery, Superstition and Idolatry.

Woe be unto the Pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my Flocke, saith the Lord. Ierem.23.1.

First printed at Ipswich, and now reprinted for T. Bates. 1641.

10.1. Bishop Wren's ceremonial reforms as depicted by his enemies, in this case Wlliam Prynne's *Newes from Ipswich,* originally published in 1636, not in Ipswich but in Edingburgh.

Library, King's sympathetic reading takes Wren at his own word. Less complementary puritan assessments of the bishop's actions are not considered. Instead, Wren emerges as efficient administrator, whose energetic pursuit of the moderate aims of order and uniformity, hardly warranted his eighteen year imprisonment by Parliament from 1642 until gaining his release at the Restoration in 1660.[3] This reading has been adapted by Kevin Sharpe. Perversely, he insists that the opposition aroused during Wren's episcopate should be taken as 'a measure of his success in pressuring men to conformity'.[4] More recently, Julian Davies has recast Wren as one of the villains of the piece. Seeking to place King Charles rather than William Laud centre stage as the real instigator of ceremonial reform in the 1630s, Matthew Wren, as the king's choice for Norwich, assumes the role of royal hatchet man. Enabling Wren to advance his 'hawkish solutions' for governing Norwich, Charles backed a figure more Laudian than Laud himself.[5]

Davies's interpretation of the origins of Caroline ecclesiastical policy restates Wren's notoriety as a zealous and uncompromising disciplinarian, an aspect of his governmental style that was never really in question. It is true that Wren was King Charles's candidate for the vacant bishopric in 1635. We know this from a letter among Laud's papers sent by the archbishop to the king's sister Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, touching her own suit on behalf of John Hassell, dean of Norwich, who also aspired to the episcopate. Hassell, who owed his current position to Laud's intervention, hoped for further patronage. But as Laud explained, the

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[3] P. King, 'Matthew Wren, Bishop of Hereford, Norwich and Ely, 1585-1667', University of Bristol D.Phil., 1969, especially chs. 6 and 7; *idem*, 'Bishop Wren and the Suppression of the Norwich Lectures', *HJ*, 11 (1968), pp. 237-54. A similar argument can be found in H. A. Lloyd-Jukes, 'Bishop Wren and the Non-conforming Ministers of the Diocese of Norwich', *History Studies*, 1 (1968), pp. 15-20.
[4] K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 368-74 especially, p. 371.
[5] J. Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 246-7.

dean was not a serious contender, the king believing that Norwich diocese required 'a man whom he might trust'. Instead Charles promoted Wren, then Bishop of Hereford, but also someone close to the king's service as dean of the Chapel Royal. Consequently, the archbishop was happy to endorse this selection, holding 'it no good manners to prevent my master till he was graciously pleased to discover himself, which he hath since done'.[6]

The point is that Wren was a figure whom Laud 'might trust' as well. The need for a forceful manager at the helm in East Anglia, was brought home to the archbishop during his metropolitical visitation of Norwich, conducted in April 1635. To the vicar-general Sir Nathaniel Brent, the whole diocese was 'much out of order'.[7] This was especially the case in the city of Norwich, where Brent had encountered many ministers who refused to wear 'priests' cloaks'. While some were suspected of being nonconformists, 'they carried themselves so warily that nothing could be proved against them'. On a personal note, the vicar-general felt deliberately snubbed by the mayor Christopher Barret, a godly parishioner at St Andrew's previously presented for not standing at the *Gloria* or Gospel, who failed to turn out to greet his honoured guest. This was in contrast to the cannon salute laid on by the burgesses of King's Lynn, anxious to avoid similar provocation. Afterwards, Barret and his brethren were compelled to make amends by producing the customary gift of plate, reinforcing their loyalty to both church and state, protesting 'that they will be always ready to desire your Grace's good opinion of

[6] Laud, *Works* vii, pp. 167-8. For the dean's earlier ties with the Queen of Bohemia see PRO SP 14/174/35. Laud may have been aware of Hassell's earlier associations with the puritans William Bradshaw and Arthur Hildersham from the dean's time as minister of Burton upon Trent, a point I owe to Ian Atherton. If known this may have prejudiced the king's decision against him. Hassell, who was then embroiled in a dispute over his statutory rights *vis-à-vis* the Norwich chapter, sensed the policy changes at court and became an active Laudian under Wren, NRO DCN 86/29; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 86.
[7] Laud, *Works* v, p. 334.

them'.[8] Reading Brent's assessment of the alarming levels of nonconformity, Laud was aware of the need for tighter diocesan control in Norwich.

Indeed, upon his promotion, Wren's antidote for the ills of his new charge, worthy of some mention since it underwrote everything he performed in his see, took the form of a disarming set of visitation articles, comprised of nine chapters and 132 sections with six questions in each, 'thereby the better to provide for the Serenity of Men's Consciences and the Securing of Men's Minds', as the bishop himself put it later.[9] However, to the godly these injunctions had the opposite effect.[10] They became a source of extreme discomfort especially when applied in conjunction with a separate list of 'Particular Orders, Directions and Remembrances', distributed in manuscript to the bishop's officers during the primary visitation of 1636. In puritan circles, this hand-written circular acquired the disparaging title of Wren's 'pocket injunctions'.[11] Most controversial of all was the provision for the administration of the eucharist from a permanently fixed altarwise communion table, set at the east end of the chancel and divided from the main body of the church by a rail 'reaching across the north wall to the south wall, near one yard in height [and] so thick with pillars that dogs may not get in'. The idea was to stop communicants from entering the sanctuary as well. Instead members of the congregation were expected to 'come up reverently and kneel before the rails to receive the holy communion', in an orderly procession, which in 'great parishes' was to be limited to four

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[8] PRO SP 16/292/128; NRO DN VIS/5/1, for Barret's nonconformity at St Andrew's; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 51r, 15 Apr 1635.

[9] *Articles to be enquired of within the diocese of Norwich, in the first year of...Matthew Lord Bishop of Norwich* (1636), *STC* 10298; *Parentalia*, p. 110.

[10] For adverse commentary on the articles see Symonds D'Ewes, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Symonds D'Ewes*, ed. J. O. Halliwell (2 vols., London, 1845), II, p. 142; T. Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 208.

[11] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 33r-6v; Tanner MS 220, fo. 54, petition of Samuel Peck of Hingham. According to Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 288 n. 74, these directives became known as 'the whip with twenty eight strings'.

hundred in any one service. If the parishioners exceeded this total, they were admonished 'to have communion the ofterner', in smaller groups.[12]

Julian Davies has interpreted the thorough-going nature of these instructions as marking an extreme hard-line position on the 'altar policy', in contrast to William Laud's moderate stance over the contentious issue of receiving at the rail. If so, Wren posited his ceremonial reforms as being within the spirit of official policy sanctioned by Lambeth. To begin with, the prelate was careful to justify the setting up of rails 'according to the archbishops late injunctions' issued by Nathaniel Brent in the metropolitical visitation. These orders have survived in the consignation book drawn up in April 1635. Specifically, Brent commanded churchwardens to rail in communion tables at the east end 'in comely sort' to protect the object from potential canine intrusion. Admittedly, the instruction is silent on the matter of receiving at the rail.[13] However, from a later account of a conversation between Laud and Brent, dated to November 1641 and probably recorded for use in Laud's trial, the archbishop instructed Brent to encourage reception at the rails, albeit 'by persuasions' and in 'a faire way', during the metropolitical visitation. In his own words, Laud hoped 'the people will best be won by the decency of the thing itself'.[14] It is likely that Brent acted upon this brief in Norwich, as in other dioceses in the southern province, preparing the ground for Matthew Wren's more assertive stance in 1636. Moreover, when Wren's pressing of the ceremony was questioned as 'a noveltie' by his successor Richard Montagu, Laud intervened quickly. After seeking further 'direction from authority', the

[12] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 33r-6v.
[13] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 33r; NRO DN VSC/2/3b, fo. 1r, which was first given in relation to St Nicholas, Great Yarmouth. A copy of Brent's order for the port, which insists upon railing in the communion table, survives among Wren's papers. This too suggests that when compiling his own visitation articles, Wren was taking his cue from the archbishop, Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 15r.
[14] PRO SP 16/485/118; Laud, *Works* v, pp. 342-3; Fincham, 'The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s', p. 936.

archbishop was content to settle Montagu's qualms by recommending to Charles that 'the present bishop continue it and look carefully to it'.[15] Thus Laud sanctioned taking communion at the rail. From this correspondence, it seems Wren's enforcement of this sticky aspect of the 'altar policy' in Norwich met with Laud's approval, raising doubts about Davies's thesis that the archbishop's designs for eucharistic practice differed fundamentally from those of his subordinates. Moreover, on Davies's account, the reader could be forgiven for assuming that Laud disagreed with the heavy-handed tactics employed by his zealous lieutenant, Wren. If so, it is odd that when drawing up his will, the archbishop should single out his 'worthy friend' Matthew Wren as an overseer of his estate, having already granted Wren the honour of being godfather to the bishop's fourth son, who was aptly baptised 'William', acknowledging the close working relationship which existed between the two prelates.[16]

Besides the controversial issue of reception at the rail, Wren's orders caused distress for other reasons. From a ministerial perspective, the new bishop's insistence that the entire second service, including the Epistle and Gospel, was to be read at the communion table within the chancel, was especially confounding to godly clergymen.[17] For practical reasons, the placing of the minister at some distance from his congregation could render the lesson and service inaudible.[18] Wren was prepared, albeit begrudgingly, to grant dispensations for certain great churches 'scarce one such of forty throughout the Diocese', to place the communion table lower down in the chancel for all services except the eucharist, a direct obverse of the Elizabethan Injunction governing the positing of tables. This allowance was made at St Mary's Bury St

[15] LPL MS 943, p. 626; Laud, *Works* v, p. 340.
[16] Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church*, pp. 215-16; Laud, *Works* iv, pp. 448, 450.
[17] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 33r.
[18] *Parentalia*, p. 80.

Edmunds, Lavenham and Great Yarmouth.[19] But as the bishop informed parishioners at Bury, any such leniency was to be the exception rather than the rule, 'because however, one church in five hundred can pretend such an impossibility of hearing, yet every one should expect and contend the same indulgence'.[20] Episcopal intransigence dismayed evangelical pastors keen to officiate with as little formality and ceremony as possible. Not only did the directive serve to enhance the visible separation between the preacher and his congregation, the move could also be taken as an attempt to subvert the very nature of the pastoral ministry itself.[21] When Wren demonstrated the new priestly mode in person in the precociously Protestant town of Ipswich, his actions triggered a full scale riot.[22]

While the city of Norwich did not erupt into open violence in reaction to the bishop's injunctions, the impact of ecclesiastical reform succeeded in stirring up political faction fighting among the civic elite. Events were precipitated by the primary visitation completed in June 1636. Balking at compliance with the episcopal orders, several city ministers refused to present themselves and were summarily excommunicated by the bishop acting through his chancellor, Clement Corbet. Welcoming the opportunity to censure the city's godly preachers, Corbet was a

[19] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 29v. Wren's concession was given in response to a petition from Edmund Calamy and Henry White, lecturers at Bury St Edmunds, SROB MS 909/8, fo. 50r, 16 /May 1636. Such leniency did not prevent Calamy from preaching against innovations, Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 317. For similar dispensations granted to Lavenham and Great Yarmouth see *Parentalia*, p. 80.
[20] SROB MS 909/8, fo. 50r.
[21] *The Winthrop Papers*, III, Massachusetts Historical Society (1943), p. 356.
[22] F. Grace, '"Schismaticall and Factious Humours": Opposition in Ipswich to Laudian Church Government in the 1630s', in D. Chadd (ed.), *Religious Dissent in East Anglia III* (Norwich, 1996), pp. 97-119 especially, p. 99. The report of a second altercation following Wren's translation to Ely in 1638, calendared in *HMC* Rutland MSS, p. 522, whereby 'some red coats peeping in at the window' interrupted a committee for sewers at Wisbridge with shouts of 'give us Wren that damned bishop Ely, we will have him or else fire the town and cut the throats of all the commissioner', strikes as being a later fake.

formidable agent on Wren's behalf.[23] Indeed, if the bishop's articles were designed to test the loyalty of the rank and file of the clergy, they certainly had the effect of singling out the disloyal, when a total of eleven ministers incumbent upon city livings and one schoolmaster, chose not to comply and were suspended. These included four rectors, John Ward, William Bridge, Thomas Allen of St Edmunds and William Stynnet of St John Maddermarket. To this list can be added a further seven stipendiary chaplains, Ralph Furness of St John Sepulchre, Robert Kent of St Martin at Oak, John Burnham of St James and St Paul, John Carter of St Peter Mancroft and his curate Edmund Brome, as well as William Bridge's two assistants at St George Tombland, Richard Ireland and Thomas Carver.[24] Another figure who ran into trouble for not observing the articles was John Ward's protégé Gilbert Cushion. A schoolmaster and an ordained priest, as a test of his conformity, Cushion was made by Clement Corbet to officiate the second service at the cathedral wearing a cope, as required by the Canon 24. This he did in 'so scornful a behaviour' that he was deemed insufficiently humbled to be restored.[25]

Despite John Evans's lame assertion that 'the number of ministers actually forced out by Wren was and is debatable', in Norwich at least, five of the original deprived dozen are known not to have chosen to seek reconciliation with the new ecclesiastical order.[26] Here the lead was taken by John Ward and William Bridge. If Bishop Wren's Norwich informant William Alanson

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[23] According to William Prynne, Clement Corbet's zeal manifested itself in a threat to pistol one recalcitrant clergyman for refusing to read the Book of Sports , Bod L Tanner MS 299, fo. 160r. Apparently this utterance was made to William Greenhill, Tanner MS 68, fos. 6r-v.

[24] Taken from the list in Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 37r-v, 155r.

[25] *Ibid*, fos. 82r, 336v. For Cushion's links with Ward see BL Harl MS 3783, fo. 39r. The Cushion referred to disparagingly as 'a young man' by Wren's commissary was probably Gilbert junior on whose behalf Ward had written to William Sancroft to procure a place at Emmanuel College. In addition William Alanson noted another former curate at St George Tombland, Edward Wale. However, since Wale had been suspended prior to the 1636 visitation, he does not count, Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 155r and NRO DN VSC/2/4, fo. 3r.

[26] J. T. Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich* (Oxford, 1979), p. 94. My reading is based on a comparison of the list in Bod L Tanner 68, fos. 37r-v with the details in fo. 155r.

is to be believed, the two men were already contemplating a move from East Anglia prior to being excommunicated during the 1636 visitation. Allegedly Ward was planning to sail for New England 'any time above this Twelve Month'. However, in the event he passed over into Holland, no doubt utilising his connections with the émigré Dutch community within his own parish of St Michael at Plea.[27] Whether Bridge initially hoped to join his colleague is less certain. Nevertheless, it became apparent that life in Norwich was about to become extremely awkward for the pastor, especially in light of his old foe Thomas Ingram's timely reminder to Wren of Bridge's former indiscretions in expounding doctrine 'contrary to the faith of Christ and Holy Scripture'.[28] While Bridge did certify for his conformity and was absolved, he eventually followed Ward to the Netherlands by November 1636.[29] Doubtless the minister was also able to draw upon contacts from the Low Countries resident in St Peter Hungate, where a Dutch congregation later worshipped in the 1640s under Theophilus Elison, son of John, the first pastor of Norwich's Dutch church.[30] With Ward, Bridge became joint pastor of the English church at Rotterdam, the implications of which are explored in the next chapter. In the process, Bridge's career move netted him a greater stipend than that furnished by Norwich corporation, an important consideration given his former employer's refusal to fund the Tombland lecture after the minister's estrangement from the church.[31]

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[27] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 3v, 155r. For Ward's links with the 'stranger' community in his parish see PRO PROB 11/143, fo. 481r and above, p. 168-9.
[28] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 79r.
[29] Followed in Bod L Tanner MS 89, fo. 175; Tanner MS 314, fo. 122v; BL Egerton MS 2716, fo. 232; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 3r, 25 Apr 1637.
[30] For Bridge's departure see Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 3v. The Dutch congregation at Hungate is mentioned in M. Exwood and H. L. Lehmann (eds.), *The Journal of William Schellinks's Travels in England 1661-1663*, Camden Society 5th Series, 1 (1993), p. 158.
[31] See below, pp. 242-5; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 155r.

Another minister who decided to migrate first to Holland and then to New England was Thomas Allen, rector of St Edmund's. Encouraging several members of his flock to emigrate with him, the complex run of events leading to Allen's departure from Norwich will also be examined below.[32] The fourth city minister suspended in 1636 was Ralph Furness. At the grand old age of eighty-three, Furness was something of a ministerial relic from a bygone Elizabethan age.[33] But he was also a serial nonconformist, starting his career as John More's successor at St Andrew's in 1592, being hired to preach before the corporation. Four years later, he was presented to the north Norfolk living of Morston by Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey, only to be deprived during the clampdown on nonconformity after the Hampton Court Conference. Nevertheless, by 1614, he was back in Norwich having been installed at St John Sepulchre by Bishop Jegon after subscribing. But continuing to officiate without wearing the surplice, Furness made for an unlikely backer of Wren's articles, instead refusing outright to read the second service from the communion table.[34] Suspended, he was forced into involuntary retirement. The dean and chapter as the appropriate rector of St John Sepulchre granted the lease of the cure to one of Wren's standing commissioners, the aptly named Thomas Discepline or Displine, who faced ongoing resistance from members of the Furness family still resident in the parish. Headed by the former incumbent they led a protest against receiving at the rail. While the matter ended up in the Consistory Court, Discepline allegedly kept the chancel door locked, saying that 'none

[32] NRO DN REG/16/23, fo. 87r and below, pp. 229-39.
[33] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 155r.
[34] Blomefield iv, p. 301; NRO CA, 1589-1602, fos. 101v, 131r, 159r, 186r; NRO DN REG/14/20, fo. 247r; V. Morgan, J. Key and B. Taylor (eds.), *The Papers of Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey IV*, NRS, 64 (2000), pp. 16-17; K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), p. 325; NRO PD 90/69 (S); NRO DN VSC/2/3b, fo. 3r; DN VIS/6/4; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 37v.

but the priest himself might pass that way', an obvious foil to Furness, who possibly continued to administer the sacrament illegally to his former flock.[35]

Furness's nonconformity had been an occupational hazard throughout his career. However, the vexing issue of reading the second service from the chancel vexed more conformable men such as John Carter and Edward Brome of St Peter Mancroft, William Stynnet of St John Maddermarket, Robert Kent of St Martin at Oak and John Burnham of St Paul and St James. Brome, Stynnet, Kent and Burnham eventually conformed.[36] But the fifth figure at odds with the new ecclesiastical order, John Carter, continued to press the matter in a series of impassioned exchanges with Chancellor Corbet. Carter had a strong case. As the name Mancroft, a corruption of 'Magna Croft' implies, St Peter's is a large building, a fact which to the minister's thinking, warranted the parish's inclusion in Wren's list of 'scarce one such of forty throughout the diocese', where the communion table might be lowered into the main body of the church. Carter stated as much, preaching to his entire congregation. His argument hinged around the provision stated in Canon 14, whereby the ordinary could order the reading of prayers in any part of the church 'so as the people may be most edified'.[37] Making intercessions at the uppermost recess of the chancel was not edifying. In this assessment, Carter enjoyed the support of several parishioners, including the distinguished troublemaker and critic of Samuel Harsnett, John Thacker, now firmly established on the roster of officiating churchwardens. During Bishop

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[35] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 155r; *Chapter Minutes*, p. 73; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r; NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 1r; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 131.

[36] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 37r-v. William Stynnet, who emerged as a Presbyterian during the Civil War, was later accused by the Independents of siding too closely with episcopacy in the 1630s, BLTT E 385 (4), *Vox Norwici: or the City of Norwich Vindicating their Ministers* (1646), pp. 9, 11. Robert Kent died shortly after being restored, *Parentalia*, p. 94.

[37] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 54.

Montagu's visitation in 1638, Thacker noted ironically that nothing was amiss save that divers could 'not hear the minister read when he readeth second service at the communion table'.[38]

Unfortunately for both Carter and Thacker, Chancellor Corbet, who regarded Mancroft as a principal showcase church for the rest of the city and diocese, was unwilling to indulge the minister's scruples. Writing to Wren, he warned his master not to 'let any slipp'.[39] For Corbet, Carter was 'a Traducer...very schismatically brede' whose father, a celebrated Suffolk divine of the same name, had 'died in that shifted vaine' in St Swithin's in 1615.[40] He had no intention of allowing Carter to set a precedent over the location of the communion table in Norwich. The chancellor's concern was pronounced, especially given the minister's previous track record in dissuading his entire congregation from standing at the Gospel in 1633. Since neither party was willing to budge on the second service, Carter was unable to regain his cure. While he hoped to remain in Norwich as a schoolmaster, Corbet was having none of it, subsequently informing Wren that the minister would 'do more mischiefe in that course than he hath done in his shuffling practices in the Church'.[41] Carter sought a temporary haven at Newport, Essex. However, unlike John Ward and William Bridge, who took the dramatic step of quitting England for Rotterdam, Carter, who emerged as a staunch critic of Bridge's brand of Congregationalism in the 1640s, preferred to reach some accommodation with Wren's successor Richard Montagu

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[38] NRO PD 26/71 (S), fo. 135v. For Thacker see above, pp. 119-21 and below, pp. 266-70.
[39] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 2v.
[40] *Ibid*, fos. 189v-90r. Corbet's assessment of the elder Carter is borne out in BLTT E 903 (4), John Collings, *Elisha's Lamentation for Elijah* (1656), p. 23, which recalls that the minister 'was a Non-Conformist in those furious times of Prelacy'; NRO NCC 80 Angell, for the elder John Carter's will.
[41] NRO DN VIS/6/4; BL Egerton MS 2716, fo. 436, Anthony Mingay to Framlingham Gawdy, 20 Dec 1636, which notes that 'Mr Carter hath laid down his living'; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 1r, 2v, 3r.

in September 1638.[42] Carter's disagreement with Corbet did not lead him to consider alternative ecclesiologies, even if his departure left his parishioners with the task of finding a replacement. According to local gossip, John Chappell was approached by Wren to accept the vacant cure, although Chappell, having already been slighted by 'those godly and factious people', was understandably not so keen.[43] Instead, one of the bishop's standing commissioners, Simon Sumpter, brother of Alderman Robert, stepped in to officiate. But finding this position difficult to maintain with his living of Badingham in Suffolk, Sumpter readily resigned upon learning of Carter's rapprochement with Montague.[44]

Facing the imminent loss of John Carter in the summer of 1636, the godly of Norwich corporation were agitated into making a response. The problem was that since January 1633, Carter had been employed by the city to give a Tuesday lecture at Mancroft which, when compounded with the sudden loss of William Bridge's exercise on Fridays, ensured that the civic teaching rota was once again reduced to one sermon per week at St Andrew's.[45] Since this was held by George Cock, Wren's supporter, St Andrew's did not resound with evangelical preaching.[46] To many the reduction of weekday lectureships mirrored the draconian measures imposed by Samuel Harsnett in 1622, although in this instance the godly had no recourse to a Parliament to air their grievances. Instead they would have to make a direct appeal to King

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[42] John Collings, *Elisha's Lamentation for Elijah*, p. 24; BLTT E 447 (6), *The Attestation of the Ministers of the County of Norfolk and City of Norwich in Vindication of the...Solemn Covenant against the spreading Errors and prodigious Blasphemies that are scattered abroad in these Licentious Dayes* (1648); NRO PD 26/71 (S), fo. 135v, which records Carter's subscription in the Mancroft vestry minutes for 11 Sept 1638.
[43] BL Egerton MS 2716, fo. 436; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 5v, 20 Jan 1637; Tanner MS 68, fo. 4v.
[44] Bod L Tanner MS 89, fo. 151; Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r; Venn iv, p. 185; PRO E 331/Norwich/11, 8 July 1630, for Sumpter's institution to Badingham.
[45] Carter's appointment is given in NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 287v, 21 Jan 1632. Significantly, he had also been licensed by Archbishop Abbot during the interregnum after Francis White's move to Ely, NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 7; NRO CA, 1625-48, fo. 240r.
[46] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r.

Charles and Archbishop Laud. However, for any plea to carry weight with the monarch, it would have to be delivered on behalf of the entire citizenry, a move which caused friction among the magistrates, provoking opposition from a group of aldermen sympathetic to the bishop. Political manoeuvring began with the elevation of Thomas Baker to the mayoralty in May 1636. A member of the godly, Baker was closely allied to the puritan activist Alderman Robert Craske, Craske having served as an apprentice grocer to Baker's grandfather, Nicholas. The new mayor readily identified himself with the godly cause. In July 1636, he successfully steered an initial petition to Wren through the city Assembly calling for the immediate restoration of the eleven beneficed clergy suspended in the preceding month.[47] As seen, those clerics willing to conform were reinstated. But since this number did not include the three preaching heavyweights, John Ward, William Bridge and John Carter, Baker and his associates decided to press their complaint against Wren in August.

Besides the laconic entries in the corporation records, our knowledge of what happened next is derived from a series of letters among Wren's files.[48] Explaining their own position against the godly activists, we are fortunate to posses correspondence from a group of disgruntled magistrates under the nominal leadership of Alderman Henry Lane, about whom more in a moment. However, the most informative eye-witness accounts stem from William Alanson, curate at St Mary Coslany since 1625. A petty canon at Christ Church as well as a former ordinand and protégé of Samuel Harsnett, Alanson had been ordained into the ministry as

[47] Millican, *Freemen*, p. 74. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 284 states that Baker had been Craske's apprentice, but this is not supported by the freemen's lists; NRO AB5, 1613-42, fo. 326r, 24 July 1636.
[48] The relevant letters are bound out of chronological sequence in Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 159r, 147r, 150r-v, 152r-v, 162r.

a deacon by Richard Neile, while Bishop of Durham in 1619.[49] The cleric's early mentors were recognised for their antipathy towards puritanism. Alanson was no friend of the godly either, his dispatches heightening the drama that a subversive conspiracy was afoot – 'for our Norwich Puritans, though they bee more Civil, yet they are as Malitious and more Crafty than those of Ipswich. Here three or four Puritans rule the whole city'.[50] Certainly, the minister was well placed to keep Wren abreast of city affairs, having formerly served positions in the corporation's employ. Appointed to the mastership of Norwich's Great Hospital, he had also been instituted to the living of South Walsham in the magistrates' gift, although from there Alanson failed to gain promotion to one of the corporations prestigious stipendiary lectureships, his ambitions possibly being thwarted by the appearance of William Bridge.[51] This may explain his invective against 'our former needless multitude of Lecturers'. As for Bridge's patron, John Ward, he was simply unable to 'Turne Ten lines of Englishe into Tolerable Latin, nor Construe twenty lines of Latine in any Indifferent Author'.[52] Alanson turned to his new diocesan for patronage. For his pains, Wren rewarded the minister by making him his chaplain, appointing him to serve as a standing commissioner, in which capacity he allegedly preached that any who died excommunicate without seeking absolution 'went *ipso facto* to hell'.[53]

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[49] NRO DN VIS/6/2; DN VSC/2/3a, p. 6; *Chapter Minutes*, pp. 72-3; Venn i, p. 21, gives Alanson as a graduate of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. His precise origins are obscure. However, Robert Alanson, born in Cumberland and recorded as chaplain at St George Colegate in 1617 may have been a close relative, NRO DN DEP/35/40, fo. 29v. If so, this sheds light on Alanson's oblique reference to 'my Northern Kindred' in a later dispatch of 1641, Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336v.
[50] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 159r.
[51] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 135; NRO MCB/16, 1624-34, fo. 196r, 4 Aug 1630; NRO ANW 3/30. However, Alanson did preach before the corporation in 1634, NRO CA, 1625-48, fo. 183r.
[52] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 159r, 155r.
[53] *Ibid*, fo. 162r, signed 'Your Lordships Humble and Faithful Chaplain'; Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r; Tanner MS 220, fo. 135.

Alanson continued to maintain contacts among the magistracy. Such links account for his extensive insider knowledge of proceedings in the Mayor's Court which informed his various dispatches to Wren. While this correspondence has been used by John Evans, it is worth dwelling further on the personalities involved in the ensuing political wrangle. According to Alanson's report, confirmed by entries in the corporation records, trouble began on 15th August 1636 when, at a specially convened meeting of the Mayor's Court, a second petition to be presented to the king against Wren was forwarded for ratification at the next Assembly on 21st September.[54] The prime mover was the town clerk, Thomas King, whom we have already met as one of William Bridge's patrons. Having drafted the document, King was especially grieved by the loss of both Bridge and his colleague John Ward of St Michael at Plea, where the town clerk worshipped, having been presented by the churchwardens for not standing at the Gospel in 1627.[55] However, from the court minutes, a majority of the aldermen resolved to drop the petition, preferring to send representatives to entreat with the bishop.

Regrettably, the original document bearing signatures has not survived, to allow us to check Alanson's stinging comment that the complaints were endorsed exclusively by 'notorious Puritans, the Town-Clarks Creatures'. From a transcription made by Wren, it emerges that King's supporters sought redress according to nine articles. The first seven points criticised the novelty and illegality of the bishop's ceremonial reforms, while article eight was more urgent in its emphasis upon the loss of several preaching ministers and weekday sermons, formerly frequented by 'many gentlemen and others of good quality', to the detriment of trade and an

[54] Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, pp. 90-5; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 159r; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 120v, 15 Aug 1636.
[55] See above, pp. 172, 183; NRO DN VIS/5/3/2. Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, p. 91 confuses Thomas King with his son Henry.

increase in poverty. Consequently, many inhabitants were forced to depart the city taking their livelihoods with them.[56] Sceptical, Alanson was quick to remark that 'for the pretended poverty that is growing so fast upon us, I am sure the citizens wear as rich cloathes and make as greate feasts as ever they did'. Several aldermen agreed.[57] Confiding in the minister, one of their number, most probably Henry Lane, who was acknowledged as the first to 'oppose these practices', recounted accidentally stumbling across a closed meeting headed by Mayor Baker and Town Clerk King on 12th September. Observing 'divers papers lying upon a Table before them' Lane was prevented from seeing the documents which 'with all speed they covered'.[58] The alderman suspected that an underhand political strategy was being cooked up by Baker and King to break the magistrates' consensus not to present the petition to the next Assembly.

Lane's concerns were realised on 21st September. When debating business to be forwarded to the Common Council that day, the protest against Bishop Wren was raised in the Mayor's Court. Again Lane's supporters stayed the motion. They were surprised when, as they informed the bishop several weeks later, upon entering the council chamber they were greeted by 'the most frequent and fullest assembly that any of us in our remembrance did ever see'. Managed by the town clerk, fifty three out of a total of sixty councilmen were present and 'not without carefull solicitation (we verelie believe)'. Suddenly, Mayor Baker drew the same petition which had already been blocked by the aldermanry out of his pocket and handed it to King to be read out loud. This provoked a storm of protest from Lane's party, incensed by the business's 'fawse cariage'. Immediately Lane and his associates requested to see the names of

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[56] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 159r, 160-1.
[57] *Ibid*, fo. 152r, certain aldermen to Bishop Wren, 17 Oct 1636.
[58] *Ibid*, fos. 147r, 159r.

those subscribing to the articles, which Baker refused on the grounds that the petition, signed by 'six or seven score persons', had been entrusted solely to him.[59] A hot debate ensued. While Alderman Lane's objections were deemed reasonable enough to satisfy 'moderate men', by winning over the Common Council Baker and King carried the day. It was agreed to move the complaints to both Charles and Laud on behalf of all the citizens of Norwich.[60]

Since we only have the anti-petition group's word for it that they constituted, out of a total of twenty four magistrates, 'most of the Aldermen present', it is impossible to know how the voting went.[61] By the same token, it is difficult to judge the exact size of Mayor Baker's constituency. Wren, who saw the petition and later wrote to Laud about the 'dissenting and dissuading' over its passage, stated that only six aldermen had set their hands to the protestation.[62] Of more importance, is the fact that factions, spurred on by protagonists on each side, were quick to emerge. Indeed, the contested Assembly resolution did not end on 21st September as Mayor Baker was faced with delivering the city's complaints amid continuing opposition from the rest of the magistracy. Both Lane and William Alanson were hot on his trail. As the alderman revealed to the minister, who then wrote to Wren, 'the Mayor, the Town Clark and three or fower Puritan Aldermen have their private meetings at one alderman Crask's, where their plots are hatched and expedited, and their Court oft times not acquainted with them at all'. The reference to the known puritan agitator Robert Craske is significant. At the same time, Alanson reported that another radical figure, 'that absurd, clamorous Alderman' Thomas Shipdham was in liaison with the burgesses of Ipswich, who were also engaged in a similar

[59] *Ibid*, fos. 152r-v, certain aldermen to Bishop Wren, 17 Oct 1636.
[60] *Ibid*, fos. 150r-v, Henry Lane to Bishop Wren, 14 Oct 1636; NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 327v, 21 Sept 1636.
[61] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 152r.
[62] Bod L Tanner Ms 70, fo. 103v, Wren to Laud, 20 Oct 1636.

petitioning campaign against the bishop following the earlier disturbances in the port town. Apart from Craske and Shipdham the minister named the usual suspects Thomas Atkin, John Tooley and Thomas Cory at work in furthering the petition.[63]

On the other side, lining up behind Lane, stood two key city officers. The first was the city steward Edmund Reeve, while the second, the recorder Sir William Denny, as a member of the King's Council, was an assured opponent of the Mayor's faction.[64] Crucially, Lane could also count on Thomas Barber. As one of the sheriffs at the time of the Assembly of 21st September, his prior consent was required for the petition to pass as a legitimate act of the corporation, a point which was not lost on Wren. Barber was unwilling to countenance the articles 'for which the Town-Clarke fell very fierce upon him'.[65] Similarly, John Freeman, as a keen supporter of the Lane faction, carefully manoeuvred into shrievalty by his aldermanic patrons on 21st September, was equally uncooperative. Nevertheless, in spite of such resistance from the two city officers, Baker and King, proposed to send the petition to London anyway. Learning of the move by John Tooley, Thomas Shipdham and other 'zealous Commenders and dispatchers' of the petition to travel to the capital on 13th October, Henry Lane threatened to undermine the document by certifying against it.[66] Hastily penning an apology to Wren the next

[63] Bod L Tanner Ms 68, fo. 147r, 162r.
[64] *Ibid*, fo. 150v. For Reeve see above, p. 155. Denny, originally from Beccles was made recorder in 1618 and knighted in 1627, BL Add MS 18126, fo. 292, Hawes, *Officers*, p. xxxvii and PRO SP 16/212, fo. 47, *Liber Pacis* 1632, for his place on the King's Council. In his will proved in 1641 he left a bequest of 'a book' to Matthew Brook the beleaguered Laudian curate of Great Yarmouth. He also made provisions to be buried in the cathedral, where he owned property, NRO NCC 54 Brampton, PRO E 179/153/583. Both actions hint at an attachment to the emerging ideals of the Caroline church.
[65] Bod L Tanner MS 70, fo. 103v; Tanner MS 68, fo. 162r.
[66] Bod L Tanner Ms 68, fos. 147r, 162r, 150v.

day, he then drew up a certificate signed by Sheriff Freemen and nine of his brethren, reproduced overleaf. [67]

In the event, Alderman Lane's protest successfully discredited Mayor Baker's cause before Archbishop Laud and King Charles, much to the chagrin of the godly among Norwich's citizenry.[68] But what caused him to oppose the anti-Wren petition in the first place? On the one hand, the flow of letters from Alanson, Lane and his backers, offers a unique insight into the political strategies probably accompanying other proceedings in the Norwich Assembly, not revealed by the resolutions entered into the Assembly Books alone. On the other hand, the correspondence sheds little light on the motivation of the protagonists hostile to Baker and King. Obviously, Alderman Lane and his fellow magistrates were left smarting at the underhand tactics employed to undermine their powers of veto with a dubious and arguably unconstitutional appeal to the Common Council.[69] Yet is it possible to detect more than mere pique behind their actions? After all, by committing themselves to disarming a puritan petitioning campaign against Wren's reforms, Lane's followers may have been demonstrating a deep seated dislike of the godly activists in their midst. Moreover, the 'pro-Wrenians' may also have been expressing a positive approval of the changes in worship introduced in 1636.

The key to unlocking the confessional leanings of the 'pro-Wrenians' lies in reconstructing the individual histories of the twelve 'ever devoted' certifying against Mayor Baker's petition on 17th October. Heading the list were the most senior office holders and four

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[67] *Ibid*, fos. 150v, 153r.
[68] Bod L Tanner Ms 70, fo. 103v.
[69] The magistrates' right to veto motions in the Assembly had been left open after a debate in 1629. No resolution was passed, although it was agreed in principle that a mingling of aldermen and councillors' votes could be employed to pass legislation, NRO NCR Case 17b, *Liber Albus*, p. 145. From Lane's perspective this decision could be abused by the mayor to assert his executive authority over the Assembly.

Norwich this xvi day of
the October 1636

+ John Fframan Sheriff

+ Henry Laine.

+ Thomas Barber sloter sheriff

10.2 Bodleian Library Tanner MS 68. fo. 153r. Certificate of various aldermen to Bishop Matthew Wren.

former mayors, John Anguish, his brother Alexander, Robert Debney and William Browne. Beneath them we note the names of one of the current sheriffs John Freeman, the former sheriff Thomas Barber, Henry Lane along with his colleagues among the magistracy Robert Sumpter, William Gostlyn, John Loveland, Thomas Carver and Richard Ward.[70] In each case, some figures are better documented than others. For example, when searching for their wills, potentially useful sources with which to illuminate personal piety in early modern England, the coverage proved disappointingly uneven.[71] Of the twelve signatories in 1636, half their number appear to have died intestate. Of the remaining six, Robert Debney, William Browne, Thomas Carver, John Loveland, Thomas Barber and John Freeman, only two, Robert Debney and William Browne had wills proved in the late 1630s, when the course of recent political events was still fresh in mind.[72] In neither case does the religious preamble anticipate the Caroline church's departure from a Calvinist tradition. Debney's wish 'to be saved and to rise again att the latter day to have remission of my sinnes and to enjoy life everlasting', is an opaque statement of faith, as is William Browne's final appeal 'beseeching God Almightie to Receive my Soule into his heavenly kingdome'.[73] Of the remaining wills from the 1640s and 50s, only one, that of Thomas Carver, indicates the testator's beliefs. Here the citizen's hope in 1642 'to have fruition of eternall life through the residue of his elect', puts him in the Calvinist camp.[74]

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[70] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 153r.
[71] For wills as invaluable guides to religious beliefs see N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* 2nd edn (Oxford, 1990), pp. 140-2, 192-4. For the pitfalls in interpreting will evidence see J. D. Alsop, 'Religious Preambles in Early Modern English Wills as Formulae', *JEH*, 40 (1989), pp. 19-27; J. Craig and C. Litzenberger, 'Wills as Religious Propaganda: the Testament of William Tracy', *JEH*, 44 (1993), pp. 415-6, 431.
[72] In alphabetical order the six are, Thomas Barber, NRO NCC 34 Aliston (1643), William Browne, NCC 18 Greene (1639), Thomas Carver, NCC 33 Brampton (1641), Robert Debney, PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 251r (written in 1634 but proved in 1638), John Freeman, PROB 11/219, fo. 83v (1652), John Loveland, NRO NCC 70 Houchin (1649).
[73] PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 251r; NRO NCC 18 Greene.
[74] NRO NCC 33 Brampton.

Sadly, extant wills do not survive for either of the two Anguish brothers John and Alexander. This is a pity in light of John Anguish's reputation as one of King Charles's good servants, examined by the House of Commons in 1640 for his assiduous collection of Ship Money while serving as mayor in 1635.[75] In gathering the tax, Anguish had made a number of enemies.[76] But he also aroused the antipathy of the godly upon clamping down on Edward Penton, a 'Sanctified brother [who] hath bin already at New England', for distributing prohibited literature such as Henry Burton's *Divine Tragedy* and William Prynne's scurrilous attack on Wren *Newes from Ipswich*, in Norwich in 1637. Turning over Penton's house, Anguish caused a scuffle involving 'many women [who] assembled and were near by to make resistance, if they could have found how to do it'.[77] Examined before the magistrate, Penton's network of London suppliers, extending as far as Burton and Prynne, was brought before the Court of Arches and then prosecuted in Star Chamber in April 1637.[78] This chain of events had been caused by one justice's vigilance.

John Anguish's action against puritan pamphleteers is all the more remarkable given what is known about his family background among the godly circles of late Elizabethan and Jacobean Norwich. Here it may be convenient to consult the family tree on the next page. Alderman John's father Thomas, the youngest of three brothers, originally hailed from Foulsham, Norfolk, where his family were classed as armigerous. Mayor in 1611, Thomas

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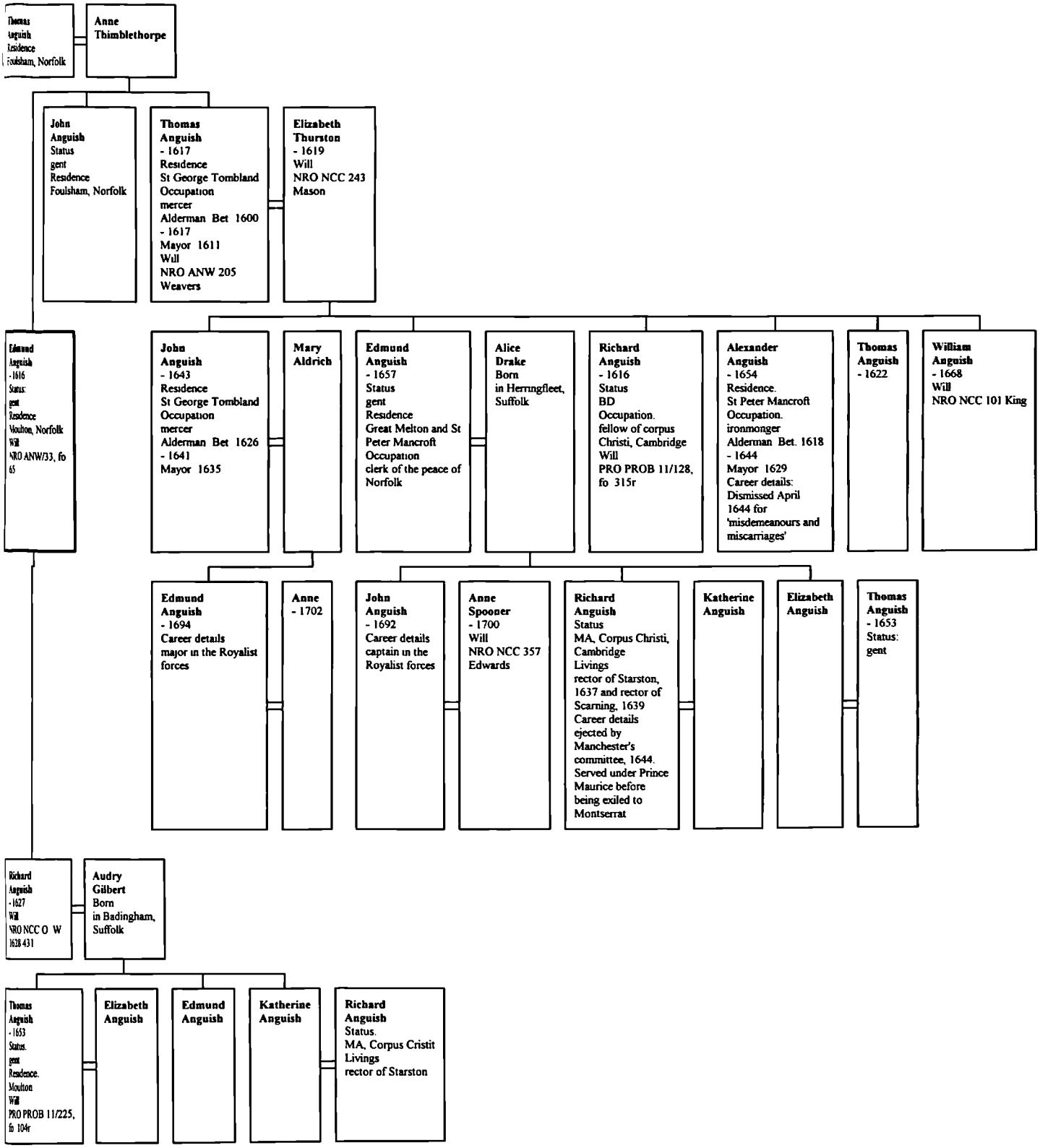
[75] *CJ* II, pp. 47, 71; R. Schofield (ed.), *The Knyvett Letters, 1620-1644*, NRS, 20 (1949), p. 96.

[76] Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, pp. 81-3, discusses the collection of Ship Money in the city. A tantalising bit of gossip in one of Anthony Mingay's letters, referring to John Anguish's absence on account of 'Lord Castleton and the bowling ground', ties the mayor with another advocate of Caroline fiscal policy, the Lincolnshire peer, Nicholas Saunderson, *HMC* Gawdy MSS, p. 156; C. Holmes, *Seventeenth Century Lincolnshire* (London, 1980), p. 102.

[77] PRO SP 16/346/58.

[78] PRO SP 16/349/52. The link man here was Edward Chillings or Chillingham, who was also presented during the famous trial of Burton, Bastwick and Prynne, SP 16/354/181, fo. 1v.

10. 3. Anguish or Anguishe



Anguish served as an apprentice mercer to Edmund Thurston, marrying his sister Elizabeth.[79] A signatory of the 1583 Norwich supplication against episcopacy along with Robert Browne and Robert Harrison, Thurston was a son-in-law to the great Elizabethan founder of civic Protestantism, Alderman John Aldrich, whose granddaughter Mary, married Thomas Anguish's eldest son John.[80] Thomas Anguish also sent another son Richard to that bastion of future evangelical ministers in Norwich, Corpus Christi, Cambridge.[81] Throughout his career in city office, Thomas Anguish was the embodiment of a godly magistrate, finally sealing his reputation by establishing a children's hospital, a philanthropic act celebrated in true Protestant fashion with an annual sermon on founder's day.[82]

Thomas Anguish's godliness was scorned by one hostile Catholic commentator. Witnessing the unfortunate events of Thomas's mayoral inauguration in 1611, when after a 'lamentable mischance', a cord suspended with fireworks collapsed in the market place killing thirty or so bystanders, the correspondent took the accident as a sign of God's wrath. The tragedy was 'as a scourge to that wicked citie and puritane mayor, whose name...being Anguish did portend anguish and sorrow to the people'. Fireworks were banned from Guildhall feasts thereafter, although by interpreting the deaths in similar terms as the working of God's providential judgement upon himself, Anguish hoped to make atonement with the charitable

[79] W. Rye (ed.), *The Visitation of Norfolk, 1563, 1599 and 1613*, Harleian Society (1891), p. 6; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 70, which erroneously states that Anguish married Thurston's daughter Elizabeth; Millican, *Freemen*, p. 73; PRO PROB 11/77, fo. 32r, will of Edmund Thurston, proved 1590.
[80] *Seconde Parte* I, p. 159 and ch. 3 above for John Aldrich; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 79; G. Branwhite Jay (ed.), *The First Parish Register of St George of Tombland Norwich, 1538-1707* (Norwich, 1891), p. 36.
[81] Venn i, p. 33; PRO PROB 11/128, fo. 315r, will of Richard Anguish BD, proved 1616.
[82] NRO ANW 205 Weavers, will of Thomas Anguish, proved 1617; NRO NCR Case 25e, Anguish Boys' Hospital accounts, 1620-68; Blomefield iv, pp. 407-12.

10. 4. Alderman Thomas Anguish, mayor 1611.

benefaction at his death.[83] While substantiating his Catholic detractor's claims that the mayor was a 'puritane' is not easy, Thomas Anguish was certainly a firm Calvinist. Drafting his testament in 1617, he greeted the prospect of death without a troubled mind, hoping that Christ:

> hath of his own free will and greate mean fully paide and satisfied the wrath of God the father due unto me for my synne. And that through his blessed merit, death and passion [I] shall have and enjoy the fruition and benefit of everlasting life to ioyn with him in eternall ioy and happiness among the elect children of God forever.[84]

Such predestinarian beliefs were imparted by the father to the young John Anguish and his brothers. But at the same time, it would be inaccurate to ascribe an overbearing dourness to Anguish's godliness, since the alderman also held the cultural pretensions befitting his status as a city father, symbolised by his monument, an early work by Nicholas Stone, later master mason of the King's Works, erected to overlook the family pew in St George Tombland.[85] Besides being a benefactor to poor children, Thomas Anguish was also a patron of the cathedral church. Owning a dwelling and shop adjacent to Christ Church in St George Tombland, the alderman, together with his son Edmund, lavished expense upon a new organ for the choir, having a standing order for repairs from 1607-9. Edmund Anguish has already been encountered in providing seating in the cathedral green yard.[86] Significantly, in light of his marked anti-puritanism, Edmund's elder brother John emerged as a patron of the dramatic arts, being charged for frequenting unlicensed itinerant stage plays by the Mayor's Court in 1616.[87]

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[83] Westminster Cathedral Archives, AAW A. X., no. 131, p. 377, William Rayner to Thomas More, 11 Oct 1611, *ex inf* Michael Questier. I am grateful to Dr Questier for providing a transcript of this letter. A brief narrative of the accident is given in NRO COL 5/19, fo. 46.
[84] NRO ANW 205 Weavers.
[85] BL Add MS 12525, fo. 47r; M. Q. Smith, 'The Monument of Thomas Anguish in Saint George of Tombland, Norwich', *NA*, 32 (1962), pp. 96-8.
[86] NRO DCN 107/1 and above, p. 145.
[87] NRO MCB/15, 1615-24, fo. 96v, 11 Sept 1616; L. G. Bolingbroke, 'Players in Norwich from the Accession of Queen Elizabeth until their Suppression in 1642', *NA*, 13 (1898), pp. 14-15.

Regrettably, the lack of vestry minutes for St George Tombland means that we cannot tell what inpact John Anguish, as head of his family, had upon his parish in the 1630s. For example, it would be interesting to know his opinions as to the Reverend William Bridge's circle in the church, supported by Anguish's opposite number on the aldermanic bench, John Tooley. However, in the case of John's younger brother Edmund, documentation is more forthcoming. Although owning property with a third brother Alexander in St Peter Mancroft, Edmund did not enter civic office since his main interests lay in the surrounding county of Norfolk, where he served as clerk of the peace from 1618 until 1641, his seat being at Great Melton to the south of Norwich.[88] Through several deaths among his cousins, Edmund found himself head of the Norfolk Anguishes in 1628. More specifically, following the premature decease of his cousin Richard of Moulton, Edmund was made the guardian of Richard's heir Thomas, then a minor, along with his daughter Katherine. Edmund was entrusted with Katherine's instruction, 'in the feare of God'.[89] However, his new found family role attracted Sir Robert Gawdy, who asserted his own right to the wardship of the young Thomas on the disingenuous grounds that several of the Anguishes' Moulton tenements encroached upon his manor at Claxton. Gawdy was convinced that the lands were held by knight service ensuring that the property, then occupied by a minor, fell to his control. So begun a complex round of litigation whereby Edmund Anguish was forced to defend his family's honour at the same time as affirming his own standing within county society.[90]

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[88] PRO E 179/153/583; Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 29; NRO MS 5320; PRO C 2/CHASI/D46/22.
[89] NRO NCC O. W. 1627 431, will of Richard Anguish of Moulton gent. This bears an uncompromising Calvinist preamble, trusting the soul to partake of 'the heavenly inheritance prepared by almighty God for his Elect'.
[90] Followed in PRO C 2/CHASI/G23/16.

Initially Gawdy's complaints were heard by the Earl of Arundel in his capacity as Earl Marshall. Deciding against Gawdy on the grounds that the contested lands were not held from the crown, the earl allocated full custody and rights of marriage to Anguish, who proceeded to exercise the latter astutely, consolidating his family's claim by marrying Thomas to one of his daughters. Incensed by the prospective union between two 'neere kinsfolkes', Gawdy attempted to prevent the wedding by abducting Thomas. In any event, the contested marriage went ahead, forcing Gawdy to serve a writ for ravishment of ward on Edmund Anguish through the Court of Common Pleas to be decided at the Norfolk Assizes. After claims and counter-claims that the jury had been rigged by either party, Arundel again intervened on Anguish's side. Defeated at the Assizes, Gawdy then chose to pursue the case in Chancery, in order to recover his losses in 1630. But to keep everything in the family, Anguish married his second ward Katherine to his son Richard. Edmund Anguish had managed to consolidate his inheritance and enhance his status in the process, although not without the timely intervention of two influential friends, namely the Earl of Arundel and Sir William Denny, who served as legal council to the defendant throughout.[91] Against this background of troubles with the Gawdys, we can trace Anguish's related efforts to elevate his seigneurial profile by restoring All Saints' Great Melton.

It is worth shining the historical spotlight upon Great Melton, a settlement containing two churches, St Mary's annexed to the neighbouring vicarage of Marlingford and All Saints' adjacent to the now ruinous Melton Hall, Edmund Anguish's seat since 1624. The present All Saints' was completely rebuilt in the nineteenth century.[92] However, from the time of Anguish's

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[91] *Ibid*; A. W. Hughes Clarke and A. Campling (eds.), *The Visitation of Norfolk, 1664*, NRS, 4 (1934), p. 4, for the second Anguish interfamilial marriage.

[92] NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book 1627; PRO C 2/CHASI/D46/22; Blomefield v, p. 21; N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2* (London, 1962), p. 368; NRO MS 4579, fo. 360.

occupancy of Melton Hall and throughout the 1630s, the church was re-edified by the squire's family and tenants, a process recorded retrospectively in the parish register, most probably by William Yonger, sometime librarian at Gonville and Caius College and rector of All Saints' upon Edmund Anguish's presentation in 1631.[93] Looking back with nostalgia in the 1640s, Yonger noted that in December 1624, the existing communion cup shared by both parishes was sent to Norwich and recast into two vessels. The cost was met by the new landlord and twelve of his Melton tenants, while nine years later between January and October 1633, the parishioners laid out money for more extensive repairs to the church's fabric. The internal fittings of the chancel were remodelled to include a frame for the Decalogue, Lord's Prayer and Creed set up at the east end. Rails were then erected around what the memorial describes as 'the high altar', while the chancel floor was freshly paved, the whole affair being topped off with a painted ceiling 'formerly taken from the rood loft' and placed over the communion table. Further donations of new Prayer Books were made by members of the Anguish family.[94] These included Edmund's eldest son John, Alderman John's son also called Edmund, with the squire's son-in-law George Bayfield, under sheriff of Norfolk in 1638.[95] Another benefactor was Edmund senior's third son Richard. Rector of Starston, upon the presentation of George Bayfield in 1637, Richard Anguish gave a cushion for the communion table at Melton in May 1638.[96]

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[93] NRO PD 479/1, account of church refurbishment, 1623-57, unfoliated. For William Yonger see Venn iv, p. 485; NRO DN REG/16/23, fo. 149r.
[94] NRO PD 479/1.
[95] Branwhite Jay (ed.), *The First Parish Register of St George of Tombland*, p. 41. For Bayfield's ties with the Anguishes see BL Egerton MS 2716, fo. 429r. His office holding is given in *HMC* 12th Report, Buxton MSS, p. 252.
[96] Hughes Clarke and Campling (eds.), *The Visitation of Norfolk, 1664*; NRO DN REG/16/23, fo. 172r. As well as promoting his kinsman to Starston, Bayfield acted as a patron with Edmund Anguish, providing sureties for Simon Davy to the rectory of Sterning in 1629, PRO E 334/17, fo. 189r. This establishes another connection between the two men.

Here we can discern a close-knit family group taking pride in beautifying their chancel in a manner coinciding with the emergent ideals of the Caroline church. Having asserted his family's property rights, the squire Edmund Anguish, was equally anxious to fulfil his role as a religious patron, consummate with his new standing within the county.[97] But it is equally significant that the date of the work's completion, 1633, chimed in with events in London. If Yonger's account is accurate, the scheme at Great Melton followed the Privy Council's decision on the famous St Gregory's case in November 1633, which sanctioned the conversion of communion tables into east-end altars.[98] This enabled Edmund Anguish to claim official endorsement from central government over the ordering of liturgical fittings. Yet at the same time, by fashioning Great Melton chancel in line with an official ruling, the Anguishes made their liturgical preferences for the rising 'Laudian style' clear. This is also demonstrated by their adaptation of medieval fixtures to contemporary use in the church. In particular, the opaque reference to a 'painted ceiling' reconstituted from the original rood loft, was perhaps intended to emphasise continuity in worship with the medieval Catholic past, a major thread in Laudian perceptions of the visible succession of the Church of England from that of Rome.[99] Moreover, was this a panel bedecked with religious imagery? If so, it is remarkable that such a piece survived intact into the 1630s, a point which could be attributed to the conservative religious sentiments of Melton Hall's previous occupier Robert Downes, noted as a notorious recusant and

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[97] As a sign of his status, Edmund Anguish compounded for a knighthood fine in 1632, PRO E 407/135, fo. 130v.
[98] S. R. Gardiner (ed.), *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution 1625-1660*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1906), pp. 103-5.
[99] NRO PD 479/1; A. Milton, 'The Church of England, Rome, and the True Church: the Demise of a Jacobean Consensus', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 187-210; *idem*, *Catholic and Reformed: the Roman and Protestant Church in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 77-85.

'a great harborer, cherisher and mayntayner of Iesuit priests' who was 'imprisoned for the same'. Downes featured among returns of Catholics from the 1570s.[100] He was also implicated in the investigation against Bishop Freke in 1578, having stated that 'I am sure we have the Bishop on our side', which in relation to the clerical provision for his own parish of All Saints' Great Melton, was not entirely misplaced. After 1589 the cure passed to one of Freke's ordinands, Thomas Browne, presented by one Thomas Browne of Brisley, yeoman, undoubtedly a relation. Lacking both a degree and a preaching licence, this longstanding rector, incumbent until his death in 1631 cannot be accredited with bringing the Reformation to Great Melton, populated by various other Brownes, who were probably the priest's kinsmen.[101] Such was the conservative and openly recusant atmosphere in the parish when Robert Downes conveyed his holdings to Edmund Anguish in 1624. This sale was much to the obvious distress of Robert Downe's sole surviving son Edward, also noted as a Catholic recusant resident at Northwold, who tried to reclaim the family property through Chancery three years later.[102]

This evidence suggests that Edmund Anguish moved into a small world antipathetic to aspects of Reformed piety. Moreover, by installing sections of the former rood loft into the 1633 chancel design, the new landlord resurrected an object of some entrenched local pride, stressing continuity with the medieval Catholic past, in line with reappraisals of the pre-Reformation devotional world current in the 1630s. Yet even before acquiring Melton Hall, Edmund Anguish had shown a penchant for more elaborate forms of worship. We have already noted his part in

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[100] PRO C 2/CHASI/D54/58. For Robert Downes see PRO SP 12/99/55, 154/88, 185/3, 188/9, *Reg Vagum* I, p. 179; T. B. Trappes-Lomax, 'Roman Catholicism in Norfolk, 1559-1780', *NA*, 32 (1958), pp. 35, 43 for Jesuit missionary activity around Great Melton.
[101] PRO SP 15/25/119, fo. 279r; NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book 1627; PRO E 179/153/533.
[102] NRO DN VIS/6/4, entry for Northwold; PRO C 2/CHASI/A38/24, D46/22, D54/58.

contributing towards a new organ for the cathedral in 1608, but of more significance was his joint role, with his brother Alexander, as churchwarden at St Peter Mancroft from Easter 1622 until Easter 1623, when adornments including a 'high altar' and images, were introduced into the church. The two brothers as churchwardens would have overseen the refurbishment. While, the parish accounts for Mancroft contain no references to an altar, payments were made for a reredos to support the Decalogue in 1623, an item hinting at a wider beautification scheme supervised by the Anguishes which, given Edmund Anguish's later restoration of Great Melton, suggests that he had developed a taste for sacred imagery and ritualism prior to Charles I's Personal Rule.[103]

Regrettably, Edmund Anguish like his brothers John and Alexander, died intestate. As such, we have no way of telling whether he departed from the rigid Calvinism associated with his father Alderman Thomas Anguish. But it is striking that Edmund matched his piety with a commitment to the royalist cause after 1642. Along with his eldest son John, he was promptly sequestered for supporting the king in 1643, John Anguish gaining a commission in the royalist field army where he reached the rank of Captain.[104] For his pains John junior was created port comptroller of King's Lynn at the Restoration. Dying in 1692, he declared his 'faithful discharge of his duty to king Charles of blessed memory in the wars during the wicked rebellion', on his monumental inscription in Melton All Saints. Father and son were at large when the Major Generals accounted for suspected royalists in 1655.[105] Another member of the

[103] NRO DCN 107/1 and above, pp. 119-21 for events in the 1624 Parliament; NRO PD 26/71 (S), pp. 33, 35-6.
[104] *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, pp. 113-4; BL Add MS 5508, fo. 39v; PRO SP 28/213, fos. 10r-v.
[105] PRO SP 29/7/129; NRO MS 4499, noting John Anguish's monumental inscription; BL Add MS 34013, fo. 2r.

Anguish clan to fight for the king was Alderman John's eldest son Edmund, who went by the unfortunate title of Major Anguish when taken in arms at Gloucester. [106]

Yet by far the most vociferous of the younger generation was squire Edmund's third son Richard. A graduate of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, Richard Anguish entered the ministry as one of Wren's ordinands in 1637, exhibiting a zealous attachment to the new ceremonial orthodoxy characteristic of Wren's administration.[107] Because of this he managed to alienate one of his Starston parishioners, James Seaman. Describing his new incumbent in uncompromising terms as 'a devill and no man', Seamon added that Mr Anguish 'did look after the fleece but for his flock they might go starve', sentiments which suggest that Anguish did not fashion himself as a preaching pastor. Seaman threatened to make the rector 'into barley bread'.[108] In 1644, in the wake of the Earl of Manchester's investigation into scandalous ministers, Seaman got the chance to oust his parson, testifying to the commission that Anguish was 'a great practicer and presser of Bishop Wren's Injunctions', having preached that 'the demolishing of Monuments in Churches was a sin as ill as sacrilege'. Anguish also argued that 'it were better some few factious and schismatical persons suffered than the whole kingdom should perish'. For this and other speeches against Parliament, Richard Anguish was sequestered, finally joining his relatives in the king's forces by serving under Prince Maurice before enduring exile on Montserrat during the Commonwealth, only to return to Starston, vindicated, at the Restoration.[109]

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[106] R. H. Mason, *The History of Norfolk* (London, 1884), p. 282, a dubious source. Major Anguish died intestate and was interred at Great Melton in 1694, see E. Farrer, *Church Heraldry in Norfolk*, vol. 2 (Norwich, 1885), p. 175.
[107] Venn i, p. 53; NRO DN REG/16/23, fo. 172r. Richard Anguish could claim a sense of collegiality with one of Wren's clerical commissioners, Stephen Hurry of nearby Alburgh, who remembered Anguish in his will, Bod L Tanner Ms 68, fo. 220r; Bod L J. Walker MS c 6, fo. 47; PRO PROB 11/200, fo. 331v.
[108] NRO DN DEP/45/48b, fos. 58v-9r, Anguish *con* Seaman, 21 July 1640.
[109] Bod L J. Walker MS c 6, fos. 45v-6r, which lists Seaman among the witnesses; PRO SP 29/22/116; A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 263.

On the basis of the available evidence, members of the Anguish family conformed wholeheartedly to the new ceremonialism introduced by the Caroline church. It is likely that another forward conformist was the Anguishes' near neighbour at St George Tombland, Bishop Harsnett's former ally, Alderman William Browne.[110] Browne, who signed against the anti-Wren petition, has left little trace of his personal religious beliefs. However, as the historian and antiquary Walter Rye argued convincingly, Alderman Browne was the uncle of the illustrious physician Sir Thomas Browne, who settled in Norwich around 1635.[111] Possibly, the doctor stayed with his uncle after following his tutor Thomas Lushington to the city. A celebrated wit, troubled for advancing Socinianism in the 1640s, Lushington had moved to East Anglia as Bishop Richard Corbet's chaplain, remaining in Norwich to participate in Wren's administration as one of the bishop's standing commissioners in 1636.[112] Through Thomas Browne we can discern a link between Alderman William Browne and Lushington. Moreover, Thomas Browne's most famous work, *Religio Medici*, published in 1642 but composed earlier in 1636, may have been influenced by lively debates over ceremonial conformity within Tombland, occasioned by William Bridge's rejection of Wren's injunctions. One much quoted passage can be read as an attempt to resolve the issue of adherence to ritual observance opened in 1636. As Browne admitted:

> I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeale terms superstition, my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity; yet at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, my hands, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotions. I should cut

[110] PRO E 179/152/497; W. Rye, 'The Precincts of Norwich Cathedral', *NAM*, 2nd Series, 1 (1906), pp. 49-51 and see above pp. 104-5, 145-6 for Browne's links with Harsnett.
[111] W. Rye, 'What Brought Sir Thomas Browne to Norwich?', *NAM*, 2nd Series, 1 (1906), pp. 83-5; *idem*, 'Sir Thomas Browne, his Descent and Arms and his Possible Family Connections with the Family of Dr Dee the Mystic', *Norfolk Historical Essays IV*, no date or place of publication, pp. 449-54.
[112] John Aubrey, *Brief Lives* (Oxford, 1898), p. 186; *DNB* 'Thomas Lushington'; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 220r; Tanner MS 220, fo. 136.

> off my arms rather than violate a church window, than deface or demolish the memory of a Saint or Martyr...At a solemn Procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blinde with opposition and prejudice have fallen into excess of scorn and laughter.[113]

If penned in Norwich in 1636, these words have a special resonance for events taking place after Wren's visitation. Browne's attachment to outward signs of devotion were shared by his uncle, who in light of his former refusal to communicate with the established church, emerges as a dislocated Catholic under James I.[114] Certainly, Wren's impact upon Norwich's religious life provides a context for Thomas Browne's treatise. Another local figure who seems to have perused *Religio Medici* approvingly, was the Laudian apologist and rector of St Clement's, Foulke Robartes, who defended the use of external, physical gestures in public worship in comparable terms in 1639. Thus Robartes declared 'by the outward gestures of our bodies we declare that worship which is in the heart'. Along with Sir Thomas Browne, the minister then noted that 'Whenever I see any man using outward reverence in the act of God's worship, I shall judge him to be more devout within'.[115]

Besides Alderman Browne another potential backer of Wren's reforms was Robert Debney. We have already met Debney as a commanding patron of St Gregory's church, a reputed haven of elaborate ritual practice since 1622 and a parish which significantly brings together four additional names on the pro-Wren certificate. These were Robert Debney's son-in-law Richard Warde, John Loveland, his son-in-law John Freeman and Henry Lane.[116] Warde and Loveland's confessional identities are hard to pin down, although Loveland later emerged at

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[113] Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, in *Works*, 1, ed. G. Keynes (London, 1928), pp. 9, 12-13.
[114] NRO ANW 3/17a, *comperta*, 1613.
[115] Foulke Robartes, *Gods holy house and service* (1639), pp. 61, 64.
[116] For Robert Debney see above pp. 146-7, 157-9; PRO E 179/153/581; PRO PROB 11/177, fo. 252r, will of Robert Debney and NRO NCC 70 Houchin, will of John Loveland, for these family ties. All four contributed to the beautification scheme in 1623, NRO PD 59/54, fos. 63v-4r.

the head of the Royalist, anti-puritan faction in city politics in the opening stages of the Civil War. Support for the king was shared by Loveland's son Joseph, ejected from his fellowship at Gonville and Caius College in 1644 for refusing the Solemn League and Covenant. Loveland junior was also sequestered from his Cambridgeshire living for, among other indiscretions, sending a horse to the royal forces, with instructions that if the animal should fall into Parliamentarian hands, the party 'should ride the horse to death'. Joseph returned to Norwich as a prebend of the cathedral at the Restoration.[117]

Now serving as sheriff, John Freeman, a vintner by trade, has also been encountered as the churchwarden responsible for adorning St Gregory's with 'superstitious' imagery in 1623. In the meantime, he acquired property in St John Maddermarket. While he retained links with St Gregory's, requesting to be interred there at his death, Freeman was qualified to hold parochial office at St John's where he served as questman in 1633 and 1634.[118] It is more than coincidental that during this period, Maddermarket was given the Freeman touch. As revealed by the extant parish accounts for 1633, the churchwardens paid for a reredos complete with a frame for the Creed and Ten commandments. This may have been decorated with imagery, since the work was carried out by Thomas Isbourne, noted for his beautification of St Gregory's. Moreover, as sheriff in 1636, Freeman headed a rate levied to provide communion rails 'as Commanded by Authority', cajoling less enthusiastic parishioners, such as the puritan aldermen Thomas Atkin and Robert Craske, into contributing as well. While performing his duty as sheriff, Freeman assisted Chancellor Corbet in persecuting the Reverend Thomas Allen. These

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[117] See below p. 257; J. Venn, *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College 1349-1897* (Cambridge, 1897), I, p. 243.

[118] NRO DN CON/11, file 212, discussed above, p. 159-61; Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 36; PRO PROB 11/219, fo. 83v; NRO PD 461/48, unfoliated.

actions will be discussed fully in the next chapter, suffice to say that as sheriff in 1636, John Freeman proved to be a staunch proponent of the new ecclesiastical order.[119]

What of his principal patron among the magistracy, Alderman Henry Lane? Through his correspondence with Bishop Wren, Lane's support for his diocesan is the best documented of the twelve aldermen signing against the puritan petition. Yet it remains difficult to account for his motivations. Indeed as the son of Thomas Lane, mayor in 1603 and a patron of the Calvinist minister Thomas Newhouse and the separatist pastor John Robinson, Henry's future siding with Wren's administration might seem puzzling. Thomas senior also made his mark as a donor to the church by leaving a silver communion cup, embossed with his name, to St Peter Hungate.[120] It is likely that the younger Henry hoped to emulate his father's spending on the material aspects of worship by participating in the St Gregory's beautification scheme in 1623, which as outlined in chapter eight, did not exactly fit Wren's vision for the internal ordering of church furnishings. To begin with, upon visiting in 1636, the bishop's officers were affronted by 'naked images in the chancell, not decent' still present from the 1620s. More importantly, the rails erected in St Gregory's in 1622 caused offence for being too far from the communion table for the new diocesan's liking, while communicants continued to enter the sanctuary to receive contrary to Wren's instructions. It 'can be no other, sayth alderman Lane'.[121] Although the fundamental matter of reception at the rails perhaps provided a source of friction between Wren and his most vociferous ally in Norwich corporation, any disagreement did not create lasting ill-feelings between the two men. In 1637 a painter was employed for work about the rails at St Gregory's,

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[119] NRO PD 461/48, entries for 1634 and 1637; below, pp. 232-5, 244.
[120] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 67; PRO PROB 11/109, fo. 174r, will of Thomas Lane, proved 1607.
[121] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 63v; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 213r, 216r.

suggesting that the partition was re-positioned. To make amends for any indiscretion, Lane subsequently arranged for 6d worth of tobacco to be sent from St Gregory's, as a parting gift to Wren upon his translation to Ely in May 1638.[122]

On a personal level, the bishop as Vice Chancellor of Cambridge, had done Lane a favour by securing a contested fellowship for his son at St John's College.[123] By safeguarding Wren's interests in city affairs, Alderman Lane hoped to reciprocate this good turn, leading the challenge to the godly petitioning campaign, in a bid to dispel lingering royal suspicion over Norwich corporation. After all. Lane had his fingers burnt in 1635. Colluding, rather ironically with the puritan feoffee Thomas Atkin, Lane had contested the rights of individual aldermen to attend the county musters, much to the annoyance of the Earl of Arundel, Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, who raised the matter with the Privy Council. Siding with the earl, the Council ominously threatened to recall the city's charter by writ of *quo warranto*.[124] Faced with the opportunity to salvage his tarnished reputation in the eyes of the crown, Lane threw himself behind episcopal authority in 1636, in turn restating his steadfast loyalty to both church and state.

However, stronger evidence of the alderman's cordial relations with Wren, is revealed by a single letter sent by Lane to his former diocesan in August 1641. Expressing the continuing 'respect I bear your Lordship', this dispatch was written at a time when those with grievances against the previous bishop of Norwich were rapidly closing in against him. Yet Lane saw it his duty to inform Wren about accusations made by Tulling a 'bold and impudent fellow'.

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[122] NRO PD 59/54, fos. 89r, 89v.

[123] CUL MS Mm 1. 38., p. 99; PRO PROB 11/166, fo. 49, will of Dr Robert Lane, Henry Lane's brother, proved 1634.

[124] G. L. Owens, 'Norfolk 1620-1641: Local Government and Central Authority in an East Anglian County', University of Wisconsin Ph.D., 1970, pp. 526-7; PRO PC 2/45, pp. 69-70, 101. Thomas Atkins was arrested and imprisoned for his refusal to attend county musters, Bod L Bankes MS 18/30.

Specifically, Tulling reported words allegedly uttered by Wren to the churchwardens of Walsingham, who had produced a charter exempting their church from being visited by the diocesan by royal sanction. Wren's response was that 'in such cases the authoritye of Bishopp was above that of the Kinges'. Doubting this story's validity, Lane hoped to 'doe your Lordshipp any good office in this or in other occasion', which was a courteous pledge to make while the prelate was being investigated by the Long Parliament in 1641. Moreover, Lane offered confirmation of Tulling's remarks from another witness, Mr Dobson, minister.[125] This can only be Isaac Dobson, William Bridge's carefully picked successor at St George Tombland and a staunch apologist for Wren's reforms, who argued dogmatically that 'wee ought to beleeve as the church beleeves and if the church said the crow is white, wee must beleeve it'.[126] Such was the clerical company Alderman Lane kept in the later 1630s. Besides Dobson, another marked influence upon Lane was his clerical associate, Wren's chaplain William Alanson, who assumed the cure at St Gregory's following Matthew Stoneham's death at the end of 1636. It was more than coincidental that the bishop's informant should come to officiate in a parish containing a significant number of 'pro-Wrenians'. As Alanson's opponents remarked in 1642, the minister was given to reading the litany 'in the body of the Church after the manner of Rome', allegedly imparting many superstitious doctrines, proven 'especially by popish authors'.[127] Who these were is not stated, although in serving a parish predisposed to ritualistic worship, Alanson played to a like-minded audience.

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[125] Bod L Tanner MS 290, fo. 116r
[126] NRO DN SUB/1, p. 59; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 135.
[127] *Chapter Minutes*, pp. 72-3, 10 Jan 1637; NRO PD 59/54, fos. 86v, 87v, 89r, 91r; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 135.

If Alderman Lane and his fellow parishioners held initial qualms over complying with Wren's visitation injunctions, there is a sense that after 1636 and under William Alanson's guidance, St Gregory's congregation emerged as 'joyfully conformed' to the new ceremonies. In the case of individuals such as Robert Debney and members of the Anguish family, Wren found a common cause against godly activists. Certainly, within the city of Norwich, the bishop's reforms gained a mixed reception from the inhabitants, not all of whom proved antagonistic towards Caroline ecclesiastical policy as it developed after 1633. That this was so in a borough associated with a strong reformed tradition, warns against making assumptions about the city's overarching 'godliness'. Wren was able to tap into a core of native sentiment out of alignment with the general direction of evangelical Protestantism which, in the case of figures like Robert Debney and William Browne, may have been marked for some time. Suffice to say that the impact of Wren's episcopate should not be viewed solely through the prism of puritan complaint. The passing of the 1636 visitation did excite confessional tensions within city life, although it is likely that such friction was already present, the new ecclesiastical order merely empowering critics of godly learning to articulate their opinions in a more focused way. This was of no consolation to the godly, who found themselves at odds with ecclesiastical government. The resulting crisis of conscience, which inspired the puritan diaspora to Holland and the New World as a precursor to England's 'wars of religion', will now be analysed in depth.

PART IV; TRACING THE PURITAN REVOLUTION IN NORWICH

11. PURITAN DIASPORA, 1636-1640

The years following Wren's visitation to the summoning of the Long Parliament are regarded as a dark time for Norwich's godly community.[1] The bishop's clampdown on nonconformity had successfully emptied the city of much of its celebrated preaching fraternity, most conspicuously the towering figure of William Bridge. Wren also refashioned liturgical practice in ways which were attacked as illegal and 'popish'. Indeed, a sense of moral outrage has since pervaded the historical narrative of the summer of 1636, so much so that the story of Wren's episcopate proved fertile ground for a Victorian pot-boiler, Andrew Reed's *Alice Bridge of Norwich: a Tale of the Time of Charles the First*, published in 1879. Congregational minister at St Leonards-on-Sea, Reed had spent some time in Norfolk. There he acquired an 'interest in the romance of Puritan times' and proceeded to write about it with gushing sentimentality through the eyes of Alice, an entirely fictitious daughter of the Reverend William Bridge, forced to flee Norwich where 'civic liberty was a shadow. Every place swarmed with spies and heavy fines suppressed all curious talk...a hasty word against any Church officials brought speedy penalties. Presence at a conventicle or opposition to Popish ceremonies was punished most severely'.[2]

Of course, Reed's essay on the historical novel was a work of fiction. As such his Norwich is peopled with near-historically accurate figures, like sheriff Jacob Freeman, assailing Bridge, pilloried on 'Tombland Green' for his refusal to read the Book of Sports, with 'Hurrah for the Bishop! Down with Puritans'. Brave Alice stepped up to save her father from

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[1] J. Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk* (London, 1877), p. 85; Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', pp. 288-9.
[2] Andrew Reed, *Alice Bridge of Norwich: a Tale of the Time of Charles the First* (London, 1879), preface and p. 199.

humiliation before escaping to Great Yarmouth with the bishop's son, a Cavalier named Stephen Wren, in hot pursuit.[3] However, even without the added tropes of Victorian melodrama, the course of events surrounding the puritan exodus from Norwich were no less dramatic in their own right. To begin with, the aggrieved godly continued to protest against Wren's innovations. The bishop's detractors remaining within the city, sought to challenge episcopal directives with recourse to legal process, or through more open displays of defiance such as refusing to pay parish rates to provide for controversial church adornments. Ultimately, as in the case of William Bridge, others rejected episcopacy outright in favour of alternative ecclesiologies.

Before discussing Bridge's break from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, it is appropriate to begin with another local puritan *cause célèbre*, the case of Thomas Allen, rector of St Edmund's, who was deprived for failing to present himself at the 1636 visitation. Son of a Norwich dyer, Allen comprised one of the younger generation of Emmanuel College graduates. He owed his induction to St Edmund's in February 1634, his first living, to Lady Elizabeth Clere of Ormesby and Colton, the widowed sister of Sir Thomas Wroth, identified by Nicholas Tyacke as 'an extreme puritan', for his part in organising the London root and branch petition in 1641.[4] Lady Clere also devoted herself to the anti-episcopalian cause, lending money to Parliament and the Scots in the 1640s. She counted as friends and kinsmen respected figures within East Anglian godly circles such as members of the Corbet family and the staunch Parliamentarian Sir Symonds D'Ewes. When drafting her will, part of her estate was to be supervised by the former Norwich feoffee, Alderman Thomas Atkin.[5] Given the overarching godliness of these family

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[3] *Ibid*, pp. 211, 220. An illustration of William Bridge in the stocks adorns the frontispiece.
[4] *DNB* 'Thomas Allen'; NRO DN REG/16/23, fo. 87r; B. Cornford, 'The Cleres of Ormesby', *Yarmouth Archaeology*, 1 (1982); N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603-1640* (London, 1990), pp. 18, 21.
[5] PRO PROB 11/194, fos. 53v, 54v-5v, will of Lady Elizabeth Clere, proved 1645; PRO SP 16/531/134.

connections, the sense of evangelical purpose behind Thomas Allen's elevation to Norwich is not difficult to detect. Indeed, the new minister's appointment caused immediate concern for Chancellor Clement Corbet. Within a year of his arrival Allen successfully set about the task of transforming his church, quite literally, into a shining beacon of advanced Protestantism, holding afternoon exercises past the prescribed canonical hour on Sabbath days. In doing so, he split the parish.

As in the Consistory Court hearing against William Bridge in February 1634, Allen's transgressions were brought to Clement Corbet's attention by two churchwardens, Richard Wythe, a worsted weaver and former common councillor and his apprentice Thomas Dixon, both officiating as questmen at St Edmund's in 1635.[6] But manipulating their grievances was the chancellor, who instigated office proceedings against Allen. According to Thomas Dixon, the new rector caused friction by expounding from three in the afternoon 'until it was dark', forcing the churchwardens to light candles at additional cost to themselves. In turn, the minister's sermons drew people from elsewhere in the city. Crowding into the nave, the churchwardens suffered the indignity of having to relinquish their seats for numerous strangers 'accompted to be schismatically affected'.[7] Allen also attracted attention for his nonconformity. As Wythe and Dixon pointed out, their pastor often omitted the litany, Decalogue and Nicene Creed during Sunday morning worship. He neglected to bow at the name of Jesus.[8] More alarmingly, he

[6] NRO DN DEP/42/47a, fos. 528r-33r. Richard Wythe, recorded as being seventy six at the time of the trial was probably used to the less electrifying ways of Allen's immediate predecessor John Fernly, rector since 1602, NRO DN REG/16/22, consignation book 1627. Wythe died shortly after these proceedings, NRO NCC 259 Blosse. For his career and links with Dixon see Hawes, *Officers*, p. 171 and Millican, *Freemen* p. 90.
[7] NRO DN DEP/42/47a, fos. 528v-9r, 531r.
[8] *Ibid*, fos. 528v, 529r, 531r.

admitted unlicensed men to preach in St Edmund's, encouraging members of his flock to contend the prescribed rites and ceremonies of the church.[9]

One figure, Jonathon Porter, a weaver, was especially contumacious in the eyes of the churchwardens. With several fellow parishioners, Porter had previously been excommunicated during Bishop Richard Corbet's visitation of 1633, for failing to pay towards the repair of St Edmund's chancel. He had been absolved. However, this did not prevent him from continuing to disrupt worship by loitering in the churchyard until the time of the sermon. Admonished to attend divine service, Porter refused to kneel at the required places. Standing to pray wearing his hat, he then proceeded to mock set forms by looking towards Mary Oliver with 'a laughing countenance' about his face.[10] Mary Oliver was a relative, possibly the spouse of Thomas Oliver. A notorious nonconformist, Thomas Oliver had been presented in 1629 for his 'irreverent behaviour' in not standing for the Creed or Gospel in St Edmund's. In 1633, he was caught gadding with his wife to sermons at St Michael at Plea.[11] Such was the puritan contingent among his parishioners which the Reverend Allen proceeded to cultivate, attracting godly strangers to reinforce the spiritual exclusivity of his exercises at St Edmund's. He strove to administer to a saving remnant, an elect. However, in losing their pews, the two churchwardens were not considered among this group, which marked a worrying trend for Chancellor Corbett. In his defence, Allen called upon one of his flock, another weaver Michael Metcalfe, as a character witness. Metcalfe, who like Jonathon Porter had also failed to contribute to the

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[9] *Ibid*, fos. 528r, 533r, which refer to a Mr Arthur and a Mr Gray respectively.
[10] *Ibid*, fo. 530v; NRO DN VIS/6/4. It is worth speculating whether Jonathon was related to Nathaniel Porter, presented for attending conventicles in St Andrew's in 1632 and St George Tombland a year later, NRO MC 16/15, fo. 4; DN VIS/6/4.
[11] NRO DN VIS/6/1; VIS/6/4.

maintenance of his church's fabric in 1633, believed the Reverend Allen to be 'a very conformable man to the orders and discipline of the Church of England', arguing that Thomas Wythe's complaint had been 'made in malice'.[12] We shall encounter Metcalfe, Porter and the Oliver family again.

Censured in 1635, Thomas Allen held out against Wren's injunctions by not appearing at the 1636 visitation, for which he was declared contumacious and excommunicated. His initial movements afterwards are difficult to trace. However, Chancellor Corbett was informed that Allen had taken ship to Holland, where he joined his fellow Norwich ministers John Ward and William Bridge, at Rotterdam.[13] Towards the end of 1636, Allen lodged a protest with the Consistory Court, contesting his deprivation as infringing upon his common law rights. As he claimed, his excommunication and subsequent suspension from office were void on the grounds that the visitation of St Edmund's, unaccompanied by royal letters patent, had been conducted illegally. Thus Wren's visitation stood contrary to the Royal Supremacy, while Allen's excommunication was an alien novelty, a *Praemunire*.[14] In the meantime, the minister had seemingly read a copy of William Prynne's *Brief Instructions for Churchwardens and others to observe in all Episcopall and Archidiaconall Visitations and Spiritual Courts*, published in Amsterdam in 1636 to coincide with Wren's arrival in East Anglia. Prynne provided handy legal advice for those seeking to avoid being visited by the bishop's officers. Arguing around six points, by 'virtue of the Oath of Royal Supremacy', churchwardens were instructed to demand royal patents before making any presentments. They were to inquire if the articles had been

[12] NRO DN DEP/42/47a, fo. 532r;; DN VIS/6/4.
[13] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 3v, 7r, which states that Allen had also gone to Cambridge to converse with John Carter, chaplain of St Peter Mancroft in April 1637.
[14] *Ibid*, fos. 116r-8v.

passed by convocation meeting with the king's licence and ratified by Parliament. If not, the authors of such injunctions were to be considered *ipso facto* excommunicated, an extraordinary reworking of Canon 12, which applied the same sanction to any for holding 'anabaptistical' conventicles to frame ecclesiastical constitutions without the king's authority.[15] Wren's reforms were not only illicit. By devising his measures without recourse to convocation as prescribed, the bishop had by default excluded himself from the church. The implications for Allen were apparent. Since the bishop was liable to be excommunicated for breaking his oath of canonical obedience, the minister was free to continue in office without restraint as before.

This challenge held subversive overtones for episcopal authority. However, in a related legal move, Thomas Allen's brother Robert, also resident in Norwich, sought to protect his family's property interests in the face of ecclesiastical censure. Acknowledging his brother's sentence to be invalid, Robert upheld Thomas's right to collect his tithes. Subsequently, Robert Allen brought a suit in the Court of Common Pleas against several members of the St Edmund's congregation for denying their minister his maintenance. Reflecting existing parochial divisions, the figure most reluctant to fund the sequestered pastor was Thomas Dixon.[16] Acting through the agency of his 'loving friend' Thomas Lechford, a Clement's Inn lawyer who, in his own words, 'suffered imprisonment and a kind of banishment' to Boston because of his association with William Prynne in the late 1630s, Robert Allen then served writs against Dixon and others for trespass in breaking the ground in St Edmund's chancel to raise altar steps and rails. Dixon's allies included Chancellor Corbet and the current churchwardens Nicholas Copping and Richard

[15] William Prynne, *Briefe Instructions for Churchwardens and others to observe in all Episcopall or Archidiaconall Visitations and Spirituall Courts* (Amsterdam, 1636), *STC* 20454.3, no pagination; J. R. Tanner (ed.), *Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I* (Cambridge, 1960), p. 234.
[16] PRO SP 16/334/23, Robert Allen to Thomas Lechford, 20 Oct 1636; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 115r.

Wadcton, both of whom were arrested in October 1636 pending trial at the Assizes the following August.[17]

Attempting to discredit Thomas and Robert Allen in the 1640s, William Alanson, drawing upon information supplied by William Payne MA, a 'man almost fowerscore yeares age', who resided in St Edmund's in the 1580s, recalled that rails were present in the church's chancel from the middle of Elizabeth's reign. These did not follow Wren's single north-south pattern. Instead, they encompassed the communion table 'turning upon either side unto the east window', while it was also customary for former incumbents at St Edmund's, including 'Mr Allen at his first coming hither', to administer the sacrament from the rails. If true, the existence of rails in a 'pre-Wrenian' arrangement at St Edmund's, added an exacerbating factor in the Allens' dispute with ecclesiastical authority.[18] Naturally, Wren and Corbet were anxious to prevent such a potentially embarrassing case from being given a prominent local platform before a grand jury, the Chancellor advising his master to issue a writ *de excommunicato capiendo* against Thomas Allen to secure his arrest. Both counted on Archbishop Laud's support 'to shelter us...from that storme'. However, to imprison the Reverend Allen, the bishop first had to track him down, which he hoped to achieve by setting spies on the minister.[19] In Norwich, Corbet enlisted the willing help of William Alanson. But providing the necessary muscle was the sheriff John Freeman, who acting on a tip-off that Thomas Allen was lodging with his

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[17] PRO SP 16/335/68, Robert Allen to Thomas Lechford, 17 Nov 1636; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 7r, 115r. For Thomas Lechford see his entry in *Dictionary of American Biography* as well as Lechford's *Plain Dealing: or, News from New England. A short view of New Englands present Government, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, compared with the anciently received and established Government of England* (1642), sig. A2r. A copy of this exists in BLTT E 136 (22).
[18] Bod L Tanner MS 314, fo. 110; *Parentalia*, p. 84.
[19] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 5r, 7v, 115r; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 8r, 9 May 1637.

brother, raided and proceeded to 'beset and breake upp' the Allen household in the middle of the night of 11th June 1637, with the chancellor and Alanson in tow. Despite such harassment, the Reverend Allen was nowhere to be found.[20] In the event, proceedings against the churchwardens of St Edmund's were not brought to trial, although the threat of a legal precedent undermining episcopal directives loomed large for Wren, who thought it prudent to confer with the judges appointed for the next Assize circuit.[21] Wren halted litigation in the secular courts by bringing charges against the Allens in High Commission, forcing them to drop their suit. As a result, an inquiry was begun into defaults of payments to the sequestrators of St Edmund's, which in turn blocked any residual financial assistance to Thomas Allen from his loyal parishioners.[22]

Ultimately, with local backing from Chancellor Corbet and Sheriff Freeman, Wren staved off the potential threat from the Allens. But the family's legal challenge had been a close call, as Clement Corbet observed 'if we be open to Writts and Prohibitions, these Refractories which be either suspended or excommunicated will never be reduced to order so long as they may shelter their contempt with quirkes and trickes of the law'.[23] Had the suit for trespass received a sympathetic hearing at the Assizes, the outcome would have been disastrous for the bishop. Nevertheless, the bitter ideological wrangling, based around fundamental legal principles, opened up a running sore in the relations between sections of the Norwich godly and the established church, which rebounded against Wren in the 1640s. Thomas Allen evaded censure by crossing over to Massachusetts, where he developed a taste for the New England 'way'. Defined as a form of congregationalism where church membership was determined by outward

[20] This episode can be followed in Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 120; Tanner MS 220, fo. 2.
[21] Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 8v, 16 May 1637.
[22] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 2; Bod L Rawlinson MS C 368, fo. 8v, 23 May 1637.
[23] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 8r.

signs of sanctity, this 'way' chimed in with Allen's previous ministerial efforts to convert St Edmund's into a shining beacon for the visible elect. A later devotee and editor of John Cotton, Allen settled as a teacher to the gathered church at Charlestown.[24] Upon returning to his native Norwich in 1651, it was this brand of New England puritanism which the minister exported back home upon becoming pastor to an Independent congregation, which met, in a symbolic show of godliness, in William Bridge's former church of St George Tombland.[25] Celebrating the fact in 1652, Allen's flock erected a gallery in the chancel, said to be a 'great hindrance' to divine worship in the 1680s. At the Restoration, the minister remained openly defiant towards episcopal authority, when he was bound over for maintaining illicit conventicles with his equally obstreperous brother Robert.[26]

There has been a trend within the recent historiography of the New England experience to downplay the religious origins of the 'Great Migration' in the 1630s. For example, the work of David Grayson Allen and David Cressy has highlighted a range of material incentives for New World settlement under Charles I, with religious motivations being far from paramount. As Cressy has argued 'the primacy of puritan concerns in the bulk of the movement' remains to be

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[24] K. L. Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames: Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism* (Urbana, 1972), pp. 200-6; D. D. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: a History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1972), pp. 46-7, 81-2; BLTT E 843 (5), John Cotton, *An Exposition upon the Thirteenth Chapter of the Revelation* (1655), 'Epistle to the Reader' by Thomas Allen.

[25] For Allen's return to Norwich see A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), p. 7; BLTT E 957 (1), Thomas Allen, *A Chain of Scripture Chronology from the Beginning of the World to the Death of Jesus Christ* (1659), 'To the Reader' by William Greenhill.

[26] For the battle over the Tombland gallery see NRO DN FCB/1, fo. 87 and the forthcoming work of Kenneth Fincham on the restoration of altars after 1660; BL Add MS 41656, fo. 75r.

determined.[27] Admittedly, we will never know the reasons animating the vast majority of travellers to New England, whose motives are difficult to reconstruct beyond the fact that their names feature on passenger lists in the 1630s. However, to pass over Wren's administration as a significant cause of emigration from East Anglia misses the point.[28] Here, the timing of the 'bulk of the movement' a year after the bishop's primary visitation in 1637 was more than coincidental, as Norman Tyack's survey of migration from Norfolk and Suffolk in early Stuart England confirms. Tyack's list of emigrants provides a sample figure. Based upon his calculations for Norfolk alone, the number of identifiable settlers shot up from a handful of just nine in 1636, to become a torrent of 180 by the end of 1637, with a steady flow of 141 proceeding in the following year.[29] Of course, this sudden rise may simply reflect a bias in the available evidence. Details of licences to travel abroad from Great Yarmouth, only exist among central government sources for the years 1637-9, although that the Caroline regime felt it prudent to police migration more stringently at this time, reveals a growing concern that religious malcontents were in fact absconding overseas in increasing numbers.[30]

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[27] Two seminal articles stressing the variety of mixed motives behind settlement in New England are T. H. Breen and S. Foster, 'Moving to the New World: the Character of Early Massachusetts Immigration', *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Series, 30 (1973), pp. 159-222; D. G. Allen, 'The Matrix of Motivation', *New England Quarterly*, 59 (1986), pp. 408-18. More importantly see D. Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication Between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 74-106.

[28] For restatements of the centrality of religion in the great diaspora see V. Dejohn Anderson, *New England's Generation: the Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 12-46; S. Hardman Moore, 'Popery, Purity and Providence: Deciphering the New England Experiment', in A. Fletcher and P. Roberts, *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 257-89.

[29] N. C. P. Tyack, 'Migration from East Anglia to New England Before 1660', University of London Ph.D., 1951, especially the appendix and p. civ. Tyack was unaware of references to Norwich emigrants among Wren's papers. He also failed to take into account settlement in the Low Countries at this time, a point I shall return to below.

[30] PRO E 157/21, 157/22; Bod L Tanner MS 433, *passim*. Both documents have been reproduced in C. B. Jewson (ed.), *Transcript of Three Registers of Passengers from Great Yarmouth to Holland and New England, 1637-1639*, NRS, 25 (1954), *passim*.

The case of Thomas Allen demonstrates the strength of religious feelings manifested in the trek to New England from Norwich after 1636. Here Allen's continued stance against his suspension was by no means conducted alone, since a number of his parishioners felt compelled to 'cross over' with their pastor after facing similar ecclesiastical censure. At least four householders from St Edmund's are known to have departed for Boston in 1637. Of these we have already met the acknowledged troublemaker Jonathon Porter, who took flight with another weaver from St Edmund's, John Piers or Pierce.[31] A more vociferous adherent of Thomas Allen was Michael Metcalfe. Described by William Alanson as 'a violent Puritane', Metcalfe had allegedly courted attention prior to Wren's coming with 'dangerous words against the king' for reissuing the Book of Sports.[32] In 1637, he attempted to leave for New England on two occasions, the first via Plymouth, the second through Great Yarmouth. Initially, he planned to venture forth alone, sending a lengthy epistle justifying his actions to his wife, children and all other 'true professors of Christs gospel in the city of Norwich'.

Trusting in God's providence to deliver his people from 'the furnace of affliction' he lamented the state of religion in his native city. Calling upon his brethren to 'try the doctrines of your preachers' and to be wary of Arminian teaching, Metcalfe admonished other citizens not to 'nibble too long at the bait until you are catched with the hook, rather banish from your ears and hearts those stinking fogs and infectious vapours into the Netherlands from whence they were spawned as a bastard brood of Popery'. Laden with apocalyptic cant against 'sinful Norwich', he implored the faithful to 'quit yourselves like men'. Observing that 'the hour of temptation is

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[31] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 158r, 338r. For Piers see NRO DN VIS/6/4; PRO E 157/21, fo. 3r.
[32] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 338r.

at hand, which shall come upon the world to try them that dwell upon the earth', Metcalfe convinced himself that the only sanctuary from a profane and ungodly land lay across the Atlantic.[33] Joining his family, the Metcalfe household left Yarmouth for Boston in April. But leaving England on the same ship were his fellow parishioners Thomas Oliver and his wife, both of whom were known to the church authorities for their earlier nonconformity in the 1630s. Metcalfe persuaded others from St Edmund's Norwich to follow him and the Reverend Allen to America. Yet, although the weaver had been a force behind migration from his parish, he found life across the Atlantic too turbulent, since on the basis of William Alanson's testimony, by sticking to the Book of Common Prayer 'hee cannot yet be admitted to be a member of their church'.[34] If true, Metcalfe soon became disillusioned with the direction of the New England 'way'.

While, a number of Thomas Allen's flock became fellow travellers on his journey overseas, of no less significance to the godly reaction to Wren's reforms, were the minister's supporters who chose to stay behind. Robert Allen's litigation on his absent brother's behalf has been noted. Another key figure very much in on the act was Thomas Toft or Toftes, a parishioner with Robert Allen at St Clement's, adjoining St Edmund's, where he served as churchwarden and vestryman during the 1630s.[35] A grocer by trade, Toft played a pivotal role in Norwich's puritan movement after 1637. He is most familiar as the iconoclastic city sheriff responsible for 'that furious sacrilege' visited upon the cathedral in May 1643, vividly depicted

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[33] Michael Metcalfe, 'To all the true professors of Christs Gospel within the city of Norwich, 13 Jan 1637', *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 16 (1862), pp. 279-84.
[34] PRO E 157/21, fos. 3r, 3v; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 338r.
[35] PRO SP 16/334/23, 345/23; Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 74. Toft's family home, which still stands on the corner of Fye Bridge Street and Fishergate, was purchased from the former mayor Sir Robert Wood, *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 88.

by Joseph Hall, Wren's successor but one to the East Anglian see. Describing his rough treatment by the puritans in his *Hard Measure*, Hall recalled being intimidated by Sheriff Toft. Entering the bishop's palace with a company of 'many zealous fellows', the sheriff's party:

> came into my chapel to look for superstitious pictures and relics of idolatry and sent for me to know they found these windows full of images, which were very offensive and must be demolished. I told them they were the pictures of some ancient and worthy bishops – St Ambrose, Austin etc. It was answered me that they were so many popes and one young man among the rest...would take upon him to defend that every bishop was pope.

Toft later emerged as an Independent of extreme views.[36] But his violent repudiation of episcopacy was shaped by his experience of parish life in the 1630s, a sequence of events that has not been explored fully.

Toft showed his disapproval of Wren's visitation by paying for a writ against the St Edmund's questmen on behalf of Robert Allen. This in itself was an audacious move since Toft, through accepting the office of churchwarden, had already taken an oath to fulfil his duty to his diocesan,. Here, it may seem that Toft, like Michael Metcalfe, became a radical in response to Wren's directives. However, from earlier evidence brought before the archdeacon in 1616 and 1617, it appears that Toft had, as a young man, been counted a nonconformist for refusing to stand at the Creed in St Clement's, also being caught sermon gadding with several neighbours.[37] Significantly, his eldest son John resided at Hingham, when in 1635, thirty householders, John Toft included, emigrated to found the not inconsistently titled Hingham, Massachusetts.[38] This

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[36] Joseph Hall, *Hard Measure*, in *The Works of Joseph Hall*, ed. P. Hall (12 vols., Oxford, 1837), I, p. lv; *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 88.
[37] PRO SP 16/345/23; Rye, *Rate Book*, p. 74 records Toft's parochial office holding; NRO ANW 3/20, *comperta*, 1614-17.
[38] S. Lincoln, *History of the Town of Hingham Plymouth Colony Massachusetts* (Hingham, Mass, 1827), pp. 22, 49-50; D. G. Allen, *In English Ways: the Movement of Societies and the Transferral of English Local Law and Custom to Massachusetts Bay in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1981), p. 258 for John Toft of Hingham. NRO ANW 1672-3 34, will of Thomas Toft senior proved 1672, which establishes the family relationship.

overseas contact proved vital to establishing a refuge for the former Norfolk feoffee Robert Peck, with a sizeable part of his congregation, while evading conformity under Wren two years later. Noting the prevention of tithes to Thomas Allen, Peck safeguarded his livelihood by conveying part of his property to his son Joseph and others to hold in trust. By these means, several of Peck's parishioners reserved tithe income for their old minister, much to the irritation of Chancellor Corbet and the replacement incumbent at Hingham, Edward Agas.[39] In addition, members of Peck's flock boycotted Agas's services and were excommunicated. However, procuring their absolution through the Court of Arches, Agas, who moved in the circle of one of King Charles's grooms of the bedchamber, the future Royalist Sir Thomas Jermyn of Rushbrooke in Suffolk, took the matter to the top, petitioning Archbishop Laud to stay the court's actions.[40]

Providing for Robert Peck's security undoubtedly eased his return in the 1640s. As one of the older generation of godly clergy, he was not enamoured with the New England 'way', later emerging as a staunch critic of the Independents in Norfolk, in association with John Yates of Stiffkey, who perhaps had Peck in mind when he fulminated that 'America is no more the place than Rome, Satan is to be feared, hath found and will find their societies' in 1637.[41] In Peck's absence, Thomas Toft continued to sustain links with Hingham. To begin with, one of Toft's fellow parishioners at St Clement's, William Ludkin, a locksmith, left for the new Hingham,

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[39] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 11r for Robert Peck's departure; PRO CP 25/2/464/14 CHAS I EASTER; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 54, 145; NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 6v, contain details of these financial transactions.
[40] PRO SP 16/382/14; SROB HD 1113/1, fos. 27, 39; A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), p. 325 for Edward Agas.
[41] BLTT E 447 (6), *The Attestation of the Ministers of the County of Norfolk and the City of Norwich* (1648), which corrects the reading of Peck's career in. Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk*, pp. 103-5. Peck was not a Congregationalist. For John Yates see above, pp. 72-3, 92-8, 108-12, 123-41, 171-2 and his *A treatise of the honor of Gods house* (1637), *STC* 26089, 'To Clere Talbot'.

where his brother George had settled with Toft's son John. More importantly, another of Toft's sons, Thomas junior, nourished the godly remnant in old Hingham. Serving as curate there in 1639, he was examined by the Consistory Court for preaching 'that the lights of the Church of England were gone into New England and that only the socketts were left'.[42] A cliché among puritans crossing the Atlantic, Michael Metcalfe had said the same, Toft found a receptive audience. Significantly, the younger Thomas had begun his clerical career in 1636 as a deacon under the Reverend Thomas Allen, where he was found expounding at St Edmund's without a licence.[43] Thus the Toft family spanned the two epicentres of puritan migration from Norfolk, St Edmund's, Norwich and Hingham.

Moreover, Thomas Toft senior provides the missing piece in the jigsaw linking Norwich's godly community with another part of the puritan constellation from the city, John Ward and William Bridge's fellowship in Rotterdam. After clashing with Wren, both ministers assumed the charge of the English church formerly tended by William Ames and Hugh Peters.[44] According to Thomas Edwards, the later critic of the Independents in the Westminster Assembly, Bridge's dramatic re-ordination by John Ward, acting on behalf of the Rotterdam synod, was tantamount to declaring his formal separation from the established church. Bridge did not regard himself as a separatist, although reading his later correspondence it is easy to see how charges of

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[42] Allen, *In English Ways*, p. 179; NRO ANW 1672-3 34; NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 16r.
[43] Michael Metcalfe, 'To all the true professors of Christs Gospel within the city of Norwich', p. 283; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 37v.
[44] C. B. Jewson, 'The English Church at Rotterdam and its Norfolk Connections', *NA*, 30 (1952), pp. 324-37; K. L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: a History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leyden, 1982), pp. 164-5.

fomenting schism were made to stick.[45] One particularly 'fierce letter', readily seized upon by Edwards, saw Bridge admonishing several Norwich citizens to turn from episcopacy and 'look out after the platforme of Government left by Christ and his Apostles, by Elders, Pastors, Teachers, Deacons and Widdowes, and to consider that every Church hath the power within itself and is not subject to an Officer, or to another Congregation but to the whole body'. In a deliberate move to drum up further membership for his new church, Bridge struck out against episcopacy as 'Papall and Romish'. To submit to it was to follow the Antichrist:

> what becomes of them that do worship the beast and what of him that do receive his marks...it is a receiving a marke to practice any Canon, constitution or order that is framed or injoyned by that government. What? You have no Elders, Pastors etc. What? You sit, stand, kneele at the command of that government...Paying a Pepper corn may acknowledge a Land lord, and the standing up at the Creed may acknowledge the government.

This invective, which unfortunately is not dated, was addressed to five Norwich citizens, Henry King, Mr Toft, Mr Smith, Mr Rayner and Mr Mapp.[46] Of these, Smith and Mapp have proved difficult to trace, while Mr Rayner was probably Thomas Rayner, a founder member of the first Congregationalist church at Great Yarmouth in 1643.[47] With Henry King we are on firmer ground. Son of the Norwich town clerk, Thomas King, Henry has been encountered as the attorney acting as a London based agent for the Norfolk feoffees in 1631. He is known to have visited his sisters in Holland in the summer of 1637.[48] It seems likely that on his journey, King had some conference with Bridge, the above quoted letter being the outcome of any such

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[45] BLTT E 1 (1), Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia* (1644), pp. 17-18. A more sympathetic account of William Bridge's efforts to discipline his flock for prophesying 'after the Brownists way' is given in BLTT E 317 (5) Robert Bailie, *A dissuasive from the errours of our time, wherein the tenets of the principall sects, especially of the Independents are drawn together* (1645), pp. 75-7.

[46] Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia*, p. 45.

[47] NRO FC 31/1, fo. 1. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 297, n. 98, incorrectly states that the Henry King referred to was the rector of Heddenham.

[48] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 185r; A. Campling and A. W. H. Clarke (eds.), *The Visitation of Norfolk 1664* vol. I, NRS, 4 (1934); PRO SP 16/31/134 and above p. 172 for Henry King and pp. 183, 203-7 for Thomas King; PRO E 157/21, fo. 15r.

meeting. If Bridge communicated with Norwich men travelling through Holland, a likely identity for Mr Toft would be Daniel Toft. Licensed to journey to Leyden in the spring of 1637, Daniel also happened to be another son of the ubiquitous Thomas Toft, who would have known William Bridge through his uncle John, his father Thomas senior's brother. A parishioner at St George Tombland, John Toft like his brother was a nonconformist. Presented on several occasions for refusing to stand at the Gospel during Bridge's time at the church, Toft with his wife had also been caught gadding to hear his minister's sermons at St Peter Hungate.[49]

However, this was by no means the extent of the Toft family's contacts with William Bridge's supporters. Returning from the Netherlands by the autumn, perhaps conveying Bridge's entreaty to join his congregation there, Daniel Toft brought more than just words of encouragement back to Norwich. After one of Sheriff Freeman's raids, John and Thomas Toft were found in possession of what Clement Corbet described as 'scandalous and seditious books'. Although promptly burnt by the hangman in October 1637 by order of Mayor Robert Sumpter, a 'pro-Wrenian' within the corporation, the literature had originated from Delft, where Daniel Toft stopped on his return, making shipping arrangements for the pamphlets with one Thomas Thurston. Another ardent Reverend Bridge groupie, Thurston, had sold up and moved to Rotterdam 'to remain' in April 1637. As a weaver, Thurston's migration could be explained simply in terms of his bid for economic betterment amid a downturn in the cloth industry, were it not for the fact that he later reappeared as a member of Bridge's Independent church at Yarmouth in 1643, indicating his strong religious convictions.[50]

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[49] PRO E 157/21, fo. 5v; Jewson (ed.), *Transcript of Three Registers of Passengers from Great Yarmouth to Holland and New England*, p. 27; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 285r; NRO DN VIS/6/4.
[50] Hawes, *Officers*, p. xxxvii; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 285r, Corbet to Wren 4 Dec 1637; PRO E 157/21, fo. 4v; NRO FC 31/1, fo. 1.

Neither John nor Thomas Toft chose to domicile in Holland. However, Bridge successfully coaxed another prominent Norwich resident, the town clerk Thomas King to cross the North Sea with his wife Rebecca in 1639. One of King's daughters married John Armiger of St Andrew's, where Wren's right to visit the parish had also been resisted. Examined by Clement Corbet in 1637 for criticising the Book of Common Prayer and for his continual absence from church, Armiger likewise departed with his family to the Low Countries. Under favourable circumstances, Thomas and Rebecca King returned to Norfolk as co-founders of Yarmouth congregational church.[51] Of more importance to unravelling a puritan network, prior to their exodus from East Anglia, the Kings were caught with upwards of fifty citizens, including several of Thomas Toft's sons, at an illicit conventicle in the house of William Clerke in St Peter Mancroft in 1636. Clerke was said to have separated himself from the established church.[52] However, the presence of Thomas and Rebecca King at the meeting, sheds light on an organised puritan movement in the city, which spread vertically downwards from key figures among the civic elite.

Through his son Daniel and the Kings, Thomas Toft kept in touch with developments in Rotterdam. But besides his connections with the town clerk, the Toft family enjoyed contacts with other city officers, including Wren's opponent Mayor Thomas Baker, under whom Thomas Toft had served his apprenticeship. Such prestigious backing proved influential during Toft's legal action with Robert Allen against Chancellor Corbet. Here, another important link in the chain is furnished by the will of old Robert Craske, written in May 1638 and proved a year later,

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[51] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 8v, 10r, 338v; NRO DN CON 15, bills and answers 1637 for Armiger's sentence; NRO FC 31/1, fo. 1.

[52] NRO DN CON/16, loose file of articles against William Clerke, 7 Aug 1636. Shipps, 'Lay Patronage', p. 297 incorrectly dates the conventicle to 1639.

which reveals that the godly cause in Norwich was anything but dormant after Wren's visitation. In a remarkable set of bequests, Craske provided for annual sermons at St Julian and St Peter Hungate. On each occasion the preacher was to teach on the sobering subject of how the auditors 'shalbe discharged at the day of Judgement when they shall appeare before Gods Judgement seate', a theme redolent of an earlier printed sermon by John More, the 'Apostle of Norwich'.[53] Craske was attempting to revive the heyday of godly patronage in Elizabethan Norfolk. To execute this bequest was the alderman's kinsman, Hammond Craske, a figure who would later emerge as a lieutenant in the Norwich volunteer company and a staunch Parliamentarian. As such, Hammond Craske had no compunction in using the cathedral as a stable in the Civil War, mocking the altar 'in a deriding manner'.[54] More significantly, overseeing the will stood Robert Allen, the recipient of a piece of pewter plate inscribed with the initials 'R. A.', who was requested to convey legacies to a select band of clergymen, Ralph Furness, John Carter, John Ward, William Bridge and Thomas Allen, all of whom had been deprived in 1636. As supervisors, Craske appointed two partners from the Norfolk feoffees. The first was his brother-in-law Alderman John Tooley, while the second was Alderman Thomas Cory who, when devising his own will in 1639, also remembered the same displaced city preachers, naming 'my loving and faithful friend John Tooley' as supervisor.[55]

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[53] Milican, *Freemen*, p. 78; PRO PROB 11/181, fos. 417r-v; John More, *Three godly and fruitfull sermons* (Cambridge, 1594), *STC* 18074.5, p. 1.
[54] PRO PROB 11/181, fo. 418v. For Hammond Craske's career see BLTT 669 f 6 (54), *To the Lords: the Petition of Many Thousands of the Inhabitants of Norwich* (16 July 1642); E 114 (27), *Newes from the Citie of Norwich* (1642); E 385 (4), *Vox Norwici* (1646), p. 15; *CJ* II, pp. 701, 704; *LJ* V, pp. 266-7, 468, 574-5; BL Add MS 22619, fo. 33; NRO DCN 107/3.
[55] PRO PROB 11/181, fos. 419r-20r; PROB 11/180, fos. 45r, 46r.

Unlike his associate Thomas King, Robert Craske remained in Norwich, where he balked at receiving at the rails in St John Maddermarket in 1637. Cited in the Consistory Court with his fellow parishioner and partner in the Norfolk feoffees, Thomas Atkin, whom Corbet labelled as 'an absolute schismatike', the matter was especially galling for both aldermen, in that they had already been forced to pay for the privilege of railing in the communion table at St John's.[56] Possibly the threat of court proceedings acted upon Atkin's decision to turn down the mayoralty in favour of becoming sheriff of London in 1637. Leaving for the capital and provoking a storm of protest from his colleagues within the corporation, one of the reasons Thomas Atkin gave for his departure was that there was no more good preaching to be had in Norwich.[57] However, more active resistance over receiving at the rail was pursued by Thomas Toft and his supporters at St Clement's. In 1637, he organised a rate strike to hold up Laudian refurbishment in the church, finally being pressed into making payments by the Consistory Court a year later, although even then he was reluctant to conform to Wren's injunctions, venturing only to the chancel entrance to receive.[58]

In this respect Toft was able, in due course, to claim episcopal sanction for his actions. As pointed out in chapter ten above, following Wren's translation to Ely in May 1638, the bishop's successor, Richard Montagu, contested the 'noveltie' of processing to receive at the rail introduced in 1636. Montagu hoped to defuse the tensions created by his predecessor.[59] That he tried to appear as a conciliatory figure, is demonstrated by his rapprochement with his old

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[56] NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 1r; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 8r; NRO PD 461/48, St John Maddermarket churchwardens' accounts, unfoliated payments for 1637.
[57] NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 1r; PRO PC 2/48, pp. 75-6, 25 June 1637; PRO SP 16/361/92.
[58] NRO DN SUN/4a, fo. 9v; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 134-5.
[59] NRO FCB/1, fo. 36r and above, p. 192-4.

literary adversary John Yates, stating that 'you are welcome to me if I am welcome to you, not a word of our controversy, I am weary with chiding'.[60] Montagu's efforts to pacify Norwich extended to making concessions on Wren's interpretation of the 'altar policy'. Considering reception at the rails 'a mere unnecessary, inconvenient, cumbersome, or irregular course' and finding 'no law, articles, advertisements, canons, [or] injunctions that require it', upon Archbishop Laud's insistence, he retained the practice. However, giving directions at a synod in Ipswich in October 1639, Montagu made a few key modifications to Wren's scheme. Dispensing with Wren's insistence on procession, communicants were to enter the chancel and receive kneeling in neat, orderly rows, with 'the best in the parishe' aligning themselves nearest the rails.[61]

Thomas Toft was more content to comply with Montagu's ruling. However, this was to the ongoing annoyance of his minister Foulke Robartes, who was very much Wren's man rather than Montagu's. For Robartes, Wren's injunctions provided clarity whereas Montagu's compromise seemingly pandered to malcontents. The point was that it gave the likes of Toft an opt out clause, since as a vestryman and arguably among 'the best in the parishe', Toft was supposed to set an example to others in taking up the requisite pole position at the rail. That Montagu's sanction allowed Toft to get the better of his parson grated with Robartes. Indeed in the later 1630s, St Clement's witnessed a remarkable battle of wills as one of Wren's most entrenched detractors, Thomas Toft, clashed with one of the bishop's most avid fans, the Norwich prebenadary Foulke Robartes, who had been sad to see his former diocesan go. Writing

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[60] BL Add MS 25278, fo. 137r and see above pp. 123-41 for John Yates's changing relations with Montagu.
[61] LPL MS 943, p. 626; NRO FCB/1, fo. 37r; K. Fincham (ed.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church II*, Church of England Record Society (1998), p. 219.

to Wren with a tear in his eye, Robartes recalled his thirty-six year ministry in Norwich. During that time, as he put it, no other ordinary had attempted to 'bring things so full home to the primitive Christian devotion' or to resurrect 'the pristine splendor of religion'. Yet such sentiments were extraordinary given Robartes's career profile. Incumbent at St Clement's since 1602, he was most likely a relative, possibly a nephew, of Thomas Robartes, *doyen* of the preaching fraternity in Elizabethan Norwich, who had been suspended from the same cure for nonconformity by Bishop Freke.[62] Like his forebear, Foulke moved in godly circles as Wednesday corporation lecturer at St Clement's from 1615 until 1633.[63] Something of a poetaster, he dedicated verse to a collaborative edition of sermons by the champion of Calvinist orthodoxy in Jacobean Norwich, Thomas Newhouse, affirming his trust that:

> Gods sure Election as foundation stands.
> Gods Feare as strongest pillar bears up all.

Consummate with his role as an evangelical pastor, Robartes was not always compliant over wearing the surplice.[64] However, by the time of Wren's visitation, having already been inducted into the ceremonial environment of Christ Church Norwich as a prebend since 1616, Robartes changed tack, abandoning his former predestinarian beliefs. Writing in 1639, he expressed the view that God's grace was available to all. As he remarked, 'is not the excellent goodnesse of God such as drawes all mens eyes upon him and feeds them all with expectation? Is not his

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[62] Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 309r; NRO DN VSC/2/3a, p. 2. For Thomas Robartes see above, pp. 33, 50, 59-62. Foulke Robartes's origins are obscure. However, the name 'Foulke' denotes Welsh ancestry as does the fact that he sought ordination in the diocese of St Asaph. Thus it follows that he was related to Thomas Roberts, a fellow Welshman, although Foulke was not his son, see NRO NCC 326 Bate.

[63] NRO CA, 1603-25, fos. 241v, 261r, 281v, 301r, 219r, 338v, 357r, 414v; CA, 1625-48, fos. 11v, 131v, 140v, 164r. See also NRO NCC 89 Coomney, will of Anne Rugge proved 1613, for further evidence of Robartes's inclusion in godly circles.

[64] Thomas Newhouse, *Certaine sermons preached by T. Newhouse set forth by R. Gallard* (1614), *STC* 18493, p. 143 and see above, pp. 71-2 for Newhouse; NRO ANW 3/20, *comperta*, 1614-17, entry for St Saviour's.

bounty such as filleth every living thing with plenty of his goodnesse? Shall not the eye then looke up towards God in admiration and hope? Shall not the hand be lifted up showing the heart ready to receive the blessing and to reach our thankes?'.[65]

Perhaps Robartes's anti-Calvinist conversion was occasioned by his unhappy experience of administering to vocal critics of ecclesiastical policy, namely, Thomas Toft. In return, Toft's hostility to religious change in the 1630s may have been a reaction to his minister's widening detachment from his evangelical roots, forming one part of a very stressful relationship. Committing his exalted views on the 'beauty of holiness' to print in 1639, it is possible to sense Robartes's obvious frustration. Here too, the timely appearance of his *Gods holy house and service*, dedicated to Laud and to Wren, for having followed the archbishop 'as another Elishaeus in the spirit of Elias', was intended as a retort to Richard Montagu for questioning the legality of Wren's injunctions. Yet the minister also had his parishioners in mind. Striking out against the 'much irreverence' in the performance of Holy Communion, he complained bitterly that 'I have often conceived thereupon that either Papist, Turke or Pagan observing our fashion, would think that either our churches were not the houses of the holy God, or that the people in them were not about Gods worship'. For both Bishop Montagu and Thomas Toft's benefit, he had much to say about receiving at the rail. Asking 'what superstition is it to kneele at the rayle more than at the stoole?', he pointed out that 'the nearer a man approacheth to that table whereupon he setteth with his eyes the sacred body and blood of his Saviour Jesus Christ', the 'more he should find himselfe ravished with devotion and not scared with all imagination and superstition'.[66]

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[65] Le Neve, *Fasti* vii, p. 57; Foulke Robartes, *Gods holy house and service* (1639), *STC* 21068, sig, *3v.
[66] Robartes, *Gods holy house and service*, sigs. *2r-v, p. 44.

Unfortunately for Robartes, both his current diocesan and a number of his parishioners and fellow citizens did not share his enthusiastic 'Wrenian' stance on eucharistic practice. More importantly, as the minister's anxieties demonstrate, hostility towards the overall 'Laudian' altar policy continued to rankle within some Norwich parishes, despite the concessions over reception at the rail granted by Montague. Individuals like Thomas Toft, linked to a puritan network with contacts across the North Sea and the Atlantic, continued to trouble Wren's clerical supporters. With the summoning of the Short Parliament, amid a mounting Scottish crisis, godly activists in Norwich were able to muster sufficient political clout to return two of their number to Westminster. The first was Robert Craske's supervisor Alderman John Tooley. The second was his co-feoffee Thomas Atkin, whose election was especially controversial given his previous discharge from the aldermanry to become sheriff of London. Inevitably, the two MPs attended with a petition reiterating the complaints made in 1636. Noting that Wren's visitation had been to the detriment of the city's economic well-being, the signatories called for the immediate repeal of the bishop's articles and the restoration of preaching exercises.[67] Parliament's abrupt dismissal prevented any proceedings from taking place. However, the course of national events and the calling of a second Parliament in October 1640, allowed the Norwich citizens to mount a more successful campaign against Wren and his former adherents in municipal government and among the city's clergy. The ensuing struggle, a legacy of the unresolved situation in 1636, will be set in context as an epilogue to the city's confessional politics under the first two Stuarts.

[67] *CJ* II, p. 6. The Norwich petition, presented on 18th April 1640, is calendared in *HMC* 4th Report, p. 24.

12. PURITAN REVOLUTION, 1640-1643

It is not the intention of this chapter to outline in detail the collapse into civil war and its ramifications for Norwich's citizens, already traced by John Evans.[1] Instead, the concern here is with the resurgence of divisions aggravated by political collapse at the heart of national government, which created a more ideologically charged atmosphere in the city than Evans presented. In particular, attention will be drawn to the ways in which splits among the magistrates in the early 1640s mirrored confessional divisions in the 1630s. The summoning of the Long Parliament saw remnants of the 'pro-Wren' contingent under Alderman Henry Lane, attempting to stave off repeated challenges from the godly. Support for the king's cause existed among Norwich's governors. But ultimately, this potential Royalist constituency did not prove forceful and determined enough to prevent the city's alignment with Parliament in 1643. The role of religion in determining Civil War allegiance is subject to much debate.[2] However, in Norwich at least, a correlation did exist between patterns of religious affiliation at the height of the Personal Rule and the gradual taking of sides during 1642. While the struggle was not exclusively about religion, views on the Caroline church shaped factions among the city's elite.

Indeed, Henry Lane's elevation to the mayoralty in May 1640, ensured that the godly activists' jockeying for power was by no means well assured on the eve of the calling of the Long Parliament. Lane procured a sympathetic officer for the shrievalty in September. His

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[1] J. T. Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich* (Oxford, 1979), ch. IV. For a comprehensive account of the city during the Civil War and Interregnum see Andrew Hopper's entry in the forthcoming history of Norwich edited by C. Rawcliffe and R. Wilson.

[2] J. Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil War', *TRHS*, 5th Series, 34 (1984), pp. 157, 178; C. Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies, 1637-1642* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 14-26; I. Green, '"England's Wars of Religion"? Religious Conflict and the English Civil War', in J. Van Den Berg and P. G. Hoftijzer (eds.), *Church, Change and Revolution: Transactions of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch Church History Colloquium* (Leyden, 1991), pp. 104-5.

candidate, John Osborne, approved by the majority of the magistrates, was instrumental in settling the quarrelsome elections for Westminster the following month. With Lane Osborne was declared a 'delinquent' and discharged from the aldermanry in 1642.[3] For their part, the godly minority within the Mayor's Court, led by the two former feoffees, the Short Parliament MP John Tooley and Augustine Scottow, exerted their influence over the Common Council to appoint John Dethick as the second sheriff. Dethick's candidature was unsettling to Lane. To begin with he was a close associate of another Norfolk feoffee Thomas Atkin, having previously served as his apprentice. Moreover, like his master, he had also opted to reside in London, requesting exemption from civic office in August.[4] His appointment and timely return to the city to coincide with Charles's convening of a second Parliament, was clearly part of an orchestrated move by the godly aldermen to nominate one of their number.

With the Parliamentary elections in October, Dethick's role became apparent. The first of the two borough seats was secured comfortably by Alderman Richard Harman, Henry Lane's immediate predecessor as mayor in 1639. Clive Holmes has suggested that Harman was a moderate respected by Wren. Certainly, William Alanson deemed him, 'an ingenuous man', even though such honesty and frankness had previously compelled Harman, while serving as churchwarden at St Andrew's in 1636 and 1637, into questioning Bishop Wren's right to visit the church.[5] As such Harman was no Laudian enthusiast, remaining an active Parliamentarian

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[3] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 364v, 3 Oct 1640. Osborne became mayor at the Restoration in 1662, *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 92.
[4] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 364v, 3 Oct 1640. For Dethick see Milican, *Freemen*, p. 105; V. Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution* (London, 1964), p. 253; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 293r, 20 Aug 1640.
[5] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 80; C. Holmes, *The Eastern Association in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 245; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336r; NRO MC 992/1, fo. 14v for Harman as churchwarden and Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 8v, 10r for parochial resistance at St Andrew's.

until his death in 1646.[6] However, having successfully returned one potential critic of the former bishop, problems then arose over the citizens' selection of a second burgess. This seat was fought over by John Tooley and Richard Catelyn. Already encountered as one of the four lawyers among the Norfolk trustees for religion in 1631, Catelyn immediately strikes as being an unlikely advocate of Caroline ecclesiastical policy. In the 1640 election he was the clear winner polling 906 votes to Tooley's 265.[7] However, in the initial indenture returned to Westminster by John Dethick, Tooley was named as victor, which provoked protest from the other sheriff, John Osborne, who made out another indenture advancing Catelyn. Dethick had conspired to throw the election for Tooley knowing that Catelyn, who was not a freeman of Norwich, was ineligible to stand. Of course, the prospect of either Tooley or Catelyn as a representative cannot have been relished by Henry Lane's supporters, although in the event, Catelyn, who was to emerge as a lacklustre supporter of Parliament, appeared as the lesser of two evils.[8] Lane was keen to close the loop hole, granting Catelyn his freedom and passing an ordinance banning the election of outsiders in future. But by approving Catelyn in order to counter sheriff Dethick's manoeuvre on Tooley's behalf, the 'pro-Wren' group moved to prevent a more radical agenda from being pursued on the city's behalf at Westminster.[9]

If this was Lane's intention, it backfired following the bishop's impeachment on 19th December. Immediately, the stage was set for a more concerted attack against the reforms

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[6] M. F. Keeler, *The Long Parliament, 1640-1641: a Biographical Study of its Members* (Philadelphia, 1954), pp. 203-4. Incidentally Harman sat on the Commons' committee to investigate complaints against Wren, Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 334. Further evidence of his commitment to Parliament's cause is given in NRO HMN 7/122/3.
[7] PRO SP 16/531/134 and above pp. 170-1 for Catelyn; PRO C 219/43/2/62.
[8] PRO C 219/43/2/63; *CJ* II, p. 22, 7 Nov 1640; Keeler, *The Long Parliament*, p. 57; PRO SP 23/72/606; SP 28/213, fo. 10r for Catelyn's political career in the 1640s.
[9] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 354r, 20 Oct 1640, fo. 367v, 3 Apr 1641. This conclusion was also reached in Holmes, *The Eastern Association*, p. 24.

imposed in 1636 when, as the ever vigilant William Alanson observed on 11th January 1641, 'our citizens are very busy at an Assembly, where every parish is giving in what charges and expenses my Lord's visitation put them to'.[10] Heading the investigation was a reputed nonconformist, Alderman Christopher Barret. He was particularly anxious to resolve the lingering matter of rails within St Edmund's, haranguing the churchwardens for complying with the former bishop's orders, adding 'I perceive you would well nigh have Poperie come in again'.[11] His findings informed the first of three petitions dispatched by the corporation against Wren. Referred to the Commons' committee on Wren on 27th January, this initial document repeated the complaints expressed in 1636, that the prelate had enforced superstitious innovations and driven out preaching in favour of a 'debaucht, ignorant and lazy ministry zealously observant of his will and pleasure', depopulating the city with a knock on effect on trade. However, as an indication of changed circumstances, the petition was not stalled by the magistracy as in 1636. Consequently, Mayor Lane did not try to impede the Assembly on 11th January, although dissenting voices were raised by two 'Wrenians', William Gostlyn and John Freeman, who now enjoyed a seat on the aldermanic bench.[12]

This first list of accusations was compiled amid a flurry of excitement, as Sir Thomas Knyvett observed to his wife. Returning home to Norfolk in January, he noted 'Conventicles every night in Norwich, as publicly known as sermons in the daytime, and they say much more frequented. There is but two preaching ministers that goes for current among them in the whole

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[10] *Parentalia*, p. 51; *CJ* II, p. 55; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 336v.
[11] NRO DN VIS/5/1, entry under St Andrew's for Barret's nonconformity; Bod L Tanner MS 290, fo. 108r. This letter was quoted in Wren's defence, see *Parentalia*, p. 99, where Alderman Barret is amusingly mis-transcribed as 'Parrot'.
[12] Symonds D'Ewes, *The Journal of Sir Symonds D'Ewes*, ed. W. Notestein (New Haven, 1923), p. 284; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 44-6; NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 356r, 11 Jan 1641.

city, *viz* Mr Carter and Mr Hall, the rest all prators'.[13] John Carter of St Peter Mancroft, had been suspended under Wren but restored to his living and Tuesday corporation lectureship by Richard Montagu in 1639. He was summoned to Westminster to testify as to his treatment by Chancellor Corbet, where he was joined by Henry Hall, the chaplain and Thursday lecturer at St Andrew's, who later became a Presbyterian member of the Assembly of Divines.[14] With Carter giving evidence against Wren, another strike at the bishop was made by Norwich's magistracy. Although not referring to the prelate by name, the ensuing petition calling for release from compulsory attendance at the cathedral every Sunday, could have been taken as a direct attack on Wren for enforcing the measure in 1636.

This much quoted petition is a curious document loaded with hyperbolic indignation. The two named protagonists behind its inception were the radicals Christopher Barret and Thomas Shipdham, who complained bitterly about having to sit through lengthy, elaborate services in the cathedral, 'not less than three hours and a halfe ordinarily' in low draughty pews, which left the aldermen 'much distempered with colde whereby their health is much impaired'. Mr Barret also suffered much humiliation after being bombarded with objects during worship, including a great bible, which broke his spectacles. On another occasion someone allegedly urinated over Mrs Barret's seat, while:

> at the time of the present Mayor that now is upon the Sunday the day before the knights of the shire were chosen in October last, alderman Shipdham Iustice of the Peace and sitting next to the Mayor, somebody most beastly did conspurcate and shitt upon his gowne from the galleries above. And the Sunday immediately after some one from the galleries did let fall a shooe which narrowly missed the Mayor's head. And at another time one from the said Gallery did spitt upon alderman Barrets head.

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[13] B. Schofield (ed.), *The Knyvett Letters, 1620-1644*, NRS, 20 (1949), pp. 98-9.
[14] For Carter see above, pp. 00; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 336r-v; NRO CA, 1625-46, fos. 321r, 345r; Blomefield iv, p. 301; *DNB* 'Henry Haill'.

Of course, we lack evidence to confirm whether such ribald antics really happened. However, while these episodes perhaps lacked a certain veracity, the inclusion of Mayor Lane, Sheriff Osborne and three other 'Wrenians', William Gostlyn. Thomas Carver and John Freeman among the signatories, strikes as being particularly jarring.[15] Was Lane's group buckling under pressure from Barret and Shipdham to press grievances against Wren and the local church hierarchy? If so, this was more than Lane could stomach who, wanting to remain loyal to his former diocesan, took a stand and resigned from the mayoralty in February 1641, four months before his term was due to end.[16]

Lane's request for early discharge set in motion a chain of constitutional moves, whereby the puritans wrestled control of city government. By abstaining from office, Lane inadvertently created an opportunity for his ideological opponent John Tooley to serve as deputy mayor until the next elections. The seniority principle dictated that the next mayor would be William Gostlyn. In turn he was to be succeeded by another known Wren supporter and Lane's fellow parishioner at St Gregory's, John Loveland, who would also prove unsympathetic to the godly.[17] Neither candidate was a welcome prospect to those with aspirations for further reformation. Thus in the ensuing mayoral elections in May, the freemen voted for Thomas Carver and Adrian Parmenter, the third and fourth in seniority, from whom the magistrates nominated Carver as the new mayor elect. Carver's appointment was a compromise. Parmenter, a former apprentice to Alderman Robert Craske, who would rise to notoriety as a member of the sequestration committee for Norfolk, held uncompromising religious views unlikely to heal rifts in the

[15] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 147, 149-50.
[16] See for example Bod L Tanner MS 290, fo. 110r, Lane to Wren, 19 Sept 1641; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 305r, 20 Feb 1641.
[17] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 356r, 11 Jan 1641.

governing elite.[18] For the godly, it was apparent that Carver, who was not a well man, might have to defer to a deputy of their choosing. In the event of his death, which followed on 29th May just weeks after being voted in on 1st May, the puritans seized the initiative by forwarding their preferred candidate, Parmenter, as the next mayor elect. The mayoral vacancy was greeted with calls for a second election by the Common Council.[19] However, in light of Carver's unfortunate demise, during the Assembly on 11th June, the council moved that voting should be carried out regardless of seniority, enabling all aldermen to stand for the position. The puritans' ploy worked and Parmenter gained promotion to the mayoralty.[20]

In the autumn, the new administration was presented with the opportunity to dismantle the controversial Laudian furnishing introduced in 1636, by acting on the Commons' resolution of 1st September ordering the removal of altar rails and the levelling of chancel steps. This ruling was followed up by the mayor's officers. However, as evidence from a sample of the eight extant churchwardens' accounts for city parishes covering the period demonstrates, initial compliance was piecemeal. Of the eight, four make reference to specific payments for the removal of rails. More importantly, only two parishes, St Benedict's and St Mary Coslany had made these alterations by the time of drawing up their accounts during Easter 1642. In St Stephen, the rails were taken away and the chancel levelled a year later.[21] At St Lawrence, where Samuel Davill had assumed the cure from the Laudian rector Richard Gamon in 1637,

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[18] Ibid, fo. 371r, 26 May 1641; Mayors *of Norwich*, p. 81; Milican, *Freemen*, p. 76; BL Add MS 15903, fo. 26.
[19] NRO AB/5, 1613-42, fo. 371r, 4 June 1641.
[20] *Ibid*, fo. 371r, 11 and 16 June 1641.
[21] *CJ* II, p. 279, 1 Sept 1641; 'Altar Rails', *EANQ*, 1st Series, 3 (1868), p. 252. Extant accounts for St Peter Mancroft, St John Maddermarket and St Gregory do not record payments for the removal of rails. St Saviour's accounts, NRO MC 1939/1, list income only. However see NRO PD 191/23, fo. 50r (St Benedict); NRO COL 3/4, fo. 70r (St Mary Coslany); 'Account Books of St Stephen's Church and Parish, Norwich', *EANQ*, 2nd Series, 8 (1899-1900), p. 378.

there was considerable inertia, the rails only being dismantled in 1643 when the parishioners subscribed to the Solemn League and Covenant, ridding their church of any remaining 'inscriptions and crucifixes' at the same time. Like his predecessor, Davill, who formerly served as Foulke Robartes's curate at St Clement's in the 1630s, was a keen ritualist. Preaching against the committee for iconoclasm, he berated those executing Parliament's ordinances to destroy images, as 'base domineering fellows which scandalised the ministers of God and abused the temples of the Lord'.[22] Of course, it cannot be assumed from the lack of detail in the remaining accounts that other churches failed to dispose of rails in 1641. Parish officials may simply have taken down railings themselves without additional charge to the rates, although in the case of levelling chancel steps, it is likely that some expenditure would have been made. Perplexing questions surround the reputed '*avant garde* conformist' church of St Gregory. In the receipts for 1641 and 1642, no mention is made of communion rails by the churchwardens who instead laid out money for colouring the font. Perhaps the parish held out against the Commons' resolution? Possibly, any existing rails were taken away by more forcible means in 1643 when the accounts record a large payment of £10 for glazing and other objects 'that must be repaired', indicating that the church had been subjected to a spate of iconoclasm.[23]

The point is, that within Norwich, there was a measure of resistance in some parishes to the Commons' ruling on rails. Continued reluctance to comply forced Adrian Parmenter to inform Parliament of local attachment to Laudian reform when, upon learning of Charles's abortive attempt to arrest the Five Members in January 1642, the Mayor's Court reacted with a

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[22] NRO DN SUB/1, p. 62; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 134; NRO PD 58/38 (S), fo. 66r; Blomefield iv, p. 264; BL Add MS 15903, fo. 75.
[23] NRO PD 59/54, fos. 94v, 95v; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 131r.

petition calling for the speedy defence of the country and the relief of Ireland. This was delivered to the House by representatives from the corporation on 22nd February. However, attached to the remonstrance was a separate catalogue of complaints, noted by Framlingham Gawdy in his diary, as running 'something like the rest against Bishop Wren that their abilities are not now in respect of the decay of trade as it was in Queen Elizabeth's days'. With Wren incarcerated in the Tower, a third attack on the bishop seemed overkill. At least this is how Sir Symonds D'Ewes viewed proceedings, when he remarked that the House had already 'transmitted a charge long since against Bishop Wren which rested with the Lords'.[24] But the document, in the Tanner manuscripts, also amounted to an assault on the bishop's adherents. Parmenter's supporters took the opportunity to single out those 'least affected' to Parliament and the cause of forward Reformation, namely eighteen 'scandalous' members of the city's clergy, notorious for being zealous observers of Wren's orders.[25] Of these, Thomas Displine, Foulke Robartes, William Alanson and Isaac Dobson have been encountered as apologists for the Laudian church. While, specific charges were made against each minister in person, the complaints also highlighted a number of superstitious practices still being followed in Norwich churches, most conspicuously St Gregory's, where several of Mayor Parmenter's adversaries

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[24] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 339r, 12 Feb 1642; W. H. Coates, A. S. Young and V. F. Snow (eds.), *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament 3 January to 5 March 1642* (New Haven, 1982), pp. 439-40, 445.

[25] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 131-5. The eighteen were, William Alanson of St Gregory, Mr Alfe of St Martin at Palace, Mr Christopher of All Saints', Samuel Davill of St Lawrence, Thomas Displine of St John Sepulchre, Isaac Dobson of St George Tombland, Robert Harris of St John Timberhill, Robert and William King of St Michael Coslany, Joseph Reading of St Augustine, Foulke Robartes of St Clement, Edward Smith of St George Colegate, Thomas Smith of St Peter Southgate, John Sowter of St Peter Parmountergate, John Spendlowe of St Martin at Oak, Robert Tite of St Michael at Thorne, Laurence Townley of St Julian and John Ward of St Swithin.

including Henry Lane and John Freeman worshipped.[26] The intention was to point out the hesitant support for Parliament from some quarters of the city's magistracy and ministry.

Mayor Parmenter's petition signified the widening political and religious fissure already present by the end of 1641, which became more apparent in the coming mayoral year under the leadership of William Gostlyn. As the next alderman under the chair, Gostlyn's elevation revealed that the seniority principle held despite the wrangling over Parmenter's election. A 'pro-Wren' alderman in 1636 and a future Royalist, Gostlyn's rise to the mayoralty in May 1642, conceivably marked a set-back for the godly within the corporation, although the course of national events would soon confound residual opposition to the puritans in Norwich.[27] Whatever Gostlyn's sympathies in 1642, his first months in office were preoccupied with the practical matter of securing the city's defence amid the decline into civil war. Here, a lead was taken by local Parliamentarian activists who on 16th July, formed a volunteer company with the expressed intent of uniting against 'the dayly growing evils and almost desperate diseases which have overspread the whole body of this kingdom, both in Church and State...the multitude of frivolous, ridiculous and unwanted ceremonies, pressed with the vehemence of suspension, excommunication and deprivation of many godly ministers'. They also condemned monopolies, illegal taxation and tyranny 'as if government had been set free from restraint of laws' during the Personal Rule.[28]

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[26] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 130-1, 135.
[27] *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 81; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fo. 153r.
[28] BLTT 669 f 6 (54), *To the Lords, the Petition of Many Thousands of the Inhabitants of Norwich*, 16 July 1642, reprinted as BLTT E 114 (27), *A True and Exact Relation of the Present Estate of the City of Norwich* (27 Aug 1642).

Significantly, the company's declaration was published following rumours of popish plots to burn down the city, which also found their way into print generating panic among Norwich's elite.[29] Set against the volunteer company, the city also witnessed a groundswell of popular sympathy for the king's cause. Much of this was spread by menacing talk of the kind indicted during the July Quarter Sessions where, for example, one Robert Riches openly called the Parliamentarian Earls of Warwick and Holland 'bastards', stating 'their mother was a whore'. He hoped to see them hanged as traitors with John Pym. More prophetically, one John Baldwyn, exclaimed that Parliament was against the king, adding that if Charles 'should go to the Parliament, they would take away his prerogative and commit him to prison and take off his head'. For Francis Morris, Parliament was a nest of 'Anabaptists, Brownists and Roundheads who care not for Bishopps'. Perhaps Morris had spent time in the company of Robert Tite, assistant curate at St Martin at Oak and chaplain at St Michael at Thorn, accused of being a common alehouse haunter and observer of the altar after 'saying God is there more especially present'. Tite loudly drunk Bishop Wren's health, stating that those unwilling to share his pledge were rebels. Moreover, the minister had already been bound over for sinister words that 'he cared not if the whole city were of fire', a dangerous utterance which proved unsettling even for another of Wren's former allies, Mayor Gostlyn, who felt it prudent to report proceedings of the July sessions to Speaker Lenthall.[30]

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[29] BLTT E 179 (10), *Bloody Newes from Norwich: or a true relation of a bloody attempt of the Papists in Norwich to consume the whole city by fire* (27 Nov 1641), reprinted as E 147 (1), *Foure Wonderfull, Bloody and Dangerous Plots discovered from Norwich where a Train of Papists had conspired the firing of the Citie* (May 1642). However, further evidence for these 'plots' is lacking.

[30] NRO NCR Case 11a /46 and 47, Quarter Sessions, interrogations and recognisances, 1642-3; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fo. 134 for Tite; *HMC* Portland MSS I, pp. 46-7, 53.

Given his prior associations with the 'Wrenians', Gostlyn could have found some common cause with the likes of Robert Riches, Francis Morris or Robert Tite. Yet, unnerved by the rapid decline into war in the summer of 1642, the mayor failed to make a decisive stand for the king, when on 28th July, Captain Moses Treswell entered the city to execute the Royalist commission of array on behalf of the Earl of Lindsey. After an animated emergency meeting of the Mayor's Court, it was agreed that Treswell should not be allowed to recruit volunteers. Thus when the captain marched through the streets beating his drums, he was promptly arrested, imprisoned and dispatched to Westminster.[31] While Gostlyn felt it prudent to inform Charles of his actions, Norwich's magistracy as a whole made its political allegiance clear. When a royal proclamation calling for aid in suppressing rebels was delivered to the Mayor's Court, the aldermen refused to have it read out at the next Assembly.[32] Instead, the city was placed on greater alert. Every able-bodied householder was to attend the watch in person, while on 5th August the magistrates acting on an order from the Lords, relinquished command of the trained bands to the newly formed deputy-lieutenants for Norwich, Livewell Sherwood and Hammond Craske, the mainstay of the volunteer company, who were given the vital task of guarding the city's magazine.[33]

Military build-up precipitated the formation of the Eastern Association by Parliamentary ordinance on 20th December 1642. Establishing an alliance of the five counties of Norfolk,

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[31] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 355v, 29 July 1642; BL Add MS 22619, fo. 34; *CJ* II, pp. 698, 701, 1-3 Aug 1642; BLTT E 112 (16), *Joyfull Newes from Norwich wherein is declared how the Earl of Lindsey endeavoured to raise a party against the Parliament* (17 Aug 1642). The Treswell incident also played a key role in the events leading to the formation of the Eastern Association, Holmes, *The Eastern Association*, pp. 56-7.
[32] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 359v, 27 Aug 1642.
[33] *Ibid*, fo. 355v, 29 Aug 1642; *LJ* V, pp. 265-7, 5 Aug 1642; *CJ* II, pp. 868-9, 29 Nov 1642.

Suffolk, Essex Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, inhabitants were to swear 'with our lives, powers and estates' to defend the region from Royalist incursion.[34] The intention was to galvanise local loyalties to Parliament. In Norwich, where Mayor Gostlyn had been walking a political tightrope in the interests of preserving peace in civic government, Royalists among the corporation could no longer procrastinate. On 31st January, the Lords implemented the Ordinance in the city. The two captains in charge of the volunteer company, or either of the two sheriffs, were instructed to confiscate arms and horses from known recusants and other 'delinquents'. At this stage, the mayor, backed by the new city recorder, Francis Cory, sought to hinder the order.[35] Their actions were the direct cause of a timely visit to Norwich on 1st March 1643 by Lord Grey of Warke, recently appointed Major General of the Eastern Association. Smelling a royalist plot, Lord Grey had the mayor arrested and imprisoned at Cambridge on 2nd March.[36]

There was substance to the Major General's suspicions, since Gostlyn's removal heralded a bungled coup by a group of disaffected citizens and gentry to capture the city for the king two days later. The eighteenth century historian Francis Blomefield implied that a number of magistrates were involved.[37] However, from a list of traitors convicted at the following Quarter Sessions and sent into Cromwell's custody, seven ring-leaders, including Sir William Denny, the former Norwich recorder's son and Sir Thomas Richardson, hitherto an active Parliamentary committee man, emerge. Beside them stood four Norwich citizens, Thomas Aldrich, John

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[34] *LJ* V, pp. 505-7; *CJ* II, p. 942; Holmes, *The Eastern Association*, pp. 62-5.
[35] *LJ* V, p. 583, 31 Jan 1643; *CJ* II, p. 967, 16 Feb 1643; PRO SP 24/66, City of Norwich *versus* Cory, documents Francis Cory's hostility towards Parliament.
[36] BL Add MS 22619, fo. 29; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fos. 377v-8r, 379r, 1-2 Mar 1643.
[37] Blomefield iii, p. 384.

Payne, Ralph Sulyard and Augustine Collier. However, the central figure was Augustine Holl, whose family home at Heigham, close to the city walls, was besieged by the volunteer company.[38] As a former sheriff of Norfolk, Holl was well placed in county society to act as the main protagonist. Something of a hothead, who in his youth had been responsible for starting a drunken brawl in a Norwich inn, Holl enjoyed a privileged position at court as one of King Charles's gentleman ushers.[39] Yet his ill-planned uprising on his master's behalf did not attract the desired following. One figure closer to city government known to have been in league with Holl's associates was Alderman John Anguish, who was caught holding Holl's boat at his house by St Martin's Gates. This was locked up by the marshals. Perhaps Anguish did not make a greater show of force on account of his declining health, since he passed away at the end of April.[40]

The Royalists had failed. With Gostlyn languishing at Cambridge, the mayoralty was freed once again for the more dependable Parliamentarian Adrian Parmenter to serve as deputy. A wider purge of those disaffected to Parliament then followed. At a hastily convened Assembly meeting held the following week on 13th March, it was agreed that letters be sent to aldermen Henry Lane, John Osborne and John Daniel requesting their return to Norwich upon pain of forfeiting their places.[41] Lane, who had been absent for a year, had perhaps joined the king's forces. However, Osborne and Daniel had been unable to attend for three months on account of

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[38] NRO NCR Case 11a/47, which fixes the date of the 'riotous assembly at Heigham' to 4th March 1643; BL Add MS 22619, fo. 33; R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War* (London, 1969), pp. 176-8; PRO PROB 11/155, fo. 26r, will of Thomas Holl proved 1629.
[39] NRO MS 12818; PRO STAC 8/25/5; PRO LC 5/134, p. 172.
[40] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 6r, 13 Mar 1643; G. Branwhite Jay (ed.), *The First Parish Register of St George of Tombland Norwich 1538-1707* (Norwich, 1891), p. 36.
[41] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fos. 6r-v, 13 Mar 1643.

their imprisonment, in Norwich, for non-payment of Parliament's Proposition tax. They shared a cell under the Guildhall with two city clerics. The first was one of Wren's former standing commissioners Thomas Displine, parson of St John Sepulchre. The second was John Whitefoot. William Alanson's successor at St Gregory's from the beginning of 1642, Whitefoot later gained the rectory of Heigham where Augustine Holl and afterwards Bishop Joseph Hall resided upon his sequestration in 1644. Hall was finally laid to rest at Heigham church, Whitefoot delivering his funeral sermon.[42] However, failing to reply to their summons, the missing aldermen were promptly discharged from the Mayor's Court on 18th March, to be replaced by three Parliamentarians, Livewell Sherwood, Matthew Lindsey and Robert Baron.[43]

The events of March 1643 confirmed the hegemony of the Parliamentarians in municipal government. However, with the next mayoral elections looming at the end of April, there was a possibility that the city would be saddled with another mayor more inclined towards the king. The seniority principle stated that Thomas Barber would be the mayor elect. Although quiescent during the attempted coup, Barber, who as sheriff in 1636 had been an active supporter of Matthew Wren, was evidently not trusted by the dominant puritan party. So at the Assembly on 30th April the notion of seniority was dispensed with for the next term.[44] Instead the Common Council elected two candidates, John Thacker, whom we have already met as a leading protagonist in the lobbying campaign against Bishop Harsnett in 1624, alongside Matthew Peckover. The aldermen chose Thacker. But faced with the rise of John Freeman, the longest

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[42] *CJ* II, p. 896, 19 Dec 1642; NRO PD 59/54, fo. 94v; J. Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk* (London, 1877), p. 121; Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War*, p. 231.
[43] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fos. 381r-v, 18-20 Mar 1643.
[44] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 6v, 30 Apr 1643; Bod L Tanner MS 68, fos. 153r, 162r. It is plausible that Barber was considered too infirm to hold office. He wrote his will several months later, NRO NCC 4 Burlye.

standing city officer to the mayoralty in 1644, the Assembly abandoned the seniority principle altogether on 1st May, the day of Thacker's elevation.[45] As one of Wren's agents, Freeman had been shown a vote of no-confidence by the majority in his ward.[46] Similar misfortunes awaited Alderman Gostlyn, when he attempted to reclaim his fee for the part of his mayoralty spent incarcerated at Cambridge, upon his release prior to August 1643. Arguing that his expenses had been incurred performing the city's business, he tried to claim them back. Suing the corporation for damages, his return to Norwich was not welcomed by his fellow alderman, even though he continued to enjoy his role as a magistrate, sitting on local commissions of Oyer and Terminer into the mid 1640s.[47] As the last of the surviving 'Wrenians' within the Mayor's Court, Alexander Anguish, failed to retain office. No doubt because of his family's ardent Royalism, he too fell foul of the change of administration, being expelled from the aldermanry on charges of fraud and corruption in April 1644.[48]

Assuming control of city government in the wake of Augustine Holl's botched coup, the godly were able to resume the task of rebuilding Jerusalem within Norwich. One outstanding object in their sights ripe for further reformation was the cathedral, a powerhouse behind the ceremonial reforms imposed across city parishes in the 1630s. According to T. L., rumours abounded that apprentices planned to storm Christ Church on Shrove Tuesday 1642. If his account is to be trusted, the threat of violence forced the dean and chapter to remove the

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[45] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 9v, 1 May 1643. For Thacker see *Mayors of Norwich*, p. 82; BL Add MS 18597, fos. 168v, 175v and above, pp. 119-21, 199-200.
[46] NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 384r, 3 May 1643.
[47] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 11v, 25 Aug 1643, fo. 13r, 17 Nov 1643; PRO C 181/5, pp. 481, 521. In the meantime, a 'Mr Gostlyn' provided refuge for Bishop Joseph Hall in the cathedral close, see Hall's *Hard Measure*, in *The Works of Joseph Hall*, ed. P. Hall (12 vols., Oxford, 1837), I, pp. Iv-vi; Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War*, pp. 225-31. This benefactor may have been Alderman William Gostlyn, who is known to have owned property in Christ Church in the 1640s, see NRO NCR Case 7k/1, levy for Fairfax's forces, unfoliated.
[48] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fos. 16r-v, 4 Apr 1644 and above pp. 212-19 for the Anguishes' Royalism.

contested communion rails from the cathedral themselves, while a crew of parsons and priests stood armed at the precinct gate ready to repel any assault.[49] However, there is no corroborating evidence to support this story. Of more fundamental importance for those preparing to make a stand against the king was the fact that Christ Church continued to offer a platform for pro-Royalist preaching. One rousing sermon with the provocative title of *Rex Meus est Deus*, found its way into print in two editions. The first, dated 23rd March 1643, bore the anonymous hand of G. D., while in a second version produced several months later, the author was exposed as George Downham, rector of South Repps since 1638.[50] The timing of the initial publication after the botched Royalist coup was more than coincidental. Conceivably, Downham had delivered his text several weeks earlier with the express aim of drumming up local backing for Augustine Holl's bid to raise the city.

Downham's sermon has escaped historical attention. However, the work which, as the title suggests, expanded on the divine right of kings, Charles being alluded to as the 'sparkling gemme in the ring of this round world', is more remarkable for containing an all out attack on the Calvinist theology of grace.[51] Downham laid into the 'carnall gospellers of these times that are all for faith and nothing for works, that believe they shalbe saved as soon as the rest, but they have nothing to shew for it'. Rather, those who maintained that God's grace was only operative on his elect, were 'scandalizars of religion' since 'the means of salvation are held out to all, if thou or any thou in the world will do well thou shall be accepted' according to God's revealed

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[49] BLTT E 140 (17), T. L., *True Newes from Norwich* (Feb 1642), p. 7.
[50] BLTT E 93 (24), G. D., *Rex Meus est Deus, or a sermon preached in the common place in Christ Church in the City of Norwich* (23 Mar 1643), given as George Downham in Wing D2096A. For Downham see Venn ii, p. 61.
[51] Downham, *Rex Deus est Meus*, p. 30.

will and 'what is commanded thee in this world'.[52] Significantly, Downham rallied his auditors by playing on hostility to predestinarian teaching. That he believed he could make an appeal by infusing his Royalism with a distinct doctrinal edge, testifies to the relative success of anti-Calvinist teaching in making in-roads into Norwich's citizenry prior to the 1640s.

This variety of sermon would not have been appreciated by the godly. It is likely that throughout 1643, the cathedral green yard continued to play host to preachers vindicating the doctrinal ideals of the Laudian church. This accounts for Parliament's order of November 1643 granting Mayor Thacker control over appointing ministers to serve the cathedral on Sundays. The same ordinance also resolved the issue of seating arrangements within the choir, enabling the corporation to sit at the east end of the cathedral chancel 'as in former times they were accustomed', presumably in the space occupied by the railed altar in the previous decade.[53] That Christ Church harboured Royalist clerics, also occasioned Sheriff Thomas Toft's iconoclastic purge of the cathedral, vividly described by Joseph Hall. Entering the building with aldermen Matthew Lindsey and John Greenwood, Toft supervised the 'furious sacrilege' witnessed by the bishop:

> Lord what work was here! What shattering of glass! What beating down of walls! What tearing up of monuments! What pulling down of seats! What wrestling out of irons and brass from the windows and graves! What defacing of arms! What demolishing of curious stone-work, that had any representation in the world.

Offending superstitious objects were marched out in a 'sacrilegious and profane procession' to the market place and burnt amid much shouting and blowing of dismantled organ pipes.[54]

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[52] *Ibid*, pp. 3, 8-9.
[53] NRO NCR Case 17b, City Revenues and Letters Book, fo. 43r.
[54] Joseph Hall, *Hard Measure*, p. Iv. For Matthew Lindsey see *Mayors of Norwich*, pp. 85-6. For John Greenwood see Hawes, *Officers*, p. 72 and above, pp. 181-2. Thomas Toft's earlier career is traced in ch. 11 above.

Some confusion persists over the precise date of these events. R. W. Ketton-Cremer and John Evans implied that the iconoclasm occurred between September and November 1643, although an entry in the dean and chapter's accounts 'for taking down the organ' on 25th May 1643, fixes the episode some months earlier.[55] The timing was significant, since the desecration greeted John Thacker's rise to the mayoralty, heralding godly victory over the 'pro-Wren' contingent. Moreover, by ransacking the cathedral in May, Thacker and Toft were pre-empting the Parliamentary ordinance calling for the destruction of all monuments of superstition and idolatry, which was not issued until the following August. Acting on this directive, the Norwich men embarked on a second round of iconoclasm in January 1644. Forming a committee to take stock of 'such scandalous pictures, crucifixes and images as are yet remaining', several 'popish pictures' were removed from St Swithin's and St Peter Mancroft and burnt in the market place.[56]

Another potential influence on Toft's actions in May was the reappearance of William Bridge to Norwich. Already present in East Anglia as town lecturer at Great Yarmouth since the end of 1641, Bridge had made a personal sacrifice of £42 8s 7d worth of plate towards Parliament's war effort. Preaching before the Norwich and Yarmouth volunteer companies, he exhorted his listeners to have courage against the 'malignant and Iesuiticall party'. Bridge saw the struggle against the king in apocalyptic terms, perceiving 'what great matter it is to die for your God, a little before your time, who would live when Religion is dead'.[57] In May 1643, Norwich corporation persuaded their former employee to give a Friday lecture at St Andrew's.

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[55] Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk in the Civil War*, p.p. 252-5; Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, p. 129; NRO DCN 10/2/1.

[56] C. H. Firth and R. S. Rate (eds.), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660* (3 vols., London, 1911), I, pp. 265-6; NRO MCB/20, 1634-46, fo. 411r, 23 Jan 1644, fo. 415r, 9 Mar 1644.

[57] Cited in Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk*, p. 108; BLTT E 89 (7), William Bridge, *A sermon preached unto the volunteers* (1642), pp. 9, 12.

While in the city, Bridge established another Independent church joined to his congregation at Great Yarmouth, which was later placed in the pastoral charge of Timothy Armitage, hired to preach at St Michael Coslany on Wednesdays and deliver a weekday lecture in the cathedral.[58]

Bridge's return was intended to restore the balance of Norwich's religious life as it existed before 1636. Yet at the same time there was a sense in which, set against escalating conflict across the nation as a whole, religion in the city would not be the same again. Division within the godly ensured that there would be no unity among Protestants. The rift between Congregationalists and those who favoured a more rigid national church structure along Presbyterian lines, two varying ecclesiologies which had already informed trajectories of puritan response to the new ceremonialism of the 1630s, would create lasting fissures within the city's teaching fraternity.[59] However, apart from the godly we should consider those citizens who conformed under Wren, to emerge as a Royalist contingent in the 1640s. From the evidence reviewed here, there was every indication that the king could count on a large body of potential lay and clerical support within Norwich, even though the city finally declared itself for Parliament by 1643. The failure of the 'Wrenians' to act decisively from 1642 can be attributed to the greater military strength Parliament mustered in Norfolk. But while the Royalists were overwhelmed by superior force, in relation to their godly adversaries, they lacked the comparable fervour and single-minded determination needed to capture corporate government. Untimely deaths or, as in Henry Lane's case timely desertions, thinned Royalists ranks at a critical moment. Moreover, the 'pro-Wren' group's political fortunes were inexorably tied to the

[58] NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 10r, 3 May 1643; Blomefield iv, p. 301; NRO FC 31/1, fo. 3; *DNB* 'Timothy Armitage'; NRO AB/6, 1642-68, fo. 13r, 17 Nov 1643.
[59] Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich*, ch. V; BLTT E 385 (4), *Vox Norwici, or the City of Norwich Vindicating their Ministers* (1646), *passim*; see above, pp. 127-31, 235-6, 240-3.

Caroline church which, upon being dismantled after 1641, left the clerical personnel of Wren's administration and their lay backers high and dry, without recourse to a higher authority to justify their actions.

Godly revolution facilitated a number of clerical ejections, executed by the Earl of Manchester's Norfolk committee for scandalous ministers, formed in 1644. Although, given the loss of most of the committee's records, it is difficult to document deprivations from Norwich parishes accurately, the eighteen malignant priests referred to in the 1642 petition provided a list of potential clerical targets for the puritans.[60] Unfortunately, the suspension of visitation procedure ensures that we cannot tell whether all of these eighteen had vacated their cures by 1644. William Alanson is known to have left St Gregory's by the beginning of 1642, possibly to join the Royalist campaign with his patron Alderman Lane, although in the absence of any evidence, this is highly speculative. Of the remaining seventeen, nine were identified as clerical sufferers by A. G. Matthews.[61] Foulke Robartes and John Spendlowe, as prebends of the cathedral, endured a similar fate to their brethren within the chapter upon its formal abolition on 29th May 1649.[62] Besides these two, the other fifteen, recorded as being minor canons, were also turned out of office in 1649. Yet prior to this date, given the puritan ascendancy from 1643, it is unlikely that these figures could have escaped the notice of the local committee, staffed as it was by zealous godly city officers such as Matthew Lindsey and John Greenwood, alongside the

[60] Bod L J. Walker MS c 6, fo. 44r; Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 131-5.
[61] NRO PD 59/54, fo. 94v. The nine listed in A. G. Matthews, *Walker Revised* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 263-75, in alphabetical order are, Thomas Displine, Robert and William King, Joseph Reading, Foulke Robartes, Thomas Smith, John Spndlowe, Robert Tite and John Ward. In December 1644, Joseph Reading was recorded as having been absent from his church for the past year and a half, *Chapter Minutes*, p. 84.
[62] Firth and Rate (ed.), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, II, pp. 81-104, 200-5; Blomefield iii, pp. 622, 666-70.

radical Independent lawyer Henry King.[63] So it is likely that most of the eighteen were removed from their cures before the end of 1644. Having evicted these former proponents of the Laudian church, significantly reducing the number of clerical personnel within city parishes in the process, the way was clear for a remodelling of Norwich's ministry along more concerted evangelical lines. Godly hopes to refashion the 'New Jerusalem' could begin once again.

[63] Bod L Tanner MS 220, fos. 131-3; Bod L J. Walker MS c 6, fo. 45r. For Henry King, see above, pp. 172, 243.

CONCLUSION

It is currently fashionable to take a long term perspective on the English Reformation as a drawn out process stretching across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The stress lies on the unresolved nature of the official Reformation after 1559 which, failing to satisfy godly calls for further reform, also spawned a confessional antithesis labelled variously as 'anti-Calvinist', 'Arminian' and, in the form it took under Charles I, 'Laudian'.[1] So far the evolution of this later strand has been explored in terms of its intellectual origins in the two universities. In addition, the ways in which the rise of English anti-Calvinism came to inform ecclesiastical policy under James I and Charles I, has also been examined.[2] However, less has been done to assess the impact of religious change in the early Stuart church at the local diocesan or parochial level. Following Nicholas Tyacke's thesis, the ceremonial reforms associated with Archbishop William Laud have been depicted as intruding upon established patterns of religion, significantly alienating a range of English Protestant opinion from episcopal government on the eve of the Civil War. This view has been endorsed by the work of Patrick Collinson and Judith Maltby's recent efforts to capture the reformed essence of religious conformity after 1559.[3] Given the presence of an ameliorating 'Prayer Book Protestantism', attempts to remodel liturgical practice to meet the emergent ideals of the Caroline church, a policy which Maltby has termed

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[1] See the introduction to N. Tyacke (ed.), *England's Long Reformation, 1500-1800* (London, 1998); D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999), ch. 4.

[2] N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in C. Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (Basingstoke, 1977), pp. 119-43; *idem*, *Anti-Calvinists: the Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1990), J. Davies, *The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism, 1625-1641* (Oxford, 1992); K. Fincham, 'Episcopal Government 1603-1640', in K. Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 71-91; *idem*, 'The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s', *HJ*, 44 (2001), pp. 919-40; A. Foster, 'Church Policies of the 1630s', in R. Cust and A. Hughes (eds.), *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (Harlow, 1989), pp. 193-223.

[3] Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, ch. 8; P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), p. 90, which describes William Laud as 'the greatest calamity ever visited upon the English Church'.

'Thorough', were unwelcome and unpopular.[4] Alternatively, Christopher Haigh, George Bernard and Kevin Sharpe have viewed Laudianism as fitting in with the rhythms of parochial worship.[5]

This study has attempted to furnish a detailed contextualised local setting through which to observe the reception of ecclesiastical policy under the first two Stuarts upon the parish ministry and, where he can be counted, the 'man in the pew'. The city of Norwich has proved an interesting test case for three basic reasons. First, as England's second city at the heart of one of the country's most populous and wealthiest regions on the axis of the trade route with the Low Countries and a focus for immigration, Norwich consequently became a hubbub of religious ideas. Secondly, as a town of many churches, the city was able to embrace a spectrum of parochial customs within its walls. Thirdly as home to the mother church of the diocese, Norwich's citizens were readily exposed to the flow of national religious policies played out in the cathedral and re-enacted in parishes elsewhere across the vast East Anglian see. All of this made for a consistently dynamic and occasionally explosive religious atmosphere.

Having taken a slice of the city's political and cultural history between two conspiracies, John Appleyard's planned Catholic uprising of 1570 and Augustine Holl's equally ill-fated Royalist coup of 1643, the course of Norwich's experience of the later Reformation runs as follows. From the outset, the progress of reform was a hotly contested affair far from Muriel

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[4] J. Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 16, 23-4, 84-6, 99-113, 228-32.

[5] C. Haigh, 'The Church of England, the Catholics and the People', in C. Haigh (ed.), *the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke, 1984), pp. 214-19; *idem*, 'The Taming of Reformation: Preachers, Pastors and Parishioners in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *History*, 85 (2000), pp. 572-88; G. Bernard, 'The Church of England c. 1529-c. 1642', *History*, 75 (1990), p. 204; K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 342-3, 383-92.

McClendon's depiction of a 'quiet Reformation'.[6] Instead Norwich's famed civic godliness was the product of an alliance between a determined body of Protestant magistrates affiliated to John Aldrich and Nicholas Sotherton through the Merchant Venturers' Company, working in conjunction with the diocese's first Elizabethan bishop, John Parkhurst. Their common aim was to evangelise the city. However, for their part, the dominant Protestant mercantile elite also hoped to enforce reformation to improve the moral rectitude of urban society amid anxieties over economic downturn and a slump in the export of the city's staple product, cloth. In promoting the word of God preached by inspiring ministers such as John More, the intention was to foster a 'culture of discipline'. Underpinned by a stark predestinarian message, whereby God had predetermined his elect to salvation and the reprobate to damnation, the onus was placed upon man's irrevocably corrupt nature and the constant guarding against sin as a prerequisite for the godly life. From recognising sin in the self, it was a short step to expurgating sinfulness in society. Developments in the 1570s laid the foundations for Norwich's lasting tradition of civic sponsored godly learning, signified by a close association between magistracy and ministry in the task of converting the city's inhabitants into devout God fearing Christians, redeeming them from the wiles of superstitious Popery, the cause of sedition and rebellion in 1570.

Nevertheless, the new 'culture of discipline' was not without its critics. One was the dislocated Catholic alderman Thomas Whalle, who disliking John Aldrich's punitive approach to dispelling poverty, harked back to a bygone medieval age when Christian charity was given in the spirit of performing good works, meritorious to salvation. Another hostile party to the rigid Calvinism propagated by Norwich's preaching fraternity was Bishop Edmund Freke. Evidence

[6] *Quiet Reformation*, pp. 253-8.

suggests that Freke himself maintained anti-predestinarian views believing in the possibility of man's innate qualities to achieve his own salvation, although whether his soteriological position drew adherents within the city's governing elite, has left no trace on the historical record. Moreover the rise of puritanism in Norwich, as patronised by the corporation, in turn created schism. The emphasis placed upon predetermined election and reprobation as a means towards social discipline and order, paradoxically became a force for radical dissent under Robert Browne and Alderman John Aldrich's protégé Robert Harrison, who in the 1580s both strove to create a more perfect church along the lines of visible sanctity, initially drawing in wealthy citizens such as the future mayor, Roger Weld. Norwich acquired a reputation as a hotbed of separatism, which given the presence of William Hunt's congregation, part of which later dispersed to Leyden with John Robinson, was not unfounded.

Although a balance between the demands of an evangelical agenda, fulfilled by episcopacy, was struck under James I and celebrated by the minister John Yates, Norwich's reputation for nonconformity ensured that both city and diocese became a destination for disciplinarian trouble-shooting bishops. This became marked in the wake of events hinging upon James's negotiations for a Spanish marriage. Thus we can discern the strategic placement of the anti-Calvinist Samuel Harsnett over the see in 1619, as part of a co-ordinated move to stifle what the king increasingly regarded as a 'puritan' criticism of current foreign diplomacy. Harsnett began a concerted attack on Norwich's longstanding alliance of magistracy and ministry. Not only did he terminate stipendiary lectureships and prohibit Sunday morning sermons in favour of the cathedral service, but he also sanctioned the greater ritual adornment of parish churches, emphasising the visual and symbolic significance of the communion table as a high altar,

occasionally, as at St Peter Mancroft and St Gregory, with the added embellishment of sacred imagery. The appearance of religious art offended some Protestant sensibilities. Yet signalling further religious change, Harsnett also fostered anti-Calvinist preaching in the later 1620s, licensing the Arminian controversialist John Chappell to hold the city's most prestigious pulpit at St Andrew's. That godly activists among the corporation were ready to resist such developments is understandable. What is more surprising given the background of civic sponsored godliness, is the fact that Harsnett's measures found lay proponents, most conspicuously Alderman William Browne, as well as parishioners at St Gregory's headed by Alderman Robert Debney. Significantly, it was from the same church that Bishop Wren drew his most vociferous lay supporters, Alderman Henry Lane and John Freeman, in 1636.

What could arguably be described as the '*avant garde* conformity' pursued at St Gregory's, helped nurture a lay constituency for aspects of religious change under Charles I, which found common cause with Wren's moves to counter godly piety locally. The same devotional preferences underwrote the Anguish family's 'Laudianism' in the 1630s. It is also interesting that, in the case of the identifiable city fathers from St Gregory's and the Anguishes, their siding with Wren's ceremonial innovations predisposed them to join the Royalist cause in 1642. Perhaps the bishop's backers acted out of dissatisfaction with the Reformation prior to the 1630s. Some may have been alienated from the forward Protestantism ascendant in Norwich since the 1570s, although the role of anti-Calvinist prelates and their backers among the clergy in winning round lay advocates of religious change in the 1630s should not be discounted. John Chappell has been noted as an concerted Arminian apologist from the late 1620s. It is clear from later puritan complaints against malignant priests to the Long Parliament, that anti-Calvinist

divines had begun to proliferate in the city's parishes by 1642. Doubtless some found a message highlighting the universal nature of God's saving grace comforting. Certainly other parts of the Laudian package, such as the renewed emphasis on the material aspects of worship, chimed in with Norwich's development as a regional centre of artistic production, traced by Virginia Tillyard and Victor Morgan.[7] As stated, from the 1620s, imagery came to ornament city churches as at St Gregory's, albeit to the scandal of the godly. The impulse within Laudianism to invest sacred space with the aura of the 'beauty of holiness', appealed to burgeoning local artistic sensibilities tinged with a considerable parochial pride, which reflected the trappings of accrued wealth within the city more generally.

These were the positive aspects of the new religious mode which found form in the East Anglian capital. At least, the assistance given to Wren by some quarters of Norwich's population reveals the political potency of the Caroline church and its potential to influence the formation of Royalism in the 1640s, prefiguring the established church's ideological underpinnings of the Tories amid the 'party rage' against Whigs and dissenters in city government after the Restoration.[8] Moreover, the *avant garde* style found in some Norwich parishes questions the static nature of conformity sketched by Judith Maltby. Rather conformity within the early Stuart church emerges from this study as a more malleable phenomenon, one which, as Peter Lake and Michael Questier have argued recently, was defined according to the

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[7] V. Tillyard, 'Painters in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Norwich', *NA*, 37 (1980), pp. 315-19; V. Morgan, 'The Norwich Guildhall: Portraits: Images in Context', in A. Moore (ed.), *Family and Friends: a Regional Study of English Portraiture* (London, 1992), pp. 21-9.

[8] J. T. Evans, *Seventeenth Century Norwich* (Oxford, 1979), chs. 6 and 7; G. J. A. Guth, 'Croakers, Tackers and Other Citizens: Norwich Voters in the Early Eighteenth Century', Stanford University Ph.D., 1985; I. Atherton and V. Morgan, 'Revolution and Retrenchment: the Cathedral, 1630-1720', in I. Atherton *et al* (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese 1096-1996* (London, 1996), pp. 563-75.

priorities of different diocesan governors, following the direction of church policy at the centre of national government, two interests which were not always in close agreement with one another.[9] Conformity fell in line with the dictates of ecclesiastical authority. But to assert this is not to imply that the act of conforming necessarily implied a kind of passive resignation in the interests of smoothing over religious tension and discord. Here Judith Maltby has equated the 'conformable' with all that made for quiescence in post-Reformation England. However, from the evidence reviewed for Norwich, laymen who followed the agenda set by Harsnett and Wren, hoped to inject a new ritual vitality into parish life as a challenge to rival forms of godly piety already established. By this token, conformity to episcopal initiative in Norwich from the 1620s, assumed an assertive character.

Yet despite marking a reaction to the forward march of Reformation, it is difficult to perceive lay backing for Laudian policy in Norwich in the 1630s as belonging to an unbroken Catholic or anti-reformed continuum in the vein of Christopher Haigh's 'parish Anglicanism' or Alexandra Walsham's 'church papistry'.[10] Rather any lay constituency for Laudianism was dependent upon a more complex set of contingent factors determined by local political circumstance. Thus while we can detect adherents among Norwich's citizens of the religious style associated with the anti-Calvinist party, such support followed its own logic according to a number of specific influences. Early Stuart Norwich was a flash-point for religious discord. The unstable mixture of the city's entrenched native reformed tradition and an anti-Calvinist agenda

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[9] P. Lake and M. Questier, 'Introduction', in P. Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. xiv-xvi.
[10] Haigh, 'The Church of England, the Catholics and the People', pp. 214-19; A. Walsham, 'The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited: Catholics, Anti-Calvinists and "Parish Anglicans" in Early Stuart England', *JEH*, 49 (1998), pp. 620-51.

implemented by prelates like Harsnett and Wren, created polarised sympathies for or against the established church hierarchy. In Norwich, those identifying with religious change did so out of mounting unease with the godly challenge to diocesan orders. By seeking to undermine episcopal authority, the godly incited their enemies to rally behind successive prelates, the godly and the conformable playing off against one another in fashioning their respective religious allegiances, once diocesan government had forced the taking of sides. Yet the variety of conformity emerging from this struggle was moulded by its immediate cultural environment. In Norwich during the 1620s and 1630s, conformity was squeezed under pressure amid calls for further reformation from the city godly and the priorities of local ecclesiastical administration. But this alone did not define how the opponents of the godly would relate to religious change. Here, the resulting conformable synthesis attached to greater ritual observance and concerns for the 'beauty of holiness', as witnessed at St Gregory's, also owed something to the overall artistic and cultural milieu unique to Norwich.

In short the thesis is this. While, in the case of Norwich, Caroline church policy gained acquiescence from identifiable laymen, the motives of those assenting to ecclesiastical change were more fluid than either Haigh's model of a tenacious 'parish Anglicanism' or Walsham's conception of a subversive 'church papistry' rooted in the sixteenth century would allow. Figures such as Alderman William Browne and possibly Robert Debney may have been at odds with aspects of the reformed tradition. However, in general, the citizens later associated with Wren had been accommodated within the broadly based evangelical framework of the Jacobean church, at least until Bishop Harsnett's unravelling of the city's forwardly Protestant past in the 1620s presented opportunities for fostering alternative modes of piety. Ultimately, alignment

behind Wren depended on the political situation of Charles I's Personal Rule. With the rise of Laud and his colleagues, conformity to religious innovation became the acid test of loyalty to the church and the crown, although, in Norwich, antipathy towards the city's godly community helped galvanise lay conformity to Laudian ceremonial novelty in the 1630s. In the process, laymen bought into the collective paranoia of Caroline government, that puritanism stood to subvert royal authority.[11] Yet, by the 1630s, hostility to the godly was already present and marked among some conformists in Norwich, who turning aside from the sermon centred piety of English Protestantism, indulged their preferences for enhanced ritualism and sacred art, as part of the rich pageantry accompanying urban life in the East Anglian capital. In the process, their religious outlook came to be refined by anti-Calvinist divines active within the city.

A microhistorical approach to engaging with religious allegiance adds much complexity to the overly schematic categories of conformity already forwarded by Haigh, Walsham and Maltby. Certainly, the need for proper contextualisation when assessing the 'conformable' in early Stuart England becomes apparent. Indeed, by applying the tool of prosopography to the points where local politics and parochial religion met within an urban setting, it has been possible to uncover much about the shifting confessional identities of hitherto obscure clerics and lay townsfolk. What remains to be seen is whether Norwich's experience of religious conflict occurred in other boroughs. Here, one tantalising factional religious contest in England's third city, Bristol, has been alluded to by David Harris Sacks, who has written of the

[11] For similar examples of local response to a perceived puritan threat in the 1630s see V. Stater, 'The Lord Lieutenancy on the Eve of the Civil Wars: the Impressment of George Plowright', *HJ*, 29 (1986), pp. 279-96; R. Cust, 'Anti-Puritanism and Urban Politics: Charles I and Great Yarmouth', *HJ*, 35 (1992), pp. 1-26; P. Lake, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and a Shropshire Axe-Murder', *Midland History*, 15 (1990), pp. 37-64; *idem*, '"A Charitable Christian Hatred": the Godly and Their Enemies in the 1630s', in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 145-83.

rise of a Laudian party among the civic elite in the 1630s under Alderman Robert Aldworth, a distant kinsman of Archbishop Laud, who favoured church beautification in his will. How did this group jostle for power in Bristol and what of the reaction of the godly? Regrettably, Harris Sacks, whose main interest concerned the struggle for free trade in the city against the monopolising tendencies of the Merchant Venturers' Company, of which Aldworth was a member, does not say. He concluded that the 'potential for conflict seems to have been largely contained' in city affairs under the Stuarts. However, given the rise of confessional factions in Norwich, where similar professional rivalries were not so apparent, what of the situation in Bristol where socio-economic tensions were more marked? Surely a religious dimension would have impinged upon competition for trade? Indeed in the case of Robert Aldworth's opponent Alderman Matthew Warren, a member of the godly and a later sectary, whose wife became a Quaker, we have a committed foe of the Caroline church. Warren ran on an anti-monopolist platform. But was this a cause or merely a condition of his puritanism, which led to his exclusion from local politics by the dominant religious party in civic office in the 1630s? [12]

Bristol furnishes another interesting study of support for the Caroline church amid a fractious urban political scene. Like Norwich, Bristol was a cathedral city, which from 1637 until 1641, became the seat of another vocal champion of the ideals of the Caroline church, Bishop Robert Skinner.[13] It is likely that Skinner found a comparable clerical and lay constituency in his new see to that which gathered behind Wren in East Anglia. Suffice to say that town-gown relations in Bristol under the Stuarts calls for more thorough research, as does

[12] D. Harris Sacks, 'Bristol's "Wars of Religion"', in R. C. Richardson (ed.), *Town and Countryside in the English Revolution* (Manchester, 1992), pp. 100-29, especially, pp. 113-4, 116-7.
[13] Robert Skinner, *The Speech of Dr Robert Skinner, Lord Bishop of Bristol, at the Visitation of Dorchester, September 18 1637* (1744); BL Add MS 20065, fos. 37r-44r.

the extent of lay participation in religious change in cathedral cities elsewhere, particularly those presided over by anti-Calvinist episcopal governors. What, for example, of Richard Neile's tenure in York, where the bishop's early implementation of the 'altar policy' excited local controversy?[14] Moreover, picking up the threads in James I's reign, it is possible to pinpoint a specific internecine clash exacerbated by William Laud's conversion of the communion table into an altar at Gloucester cathedral during his time as dean there in 1617. This innovation prompted a scurrilous libel in Gloucester, the perpetrators being dealt with by Alderman John Jones. Wishing to punish the dean's critics further, Jones insisted that they be examined by 'his Majesty's high commission', on condition that the appointed tribunal was not staffed by any 'that favour that schismaticall faction of the puritanes'.[15]

Jones may simply have been acting as an overzealous Justice of the Peace. However, as well as being a member of Gloucester's civic elite, Alderman Jones was also the diocesan registrar, a position which would have allied him closely with Dean Laud in local church administration. Moreover during the 1610s, he had led a faction at loggerheads with the dominant godly oligarchy in city politics. Under Charles I, the role of registrar then passed to his son Henry Jones, who subsequently came under suspicion for his alleged Roman Catholic sympathies.[16] Given these biographical details, the need for an examination of Jones's place in the 'Gloucester altar controversy' becomes clear. In light of the alderman's apparent defence of Laud's liturgical reform, matched by his hostility towards local puritans, are we dealing here

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[14] Fincham, 'The Restoration of Altars in the 1630s', pp. 922-3; *The Winthrop Papers* III, Massachusetts Historical Society (1943), p. 127.
[15] Laud, *Works* iv, p. 233, vi, pp. 239-41; PRO SP 14/90/75.
[16] PRO STAC 8/4/9, 207/25; B. Taylor, 'William Laud Dean of Gloucester 1616-21', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 77 (1958), p. 89; PRO SP 16/308/22, fo. 39.

with an early lay Laudian conditioned by the political circumstances within his native city? Of course, this is just one example offering a 'springboard' to a desirable research project on the localised aspects of the Caroline church's pre-history. However, as I hope the present study has demonstrated, by applying a microscope to politics in early Stuart towns, it is possible to discern confessional squabbles no less interesting than those accompanying the earlier stage of the England's urban Reformation, which in turn presaged England's 'wars of religion' in the 1640s.[17] Conceivably, further prosopographic work will unearth potential lay proponents of Laudianism in other English towns. Moreover, as the example of Norwich illustrates, 'proto-Laudianism' could evolve within in a borough ostensibly thought to have been a puritan citadel, an exclusive habitation of the godly. I am not arguing that the East Anglian city was normative. Yet it is possible that the same kinds of religious divisions prevailed in other cities set upon their respective 'hills' across the landscape of early Stuart England? There is much more to do. But there is every indication that there is much more to find.

[17] P. Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp. 28-59 and the introduction to P. Collinson and J. Craig (eds.), *The Reformation in English Towns 1500-1640* (Basingstoke, 1998); J. Craig, *Reformation, Politics and Polemics* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 176-82.

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3/24	*comperta*, 1620-1, deaneries of Ingworth, Holt, Walsingham, Lynn, Briseley, Toftres and Sparham
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5/19	chronicle of events in Norwich, 1066-1755

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31/1	history and first register of Great Yarmouth Congregational Church

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7/172	miscellaneous correspondence relating to Norwich in the Civil War

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